

Opinion



Other Viewpoints

Democrat throws his hat in the ring

Republican Jerry Moran still is the overwhelming favorite to win re-election to his 1st District congressional seat, but it's good that the Democratic Party has fielded an opponent in the race.

John Doll, owner of a lawn care business in Garden City, announced last week he would seek the Democratic nomination for Moran's seat in 2006. Doll is hardly a household name in the huge 1st District, which encompasses 69 counties in western Kansas and along the northern tier of the state to within 40 miles of Missouri. And he described himself as "not 100 percent Democrat" because he is conservative and opposes abortion.

But the fact that Doll has declared his candidacy early may indicate that he plans to make a race of it. Simply having a Democrat on the ballot would give Moran more competition than he's had in the last three elections. The last time he had a Democratic opponent was in 1998.

Moran is a popular representative and a key leader in the state's Republican Party. He was considered a top contender to oppose Gov. Kathleen Sebelius in 2006 and, since deciding to skip that contest, seems almost a shoo-in for re-election.

Nonetheless, having an active, major-party opponent forces a candidate to actively campaign in the district and articulate stands on key issues. In what's often called "The Big 1st" District, that will be no small chore, but the process will benefit voters by giving them a chance to get to know their candidates and their representative better.

The Lawrence Journal-World

About those letters . . .

The *Free Press* encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten, if at all possible, and should include a telephone number and an address. Most importantly, all letters must include a signature. Unsigned letters cannot be published. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and length, and, likewise, reserve the right to reject letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive or libelous.

Where to write, call

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202/224-4774
U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202/224-6521
U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran, 2443 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. 202/225-2715 or Fax 202/225-5124
State Rep. Jim Morrison, State Capitol Building, 303 SW 10th St. Rm. 171-W, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7676 e mail: jmorriso@ink.org web: www.ink.org/public/legislators/jmorriso
State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol, 300 SW 10th St., Rm. 128-S., Topeka, Kan. 66612, 785/296-7399 ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us



Where is the development director?

I'm concerned about the fact for the past four months Sheridan County has not had a full-time economic development director.

When Bert Mosier resigned from the post in May, I sure didn't think it would take the development board this long to put a full-time director in place.

I've talked with board president Jacque Boultinghouse, Selden, and she said the board, while not as visible as Mosier, is keeping things up and running.

Sorry Jacque, that's unsettling to me. All of you on the board have full-time jobs, and from having personal experience in economic development, I know what you are attempting won't work.

There is no way Sheridan County Development board members can fill Mosier's shoes. They can't stop by businesses on a regular basis and touch base with owners, or man the phone during business hours, or most importantly, promote the county they way taxpayers funding the corporation deserve.

Come on, it's time to get someone in that office on a daily basis.

Okay, I'll admit that the task of economic development seems to some as exciting as watching paint dry, but it's a much needed office.

It's needed especially in changing times of limited budgets – federal government down to Sheridan County – and it's something each county must have to survive.

Before Mosier left, he was actively involved in trying to promote Sheridan County on the Front Range in Colorado. What's happened to those plans?

Before he left, Mosier was actively involved



Jan Katz Ackerman

• From Where I stand

in promoting Sheridan County as a place for agritourism. What's come of that project?

Board members, you need to get the task of filling Mosier's vacant position done and done quickly.

No, I'm not advocating hiring anyone for the sake of hiring someone, but come on, four months, isn't that long enough?

Sheridan County taxpayers need a full-time director to be keeping tabs on what's coming out of Topeka in the way of incentives for the county.

The holiday season is just around the corner and people, including development board members, will be busy.

You need to get someone hired to promote the local holiday events, and to take the task off your plate.

The time has come to get the \$37,500 paid to Mosier back to work.

And it's time to answer to Sheridan County taxpayers and introduce them to their next development director. Soon!

On the same train of thought, here's a little clip that crossed my desk many years ago and I thought I'd share it with you.

What is your town like?

