

Is the legislation on pseudoephedrine fair

Law enforcement groups are pressing the Kansas Legislature to require a prescription for purchase of the common drug pseudoephedrine, used by allergy sufferers to stop a runny nose, but also a key ingredient in making the illegal drug methamphetamine.

This is not a good idea. It amounts to punishing the state's pharmacists and allergy patients in the name of a problem that's largely solved.

Kansas already restricts sale of pseudoephedrine, often known by the brand name Sudafed. Stores are required to keep it behind the counter and buyers must sign a log.

Someone with the sniffles can buy 3.6 grams, more than 100 pills, at one time, or up to 9 grams a month. That's enough for most patients, but getting even that is cumbersome and unwieldy.

Though many law-enforcement officials say the problem of meth labs in Kansas has been largely solved, some groups still are pushing for tighter laws. Drug dealers will send out teams of people to buy Sudafed, a practice known as "smurfing."

Pharmacists and clerks often spot these efforts and many will call police. It's already illegal, but still, the dealers are bound to try.

The fact is, the number of meth labs in the state today — once a rampant problem — has dropped to almost nothing. In Salina, for instance, police say the city once had more than 100 illegal meth operations and now has only a handful.

Why, then, do we need to further inconvenience allergy patients and druggists?

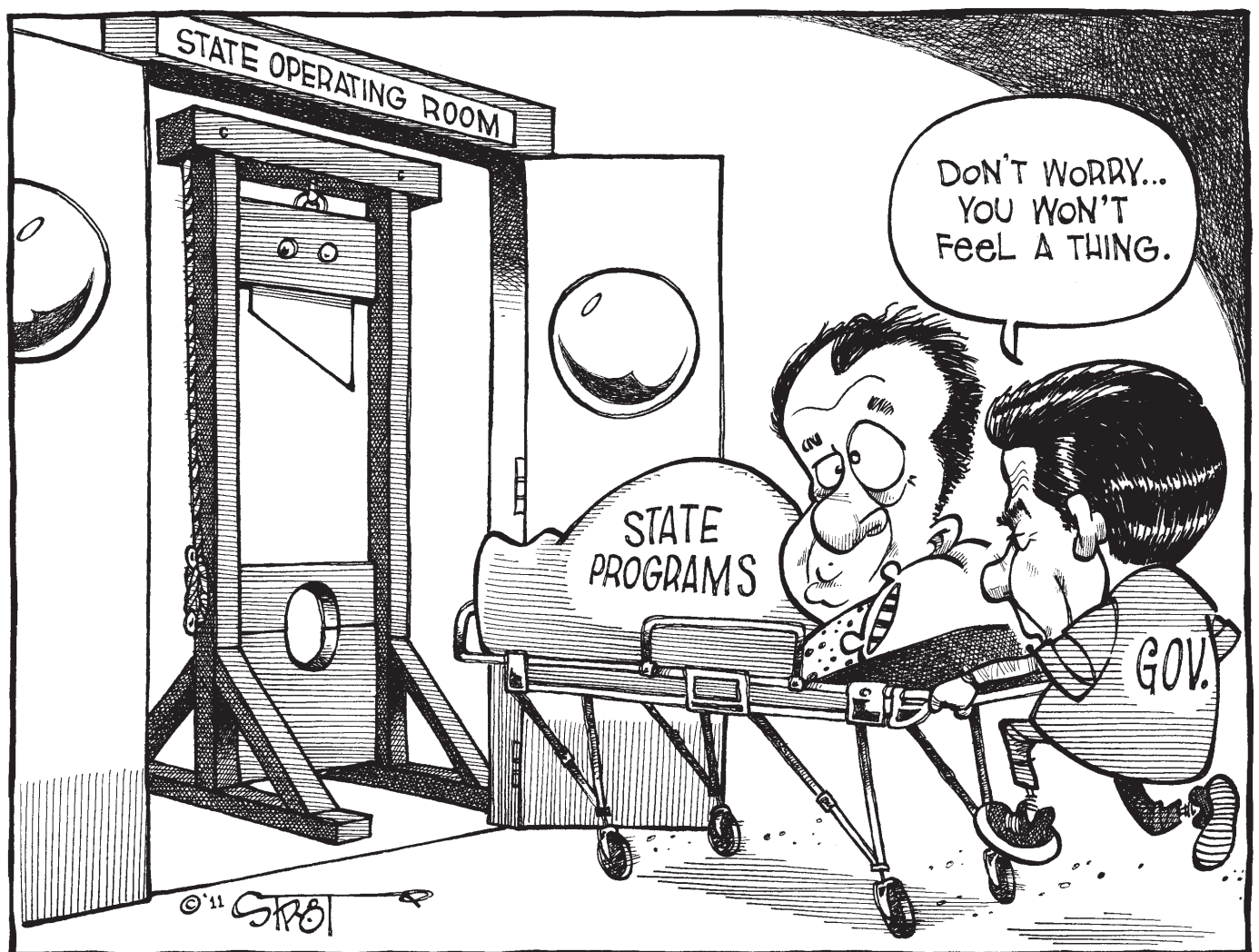
The price of this "progress," by the way, has been a takeover of the meth trade by Mexican cartels, resulting in violence across that once-peaceful country and upwards of 30,000 deaths. Meth-making, once a cottage industry, has become a big money-maker for organized crime.

