

## Positive legislation for rural Kansas

I am writing this article with one official day left before the Legislature is to adjourn. It has been a very long week, with hours spent in meetings and debating on the floor of the House. No one seems to be able to tell when we will officially be done. I will have a summary article following the end of the session.

News from your legislator  
**Ward Cassidy**



Some good news for Northwest Kansas – after fighting all year for Home Owned Carnivals, I carried the bill on the House floor, and the bill passed 114 to 7. It had previously passed the Senate and is on its way to the Governor's office for final approval. All of the negatives were taken out of the original bill. The only stipulation that will be required, for our Home Owned Carnivals, will be to send proof of insurance to the Department of Labor. Recognizing that our Home Owned Carnivals are a different entity than the traveling carnivals, and not a Worlds of Fun, should make us free of negative legislation for years to come.

I am sure everyone is aware also of the good news that most all of our small town post offices will still operate. Senator Moran has worked hard in Washington, D.C. to help with this issue.

I would like to thank Lynn Doeden, the hospital administrator in Oberlin, for organizing a meeting of many area hospital administrators and other health agencies with the head of the Board of Healing Arts. Kathleen Lippert agreed to come to Oberlin and address our concerns with certifying needed health care workers for NW Kansas.

In a move that was both shocking and historical, the House rushed a Senate Tax Bill to the Governor. I will not attempt to tell you of all the behind the scenes political maneuvering or the parliamentary rule procedures used to get it through. I will tell you that I could not vote for a tax plan that was not debated and that shows a tremendous negative balance in just a few short years. I just pray that we do grow jobs and the economy. I would love to cut taxes, but I would like to have a chance for debate to fight for our district.

There is not much time left, and I have not updated news about the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System (KPERS). There is still a conference committee meeting today, and I am hoping we can at least start some good legislation to help with this critical issue.



## Remembering the good ole days

Prom season is over for another year. But for that one night, the gangly girls and awkward boys morph into beautiful young men and women. Dressed up so that one almost has to be re-introduced to kids we've known all their lives. The hair; the make-up; the tuxedos. It's almost unbelievable. But then Sunday morning comes, and it's back to reality. It's back to their jobs at the local hamburger joint or doing chores on the farm.

I e-mailed a former acquaintance who is returning for his 50th high school reunion and asked him to share some of his memories. He was happy to comply and our correspondence sparked a memory I had of him. He had a date to prom with one of the cutest girls in school and she wore (gasp) a short prom dress. It was green, I think. He looked snazzy in a white sports jacket and black trousers. He was also grinning from ear to ear. Why do I remember stuff like that?

-ob-

### Out Back Carolyn Plotts



Back "in the day" we wore our prom dresses to the Alumni Banquet. It wasn't a matter of if we went or not...attendance was mandatory. Perhaps not by the school administration, but by our parents. Nowadays, it's hard to get the most recent graduates to attend the banquet, let alone get dressed up for the occasion.

Personally, I think you have to be out of school at least 25 years before reconnecting with old friends becomes important. I have probably attended more alumni banquets than anyone else in my class and I can tell you it took that long for me to really appreciate it.

At our five-year reunion all we had

to talk about was, "Are you still in college?" or, "Are you married yet? Any kids?" We had not lived long enough to have anything to really talk about.

By our ten-year reunion we were into careers and kids. By 15 and 20 years it was all about making an impression. At 25 years we began to get real again and actually talked. And from 30 years on, it's been tons of fun. The pressure is off. We are what we are, and we're okay with that. Our kids are on their own and now we get to brag about our grandchildren.

-ob-

Jim always asks me what I want for Mother's Day. I tell him, "I'm not your mother. You don't have to get me anything." But he never listens and this year I got something I've really wanted...a small, electric weed eater. One I can handle.

So I had a fine Mother's Day. If you're a mom, I hope you did too.



Thumbs up and thank you to the people for making the races great again! It was awesome to see the fast racing in our community. Emailed In.

