

from our viewpoint...

## City, county need options to avoid cuts

The ink is nearly dry on the annual budget for all Sherman County government units, and one thing that's clear is that cities, counties and schools will continue to have problems as long as the state is short of money.

The City of Goodland decided to hold the line on its property taxes this year, but this will mean using its carryover reserves. With the state cuts from last year and this year, the city will face the same problem next year.

The Goodland School District managed to minimize the dreaded yo-yo effect set up by the state when it changed the time for property tax payments to next May. The district's tax levy will drop slightly this year, but will have to go back up next year. The change helps balance the state budget, but does not provide schools with any real growth.

County commissioners spent many hours pouring over the department budgets, and were able to keep their tax increase below double digits. Earlier in the year, the commissioners cut the solid waste fee by 10 percent to provide a little relief.

Adding all the various budgets together is the next step, and then each property owner will get a notice, showing how all the changes affected their taxes. With the ups and downs, officials say it's possible many property owners will not see much increase in taxes.

The state cuts were a major factor in every board's review and had a lot to do with whether taxes had to be raised.

For the city and county, one area that was hit hardest is road maintenance and street repair. There is no thought that these cuts will be reversed in the next few years, so maybe it's time for the citizens of Sherman County to look at an alternative way to raise money for our roads and streets.

There are signs of future economic progress including a downtown revitalization program that will improve the appearance of Main Street and replace the brick streets — in addition to the planned replacement of the intersections at 11th and 12th streets.

Meetings were held Thursday with a manufacturing company which wants to relocate from California to Goodland. This would bring at least 30 jobs and a payroll of about \$40,000 per month. The company says it hopes to increase the work force to 100 within a year. This is not a done deal, but the state has agreed to put up \$100,000 to help the company relocate.

With a dedicated effort by the citizens and businesses in Goodland, this can happen, and possibly it would be that first step up the development ladder.

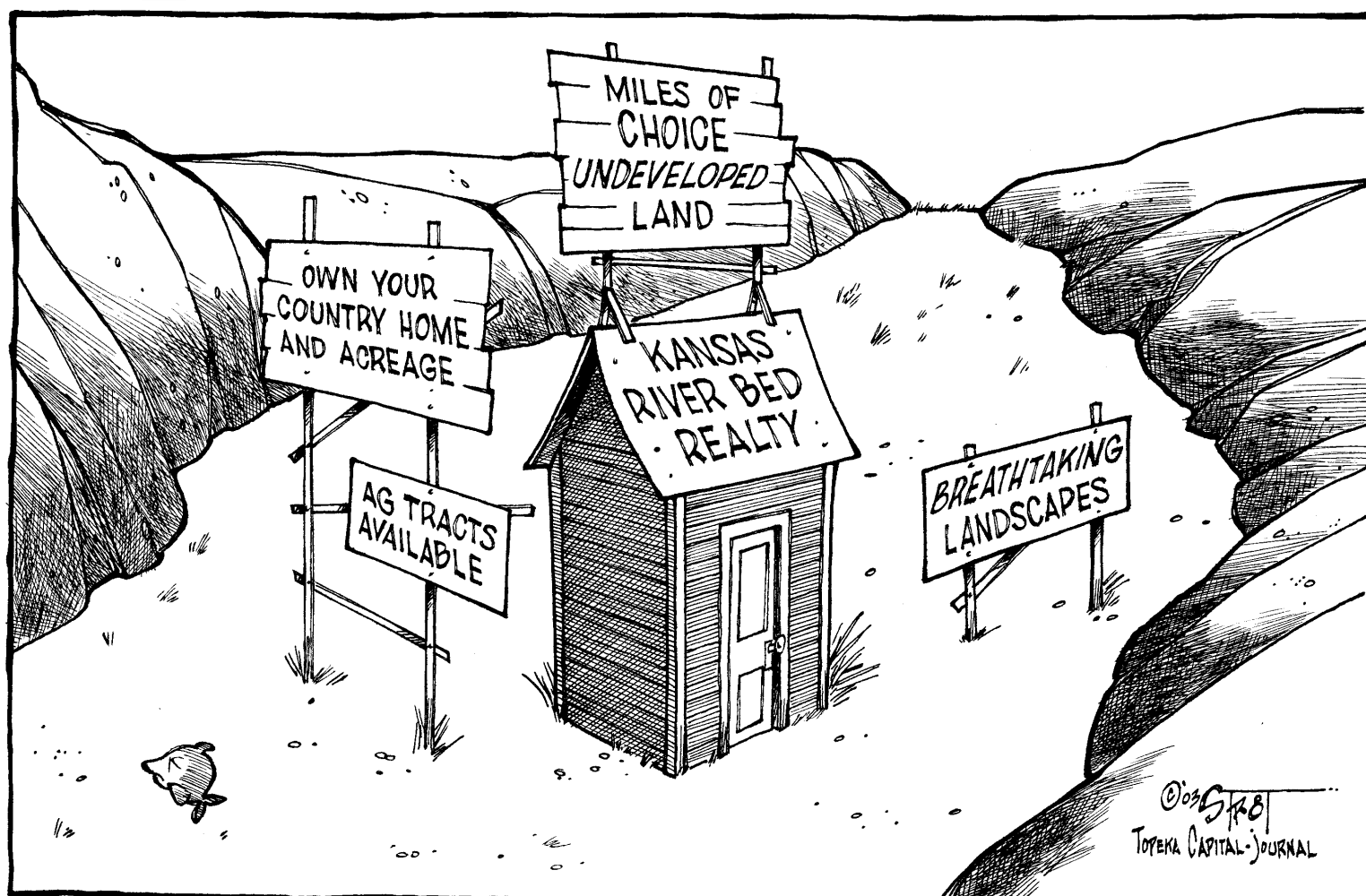
The potential deal is good news, and combined with several other projects under construction or awaiting approvals, there may be a light at the end of the long economic tunnel.

