



Kansans need fresh indoor air

To the Editor:

Multiple polls have been conducted across the state and in each one, at least 70 percent of the state of Kansas supports a state-wide smoking ban. As it stands now, individual local entities have passed their own bans which has resulted in a patchwork quilt of various laws. The Senate has recognized the will of the people and has advanced a statewide clean indoor air bill. The House is now poised to make sure that doesn't happen.

Smoking is a public health issue, plain and simple. We don't allow seat-belt laws to vary from county to county. There isn't a different speed limit on the interstate based on local determination. Drunken driving blood alcohol levels aren't determined locally. Smoke-free indoor air should be no different.

Every Kansan deserves the protected right to a clean indoor air environment. Imagine if asbestos was allowed in dwellings because

—Letters to the Editor—

someone didn't feel it was the right of the government to make them take it out.

If the will of the people is for a statewide clean air bill, then the House should not be even considering not passing this. Yet, there remains doubt that it is going to get done.

I know it takes time to make your voice be heard. But it is amazingly easy to do:

Go to your phone or computer right now. Place a call or email to the following people in Topeka. You will not talk to them. It will be the office staff who takes the call. Identify yourself and tell the staff member that you would like the representative to support the Kansas Clean Indoor Air Act: HB 2221. The email is also just that simple.

Chair of the Health and Human Services Committee: Brenda

Landwehr
brenda.landwehr@house.ks.gov 785-296-7683.

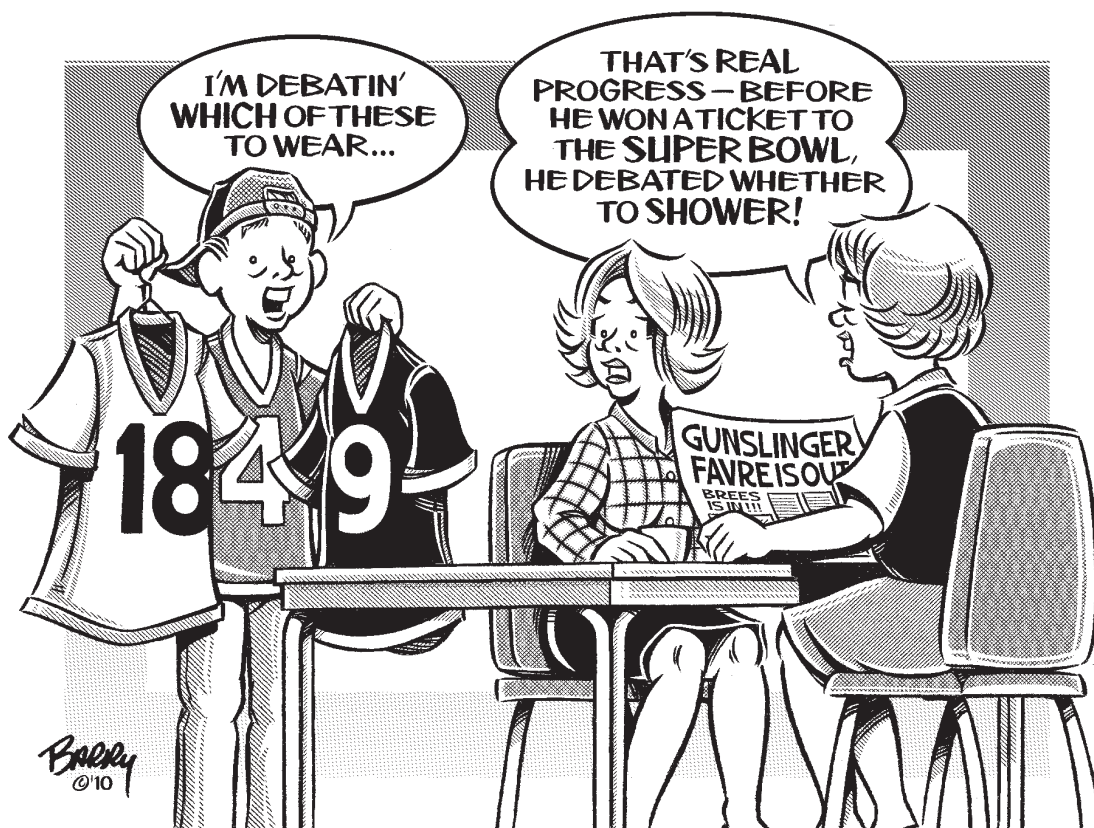
Speaker of the House: Mike O'Neal
mike.oneal@house.ks.gov 785-296-2302

