

# Opinion



## A Kansas Viewpoint

### Town keeps going

From The Hutchinson News

Every community — and particularly smaller, rural ones — must decide whether to step up and fight to keep their town from dying off piece by piece.

In Kansas, too many communities suffer from slow erosion. Young residents leave for brighter horizons. A grocery store closes, or a pharmacy. Residents have to travel to meet their needs.

Before long, a town is clinging to life, with a continually shrinking population and few prospects for growth.

Hoisington had to make such a choice recently.

With 2,953 residents, it is small enough to be in the danger zone but big enough to take action.

And that is what it has done.

The town's only pharmacy closed its doors in January. But instead of sitting back and watching residents drive to Great Bend for their prescriptions, the community put together a task force. The city is taking an active role in opening a new pharmacy as soon as possible.

With the help of a federal grant and some motivated leadership, the town should recover from the stumble. Estimates put a new pharmacy in town by July. ...

There are many ways a community can hang on to its business. The city can take an active, even financial, role. Or, the community members can take it upon themselves to support their local businesses by frequenting them before other retailers that might be conveniently located near their job or offer slightly lower prices. ...

It's true Hoisington still has some hurdles to jump. It must finalize a contract with pharmacists, and it must come up with matching funds to pay for a building. But, we could all learn a little something from Hoisington's team effort.

This pharmacy closure could have started a downhill slide. Now, it may be the beginning of a brighter future.

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**U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback**, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202/224-6521

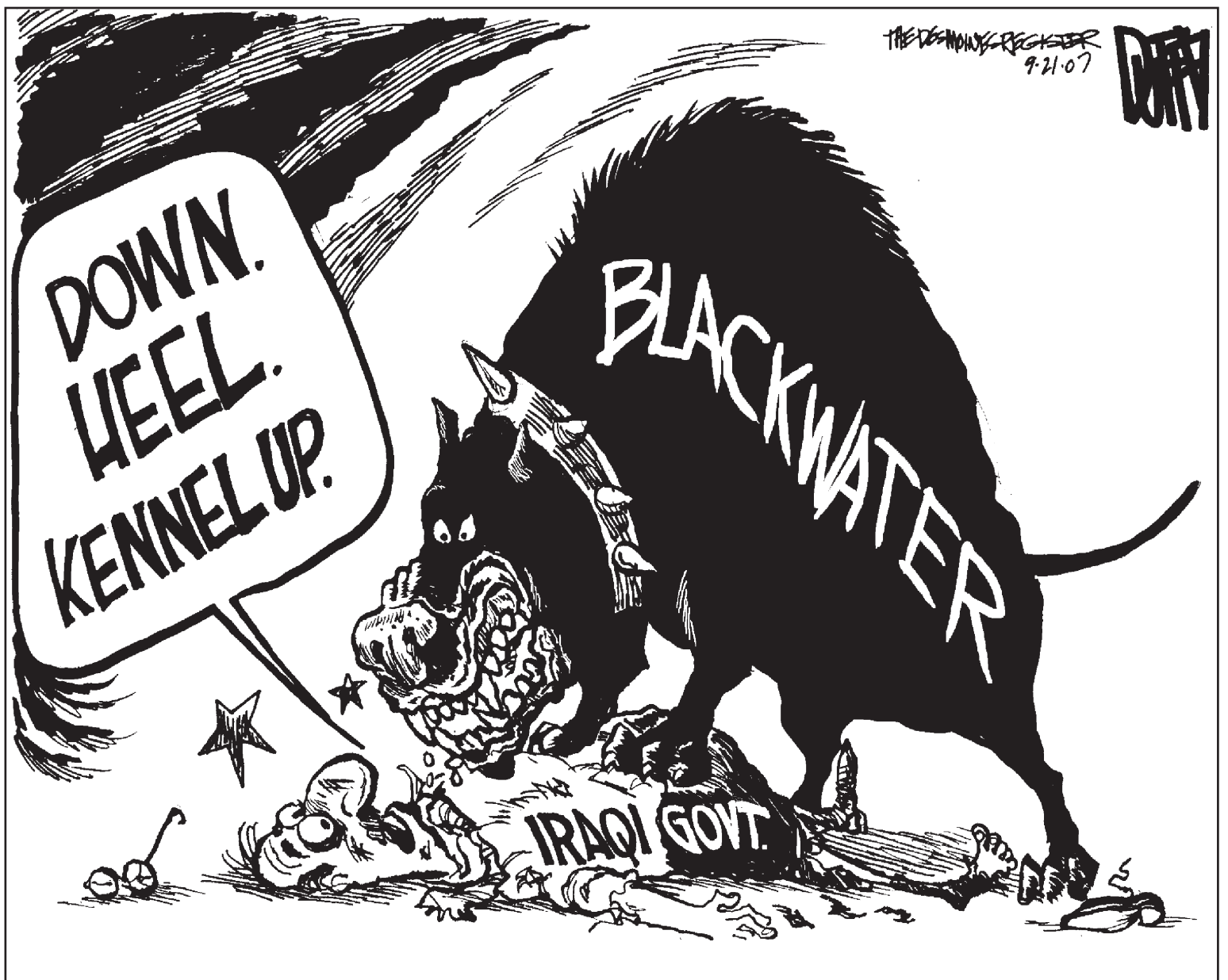
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### Pass it on ... well, maybe not all of it

