



Text messaging now banned while driving

Some days, you have to wonder what those people in Topeka are thinking about when they write our laws.

Starting on Thursday, for instance, Kansas will have a law banning people from sending or reading text messages while driving. However, police can't write any tickets until Jan. 1. Only warnings.

If texting, or cell phone use in general, was really that much of a problem, how can we afford to wait half a year?

The truth is, only about 6,000 accidents a year are attributed to "distracted" drivers from all causes, including phones and texting, in the entire country. The number of injuries is minimal. But sending texts sure seems dangerous, so we have a law against it.

That's bad? Look at the list of exemptions: The law excludes police officers and other emergency services workers. You'd think that if texting was dangerous, the last people you'd want doing it are people driving emergency vehicles. Go figure.

Ordinary citizens can send and receive texts when stopped off the roadway, when receiving emergency or traffic and weather alerts, to report crimes, or to prevent "imminent injury" or property damage.

This is a "feel-good" law. Emotionally, everyone agrees that texting while driving must be bad, though there's no actual evidence. So, pass a law against it, but hey, it's no big deal.

In the same bill, at the last moment, the state Legislature stuck a provision banning anything from covering all or part of a license plate, either a clear cover that interferes with

readability or something opaque.

All or part ... that must include those obnoxious dealer brackets that cover up the state and other information. We've always said, "there outta be a law...." But still, not exactly a public emergency.

The worst thing about that provision is, apparently, it was added at the last minute in a House-Senate conference committee. It was never given a committee hearing, never opened up for public comment, just rammed through both houses when everyone wanted to go home.

That's a poor way to make public policy. Surely some groups - the auto dealers who hand out those plate holders come to mind - would have objected at an open hearing.

Laws should be made out in full view, with plenty of time for comment and advice. Not late at night, at the end of a session, when the people who might care are not listening, maybe even not present.

But that's what passes for good government in most states, even in the U.S. Congress.

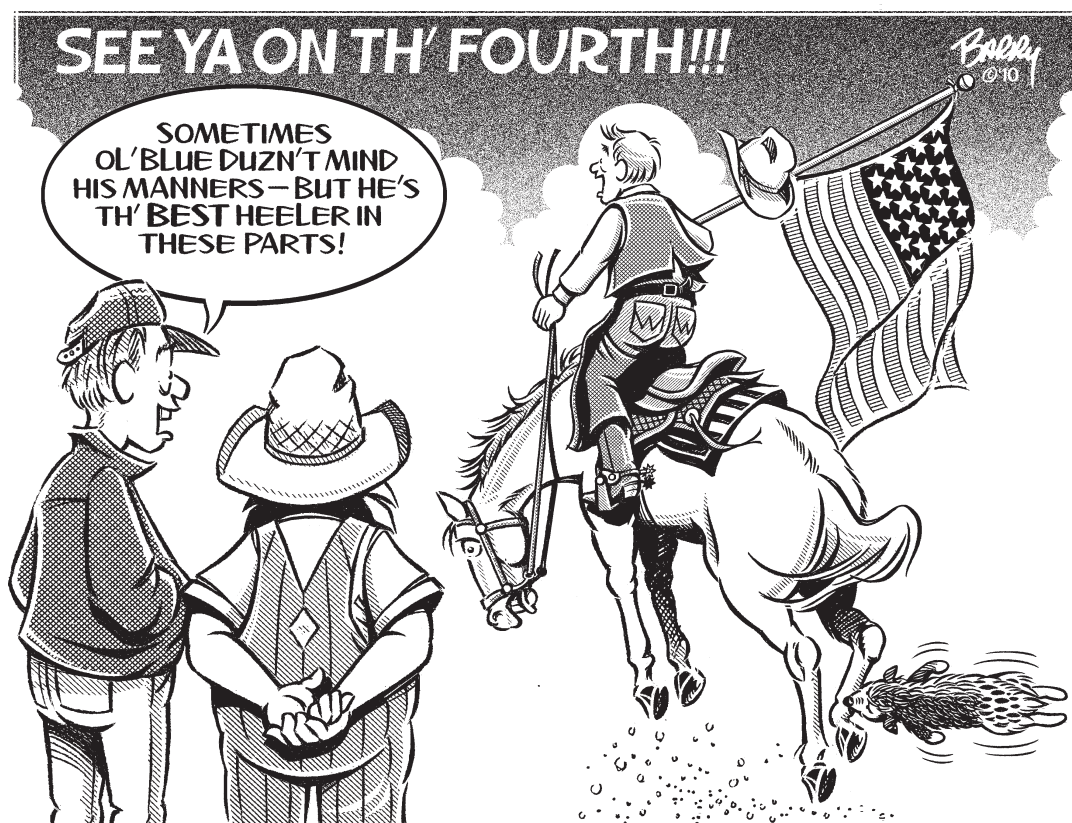
But we digress. If you think some of the traffic laws are silly and riddled with exemptions, there's the "statewide smoking ban" that allows smoking in state-owned casinos.

Hey, if it's bad, it's bad.

That law will be tied up in court for some time, by the way, since owners of a handful of bars and bingo parlors think it's unfair to exempt the state and not them. They sued, and who could blame them?

But nobody said laws have to make sense.

