

from our viewpoint...

Parks make city place we like to live

One thing that separates one city from another is the open spaces they preserve as part of the development of a park system, and there are several good parks that give Goodland a unique image

The Goodland parks committee presented a survey report and recommendations about the future of the city's parks to the City Commission recently..

Among the recommendations is a statement that there are more parks than the city needs, and that it might be possible to eliminate one or more parks to reduce expenses. With the city's tight financial situation, it is prudent to examine everything, looking for ways to save expenses, and it's good to look at the development and use of city parks.

The committee asked citizens to fill out questionnaires and gathered opinions from those who attended the fair in August. Most of the people who expressed an opinion felt the parks were adequate for the city, and especially mentioned the use of Chambers, Gulick and Steever parks for a variety of activities.

There was a sense that Pioneer Park on Cherry Ave. needs to be completed to provide a better entrance to the city.

The committee suggested that the city has too many parks, recommending the city could eliminate the park area northwest of West Elementary and Rosewood Park, in the Rosewood Addition north of the hospital. Their survey showed these to be the least used city parks.

We agree the park area to the northwest of the elementary school is not the most used, and as the city develops, this might be an area that could be sold for development of housing.

However, we do not agree the city should eliminate Rosewood Park. The committee cited this as the least used park, and suggested it could be eliminated or given to area homeowners to maintain.

We feel it is not as used currently because the number of children living in the area is not as high as other parts of the city, but that may change in the future. This is a wonderful park, and certainly adds a special quality to the neighborhood. When the park was developed, it was part of the plan for the neighborhood and should be preserved.

It is possible that the homeowners could develop some sort of park district to maintain the park, but it would be better that it remain a city park to provide opportunities for development of other recreation facilities for all citizens.

We agree with the committee that a skateboard/roller blade area could be developed in one of the parks. One suggestion is to take the tennis courts at Gulick for this purpose.

The city commission thanked the committee for its work, and asked that the group continue to look at the parks and possible ways to improve them. We believe the city has a good number of parks, and that within the budget they should be maintained or improved as much as possible.

Parks are an important feature of a city, and in future generations, the effort to preserve them will pay big dividends.

— Tom Betz


The Goodland Star-News

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562)

