



## Governor Brownback receives some criticism

Gov. Sam Brownback seems to be under fire from every which direction.

His moves to slash the state's income tax — while extending a sales-tax increase passed by a Democratic governor — cut state spending, trim the fat out of state agencies and programs and generally make government work may or may not be popular with voters.

But one thing is sure: Mr. Brownback has drawn the enmity of nearly every pressure group representing those who spend state money or draw a state paycheck, and from many who just think more state spending is a good thing.

In his first two years in Topeka, the governor found many of his initiatives frustrated by hold-over "moderate" Senate leadership that blocked his cuts and programs at seemingly every turn. The governor and his conservative backers turned to voters statewide, targeting this group. Nearly all of them were turned out of office in races that often involved established conservative members of the House with plenty of money from conservative groups.

Even so, the 2013 state budget, adopted last year, cut state spending by \$465 million, or about 3.2 percent, the first time the state spending hadn't gone up in decades. This year, with solid conservative majorities in both houses, the Legislature cut spending even beyond what the governor proposed. Colleges particularly felt the knife.

All that has left the governor with more critics than friends, or at least, it seems that way. He's drawn fire from statewide associations of teachers, school boards, families of the disabled, colleges, county officials, you name it. No group represents just ordinary voters statewide, however, and there's not much of a read on how they feel about his tax and spending cuts.

But organized groups of all sorts have been

touched by the cuts, and many don't like them. Editorial writers for the state's major newspapers uniformly panned the Brownback agenda and both the tax and spending cuts. Many refer to claims that his income tax cuts favor the rich while programs for the poor have been cut.

The *Topeka Capital-Journal* did praise the governor for stemming the growth of state spending, but most of the major papers, from *The Kansas City Star* to the *Hutchinson News* and the *Garden City Telegram*, have had far more to say about the cuts. Even the *New York Times* chimed in, advising the state's high court on the school case.

Much of what's been written has been speculation that the tax cuts are unfair, that the income-tax cuts in particular will fail to stimulate the state's economy and that there will be no money if the state Supreme Court orders the state to spend millions more on schools, restoring cuts made under former Gov. Mark Parkinson.

All the criticism may be taking its toll. An early poll by a Wichita television station showed the governor trailing would-be Democratic challenger Paul Davis, the House minority leader, 43 percent to 39 percent. However, political experts interviewed by *The Star* suggest that the governor will run a better race next fall.

A real unknown is what will happen in House races. The entire House has to run for re-election every two years, unlike the Senate, which has four-year terms. If the anti-Brownback crowds get behind candidates in House races, it might be able to cut into the conservative majority there, if not prompt a takeover by more-liberal leaders.

But it's way too early to predict any of that. Or to forecast the governor's demise. We'll just say it could be a far more interesting fall than most in 2014. — *Steve Haynes*



## National Hospice Month is here

### Letters to the Editor

Some people mistakenly think hospice care is just about dying. That hospice is the place you call when nothing more can be done. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Hospice helps patients and families focus on living. All Americans deserve quality care at the end of life - it is a fundamental part of living.

Hospice care brings comfort, dignity, and peace to help people with a life-limiting illness every moment of life to the fullest. It also reaches out to provide support for the family and friends who love and care for them.

Hospice cares for more than 1.65 million Americans, and their families, every year - a number that continues to grow. Yet, there are some important facts about hospice that people don't know. And this may be keeping people from getting the best care possible, when they need it most.

Hospice care is the model of high-quality, compassionate care that helps patients and families live as fully as possible. The focus is on caring, not curing. Hospice utilizes an interdisciplinary team of healthcare professionals and trained volunteers that address symptom control, pain management, and emotional and

spiritual support expressly tailored to the patient's needs and wishes.

Hospice is paid for by Medicare, Medicaid, most insurance plans, HMOs, and managed care plans. Fear of costs should never prevent a person from accessing hospice care.

Hospice serves anyone with a life-limiting illness, regardless of age or type of illness.

Hospice serves people of all backgrounds and traditions; the core values of hospice-allowing the patient to be with family, including spiritual and emotional support, treating pain-cut across all cultures.

Research has shown that the majority of Americans would prefer to be at home at the end of life's journey-hospice makes this possible for most people. National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization research shows that 94% of families who had a loved one cared for by hospice rated the care as very good to excellent.

Hospice serves people living in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has indicated that expanding the reach of hospice care holds enormous potential benefits for those nearing the end of life, whether they are in

nursing homes, their own homes, or in hospitals.

Hospice patients and families can receive care for six months or longer.

