

Kansas debt quadrupled over the last 12 years

Apparently, no one has noticed — or much cares — that Kansas' per capita state debt has quadrupled in just a dozen years.

The tab hit \$4 billion in 2004, or \$1,400 for every man, woman and child in the state. In 1992, the figure was just \$363.

In 12 years, a Wichita State University study says, Kansas went from 43rd in state debt per person to 17th.

Most of the money went into concrete, asphalt and steel for new roads, as the Legislature turned to bond issues to finance new construction. It's faster, and sometimes even cheaper, to build big projects right now with bonds.

You borrow the money and pay for construction at today's prices, not an inflated future price. To a degree, that makes sense, but the more you borrow, the less money there is left in future years.

As payments on that debt come due, it'll be harder to pay for highways in the future. Already, the Legislature has stripped the road fund of sales tax money promised for coming years.

State Budget Director Duane Goossen was quoted as saying he's "not worried" about the debt. Kansas has a strong credit rating and plenty of capacity for more borrowing, he said.

That's good to know, but there remains the fact that someone has to pay this debt off.

Guess who?

Worse yet, the Legislature has been using more

expensive revenue bonds for state borrowing. That's mostly because they can be issued without a public vote.

General obligation bonds, backed by the "full faith and credit" of the state, would be cheaper, but anything over \$1 million would require a state-wide vote.

It's easy to see why the Legislature went with revenue bonds. The state borrowed \$500 million in one bond issue just to stabilize the employees' pension fund.

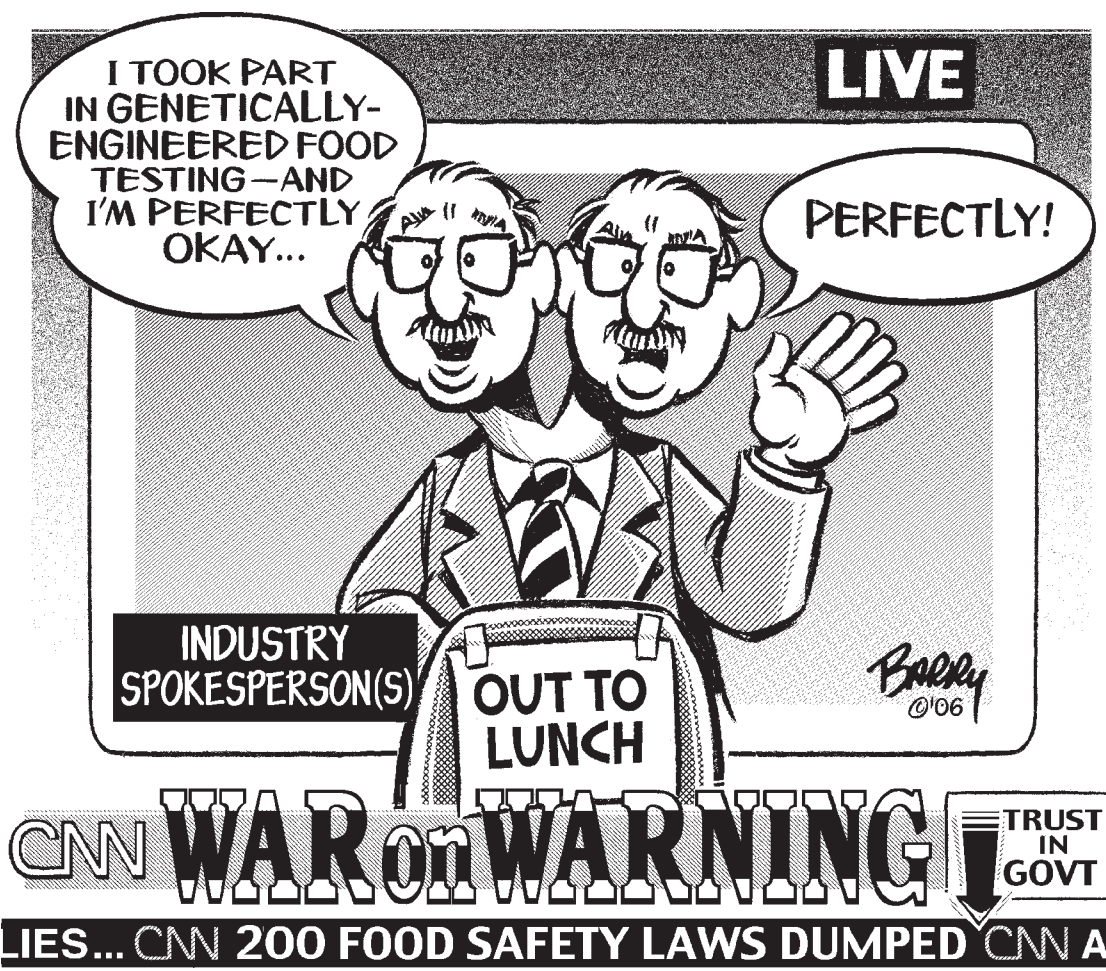
It's unlikely voters would have approved that loan, let alone the several issues for road building. With revenue bonds, once the governor signs the bill, the state can just go ahead and sign for the debt.