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## ELECTED OFFICIALS:

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- ★ **U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts**, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. roberts.senate.gov/public/ (202) 224-4774
- ★ **U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran**, Russell Senate Office Building Room C-4, Washington, D.C. 20002. moran.senate.gov/public/ (202) 224-6521
- ★ **State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer**, State Capitol Building, Room 300 SW 10th St., Room 262-EA., Topeka, Kan. 66612. ralph.ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us (785) 296-7399
- ★ **Congressman Tim Huelkamp**, 126 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. huelkamp.house.gov (202) 225-2715 or Fax (202) 225-5124
- ★ **State Rep. Rick Billinger**, Docking Building, Room 754, Topeka, Kan. 66612 rick.billinger@house.ks.gov (785) 296-7659
- ★ **State Rep. Ward Cassidy**, State Capitol Building, 300 SW 10th St., Topeka, Kan. 66612 ward.cassidy@house.ks.gov (785) 296-7696

## A tour of the 2012 Kansas wheat crops

Looking at Kansas wheat across the state during the first few days of May, members of the Wheat Quality Council (WQC) labeled the crop in "pretty good shape." While the wheat in the western third to half of the state needs a drink, the 100 participants of the 55th annual tour agreed the crop is two to three weeks ahead of schedule and combines will begin rolling into the fields in May, which is unheard of.

After three days on the road, 63 participants of the WQC tour estimated the 2012 wheat crop to yield 403.8 million bushels. This figures out to be roughly 45 bushels per acre on the 9.5 million acres planted in Kansas.

The tour began on April 30 in Manhattan and traveled to Colby on the first day. Twenty-two vehicles following six different routes made the convoy. The second day, the tour ended up in Wichita. The final day it moved from Wichita to Kansas City.

Each vehicle made from 12-20 stops and this year's tour tallied 608 visits in different fields, according to Mark Nelson, Kansas Farm Bureau commodities director.

"We used formulas provided by Kansas Ag Statistics to make our estimates," Nelson says. "While this nearly 404 million bushel estimate seems like a huge crop, we only have to go back to '97-'98 when Kansas farmers harvested 500 million bushel crops. On the other hand, last year we harvested a much smaller crop with 276 million bushels because of the extreme drought."

Lincoln County farmer Steve Boor

### Insight John Schlageck



participated in the wheat tour for the first time this year. The veteran wheat producer says participating in the wheat tour was one of most fun things he's done.

"I had a blast," Boor says. "To rub shoulders with wheat breeders, importers, exporters, millers, bakers, agronomists and just about anyone else who has a hand in wheat was another worthwhile learning experience."

And while there were 100 participants on the tour, the veteran wheat producer was surprised only nine wheat farmers made the trip. He also noted that often estimates of the crop yield were higher than his.

"I'd look at other people's numbers and shake my head and tell them, 'it ain't going to make that,'" Boor says. "They laughed and told me I was figuring low on purpose to keep the price of wheat high."

Not so, according to the veteran Lincoln County wheat grower and he told those on the tour so.

"After 40 years of walking in and out of these fields, I can look at wheat and tell you if it's a 10, 20, 30, 40 or 50 bushel crop," Boor explains. "You feel it in your gut. I've been broken hearted by enough of these fields hoping to harvest 50 bushel wheat and it turned out to be 25 or 30 bushel wheat. It has

a way of making you humble."

Boor observed many of the participants gravitated to the best looking wheat. He'd hang back and find a spot that was more representative of the average field. He added that he couldn't blame them for being attracted to the best looking wheat.

While he admitted the wheat crop did look good in some regions of Kansas, he didn't see any heads on this trip like he's seen in past years. "That's another reason I wasn't convinced the figures we came up with were something you could take all the way to the bank," Boor says.

When the Lincoln County farmer said, "I can guarantee you our wheat crop isn't going to make what our estimates on the tour showed," Boor says. "The hot temperatures and wind really took the starch out of the wheat crop."

Like all farmers, Boor knows the wheat crop was as good as it could get the first week in May. At this stage of maturity, with ideal weather conditions the crop can maintain and if temperatures turn hot and the wind continues to blow, the crop can deteriorate quickly.

While he wouldn't be surprised if there is some 50 and 60 bushel wheat harvested in Kansas this year, Boor says he'd be thrilled with a crop that averages 40 bushels per acre.

"I'd guess we'll harvest about 390 million bushels in Kansas," the Lincoln County farmer says. "I'm a realist. Whatever it ends up when we haul the crop to the bin – that's what it'll be."

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