

# commentary

from our viewpoint...

## Governor's race offers clear choice for change

One candidate in the Republican race for governor offers a clear choice, a chance to change the way things are in Topeka. That is Tim Shallenburger, the current state treasurer and former Speaker of the House.

Shallenburger operates with a well-defined set of beliefs. He thinks state government should shrink, not grow, and he wants decisions to be made back at the local level. He believes in individual rights, not government.

The Baxter Springs banker makes no bones about his conservative point of view, but that is not such a bad thing.

His principle opponents in the Republican primary include Sen. David Kerr, who as president of the Kansas Senate led the moderate forces in Topeka this year. He consistently came down on the side of more spending and bigger government, so you could say he has a point of view also.

Call Sen. Kerr the leading liberal Republican in the race. Many would say that the session showed him to be ineffectual at building a consensus among the three factions in the Senate or at setting an agenda for the state.

The other main candidate is Bob Knight, mayor of Wichita, who mostly has avoided aligning with any group in Topeka, but seems to be more of a moderate than a conservative. His running mate, Speaker of the House Kent Glasscock, is part and parcel of the dominant moderate (or liberal) wing of the Republican Party, and his wife works for Gov. Bill Graves.

Knight has led a campaign to reduce electric rates in Wichita at the expense of people in the northeast part of the state, a fact which won't endear him to many voters outside his home town. He's popular in Wichita, though, having been mayor not once but for two separate stretches. There's even a freeway named after him.

When he came to Oberlin — something the other candidates have not done — Shallenburger was forthright about his beliefs. It wasn't what the man asking the question wanted to hear at all, but the treasurer said he wouldn't back a state law barring counties from regulating livestock operations.

That kind of decision, he said, is best made at the local level, not by state bureaucrats.

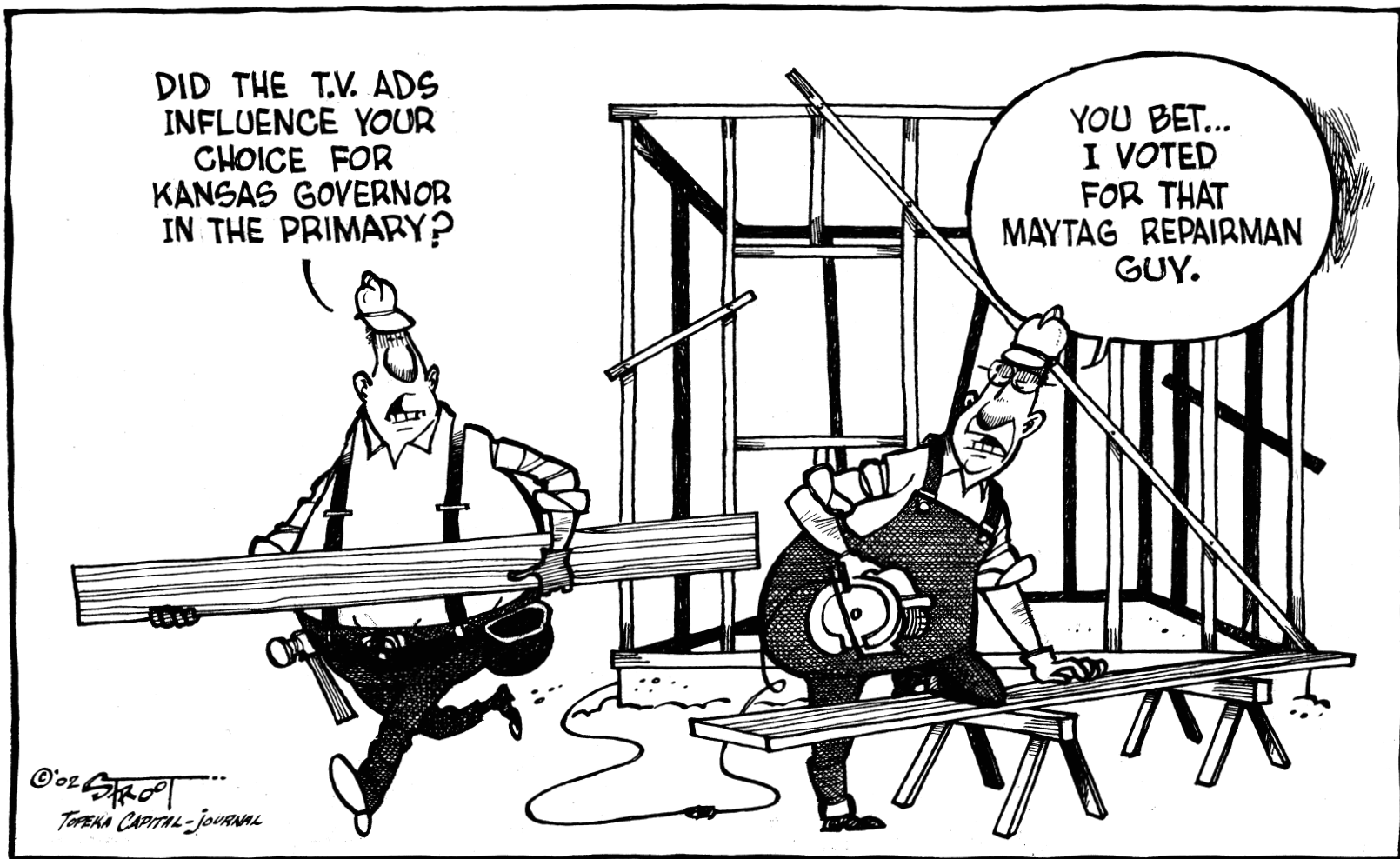
Some criticize him for cutting taxes when he was speaker, but since when is cutting taxes when the state has a surplus a bad thing? Seems to us that the mistake in Topeka was to increase spending the last four years, when taxes were not coming in.

