

Senator endorses the "Voter ID" law

It's disappointing to see Sen. Sam Brownback, the Republican candidate for governor, jump in and endorse calls for a "voter ID" law in Kansas.

The senator, in a press release Monday with the party's candidate for secretary of state, Kris Kobach, pledged they would work together to pass such a law.

And while this newspaper generally leans Republican, we see this as foolish. There is no evidence Kansas has a vote fraud problem. Under long-time Republican Secretary of State Ron Thornburg, Kansas has had clean elections for years. That has not changed.

Kobach, a law professor and anti-immigration activist, is way out in right field on this issue. He tries to scare voters with the specter of illegal immigrants somehow tainting Kansas elections.

But this is a solution looking for a problem. With no evidence of voter fraud or of illegals trying to vote, we think Kobach is just trying to scare us. That's wrong, and it's wrong for Sen. Brownback to get involved.

We know the senator, as leader of the Republican ticket and an apparent shoo-in candidate, needs to do what he can for the entire ticket. But Kobach is a one-issue candidate - illegal immigration - running for an office that has nothing to do with immigration.

Kansas has plenty of problems, starting with a budget that has ballooned under the influence of government "mandates" and pressure from schools and public employees. We can't pay for the demands of schools, prisons, roads and other programs. Taxes are high and rising; the property tax is out of control.

All these are things we will look to Gov. Brownback to find solutions for. The state needs leadership that will bring big government under control and provide a fertile climate for small business and job growth.

We need lower spending, a lid on taxes and leaders who will interpret the role of government as something less than all-encompassing. We have not had that for the last seven years.

Instead, we've seen the budget grow, taxes increased at the city, county, school district and state level. We've seen nothing to indicate that the governor's office even cared about those issues.

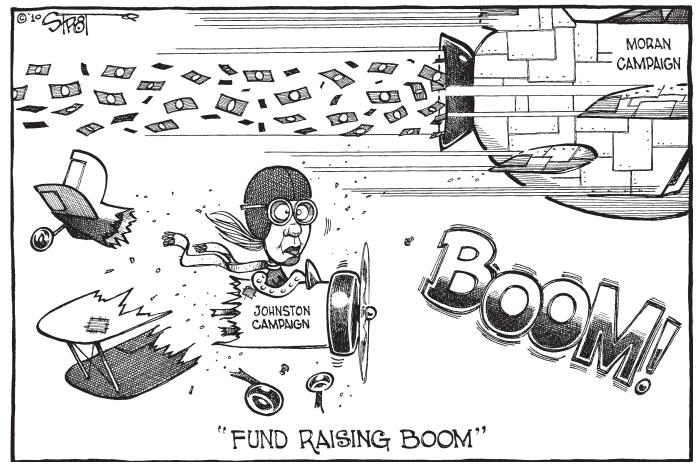
Here, however, we have two Republicans pushing a big-government bill to tighten the noose of security-apparatus control around all Kansans' necks. That's not something that those who love freedom should applaud.

It's not something Mr. Brownback should give credence to. And it's not something Kansas needs.

۲ Give it a rest, gentlemen.



Steve Haynes



Don't let ignorance nor arrogance sway your vote

Some people just don't bring out the best in us and that is best exemplified by politics and politicians. During these 2010 midterm elections we have been entertained and maddened by both ignorance and arrogance.

Consider the following:

In the Kentucky Senatorial debate, Jack Conway (D) attacked Rand Paul (R) regarding a college prank of 30 years ago. If you can't dig up any dirt other than some thirty year ago...give it up. Question his alleged medical "board certification," which is relevant.

Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas' wife is demanding an apology from Anita Hill for her testimony nineteen years ago claiming inappropriate sexual behavior from the then nominee to the high court. Why bring it up now?

used by both parties and both genders, but this past week Sarah Palin implored GOPers to accept the Tea Party agenda, many similarities to Sarah Palin and the

Phase I Mary Kay Woodyard

insinuating all GOPers are male. Sharon Angle, Nevada Senator Harry Reid's rival, used the phrase as well, regarding Social Security funding. The most visible Tea Party candidates are female, which judging from the caliber of those candidates we should all tremble in our heels.

The debate between Christine O'Donnell (R) aka Tea Party and Chris Coons (D) for Joe Biden's vacated Senate seat provided a plug for Saturday Phrases, such as "man-up" have been Night Live if nothing else. I'm sure any re-creation of the show would not require a rewrite of O'Donnell's script. She has

Saturday Night Live skit is only one of many.

Elizabeth Dole is running to retain her Senate seat in North Carolina. Her opponent, Kay Hagan, has been leading and one wonders if negative ads by Dole are the reason. Dole has accused her opponent as being "godless". And she knows this, how?