Putting these important allergy drugs on the prescription list will drive up the cost to legitimate users and drug stores alike, reducing availability and legal use, while having almost no benefit to society.

This bill is a turkey, and the Legislature needs to say "no."

Not everything that might sound like a good idea turns out to be one, and this bill is a good example.

— Steve Haynes



Which should come first, us or them

I find it amazing that someone hasn't accused certain members of Congress of being un-American. One would think those individuals would want to invest in America. The way I see it though, they have had a greater interest in foreign countries than in the U.S. of A.

Think back to the Iraq War. According to the Washington Post, this was the first time in our history we went to war and cut taxes at the same time, leaving us with a war funded entirely by debt. In 2003 our federal debt was \$6.4 trillion dollars only to jump to \$10 trillion in 2008 (before the financial crisis). Economists estimate about 25% of this is directly related to the war, but it does not include

Phase II
Mary Kay
Woodyard



the money that will be needed to provide medical services and disability payments to veterans.

Much talk is spouted about the Democrats fiscal actions, primarily the impact health care reform will have on the federal debt. A concern rests with those who claim our debt dilemma is the result

of Obamacare. Estimates of the cost of health care reform range from the billions to a trillion dollars, but it definitely is an investment in America's future.

The repeal of the health care reform bill failed but it certainly has a way to go before it passes its constitutionality test. Is it perfect in its present form, probably not, but it is a beginning. It is important however to determine where our allegiance rests. Is it more important to control and attempt a takeover in countries/cultures we have yet to understand? Or is it more important to build a strong country from within, both physically and fiscally.



Editor:

When my Dad passed away and I was going through things, I found a couple of shoe boxes that had letters I had written to Mom and Dad. The letters were from the sixties and early seventies. After the early seventies, they stopped. By then, we were sending cassette tapes back and forth. Of course, we erased the tapes to be used again. In going through the letters, I got to thinking: when was the last time I actually sat down and wrote or typed a letter on paper to a friend or family member?

Now, in our fast-paced, hi tech society, we are more likely to call them on our cell phone or e-mail them or use text messaging. Do we realize that we are deleting away our history, or sending it out into the air, never to be seen or heard of again?

It wasn't too long ago that calling someone long distance on the phone was expensive. It was much more economical to just write a letter and send it off for a few cents. Of course, computers, e-mail and cell phones weren't around then.

Quotes from personal letters and journals that people kept, were used by Ken Burns when he produced his series on the Civil War. These quotes gave the series more depth than it would have had otherwise. One entire letter was read at one point in the program. It was written by a soldier to his wife the day before he was to go into a battle. It was a beautiful letter. Fortunately, it was kept down through the years and shared with us.

How many of us keep letters we have received from family and friends? If someone in the future were to produce a series on us during the war in Iraq, where would they get the personal slant to give it more meaning?

A written letter from someone may not seem to have much importance now, but in the future, who knows?

June Prout

Let us know what's on your mind!

