

# commentary

from other pens...

## Dome statue questions put artist in the middle

### The Garden City Telegram on Statehouse statue:

The statue of the Kansa Indian, secured to the back of a flatbed, drew dozens of curious onlookers in Garden City Saturday, many chatting up artist Richard Bergen, whose only goal is to see it finally affixed atop the Capitol in Topeka.

That's scheduled for Oct. 7, after the statue winds its way across the state on a 50-city tour...

The statue has been on Bergen's calendar since 1988, when it was first commissioned. Expenses to secure the dome and political haggling since then have stymied completion until now...

While one can empathize with the man caught in the middle of the issue, Kansans have every right, indeed obligation, to pose tough questions to their elected representatives and wonder out loud if now is the time to be spending money on this, or any other special project.

And they have. Kansans have opined on the statue, as well as transportation and school funding, among others. What is it they say about a fool and his money? It would certainly be a fool's game not to pay attention to what lawmakers were doing to our pocketbooks.

Expect a beaming smile on Bergen's face when a crane drops "Ad Astra" onto its proper place. He should smile, he's earned it for a job well done.

At the same time, Kansans can use the statue as a reminder of their role in keeping fiscal responsibility on the legislative agenda.

### The Manhattan Mercury on Graves' endorsement of Shallenburger:

Gov. Bill Graves endorsement Thursday of his party's nominee to replace him wasn't much of a surprise, but neither will it likely have the impact it could have.

The governor endorsed state Treasurer Tim Shallenburger...not because he agrees with Mr. Shallenburger. Rather, calling party loyalty the "primary factor." Gov. Graves endorsed Mr. Shallenburger because partisan duty compelled him to do so...

Gov. Graves' endorsement can indeed benefit Mr. Shallenburger, if...the governor becomes actively involved in the campaign...

But the governor's endorsement falls well short of closing the rift between moderate Republicans and conservatives...

Lt. Gov. Gary Sherrer...didn't pull his punches reacting to the governor's endorsement.

"Integrity comes before unity," Lt. Gov. Sherrer said, adding, "We're talking about the future of the state, and I just don't think the folks who are his core supporters see the state the way I do."

Whether Mr. Shallenburger prevails in November could well depend on how many moderate Republicans follow Gov. Graves and how many "see the state" the way Lt. Gov. Sherrer does.

## where to write

**U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts**, 302 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774

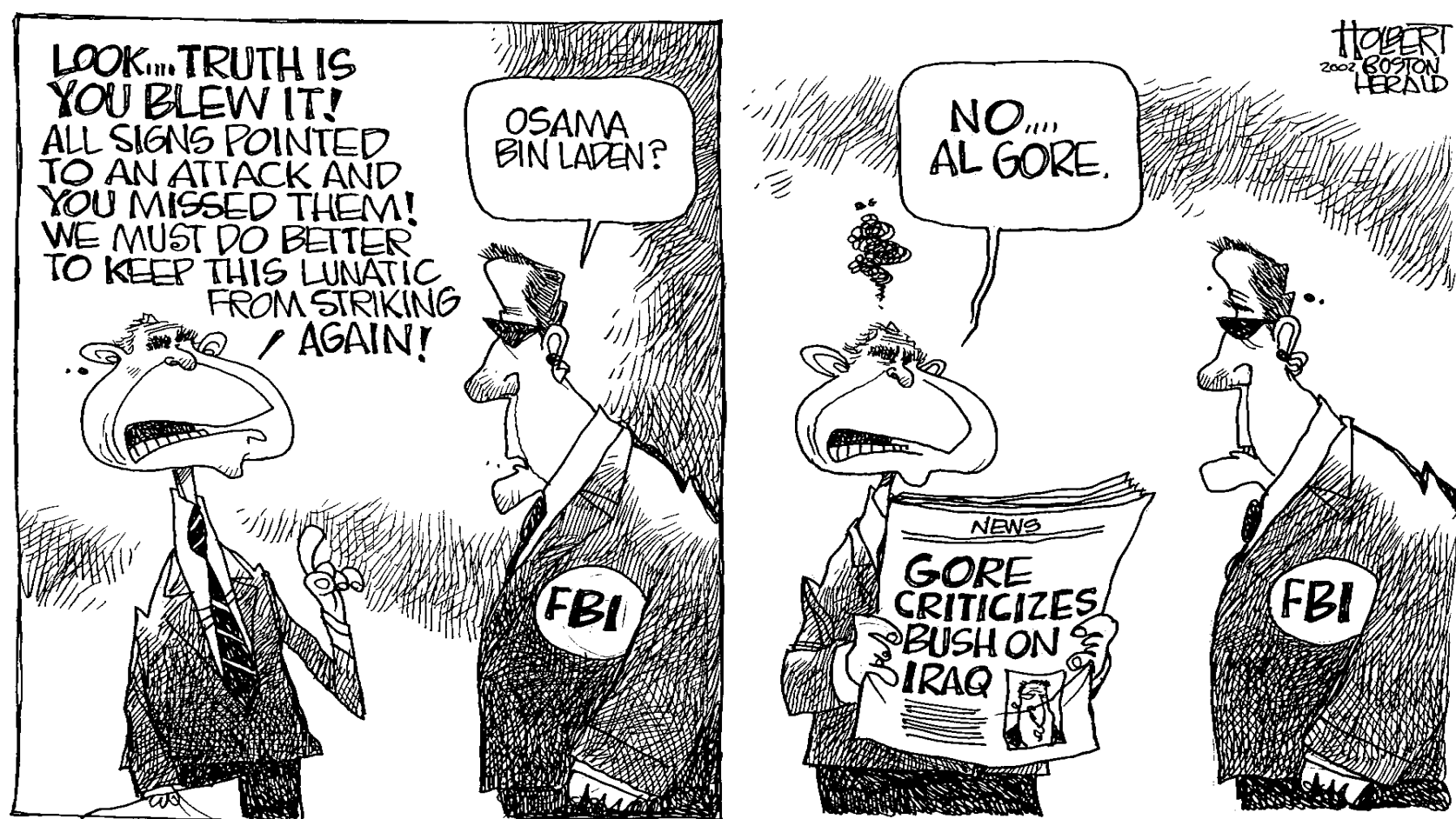
**U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback**, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521

