



Toyota's fiasco raises plenty of questions

The Toyota fiasco raises plenty of questions, and doubtless there'll be no good answers.

One issue is how a driver could fail to react to a stuck accelerator. Every car I've owned has both a gearshift and a key. Using one or the other enables you to instantly control a stuck throttle, yet most stories on the recall fail to even mention these simple safety steps.

Turning off the ignition might not save you from a bump if you're facing a wall or pulling up behind another car at a light. But neither situation should produce a fatality, let alone a serious injury.

The "worst-case" often cited in "scare" stories involves a California state trooper driving a borrowed Lexus that reportedly reached speeds in excess of 110 mph as it accelerated along a mountain highway. The victims had time to call 911 and tell the dispatcher this before the car crashed and burned.

What was this guy thinking?

Shift the car into neutral. Sure the engine will be racing, but the car'll stop.

Turn the key to off.

With the engine off, power steering and power brakes are lost, but the car will stop. (Be sure NOT to remove the key, or the steering column may lock up.)

So, while this regulatory laxity is something that shouldn't happen, especially over a period of seven years while both the manufacturer and government officials ignore the problem, it's not exactly the end of the earth.

Then, there's the issue of how a safety defect

like this could be ignored for so long. Toyota built millions of vehicles with apparently faulty throttle assemblies, arrogantly ignoring consumer complaints and trying to suppress any investigation or recall.

What does that say for the company's hard-won reputation for quality?

Or corporate concern for safety?

And just where were the regulators, through two administrations, who were supposed to protect us from this kind of situation?

Then the question no one has asked yet, but someone should: Is Toyota being set up for a torpedo by the U.S. government, which just became the biggest stockholder in two American competitors?

And should we allow any bias toward one or more companies to overshadow free and open competition?

The situation does not present a pretty picture of government regulators or of the auto industry bureaucracy, any way you look at it. There seems to be a lot more concern for covering their collective behinds than for consumers, car owners and the general public.

We need Toyota — and the American car companies — to build good and dependable cars and trucks, vehicles we all want to drive, that are safe and efficient, that produce plentiful jobs.

Not more bungling like this.

That said, anybody want a good deal on a Camry?

—Steve Haynes

Facts about education funding

Mark Twain said there are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies and statistics. You may have recently heard some lobbyists, legislators or television commercials offering statistics claiming that spending on Kansas public schools has actually gone up over the past few years and school districts have \$700 million in reserves to deal with budget cuts. The statistics they cite are, at best, partial truths.

For example, in 2004, the state legislature mandated that, instead of sending school Kansas Public Employees Retirement Service (KPERs), it would first be wired to school districts and then immediately be re-wired to the Retirement Service fund.

That's about \$250 million that shows up on school district budgets. At the time, the majority in the legislature said they wanted to show that the actual expenses of education were. The fact that schools can't actually educate children with the money apparently makes no difference. Increases

—Letters to the Editor—

to Kansas Public Employees Retirement Service are counted as increases to education and, since the legislature has been borrowing from the state's retirement fund and must soon pay it back, this statistical red herring will undoubtedly continue.

Also, funding statistics include state-wide funding for new school buildings, which is called Bond and Interest. While it's true that the state is spending more money on recent bond issues in some school districts, it is funding for operating costs like salaries, utilities, fuel, food and insurance that is being cut.

It would be more honest to cite statistics that relate to the General Fund, which is the primary fund

for operating expenses. That fund decreased 6.9 percent from last year to this year.

According to the Kansas State Department of Education, even when you include funding increases from Kansas Public Employees Retirement Service, Bond and Interest, Local Option Budget and federal funds the amount of funding to Kansas schools still decreased 3.2 percent from last year to this year.

Meanwhile, schools have more students, more at-risk students, and higher student achievement requirements than ever before.

Supt. Darrel Stufflebeam
Creek Rock Schools
St. George

Obama administration — a 'Pansy agenda'

Letter to the Editor:

"Common sense" dictates that AIDS and other STDs will probably increase significantly as the Obama administration promotes "pansy-ism" as a "normal lifestyle," and promotes taking the "pansies" into the armed forces!

The allowance of HIV/AIDS infected people to immigrate to the U.S.A. will further augment the spread of AIDS and other STDs. Such policies are "idiotic"!