Now, though, there's a move afoot to refinance the bonds, or at least part of them. Lowering the interest rate just one point could save \$4 million a year.

The state could issue general obligation bonds, at a lower rate, and call an election to approve the issue. Some legislators think people would vote for that.

"It's like refinancing your house," said Sen. Phil Journey, a Wichita Republican. "You're crazy if you don't do it."

What's crazy is spiraling, ever-more-expensive debt. It remains to be seen whether voters will buy that logic. — Steve Haynes



News From the Past

5 years ago - 2001

The Seventh Day Adventist Church in St. Francis has a new pastor, Arlin Cochran. He also is the pastor of Seventh Day Adventist churches in Oberlin and Goodland.

Steve Schultz, former resident of St. Francis, has been appointed as the St. Francis post master. He succeeds Annette Miller, who retired in January.

The Cheyenne County Fair Board has announced that the Denver Bronco cheerleaders will entertain the crowd of the Friday night of the Fair. The tractor pull is also slated that evening.

The St. Francis Wrestling Club sponsored a Kids Wrestling Tournament on almost 200 kids in attendance.

Cheyenne County resident Nicole Howard will represent the county at the Kansas Junior Miss State Finals in Belleville.

Members of the St. Francis Brownie troop include Aubree Schleppe, Sarah Trembly, Jeri Rae Merchant, Emily Mullins, Hailey Woodcox, Christina Schoenrogge and Mikaela Grace. Janet Jensen

is the leader and Lori Gohl the assistant.

Cub Scouts include Justin Sherlock, Jesse Pacheco, Jacob Reidel, Matt Whitmore, Cody Sherlock, Alex Long, Thomas Estrada, Hector Nunez and Logan Whitmore. Lila Whitmore is the leader.

20 years ago - 1986

Troy Faulkender placed second at the State Wrestling Tournament. Darris DeGood, Bobby Lee and Donnie Smull placed fourth and the Indian team finished in fourth place.

"A Wife Takes A Wife," an original comedy by Kate Gienger will be presented at Riverside Recreation on March 20 and 21.

Eight Haigler ladies, Virginia Harford, Laura Pearl Wall, Viola Pearson, Eloshia Schmutte, Mildred Stute, Joann Webster, Florence Douglass and Florence Daniels, are undertaking the huge project of compiling the history of families who have lived in Haigler.

Kendall Day was the winner of the 1986 Pinewood Derby.

40 years ago 1966

It has been announced the entire faculty at the high school will be returning next year. Head coaches for

next year will be Ray Huffman, football; Tom Breunich, basketball; Gary Wilson, wrestling and Roger Lewis, track. Don Hall will be high school principal and in charge of the counseling program. Carl Sperry is the superintendent. The new junior high classrooms at the high school are in the process of being completed.

45 years ago - 1961

Sondra Dorsch has recently been selected as the delegate to the annual Sunflower Girls State held in Lawrence.

A section of Cheyenne County Land has sold for an average of \$137 an acre at an auction sale.

One of the biggest house moving operations ever undertaken in this area took place when a house was moved to the Darrell Harkins farm south of St. Francis. It was a three-story house that was estimated to weigh close to 80 tons which was originally built in 1921 by Ludwig Schleppe and his wife. The house was located 10 1/2 miles northwest of St. Francis. Thirteen children spent at least part of their growing years in the house.

Hangin' With Marge

Good Grooming

By Margaret Bucholtz



Just sit back and listen to a group of girls between the age of 8 to 10 and somewhere in their discussion they vary from what dolls they like to how they can't wait to shave their legs. Oh how I wish I could go back to those days!

The days when you could actually shave without your glasses on would be a plus. Then on top of that it just gets to be another one of those things you need to do. I think the time I had to go back to Greeley to

the foot doctor was one of those experiences. We didn't leave home until early that morning and when I realized I needed to shave my legs, I just didn't think I had time to shave both of them. After all I needed time to locate a book to read on the way, drink another cup of coffee, and pack a little food in case we got hungry.

