

# commentary

from other pens...

## Many consolidation ideas are on target

Consolidation may well turn out as the buzz word of this legislative session.

Conversations are taking place all over the state regarding a peek into the possibilities of consolidating services as a means of saving money

Lawmakers last week began discussions with educators over the current make up of the state's public school system and whether there may be efficiencies that can be realized. There are currently 303 school districts in Kansas, and it's highly likely some should merge to save expenses and to offer a better education for their kids.

Small districts are at a disadvantage in providing the proper educational tools for students. Moreover, small districts struggle to offer much-needed extracurricular activities to students.

Reno County officials are lunching with officials from the city of Hutchinson to discuss the possibility of merging some public safety services. It's a discussion that should get the attention of officials from other counties.

Garden City commissioners appear to have an open mind toward potential consolidation of services. At a meeting last week, commissioners said it is worth examining what areas of law enforcement, fire and ambulance services may be able to streamline services with the county to avoid unnecessary redundancy and expense.

Commissioners from both governments should direct their charges to prepare a report on the pros and cons of consolidated services to measure whether a blueprint should be drawn.

Such efforts signal to, constituents that elected representatives are open to new ways to thinking, new approaches of tackling old problems.

Merged public safety departments have worked 'in other communities, and it behooves local governments to seek out. all financial efficiencies available.

City commissioners are on target to pursue the idea. - *Garden City Telegram*

## 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. 449-N, Topeka, KS 66612. (785) 296-7399

**Kansas Attorney General**, 301 S.W. 10th, Lower Level, Topeka, KS 66612-1597 (785) 296-3751 Fax (785) 291-3699 TTY: (785) 291-3767

## The Goodland Star-News

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562)  
Member: Kansas Press Association  
Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association  
National Newspaper Association  
e-mail: [star-news@nwkanssas.com](mailto:star-news@nwkanssas.com)

**Steve Haynes**, President

**Tom Betz**, Editor

**Managing Editor**

**Pat Schiefen**, Copy Editor

**Darrel Pattillo**, Reporter

**Sharon Corcoran**, Society Editor

**Eric Yonkey**, **Bill Wagoner**, Advertising Sales

**Skilar Boland**, Adv. Production **Sheila Smith**, Office Manager

### Nor'west Press

**Jim Bowker**, General Manager

**Richard Westfahl**

**Betty Morris**

**Ron VanLoenen**

**Mary Jo Tapparo**

**Teneile Lovelace**

**Judy McKnight**

**Lana Westfahl**



**nwkansas.com**

**N.T. Betz**, Director of Internet Services  
([nbetz@nwkansas.com](mailto:nbetz@nwkansas.com))

**Evan Barnum**, Systems Admin.([support@nwkansas.com](mailto:support@nwkansas.com))

Published every Tuesday and Friday except 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 Star-News, 1205 Main St., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: [star-news@nwkansas.com](mailto:star-news@nwkansas.com). Advertising questions can be sent to: [goodlandads@nwkansas.com](mailto:goodlandads@nwkansas.com)

The Goodland Star-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, \$20; six months, \$38; 12 months, \$72. Out of area, weekly mailing of two issues: three months, \$30; six months, \$45; 12 months, \$80. Mailed individually each day: 12 months, \$115. (All tax included.)

Incorporating:

**The Goodland Daily News**

1932-2003

**The Sherman County Herald**

Founded by Thomas McCants  
1935-1989

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

**Nor'West Newspapers**

Haynes Publishing Company



## Irrigation over the High Plains

*Editor's note: This is the winning essay in the Sherman County Conservation District contest this year written by Devin Mangus of Kanorado. He is a fifth grader at North Elementary.*

Irrigation was first introduced into North-west Kansas in the late 50s and early 60s. In regions with seasonal rainfall such as North-west Kansas; irrigation makes farming possible even during dry months. It provides extra water for plant growth from areas that have long periods of little or no rainfall.

The water used for irrigation in Northwest Kansas is taken from dug wells. The wells are dug at varies depths. The depth is determined on how far it is to reach the water in the Ogallala Aquifer. The depth the well is dug and the amount of water in the aquifer determines how many gallons of water are available for the farmer to use in irrigation of his crops.

Crops grown under irrigation in Northwest Kansas include wheat, corn, varies bean types, grain sorghum, sunflowers, alfalfa and certain livestock feeds. Each crops needs different amounts of water to produce good yields and



## from our readers

### to the editor

income.

There are 4 general methods of irrigation practices: (1) surface irrigation, (2) sprinkler irrigation, (3) trickle irrigation, and (4) sub-irrigation.