**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



## Reading helps make wise credit card decisions

Dear Kansas Consumer:

Each year, my office receives a fair amount of complaints that involve credit cards. Before consumers apply for credit cards, they need to read all of the information that accompanies a credit application. Otherwise, those consumers may end up with charges on their card they did not know they would be responsible for, and terms and conditions vary greatly between credit offers. Listed here are some terms and conditions found on typical credit card statements and applications.

**APR**—The annual percentage rate is the yearly interest rate you pay on any outstanding balance. This is something that should be compared between card offers before a choice is made.

**Grace period**—This is the time between the date of a purchase and the date interest starts being charged on that purchase. If a card has a standard grace period, consumers have an opportunity to avoid finance charges by paying their current balance in full. If there is no grace period, the issuer imposes a finance charge from the date the card is used or from the date each transaction is posted to



**carla j. stovall**

• consumer corner

the account.

**Annual fees**—Many credit card issuers charge an annual fee for granting credit, typically \$15 to \$55. Some issuers charge no annual fee.

**Transaction fees and other charges**—Some credit card issuers charge a fee if the card is used to get a cash advance, if a payment is not made on time, or if the credit limit is exceeded. Some issuers may charge a flat fee every month whether or not the card is used.

Owning a credit card brings with it certain obligations and responsibilities. Consumers must never give out the number or expiration date to an unknown person or business, especially over the telephone. The card must be kept in a safe place to

prevent theft, and each billing statement should be reviewed promptly so that questionable charges can be reported in writing to the card issuer.

Finally, keep careful track of each time the credit card is used. It is easy to accumulate a large balance on a credit card very quickly, and since the consumer is responsible for paying for purchases plus interest, that balance can end up being a large amount.

Use credit wisely and be disciplined in making purchases on credit.

*Attorney General Carla J. Stovall offers this public service to help you avoid becoming a victim of consumer fraud. Although some of the details have been changed, the cases appearing in this column are based on actual complaints. For further information or to file a complaint, please write Attorney General Carla J. Stovall, Consumer Protection Division, 120 SW 10th, 2nd Floor, Topeka, Kansas 66612, or call the toll-free Consumer Hotline, 1-800-432-2310. Leave your name, number and subject of your inquiry with the receptionist and your call will be returned promptly.*

## Wedding band blues



**jim mullen**

• the village idiot

Sue and I have stopped going to wedding receptions. We got tired of sitting in front of the speakers. The bride and groom seem to think we've made some special request to be deafened by the band. It's always so loud we can't speak to each other much less the other guests.

We sit and smile and nod while the bride's father is talking to us. "Ain't that the truth," "I know what you mean," and "You can say that again," we say over and over because we cannot hear a word he's saying.

The only thing we have to go on is the expression on his face. For all we know, he is complaining about the loud music, too. The music is not just loud, it's bad. It has been picked especially to annoy me. I wouldn't like this crap at a normal volume. Now that it's making my hair blow in the breeze of the speaker I really hate it. I don't know what message the happy couple think they're sending us, but the message I'm receiving is "Give us an expensive present and get the hell out. My parents made me invite you. They said you might be good for a cappuccino machine."

