

Drumbeat sounds like county consolidation

With the opening of the Legislature on us, the drumbeat is starting to consolidate Kansas counties.

One writer urges retaining the 35 counties with populations over 14,000 and combining the rest into just 13 rural counties. In the northwest, he postulates nine counties combining around Colby and maybe another six or seven around, say, Phillipsburg.

No local choice or "piecemeal" approach would be allowed; just get it done and quit whining.

That's democracy for you.

The writer claims the usual benefits: fewer county jobs, lower taxes, better services, less burden on business.

Sure.

We can't recall a consolidation that ever saved taxpayers money.

They're often sold that way, but the truth is, government is loath to give up revenue. Save money here, and someone will spend it there. Taxes never go down — unless taxpayers demand it.

There's always someone with a "need" to spend money on.

There's no thought here to what happens to people in the nearly 60 former county seats, towns like Goodland and Oberlin, St. Francis and Atwood, Norton and Hill City, Sharon Springs and Gove, where the jobs will be eliminated "by attrition only."

If you want a forecast, though, drive through Russell Springs, where the dusty old Logan County courthouse stands in mute testimony to the loss of a county seat.

There are more issues here than meet the eye. Efficiency is just one of them.

Sure, a nine-county sheriff's department would

be bigger than the two- and three-man departments most counties field. But is that better?

Dispatchers in a central office could handle the load, but would they know the roads, or where the Jones farm is? Would there even be a deputy on duty in the former Rawlins County on the day something happened? Or would he be having coffee in the office at Colby?

It might make more sense to combine city and county services, or even cities and counties, and eliminate some duplication right at home.

It's only realistic to assume that no actual money would be saved in any consolidation. Jobs would be lost, offices closed, towns destroyed, but the money likely would just flow to the new county seat.

What happens then is an acceleration of the past century's trend: More people in the bigger towns, fewer in the smaller.

That's not, or shouldn't be, the goal of state policy. Kansas ought to be defending and building its small towns, not destroying them.

To this point, there is no groundswell for consolidation, just a few know-it-alls who think they know what is good for us.

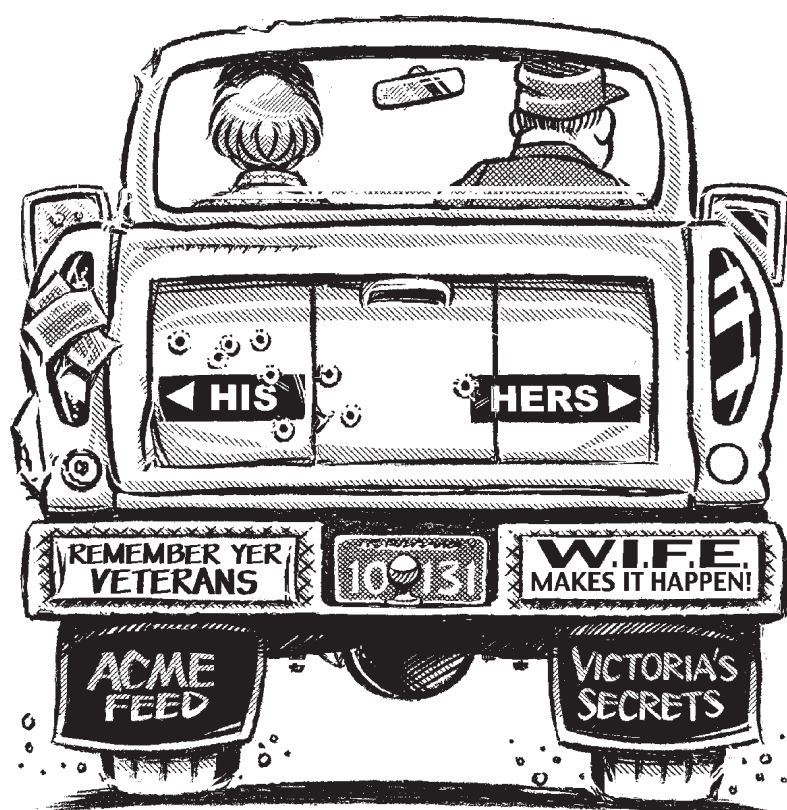
Voters will have to sort out what of this makes sense and give public officials some direction. Until that is clear, nothing will happen.

