

commentary

from other pens...

Sebelius crashes party, protects consumers?

The Wichita Eagle on Blue Cross decision:

Kansas Insurance Commissioner Kathleen Sebelius crashed the wedding of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas and Anthem Insurance Companies Inc., effectively sending the for-profit suitor back home to Indiana.

It was nervy of Ms. Sebelius to deny policyholders their part of the proceeds of the sale, which 63.4 percent of 100,000 voting policyholders had approved in January. It was also nervy to block a transaction that met legal requirements.

But what Ms. Sebelius says goes in this arrangement... And she says the marriage would have subjected those 715,000 Kansans covered by Blue Cross to "millions of dollars in increased premiums" — echoing the harshly worded, though speculative, conclusion by a state legal team last month that premiums would have jumped \$248 million over the next five years to keep up with Anthem's profit margins.

Now, the question becomes what will happen to Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas in the absence of this deal.

It's naive to think this merger proposition will be the not-for-profit company's last...

We hope politics weren't at play here, that Ms. Sebelius called it according to the numbers and not the need to shore up her reputation as a consumer champion. Either way, though, Ms. Sebelius will likely trumpet her rejection of the Anthem-BCBS deal from here to November as evidence of how much, if elected governor, she would value Kansans' health and pocketbooks.

In embracing the critics' predictions of higher premiums, Ms. Sebelius has surprised many. And, in the short term, Blue Cross Blue Shield customers in Kansas may consider themselves safeguarded by Ms. Sebelius' intervention. Only time and the market will tell, though, how long — and how strongly — Blue Cross can go it alone.

The Hutchinson News on redistricting:

Laura McClure gave her life — her political life — so that other Democrats might live.

Republicans should be ashamed.

McClure represents the mostly Republican 119th House District. And she keeps winning.

Elected in 1993, she's now the ranking Democrat on the House Utilities Committee. But that's the problem.

She's a Democrat...

Rep. Clay Aurand, a Republican from Courtland, told McClure that the Hays map would survive under only one condition — she had to promise GOP leaders that she would not run against (Rep. Dan) Johnson (R-Hays).

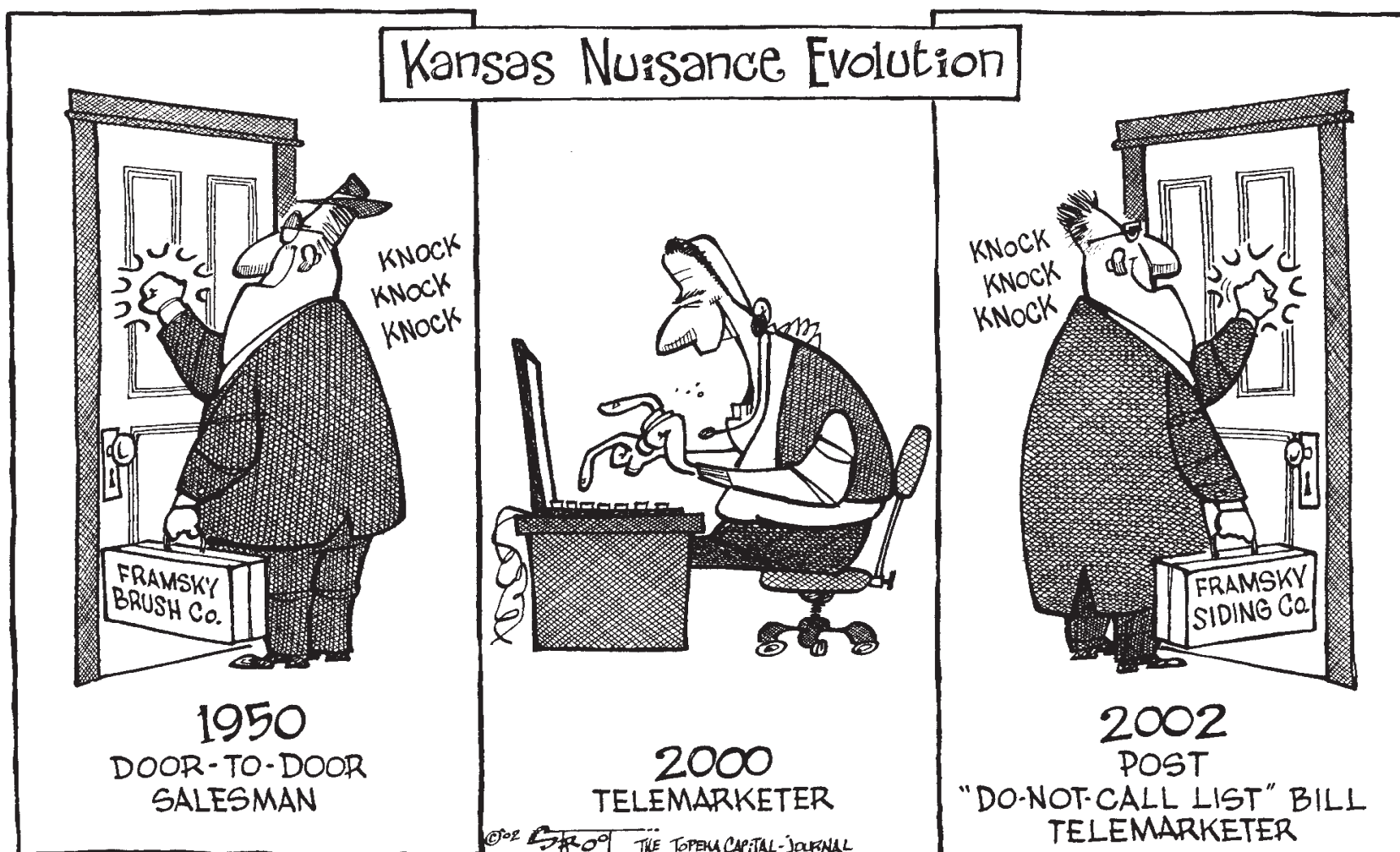
So she made the promise.

