

from our viewpoint...

Voting opens today for county question

The Primary Election is two weeks away, and advance voting began today in Sherman County.

Most of the people on the ballot are Republicans running for party nominations starting with county commissioner, state representative, governor, US Representative and U.S. Senator. The Democrats have candidates as well, but no big races.

This is a unique Primary Election in Sherman County where all registered voters are eligible to vote on the question of setting a 2 mill property tax levy to provide money for the economic development program.

For the other part of the Primary one has to be a Republican to vote in the race between Brenda McCants and Jim Morrison for state representative, the Republican candidates running for governor, among the six candidates vying to be the U.S. representative for the First Congressional District and the two Republicans vying to be U.S. Senator. Democrats and unaffiliated can vote in the Democratic primary to support their candidates.

The 2 mill property tax would replace the money the City of Goodland and Sherman County have been giving the development council since the group was created by the county commissioners at the request of a citizens committee who felt the county needed an economic development program.

When the citizens gathered at Gambino's more than seven years ago the objective was to create an economic development program because the existing one was not functioning.

Worse than having an under-funded program is to have none at all. In today's world it is important to have a contact person who can handle business inquiries from both local companies and from those looking for a place to expand or relocate.

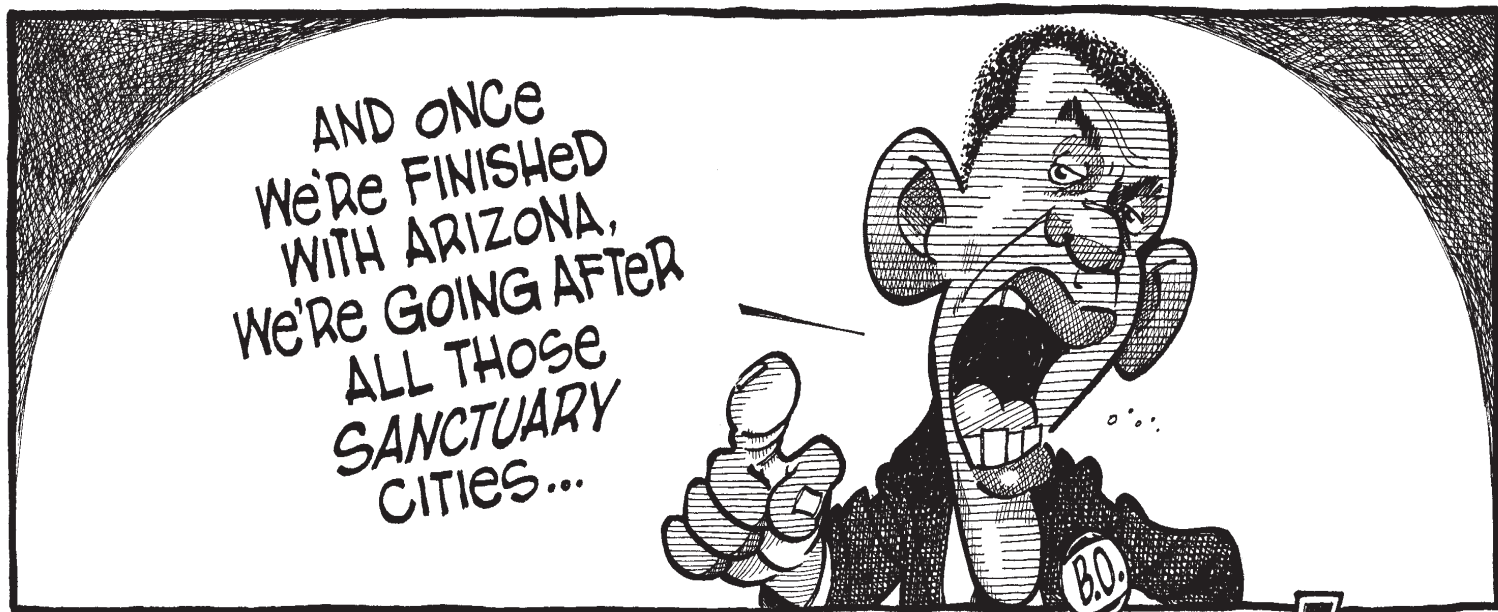
The development council works with local businesses and homeowners through the Neighborhood Revitalization Program that provides property tax rebates for those who have made a minimum improvement of \$5,000 of assessed value in their business or home. This program has been in place for five years and 140 projects have been approved totaling about \$8 million.

Judging the success of an economic development program is not as easy as looking at a profit and loss sheet for a business. Many times the success of economic development efforts are not as dramatic as bringing a grocery store or antenna factory to town. Many of the smaller projects the development council has supported have brought businesses customers and work for contractors in the community.

The business and housing grants have brought more than \$90,000 in work and purchases with the requirement the supplies and labor come from local businesses. In some cases the products have to come from out of town, but are ordered through a Sherman County business.

Dodge City passed a one cent sales tax for economic development that has led to public and private investments of more than \$1 billion. Other cities have similar stories, and some have had tremendous success. For each of the cities and counties the important point is to have a contact person in economic development.

We agree the development council needs a plan, and to be accountable. We believe the best way to support projects such as the grocery store are to vote "Yes" on the ballot issue either by voting advance or at the Veterans of Foreign Wars on Tuesday, Aug. 3. — Tom Betz



Grand Hotel was 'grand'

I've had numerous people (yeah both of you) ask about our trip to Mackinac Island and the Grand Hotel.

What can I say. It was grand. Well, it was also fancy, expensive and a heck of a long way to go to enjoy a little cool air.

We agreed. We're glad we did it, and we'll probably never do it again. It's too far and too much.

When you can get to Estes Park in a few hours, why go all the way to Michigan.

