

from our viewpoint...

\$69 standing in way of ‘I do’?

A state legislator from Topeka, Rep. Joe Patton, wants to eliminate the cost of marriage licenses for couples who can’t afford them.

The cost of a license in Kansas is \$69. That’s probably the cheapest expense potential newlyweds face.

Rep. Patton said in part, “Eliminating the financial burden to marry for those with limited incomes in our state would have a positive impact on the number of marriages in our state which would lead to stronger families and society”

Maybe.

The representative pointed to one study that found, “Even small changes in the cost of a marriage license can have significant effects.” Kansas reportedly has seen a decline in the number of marriage licenses in recent years.

Maybe that’s because more couples are opting to live together outside of marriage, and probably the cost of a license has nothing to do with it.

Under Patton’s plan, those who are not able to pay the fee would be able to file a poverty affidavit and have the fee waived much like Kansas courts currently do with docket fees, he said.

And he continued, “Evidence-based studies show us marriage is positively associated with a large number of outcomes, including the improved well-being of children, better mental and physical health for the married adults and greater earnings for family members. However, many couples don’t marry because they can’t afford to pay the marriage license fee.”

Not so fast there. Instead of eliminating the fee all together — especially at a time when the state is financially strapped — it would make more sense to simply reduce the cost of a marriage license for those unable to pay the \$69 fee. That way the state’s piggybank would get fed, too.

Who would have thought the cost of a marriage license would become an issue, especially in a society that seems to give little notice to the many couples living together marriage free.

Maybe what is needed in those locations that issue licenses are two windows, instead of one, carrying the following notations:

License to marry, \$69

License not to, \$69

What’s wrong with catching them coming and going?

After all, it all goes for a good cause — keeping the state operating.

And all of this over \$69?

Give us a break! -Tom Dreiling

Letter Policy

The Goodland Star-News encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten, and must include a telephone number and a signature. Unsigned letters will not be published. Form letters will be rejected, as will letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and good taste. We encourage letters, with address and phone numbers, by e-mail to: <star.news@nwkansas.com>.

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nwkansas.com

N.T. Betz, Director of Internet Services
(nt.betz@nwkansas.com)

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

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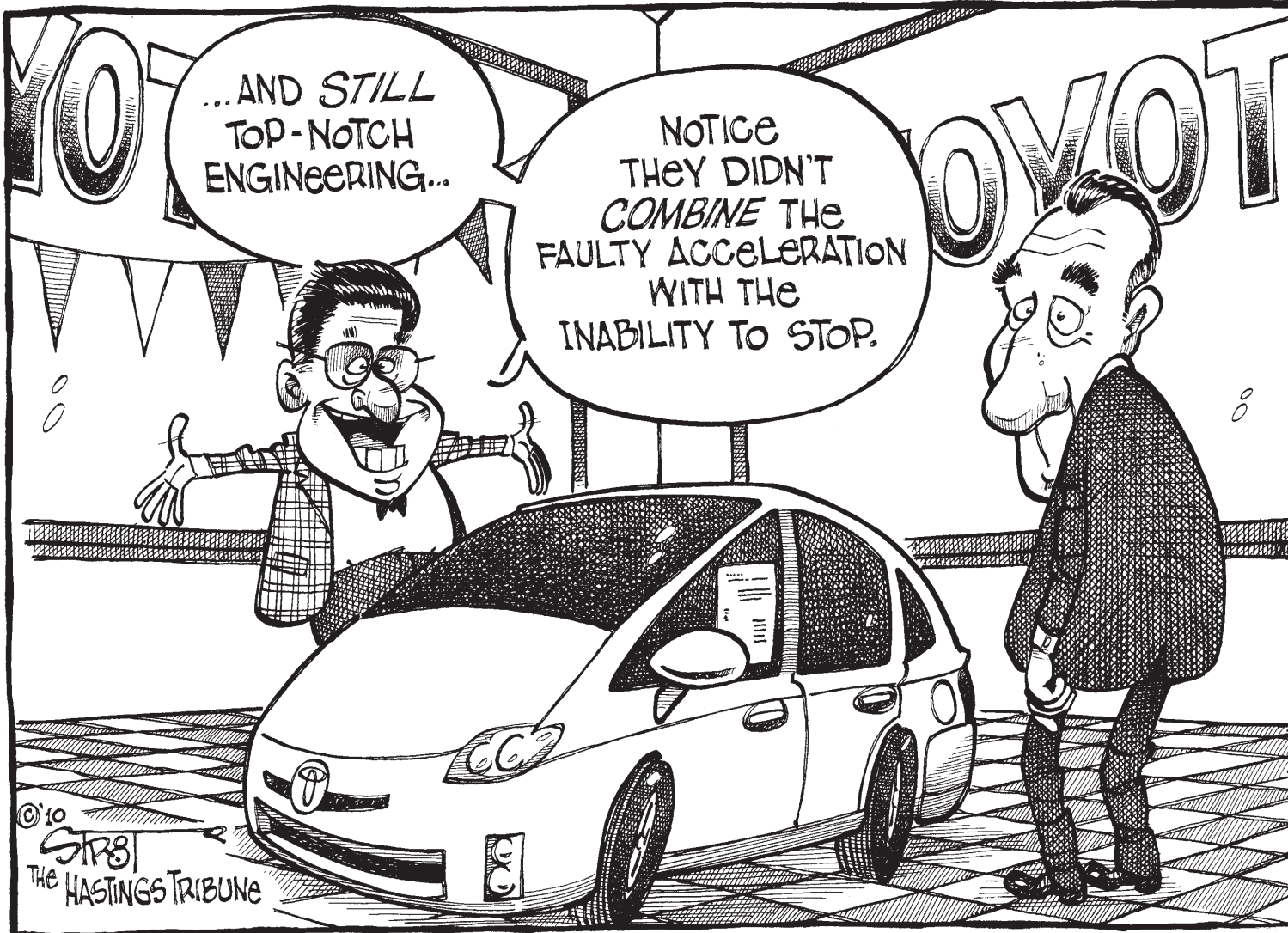
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1935-1989