Terry Rueb
St. Francis

P.S. Policies are anti-Biblical!

—Honor Roll—

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GOD SAYS
Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man: so are children of the youth. Psalm 127:3, 4

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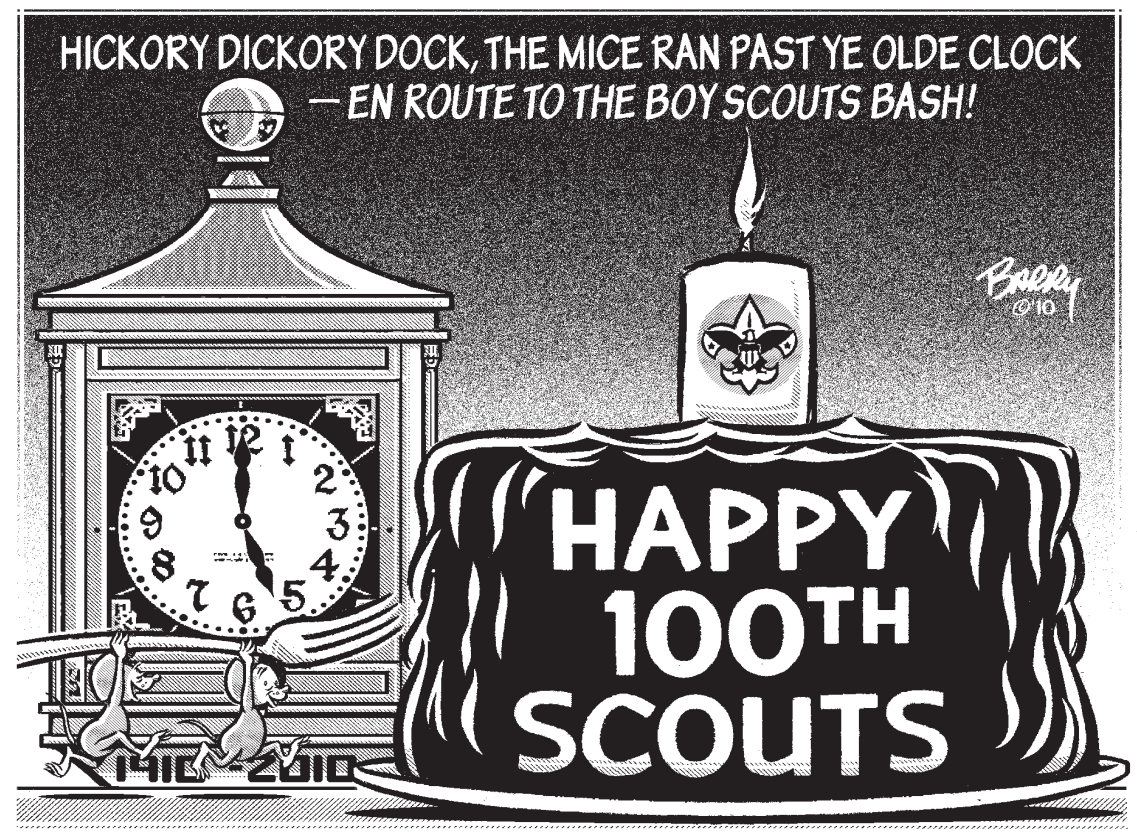
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Reader expresses his concerns

Letter to the Editor:

Part of the following, has as its source an Associated Press article, dated 2-5-10, penned by writers Romans Koksarovs and Gary Peach.

The article is entitled, "Latvian Ghost Town Auctioned Off For \$3.1 Million."

What does this have to do with anything here in the U. S., more over why should we be interested in the purchase of an abandoned city in Latvia? The Associated Press article relates that, "The town formerly known as Skrunda-1, housed about 5,000 people during the Cold War, but was abandoned over a decade ago after the Russian military withdrew from Latvia following the Soviet collapse."

— Letter to the Editor —

"A representative of a Russian investor won the bidding contest in Latvians capital, Riga, with an offer of 1.55 million (Lats), (\$3.1 million dollars)."

So what is the significance of some rich Russian buying an innocuous abandoned town in an innocuous place? The significance is, if we extrapolate from this article that the (1.44 million Lats) is the equivalent to (\$3.1 million dollars), it doesn't take much to figure out that a small insignificant country over somewhere around Russia, has a currency called the Lat, which is the equivalent of the dollar, but is worth twice as much as the dollar. How did this happen?

