

People need say in selection of judges

The decision to open up interviews conducted with candidates for Court of Appeals and Supreme Court vacancies in Kansas is a step in the right direction, a good move, a fine idea.

It doesn't, however, change the fact that in Kansas, appellate judges are chosen in a process that is by nature elitist, inbred and undemocratic.

Appeals judges, and district judges in most large counties, are chosen by committees dominated by and chosen by, mostly, lawyers. While they supposedly represent the voters in this process, the members of these panels are anything but representative.

Kansas used to elect its judges. We still elect district judges in most counties, outside the metro areas, and the process works pretty well out here. Judges seldom if ever come under attack for their decisions, though they surely must weigh public attitudes when deciding cases.

The electoral system, with judges running by party and seats open for contest every four years, allows for change when a judge is not responsive to the public. Usually, this means poor public service or erratic decisions. A decision to oust a judge is rare, but voters have done it.

Appeals judges are another matter. Once appointed by the governor, they answer to no man, short of committing some impeachable offense. As we've seen with presidents, impeachment is something reserved for truly bad officials, not for those with whom we disagree.

While district judges may have to keep an eye on the voters, appeals judges simply do not. While they are supposed to stand for "retention" every four or six years, the fact is, no Kansas judge or justice has been voted out of office since the state adopted the so-called "Missouri" plan of choosing its judges.

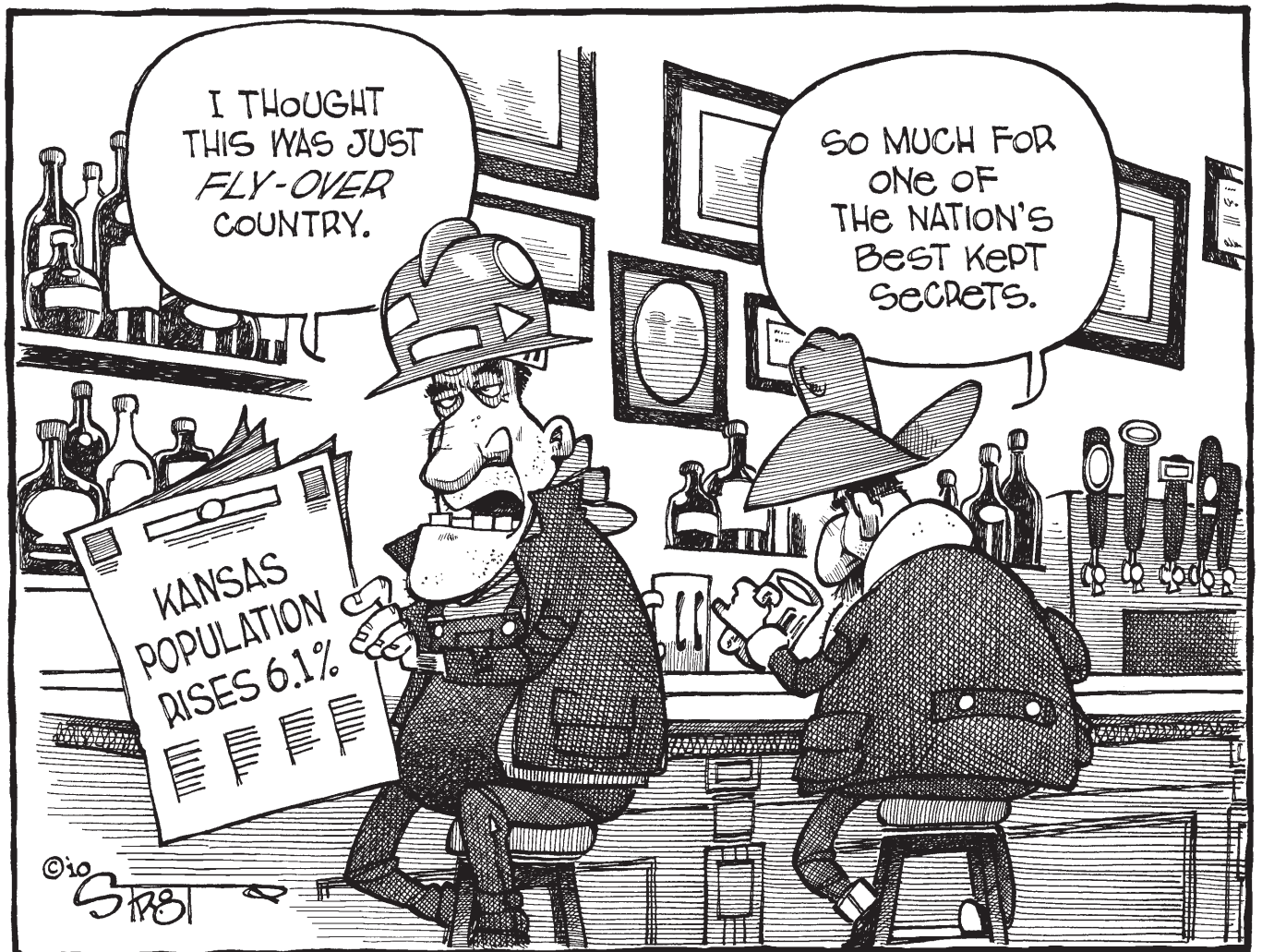
This has led to some poor law, where judges have substituted their infinite wisdom for that of the Legislature and governor, making budget decisions and more or less taking over the state's education finance system.