The increase in economic activity will be good for us all, and it might be time to consider passing a countywide sales tax to help maintain and improve city streets and county roads.

A previous sales tax was used to upgrade old U.S. 24, which is a vital conduit across the county. This sales tax disappeared over a year ago, and with the state cuts, it will be difficult for the county to keep this road up.

The city has streets and intersections that need attention. Many need complete replacement where the base has failed.

A countywide sales tax would provide the city and the county money maintain our roads and improve our streets, and free us from the whims of Topeka. — Tom Betz



## Good to see some cooler temperatures

I don't know about you, but I'm happy to see some cooler temperatures.

We've just completed an especially hot summer across the Mid-West. I know that soon I'll be complaining about the winter's cold, but right now I'm happy to see some rain and less-than-one-hundred-degree days.

It seems summer brings with it heart-breaking stories of children who are left in cars by parents or caregivers. The public is outraged by the neglect, the thoughtlessness, of these adults. A disc jockey on the radio was ranting and raving about having such incompetent parents sterilized. One case I read seemed to be mostly a case of miscommunication between the adults involved, but no matter what the circumstances, it is always a tragedy.

I've thought a lot about the cases I've heard of this year. I've prayed for all the families involved. I've felt some of their feelings of loss and hopelessness. I've of course wondered, "Why?," as I'm sure the parents have, even as they've wished to go back and live those few hours again — only with a different outcome.



**lorna g t**

• commentary

One of my conclusions comes back to the busy lives we all live. Parents are being pulled in too many directions; they have too much on their minds; there isn't enough time to properly do everything that children require.

I can understand pre-occupation. After not having a baby in the household for about 7 years, I had another son. When he was about a month old, I went to the grocery store with a friend and put my son in his carrier down in the bottom of the shopping cart. She was shopping; I was just along for company and to visit.

She paid for her groceries, and we left the store. A man came running after us: "Didn't one of you ladies leave something in a grocery cart?" I, with great embarrassment, went back to get my son. I wasn't used to having a baby;

I might have left him in a car, I guess. I was too preoccupied with other activities. Thank goodness, we weren't turned into the authorities for such accidents then.

