

## Kansans have a proud history

This Saturday marks an important milestone for our great state: the 150th Anniversary of Kansas' entrance into the Union.

The state's motto is *Ad Astra per Aspera*, "to the stars through difficulty". It has symbolized different things for different generations. But one thing has remained constant: it has always meant standing up for what is right, even when it is not popular.

As Kansans, we have a proud history. In the days before Kansas became a state, settlers bravely fought physical and political battles to ensure the state would enter into the Union on the right side of history. For those settlers, the desire to make Kansas a free state was not about self-preservation or self-improvement; rather, it was about making life better for the next generation and giving a voice to those without one in the political and economic system of the country.

Following in the footsteps of the Sunflower State's pioneers, I will approach the next two years in Washington with commitments to defend the unpopular and to speak for the unspoken.

A \$14.0 trillion debt, record budget deficits, and economic policies that inhibit, not promote, growth threaten the financial solvency of the country today and tomorrow. It is easy for lawmakers today to just charge the country credit card and continually seek an increase of our credit limit, but the consequences will be dire: future generations will be burdened and shouldered with the bad decisions of yesterday if we fail to correct them today. At the risk of our country's bankruptcy, spending must be reduced, deficits must be eliminated, and the budget must be balanced.

I am honored to be serving on the Committee for Veterans. To the more than 200,000 Kansas men and women who have served our country, your voices deserve to be among the loudest, yet sometimes your basic needs are not even met. Congress and citizens must honor your service by making sure that you are cared for beyond battlefields and war zones.

They say that a society will be judged by how it treats the weakest of its members. Congress must pledge to defend the unborn, and this begins with eliminating any federal funding for abortion both at home and abroad. The past few weeks have revealed some staggering statistics, including that Kansas has the 13th highest abortion rates in the country and that the abortion rate in our state has increased. But beyond government's role, we must do more as a society to encourage and assist pregnant women and their families. Whether through our direct help or through adoption, let us work together so that they know that we value them and their unborn children.

Today's fight to defend the unborn is in many respects similar to the battles our forefathers waged against slavery during Bleeding Kansas. Bolstered by the treacherous Dred Scott decision of the U.S. Supreme Court, proponents of slavery argued that slaves were not human beings. Abolitionists, on the other hand, demanded and fought for the basic human rights of all people, including slaves. Similarly, those who speak up for the unborn, do so to ensure that individual liberty and dignity are respected and revered for all.

So this Kansas Day let us celebrate not just the history of the state, but also what it means to be a Kansan. Embrace the proud history of this state and join me in following in our forefathers' steps by making a pledge to amplify unheard voices, to stand up against and remedy injustices, and to defend the life and liberty of every American.

—Congressman Tim Huelskamp

### Letter to the Editor

On behalf of The Salvation Army and those whom we serve, we would like to take this opportunity to say "Thank You" to all your readers who helped make this another successful Christmas Season.

As always, we are grateful to everyone who donated their time to bell ring throughout the holiday season, as well as the businesses that supported our Red Kettle Campaign. These volunteers and all who helped by filling the red kettles and mailing in contributions have made a huge impact on our efforts.

Because of the generosity throughout the community, our neighbors in need are receiving help not just at Christmas time, but throughout the year. Thank you for playing such an important role in the work of The Salvation Army where you live! We are grateful for the generosity of those who give their time and treasures so freely to help people throughout the community.

If you are interested in donating or volunteering during the coming year, please call 1.800.336.4547 extension 368 for more information. You can also find out more information about The Salvation Army's service in this and other communities at <http://www.kansas.salvationarmy.us>www.kansas.salvationarmy.us. May God Bless you!

Sincerely,  
Brian Carroll

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## We need to celebrate Kansas' birthday

Tomorrow, January 29 is a special day for Kansas. Kansas will be 150 years old. We can't say Kansas is celebrating its 150th birthday because due to economic hard times we decided not to celebrate.

Big mistake, methinks!

Daughter Elizabeth was making plans for celebrating the day already a year ago. That's because she was teaching in Smith County, home of the authors of the Kansas State Song, "Home on the Range." The cabin where Brewster Higley penned the words still stands north of Athol, Ks. How fun would it be to do a unit about the song and Kansas history, take the kids out to the cabin and so forth?

That was last year. This year she is in Oklahoma. She is gratified to see there are several events planned in the school and community even though she will not be there to enjoy them.