Well, voters could throw the rascals out, you say?

We ask why they have to put up with rascals when they could be choosing their own judges, as once was the case.

In fact, it's hard to see the reason we switched. But a return to some sort of sanity in judicial selection would be a good thing. If we're not going to trust the voters to select judges, at the least, the state Senate ought to have veto power over the governor's choices, as it does with most appointments.

Open interviews are a start. But, why not let the voters decide? — Steve Haynes



'I love you' will be what's remembered

This was a day we had been anticipating. Not looking forward to, yet we knew it was coming. Jim's dad died, peacefully, in his sleep early Monday morning, with one son and daughter-in-law by his side. We arrived about ten minutes later and were able to say our good-byes.

Jim had gone to see his father earlier in the day, and I'm so glad he did.

One thing neither one ever failed to do as they parted company was to say, "I love you." Jim said his dad was so weak the last time he saw him that all he could do was mouth the words but, I know Jim heard him.

Jim says that a father's legacy is in his children and that his dad had two sons who followed in his footsteps. One son became a carpenter and one son is a farmer. Two professions their father had excelled at.

After Jim's dad lost his leg in a farm

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



Well, his wish will come true because, according to his wishes, he will be buried on the farm.

He, personally, picked the spot and his son, Gene, has prepared the area, fencing it off and making a road to it. We have promised to carve his tombstone out of Kansas limestone and it will be a labor of love.

Jim, Sr., was not a perfect man but, he was a good man. He did the best he could. He was a godly man, wearing out several Bibles in his lifetime with intent study and daily reading. We have the comfort of knowing he had been immersed into Christ and his salvation is secure. And, in the end, that is all any of us can hope for.

Dad lived a good life; he fought the good fight. He has finished the race; this life is over. He died knowing he was loved.

accident two and one half years ago, he had to live in a long-term care facility. At age 91, he had been totally independent.

Living alone, taking care of livestock and doing his own cooking, albeit a little questionable. We used to joke that Dad had a cast-iron stomach.

After the accident, which cost him his left leg, Dad had to have skilled nursing care. His life had turned on a dime but, he held out hope that he could, some day, return to his beloved farm.

Youngster got good care at hospital

To the Editor:

The weekend of December 17, our kids and grandkids all joined us in Norton to celebrate Christmas with family. It was exciting to see the new construction and positive happenings. We had a great time. On Saturday evening our daughter-in-law, Kristin, who is a registered nurse in Topeka became concerned about their four year old daughter who wasn't feeling well. She wanted to verify what she was seeing.

She decided to call the hospital emergency room. She asked if she could stop by and visit with emergency room personnel regarding what she was seeing and what action should be taken.

Being an experienced nurse and working towards nurse practitioner certification, Kristin has high expectations of medical personnel and facilities. Knowing Rich Miller and some of the hospital

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

staff, I was curious as to what Kristin's observations and comments would be after her visit.

She was very, very impressed with the level of professionalism, friendliness and knowledge of the staff. She felt they had gone the extra mile to help her. Additionally she was amazed at the excellent facilities available in a small town in western Kansas. She returned for a follow-up visit Sunday morning and continued to be impressed.

I have known Rich Miller since — well quite a while. I served on the physician

recruitment committee.

Mary and I have known many of the staff and have always held the Norton County Hospital in high regard. But sometimes in a small town people can become critical and not realize how fortunate they are to have excellent care and administration. We have always been appreciative of the Norton County Hospital and staff. Thanks to all of you for all you do. Oh yes, the granddaughter is feeling better.