You guessed it — I just shaved the one leg. What a long ride it was as I began worrying about the fact I would have to removed my jeans

and reveal both legs.

Finally after worrying for several hours I told Kurt "I sure hope I don't have to take my jeans off." He looked at me a little weird and asked "Why would that bother you?" I replied "Because I only shaved one leg."

He mumbled something about "height of laziness." I didn't understand it, but I also didn't have to remove my jeans!!

Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick



I wasn't sure if I could write this week's column or not. I've been out of action with an injured left pinkie.

That might not sound like much, but for a newspaper person a hand injury sure makes it tough to write.

Last weekend the cyst I had been carrying on the last joint of my little

finger began to give me trouble. I had not given it much thought until the pain began. Thank goodness for Lezlie as she went into "action" mode.

The next few days were filled with visits to the clinic, hospital and a hand specialist in Denver. The

doctors and nurses worked together to fight infection and save my finger.

Things look better now, though a little blurry from pain killers. But it does seem that I will keep my pinkie. One more week of IVs, bandage changes, pinkie therapy and I'll be able to return to the specialist in Denver.

It is hard, especially for a man, to admit that he may not be right or in control of the world around him. My thanks go out to my wonderful wife, Dr. Miller and the great ladies at the clinic and hospital and Dr. Britton's office. I knew from the start that my pinkie was in good hands.

Looking for relatives

In 1886 several Rathbun families moved from Missouri and Nebraska with some Tromble families to Cheyenne County. In the drought year, 1898, many Rathbun and Tromble families moved to Colorado, Wyoming and back to Nebraska. Uzal and Ann Rathbun stayed in Cheyenne County.

Relatives are looking for descendants from this branch of the Rathbun family or information on them.

Uzal was a brother of Mary Elizabeth Rathbun Ingram and Nancy Ann Rathbun Galloup, who were twins. Mary Elizabeth was the mother of Willie Ann Ingram Tromble and her twin, Nancy Ann was the mother of Retha Galloup Tromble.

Their descendants are planning a reunion at the United Methodist Church fellowship hall in Goodland

on the June 9 in the evening and also on June 10 and June 11 at 12th and Sherman Street and would welcome members of this family branch.

For further information, contact Ruby Ahring, 216 S. 3rd, Lincoln, KS 67455 or e-mail doll@nckn.com.

GOD SAYS
Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.
James 1:12

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County Health Talk

By Susan Roelfs

What is a Chem-27 Panel?

A chemistry screen is a blood test that measures the levels of several substances. A chemistry screen provides information about your general state of health and helps your health professional detect certain abnormalities or determine whether treatment for a specific problem is effective. The type of chemistry screen you have done depends on

which substances your health professional wants to evaluate.

A chemistry screen may be done: As part of a routine physical examination. A chemistry screen can provide valuable information about the general state of your health. Your health professional can use information obtained from a chemistry screen to recommend dietary or lifestyle changes. To detect abnormalities, such as

low or high levels of substances, that may be causing specific symptoms.

To evaluate a specific health condition and monitor the effectiveness of its treatment.

If a fasting blood sugar test is being done as part of the chemistry screen, do not eat or drink anything other than water for 12 to 14 hours before the blood sample is taken.

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.

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.

Salem Lutheran Church
332-3002
Pastor Chris Farmer
Sunday School 10 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.

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

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.

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.

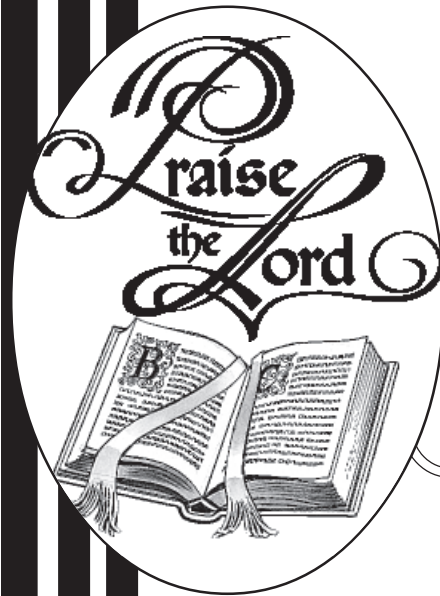
St. Francis Community Church
332-3150
204 N. Quincy Street
Pastor: David Butler
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

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

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.

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

Clough Valley Church of Hope
12 m. west, 6 m. north of SF
Pastor Jason Howard
332-3152
Saturdays 8 p.m. CT or 7 p.m. MT



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