And just when you thought there could be no more surprises from Christine O'Donnell, she touts her knowledge of the Constitution as opposed to Coon's Yale education. After all her education at Oxford, oh, no, that was a rented room from Oxford University. Now that is a scary thought.

I've always wondered if there was a reason elections were held close to Halloween, and now I am sure of it. This year candidates will be given two days to take off their masks and reveal their true identity. Want to take any bets?

Watch your children around farm machinery

Insight

John Schlageck



Thumbs up to Marvin Matchett for being such a good sport and to all of those Husker and Wildcat fans who donated to such a good cause. Called in.

Thumbs up to all of those that donated blood Tuesday. Emailed in.

Letters to the Editor: e--mail jsherard@nwkansas.com, or to write 215 S. Kansas Ave. 67654

Thumbs Up: e-mail jsherard@nwkansas.com e-mail nortontelegram @nwkansas.com

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The dream of many young farm boys and girls is to ride with their fathers on a tractor. For a youngster, the mammoth tractor epitomizes raw power, responsibility and coming of age.

Nothing is more exciting to youngsters

than the belch of diesel smoke, the roarShe believes there is no way farmers and of engines and rubber wheels rolling onranchers can be too careful about everypowerful tractors, combines or silageday safety in their vocations.

cutters. They draw children like a moth Higgins has seen and heard it all during to a flame and, like fire, can be dangerous.her three decades in agricultural safety. Such equipment can cut, crush or trapShe poses the following questions: children. It holds potential harm for the "I have to wonder why would a mother

ones we want to protect the most - ourwalk away from a very young child durchildren. ing a parade with four huge draft horses

Never invite your children to ride in the pulling a wagon within five feet and candy tractor with you. Stress that your young-in the street?

sters stay away from machinery. Never "Why would a father put his young son let them play or hide under or aroundin a stall with four miniature mares and machinery like tractors. foals at a sale, latch the door and walk

Farms offer children a unique environ-away to chat with friends? The mares ment to live, play, work and grow up. Ashad been kicking and biting each other a child, I can remember tossing a lassoas horses do, jockeying for position. It around the grain auger and climbing intowould have been very easy for the child the grain bin of our combine. At the ageto get caught in the middle.

of five, this giant silver machine symbol- Higgins went on to say she witnessed ized the far away Rocky Mountains and Iboth incidents during the last month.

was scaling their peaks like my legendary "I have no doubt both parents dearly hero, Jim Bridger. love their children," Higgins, a mother

Safety experts label agriculture one of two, emphasizes. "I don't believe they of the most hazardous occupations, and made a conscious decision to consider the farm children are routinely exposed to the risk and potential danger involved. I think same hazards as their parents who workthey, like a lot of people, just don't think the farm. Each year, hundreds of childrenabout safety at all.

are killed and thousands more are injured So how do we deal with such quesin farm-related incidents, according totions? How do we ensure such behavior National Safety Council statistics. is eliminated in the future?

Veteran Kansas Farm Bureau safety di- Education and awareness are the key rector Holly Higgins has logged 33 yearsing redients to help make the farm a as a crusader for farm and ranch safety.safer place for children to play, Higgins passion.

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★ U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, 303 Hart Senate Office

Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521

★ U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran, 2443 Rayburn HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715; fax (202) 225-5124

★ State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol Building, Room 262-E, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7399

★ State Rep. John Faber, 181 W. Capitol Building, Topeka, Kan. 66612.

suggests. Brushing up on some of the potential hazards can also make it safer for parents.

Animals - even friendly ones - can be unpredictable. Have your children stay away from large ones. Emphasize they stay away from animals with newborn or young. Tell them to remain calm, speak quietly and move slowly when around animals.

While barns, grain handling facilities and big buildings can be fun to play in, falls can occur or children may be exposed to harmful substances like chemicals and electricity.

Wide-open spaces also provide children with ideal playgrounds. This isolation may also lead to difficulty finding help in the event of an emergency.

Explain the dangers associated with stored grain. Stress the principles that grain can entrap a person almost immediately. Children should never play around or in grain that is stored in bins, trucks or wagons. Emphasize that it is difficult or can be impossible to pull even a child out of grain if he/she becomes trapped.

Remember, it is important that youngsters have a safe place to play. Ask them to identify safe play areas. Talk about areas away from farm machinery, animals, manure pits, silos, etc. Carefully define safe boundaries. Let them know where they can and cannot play.

John Schlageck is a leading commentator on agriculture and rural Kansas. Born and raised on a diversified farm in northwestern Kansas, his writing reflects a lifetime of experience, knowledge and

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