THE SHERMAN COUNTY
STAR
Founded by Eric and
Roxie Yonkey
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Top money-grabber merits thumbs up

Thumbs up to Sianna Miller, for being the best money grabber around.-(e-mail); to the elementary students, on your outstanding art exhibit at Carnegie Arts Center; you gotta’ see it!-(e-mail); to our sharing neighbors, for the excellent chili on a cold evening; really appreciated.-(telephone); and to the driver(s) of the transportation van, for their care and concern.-(td).

-td-

Have you ever looked into your records? You know, birth and church and stuff like that? Well, I did. What sparked my interest, however, was the fact I lost a birthday along life’s path. This goes back 10 years when I was preparing for my 64th birthday. About a month before that celebration, I received a letter from the Social Security Administration telling me that, in essence, I would be turning 65 on Nov. 25 (of that year) and will be able to take full advantage of all the benefits Social Security has to offer. 65? What? I will go from 63 to 65 without a 64? Yep!. Records maintained by family members show I was born in 1935; Social Security showed I was born in 1934. So I requested and received a copy of my birth certificate from the state. Sure enough, it said I was born in 1934. My mother always said I and the other two younger family members were born at St. Anthony’s Hospital at Hays. My birth certificate showed I was born in a residence at 216 W. 16th Street in Hays. Not fully convinced, I requested and received a copy of my church records, There it was: I was baptized just days after my birth in 1934. As I scanned my church record, I was surprised



tom dreiling

• time out with td

to learn that my wife’s first name was Edna. Edna? Don’t think so!

But that’s not all.

I have also learned that I am not a type 1 diabetic, but in fact, type 2. When I was diagnosed some 20 years ago I was immediately put on insulin which I continue to inject three times a day. The most recent revelation that I am type 2 knocked my socks off. Wow, I thought that now I can get rid of the insulin and just take an oral medicine. Not so. I was told that wouldn’t be the case because my system is pretty much married to insulin after all these years and stopping now might create problems I could best do without. Most importantly, I learned that my pancreas is functioning to some degree, which is not the case for type 1 diabetics

So, my dear readers, in a nutshell I learned that I am older than I thought I was, I wasn’t born where I thought I was, I am not a type 1 diabetic as I thought I was, and hey, I even married Edna!

Maybe it’s best if you don’t poke into your records.

-td-

I’m struggling with what my sacrifice for the approaching season of Lent will be. The most significant sacrifice I ever made for Lent was in 1970 (it might have been 1969 and the

mind is still debating the year). Anyway, let’s say 1970. That was when I and wife Jean gave up smoking. She didn’t smoke much, a puff here and there and that was about it. But I was hooked, no less than two packs a day. Forty years later I continue to be smoke free. And I’ll tell you that first year was the most difficult year in my life. But I got through it, thanks to Jean’s support and the help and guidance of my family physician, Dr. McCullough. If you have ever thought of kicking the habit, by all means do. **You can do it.** And those four words aren’t just hot air.