Which brings up another sore point. We may stop giving presents, too. When we were still going to weddings there was always the slim chance that the happy couple might still be married by the next time we saw them, say a few weeks later at the baby

shower. No more. More than once we have gotten an invitation to the second wedding before we have gotten a "Thank You" note for the first.

We will run into the bride's parents at the grocery store and find out that the first husband's gone, she's got two kids under 2, and they are in an expensive custody battle over his frozen sperm. He never spent any time with the kids when they were married, which is one reason why they're getting divorced. Now he's suing for full and complete custody, he can't bear to be away from the little dears for a single moment. And by the way, she really likes the cappuccino machine you gave them. She's just a little late with the "Thank You" notes. She's been so busy going to all her girlfriends' second weddings, don't you know. She can't wait to see you at her next wedding, though. This time she's registered at Jacoby and Meyers. And she wants you to know they've hired a really good local band. Thunder and Lightning. It's the only group in the tri-state region with two drum-

mers and two bass players.

Of course, we knew from the git-go that this marriage was not going to work. It's Mullen's Laws of Matrimony. The more a couple slobbers over each other during the ceremony, the shorter the marriage. The couple that writes the sappiest, most puke-inducing vows will have the most acrimonious divorce. The couple that gets married while performing a stunt like jumping out of an airplane or scuba diving will separate after the first child. The marriage on a mountaintop with his-and-hers barefoot ministers and a tofu wedding cake will last until the kids start home schooling. If the wedding takes place in Las Vegas the marriage will last one year. A marriage in Las Vegas by an Elvis imitator will last one week.

Sue and I are thinking of stopping our mail service, too. Three or four times a year we get a note in the mail from some town in another state from one half of a formerly happy couple that always starts with, "Alice and I hadn't been happy for a long time." I'd rather sit in front of a speaker than read the rest of this. He forgets we know Alice. She was plenty happy.

*Jim Mullen is the author of "It Takes A Village Idiot: A Memoir of Life After the City" (Simon and Schuster, 2001). He also contributes regularly to Entertainment Weekly, where his email is jim\_mullen@ew.com.*

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With gardens phasing out here is a juice recipe to use some of that home grown goodness.

#### V-5 Vegetable Juice

- 6 fresh tomatoes
  - 4 green onions
  - 1/2 cup fresh parsley
  - 1/4 green bell pepper
  - 1 celery stalk
  - 1 teaspoon salt
  - 2 teaspoon sugar
  - 1/8 teaspoon pepper
  - 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
  - 1 dash Tabasco sauce
- Place all the ingredients in a blender. Cover and blend on high until the mixture is smooth. Pour into glasses, straining first to catch peels and pulp. Serve immediately. Serves 6. If too thick thin with a small amount of water. Cost per serving (1 cup) 44¢.

The rest of the following recipes are just very cost effective. All the recipes are from 'Miserly Meals' by Jonni McCoy.

#### Jam Chicken

- 2 tablespoons jam (jelly is too thin)
- 3 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger or 1 teaspoon powdered ginger and 1/4 teaspoon pepper and 1/2 teaspoon lemon juice

1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breast  
Combine the jam, soy sauce, water, and ginger in a bowl and mix well. Add chicken and toss to cover completely with sauce. Place on a baking sheet and bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees. Serves 4. For added flavor marinate the chicken in the sauce for 2 to 3 hours before cooking. Can



**pat schiefen**

• postscript

be cooked in a slow cooker on low for 4 hours. Cost per serving (1/4 pound) 66¢.

#### Tuna Loaf

- 2 6 ounce cans tuna in water, drained or any canned fish can be substituted
- 2 egg whites
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 cup bread crumbs
- 1/2 teaspoon celery salt
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3 tablespoon dried parsley
- 2 tablespoon chopped onion

Combine all the ingredients in a bowl and mix well. Grease bread loaf pan and place mixture in the pan. Pan should be about half full. Bake at 400 degrees for 30 minutes. Check after 20 minutes and if top is browning too fast reduce heat to 350 degrees for the rest of the baking time. Serves 4. Cost per serving (3/4 cup) 26¢.

#### Baked Buffalo Wings

- 2 tablespoon butter, melted
  - 1/4 cup Tabasco sauce
  - 2 tablespoons vinegar, any type
  - 5 pounds chicken wings
- Mix in a bowl the melted butter, Tabasco sauce, and vinegar. Dip chicken into the mixture. Place on a lightly oiled baking sheet. Bake 30 minutes at

350 degrees. Serve with your choice of dressing for dipping. Serves 12. Cost per serving (3 wings) 32¢.

There are also recipes for Italian Seasoning, broth powder, flavored creamer and ginger dressing. The broth powder would have a lower salt content than commercial. This book is available at Knott Just Books.

## berry's world



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