Another time, years before, my older two sons were with us at the Seattle Exposition. There was a huge crowd. We were keeping an eye on our sons, even though they weren't keeping their eyes on us. We might have lost one of them if we hadn't been paying attention. One sensed we were gone and began running and screaming. He didn't know where he was going; he was panicked. We were able to dodge through the crowd and finally catch him.

My heart is broken for the parents of lost children, no matter the circumstances. Parents are too busy and too hurried these days. It must be a never-ending heartbreak to know that because of parental inattention, their own child died in an overly-hot car. That surely is enough for them to have to endure without being prosecuted too.

Of course, it should never happen. But sometimes, it just does.

## Ship of faith needs anchor of hope

In my last column, I talked about the apostle Paul's illustration comparing a Christian's faith to a ship, the need to build a seaworthy ship, the storms the ship must weather and why some experience a shipwreck of their faith. This week, I want to talk about the ship's anchor and what pushes it forward.

At Hebrews 6:17-19, Paul adds to his illustration of the ship of faith: "In this manner God, when he purposed to demonstrate more abundantly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of his counsel, stepped in with an oath, in order that, through two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to the refuge may have strong encouragement to lay hold on the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor for the soul, both sure and firm."

A Christian's anchor is hope. That hope is found in God's word, and it serves as an anchor because it is sure — as mentioned in Hebrews, it is impossible for God to lie. God's promises are sure.

That hope keeps us from drifting into dangerous seas of wickedness and lack of appreciation for God's instructions. What is the hope that is so strong?

2 Peter 3:12, 13 says, "waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be kindled and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire! But according to his promise we wait for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

God promises a coming day of destruction, followed by "new heavens and a new earth." What will be destroyed?

Earlier in 2 Peter chapter 3, in verses 9-13, Peter talks about ones who will suffer destruction: "then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment,



**sharon corcoran**

• use it or lose it

and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they are not afraid to revile the glorious ones... like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and killed, reviling in matters of which they are ignorant, will be destroyed in the same destruction with them, suffering wrong for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime."

The ones destroyed have no respect for God's authority or for the "holy ones." who have a share in representing that authority. Many of those destroyed are animalistic, giving into the impulses of fleshly desires, and have a great time with no regard for others and no appreciation for propriety or taking the time for serious pursuits, such as hard work and the study of God's word.

Or they may be workaholics who ignore Jesus' advice in Matthew chapter 6 not to pursue material riches at the expense of God's worship.

2 Peter 3:7 simply refers to those destroyed at that time as "ungodly," and 2 Peter 2:6 says God set the pattern for the future destruction when he destroyed the ungodly inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. In verse 7, Peter reminds us that Lot, a righteous man, was preserved alive during that destruction.

This tells us of the hope for Christians — they will be preserved alive through God's coming destruction of the wicked and will enjoy the new heavens and new earth, for in them, righteousness will dwell.

Revelation 21: 1-4 tells us that in the new

earth, there will be no mourning, outcry or death and that God will be with mankind.

Having this hope for the future, anchors a Christian's faith, helping him to endure the storms he faces. No matter what trials come upon a Christian, he knows things will be better in the future, and that helps him to remain faithful to God, whose promises are reliable. Hope is the anchor, but what motivates a Christian? What moves him forward? Mark 12: 28-30 says, "And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, 'Which commandment is the first of all?' Jesus answered, 'The first is, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength.'"

Love for God motivates Christians. Since they are commanded to love God, does that mean it is forced in order to be obedient?

Christians can have the joy described in Psalm 84:10, 11: "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the Lord God is a sun and shield; he bestows favor and honor."

Recognizing the value of the blessings God has already bestowed on them and of those to come, Christians prefer even a lowly position as the doorkeeper of God's house to enjoying themselves in the revelry of wicked ones.

It is this love for God and appreciation of him that motivates Christians.

Having a love of God and the assurance that his promises for a better future will come true keeps a Christian steady and motivated in studying God's word and applying its counsel in his life and in sharing that knowledge with others.

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