District 120 Representative: John Faber
john.faber@house.ks.gov 785-296-7500

District 121 Representative: Jim Morrison
jim.morrison@house.ks.gov 785-332-7676

Do this today as the House may very well work on this bill in the next few weeks. Please encourage others that you know across the state to join you in making our wishes known. The Senate has done their job in heeding the voice of the people. Now the House needs to represent us as well. We need a breath of fresh air from Kansas into Topeka!

Mary Beth Miller M.D.
St. Francis



Time to get involved in politics

Letter to the Editor:

When should one get involved in the political process? Often times it is when some government action, or lack of action, affects one personally on either the local, state or national level. This prompts one to take some action to protect one's personal interests. When others with the same interests are also threatened, or affected, then individuals join forces to gain strength in advocating their cause.

The current state of Kansas budgetary cuts are threatening the welfare of two groups of Cheyenne County residents, both of which have very little input for their own welfare. These two groups are our youth and the dependent-aged population.

The 1966 amendment to the Kansas Constitution mandated that the "Kansas legislature shall make suitable provision for the finance of educational interests in the state". This amendment shifted the primary responsibility of funding kindergarten through 12th grade education from the local school board district to the state legislature. One of the intents of this change was to assure that every kindergarten through 12th grade student in Kansas had an equal opportunity to receive a good education.

The state legislature has assumed the responsibility of distributing the accumulated tax revenues from Kansas property, income and sales tax and other revenue sources. These revenues are distributed to school districts based on each district's financial wealth or need. By our state's standards, USD 297 (St. Francis) is considered a financially needy district. In the school year 2008 to 2009, two-thirds of our \$3.26 million in revenues, or \$2.05 million, came from the state of Kansas. Through our local property taxes we raised most of the remaining one-third of revenues, or \$1.1 million, needed to educate our youth.

— Letter to the Editor —

According to the 1930 U.S. Census, Cheyenne County's population peaked at 7,000 citizens. Our population has been declining steadily over the last 80 years to our current population of 2,742. Throughout this population decline, our community has provided excellent educational opportunities for all its youth. Even during the Great Depression our community made physical improvements to its educational facilities. Our ancestors provided a well rounded educational opportunity for its youth including the usual core subjects, as well as music, art, home economics, industrial arts, drama, vocational agriculture, journalism and sports.

Historically our community has taken pride in preparing our youth to face the ever increasing challenges of this world, regardless of where they choose to live. The current state budget short falls may threaten our community's ability to provide this well rounded education. Since we are so heavily dependent on state funding, any major state budgetary cut is amplified throughout our schools. If the state legislature chooses not to adequately provide its portion of our school funding, where will our community turn to for revenues to educate our youth?

At the local level, are we willing to increase the local property taxes to meet a portion or all of this short fall? At the state level, will we support legislation for other means of generating revenues to fund our school and all schools throughout the state?

These are questions we all must be ready to answer regardless of our age or whether we have children or grandchildren currently in our school system. Good schools and medical health care help draw and retain young families in our community.

The second group affected by

state budgetary cuts is our dependent senior citizens, particularly those receiving Medicaid. The Good Samaritan Village currently has 47 of our county residents receiving skilled nursing care. Of these 47 residents, 29 or 61 percent are cared for solely with state funds. The governor recently reduced state Medicaid funding by 10 percent. This equates to \$4,500 weekly in lower Village revenues from the state. Any cuts in revenues must be met by cuts in services and staff and offset by increases in private pay revenues. State budgetary cuts in these senior citizens' services also include programs that allow individuals to remain in their homes as long as possible.

Many of these dependent individuals have little or no voice in the outcome of their own well being. It is imperative that those that are able should take action in caring for these individuals: our youth and our dependent aged.

Please attend a forum at the St. Francis High School auditorium on Monday, Feb. 8, at 7:30 p.m. The Community Builders are sponsoring this forum on the effects of state funding cuts on Cheyenne County residents. The superintendent of schools, spokesmen for the Village and Cheyenne County Hospital and the county commissioners will be present.