Well, there's Lake Huron, of course and the Grand Hotel itself.

If you're not a guest, they charge you \$10 just to look around the place.

If you are a guest, of course, they charge you a whole lot more.

Room prices are \$190 to \$290 a night. That's a bundle, but the Brown Palace in Denver starts about \$250 a night, so maybe it's OK. And the Grand will feed you breakfast and dinner at that price.

But wait! That's per person with a 6 percent Michigan sales tax and, since there is no tipping allowed at the hotel, a 19.5 percent gratuity addition.

Ouch! The cost of the room depends on your view. If you want a nice view of Lake Huron and the Mackinac Bridge, you pay for it. Our view was off a loading dock and back stairs. If I wanted to see Lake Huron, I got up, got dressed and went out on the huge front porch and looked at it.

Yeah, it's a nice view. Not a \$100-a-night



cynthia haynes

• open season

view, but nice.

So what do you get for this oh so-scary price?

Food, music and art and the feeling of vacationing like the rich did in the early part of the last century.

First of all, they feed you. The room price includes breakfast and dinner.

Breakfast is a full meal off the menu, or as many trips as you want to the buffet, with waiters offering coffee and juice.

Lunch is on your own, but the hotel has about nine places that, for an extra charge, you can get anything from quiche to an \$18 hot dog, or you can try one of the many restaurants on the island.

In the afternoon, there is high tea. You can have tea and finger sandwiches, chat with your friends in the lobby and listen to a lady play the harp.

Then there's a demitasse service with strong coffee, finger sandwiches and someone playing quite music on the piano.

The lunch, high tea and demitasse are all extra charges, as are drinks you might desire with your meals or at the bar in the evenings.

Dinner is included in the price of admis-

sion, and is a full dress affair. Men must wear suits and ties and the ladies are asked to wear their best. An army of uniformed waiters and waitresses serve you an appetizer, soup, salad, entree and dessert.

And music. There's always music.

Besides the lady on the harp and the pianists in the morning and afternoon, a combo playing in the upstairs bar, a dinner-time quartet and an orchestra with a singer in the ballroom after dinner. There's music on the porch most afternoons provided by choirs and musical groups.

And art. That was Steve's favorite part.

The hotel has its own collection of art, which is quite good.

While we were there, it also had a couple dozen pieces from the Manoogian collection, which were destined for a new museum being built on the island.

The collection is mostly from American Impressionists, including a couple of pieces by John Singer Sargent and at least one by William Merritt Chase.

All in all, it was a great opportunity to eat too much, drink too much and generally loll in the lap of early 20th century luxury.

We enjoyed it tremendously, couldn't button our too-tight pants when it was time to come home and likely will never do it again.

It was truly a grand, once-in-a-lifetime experience.

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@nwkansas.com

Steve Haynes, President
Tom Betz, Editor
Pat Schiefen, Society Editor



Jessica Corbin, Josh Harenberg, Anne Selfridge
Advertising Department

Sheila Smith, Office Manager

Nor'west Press

Richard Westfahl, General Manager

Jim Bowker, Betty Morris, James Jackson,

Lana Westfahl, Kris McCool, Stacy Brashear, Tracy Traxel,

Gary Meyer, Judy McKnight, Brad Cramer



nwkansas.com

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

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

Published every Tuesday and Friday except the days observed for New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving 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 Yonkey
1994-2001

Nor'West Newspapers
Haynes Publishing Company

County needs development council

To the Editor:

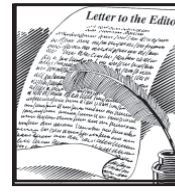
As the owner of a business that has invested much time and money into Goodland as a part of the development of a new grocery store we have watched the debate regarding the resolution to establish a property tax levy closely.

While we are not voters in Sherman County, we, like any business owner, want to see good decisions and a commitment to the community by its leadership and citizens. Our ability to serve our customers depends on it.

Were it not for the Sherman County Economic Development Council we would not have thought to consider Goodland and would not be making the significant investment it takes to bring a grocery store to the community.

The development team has provided invaluable assistance and insight. They have pushed and pulled and kept the ball rolling when we needed it most. As important, they have provided resources to help us make the project feasible in these challenging times.

The city manager, the city commissioners and the mayor have been thorough, probing and pragmatic. While they have been enthusiastic; they have clearly communicated and fol-



from our readers

• to the editor

lowed through with the need to understand the value that would be brought to the community by our project and their assistance with it.

A project such as a grocery store is not just about tax revenue, it is about jobs, skills training, quality of life and competition that results in better candidate pools for other businesses and higher quality food in a community.

We do not agree with many of the deductions put forth in the debate regarding the levy, however, we do agree with the five questions outlined in Ken Klemm's letter of June 4. Any citizen, business owner or commissioner would rightfully ask such questions. Further, I have no doubt these same questions can be answered by the mayor and city commissioners directly and as appropriately as the situation will allow.

As a business owner I would warn not all investments yield a one for one return. I wish

they did. Momentum and being able to be opportunistic is just as important, especially at the community level.

We have spent much time assessing Sherman County and the city of Goodland and without a strong and well funded Sherman County Economic Development Council, the community will not be able to take advantage of the opportunities it does have. Further, relying on a council of volunteers without a director to lead is no way to plan for a community's future. While the volunteers have proven invaluable, the community needs someone who is measured by their success (or failure).

You have a great mayor and a great group of city commissioners, let them continue to lead and do the job they were voted in to do.

We couldn't be more excited to get going with our Goodland Grocery Store. All the preparations needed to be well planned, well designed, well stocked, well financed and well trained are slow – but all are moving forward. Goodland will be our flagship store and one we know your community will be proud to shop.

Sam Mancini
CEO, Village Markets Holdings Ltd

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 — jmorrison@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

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.