

from our viewpoint...

## Ads bring out facts fudge factor

The Primary Election is Tuesday, and the airwaves, television and newspapers are full of claims and counter claims about candidates and issues, and whether they are telling the truth or not.

Sherman County voters are being asked to vote on a question to support the economic development program with a 2 mill property tax to replace the money from the city and county the Sherman County Economic Development Council has been operating on from year to year.

We agreed putting the issue on the ballot to get the voters approval was a good thing, and all Sherman County voters—regardless of party affiliation—have the right to express their opinion on this in the Primary Election.

In today's issue is an advertisement from the Sherman County Citizens Against Socialism and Government Waste asking voters to reject the economic development proposal.

The ad has exaggerated a fact or two. The main one is on the micro loan program. That program was in existence before the development council was created, and it was thrust on the council to get it going or lose the \$90,000 (\$10,000 went to administration in Hill City). The program has had some bad loans, but that is part of the high risk process. The fact there is \$17,000 in the fund is proof many of the businesses are paying their loans back and giving the next business a chance. It is after all a 'revolving' loan fund.

The other area is the incentives being offered to the grocery store. Nearly all of those are from the city, and approved in a package developed in the fall. People should not forget many businesses have come to town and asked for and been given incentives including Walmart that opened 13 years ago.

The reason to consider incentives is the return on investment the business can bring to the city and county that results in economic development by expanding the tax base.

On a larger scale Kansas Republicans have a litmus test they seem to go through with each candidate saying they are (1) conservative (2) pro-life (3) pro second amendment (National Rifle Association endorsement) and (4) pro marriage.

We asked Dr. Jim Barnett, who is running for the Big First District, and he said he felt this was because the issues were important to the voters.

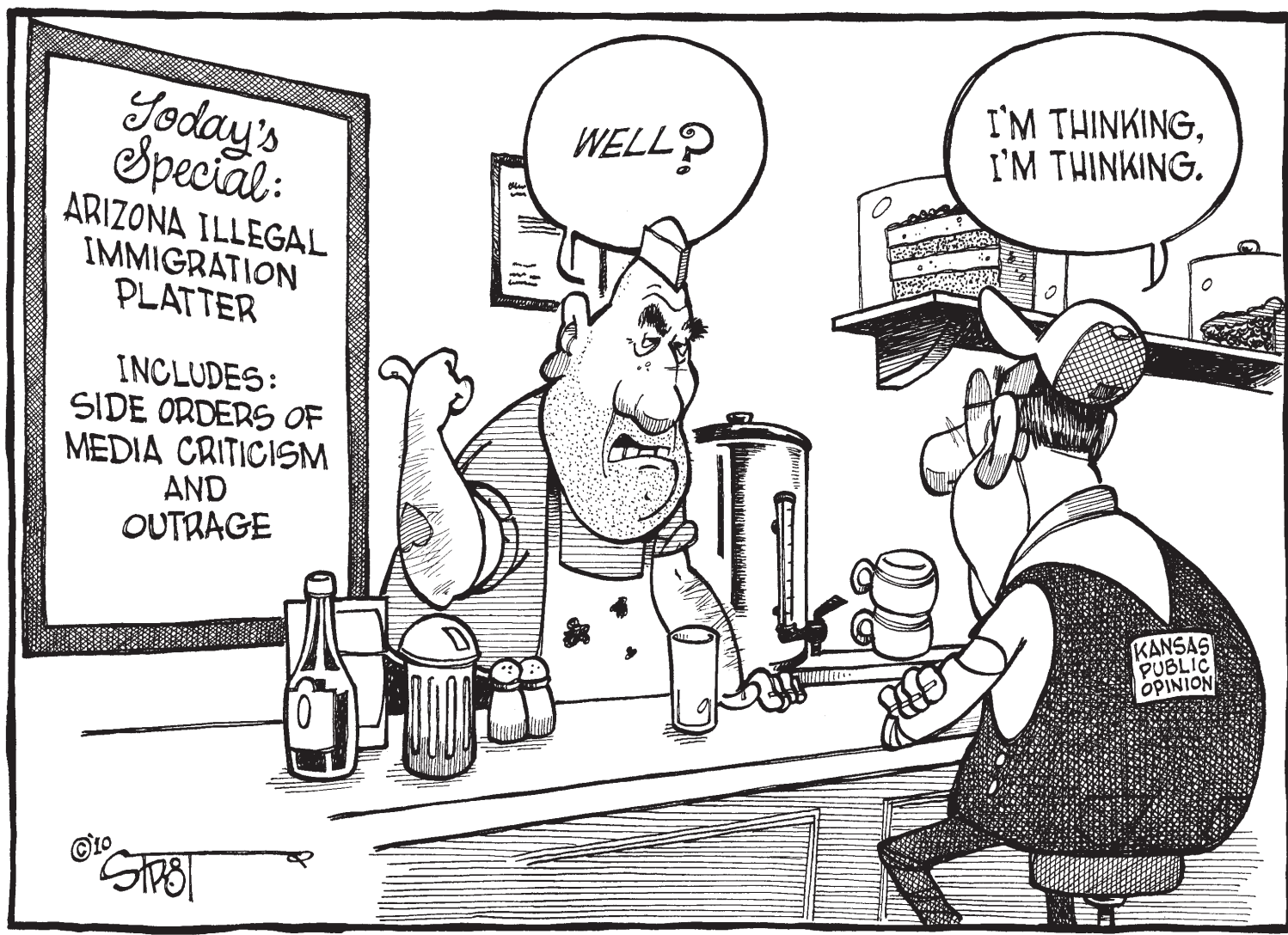
Each of the four issues are the top issues of a section of the voters, and each group pushes the candidates on their issue to get the endorsement. In some cases the endorsement brings donations from group members. When people think about 'special interests' these are seldom mentioned, but they fit the same definition.

