

from other pens...

Senate debate, ads push the envelope

A check of various television channels around 11 p.m., Saturday, brought a surprise — a pleasant surprise. It was a rerun of debate between the two candidates for the United States Senate, incumbent Pat Roberts and challenger, former Congressman Jim Slattery.

It was an interesting debate, to say the least. What we got out of it was simply this: the television commercials for this race really push the envelope. We use that term instead of the "L" word because there's too much of that already being tossed around.

Sen. Roberts has been hammering, via television commercials, Mr. Slattery's poor attendance record when he was in Congress and his employment since as a Washington lobbyist, plus a few other digs. But when they looked one another in the eye on the debate stage, it just didn't seem that way at all. After Sen. Roberts listed a litany of things he was doing for Kansas and ended each of those reminding listeners that Mr. Slattery was busy being a lobbyist, Mr. Slattery looked right at the senator and reminded him that his son is also a lobbyist. That sort of ended that.

Sen. Roberts' appearance at the televised debate was somewhat puzzling. Usually a guy who can win an audience over with his humor, he rarely looked his audience in the eye during the debate. He seemed to have been reading from a script, and he seemed annoyed at having to share the stage with someone like Jim Slattery.

Sen. Roberts will be re-elected. He's done his share of good for this state. And most importantly, it's a rare bird that wins a United States Senate seat on the Democratic ticket in the state of Kansas.

If the name Slattery sort of rings a bell, you might recall that he lost his bid for the governorship to Gov. Bill Graves some years ago.

The televised debate took place at the recent Kansas Association of Broadcasters convention in Wichita.

Eleven o'clock is a late hour for us aging political birds, but it was worth staying up to experience this lively exchange.

— Tom Dreiling, *The Norton Telegram*

where to write

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774; web address — roberts.senate.gov

U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521; web e-mail address — brownback.senate.gov/CMEmail.me

U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran, 2202 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715; Fax (202) 225-5124 web address — www.jerrymoran.house.gov

State Rep. Jim Morrison, State Capitol Building Rm. 242W, Topeka, KS 66612. (785) 296-7676; e-mail address — jmorriso@ink.org

State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol Building, Rm. 128-S, 300 SW 10th, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7399; e-mail address — ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us

Kansas Attorney General, 301 S.W. 10th, Lower Level, Topeka, KS 66612-1597 (785) 296-3751 Fax (785) 291-3699 TTY: (785) 291-3767

The Goodland Star-News

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

Member: Kansas Press Association

Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association

National Newspaper Association

e-mail: star-news@nwkanssas.com

Steve Haynes, President

Tom Betz, Editor

Pat Schiefen, Society Editor

Sharon Corcoran, Reporter

Jordie Mann, Jessica Corbin, Advertising Depr.

Sheila Smith, Office Manager



Nor'west Press

Jim Bowker, General Manager

Richard Westfahl, Betty Morris, James Jackson

Lana Westfahl, James Ornelas, Tasha Shores

Barbara Ornelas, Elizabeth Brock, Judy McKnight

nwkanssas.com

N.T. Betz, Director of Internet Services

(ntbetz@nwkanssas.com)

Evan Barnum, Systems Admin. (support@nwkanssas.com)

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@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, \$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