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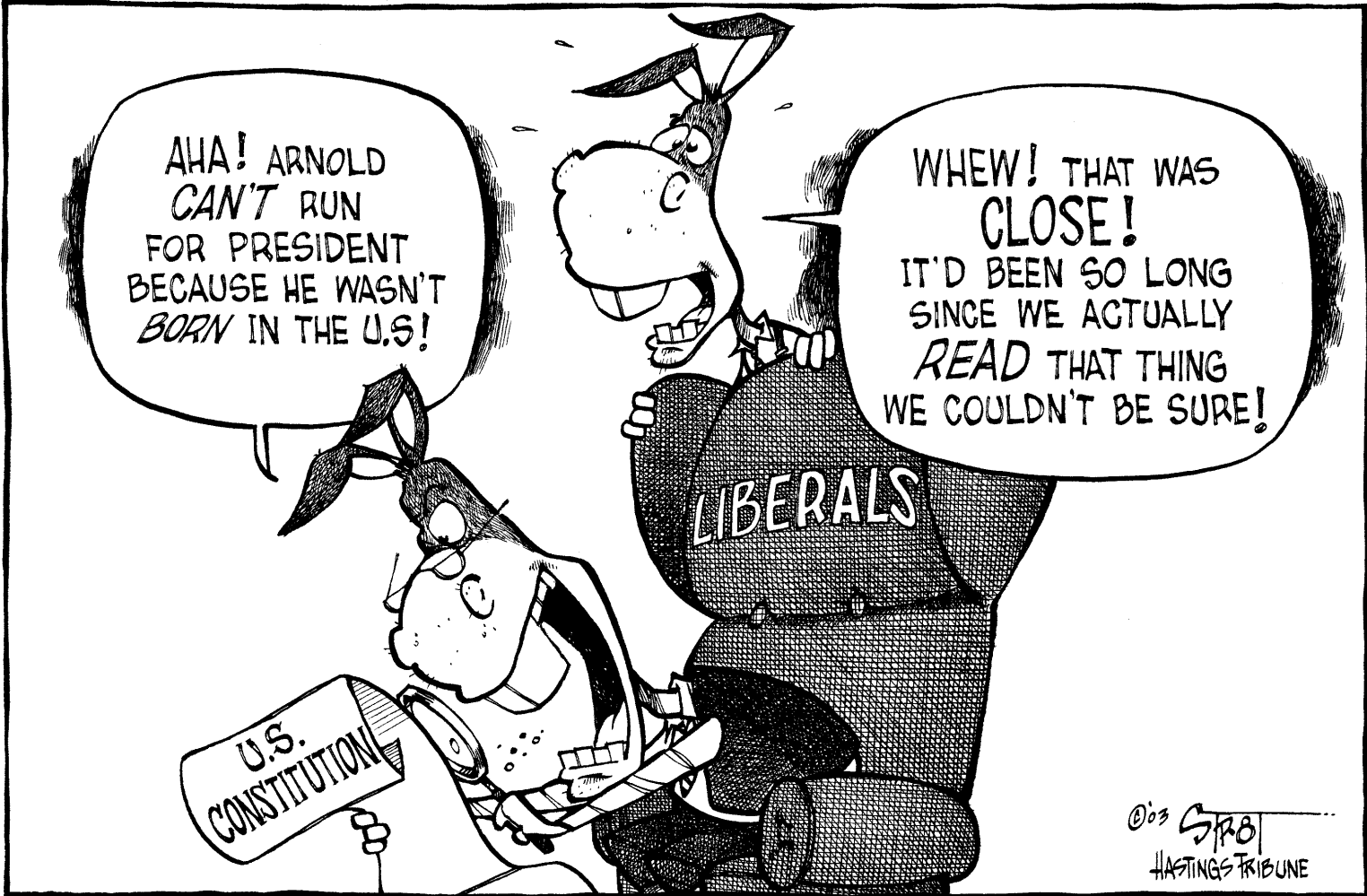
Published every Tuesday and Friday except the days observed for New Year's Day and Christmas Day, at 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735. Periodicals postage paid at Goodland, Kan. 67735; entered at the Goodland, Kan., Post Office under the Act of Congress of March 8, 1878.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Goodland Star-News, 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735.
TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: star-news@nwkanssas.com. Advertising questions can be sent to: goodlandads@nwkanssas.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 SHERMAN COUNTY STAR
Founded by Eric and Roxie Yonkey
1994-2001

Nor'West Newspapers
Haynes Publishing Company



Internet drowning in junk mail

Everyone who uses the Internet, and especially e-mail, knows about the ever-increasing amount of spurious messages that are clogging the system.

Experts believe that at least half of all the e-mail messages sent each day are junk mail, or "spam," and that this adds a tremendous cost to the use of the system for businesses.

A study by America On-Line showed that up to 80 percent of the 2.3 billion messages handled by that system each day is spam that they block from delivery. This junk is weighing the system down and taking up large blocks of the network all over the world.

The study suggests that in offices where e-mail is a major form of communication, it takes up to an hour a day to maintain mailboxes and eliminate the unwanted messages, costing businesses millions of dollars in wasted time.

While the number of spam messages continues to grow, ideas of what to do about it are being developed, but not at the same rate. The efforts to develop filters and ways to block the spam are being added each day, but there are times when it seems the spammers are ahead of the filters before they can be installed.

As an Internet service provider for northwest Kansas, we continue to look for ways to fight spam. Some days it looks like we might be winning, but just as quickly, we see the spam explode around our best efforts.

Whether there is a way to legislate a solution to the huge number of spam messages remains to be seen. Some think this is something that needs to be avoided because it may have a disastrous affect on the wonderful underlying system people rely on today.



tom betz

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Individually, there are a number of things each person can do to combat the spammers. The best suggestion is to make use of filters and blocking programs built into today's computer operating systems. These are not perfect, but certainly provide a means to customize e-mail and eliminate many of these unwanted messages.

Within the Outlook Express program is a method for creating filters to block messages by address and by key words. These work together to eliminate a large portion of the incoming spam, though they must be reviewed every so often.