If you want to live in the kind of town, Like the kind of town you like.

You don't have to pack your clothes in a gripe,

And go on a long, long hike.

For you'll only find what you've left behind.

There's nothing that's really new.

It's a knock at yourself when you knock your town.

It isn't the town, ... it's you.

Real towns are not made by men afraid,

Lest someone else get ahead.

When everyone works, and nobody shirks,

You can raise a town from the dead.

And if while you make your personal strife,

Your neighbor will make one too,

Your town will be what you want it to be.

It isn't a town... it's you!

As fuel continues to remain in a constant state of yo-yo-ism (up one day and down the next) my local gas station has posted a little notice on its bills that it needs customers to pay by the end of the month so the owner too can keep current with his wholesalers.

The notice went like this – "Due to price increases of all products, accounts MUST be paid in full by the end of the month."

While that gets the point across, I like my version of what I'd put on the bills if I was the owner – "To our past due credit customers... When you die, please let us be your pallbearers. We carried you so long that we would like to finish the job!"

Christian church's job not politics

It did my heart good, a week or so ago, to see a local commentator in the *Free Press* harping on one of my favorite essential truths: That the chief purpose of the Christian church is to pursue the evangelization of the whole world, and *not* to engage in politics in the hope of making the world a more righteous place. I could not agree more with the commentator on this point, and was almost moved to issue a hearty "Amen!" after reading the column.

Christianity, contrary to some popular misconceptions, is not a political movement, nor is it an arm of the modern, right-wing establishment. Christianity is, and always has been, a gospel of new life - life for the dead – the resurrection of Jesus Christ, repeated and completed in the hearts of living human beings. Christianity is chiefly about the question of humankind's relationship with God, and only secondarily about people's relations with other people.

According to the Bible, law is not a means of reforming people – at least, not directly. Rather, reform must happen individually, as individual hearts are transformed by the life-changing power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And as hearts are changed by this new relationship with God, people are changed so that they now live out a new moral standard, a new ethos, a new and improved behavior. Christianity countenances no other reform program.

But Christians *are* concerned with law, and that for two reasons. According to the Bible, the

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• From Pens of Kansans

law has two functions: The first is to *restrain evil*, and the second is to *lead people to Christ*. "What, then, was the purpose of the law?" the Apostle Paul asks. "It was added because of transgressions..." , and, "...the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith." While these verses speak specifically about the Law of Moses, they apply to law more generally as well.

Christians, then, want a system of law which effectively acts to *curb crime*. That is the civil aim of the law. And one of the thorniest barriers to this is the modern denial of any objective standard of good or evil. It is nothing new to human nature that, "Every man's way is right in his own eyes," (as Solomon observed). But this cannot be the grounds upon which the legal system is established. Rather, the law must present a balanced and concrete standard of right and wrong, and must unwaveringly and impartially execute that standard in the course of society.

This requires, of course, that the law be based

upon a moral standard. And ideally, we would like to see it based upon a sane moral standard – one which is not arbitrary, but which has its roots in a true standard of justice and righteousness. Very few Americans feel that they have a handle on such a standard. Many even deny the possibility of such a standard – and so they seem to expect law to be based on... well... *nothing* – an arbitrary system of law based on a floating and flexible idea of right and wrong. But it should be obvious to everyone that such a standard is really no standard at all – and is incapable of protecting the innocent or bringing the guilty to justice.

Every crime is committed for a *reason*. Every criminal has a logic or rationale for their actions; every *wrong* is *right* in the eyes of the wrongdoer. The law, by nature, must sweep away the justifications and rationalizations which the perpetrator offers for their wrongdoing, and must judge impartially based upon a standard higher than mere human conceptions. So, while the Christian knows that law cannot make men righteous, the Christian *does* hope to live in a society in which righteousness – true, impartial, and unwavering – is enshrined in the law.

So, while Christians are not lawyers by nature, Christians do have an interest in the law, and in the legal climate and direction of their culture. As does every citizen.

Chris Shubert

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