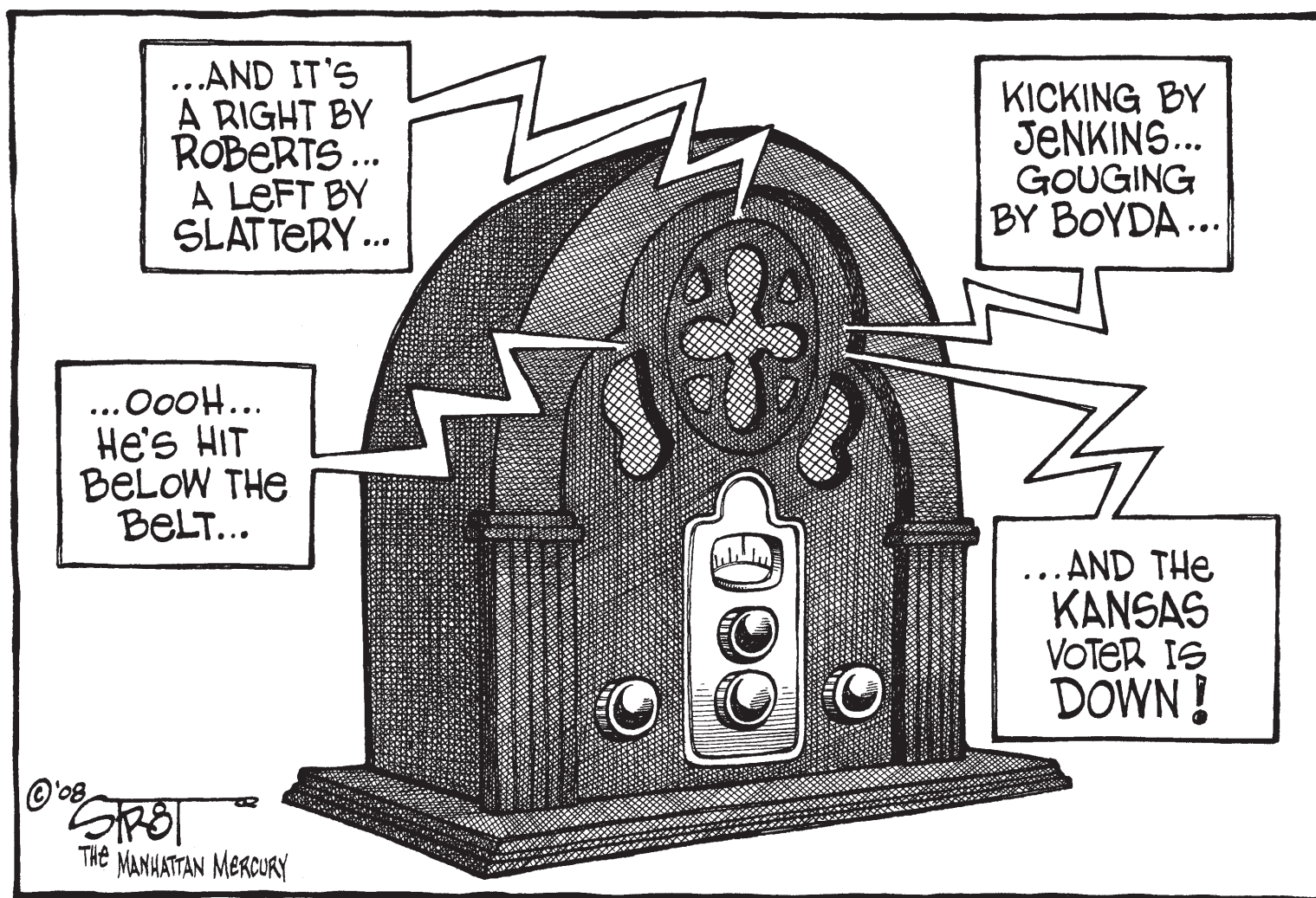
THE SHERMAN COUNTY STAR

Founded by Eric and Roxie Yonkey

1994-2001

Nor'West Newspapers

Haynes Publishing Company



I took the shortcut, but it wasn't one

"It's on a state highway, so you shouldn't have any trouble," my husband said.

Boy, talk about your famous last words. You'd think that after 40 years my husband would know me better.

It seemed like a good idea to go to the church social, pick up some supper to take home and maybe get a couple of pictures for the paper.

But, the church was in a small town, which can be reached by going down a nice paved state highway. Or, you can turn too soon and take the dirt shortcut.

I wasn't trying to take a shortcut. I just thought that was my turn. In my defense, it was paved for the first 100 yards or so. After that it was a dirt track that had had just enough rain on it to have a two-inch deep layer of slick, sticky mud.

Of course, I noticed that the pavement ended, but I was moving along real well. I figured it wasn't probably one of my best ideas of the year and I'd probably have to wash my car when I got home.

Yeah, that was a good thought. Not smart, but comforting.

Which is how I got about a mile and a half down the road before I got stuck. The car just started to go slower and slower and finally, it wouldn't go forward any more.

I tried rocking it — putting it in reverse then



cynthia haynes

• open season

drive quickly. But it did no good. I was stuck in the middle of the road — which I figured was better than being in the ditch.

Still, I had to do what I hated the most. Call Steve for help.

Of course, he was 30 miles away and it would take awhile for him to arrive and he warned me, he wasn't sure he could maneuver on that road even in his four-wheel drive.

While I was waiting, I tried backing up. While I couldn't go forward, I could go backward, slowly and sometimes sideways. I was only a hundred yards or so from the pavement when he got there, and together we pushed, pulled and dug the car back onto the blacktop.

Steve suggested I go to the car wash while he went home to fix dinner, since we weren't going to make that church supper.

Good idea, but the automatic car wash was out of order. The manual one had one bay closed and one bay busy. While I was waiting, I checked my purse for quarters. I had two, plus

three dollar bills.

The clean car rolled away and I discovered the coin changer was broken. The wash took five quarters for each round.

I called Steve again. He had two quarters and two ones. He suggested I go to the office and trade my bills in for quarters from the pop fund.

The pop fund had three quarters and the cash drawer another dozen. I bought them all.

Back at the car wash, I washed twice and rinsed once, using all the quarters I had scrounged at the office. The four left weren't enough for another go around, so I drove home.

When I got out on the highway, though, the front end wobbled like crazy. Steve said I probably had mud stuck to the wheels, unbalancing the tires.

I ended up taking the car to the shop to beg the guy, who does my service work to de-mud the underside so I could drive at more than 45 miles an hour without shimmying all over the road.

