

from our viewpoint...

River flow suits put judge in the middle

The Army Corps of Engineers, after dragging its feet most of the summer, finally brought the flow of the Missouri River down to summer size last week.

For the first time in recent memory, the river approximated the sandy, meandering stream that bedeviled riverboat pilots a century or more ago.

It was a token gesture to comply with the orders of a Washington federal judge, who told the corps to cut the flow for a month at the request of environmental groups. The corps planned to start boosting the flow from Dakota reservoirs by Friday and have the river up to navigation levels by next week.

The environmentalists, suing under the Endangered Species Act, won as most a couple of days of summer flows. Barge interests, who had sued the corps in Omaha, were less than happy, but they apparently will have the river back for the fall.

The corps was being sued by both sides, and two judges issued conflicting orders. The whole mess was dumped into the laps of a third, disinterested federal judge in Minneapolis, who was given the task of sorting it out.

The fight pits environmentalists protecting sturgeon and other rare river animals against barge companies that profit from millions of federal subsidies poured into the stream. The environmental issues mask the fact that the entire river navigation program is one big federal boondoggle.

The corps has spent billions over the years to make the Missouri into a navigable stream as far as South Dakota, though that is not it's nature. In the process, it has turned the naturally broad and winding river into a straight, deep, fast-flowing ditch.

Much of the aquatic life that once called the Big Muddy home is gone. Fish and birds can't cope with the swift, dangerous flow of the barge channel.

But to what purpose? To make Minnesota and Dakota wheat more competitive with Kansas wheat shipped south by rail? To put hard-pressed railroads — which have to maintain their own tracks and facilities with private money — deeper into a bind?

Or simply to line the pockets of the barge companies?

The nation has more need for sturgeon, whatever that may be, than it does for expensive barge service to Sioux Falls. We'd be better off if the corps saved up the millions it spends each year to maintain the Missouri for barges — it's a short season, anyhow — and let the river go back to it's meanders.

It's not the nature of federal programs to fade away, but this is one that can and should. We'd all be better off.

It's not the sturgeon. It's just the money. — *Steve Haynes*

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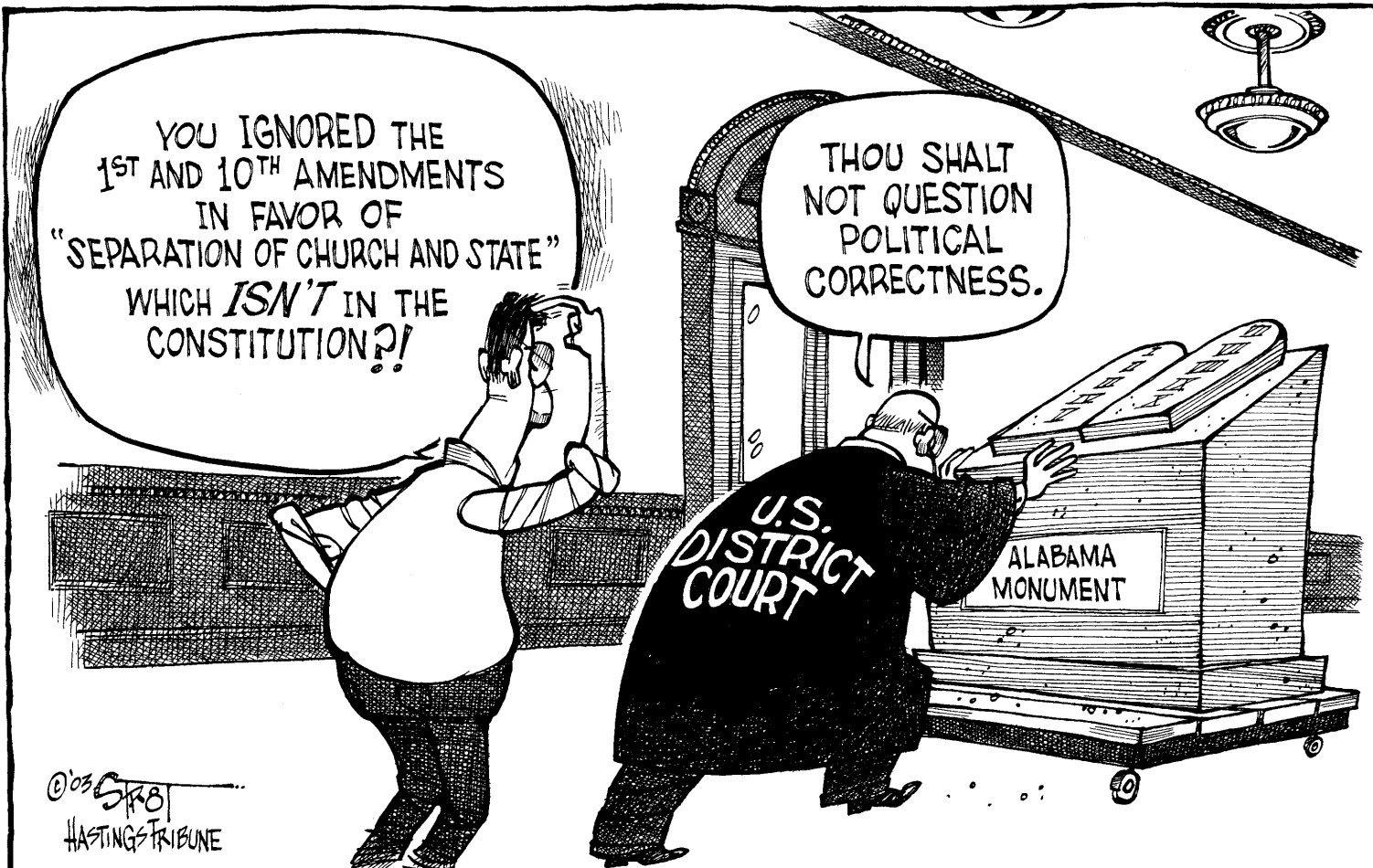
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That little checkbook caused lots of trouble

