

from our viewpoint...

Kansans register presidential choices

It was a wild week, with more than 57,000 Kansas Democrats and Republicans participating in their parties' presidential caucuses. On Super Tuesday, more than 37,000 Democrats attended Senate district caucuses as the first step in the delegate selection process, giving Sen. Barack Obama of Illinois a big win with about 74 percent of the people supporting him and 26 percent supporting Sen. Hillary Clinton of New York. The Democrats will meet in congressional conventions on April 12 for the next part of the process, election of delegates supporting the candidates to attend the national convention in Denver this August.

Super Tuesday was supposed to decide the nominees for both the Democrats and Republicans, but as with other predictions this political season, the day did not go as expected. Obama and Clinton are neck and neck in the delegate count, and primaries in the next few weeks may not give either one the magic number to wrap up the nomination.

Democrats may face a national convention with the top two candidates nearly deadlocked, each just short of having the numbers to push over the top. Pundits are looking at the surge Obama has had in the past week, but they have been bitten more than once this year and are hedging their predictions a bit to save face as the voters keep things up in the air.

For the Republicans, the list was thinned out a bit with the loss of former New York Mayor Rudi Giuliani and former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, but the fun continues with former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee keeps winning states like Kansas.

Both front-runner John McCain and Huckabee stopped in Kansas before the Saturday caucuses, and it seemed to help Huckabee, as he overwhelmingly won the Republican race with 67 percent of the votes statewide to 12 percent for McCain and 10 for Texas Congressman Ron Paul.

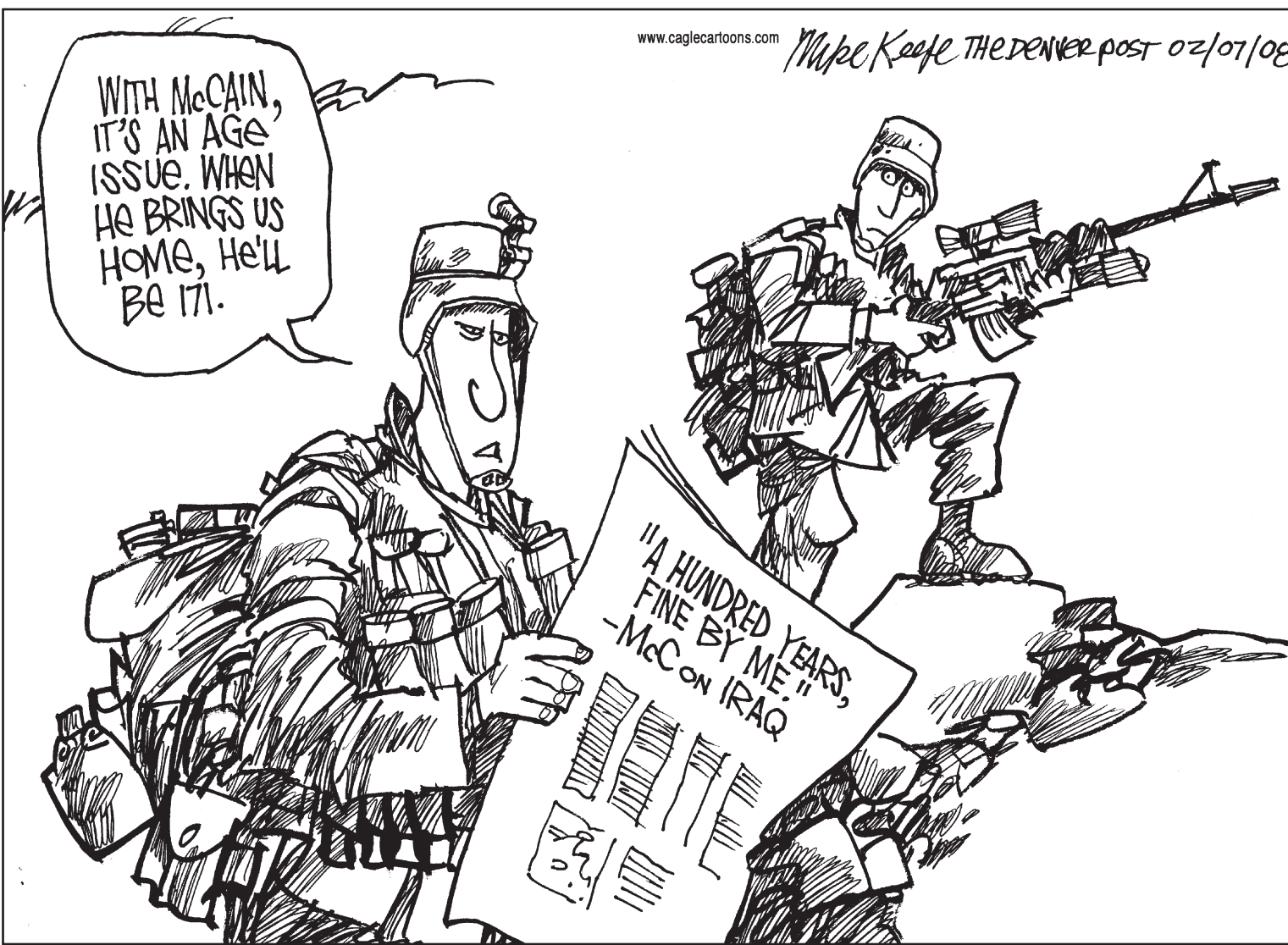
The experts got out their calculators to show that Huckabee has no way to garner enough delegates to stop McCain from wrapping up the nomination in the next few weeks.