When a spam message is received, the first step is to go to the Message menu and click on the "block sender" option. This automatically adds the address to the list of those to be blocked in the future. To make this more effective, edit the list down to domain names. To reach the list, go to the Tools menu and then click on the Message Rules option, which then opens other options, among which is the blocked sender list.

Once this opens up, there is a list of all the addresses that have been blocked. To make the filter more effective, eliminate everything in the address in front of and including the at "@" symbol. If the address is "whoknows@whocares.com, eliminating the first part will mean

Budget crunch threatens farm money

To the Editor:

There's a movement in Washington that could cost Kansas farmers as much as \$50 million. The Farm Bill is being re-opened. Some producers' government support payments might be reduced. What's worse, most farmers will not know about it until it's too late because the deals are being cut behind closed doors in Congress.

Below is a letter to Kansas farmers by a Kansas farmer trying to spread the word. Anyone in Kansas who depends on agriculture to make a living needs to know what's going on, and it would be of great interest to your readers. Please consider this letter for publication. If you have any questions, contact Paul Penner, the author, or me at 202-367-1625. Paul's number is at the end of the letter.

Phillip Hays, Acre Partners
Washington

Dear Kansas Farmer:

I grow wheat, milo and soybeans in Hillsboro. Like most other Kansas farmers, I assumed that after we passed the Farm Bill last year, farmers were taken care of for a while. We worked for years to get a Farm Bill with a decent safety net. I figured our business in Washington was done for a little while.



from our readers

• to the editor

I was wrong. Earlier this week, I learned that there are some in Congress currently attacking the Farm Bill. There is a movement in the Senate to further reduce the cap on government payments. Why can't they leave the Farm Bill alone?

The D.C. spin machine will say limiting payments will decrease support for "huge corporate farms." They'll say we receive too much in the way of government support. Some will even say payment limits are designed to save the family farm. I disagree.

If you're like me, you depend on government assistance to makes ends meet in lean years, whether it's crop insurance, marketing loans or even direct payments.

The residents of America enjoy the safest, most abundant and the cheapest food and fiber in the world. In return, they provide less than 4 cents per meal in the way of government support.

In addition, we support 13 percent of the

that any message coming from whocares.com will be sent to the delete folder. Cutting the addresses down to the domain names reduces the incoming spam by nearly 60 percent, but it is something that you have to update regularly.

Another part of the block sender list is the key words, which are part of the mail rules. With this part of the program you tell the e-mail program what words to look for in the address, body or title of an incoming message that you do not want to read and it will automatically send it to the delete folder. The words are separated by quote marks and commas such as "mortgage," "enlarge," "Viagra," "Xanax," "weight loss," "diet pill," "refinance" or about anything else you want to block by subject.

There are other programs that can be downloaded to help in this effort, and the anti-virus places like Norton and MacAfee have e-mail programs as well. One freeware program, Mailwasher, seems to work pretty well. It can be downloaded at mailwasher.com.

With the enormous amount of spam hitting the Internet, something needs to be done to control these unwanted messages, but it will not be easy. For every new filter, it seems that another dozen different messages arrive. Nothing seems to be perfect except for abandoning the Internet, but there are good messages as well that we want to receive, so we struggle to stay ahead despite the fact we are sinking slowly in the sea of spam.

If anyone has other ideas about how to combat spam, we would be pleased to hear about them, and would reprint them to help others. We need to band together to retake the Internet from the spammers.

nation's economy, 24 million American workers, and produce the country's No. 1 export. I think we've earned 4 cents a meal.

The good news for us is that the latest attack would only affect the top 5 percent of farms in Kansas. The bad news: It would cost Kansas farmers \$50 million. It would drive some out of the business. And, it sends the message that the Farm Bill can be re-opened any time federal budgets get tight.

As a Kansas farmer you should care. Reducing payment limits not only sets a dangerous precedent, but it will affect land values, it will hurt rural economies, and it will make it difficult for some farmers to qualify for operating loans.

There was a Department of Agriculture commission appointed to study the proposal. They oppose reducing the payment limit cap at this time.

This is a plea to all farmers in the state. We must stand together. I encourage you to write Sens. Roberts and Brownback to urge them to vote no on any changes to the Farm Bill. Join me in telling Congress that the Farm Bill is off limits.

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garfield