Unless you believe there is no waste in state government, and it's a good thing for the bureaucracy to grow, then Shallenburger's positions make sense.

So vote for him, not the tax-and-spend candidates Knight and Kerr. — Steve Haynes

### where to write

- U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 302 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, 1217 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 225-2715
- State Rep. Jim Morrison, State Capitol Building Rm. 174-W, Topeka, KS 66612. (785) 296-7676
- State Sen. Stan Clark, State Capitol Building Rm. 128-S, Topeka, KS 66612. (785) 296-7399
- Kansas Attorney General Carla J. Stovall, 301 S.W. 10th, Lower Level, Topeka, KS 66612-1597 (785) 296-3751 Fax (785) 291-3699 TTY: (785) 291-3767



## We missed the train — first time in 20 years!

We hadn't missed a train in 20 years — until last weekend.

I remember the last time. It was one Thanksgiving when we lived in Colorado. We were headed home to Kansas to visit our folks.

We had gotten our train tickets a long time in advance, knowing that Thanksgiving is a big travel time. We planned to catch the train at Trinidad, a three-hour drive from our home in Creede. We planned for plenty of time. We hoped to get a pizza at the hut across from the station while we waited.

We drove into the station in time to see the tail lights of the train heading down the tracks.

A helpful station agent — they actually had some in those days — showed us a back road that he said never had any state patrol officers on it. There were none that night, anyway. We headed for the next stop at 90 mph and boarded the train in La Junta, following those red tail lights through the night all the way.

When it was all sorted out, we found out that we had fallen victim to the fall schedule change, which had come after we bought our tickets. Nobody bothered to tell us the train was leaving two hours earlier.



**cynthia haynes**

• open season

This time, we didn't even have that excuse. We were going on the Denver Post train to Cheyenne for the Frontier Days rodeo. It was to be a full day, starting when the train left Union Station precisely at 7 a.m. and ending about 12 hours later. In the middle, there would be visits to the Frontier Days parade, a barbecue at the fairgrounds, tickets to the rodeo, visits to the carnival and Indian village set up each year and music. We had bought our tickets as soon as the brochure reached us so we could secure good seats in the dome car. We drove to Denver on Friday and stayed at a hotel. On Saturday morning, we were up at 5:45 a.m. and walked to the station. It seemed strangely vacant. The parking lot had only a handful of cars. Where was the hustle and

bustle of the train, which hauls almost a thousand people to Wyoming every year?

We checked our tickets. They said Saturday, July 20.

It was July 27. We had missed our train by a full week.

We sat on a bench and stared at each other. We were in total shock.

Steve remembered that we had been told the date of the 2002 train last year on the return trip. We had written it down in our date books and not checked when the information came in to see if there had been a change.

Obviously, there had been.