Oklahoma just turned 100. I don't know how they celebrated, but they probably did more than Kansas is doing. Ah youngsters, you just can't party at 150 like you used to!

I remember the Kansas Centennial. One of the best things about that was even at nine I could spell and pronounce it. (For the record 150 years is Sesquicentennial, don't ask me to pronounce it.)

Another thing I liked was a lot of the men grew beards or mustaches. It was fun to see the somber fathers and community leaders thus adorned. Facial hair was uncommon in 1961.

A third cool thing, though admittedly off point, is 1961 upside down reads 1961

## Health care reform isn't just a matter of money

I suppose there are still some who believe those who have cancer, heart disease or other ailments are being punished by God. When I was diagnosed with rheumatoid disease at the age of 30, a "Christian" friend, rather woman, asked me what I had done for God to punish me in this way. When I watched the State of the Union address Tuesday night, I was saddened by the sight of an unmoving Speaker of the House, John Boehner, when President Obama spoke of healthcare reform. The President said we would make it impossible for insurance companies to refuse to cover someone with a pre-existing condition... the ultimate punishment.

It seemed almost overnight my life changed. When Matthew was four months old I was hospitalized with chest pain, abnormal EKG and other vague symptoms. No specific disease was identified at the time, but over the course

### This Too Shall Pass

Nancy Hagman



Many ladies made long dresses to wear to Centennial events. We just came across some old pictures of Darlene Day and Lenora Delp in such costumes at a celebration in Lenora.

I recall how jealous I was of the two girls in my class whose mothers made them long dresses. The rest of us had the great misfortune of living in households too much of a luxury. Hum---wonder what mom would think if she were raising kids today and had to get us all cell phones and I-pods? (I could be gracious and say I'm over the dress thing but it would be a lie!)

It seemed to me there were Centennial Celebrations all over in 1961. Every group and community did something. This is why I feel the Kansas Leadership is a little shortsighted in not exploiting this milestone.

It is an incentive for people to spend money. If people are buying Kansas souvenirs in Kansas stores, Kansas collects more sales tax. If they travel to an event they collect more fuel tax. The more events there are the more attention the state gets, got to be good for economic development.

The only reason I know Oklahoma just

celebrated their 100th birthday is I read it on a road sign. I don't remember where that sign was or exactly what it said but something about it stuck with me. And I have been interested in Oklahoma since. I'm just kind of wanting to go down and check out the oil boom towns and the mansions built by the oil barons. Oklahoma also celebrates their rich Indian heritage; though that is probably not much consolation to the Indians.

Surely, in Kansas, we can think of something to do to commemorate 150 years! If the legislature isn't going to do it I guess it is up to us! As long as it doesn't involve spelling sesquicentennial how difficult can it be? Merchants get some sunflowers in the store. Restaurants feature some good old farm dinner meals! What is the theme of the county fair this year? Chamber, Economic Development where are you? Commissioners and City Councils sign some resolutions!

Let's show the world we are more than flat, dull and tornadoes! We can do this people!!

As to tornadoes, several states have more than we do; Oklahoma being number one on some lists! However, for better or worse "The Wizard of Oz" linked that image to Kansas forever. Our daughter in Pennsylvania is promising to clock the next person, who upon finding out where she is originally from, says "You're not in Kansas anymore!"

I say "Just smile, Baby, and tell them: THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME."

### Phase II

Mary Kay Woodyard



of a year I gradually became worse. Jack had just received his Ph.D. and we were armed with dreams of adventure and fun family life. But as the saying goes, "life is what happens when we are busy making other plans."

Although my husband's dream had not been a career in the government, we were and are extremely grateful for his employment while a graduate student. That job transitioned into a lifelong career, in no small part, because of my need for health insurance. The stress of a chronic illness is enough to battle without

adding the lack of health insurance to it. At one point we considered expanding Jack's part time business into a full time career, but without health coverage or coverage with exorbitant premiums our own business was out of reach.

For many, health care reform is only a matter of money. If it was only as simple as that, but not having insurance is not a cheap option for the country either. Without insurance there are lost work days and hospital/doctor write offs for which the rest of us bear the responsibility. Perhaps for those opposed to coverage for all, it is simply a lack of knowledge or experience. I am sure if I didn't have a chronic ailment I wouldn't have the passion I do for everyone to have health care. Hopefully with the debates to come, empathy will prevail and the insurance struggles of those with serious illness will be acknowledged and punishment will be a thing of the past.



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