Surface irrigation is when the farmer runs water over the surface of the field. There are two kinds of surface irrigation. Flood, which covers the entire field with water that soaks into the ground using dikes or levees. Also furrow irrigation, where crops are watered through furrows dug across the field The farmer plants seeds in the ridges between the furrows.

Sprinkler irrigation is when a pump forces water through a pipe to nozzles called sprinkler heads. The sprinkler heads distribute water in a spray or mist to the crop. The pipes can

be in a straight line or an overhead sprinkler system that distributes water while moving in a circle.

Trickle irrigation furnishes water through plastic tubes that lie on or underneath the ground. The tubes have small holes called emitters that are located at points corresponding to the location of the plants.

Sub-irrigation applies water from beneath the roots of plants. The water comes from underground pipes or ditches, while the surface above the ground remains dry.

Over the years the most popular irrigation practice has become the overhead sprinkler method. This method covers more ground, and uses less water and energy. It results in less expense and labor. Which means higher yield's and income.

Farmers have been given these tools to make them more productive and plus earn the title of Lord of the Lands. Even with all of these tools and extra knowledge, we still can't out-wit Mother Nature.

## Wed at 16, Caesar has kept his focus

He was wed at 16 — a marriage arranged by his parents to a local girl. She was 14.

He was a good catch, Caesar Moyroñ Verdugo said with just a little brag in his voice. He had a job in the tourist industry, had been to the United States and could speak English.

Caesar was showing us the country he grew up in — the back country of the Baja, where ranches are tucked into the barren landscape next to streams that give them life.

This was not the Mexico we had been seeing in our five-star hotel with two swimming pools, a restaurant and exercise room. This was not the ocean front property that goes for astronomical prices.

This was the land of proud people, who live pretty much like their ancestors have for centuries.

As he points out the flora and fauna of the Baja — cactus, palm trees, birds, lizards and spiders, Caesar talks about his life and the lives of his family and friends.

He was born on a ranch and walked many miles



## cynthia haynes

### open season

to school. Eventually, he moved to the dormitory the church had next to the school for ranch children. He studied hard and earned the attention of his tutors, who pointed him out to an American couple.

The couple arranged for him to go to the United States as a foreign-exchange student when he was in the seventh grade.

When he returned he finished the eighth grade and went to work to help the family. Soon he was a married man and not too long after that a father.

But he wanted more. While his marriage has worked out, he admits he was scared to death and definitely did not want to get married when he was 16.

Over the years he has gone on to complete his high school degree and is going to college via the

## Carrying green plants may get you arrested

Mark my words: before the summer is over, police will be seen carrying armloads of green, leafy plants from a Colorado home, and the owners will be busted, hauled off to jail and fined.

For growing tomatoes.

That's right, it's soon to be illegal to grow tomatoes — or any other garden plants — in Colorado, at least in the city of Aurora. There's a drought on, you know.

And the city will be watching.

Like most Colorado cities, Aurora depends on expensive water piped in from the mountains to fuel its growth and wealth. Only this year, new subdivisions will be barren and once-vaunted lawns will be brown and wilted.

The city, fearing that its already tapped-out reservoirs will run dry, has banned new plantings after May 9. That includes lawns, trees, flowers, shrubs — and vegetables.

To appreciate how much this hurts, you have to appreciate that Aurora is in competition with every other suburb on the Front Range for new residents. People are not likely to flock to subdi-



## steve haynes

### along the sappa

visions where the lawns are dust and the landscaping consists of a few rocks.

That's what Aurora will be offering, though, and by summer, it may not be the only Colorado town in a similar fix. Heck, if it doesn't rain, we could be in the same boat out here on the plains.

Boat. That's a figure of speech. You won't be able to float your boat, either here or in Aurora, by summer. And you darned well better not be caught washing it.

The Colorado city is doing a complete about-face on planting, since normally it won't let developers open up a new subdivision for occupancy until the landscaping is in.

But as dry as it's been, the city just can't justify people using water on planting. So far,

though, it's not banned watering existing lawns. Not yet, anyway.

The city did make one small concession to the gardener that lives in all of us. An official said people can grow a few tomatoes, and presumably carrots or lettuce if they like, in containers.

I guess they're considered house plants if they're in buckets.

The officials didn't say how many buckets of tomatoes they would allow, but I can see some people filling the basement with row after row of hydroponic tomatoes under grow lights. It'd be like one of the pot-growing setups you read about the cops finding.

And come to think of it, with the garden ban, tomatoes might be almost as valuable.

By summer, I predict that some wiseguy will find a way to hide some carrots between the dog pen and the hedge. And get caught.

Bootleg tomatoes will be all the rage. And the city may have to start counting house plants.

And remember, the cops still care *what* you grow in those pots.

### garfield