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The National Anthem, sing it like it should be

I think we need to call a halt to the apparent contest raging in our country over how to sing our National Anthem.

There's really only one way, the way the composer put it down on paper. For unknown reasons, the past few years, we have heard singers try to hit notes that few, if any, can reach in an attempt to answer the roar of many in the stands. Boo to them, too!

We were speechless at the outset of Super Bowl 45 in Dallas on Sunday to have a "super" singer get her tongue tied up and her screaming vocals going nowhere as words were repeated before a shocked crowd of 100,000 and 100 million watching on television.

I don't know how they pick the singer but this one sure bombed. Our nation's beloved "Star Spangled Banner" should never be subjected to the torture it received Sunday.

As the television cameras scanned the crowd, it looked, unfortunately, like there were more people not holding their hands over their hearts, but instead holding their breath to see if this singer could outdo all the others in reaching beyond the reachable. She couldn't.

Her body language and screamability reminded me of sounds coming from places where birth is about to take place.

Our National Anthem is more of a hymn, performed to audiences who show their respect by standing at attention with their right hand over their heart. This was absent Sunday, as it is absent on most occasions anymore. Maybe we need to start from scratch, in kindergarten, to teach our little ones what the National Anthem is all about and have them carry it forward.

Thank goodness Super Bowl 45 provided greatness on the football field, because the halftime show wasn't any-

Stop
Look
Listen
Tom Dreiling



thing to write home about either. And the owner of that massive indoor arena, Jerry Jones, didn't make many friends among the thousands who had tickets to enter only to learn there were no seats for them. Well, there were seats, but in a place in the structure deemed dangerous.

Everything is bigger in Texas, so Texans say, so it goes without saying the biggest Super Bowl blunders ever occurred in, where else, Texas!

Responses: Mike Barkley, of San Diego, formerly of Goodland, writes: "I hope you print all of these (columns) out and put them in a notebook for your grandkids to find and read someday."

WillaJean Schulte of Hays writes: "That is quite interesting (column on Misawa, Japan). If your children are not already aware of how much you got around, they will some day be grateful to know. I speak from experience, regretting not asking my Dad more questions ... I did get Mom to write her memories and she did in longhand ... My brother Jim put it on the computer, for which we are most grateful."

Mary and Jack Harvey of Norton write, in part: "Thank you for that wonderful story! (Misawa again). We laughed until we had tears rolling down our cheeks. You are a superb storyteller. What a 'jewel' of a life experience." (Mrs. Harvey then related some experiences she had during a trip to Peru in the early 1980s.) She added in closing, "We are

looking forward to you sharing more adventures. I'm glad I inspired you on one of those stories."

More in the next column!

My late wife Jeannie made the best-tasting mashed potatoes of anyone. They were special, they were outstanding, deee-licious, they were the talk of the town, so to say. I used to tease her when we were with our social circle that her mashed potatoes were better than making love.

I don't know what she put in them, but the taste was hard to describe. I couldn't get enough of them.

Anyway, every time I brought this topic up, and it was often, she would just smile, and she had the prettiest smile. She never said anything. One evening when we arrived home from a dinner and dance, we were both tired, so we readied for bed. She was first to be done, so as she came out of the bathroom, I went in.

When I came out, I noticed the bedroom was dark. She said she switched off both lights on the bedside tables after opening the window on my side of the room because it was so warm and muggy (this was in July). So I hopped in bed, stretched around a minute or two and then took off my watch to lay it on the table. As I did, my hand touched something I never before felt.

I mumbled, "What in the world is this?"

I switched on the light, and there it was: a bowl of mashed potatoes! Jeannie rolled over, looked at me, chuckled, and said simply, "Enjoy yourself, dear!"

She then rolled back over to her side of the bed and drifted off.

There were no more mentions of her mashed potatoes.

I'm at milehitom@hotmail.com



Thumbs up to all the organizers, participants and contestants at Mr. NCHS, very entertaining, and a lot of work was put into the event!! Emailed in.

Thumbs up to Joan Hale, Steve Vance and Chance McKinney for judging the Mr. NCHS contest and adding their brand of humor to the event. Your time on Super Bowl Sunday is appreciated. Emailed in.

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