- Steve Haynes



News From the Past

90 years ago - 1920

Normal School closed on June 24 after a successful three weeks. Eighteen applicants for certificates wrote on the examination on June 25 and 26. All except three of those applicants have positions in schools in this county.

Uplinger's government gauge shows that 3.61 inches of rain fell in St. Francis in June.

Vola Luce, the new principal of the grade school, is moving here from Atwood this week. She has secured a housekeeping room in the Cover house near the grade building.

The St. Francis Band, under the efficient leadership of L.O. Sittler, has made rapid progress since he took charge several weeks ago. They will make their first public appearance at the celebration on July 5.

The need for the new light and water plant is very urgent and the city council is going to do everything they can to put the deal over. It was voted to at once issue the bonds that were voted for last fall.

J.C. Leach informed the Herald that he had just sold the largest hog ever received at the Bird City market. It weighed 720

pounds and brought nearly \$14 per hundred.

The C.E. Miller's are riding in a new Dodge car purchased from Schneider Bros.

The first combined harvester thresher going out from this point this season was purchased by Emil Felzien and taken out Tuesday. It is an International and a fine looking rig.

50 years ago - 1960

Dale Crist, formerly of Arapahoe, Neb., took over the duties of manager of the St. Francis Mercantile Equity Exchange Monday, succeeding Dale Kelley.

Hangin' With Marge

Things my Mother Taught Me

By Margaret Bucholtz



margeb@cityofstfrancis.net Remember those little things that mother taught you, like always wear clean underwear? If you are like me you can still hear your mother's voice as she told you all those little facts of life.

A week ago I went outside to pull a few weeds in my flowers. I love the outdoors and the cool morning air, so I use the excuse I have to go outside the first thing.

It was about 10 in the morning and all of a sudden I had this horrible pain in my chest. It went all the way through to my back and just wouldn't leave.

I got up on my feet and headed

for the house, but the pain was still there so I hollered at Kurt. He was busy and even though it was across the farm yard I was sure he was looking at me with "what-do-you-want-now" look.

The pain was just taking away my breath so I lay down on the patio and soon Kurt was by my side. For once he didn't have to beg for me to go to the hospital.

When we got to the hospital and I crawled onto the gurney in the emergency room - I was just happy to be there.

However it didn't take long until I heard my mother's voice saying, "Change you underwear ev-

ery day!" I was so happy because I had and knew that was a worry I didn't have to think about.

Then it hit me - you know the things mother hadn't said, "Keep your legs shaved" There I was laying with shorts on and stubble on my legs like you wouldn't believe. I knew I couldn't pretend the nurses couldn't see that.

Then I remembered other things like, I hadn't brushed my teeth. Oh no, I had my flip flops on and there was dirt between my toes.

My poor mother tried to raise me better and I will just have to try harder the next time.

Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick



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The mind is a funny thing.

On a recent trip to Denver my wife and I drove by my childhood home. It was a strange image that contrasted with my memory. Sights weren't as I remembered, with many objects looking quite different from what I expected.

Trees and shrubs were much larger, which reason says they should be from the 25 years since I was last there.

Perhaps this added to the perception that everything else was smaller.

From the moment we turned on the winding road that crossed the bridge over the ditch my brothers and I played in, past the first culdesac and houses where our neighbors once lived, all the way to the old home near the end of the street, the picture seemed to shrink from what my mind recalled.

The distance to and the size of the house were dwarfed with time.

Many remembrances flooded in as I described how this and that happened. Surely it didn't

make much sense to Lezlie. Like the saying goes, "You had to be there."

But then again, it was a different place that had changed so much over the years. Or is it me that has been transformed?

Memory probably isn't the best gauge for accuracy.

"Upon those who step into the same river, different waters flow." Heraclitus of Ephesus

CheyCoDeveloping

By Chuck Kribs, co-director

You can get a nut for your bolt at Lampe Hardware, a nail for your board at Cheyenne Lumber, then buy a home to work on from Cornerstone Realty.... Shop Cheyenne County First!!!

Another busy month. Diane and I have been working with a number of potential new businesses and with several existing businesses on expansion plans.

Outdoor Buddies is now a reality in Northwest Kansas, thanks to

some hard work from Kary Zweygardt and others. Look for an article on it in the paper soon!

We have contacted directly, wind energy producers and have arranged for several of them to visit with landowners and interested folks here in Cheyenne County. Power distribution remains a problem, but progress is being made there as well. Notifications will be posted as to meeting schedules. You may contact us here at Cheyenne County Development if you wish to be reminded.

Rather than asking our local business folks to attend a meeting after a long day's work, Diane and I will be contacting them individually to get their suggestions on how we can better promote St. Francis business. We have already started that process and will be continuing over the next month.

Plans are in the works to create a

tourist information Kiosk and new literature for St. Francis and The Breaks. We anticipate a "talking" kiosk and an aggressive plan to get people traveling U.S. 36 to stop here in St. Francis.

Did you know that we have the shortest federal highway in the U.S. right here between Wheeler and Sainty?

Did you know the Ho! Ho! Ho! Jolly Green Giant dude is from here?

A historical sites map for the county is being built as well.

A Bird city potential visited with us, attracted by the name "Bird City" (they are in the bird seed business). Discussions with them are continuing. Our front range program of spreading the word is working!

and the fishing ain't been bad either.....

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GOD SAYS For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord; whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. Exodus 34:14

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