A person may keep his or her referring physician involved while receiving hospice care.

Hospice offers grief and bereavement services to family members and the community.

To get the most out of what hospice offers, it's better to have care for more than just a few days. Hospice is not "giving up." Hospice is about how you live!

If this information about hospice surprises you, take the time to find out more. The best time to learn about hospice is before someone in your family is facing a healthcare crisis.

For more information, contact Hospice Services at 800-315-5122 (in Phillipsburg 785-543-2900) or visit [www.hospicenwks.net](http://www.hospicenwks.net) Visit NHPCO's Caring Connections at [www.caringinfo.org](http://www.caringinfo.org) for additional information about hospice and palliative care, advance care planning, caregiving and more or call the HelpLine at 800-658-8898.

Jennifer Kibbee, Admin. Assistant, Hospice Services, Inc.

## Thank your family caregivers

Dear Editor, November is National Family Caregivers Month, giving everyone in the United States the opportunity to recognize and say "Thanks!" to the 42 million sons and daughters, friends and spouses caring for parents and loved one. Yes, you read that number correctly: 42 million people who provide unpaid care and support to someone they love.

The value of the care that is provided by family caregivers is estimated in the billions of dollars.

Yet, the caregivers themselves incur a cost for offering this care by virtue of sleepless nights, days lost from work and their own experience of separation and isolation from activities and people they formerly enjoyed.

The Kansas Culture Change Coalition adds its gratitude and appreciation to all family caregivers. As an organization dedicated to advance "person-centered care" throughout the long-term care industry, specifically in Kansas, we recognize the

importance of the presence of a family caregiver. In the life of a resident, the presence and participation of a family caregiver helps maintain dignity, respect and empowerment that is the mission of the Kansas Culture Change Coalition.

Let us all continue to work together to advocate and care for those we love.

Please join us. [www.kansas-culturechange.org](http://www.kansas-culturechange.org).

Kansas Culture Change Coalition

## Casey's Comments

### Happy Thanksgiving

By Casey McCormick

Is there any other holiday that celebrates the American experience better than Thanksgiving? Think about it.

We begin with a group of people who were under the yoke of oppression from their government. They risked all they had to venture to a new country with little or nothing. Struggling to

survive they managed to produce a bountiful harvest. Yet even after their hard work they recognized that none of this would be possible without the grace of God.

So in 1621 the Pilgrims gathered with their Wampanoag neighbors in what we think of as the first Thanksgiving celebration.

Sounds like the American Dream to me.



By Casey McCormick [mccormickcasey@rocketmail.com](mailto:mccormickcasey@rocketmail.com)

Yes the 4th of July does mark our break from that same oppressive monarchy, but Thanksgiving shows us that a Christian led society can exist and thrive.

On Thursday I will be thinking of all the blessings I have and all of the burdens I have not. Hope the same is true for you and yours.

## Honor Roll

New and renewed Herald subscriptions: Darrel Boll, Vicksburg, Miss.; Laverne Boll, St. Francis; Lyle Boll, Las Vegas, Nev.; Lisa Mann, Joplin, Mo.; Dana Rogers, Olathe; Dallas Staples, St. Francis; Royce Cook, St. Francis; Hazel Douthit, St. Francis; Betty Kramer, Bethune, Colo.; Brenda Benhower, Angola, Ind.; Chas Oldenburg, Flower Mound, Texas; Mike Petitjean, Hutchinson; Ryan Weeks, Wamego; Carol Weems, Gladstone, Mo.; Gladys Cullum, St. Francis; Olthe Jule, Goodland; Cathy Rigby, Farmington, Ark.; Peoples State Bank, McDonald; Karen Knauer, Denver, Colo.; Becky Roberson, St. Francis; Josephine Ford, St. Francis; Eric Fiala, St. Francis; Virginia Cooper, St. Francis; Roger McQuigg, St. Francis; Ted Busse, St. Francis; Ward Cassidy, St. Francis; Mark Cooper, St. Francis; Billy Slyhoff, Montrose, Colo.

## Write Santa Claus

Christmas seen through the eyes of a child is priceless. This year The Saint Francis Herald and Bird City Times would like you to send us your children's letters to Santa! We will publish the letters in the paper, and be sure that Santa receives them and that any letters he writes back get to you!

Send all letters to The Herald at Box 1050, St. Francis, 67756, or email them to [amiller@nwkansas.com](mailto:amiller@nwkansas.com). We look forward to celebrating Christmas with your family!



## GOD SAYS

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. Luke 2:4-5

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