Johnson said he plans to vote for the new map, although he denies any knowledge of the GOP's deal with McClure.

Republicans accomplished their goal; they eliminated one more Democratic incumbent, padding their 79-46 lead in the House. But they also hurt themselves.

From now on, Johnson must live with the knowledge his own party considers him so weak it was forced to strike a deal to protect him from a Democrat. But even worse, the Kansas GOP robbed voters — mostly Republican voters — of a popular and effective lawmaker...

Strong-arming Laura McClure works against the public interest. And in the end, it will work against the GOP as well.



Looking at the history of one of life's little vices

It seems to me one of life's little vices for some is drinking coffee.

According to historians, weary travelers would chew on coffee cherries and the fruit inside to sustain them on their journeys. It is not known when the transition was made from "chewing the fruit" to "brewing the beans."

The coffee plant is a member of the genus *coffea* of the rubiaceae family. This family has 500 genera and 6,000 species of tropical trees and shrubs.

Two major commercial types are *Coffea arabica* and *Coffea canephora* (var. *robusta*).

Seventy percent of the coffee production is Arabica or "Brazils" or "Other Milds." Typica and Burbon are the two best known. Other varieties are Casturra (from Brazil and Columbia), Mundo Novo (from Brazil), Tico (from Central America), San Ramon and Jamacian Blue Mountain.

The trees or shrubs mature in three to four years and bear fruit for 20 to 30 years. They need temperatures between 59-75 degrees Fahrenheit and 60 inches of rainfall a year.

Robusta grows up to 32 feet in height as a shrub or tree. The fruit is round and takes a year to mature. It grows in West and Central Africa, Southeast Asia, and parts of South America, including Brazil. The plant prefers equatorial conditions of 75-85 degrees Fahrenheit and 60 inches of rain annually.

The coffee fruit turns red when ready. Arabica takes six to eight months and robusta nine to 11 months. The majority is picked by hand in strip or selective picking.

There are two methods to process the fruit. The dry method is the traditional. The fruit is spread on a hard surface to dry for seven to 10 days, turned occasionally and then stored.

The wet method uses a pulp machine that sepa-



pat schiefen

• postscript

rates the pulp from the bean within 12-24 hours of harvesting. The heavier mature beans are separated from the immature ones. The beans are stored in fermentation tanks for 12 to 48 hours.