Let me see, how do you pronounce - (EAR-MARKS)?

How do we pronounce - (IN-FLA-TION)?

How do we pronounce - (CON-GRES-SIONAL TERM LI-M-ITS)?

How do we pronounce - (COR-RUP-TION)?

How do we pronounce - (CZARS)? 'O' yaw, that's Russian, right?

I know, these words are hard to pronounce, but if you pronounce them slowly, with determined inflection the meaning comes through loud and clear.

R. Kent Voorhies
McDonald

Casey's Comments

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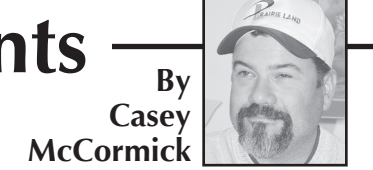
Like many of you, I've been enjoying watching the Winter Olympics in Canada. With such a variety of sports, there seems to be something for everyone.

I can only imagine the privilege it must be to represent one's country. The pride each athlete must carry to the award's podium has to

be beyond description.

But even for the participants that don't bring home the hardware, the experience has to last a lifetime.

I liked it better when only amateur athletes could compete. Watching pros play is not much different from the big business games they normally play in —



By Casey McCormick

the group with the most money generally wins. Maybe that's what makes the speed skating, skeleton and curling so much fun to watch. These folks are playing for their country, not the almighty dollar.

CheyCoDeveloping

By Chuck Kribs, co-coordinator

Last week I was visiting with Brenda Johnson at the grocery store in Bird City about a meeting at Kansas State University. As we talked, it became pretty clear that we need to pay a lot more attention to some of the things we take for granted.

Since 2007, 82 grocery stores have closed in the state of Kansas — in towns of under 2,000.

Think about that! I lived in Bird

City when we had no grocery store.

Loss of a grocery store threatens the health of local citizens, and the very existence of that community. We often talk about sales tax revenue, and so on, but gloss right over "What would we do without it?"

Speaking from experience, driving 30 or more miles to buy staples is not good, and creates a real hardship for our seniors. "Buy local" means more than

sales tax revenue.

Information is available on an excellent home loan guarantee plan, through the United States Department of Agriculture. This plan allows qualified low-mid income buyers to purchase a home with no down payment, no loan fees and no mortgage insurance. Stop in at the office and pick up the information.

It was good to see so many people at the meeting in Bird City! We CAN make a difference!

Church of Christ
332-2380, Pars. 332-3424
502 W. Spencer
Norman Morrow - Minister
Bible Class 11 a.m.
Morning Worship 10 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m.

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church
625 S. River • 332-2680
Fr. Roger Meitl
Sunday Mass 11:00 a.m.
Weekday Mass 8 a.m.
Confessions Sat. 4-4:30

First Baptist Church
2nd & Scott • 332-3921
J.W. Glidewell, Pastor
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Service 6:30 p.m.,
Wed. AWANA Club 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

United Methodist Church
Church Office 332-2292,
Church 332-2254,
512 S. Scott
Pastor Morita Truman
Early Bird Service 8:30 a.m.
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.

Salem Lutheran Church
332-3002
Pastor Chris Farmer
Sunday School 10 a.m.
Morning Worship 11 a.m.
Communion 3rd Sunday

St. Francis Community Church
332-3150
204 N. Quincy Street
www.sfccfamily.com
Pastor: David Butler
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.
Potluck & Communion -
Every 2nd Sunday
Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

Seventh-Day Adventist Church
785-890-5718 • 3rd & Adams
Pastor Jerry Nowack
Sabbath School 9:30
Morning Worship 10:45

Solid Rock Baptist Church
412 S. Denison
Welcomes You!
Pastor Allen Coon
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30
Prayer Meeting, Wed 7:30 p.m.

Peace Lutheran Church, AFLC
202 N. College
Pastor Ken Hart
332-2928 Pars. 332-2312
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.
Sunday Eve. Bible Study 7 p.m.
Communion 1st Sunday of the month

First Christian Church
Pastor Jeff Landers
332-2956 • 118 E. Webster
Bible Fellowship 9:15 a.m.
Church Service 10:15 a.m.

St. Francis Equity

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Praise the Lord