

from our viewpoint...

No reason to change Hays college's name

Change the name of Fort Hays State University? Why? It's one of the ideas being floated by President Ed Hammond during his annual tour of the region, but not a good one. Fort Hays State is a perfectly good name, with some geographic identity and a lot of history. The alternatives just aren't too attractive.

University of Western Kansas isn't likely to convince anyone from Johnson County that they've found Nirvana. Neither is Western Kansas State.

Eisenhower State could be anywhere. It's not that the college has had its name forever. It was first known as the Kansas State Normal School, then Kansas State Teachers College and Kansas State College. In those days, it was one of three state schools that changed names in lockstep, identified only by the town: Emporia State and Pittsburg State.

Fort Hays State University may have been a step up. While similar to the other two, it's unique, and that's not a bad thing. Many people don't know why the college is "Fort Hays State" and not just Hays State, but it's an interesting story. It goes back to the turn of the last century, when Hays citizens wanted to start a state "normal" school, as teacher training institutions were known in those days.

They talked Congress into donating the unused federal reservation of the old fort outside of town to the new school. That's why the college is out on the edge of town, on former federal land that had been a military post in the Indian Wars.

And why the university is "Fort Hays State" today. Not every college has such a colorful past. It's something worth hanging on to.

There's a trend among former teachers' colleges, though, to differentiate names. In Missouri, where the schools once had geographic names — Northwest Missouri State, Southeast Missouri State, Central Missouri State — one is now Truman State and another became Missouri State, much to the disgust of University of Missouri alumni.

Trouble is, no one can remember where those two are now that they've lost their geographic ties. Then there is the University of Central Missouri, right down the road from the University of Missouri.

In Colorado, the old teachers' college is now the University of Northern Colorado, though it's a little south of Colorado State.

If all that sounds confusing to you, imagine what it must be for alumni and for prospective students.

Fort Hays State is a fine name with a good story behind it. Our advice is to stick with it.

For marketing purposes, it's as good as any of the new ideas. And surely Dr. Hammond has better things to spend his money on than changing the name on all those building, vehicles, business cards and so on.

Fort Hays is a growing, vital institution with the name it has. Just keep it. — *Steve Haynes*.



Hard to believe we were in Vietnam

HANOI, Vietnam — I can't believe I or any other American in their right mind would be here.

I'm a child of the '60s. I remember the anti-war demonstrations, the headlines, the body counts, the boys who came back — and those who didn't.

While I wasn't particularly a hawk, my cousin George, mother's only nephew, was in the Army and served two or three tours over there amongst the jungles, the dangers and the mystery. Our family knew that our loyalties lay with the country, not with the protesters.

There were those who hated the war so much they sided with the enemy. I couldn't understand — and frankly still don't — those Americans who visited Hanoi and cozied up to the enemy.

The years have made the Vietnam War seem like a terrible mistake. America should have never gotten involved, but we did. We thought that we had to save the world from Communism. We didn't know that Communism would not survive.

Today, Vietnam is united under the Communist banner but it's capitalism that drives the country. Privatization is the name of the game and our guides advised us to never go to the government shops because the goods and services are



cynthia haynes
• open season

inferior to those found in the private sector.

Free speech is emerging, but not to the extent it's found in the U.S. Vietnam is more like a South American dictatorship than a Communist, socialist society. The top brass get rich and the common people struggle like they always have.

On the whole, we thought Hanoi was prettier than Ho Chi Minh City, the former Saigon. It's smaller, with lots of parks, trees and flowers.

We visited the home where Ho Chi Minh ruled Vietnam until his death in 1969 and the presidential palace, Uncle Ho's mausoleum (from the outside since it was under renovation), and the "Hanoi Hilton," the old French colonial prison where American fliers were held during the war.

The compound, actually called Hoa Lo Prison, was built in 1896 by the French to confine problem locals. It had been mostly torn down before the Vietnamese realized its tourist potential, and a new hotel and office

tower occupies most of the site.

Now it stands, with broken glass and electric wires along the top of the walls, while inside mannequins sit in leg irons used by the French. A guillotine decorates a courtyard while paintings, statues and bas reliefs show the cruelty of the colonial rule.

The American part of the museum shows items left behind by the American prisoners and gives a one-sided story of the war and the captured American fliers, incarcerated in the prison from 1964 to 1973.

Oddly enough, today there is a Hilton Hanoi, a luxury hotel with pool, spa and fancy rooms, not too far from the old prison.

Our stop was enlivened by the Premier of North Korea, who arrived for a state visit. He was staying in our hotel and we had to go through a metal detector every time we entered the building. We got some great photos of his motorcade as he left for the presidential palace — and a wave as he got in the car.

On the streets, however, people sat on low stools, ate their rice and noodles, sold mats and brooms, talked, smiled and fished in the city's beautiful lakes. Life went on.

Hanoi, Vietnam — just another tourist location.

Who would of think it?

Our offspring fontanelle



will durst
• raging moderate

Oooh. He's clever. And obviously knows exactly what he's doing. This is all a setup, people. Has to be. Yes, I'm talking about George Bush's veto of the State Children's Health Insurance Program. Who but a total stoned horned ogre would do that? Maybe an ogre with something up his sleeve, eh? Has anyone thought of that? I'm just waiting for him to drop the other shoe. Or throw it at a crippled puppy. Either way, there's a hidden agenda in there somewhere.

To intimate it didn't seem like his finest hour is akin to saying that sinking your IRA into tying live vampire bats to a horizontal stick and trying to sell them to the Fisher-Price people as above-crib mobiles is probably not your best retirement strategy. As public relations go, this was on the order of handing out celebratory exploding cigars near the oxygen tents of an intensive-care ward.