In a Primary Election there is a sharper contrast being drawn because the candidates are focused on getting the people in their party to turn out to vote and give the top one the nomination to be on the General Election ballot in November.

Candidate litmus tests are not new, and they pop up in both parties each election season. Democrats have a few less strident tests, but they are there.

Making candidates pass the litmus test is a type of 'special interest' control that translates into pressure to support these issues in the future. It is hard for a candidate in either party to tip toe through the mine field and try to ignore these issues because of the negative pressure the 'special interest' groups can create.

— Tom Betz



## Watch out for those pharmacists

Most of you are familiar with Cynthia, the columnist who writes for the newspaper. Not all of you know Cynthia, the pharmacist who fills in at drug stores from Norton to Colby and sometimes as far as Goodland, Quinter, Hoxie and Smith Center.

She was a pharmacist married to a reporter long before we bought our first newspaper out in Colorado. But then we had this business to run, there was no drug store in the county and so she started to learn about the newspaper.

Soon, she was an award-winning columnist and photographer, as well as the bookkeeper and a volunteer emergency medical technician in our little mountain town. But she yearned to keep her hand in her chosen profession. Eventually, she took a one-day-a-week job at a chain store in the Valley, some 60 miles away. She even learned the store cheer.

Then she switched to the pharmacy at City Market, which is what they call Dillon's in southern Colorado. Then the manager quit, and she moved up to his full-time job. And pretty soon, she was working a whole lot. The kids and I had to make dinner most nights, and I think she kinda liked that.

When we moved to Kansas, she said she didn't want to work that much. For a few years, she stuck with that, too. But pharmacists across western Kansas learned there was someone they could call to cover a day off, or even a week. She was, and is, in demand.



**steve haynes**

• along the sappa

Lately, she's been working in Oberlin and Norton mostly, but then Dillon's called and she decided to try working there. There was nostalgia for a company she liked, and besides, she said, they paid better than most.

So, she's been working a day or two a month down in Colby. It didn't add too much to her burden, until one day she got a notice that all Dillon's pharmacists needed to be trained to give immunizations.

She always claimed that nurses emptied bed pans and gave shots, and her sister might do that, but she wouldn't. There was money involved here, though, something like 21 hours' pay for study, the class in Salina and drive time. Plus expenses.

She came back from Salina sporting three Snoopy bandages.

"We had to practice," she said. "Not real vaccine; just saline solution."

But those little blood spots on Snoopy's nose looked real enough for me.

"I thought you practiced on oranges?" I said.