Bruce and Mary Poage, Topeka
cc: Richard Miller

Let's give dogs in shelter a second chance

To the Editor:

Hi! To whom it may concern, my name is Chance and I would like to tell you how I got my name.

When I was a puppy someone gave me to you. You didn't want me any more so you put me on the streets. I went and visited these nice people and they showed me love and caring.

I went back to you after a week but then I got sick because you didn't get me shots I needed even though you can get them for \$5 at Kowpoke. So I went back to the people who showed me love. I was abused and starving and very scared. These people cried for me unlike you who didn't want me. They tried to find me a home but I was so sick.

They called Sherry Hickman, the animal control lady. We thought I was going to die. Sherry made me healthy again and a nice young man "Cody" came and adopted me and gave me my new name Chance.

I would like everyone to know I am not the only animal that has been abandoned. I got a second chance. Some people need

to quit getting pets that they just end up putting out on the streets to fend for themselves.

I am like a baby. I need to be fed, loved and I can't take care of myself.

Too many animals with no place to go. They need to be nurtured so they have a chance to grow.

Some don't make it because of people like you. They are placed in a grave but their pain is finally through. No animal should have to be treated this way.

Please save the animals. Stop the abuse today.

Written by Lisa Foster
Norton

Thumb's up

Thumbs up to Connie Johnson and Michael Woodyard for all the hard work they do at God's Pantry. Emailed in.

Thumbs up to all homeowners who decorated their homes for Christmas; it gave the town a warm glow. Emailed in.

Thumbs up to the Rojas family for their many years of Friday nights. Emailed in.

Thumbs up to all the people who gave to those less fortunate through Pamida's

Angel Tree. Emailed in.

Thumbs up to the first time donors at the American Red Cross blood drive. 147 people signed in to donate. Called in.

Thumbs up to the Norton Senior Center for the thoughtful care sacks given at the Norton Manor. Called in

Thumbs up for the Christmas trees, with lights, on the east side of State Street above the old K&S Center and on the balcony above Whitney Law Office at 112 S. Kansas. Brought in.

Bread is still the 'staff of life'

You've got to forgive me, but during this holiday season, seems like my thoughts turn to food and all of the wonderful homemade dishes of this season. I do enjoy the great fellowship with family and friends, but alas, what would this be without something good to eat.

I love it all — turkey with dressing, ham and cranberries, mashed potatoes, green beans, wonderful cheeses and probably my favorite, freshly baked breads hot out of the oven. I can smell it now, if only I could eat some. I especially enjoy the heel.

You'll never convince me bread isn't the staff of life, healthy for you and so good. Still some physicians, diet-conscious individuals and health fanatics have stopped eating bread. They contend it is fattening and unhealthy.

Quite the opposite is true if you visit with some nutritionists, bakers, physicians and those associated with culinary delights — you know the cooks, the people who spend those hours in the kitchen cooking, baking or grilling this wonderful food.

Bread is good for us. Bread is low in calories, high in fiber and starches, an excellent source of protein and this food contains vitamins and minerals our bodies need.

Two slices of bread contain only 140 to 150 calories. In today's health conscious society, many individuals foresee bread

Insight John Schlageck, Kansas Farm Bureau

only as a source of carbohydrates, but bread is much, much more.

Most nutritionists and health professionals believe our current dietary practices need this modification or shift to bread and other cereal grain products. Complex carbohydrates appear to be a valuable supplement in the management of disease. They also have a value of improving physical endurance, mental alertness and in controlling obesity.

All bread varieties belong in the diet. Americans may want to consider a shift to more bland-based foods for health reasons.

For decades, the United States has shown a tremendous decline in per capita use of flour. At one time, Americans consumed approximately 200 pounds per person. That figure has dropped to 100 pounds.

If the American public would realize that bread and other cereal grains are healthy they might increase the use of these products in their diets. Such a change could help increase the sales of wheat-based foods that in turn would help Kansas and American farmers.

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

Kansas Press Association



Office hours:
8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.
Phone: (785) 877-3361
Fax: (785) 877-3732
E-mail:
nortontelegram@nwkansas.com

STAFF

Dana Paxton.....general manager
advertising director/
email: dpaxton@nwkansas.com
Dick Boyd.....Blue Jay sports
Harriett Gill.....society editor
email: hgill@nwkansas.com
Sherry Hickman....bookkeeping/circulation
Vicki Henderson.....computer production