-td-

On the lighter side of smoking, I was reading about a guy who was a heavy, heavy smoker. “One out, one in,” he’d say. His doctor pleaded with him to stop, to throw them away, quit! “If you don’t you won’t live to see another year,” he’d caution. Well, this guy gave the doctor’s warning some credibility, and quit. Anyone who smoked a lot and quit knows you pick up another habit, like chewing gum, eating hard candy, etc. For some reason this guy turned to tooth picks. You would never see him without one in his mouth. Unfortunately, six months after kicking the habit and taking up chewing on tooth picks, he died. His funeral, the story goes, was large as he was a popular gent. At the dinner after the burial service, someone asked one of his sons what caused his death. Without emotion, the son said, “Dutch elm disease.”

-td-

Have a good evening! And why not help fill up the church pews at the house of worship of your choice this weekend? (tad1@st-tel.net)

An idea for using the armory building

To the Editor:

Hi I have an idea for the armory building. I think we should turn it into a family place with inside miniature golf, a laser tag room and even a play room for those little people. We could have a party room with tables and all for birthday parties, even skeet-ball and games. And outside we could put batting cages maybe eventually a go-cart track.

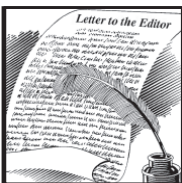
I think this would be a place Mom’s and Dad’s and even Grandparents could take the kids. I am an adult, but I would even like to do these things, it’s not just for the kids. There is a kitchen so you could have a snack bar and cappuccino!

If we are thinking we don’t have the money for this I was thinking that a family or group could sponsor a golf hole. The community could work on this project together.

It would be something none of the surrounding towns have, therefore bringing people into town to “play.” We need something for people to do that is affordable. I would hope that this would be a place for everyone.

I have talked to many people and they said it would be great. So here I am writing the paper with my idea. I hope we can get this idea in the works and have fun doing it.

Jackie Buller
Goodland



from our readers

• to the editor

To the Editor:

I understand that as professionals our jobs differ greatly. It is your job to inform the public; it is part of my job to protect the young people of our community.

We both take our jobs very seriously and for that I appreciate your efforts. But who has the responsibility to use common sense?

Last week there was a criminal trial and, hopefully, it will not need repeated in the future. It was neither a “drama unfolding” for public entertainment nor did it need the amount of publicity and detail it received in your paper. It was our judicial system at work.

All lives in that trial will forever be altered from the plaintiff, to the defendant, to their families, to the jurors who were selected.

I understand the damage to the families is done and there is nothing anyone can do to change that. Therefore, I do not write this letter out of malice to you. I do write it out of frustration.

I teach my students that in a bullying situation

there are three people involved: the bully, the victim and the bystander. The bystander who stands by and does nothing is just as guilty as the bully. It was time for me to practice what I preach.

Please be careful in future editions to protect the people of our community and not further victimize those in arduous situations.

Connie Bergquist
Signing in support,
Threse Armstrong, Brenda Linin, Benjamin Foust and Shelly Bellamy
Goodland

To the Editor:

I am extremely disappointed in the lack of discretion used by reporter Ava Betz in *The Goodland Star-News* on Friday, Feb. 5, regarding the trial coverage. Granted, news should be reported but I feel Mrs. Betz failed to use common sense and good judgement.

I am a trained child advocate and have been involved in several cases such as this one. We teach our children that we are there to protect them.

My concern now is what happens when some other child in Goodland is abused, but refuses to come forward for fear of having graphic details of their misfortune on the front page of the local newspaper?

Mrs. Betz, I feel you not only dishonored the newspaper, but showed disrespect of the children of the family involved.

Sherry Brandvik
Goodland

To the Editor:

The article you printed concerning the trial this past week contained details needed by persons on the jury and persons directly involved in the process for determining guilt or innocence.

To print those details for everyone to read is incomprehensible and a blatant disregard for an innocent child.

Disturbed by your judgement.
Linda Enfield
Goodland

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. 247W, Topeka, KS 66612. (785) 296-7676; e-mail address — jmorriso@ink.org

State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol Building, Rm. 225-E, 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