As we sat there we realized that the Ski Train was getting ready to take people up to Winter Park for the day. We decided to make lemonade and bought two tickets.

We had a great day in Winter Park, a tourist community that does most of its business from the ski trade but has plenty to do in the summer.

I know we learned a lesson, and a fairly expensive one at that. But, we had a great day and it should be at least another 20 years before we miss another train.

## How we were saved from 'Big Brothers'

In China, Cuba, and other countries where dissent to government policies is dangerous, local watch committees in neighborhoods there monitor signs of disloyalty to the state. It almost happened here in the name of homeland defense.

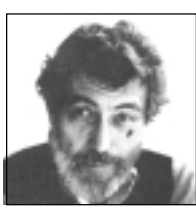
As our government's Citizens Corps Web site ([www.citizenscorps.gov/tips.html](http://www.citizenscorps.gov/tips.html)) reported in July, we were about to experience similar continual surveillance under "Operation TIPS, administered by the U.S. Department of Justice ... a national system for reporting suspicious and potentially terrorist-related activity." A program that will "involve the millions of American workers who, in the daily course of their work, are in a unique position to see potentially unusual or suspicious activity in public places."

In May, the same Web site detailed who would be watching over us in this nationwide operation: "millions of American truckers, letter carriers, train conductors, ship captains, utility employees and others" will be part of the "pilot program that will be selected in 10 cities." Had this been approved, it would have been enacted this August.

Each watcher would have a toll-free number that "connected directly to a hotline — routing calls to the proper law enforcement agency or other responding organizations."

In "1984," George Orwell wrote of a government run by the all-seeing "Big Brother." I have no doubt there are terrorist "sleepers" among us; but Attorney General John Ashcroft and President Bush had yet to tell us — as Operation TIPS was about to get underway — how the Justice Department was going to instruct its millions of informants on the definition "suspicious terrorist activity."

Before Dick Arme, a vigilant Republican House leader, stopped — for now — Operation TIPS, New York Daily News columnist Zev Chafets warned us — in his July 17 column — what



**nat hentoff**

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the return of "Big Brother" could mean as our Constitution was being amended without consultation by Congress, and without the vote of the citizenry. Chafets, a hardliner on national security, after his years in the Israeli government, pointed out:

"Once TIPS gets going people can drop a dime on anyone — farmers with barrels of fertilizer in their trucks, stock boys with box cutters, the loud neighbor next door. Who is to say they don't merit investigation?"

Ellen Sorokin reported in The Washington Times on July 19, "House Majority Leader Dick Arme, in his markup of legislation to create a Homeland Security Department ... scrapped a program that would use volunteers in domestic surveillance." And before that, the Postal Service refused to allow its letter carriers to participate in Operation TIPS. The Postal Service deserves our appreciation.

Arme, a conservative, merits the Liberty Medal for reminding Ashcroft and Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge (a supporter of Operation TIPS) that, as the president has said all along and sometimes forgets, everything we do for national security must be within the bounds of the Constitution. "Citizens," Arme said recently on NBC's "Meet The Press," "should not be spying on one another."

In evaluating the 216-page bill creating a Homeland Security Department, Arme also rejected a national identification card, which the president advocates, saying that the "Authority to design and

issue these cards shall remain with the states." More important, he added that, "The use of biometric identifiers and Social Security numbers with these cards is not consistent with a free society."

"Mr. Arme's bill," Sorokin wrote, "also would create a 'privacy officer' in the Homeland Security Department, which he said was the first ever established by law in a Cabinet agency. Mr. Arme said this person would ensure technology research and new regulations from the [Homeland Security] Department [and would] respect the civil liberties of our citizens enjoy."

How close we came to being watched by a network of officially designated domestic spies puts in question — not for the first time — the judgment of Ashcroft, Ridge and Bush when it comes to protecting our fundamental liberties. Operation TIPS' full name was the Terrorism Information and Prevention System. We do need such a system — but we need one conducted by professional law-enforcement people trained in detecting terrorist-related activity.

The new "privacy officer" in the Homeland Security Department is a useful first step, but Congress has to be much more vigilant in guarding our Constitutional liberties from further raids by the Justice Department, its FBI and its boss: Attorney General John Ashcroft. Disturbed reactions around the country to Operation TIPS should remind the attorney general that we Americans are watching him.

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