



## Free Press Viewpoint

### Too little, too late in 'pink slime' wars

A high-powered delegation of Midwestern governors gathered in South Sioux City, Neb., last week to try to save some jobs and buck up the price of beef.

While their hearts may have been in the right place, we think the governors are wasting their time, and their taxpayers' money.

No matter what they say, even if the governors did eat hamburgers made with the stuff, consumers are just not going to embrace an ingredient called "pink slime."

This stuff is nothing you wouldn't expect in your average hot dog. It's beef scraps that have been ground, had the fat cooked out at low temperature, and made ready to add to ground beef and other foods.

One objection to the product, known in the industry as "lean, finely textured beef," from left-wing groups had been that it's treated with ammonia to kill bacteria. There's no showing that the ammonia is harmful, but it is a harsh chemical.

If you had to choose between bad bacteria and ammonia treatment, though, which would you prefer? The stuff won't hurt you. Whether it makes for a fresh, wholesome and tasty burger is quite another thing.

But somehow, the opposition got ahead of that name "pink slime," and the manufacturer, Beef Products Inc., has had to shut all but one of its plants. That one, in South Sioux City, is on life support.

So there were the governors, munching on pink-slime infused burgers and making a show of how safe and tasty they were. It's a high-powered group, including two former conservative presidential candidates, our own Sam Brownback and Rick Perry of Texas. Others were Lt. Gov. Matt Michels of South Dakota, standing in for his governor, who was out of the country on a trade mission; Nebraska's Dave Heineman; and Terry Branstad of Iowa.

They put on a good show. They showed fealty to both the beef industry and to the cause of scarce jobs in their states. But we can't say they won many consumers over.

Though this type of processed beef has been on the market for 20 years without a fuss, the current scare likely has killed it for a while. Some will continue to eat it, but most supermarket chains and fast-food outlets dropped it like a hot rock.

And why not, when people will be demanding "real" beef. Many of us might prefer store-ground beef with a better texture and maybe even some flavor, of course. Many restaurants serve that, and most stores sell it. But patties made with this processed stuff can be cheaper and hold together better. Some may prefer them.

Regardless, it'll be a few years before the market for pink — er, lean, finely textured beef — returns to normal. Simply put, the damage has been done. — *Steve Haynes*

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### Kids learn what you teach them

A couple of things came up recently that got me thinking about teenagers.

The first was a young woman from China. An exchange student at Fort Hays State, she gave a program to our Rotary Club.

During the question-and-answer period, she admitted that she couldn't boil water before she went off to school. She also didn't know how to do her own laundry or clean.

My mind went back to my childhood, where my sister and I learned to cook from our mother and grandmother. Every Saturday, the whole family got into the act and cleaned house. My job was dust mopping the hard floors.

My own children were figuring out the basics of cooking by the time they were 5, and by 6, every one of them had some job around the house — folding clothes, rinsing dishes and emptying the dishwasher. When they were older, they did the laundry and mowed the lawn.

This girl said that her parents felt it was her job to study, but they ended up sending her out into the world with a head full of knowledge and few skills to cope with life.

She's a smart girl and she soon learned the basics of living, but it was a hard lesson for the first few weeks in a strange country.

I remember the bellyaching that went on in



**Cynthia Haynes**

• Open Season

our house as our little slaves labored over the dishes and laundry. But when my children left home, they all could cook, clean and do laundry and minor clothing repairs.

The other thing that I overheard was a couple of friends bemoaning the feeling of entitlement of teenagers today.

This is nothing new, my friends.

OK, kids don't so much feel entitled as they're scammers.

They'll talk you out of anything. They whine. All their friends have new outfits, those \$200 tennis shoes, don't have curfew and don't have any chores around the house.

Bull.

Their friends are saying the same things to their parents.

My daughters thought it was awful that we didn't buy them new clothes. If they wanted

something, they had to save their money and buy it themselves. They had jobs by the time they were 16.

We didn't pay them for the work they did at home. That was the dues they paid for living in the household.

When they turned 16, though, they had the opportunity to buy a car.

Their friends all had fancier vehicles bought by their parents, we were told.

That's nice, we said. Too bad you were born in this family. We don't do things that way.

Today, as adults, our three children know how to handle their money because they've always had to be accountable to themselves for what they spent.

It may be hard to listen to the whimpering from your little kids and the griping as they get older, but stay tough. These are lessons they need to learn, and like all lessons, they just get harder as you get older.

