

Imagine ... Government living within its means

A couple of proposals ready to hit the Kansas Legislature make a lot of sense.

One, by Rep. Brenda Landwehr of Wichita, would require a public vote on any proposal to increase taxes or government fees.

Tagged as the "Kansas Taxpayers Bill of Rights," it also would attempt to limit growth in government spending.

Meanwhile, Rep. Patricia Lightner of Overland Park has submitted a proposal to require a two-thirds majority in the Legislature to approve a tax increase rather than the 50 percent plus one now required.

Both women are conservative Republicans, and their measures are proposed as constitutional amendments which require a two-thirds majority in the Legislature, then a vote of the people to become law.

Presented that way, it's not too likely that either will be passed this year. Many in government are loath to give up the power to tax and spend.

But limiting state and local spending does make sense. Rep. Landwehr says she's worried that government spending continues to outpace inflation, wages and salaries. In other words, state government is growing faster than our paychecks.

Over the past 10 years, the state budget has grown 42 percent to \$10.2 billion, from \$7.2 billion in 1995. That is a huge jump during a time that included a recession, drought and high unemployment.

"Kansans have a right for government to live

within its means," Rep. Landwehr says. Imagine that.

Over the last three years, though, as the recession has squeezed state revenues, spending has continued to grow, eating up all the state's reserves. Schools, welfare and other state programs have cried for more money, though there isn't any, and there has been great pressure for a tax increase.

While taxpayers are looking for jobs and businesses are cutting back, apparently, there are many who see no need for state and local government to do likewise.

The fact is, right now, neither the state or its taxpayers can afford more spending. As the rest of us cut back, so should the state.

And that makes both of these proposals appealing. For the "Bill of Rights," we have no details yet, but requiring a vote on tax increase should put a cap on government. People usually are willing to tax themselves when they see a real need, but they don't often get the choice.

And requiring a "super majority" for tax increases in the Legislature should ensure that only the most necessary ever get through.

There will be no tax increase this year — it's an election year, after all — but next year the pressure will mount as schools, special interests and the courts put pressure on the Legislature.

That's when these measure might look real good. — Steve Haynes



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IT'S A BRAVE NEW YEAR ...

News from the Past

5 years ago - 1998

Winning the St. Francis Christmas Lighting contest were Mr. and Mrs. Roger Neitzel, Mr. and Mrs. Hurb Graves and Mr. and Mrs. Wade Hardwick.

Karen Jones, St. Francis, was elected vice president of beef education at the annual meeting of the Kansas Cattle Women held Dec. 3 in Wichita.

Shay Realty will hold an open house at their business on Main Street.

Justin McAtee was a member of the Butler County Community College Grizzlies football team that won the National Junior College Athletic Association's football championship on Dec. 4. They earned the title by winning the '98 Real Dairy Bowl at the arena at Idaho State University.

Travis Raile recently competed in the Sun Bowl in Mesa, Ariz. He is a member of the Garden City Community College Broncbuster football team which had a 9-3 season.

New handrails are on the walls at the Cheyenne County Hospital. They were purchased with funds given by Alice Monroe and hospital memorial funds.

The St. Francis Lady Indians won the Sagebrush Shootout Championship held at Brewster. Team members include Jill Dodd, Michelle Young, Amanda Jones, Ashley Feikert, Heather Sowers, Jessica Raile, Roxy Stuart, Becky Whipple, Jennifer

Henderson and Christie Holzwarth. Young and Holzwarth were named to the All-Tournament team.

25 years ago - 1958 Goodell Greenhouse & Floral will have a grand opening of their new addition Saturday and Sunday. They have recently added more than 1000 square feet of floor space to the facility.

The Cheyenne County Extension Council presented an award of appreciation to Harvey Stewart for 49 years of service to the council. He was an extension agent for 15 years and the remaining years he participated in annual meetings of the extension council. At the council meeting Cliff Raile was named chairman; Terry Weeden, vice chairman; Sharon Hendricks, secretary; Barbara Waters, treasurer.

Shari Daniels is the new Honored Queen for Job's Daughter's Bethel 52. The Senior Princess is Marilyn Magley and the Junior Princess is Debbie Aschnewitz.

Members of the newly formed Cub Scout Den 7 were recently introduced at the meeting of Pack 120. New members are Jeff Dankenbring, Wade Krien, Reese Shay, Ricky Wattenburg, Shannon Henderson, Tony Vandike and Den Chief Darrell Vandike. Den Mothers are Janice Krien and Kathy Vandike.