The next step is drying. The layer over the bean, the endocarp, must be dried to 11 percent moisture either by the sun or mechanically for seven to 15 days. This "parchment coffee" remains until immediately before export. Hulling is the next step.

The coffee beans are then graded and sorted. They are graded by size first and then density. The size of beans ranges from 10 to 20, representing the size in increments of 1/64s of an inch. The sizing can be done with screens or by a pneumatic method using an air jet. Removal of over-fermented or unhusked beans is usually done by hand. Seven million tons of green coffee (coffee beans before they are roasted) are exported a year.

Connoisseurs maintain taste characteristics vary depending where the coffee is grown. Like wine or honey, the best can come from a single farm or estate.

The coffee is evaluated by brewing and determining the characteristics. Tasting coffee is referred to as "cupping," a rigorous and disciplined process. The taster (liquorer) first assesses the green beans for appearance. The coffee is infused with water and the taster "noses" the brew. After three minutes the brew is lightly stirred and smelled again. The resulting foam is removed and the tasting begins.

The cupper takes a spoonful of coffee into their

mouth and "chews" it around before spitting it out.

Roasting is the heat treatment that transforms the green beans into the familiar brown coffee beans we buy. Four hundred degree Fahrenheit turns the beans dark brown and the oils (coffee essence, coffee oil or cafeeol) start to emerge. The roaster uses air temperatures of 550 degrees and the beans are continually moved to keep them from burning. Roasting occurs in the importing country.

The freshest coffee is newly roasted and ground. In our part of the world, getting freshly roasted coffee could be hard. However, as whole beans are readily available, you could grind your own beans. Beans maintain their freshness better than ground. Once a bean is ground, oxidation quickly damages the aromatics. Beans store better in air tight containers and in the freezer.

Going down the aisle in the grocery store, the coffee section has dramatically changed in the last few years. There is not only the traditional can of ground coffee, there are whole bean coffees, flavored coffees, instant coffees, lattes, espressos and mochas.

A few of the basics to keep in mind to have that perfect cup of coffee are the brewing method and equipment, correct amount of coffee, correct grind and good quality drinking water. Since water is 98 percent of the beverage in your cup, use good water.

The three T's of coffee making are time, temperature and turbulence. To achieve the proper "extraction," the water must be between 195 and 200 degrees Fahrenheit or "just off boil."

This ends my exploration into coffee and has satisfied my curiosity.

My grandmother used to say you weren't grown up until you drink coffee, which to this day I don't. However, I do love the smell of hazelnut coffee. It is just heavenly.

The Goodland Daily News

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562)
Member: Kansas Press Association
The Associated Press

Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association
National Newspaper Association
e-mail: daily@nwkansan.com



Steve Haynes, President
Tom Betz, Editor/Editorial Page
Rachel Miscall, Managing Editor
Pat Schiefen, Copy Editor
Doug Stephens, Sports Editor



Sharon Corcoran, Society Editor Skilar Boland, Reporter
Eric Yonkey, Bill Wagoner, Advertising Sales
James Schiefen, Adv. Production Sheila Smith, Office Manager

Nor'west Press

Jim Bowker, General Manager

Richard Westfahl Ron VanLoenen Judy McKnight
Betty Morris Lana Westfahl Lori Weiss

nwkansan.com

N.T. Betz, Director of Internet Services (nbetz@nwkansan.com)
Evan Barnum, Systems Admin. (support@nwkansan.com)

Published daily except Saturday and Sunday and the day observed for New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day, at 1205 Main St., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

Periodicals postage paid at Goodland, Kan. 67735; entered at the Goodland, Kan., Post Office under the Act of Congress of March 8, 1878.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Goodland Daily News, 1205 Main St., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: daily@nwkansan.com. Advertising questions can be sent to: gdnadv@nwkansan.com

The Goodland Daily News assumes no liability for mistakes or omissions in advertising or failure to publish beyond the actual cost of the ad.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: In Sherman County and adjacent counties: three months, \$25; six months, \$42; 12 months, \$75. Out of area, weekly mailing of five issues: three months, \$30; six months, \$49; 12 months, \$80. By mail daily in Kansas, Colorado: 12 months, \$115. (All tax included.)

