

For starters, how about Brownback, Parkinson

Cautions: What you are about to read is not, and we repeat, is not, an endorsement. It is passed along as nothing more than a suggestion for the Kansas Democratic Party. If you are serious about retaining the governor's office when the votes are counted on that cold, November night in 2010, you best twist the arm of the man occupying that chair or forget it. Period.

Gov. Mark Parkinson took over the governor's office when Gov. Kathleen Sebelius jumped ship to become a member of President Obama's Cabinet. Parkinson was serving as lieutenant governor, joining the Sebelius ticket when she sought and won re-election to a second term. The state's financial picture was in a mess when the call came from the president to then Gov. Sebelius to become Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary. The offer was the president's way of thanking her for her early endorsement of his effort.

Lt. Gov. Parkinson took the oath elevating him to the state's top elective position and has won several accolades for his performance. He has said, time and again, that he would not be a candidate for the office.

Gov. Parkinson is unique. He was a Republican for many years and changed parties when Gov. Sebelius convinced him to become her running mate. Of course this didn't sit well with the Republican leadership, seeing one of their own walk away in the fashion he did. But moderate Parkinson found a home in the Democratic Party, and today sits as governor.

Cautions: what you are about to read is not, and we repeat, is not an endorsement, but from here it looks like whoever the Democrats pick as their gubernatorial candidate next year will face Republican U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, who is fulfilling a promise to serve in that capacity no more than two terms. Making and carrying out that promise makes him unique among politicians.

One would figure Brownback an easy victor in the 2010 gubernatorial race. His conservative approach speaks well in this Republican state; however, moderate Republicans grabbed hold of things a few years ago and could spell trouble for the Brownback Express.

And there just might be some lingering hard feelings that go back years when Sheila Frahm of Colby was picked to replace Sen. Bob Dole when he resigned to devote all his time to his presidential effort. She was serving out his term. Then when it came time to seek the office on her own merit, things went wrong and Brownback was elected.

Of course this discourse might be all for naught. Brownback will be challenged in the primary. The Democrats might also end up with a primary contest. And just maybe some newcomers will steal the political spotlight. And a forecast made in this newspaper last week saying that 2010 will bring Kansas a new governor, could be all wet if Gov. Mark Parkinson goes against his earlier statements.

2010 will be an interesting year for Dorothy's Kansas!

-Tom Dreiling
(tad1@st-tel.net)



Entitled to health care

Phase II
Mary Kay
Woodyard



With all the health care debate, one congressman finally said something which made sense, "Why don't we offer health care like 'we' are entitled to."

What a novel thought. Jack is a retired federal employee. He spent years as a physicist with the then U.S. Bureau of Mines.

As such we have health care options each year during an open season. We also have prescription drug service. This is what our trusted congressmen also have. Is it free? No, it comes with a fairly high monthly price, deductible and 0-20 percent. Is it free to the federal government? No, but government subsidies and business deductions aren't free either.

I realize there are many concerns with a federally run system i.e. abortion coverage, another government program, the debt. Let me address those three. Abortion, do we really want to block millions from health care because of this one issue? Once again, why not look for positive social changes to lessen the need for abortions.

The concern about a government program and the debt must be looked at without the fear factor. The truth is the lack of insurance adds to our national

debt as well and on many levels. Those who can't get insurance don't receive medical treatment because they can't afford it and they don't have sick leave. This not only impacts their ability to work, but it affects those around them as well and it doesn't come free for us. If they are sick and have no insurance, they use the emergency room as their family physician. This raises the costs for the rest of us because they can't pay.

Those who use the argument of rationed health care must remember it is already rationed; those who have insurance get treatment, those who don't, well, you get it.

Many say people should choose jobs where they have these benefits, the "we're all created equal" argument. A wonderful theory, but it is not a truism. Most give all they can, but most will never be an Einstein or a Bill Gates. Jack

attended a workshop where the speaker was saying "try harder" does not mean anything.

He gave a woman in the class his glasses and said, "Can you read with these?"

She replied, "No."

"Well, just try harder." He said. Nice thought, but it doesn't help.

Will we make mistakes with reform, of course, but it is a start. A great number of ads are being aired or printed which are designed to scare, fear tactics, but don't take my word for it. Don't call your congressman based on ads or on columns. Research what is in the bill and what neutral, objective, non-biased institutes have determined. Will you find a perfect bill? No, but you will find one that gets us further down the road than we are now.

Passing this bill is a bit like raising children. Do we wait until they are perfect to let them go out on their own or do we let them take the first step, knowing at times we will step in and that tools are in place to help them down the path, making adjustments along the way.

Look for the facts, not the fear and move forward with the defining Christian statement, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

The story of farming

Back
Home
Nancy
Hagman



Today as I sit and look at the winter wonderland outside my window, John Ise's book, *Sod and Stubble* weighs on my mind.

It's the basic story of farming in Kansas: It rained, it flooded! There was no rain, the crops burned up. It snowed, it was cold!