Our guess is there will be some local consolidations. A few counties, a few schools, some cities will give up the ghost — when it makes sense to them.

But spare us from big-time consolidators in Topeka who think they know the way.

— Steve Haynes

WHO'S IN CHARGE ???



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News From the Past

20 years ago - January 1985

Aletha Murphy is the new Worthy Matron of Doric Chapter of the Order of Eastern Star. Hurb Graves is Worthy Patron.

30 years ago - December 1974

Blake Waters, James Lippert, John Harvey and Todd Sherlock have entered a national writing contest.

Steven W. Marsh has been named news editor of the St. Francis Herald, replacing Sharon Boardman, who resigned and moved with her husband to Lawrence.

The Parade of Homes tour includes the homes of Mr. and Mrs. John Kite, Mr. and Mrs. Ron Loudon, Dr. and Mrs. Doug Fair, Mr. and Mrs. Warren Gienger and Mr. and Mrs. John Wolfe.

A picture in the Herald shows Gordon Popp, manager of the St. Francis Equity and Emil Peter, president of the board, breaking the ground for the Equity's new service station on the corner of West Washington and River streets.

The O'Leary Home, run by Mr. and Mrs. Paul O'Leary for 16 years, will close. The building was formerly a hospital owned by Dr. J.H.A. Peck.

Peggy Love of St. Francis was among the Kansas delegation to the National 4-H Congress in Chicago.

Construction workers are tearing down a partition separating the east side from the west side of the Cheyenne County State Bank.

45 years ago - January 1960

Bank deposits in Cheyenne County reached an all-time high when at the close of business on Dec. 31, 1959, deposits of the three banks in the county reached \$7,850,216.44.

It's January sale time at Howard's Town and Country. Items at reduced price include terry printed dish towels, 47 cents each; electric blankets, \$16; Fieldcrest bath towels 27x52, \$2.98; Fieldcrest wash clothes, 39 cents; ironing board cover and pad set, 88 cents.

Mr. and Mrs. Gus Zweygardt and Mr. and Mrs. Charley Deyle received the Balanced Farming Family Living Awards. The awards were presented

by Charles F. Hixson, present of the Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. and Mrs. Otto Bunjes were one of five Kansas couples chosen for Master Farmer, Master Farm Homemaker by the extension service at Kansas State University.

M. M. Erickson of Bird City was elected to his third term as chairman of the Cheyenne County Commissioners. Other board members are August Zweygardt and Weaver Lindsten.

Little Alan Schlepp has the honor of being the first baby born in the Cheyenne County Hospital in 1960. Alan is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Leonard A. Schlepp.

50 years ago - 1955

Buddy Burnham, son of Mr. and Mrs. Bus Burnham of St. Francis, was winner of a football letter at Trinidad Junior College, Trinidad, Colo. Burnham was used extensively at end position and scored several touchdowns for the undefeated Trojan team. The Trojans were ranked as the number two junior college team in the nation this year.

Hangin' With Marge

Sagging

By Margaret Bucholtz



One morning, as I reached for my toothbrush, I happen to actually look in the mirror and there I saw someone staring back at me that I hadn't really looked at for a long time. It was that look that we all know is going to happen, but for some reason or another we are just to busy to notice.

It's called the "saggy look!" You finally have to admit that your face now has the characteristic equal to a blood hound. Your skin around your eyes is now hanging below them and you can see the red in your eyeball. Your chin is now laying on your chest and you remember the last time you raised your arm one of the grandchildren saw that muscle, which at one time was bugling on

the top is now hanging under it, and they proceed to flop it back and forth because it is fun to watch it wave. Thank heavens it was only a little head shot mirror.

I had resigned myself to the fact that gravity pulls however I was a little shocked the other day to learn that sagging happens in places I didn't even know about. I was fixing lunch and all of a sudden, in my left eye, there was this floater. I had already had little floaters from time to time in my eyes but this one was different. It was like having an octopus floating in front of your eyeball. Kurt thought I needed to call our eye doctor and ask him, so I did and was a little surprised that he wanted me there right away.