I think it was Mark Twain who said something to the effect that his parents were not very smart when he was 17, but was surprised at how much they had learned when he was 21.

I probably had similar thoughts about my own parents during those ages in my life. But now that I have my own kids, I'm sure my kids will have the same thoughts about me. It's a vicious cycle.

I've got some time before my kids are teenagers. Until then, maybe I can use some of the things I learned from my parents so my kids will either appreciate what I know, or know why I am the way that I am.

Things I learned from my parents, and how:  
Entertainment: Live in a town with two different pizza-delivery restaurants. Order one pizza from each place at the same time and see which one shows up first. The entertainment is watching the reaction of the delivery guys if they show up at the same time.

Travel: For long-distance car trips, drive overnight. You avoid much of the fuss and the repetitive "are we there yet" question. It's too dark for kids to see anything so they might as well sleep. And they are so used to being asleep at that time, they probably will anyway. (Warning: Today's portable DVD players can threaten that strategy, though).

Travel destination: Sometimes kids need to learn how to entertain themselves. Don't always



**John Van Nostrand**

### Line in the Dust

take them to Disneyland. Take them fishing and stay in cabins in remote parts of northern Wyoming. There are rocks to be climbed, fish to be caught, wildlife to watch running through the open spaces, cold river water to rush through your fingers, grilled food to enjoy — memories to be made. I still love those trips.

Develop trust with them: I'm still grateful my parents let me borrow their car to go out of state with a good, trusted friend for a weekend when I was only 16. Rules were simple. If the car came back in one piece and law enforcement agencies didn't call home before I got home, I knew the trust was there. (The moral of the story was the trust was there even before that weekend.)

Support them: When I was younger, the town I lived in was trying to grow support and awareness for the town's recycling program. I was into recycling. I went to the lunch meeting about the program and the bill for the lunch was sent home. I told them what the bill was all about and they

were supportive. They still recycle today.

Generations: Not every family can make this happen, but there is something about establishing a relationship between grandparents and grandchildren. I lost my first grandparent this summer but was grateful that my parents tried to get us together on a regular basis when I was younger. I took that relationship with my grandparents and developed it into my adult years.

Know when to be upset: (This is tough, even with a 6 and 4 year-old, which I have now). While in high school I put my car in a ditch one night. My father handled the situation well, from my point of view. I already knew I was responsible for my actions and consequences, with the car. It was one of those things discussed before I got the keys. Nothing dramatic was said about the incident.

Maybe he knew the Chuck Swindoll story about a grandfather who was trying to teach his grandson to drive a car. The youth collided with the side of the garage-door entrance. "That's OK son," the grandfather said. "You can replace garage doors but you can't be replaced. Keep trying."

Keep trying and you'll cherish the things you learn with your children and what they will learn from you.

— John Van Nostrand is publisher of the Colby Free Press.

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### Dedication needed to fight cyber crime

By Attorney General Paul J. Morrison

Internet crime is the fastest growing crime in our country, involving everything from e-mail fraud to online sex predators. Hundreds of Kansans are victimized each year and there are very few resources to turn to for help.

More frequently, criminals are using the Internet to steal money and identities of Kansans. Currently, some 60 percent of all fraud complaints involve an Internet transaction or communication. Of the Internet fraud complaints submitted by Kansans, the average loss was \$790.

Criminals are also using the Internet to connect with our kids. Earlier this year, my office subpoenaed the records of hundreds of registered sex offenders in Kansas operating on MySpace.com. The dangers of the Internet grow as more

of our children socialize online and interact with people they don't know.