Huckabee is realistic about his chances, but says he believes he has a chance to make a difference and feels that the wins he has garnered in the past week should give him something of a say in things like the Republican platform.

For McCain, the question is not if he will wrap up the nomination, but when? And how many more states will Huckabee take in the next few weeks? Huckabee could keep McCain from getting enough of the declared delegates to the convention, but he would have to have more than 90 percent of those in the next few weeks plus a good portion of the "superdelegates" to stop McCain.

For both parties, this is probably the most open and most watched election season in more than 40 years. It is good for both to show how open the convention process can be, and the interest—especially with the young people—may revitalize both parties for the future.

The underlying payoff of the presidential primaries and national conventions is that those who have been involved will be the ones who had their say in who the rest of us vote for—or against—in November. — Tom Betz



'Pies are round' old joke says

Pies are round. Cornbread are square. That's the punch line to an old joke where a high school student tries to show his granny how much he's learned by reciting the formula for the circumference of a circle — πr^2 .

That's sort of how I felt when I was making biscuits last week and realized that, not only didn't I have a biscuit cutter, I didn't even have a decent glass to cut my rounds with.

I use a glass at home. Why buy a fancy cutter when a thin-lipped glass works just as well and doesn't clutter up your utensil drawer? (After all, you need that room for the lemon zester, carrot peeler, cheese grater, garlic press, radish rose maker, bagel cutter, melon baller, salad tongs, apple corer and ice cream scoop, as well as the usual spatulas, ladles, sharp knives and pancake turners.)

This time, however, I wasn't at home and every glass in the place had a half-inch lip—not exactly knife sharp or even spoon sharp. Now, I really hate it when Steve's right. Es-



cynthia haynes

• open season

dough after the rounds were made for another cutting. I just formed the dough into a rough square and cut it with a bread knife into a dozen pieces. The squares cooked and ate as well as rounds ever did.

So now it's pie are round, but cornbread and biscuits are square at our house.

The biscuits reminded me of my father, who used to take a couple of pounds of hamburger and flatten it on a cookie sheet. He would then take a butter knife and cut the burger into square patties. After freezing the whole mess, he would break the square patties apart and put them in freezer bags for hamburgers whenever we wanted them.

Dave Thomas, founder of Wendy's, just thought he invented square hamburgers. Actually, Buford Desilet invented them in 1954, but he wasn't a restaurant owner, so he never got the credit.