*Cynthia Haynes, co-owner and chief financial officer of Nor'West Newspapers, writes this column weekly. Her pets include cats, toads and a praying mantis. Contact her at [c.haynes@nwkansas.com](mailto:c.haynes@nwkansas.com)*

### Redistricting plan up for vote

These are a set of maps for the 40th and 36th Districts. Ad Astra is the name of the Senate map in the Ways and Means Committee which should be passed out during the veto session. The other map shows the current district.

This will give you a better idea of what leadership intends for the 40th District, the elimination of the 36th District and combining it into the 38th District. Sen. Vicki Schmidt and I hope to overturn this map when we return for



**Ralph Ostmeyer**

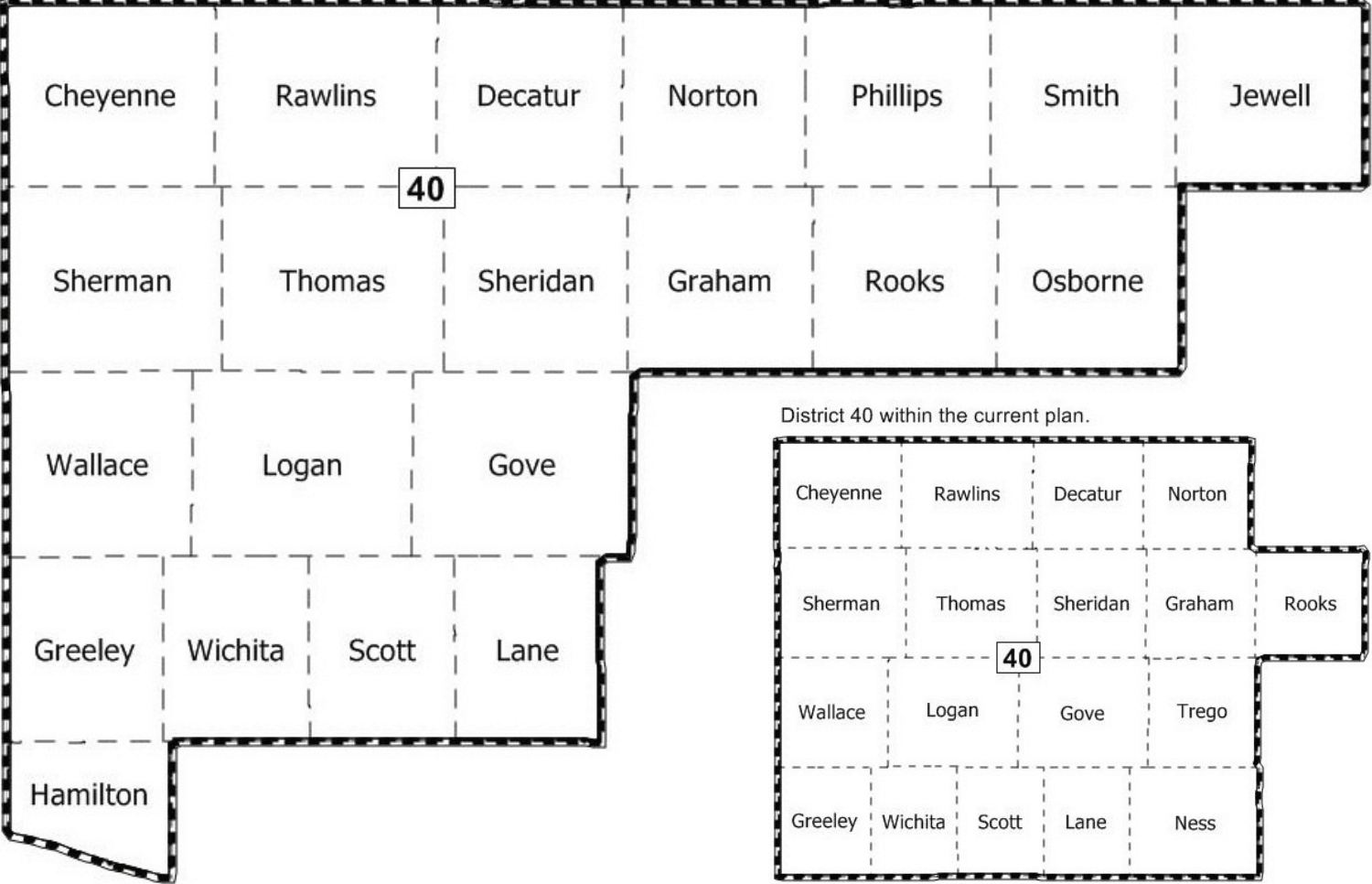
• State Senator

the veto session.

I don't believe the public realizes what these districts will look like with the changes, so I am sending these maps now.

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District 40 within proposed plan Ad Astra.



### Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