Does he seriously want us to believe he has no problem asking for another \$190 billion for his oil war, but can't find \$7 billion a year for children's health care? Are you kidding me? "No child left behind." More like "no child left standing." The man has opened himself up to charges of criminal child neglect. An Amber Alert featuring Air Force One should be triggered.

Crazy? Like a fox. He scuttled the S-CHIP hush-hush style. Like a cat burglar at night, in a closet, with the lights off, under a raincoat, wearing a ski mask and a fake ZZ Top beard. The legislation was intended to reduce the number of children without health insurance and extend coverage to several million more poor children. But the threat that some of the wrong kids might inadvertently receive cov-

erage makes that totally unacceptable? Who believes that?

Oh, we know the president's public stance: he doesn't want to slide down the slippery slope toward socialized medicine by expanding the program to higher-income families. But he's not as dumb as he looks. Surely he knows when it comes to kids, America's got a collective soft spot right at the top of our heads. Call it our offspring fontanelle.

That's why this has to be a ruse. Accusing Democrats of authoring a plan that would hurt children... that doesn't even make sense. Here's the deal: since the Prez is not up for reelection ever again, he's in league with party leadership and they're using this dodge in a drastic attempt for the GOP to hang onto the White House. Painting the Bush administration as so malevolent that in comparison all

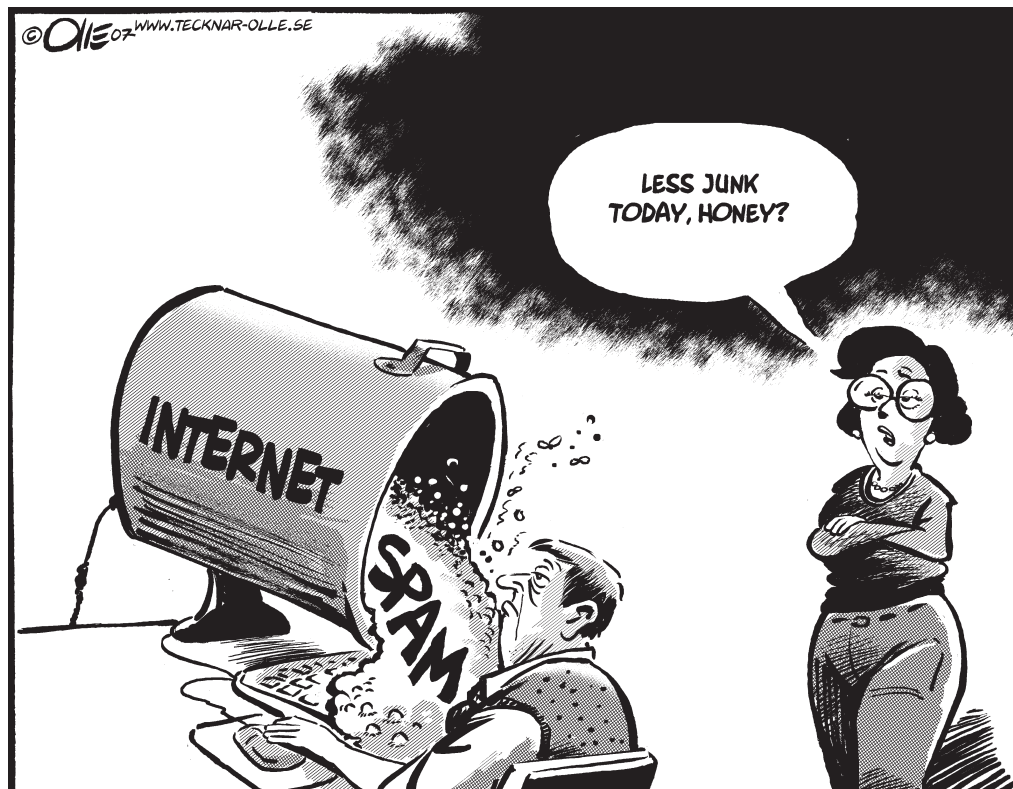
the '08 Republican candidates look like latter day saints of Jesus Christ. You know what I mean.

And we better hope this works, or the next public event is bound to be even more provocative. I can see it now: Bush emceeding an apple-pie-poisoning exhibition, right after a quick round of mom-slapping, held on the South Lawn by the light of a massive teddy bear bonfire with refreshments of barbecued pet parakeet skewers and goldfish shakes.

The vote to override the S-CHIP veto comes in a week or so, and it will be interesting to see if the Democrats can stir any movement from across the aisle using this issue as a crowbar the size of Idaho. Or if they'll just roll over on their bellies and dare the president to keep throwing shoes at them. The gray matter beneath the soft spot in my head makes me suspect the latter.

Former bike messenger Will Durst thinks he has a fontanelle near his liver, which can't be good.

Will Durst is a political comedian who has performed around the world. E-mail Will at durst@caglecartoons.com.



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The Goodland Star-News
(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562)
Member: Kansas Press Association
Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association
National Newspaper Association
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Published every Tuesday and Friday except the days observed for New Year's Day, July 4th 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@nwkansas.com. Advertising questions can be sent to: 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, \$29; six months, \$46; 12 months, \$81. Out of area, weekly mailing of two issues: three months, \$39; six months, \$54; 12 months, \$89 (All tax included). Mailed individually each day: (call for a price).

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 Youkey
1994-2001

Nor'West Newspapers
Haynes Publishing Company