This is the story of the little checkbook that got lost and all the trouble it has caused.

We were in Colorado a couple of weeks ago, and I noticed that we only had one check left in the checkbook. I took it to a bank we use out there and got \$100 so that we would have enough money to get home.

Back home, I reached into the desk drawer and grabbed another book of check blanks. I noted that the number sequence did not jibe with the check I had written a few days before, at least I didn't think it did, but figured I had forgotten or we had somehow gotten our books out of sequence.

I should have paid more attention to that little inner voice, which told me something was not right.

After getting the check blanks, I asked Steve (I'm blaming this all on him) for the cover and register. He said he thought they were in the car.

We looked in the car, practically tearing out the seats, looking under them, through the glove box, over the visors, under the floor mats and everywhere but in the gas tank. No cover. No register.

I decided I'd just write the checks I used on the cardboard back of the check blanks until the cover and register were found. They were bound to turn up — probably in a forgotten pocket or briefcase.

Over the next week, I wrote just two checks. Both were to the grocery, which allows you to get \$50 extra over and above your purchase.



**cynthia
haynes**

• open season

With the extra money and what we still had from the check we cashed in Colorado, we had enough spending money to buy our lunches and pay for miscellaneous expenses.

Then one day, a friend who works at the bank tracked me down. I'm never where I'm supposed to be, and it usually takes two to three calls to find me. But she did.

My checks had bounced. Not just bounced, but they were written on a closed account at a different bank.

What?

It seems that several months ago, my husband (I'm blaming this all on him) changed banks for our personal account. He wasn't mad at our old bank, but he wanted Internet banking and the old bank didn't offer that.

He neglected to destroy all the old checks, however, and they were still in a box in the desk drawer.

I called the grocery, immediately explaining the problem. I said I would redeem the checks. I would pay the fees. I was sorry.

They said fine, they understood, they weren't mad. They'd call as soon as the checks were returned to them.

Giving blood is similar to voting

To the Editor:

Voting is something we consider a civic responsibility. The American Red Cross would like more people to think of donating blood as a similar duty.

One out of every two Americans will need blood some time in their life, so it is very likely you or someone close to you will need it. A strong blood supply allows our community and country to be better prepared for single- or multiple-injury emergencies.

Many people think they will wait until someone they know needs blood before they donate. When someone you know needs blood, it is often too late to give. It takes about 48 hours to process blood and ensure that it is safe for transfusion. Your blood type may not match the



from our
readers

• to the editor

patient's type, even if he or she is a member of your family.

Only 5 percent of the population donates blood, and demand is growing as life expectancies increase due to advances in medical technology. This leads to frequent blood shortages.

If everyone donated twice a year, there would never be a blood shortage.

School is in! Kids need community support

With the new school year come new opportunities for learning and challenges. As Governor, quality education for all Kansas children is a top priority for me. That is why I protected education from any cuts this past year. And I commit to you I will continue to do what I can to help improve the education system for Kansas children, families and teachers.

There are things we as parents can do to make sure children have the best learning environment possible.

Communication is key to a student's success. Get to know your child's teacher. Find out how student progress is measured and ask how your



**kathleen
sebelius**

• governor

child interacts with other students. Most importantly, talk to the teacher about ways you can work together to help your child.

Schools need the support of parents and the community to be successful. Participate in school events. Volunteer a few hours a week in the classroom or speak to your child's class about your job

The Goodland Red Cross blood drive will be from noon to 6 p.m. Thursday Sept. 4, at the United Methodist Church. All eligible donors are needed, especially those with types 0-negative and 0-positive. Call (800) 448-3543 to make an appointment.

Giving blood takes about an hour, with the actual donation lasting about seven minutes. Your donation can help as many as three hospital patients. Donors need to be 17 or older, weigh at least 110 pounds and be in general good health. Most medications do not prevent you from donating.

Luella Richardson

Sherman County Publicity Chairman

American Red Cross

or area of expertise. Join the PTA to ensure you have a voice in the work of the school or offer to help with a special school project.

Another key way for you to be involved in your child's school is to attend and take part in my Education Policy Forums that are scheduled throughout the state in September.

We will be kicking off public forums on Thursday, Sept. 11 in Goodland. By attending this event, you can ensure your voice is heard. We have the opportunity to make the education system in Kansas number one and this is the first step. I encourage you to get involved and be an active part of the process.

garfield