Honor Roll

New and renewed Herald subscriptions: Joe Hoffman, St. Francis; Royce Kehlbeck, Bird City; Henry Krug, Benkelman, Neb.; Jerry Renk, Hampton, Minn.; Merle Moberly, St. Francis; Norma J. Molle, Mission; Vernie Combellick, Littleton, Colo.; Mildred Fink, Lakewood, Colo.; Keith Schlepp, Broomfield, Colo.; Daryl Barnhart, Oakley; LaVern Schauer, Fremont, Neb.; Ed and Sharon Deeds, Goodland; Merle Seavey, Wichita; Elizabeth Isernhagen, Boulder, Colo.; John Hartman, Loxley, Ala.

SING, I hear thy heart

— Letter to the Editor —

XMAS SONGS — Clever ditty's and catchy tunes as Frosty the Snowman, Rudolph the Reindeer and of Santa — (Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light) are as devoid of Christ as notorious Elvis, — (Evil songs!).

The funeral songs of the church have more JOY than the love songs of the world. Only those born again can know the HOPE, LOVE, JOY AND PEACE, expressed in Hymns, — Him their Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

... "Sirs, what must I do to be Saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and Thou shalt be saved..." Acts 16:30 B and 16:31A-C

Frank Sowers, Benkelman

Hangin' With Marge

Trees ... Trees ... And More Trees

By Margaret Bucholtz



Due to old age, drought and disease, all of our trees in our windbreak have died. Once in a while Kurt and I would go out and cut a few down, but most of the time Kurt just didn't have time. It wasn't that I minded sawing them down, it was the same problem that I have with anything that has a motor — I can't get them started. A couple of years ago Kurt bought me a new chain saw so I could work on the tree line. It didn't help I still couldn't start it!

This year about a week before Thanksgiving, Darrin called and said "I am coming home and bringing my new chain saw so we will work on the trees."

I was so happy when I heard this and then Doug called me and told me that Darrin had called him and asked he and Lezlie to help and also all the

grandchildren. Wow, this would be a wonderful family fun time!

Darrin and Dina got here really late on Tuesday and by 9 on Wednesday morning Darrin was ready to go out and cut trees. He pulled out his new shiny chain saw; however he forgot to bring an old coat. Not a problem I had one that he could wear. I got my old clothes on and went out with him as I didn't think it would be good for him to be doing this alone. He fired up his saw and started in with the little trees in the first row, sawing them down. Then he went on to the next row, this was where the big old elms are and he started in. It was great watching him. He would saw and then you would hear the snapping of the wood as the big tree would start to tumble down. When it would land

with that loud thud Darrin would look over with this big smile on his face, one like I could imagine Paul Bunyan having as he cut down trees. I hated missing out on all this fun so I talked him into helping me get my chain saw started. He got it running and it took me about half an hour to "burn", yes burn, my dull chain through one little tree. Darrin thought it would be best if I just watched him as I was really in his way and he was afraid one of his big trees would fall on me (old people can't run too fast) so I gave up. I watched him saw down tree after tree, three rows thick and about a half of a mile long. Soon trees were lying in all different directions and Darrin was happy.

Thanksgiving Day came and wouldn't you know it, no one remembered to wear old clothes so they could work in the trees that afternoon, but they all promised that they would be out Friday and help.

Friday came and sure enough help was here. It started out as fun but about six or seven hours later no one was laughing. Poor Darrin was getting glares as people walked by him and he also got a new title — "Over Achiever"!

As for me, I wouldn't say that. I got help for a day, lots of trees still lying, but Kurt got me another chain saw and this one I can start, so I go out on nice days and have the memories of all of us working together while I cut more firewood.

Casey's Comments

Mad Cow Disease — No Laughing Matter

By Casey McCormick

How now Canadian cow? There is certainly nothing funny about bovine spongiform encephalopathy (known as Mad Cow Disease to our friends in Europe).

It certainly was not a joke to the European cattle industry a few years ago and the poor individuals who contracted the debilitating, neuralgic disease after eating tainted beef.

And it certainly was no laughing matter when a dairy cow in Washington state turned out to be a carrier of the disease.

And nobody was laughing when Japan, Korea and Mexico put a complete halt to United States beef imports, followed by Canada with a partial ban.

But where is the good news to be found in such an alarming story? Luckily the United States became the first country in the world to implement safe guards against Mad Cow Disease even before a citizen contracted the horrible sickness.

In 1989 imports of cattle and bovine products from countries with a record of Mad Cow disease were stopped. In 1990 a "surveillance" program was implemented which tests all domestic cattle for the disease.

And now it appears the Washington dairy cow made its way to the United States via Alberta, Canada.

So is it safe to eat American beef? I'll let you know after my next visit to my favorite, local steak house. No joke!

GOD SAYS
For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
John 3:16

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