After an hour of torture of two different kinds of eye drops in each eye and bright lights glaring in the eyeballs, he finally told me what was wrong. It seems that we each have a sack of fluid behind the eyeball that "as we get older" starts to sag. After it sags as long as it can it just falls off, usually you don't even know it unless it doesn't do a clean drop and then it tears your retina.

On the way home I was feeling a little depressed and mentioned to my husband that I would be glad when this thing in my eye went away and then started whining about what I was going to do with my time. After all I love to read and it would be hard to read and concentrate with this black object floating. I wondered how was I going to use the computer and I even doubted if I was going to be able to watch television. His suggestion was "Why don't you put a patch over it and just use your good one?"

The next evening I greeted him at the door with not only a patch over my eye, but duct tape over my mouth, just so I wouldn't ask him anymore stupid questions and get his answers.

Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick

We all make mistakes, it's part of being human. But sometimes people take a mistake and decide to run with it. Such was the case with Dan Rather and CBS.

During the recent presidential election the CBS news department aired a story that claimed the incumbent president had lied about his military record. Although the network claimed that airing the story was not politically motivated, it was a damaging claim during a tight election.

But as it turned out the documents CBS used to backup their story were false. As a result Dan Rather is no longer going to be the head anchor for the evening news, producers have been fired and CBS has a black eye for shoddy journalism.

We all make mistakes, even at

small newspapers, but maybe if Mr. Rather had had the sense to admit he was wrong, rather than run with it, he would still have his job.



GOD SAYS

He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth.

Psalms 104:14

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This Is The Place

Carol Redding, Coordinator Cheyenne County Development Corporation

Wondering what's going on in economic development? Check out this partial list of opportunities:

Sherman County is looking for a qualified person to be the economic development director.

Nex-Tech is looking for 30-40 people now to fill wireless tele-

phone and computer jobs in NW Kansas. Let's bring home our graduates.

Home Town Competitiveness needs community involvement. Four committee chairs available.

Anyone want to sell land in the county specifically for a dairy? How about contracting to provide forage crops for that same dairy?

Discussions on free land (and

variations on that theme) for new residents.

FREE Business Plan and Start-up Group Discussion sponsored by the Small Business Development Center, Colby, various dates beginning Jan. 14.

Please call the CCDC office at 785-332-3508 or 888-735-2444 for more information.

Worship Warms the Heart

Wesleyan Church
Hwy 36 • 734-2727
Pastor Scott Baker
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Worship 11:00 a.m.
Sunday Bible Study 7 p.m.

Church of Christ
332-2380, Pars. 332-3424
502 W. Spencer
Norman Morrow - Minister
Bible Class 9 a.m.
Morning Worship 10 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m.

Grace Assembly of God
332-2925, Pars. 332-2899
208 E. 2nd
Rev. Rob Meyer
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30
Sunday Eve. Service 6 p.m.

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

Peace Lutheran Church
202 N. College
332-2928 Pars. 332-2308
Pastor David Rossbach
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.

First Christian Church
332-2956 • 118 E. Webster
Pastor Tony Christians
Sunday School 9:20 a.m.
Church Service 10:30 a.m.
Wed. night Bible Study 7 p.m.

Seventh-Day Adventist Church
332-2888 • 3rd & Adams
Pastor Jim Martin
Sabbath School 9:30
Morning Worship 10:45

St. Francis of Assisi
Catholic Church
625 S. River • 332-2680
Fr. Beryl Gibson
Sunday Mass 10:30 a.m.
Weekday Mass 8 a.m.
Confessions Sat. 4-4:30

Living Water Fellowship Ministry
Pastors:
Terry & Tiffany Glasco
Downtown Bird City
785-734-2363

Sunday:
Fellowship 9:30 a.m.
Worship & Word 10 a.m.
Bible Study 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday:
Prayer Meeting 7:30 p.m.
Last Sunday evening of Month:
Healing Service 7:30 p.m.

United Methodist
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.

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

St. Francis Community Church
332-3150 • 216 W. Washington
Pastor: Richard Garcia
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

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