I wonder if Steve will ever get credit for his "almost famous" square biscuits?

pecially when it has to do with cooking. But, when he looked at me as if I had lost my mind as I ripped around and complained and then suggested I just use a knife and make square biscuits, I felt really foolish.

Why not? Who made granny the arbitrator of all things cooking? Why not square biscuits? We were having biscuits and gravy with sausage for supper and I doubted that either the sausage or the gravy would complain, and son Lacy, who was eating with us, wasn't going to damage any chance of another free meal with a complaint.

It turned out to be a lot easier than round biscuits because I didn't have to remake the

Lunch with three polar bears

Who's our congressman?" asked mama polar bear during a light lunch on an ice floe somewhere off Alaska.

"Beats me," said papa polar bear. "Pass the walrus calf."

"I want to send a letter complaining about Joey being attacked again by those government wildlife scientists," said mama polar bear.

"Let it go," said papa polar bear. "Your brother still stinks of humans. But at least the sedation's taking longer to wear off this time, so he hasn't been his usual testy, cranky self."

"You'd be stressed too if you were chased by a helicopter, shot with a tranquilizer dart and had 'X19788' tattooed on the inside of your mouth when you were only 5 years old," said mama polar bear.

"At least now he can no longer claim that first encounter was an alien abduction," said papa polar bear.

"Cool it, kids," said grandpa polar bear. "Those scientists are just doing their job—like the ones we saw on '60 Minutes' two weeks ago."

"If it weren't for their longitudinal studies, we wouldn't know how many of us live up here or that anthropomorphic global warming is a threat to our iconic existence."

"Well, I'm sick of being harassed," said mama polar bear. "For my entire life they've been drugging us, weighing us, checking our fat content—poking into our sex lives. Now they've got Scott Pelley of CBS flying around with them."

"At least they're not putting radio collars on us or painting numbers on our backs," said papa polar bear.

"Or shooting us anymore," reminded grandpa polar bear. "In my day, we had a lot more than mad scientists, biased TV reporters and melting pack ice to worry about. We were daily target practice for sports hunters or bored sailors."

"I bet there weren't 8,000 of us left in the whole Arctic in 1970. Now that we're protected, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service estimates we're up to 25,000—though 60 percent of us live in Canada, those hosers."

"I'd rather take my chances with hunters than put up with this darn population explosion," said papa polar bear. "You can't go 20 miles without bumping into a mother and her spoiled cubs. Go into town for a little Dumpster diving, and it's so crowded you gotta take a number."

"Quit griping, son," said grandpa polar bear. "Our species has finally hit the jackpot. Humans were our only enemy. Now we're the official mascots of the climate-change industrial complex. We're as charismatic as whales.



bill steigerwald

• newsmakers

We've got lobbyists all over Washington."

"It won't last," said papa polar bear. "Wait till everyone finds out the ice cap naturally gets thinner or thicker all the time. Wait till they all realize we can swim 30 miles before breakfast. Wait till they see two-thirds of us haven't died by 2050 because of a little global warming."

"And what if '60 Minutes' turns on us and catches us eating baby seals?" fretted mama polar bear.

"Don't be such alarmists," said grandpa polar bear. "Al Gore will never let it happen."

"The mainstream media, politicians and school kids have been completely suckered. We're apex victims of modern mankind. Senators from New Jersey are working to put us on the Endangered Species List. Congress is talking about doing a study to make sure we won't be hurt

before they allow those new oil and gas leases to be auctioned in the Chuckchi Sea. It's only a matter of time before we get Pell Grants for polar bears."

"So stop worrying, kids," said grandpa polar bear, slipping off the ice floe for a little five mile swim. "We've never had it so good."

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The Goodland Star-News

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562)
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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@nwkansans.com. Advertising questions can be sent to: goodlandads@nwkansans.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 Yonkey
1994-2001

Nor'West Newspapers
Haynes Publishing Company