Incorporating:

The Sherman County Herald
Founded by Thomas McCants
1935-1989

THE SHERMAN COUNTY STAR
Founded by Eric and Roxie Yonkey
1994-2001

Nor'West Newspapers

Haynes Publishing Company

We're working to keep rural Kansas senators

Oh, what an odyssey. Two senators, one labeled a very conservative republican with a streak of populism as an advocate for family farms; the second a rural democrat and chief water carrier for the Kansas Livestock Association. Both are very independent, furiously loyal to their beliefs but respectful to the ideas of those who do not agree with them.

It was obvious to all throughout the redistricting process on the Senate Reapportionment Committee that leadership wanted to get rid of either Stan Clark or Janis Lee. It really made no difference which one, the goal was to keep them busy for the next three summers campaigning so they wouldn't have time to build coalitions within the Senate on issues they both hold dear.

Stan and Janis have a tremendous amount of respect for each other, those issues they agree on (which is probably 85 percent to 90 percent of the time) they form a formidable duo. Those issues where they disagree, they respect each other's view and recognize if either one of them is removed from the Senate that perspective will not be heard either in committee or on the floor of the Senate.

They are the only two Senators that live north and west of Salina. Both try to be attentive to all their constituents and drive many miles, and attend many meetings and events in the 9 1/2 counties that Janis currently represents and the 15 counties Stan currently represents. Their homes are over 140 miles apart.

Over the past decade both districts witnessed the aging of their constituency and the migration of their youth from their farms and small communities. The 2000 census determined that the ideal Kansas Senate district would represent 66,806 Kansans and found the population of Janis' district 10,973 short and Stan's district 9,533 short of this ideal.

The courts have ruled a 5 percent deviation from this ideal is permissible in drawing new districts and last fall they determined a map could be drawn which would still allow each of the 40 Senators to maintain the core of their current district. They assumed they could get enough of their colleagues to support this concept. That with enough individual personal attention to the majority of the senators they could understand how each one of them defined their core constituency within their current district and draw a map accordingly.



stan clark

• newsletter

The senators from counties that grew in population over the past decade fiercely opposed this idea because they wanted to gain additional representation and remember that a 5 percent deviation can move a considerable amount of territory around on a map. Janis and Stan wanted to keep rural districts light and make the urban areas heavy in population. Their justification was that travel time to reach constituents in rural areas offsets the compactness of urban districts with a few more people. Urban legislators wanted to keep their districts light because they represent areas which are witnessing growth in population and over the next 10 years this imbalance will be more pronounced.

The Kansas Senate politically has 30 Republicans and 10 Democrats. Within each party are various factions and neither party has been able to come together on a common issue. The Democrats knew that they could not control the map drawing process and were in damage control mode. The Republicans have differences within themselves and even the liberal and conservative wings do not form neatly defined groups.

From October through January, Janis and Stan tried to sell the concept of each senator maintaining their core constituency but in the end failed because other rural senators would not support them. It is still difficult for them to understand why senators from rural districts would not join them. They only needed five more rural senators to support them but couldn't get them.

They tried working with all ideologies and were hopeful many times only to see the group fall apart later. Conceding one rural Senate district Janis agreed to run against Larry Salmans if she could maintain 40 percent of her current population base. Thirty-six hours before the bill was to come before the floor of the Senate a combination of 10 democrats, 7 of the most conservative republican senators and 5 of the strongest republican advocates for increased funding for public education fell apart. Janis was in tears and the 10 democrats and 7 conservatives were literally driven to their knees as the

clock was running out.

One last Hail Mary was planned. Senator Kay O'Connor, a republican senator from Olathe who last summer was unmercifully plummeted in the media for remarks attributed to her about not believing in the right to women's vote, drew a Johnson County map the way it should be done. Susan Wagle, a republican Wichita senator had to be convinced to sit down with her democrat colleagues from Wichita and agree on a map for Sedgwick County. With these two items accomplished, Susan had to convince another Sedgwick County Senator and 2 Johnson County Senators.

While stories could be written that would fill pages of this newsletter, this was accomplished. This is the most important vote we have made in our legislative careers and certainly the most mentally, emotionally and physically draining.

Your northwest Kansas senators,
Janis Lee, D-Kensington
Stan Clark, R-Oakley

berry's world



"SECURITY!"

© 2002 by NEA, Inc.
www.comics.com