Another opportunity for discussion includes the Town Hall meeting with Senator Ostmeyer and Representative Faber on Saturday, Feb. 13, from 8 to 9 a.m. at the Bird City Legion hall. A large crowd from St. Francis and Bird City at this meeting would show our county's united concerns for these issues. Whether you attend the forum, the town hall meeting, or both, please contact our two area legislators and express your views.

Tom Keller
St. Francis

How much is 1.34 trillion?

To the Editor:

How much is 1.34 trillion??

The following number comparison are taken from Yahoo news, and credited to authored, Jim Abrams, (Associated Press Writer) titled -

"A trillion dollars taxes the mind and the taxpayer"

Only a part of this article was used as a source for the numerical comparisons.

How much is 1.34 trillion dollars?

- Counting to a 1.34 trillion, one per second will take you 31,688 years.
- \$1.34 trillion dollars is \$4,500

for every citizen in the U.S., man, women and child.

• 1,000 dollar bills stacked one on top of the other would extend 67 miles high.

• 1.34 trillion miles would let you circle the earth at the equator, which is 25,000 miles around, 54 times, if you have that as a goal.

• A trillion is followed by 12 zeros -(1,000,000,000,000).

• The earth has been around for 4.5 billion years, 1.34 trillion years is equal to 300 earth lives of 4.5 billion years.

• Looking at modern history, 1.35 seconds would take us back 40,000 thousand years to the time

of the Neanderthals, using stone tools, not to mention what we would be wearing.

The United States total accumulated debt," (that 'We the People' have accumulated as debt), plus projected spending by this administration will put our total national debt over \$40 trillion dollars. I can hear the people in the asylum saying that sounds reasonable to me, lets spend some more.

* I have no idea why 1.34 trillion as a number was used in this article other than convenience, for comparison sake.

R. Kent Voorhies
McDonald

Reader shares the Post's article

To the Editor:

The Washington Post's article: "The Audacity of Nope, 1-27-2010, authored by Joel Achenbach is the source for part of the following Letter to the Editor.

It appears that the whole political spectrum has turned against the politicians that make their living in Washington. The "radical left," who helped, in no small part to elect the President, has now turned on him like a pack of African Wild Dogs. The following are quotes from The Washington Post article, "The Audacity of Nope" that are

credited to liberal bloggers:

- "It's Official: Obama Is An Idiot" (Paul Rosenberg)
- "Barack Herbert Hoover Obama?" (Brad DoLong)
- "Obama Liquidates Himself" (Paul Krugman)
- "Obama's Self-Inflicted Lobotomy Proceeds Apace" (Jonathan Zasloff)

These quotes would be funny if the truth behind them didn't represent a growing cynicism and fear of this administration's agenda and their determination to under mine the constitution and collapse the

United States and the principles on which it was founded in their grab for wealth and power.

The American dream that I inherited from my father and mother is being forcible taken from me, my children, and their children; These are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, the second amendment, along with other constitutional rights that are disappearing at an ever-increasing pace. In other words, everything that made this nation great...

R. Kent Voorhies
McDonald

Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick



scmcormick@nwkans.com

You've seen those signs along the highways. You know — the ones issued by a transportation department that specifies a group has taken responsibility for keeping that stretch of highway clean of trash?

An organization has taken a section of U.S. 85 in Brighton, Colo. This is not a church, youth or philanthropic group but the Denver chapter of the National Socialist Movement. In case you don't know, these individuals proudly identify themselves as Neo-Nazis. Freedom of speech can be like a double-edged sword. It contains both the causes and principles we champion, as well as those we oppose.

Even though these fanatics belatedly against equality, they still claim to be patriots and use the first

amendment to force their twisted agenda down others throats.

But, despite the fact that we must allow groups like this to air their message, we don't have to sit idly by and ignore them. We can educate ourselves and our children about the horrors of fascism.

It is easy to do. Get a history book or go to the Internet and

find some pictures of the German death-camps of WWII. Better yet, get a local veteran and ask him to tell about fighting the Nazis in that war. That should help all of us understand what the Neo-Nazis have to offer.

GOD SAYS
The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?
It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.
Psalm 118:6, 8

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Communion 3rd Sunday

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www.sfccfamily.com
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Worship Service 10:30 a.m.
Potluck & Communion -
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Morning Worship 10:45

First Christian Church
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St. Francis Equity

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Praise the Lord