

Change in Republican Party will be seen in upcoming elections

Change has taken root in the Kansas Republican party, and you can hear the wailing across the state.

Whether the change will make the party stronger or weaker or better, we can't say, but things will be different.

One of the sounds you hear is the lifeboats being lowered as some of the staunchest of the party's former moderate leaders jump ship, led by the three Republican members of the so-called "Gang of Six" formed to support the campaign of Democrat Paul Davis for governor.

The three — state Insurance Commissioner Sandy Prager, former U.S. Sen. Sheila Frahm of Colby and former Secretary of Social and Rehabilitation Services Rochelle Chronister — are all former state legislators who've grown uncomfortable with the party under Gov. Sam Brownback.

The difference could not be more clear, for as governor, Mr. Brownback has curbed state spending, cut the budget and attacked the income tax. Many Kansans would say he is on the right track.

The more liberal wing of the party, however, had a hand in building up state government and genuinely feels they were doing the right thing. After decades in control, however, this wing of the party is out of power. Backing a Democrat whom they agree with may seem to be their only choice.

There should be no mistake here: At this point, there is a difference between the two parties. Those who believe a bigger state, spending more, believe they are right, and so do those who want to see a smaller government footprint.

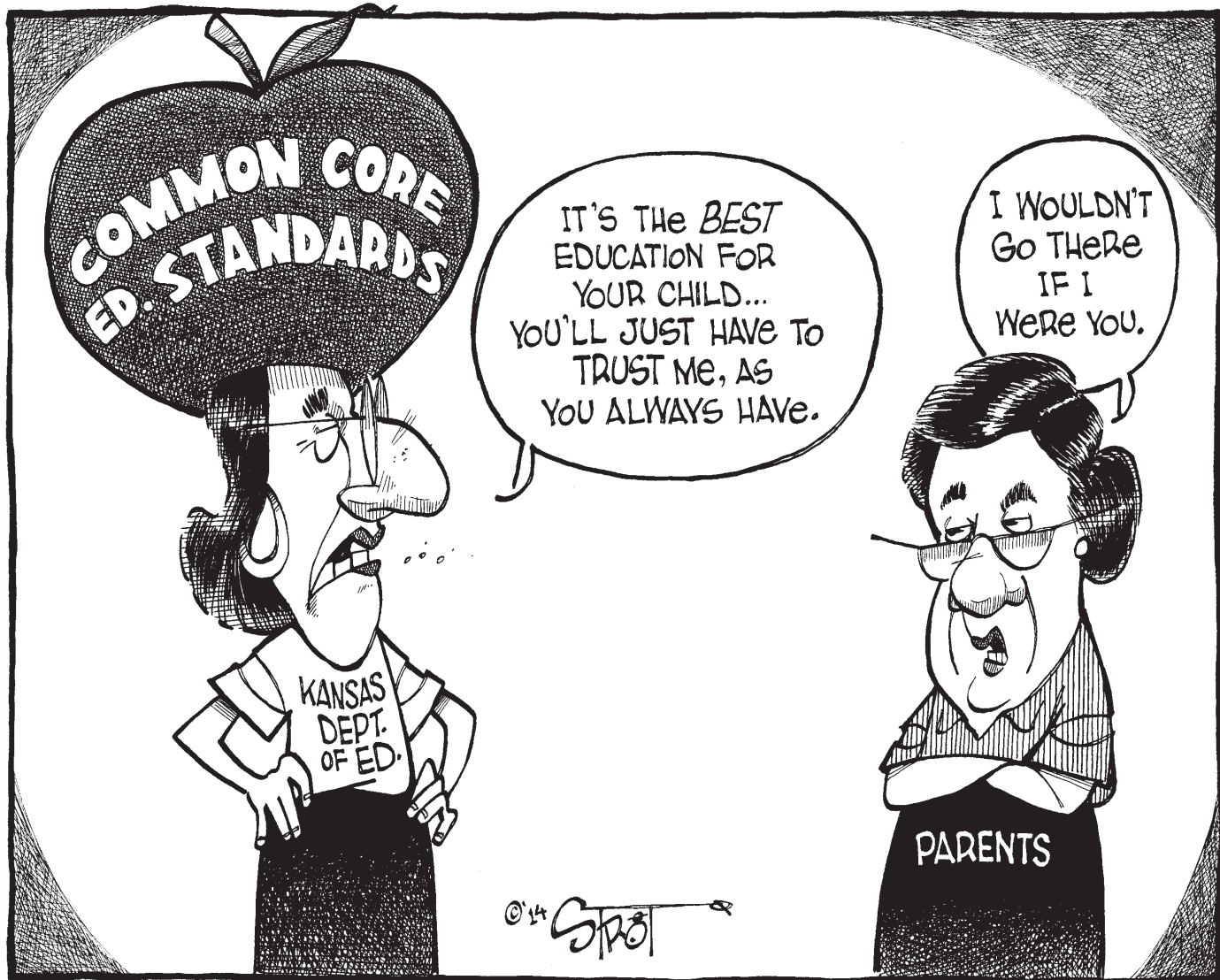
Voters have seldom had as clear a choice in this state. We're not prepared to make a prediction, but despite all the criticism heaped on him the last couple of years, Sam Brownback has not lost a statewide race dating back to 1996, when he defeated Mrs. Frahm for the U.S. Senate. He trounced former Gov. John Carlin in a 1994 House race.

