

commentary

from other pens...

Stovall, Glasscock are strong GOP ticket

Winfield Daily Courier on Stovall-Glasscock governor's ticket: Kansas House Speaker Kent Glasscock made a wise decision to become Attorney General Carla Stovall's running mate.

Stovall made a good choice for lieutenant governor on her ticket. Stovall's star quality as a strong-minded crime fighter will draw votes from left and right. Glasscock's mild-mannered brand of political realism will put the right kind of sand in her shoes.

The challenge for these two is not simply the head of steam brewing again on the Republican right, but their need to translate into votes their strong, shared commitment to public service.

... Glasscock, especially, needs to make good use of his speakership to wrestle the state's \$375 million budget shortfall to the ground and, at the same time, make structural improvements in the priority areas of public safety, public health and education.

... Stovall's achievements as attorney general are signal, historic. But it will be her appeal on the campaign trail that makes the difference. She and Glasscock have an opportunity to stir new energy in the mainstream of the Republican Party by heading it back toward the progressive, nationalistic direction from which it came.

If they cannot, Democrat Kathleen Sebelius will be the next governor.

The Emporia Gazette on the Stovall-Glasscock governor's ticket: Carla Stovall changed the dynamics of the governor's race when she announced ... that her running mate will be Kent Glasscock.

Republican moderates had been yearning for a good candidate for months, since Jerry Moran announced he had better stay in Washington. Some moderates liked Glasscock — but not enough. Some — but again, not enough — hoped Stovall would change her mind and run.

The moderates did not want their Grand Old Party to fall by default to the conservatives. ...

The merger of Stovall and Glasscock has produced, in effect, a new candidate — one that is probably more acceptable to voters than either candidate might have been alone — who may be able to sweep aside conservative candidates early enough to avoid an acrimonious primary.

That would be good for the GOP, because experience shows it takes more than three months for the party to patch itself back into a semblance of unity after a bloody primary.

The Republicans will need all their strength in November if they have to run against Kathleen Sebelius, the probable Democratic candidate.

Stovall-Glasscock, the new combo candidate, has a better chance of beating Sebelius than either Stovall or Glasscock could ever have.

The Hutchinson News on state budget crisis:

School teachers, college administrators and advocates for programs that rely on state funding could dread the upcoming legislative session.

The undisputed onset of an economic recession ... new funding commitments ... and the ongoing impact of structural tax cuts ... have combined to create a looming budget crisis for Kansas.

The state faces a \$375 million gap between revenue and expenses for this fiscal year and all of next fiscal year, which begins July 1, 2002. The projections indicate the state must reduce spending by \$110 million. The state has committed to spend another \$265 million in fiscal 2003. In addition, the projections exclude additional funding for public elementary and secondary education — an item that increased a combined \$161 million this year. ...

Legislators need to explore rescinding some of the tax cuts they passed.

But no one can count on that sort of leadership out of the Kansas Legislature, even without the campaign posturing that happens during an election year.

While many groups can make a compelling case for needing additional resources, they might want to focus instead on defending what they already have.



HERBERT RAPPIN HERALD 2001

For this, I am grateful



joan ryan

• commentary

In an airport last week, a security guard lifted a nail clipper from my purse, opened it and officiously snapped off the little filing board. As I continued on, I noticed that in a shop near my boarding gate were, yes, nail clippers.

A few days later, I read about the man who, in his rush to catch his plane in Atlanta, unwittingly committed a major security breach.

The airport shut down for four hours as the National Guard and airport officers scrambled to catch someone who didn't even know he was being chased.

The security bumbblings reflect inadequate training and staffing, sure. But they also, perhaps mostly, reflect the fact that we don't know how to be a police state. We're no good at it.

And in this season of thanksgiving, I am grateful.

Since Sept. 11, we have pulled together to battle terrorism. But we can't deny that much of our domestic response has been a series of fits and starts, small failures and embarrassments. Here's a story for you:

A Florida Highway Patrol officer, after issuing a speeding ticket to a Jordanian man on the turnpike, felt ill a short time later. Fearing anthrax, he called for an emergency medical team, which airlifted him from the turnpike, briefly closing the northbound lanes. It turned out the poor officer had suffered an anxiety attack. His own fear had felled him.

Not only have we shown our poor ability to mimic a police state, but we chafe at every political maneuver that might draw us closer to becoming one.

OK, not everyone chafes, but there always are

enough resisters to turn even the smallest threat to freedom and civil liberties into a robust public debate.

For this, I am also grateful.

When President Bush issued an executive order establishing secret military tribunals to try suspected terrorists, for example, even conservatives like William Safire howled in protest. He wrote that the decree gives Bush "dictatorial power to jail or execute aliens" through the use of "military kangaroo courts."

"It's time for conservative iconoclasts and card-carrying hard-liners to stand up for American values," Safire railed.