My children say they are getting me a global positioning system for Christmas. But then, they've only known me for 30 years.

Steve's getting me about 10 rolls of quarters.

Halloween safety target of county sheriff

To the Editor:

Halloween should be a time for scary costumes, trick or treating and good fun. But unfortunately, it has become a very dangerous and deadly night of the year due to impaired driving.

In 2006, 44 percent of all highway fatalities across the nation on Halloween night (6 p.m. Oct. 31 to 5:59 a.m. Nov. 1.) involved a driver or a motorcycle rider with a Blood Alcohol Concentration of .08 or higher, which is illegal in every state.

Drunk driving is one of America's deadliest problems. Too many lives are being lost on our state's roads and we need everyone's help to



from our readers

• to the editor

stop it. Last year alone in Kansas there were 135 people who were killed in traffic crashes that involved at least one driver or motorcycle rider with a blood alcohol concentration of .08 or higher.

On a night such as Halloween, children dressed in costumes can run onto streets and the damage could be staggering.

That is why the Sherman County Sheriff's Office will be out in force cracking down on drunk drivers this Halloween night with an aggressive Drunk Driving Over the limit, Under Arrest enforcement.

Driving impaired is simply not worth the risk. The consequences are serious and real, especially when you risk killing yourself or someone else.

Don't let your good time turn into a nightmare. Drunk driving will not be tolerated. Have a safe and happy Halloween.

Sherman Co. Sheriff

Kevin Butts

Longing for the Clintons



tom purcell

• commentary

I never thought I'd say it, but, boy, am I longing for the Clinton years.

Sure, the Clinton administration was rocky early on — lots of stumbling and embarrassments. There was the travel office scandal, the Whitewater scandal, the White House security hack who pulled up FBI records on Clinton opponents.

A handful of Clinton cronies got pinched and sent to the clink, but nobody much cared.

I remember, too, the agitation I felt when Hillary tried to nationalize our health-care system. But that effort helped pave the way for a massive Republican takeover in the House and Senate in 1994.

Initially that made me happy. The Republican Congress combined with a pragmatic Clinton brought us restraint, a surplus and a commonsense welfare-reform policy.

The welfare-reform idea was simple enough: Give a man a hand up, not a handout, and while we're at it let's teach him to fish.

Critics said the poor would be destitute. The opposite occurred. The poor did extremely well. Their success reminded me of a bumper sticker: "Liberalism — The haunting fear that somehow, somewhere people are able to care for themselves."

For the most part, the Clinton years were a lot of fun. The economy did well — the dot.com bubble was a great ride. Republicans, for the most part, acted Republican.

Better, the Cold War was over and nobody worried about much. We dropped bombs on people now and then — we waged a war in Kosovo solely from the air — but did nothing

too messy that might make for scary images on the news.

Sure, there was that incident in 1993 with the World Trade Center — a handful of radicals tried to blow the place up — so we took them to court and sent a few of them to jail.

Nobody knew then that seeds of 9/11 were being planted, in part, by our lawyerly response. Nobody seemed to know that the masterminds who arranged that terrorist strike decided they were safe — and so they began planning a more fatal strike.

Nobody paid much attention in 1990's, either, when the Clinton Administration pressured government-sponsored organizations Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to loosen their standards.

Fannie and Freddie buy up packages of loans that are originated by banks, thrifts, mortgage companies, etc. to enable lenders to lend more.

According to a 1999 New York Times article, the banks, thrifts and mortgage companies were also eager for Fan and Fred to loosen standards. Once they knew Fan and Fred would buy up the riskier loans they issued, they could issue more loans to more people and make more dough — without taking on the increased risk.

Most folks didn't worry then that the change would be one of the causes of the financial mess we now find ourselves in — a mess that would grow well beyond Fan and Fred and eventually swallow up many private institutions done in by their own greed.

No, most folks were fat, dumb and happy — and amused. For entertainment value alone, we had a president who was the gift who kept on giving:

"Monica Lewinsky was on 'Larry King Live,'" said David Letterman. "She really liked Larry King. Actually, she likes any guy with a desk."

Nobody much cared what our president did — the impeachment thing was an annoyance — so long as stocks kept rising and our collective nap went undisturbed.

It's true the economy and the dot.com bubble started to tank in the last year of Clinton's term. It's true, too, that soon after Bill left, 9/11 would hit, we'd go to war and the Fed would unleash easy dough to try and stave off recession.

Unfortunately, conditions would be perfectly set — a perfect storm of sorts — to create and eventually explode a housing bubble that would cause our global financial system to melt down.

Who knows what is next. All I know is that I'm longing for the Clinton years. I'd give anything for a Monica Lewinsky scandal about now.

Tom Purcell is a nationally syndicated humor columnist. Visit Tom on the web at www.TomPurcell.com or e-mail him at Purcell@caglecartoons.com.