A great deal hinges on who does win this fall, so there will be a lot of money spent, both Kansas money and money from national groups, liberal and conservative, who see Kansas as a battleground for issues — such as school spending — that may be decided here.

The more interesting questions, however, revolve around whether those scuttling over the side will become permanent Democrats or return to the GOP once the election is over. A lot may depend on which side prevails, but many former Republicans may well stay in the other party.

It's been said for many years that to get elected in this state, you had to be a Republican — unless your name was Docking. We suspect many who once thought that have become less than comfortable in today's GOP. Change may become permanent and the two parties may be more competitive.

This is going to be one interesting election. — Steve Haynes



Being in a comfort zone impedes change

After her husband died, my aunt would never change anything. She wouldn't buy a new car, kept her house and her wardrobe pretty much the same. She always said, if it was good enough for her husband, it was good enough for her. Sometimes we hear this thinking reiterated in society as well. As we get older, we tend to frame everything in our current world through the lens of our former one. Change becomes more difficult.

There are lots of sayings about change. Some say the only difference between a rut and the grave is six feet.

Bill Gates once said, "We always overestimate the change that will occur in the next two years and underestimate the change that will occur in the next ten. Don't let yourself be lulled into inaction."

No matter our age, it seems to be more comfortable to surround ourselves with the familiar, be it our thoughts or our living room furniture.

Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



At most any age, we prefer our comfort zone. Unfortunately, this doesn't promote change and often blocks progress. We sacrifice tomorrow's needs and society's well being for today's comfort.

My mother used to say, "The old days made for good reading, but poor living." Considering she lived from 1904 to 2004, she knew old living, good reading and current situations. She has always been a source of inspiration to me. She addressed the issues of her time, women's rights or gay rights, it didn't matter. My mother stood by equality for all.

I am as guilty as the next person for complaining about all the new gadgets and how times have changed. I find the times I fall into the "back in my day" thinking is when I am with people my age or older. Perhaps one reason my mother was able to keep such a positive spirit and not fall into that "in my day" tract was her joy in surrounding herself with people of all ages. Perhaps her career as a teacher helped her realize each generation would have its own issues and the role of the older generation was to work to understand and incorporate those issues successfully into society.

Life is change, whether you are talking bond issues to keep our community alive or lifestyle choices.

"People who work together will win, whether it be against complex football defenses, or the problems of modern society." Vince Lombardi
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When he says "Don't tell your mother"

This column is for the children. Of course, all of us are someone's child, so it is for everyone.

Kids: when your Father says "Don't tell your Mother!" Run (do not walk) and tell your Mother!

I also have a warning for Fathers: Just because you got away with something for 14 years does not mean you will get away with it forever.

The hubby is "restoring" an old tractor. I didn't give it much thought. He had to unearth it from the back of the machine shed. He told me the challenges of moving everything around.

He made some trips to various places to get parts and deliver engine components for repair. I happily rode along.

He spent hours on the internet figuring out how to best proceed with the intricacies of certain aspects of the engine overhaul. Did you know that if you put a new sleeve in dry ice first, it will drop into the block with no resistance? I went along to pick up the dry ice.

I knew he bought the tractor from Glenn. He told me it was originally purchased from the now defunct tractor dealer in town. So fun to know the history!

"What do you need it for," I asked. "Oh, it would make a great mower tractor."

Okay, but what do you NEED it for? Oh well, I'm happy when he is happy in the shop. I've thought for a while that the ideal retirement village model

This Too Shall Pass Nancy Hagman



for a farming community would be not to build it around a golf course but around a shop!

We were having a pretty good February, our days revolving around the tractor. Then the eldest daughter called. As the conversation wound down, she inquired, "What has Dad been up to?"

"He's fixing up some old Massey tractor."

"Oh," says she; "The one he bought and said, 'DON'T TELL YOUR MOTHER!'"

Come to find out the middle daughter was also in on the conspiracy.

The hubby claims the statute of limitations is up. It seems this transaction happened in 2000. I think he misunderstands the statute of limitations as it applies to things you really do not need but spend \$700 on without consulting the wife.

Of course, some people are having a hard time understanding how he hid a tractor for 14 years.

Fair enough. Maybe I don't pay much attention. As I said: as long as he is happy out there in the shop, I'm

happy.

Early in our marriage I hosted a Tupperware Party. It was a snowy night and the saleswoman's husband ended up driving her over. We banished him to the shop with Junior. They bonded over a race car.

Later we found the couple's marriage was in trouble. Junior said he wasn't surprised. The husband was so envious of the shop. How he longed to have a place like it he could go to!

At the time, I may have been nagging him about spending more time together. But Junior convinced me a great shop would insure a long and happy marriage.

He made it sound kind of romantic for a couple to ignore each other! Over the years it has become our deal. He doesn't ask much about what goes on in the house. I stay out of the shop!

Truth? I do not care where the tractor came from or what he paid for it.

But "Don't tell your Mother"? Really?

You know she is going to find out.

The longer it takes the worse it will be.

Tell her, NOW!

Meanwhile what would the 2014 equivalent of \$700 in 2000 be? A new sewing machine at least, I'm sure!

He can work that statute of limitations angle for all it's worth. I have an angle of my own. It's called "Don't get mad, get even!"

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