The winter was completely open; shirt sleeves at Christmas, on Valentines Day. There was a prairie fire, a grasshopper plague. Prices were good; they were bad. The next decade it started all over!

Ise's family left Osborne County 100 years ago. All but one of the 12 children obtained a college degree, quite a feat. Sending kids to college brings similar results a century later. Off they go, and they don't come back.

Ise's father received over two dollars a bushel for his wheat (1880's). His family also ran the post office for many years. Stamps were less than a penny. If life was fair-----with stamps at 44 cents we would now be getting in excess of 88 dollars a bushel for wheat.

God may have been trying to tell us something back in the 1800's. "GO BACK! It's too hard here! The grand experiment of settling the High Plains is doomed to fail!"

Small farms are gone. Those remaining are more efficient. We broke out all the land possible and when there wasn't anymore land we boosted yields. Farmers don't survive because they are dumb; they survive because they are smart.

Every challenge man and nature throws up we figure out a way to beat. Prices low? Produce more. Equipment too expensive? Fix the old stuff up. No one to help? Do it yourself 10-14 hours a day, seven days a week and never, ever ask for help.

Still there are hungry people in the world. Do we really have a shortage of food or a distribution problem? Because grain is piled everywhere! If they want us

to raise it we will, and if they can't pay us a fair price we take what they give. And still there are hungry people.

So now our cows and our tractors cause global warming we are told. The new Kansas Secretary of Agriculture is encouraging us to start producing more vegetables, just a few acres. He thinks it will be a wonderful thing to have locally grown produce in our stores. Good for the environment; good for farmers as these items are typically more profitable than small grains.

Gee, great idea. We'll have lots of lettuce in July and August. I'd say one of the first rules of agriculture is wise land usage. It is wise to grow vegetables where the climate is hospitable (California!). It's fine to have vegetable gardens in Kansas.

It's fine to can or freeze those vegetables for use the other 10 months of the year. But why go to all the effort of setting up a new distribution chain for Kansas vegetable production requiring a start up and shut down every year. We have it: it's called Farmer's Markets! Another just universal rule we should observe: If it isn't broke, don't fix it! Or how does that thing go about no need to reinvent the wheel?

This is exactly why the government never solves a problem. If they need more money, they raise taxes. They don't have to figure out a way to make things work or defer their every desire until better times. If they are frugal there is no reward. Instead of having something to pass on to future generations, money

left over their budgets will be cut the next year! It's a mind set incompatible with a Kansas farm.

"Okay Nancy," you ask, "So why the tirade today?"

Chalk it up to cabin fever. There is a big meeting in Copenhagen to discuss climate change. In Kansas, I look out my window and see 12 inches of snow. Not so big a deal as it was 100 years ago.

The hubby is out there pushing it cleaning the yard with a polluting tractor. The county has been by. No ice so we have electricity produced by a polluting coal plant, no doubt. I like my way of life, I'd prefer it continue.

The past year has been wet, earlier in this decade it was dry. My husband's family has owned this homestead for 70 years and the water table has NEVER been as high as it is now!

I read *Sod and Stubble*. When it comes to weather events it could have been written about the past 40 years or 140 years. Things change and they don't.

So Copenhagen: are you sure you have it right? Have weather conditions changed or did they always fluctuate? Did a Kansas farmer's tractor or cow or a coal plant cause it? How do we feed a hungry world if we get rid of the cows and turn Kansas grain land into truck farms producing vegetables two months out of the year?

Darwin asked us to believe in the theory of evolution and I do. It has always been the survival of the fittest. The planet has changed: fire, water, ice. Those who adapt survive.

I submit we would be much better off figuring out how to adapt to our environment than trying to change it. Those who adapt survive. Not that I'm lumping the two together but think of Kansas farmers and cockroaches! Both groups survive by asserting their will rather than asserting their will on others!



To....David Will for removing snow from our windshields this past Sunday, after church. (Called in)

To the city street crews and state highway crews for getting the streets and roads cleared during the storm. Also for allowing the emergency vehicles to get to their destinations safely. It certainly was not easy with the wind blowing drifts behind them. A big thank-you to all. (E-mailed)

To those high school students who came in to work the Blood Drive on Wednesday, a day school was called off for snow. (E-mailed)

To those community members who came and donated on a very cold winter day and to Don and Dorothy Stuvick who came in and volunteered the entire day! (E-mailed)

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THE NORTON TELEGRAM

ISSN 1063-701X

215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, KS 67654

Published each Tuesday and Friday by Haynes Publishing Co., 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, Kan. 67654. Periodicals mail postage paid at Norton, Kan. 67654.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Norton Telegram, 215 S. Kansas, Norton, Kan. 67654
Official newspaper of Norton and Norton County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, and the Nebraska Press Association

Nor'West Newspapers
Dick and Mary Beth Boyd
Publishers, 1970-2002



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