Many are. Politicians, commentators and civil rights groups are fighting the president's legislation that gives the government greater powers to monitor telephone calls and e-mail and to detain immigrants.

They're fighting the Department of Justice's new rule allowing the government to monitor communications between federal detainees and their lawyers.

I find this commitment to ideals quite remarkable. We have suffered through one of the bloodiest, deadliest days on American soil. We know that there are people in the world who hate us and wouldn't think twice about killing any one of us.

Yet, in our fear and grief and anger, there is also a deep-rooted decency and sense of fairness. This fact is clearer now than ever before.

We want to protect the rights even of those who might have contributed to this horror. We want to protect the civilians in Afghanistan from the bombing. We're concerned that we're not dropping enough food to feed their hungry citizens.

I know we don't all agree on what's right. Some believe we ought to bomb Afghanistan into a grease spot. Some think we ought to deport all Arabs. Some are hoarding Cipro at the possible expense of the rest of us. But for these folks, too, I am grateful.

We live in a land of great privilege; we have the resources and freedom to publicize our opinions, or to be selfish and myopic, without much risk of repercussion.

Perhaps this feeds our enemies' ambitions. They know we could never be like them, despite our great power. And that means we'll always be more vulnerable. Some frantic traveler will always slip by security to catch his plane. Some foreign suspect will always slip through our clutches because we adhered to judicial process.

But that is precisely what I am most thankful for during this time of thanksgiving. We are scared and angry and confused. We want to wrap our hands around Osama bin Laden and make him pay for the evil he has brought to our shores.

Yet we continue the struggle to hold to our ideals, even though it means we'll sometimes fail and embarrass ourselves.

I hope next Thanksgiving I can say the same thing.

Joan Ryan is a columnist for the San Francisco Chronicle. Send comments to her e-mail at joanryan@sfgate.com.

Getting ready for New Year's



red green

• north of forty

I want to talk to all the middle-aged guys out celebrating New Year's this year. This may seem premature, but don't be fooled. It's never too soon to start thinking about the traditional midnight New Year's kiss. You don't want to screw it up again this year. You only have to remember one thing — kiss your wife first. Excuses don't work. Like "I thought I was kissing you," or "I tried to, but someone else's lips got in the way," or worse still, "Come on, honey, it's New Year's. I'm supposed to have fun."

Now, in order to kiss your wife at midnight, you have to be able to find her. That means you need to stay relatively sober throughout the evening. If you're too inebriated to see, you can't recognize your wife. Braille is not an option. And after you do find her, and you're kissing her like she's your own personal Beauty Queen, don't be simultaneously making eye contact with Miss Congeniality. A split focus at that crucial moment can lead to other splits — a split lip, a splitting headache, or even a splitting wife. Don't use New Year's as an excuse to reconnect with ex-girlfriends. Should old acquaintance be forgot? Absolutely. Especially if she's attractive, and she's at the party, and she's carrying around pictures of a 12-year-old boy who looks exactly like you.

THE NO-FAULT DENT

You just got home and found a new dent in your car. A dent your wife put there. You're about to go right off the deep end. But be careful. A lot of guys have drowned underestimating just how deep the

deep end is. I know you've never put a dent in the car. Other people have. Like, when that idiot tore the door off when you left it open to go into the store to buy milk. Or when you got rear-ended because some goof didn't notice that you stopped on the highway to pick up what you thought was a dime. Or when the engine seized because none of your friends reminded you to check the oil. You know your wife's not so careful with the car as you are. But you don't need to get bent out of shape about a little dent and cause a head-on collision. Don't be the one trapped in your vehicle. Your mouth may be big, but it's not the jaws of life. Just smile and say, "That's OK, Honey." I know you still love your car. Just not enough to sleep in it.

MUM'S THE WORD

Although we like to talk, here are some times when middle-aged men should not say anything:

- Whenever you're wrong.
- Whenever you're right.
- Whenever you're in the presence of an expert or your wife.
- While the cop is writing the ticket.
- Whenever anyone is trying to place respon-

sibility, blame, or charges.

PACKAGING MATTERS

Recently, I bought a cartridge for my printer. It came in a box mounted on a card and wrapped in plastic. When I took it apart, I found that the printer cartridge itself was actually quite small, but they made the packaging unnecessarily large to make it harder to steal and to make the customer feel better about the high price. I pointed this out to my wife and mentioned how my weight gain over the years of our marriage should have the same effect: It made me seem more valuable and also made me harder for other women to steal.

QUOTE OF THE DAY: "When you sell your house and move into an apartment, you have fewer stairs, but more stares." — Red Green

Red Green is the star of "The Red Green Show," a television series seen in the U.S. on PBS and in Canada on the CBC Network, and the author of "The Red Green Book" and "Red Green Talks Cars: A Love Story."

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