Last week, I announced the creation of the first Cyber Crime Unit within the Kansas Office of Attorney General. This unit is a starting point for fighting Internet crime. But, further investments are necessary to really make a difference in the safety of Kansas families.

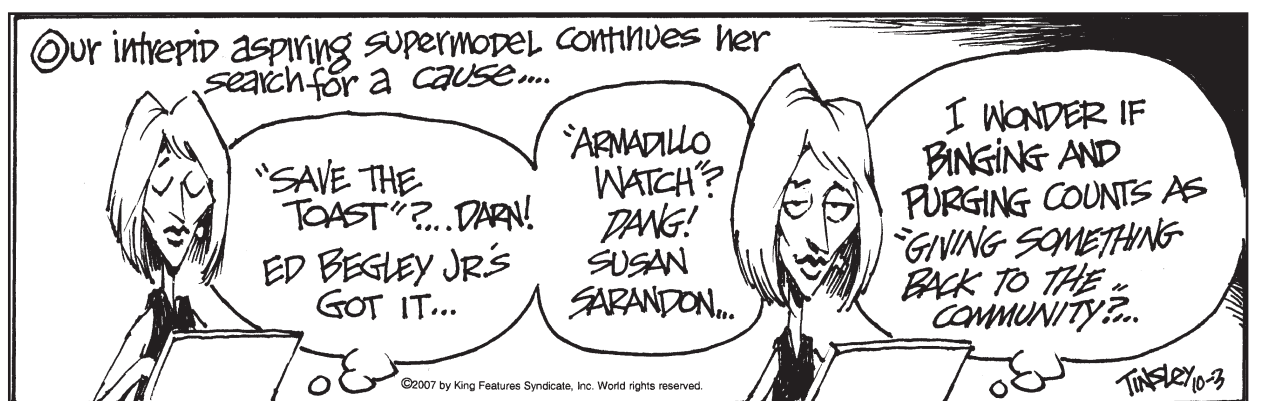
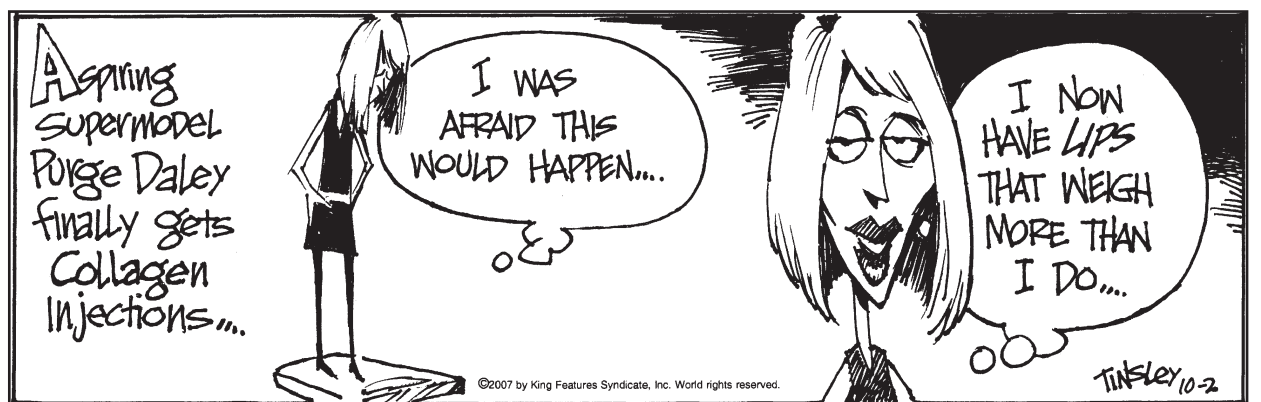
I have asked the legislature to join me in the battle against cyber crime and to support increasing resources for law enforcement to target Internet fraudsters and predators who use the Internet to connect with our kids.

I've used existing resources to dedicate a prosecutor and an investigator in my office to fight cyber crime. However, this is just a drop in the bucket. We need an additional prosecu-

tor, investigator and crime analyst to make sure Internet criminals are held accountable.

In addition to prosecuting these crimes, my office will focus on educating parents, kids, seniors and consumers to prevent Internet crime. An instructor will travel the state training the public about how to protect themselves and their personal information online. We also hope to expand programs like Netsmartz, which go into our schools to teach kids how to be safe online.

I encourage lawmakers to make cyber crime a top priority next session and give law enforcement the resources they need to stop Internet criminals. As Attorney General, I am committed to making the Internet a safer place for Kansans. It won't be easy, it will take hard work, but it is absolutely necessary to the safety of our families.



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