"Naw," she said. "They told us oranges have

tougher skins than people. We had to practice on each other."

That's the kind of thing where you want to get the first shots, so you can get even with your partner. And she can't get back at you. At least, that's what I'd do.

I noticed Cynthia looking at my arm, and I found something to do. I'm not sure if she has to do any more practice shots, but no sense taking any chances.

Actually, all this wasn't really as bad as it could have been. Last month at a newspaper meeting, she was telling everyone about her upcoming class.

"That's nothing," said our friend Shelly, a dental hygienist. "When I was in school, we had to practice Novocain shots on each other. We used real Novocain."

After all, she said, they had to know if the gums really were deadened, and they had to do the dreaded roof-of-the-mouth shots. You may know how those hurt, but if you don't, never volunteer for one. Rumor has it the Chinese use them when they question prisoners.

By the end of the day, Shelly said, everyone's mouth was numb, so they all went to the bar together. The sacrifices people make for their professions.

So here's the deal. If I see Cynthia coming with a needle, I'm leaving the room. If I see Shelly coming, I'm leaving town. Or maybe I'll just go to the bar.

## Conventional vs. organic

Do organically produced foods have higher nutritional value?

Let's take a look.

Colorado State University researchers recently compared vitamin content of organically and conventionally grown vegetables (carrots and broccoli). CSU found no statistically significant differences.

Other research from CSU focused on growing potatoes using four different farming techniques under the same growing conditions: an intensive high-chemical system; a moderate conventional system; customary organic farming (livestock manure and crop rotation on land used for organic production for 10 years; and virgin organic production, using cow manure on land cleared from brush. Nine minerals and seven vitamins were analyzed and no clear differences were discovered.

Another U.S. study found more soluble iron in conventionally grown spinach. The proportion of the soluble iron available to consumer's system was somewhat higher for both spinach and peppers grown with compost and manure.

In other studies abroad, a Norwegian study found conventionally grown carrots contained more beta-carotene, more magnesium and more manganese. The ecologically grown carrots had more aluminum. When carrots of the same variety were compared, the only difference was a higher level of carotenoids in the conventionally grown carrots.

A German study discovered lower levels of



**Insight this week**

• john schlageck

nitrate in carrots, beets and potatoes grown with manure but the differences were minute under good storage conditions. Stressful storage conditions enhanced the difference.

Consumers can conclude from such findings that people who do not buy organically grown fruits and vegetables, can find equally good products with equal nutrition at supermarkets and roadside stands—usually at lower prices. It means people who wish to eat organically grown fruits and vegetables should do so.

Bottom line—differing farming systems produce virtually no difference in the nutritional value of the crops. The variety, or strain, of the carrots and potatoes grown appears to have a bigger impact on their nutrient value than organic production methods.

It's no secret; plant breeders have long advocated fruits, vegetables and grains require three main nutrients—nitrogen, phosphate and trace minerals in varying amounts according to the plant species. If a plant is sorely lacking in one of these nutrients, it will not grow. If it has access to these nutrients, it will grow into the crop its heredity determines and will pass along the nutrients its heredity intends.

Translation— for a healthy diet eat plenty of fruit and vegetables each day, regardless of how they were grown. Doing so will probably mean a person eats more fiber that is healthy. It means less room for fatty foods that are one of the major contributions to poor health.

Eating five fruits and vegetables per day reduces our risk for heart disease and cancer. Researchers tell us this health-enhancing effect is derived from the high levels of antioxidant chemicals in the fruits and vegetables. Studies are confirming this cleansing effect from specific chemicals from specific crops including broccoli and blueberries.

So much of this research on conventional versus organically grown food has demonstrated little nutritional differences. In our society consumers have a choice. It is an individual decision.

Organic-food enthusiasts may choose products grown the way they prefer. Those with a more traditional bent can enjoy fruits, vegetables and grains grown conventionally. Remember, scientific research and studies indicate conventionally grown fruits, vegetables and grains have the same nutritional value and are equally healthy.

The choice is yours. John Schlageck of the Kansas Farm Bureau has been writing about farming and ranching in Kansas for more than 25 years. He is the managing editor of "Kansas Living," a quarterly magazine dedicated to agriculture and rural life in Kansas.

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