

from our viewpoint...

Today voters decide who wins or loses

Today is Primary Election day when Kansas voters will decide who will be on the General Election ballot in November, and Sherman County voters decide the fate of the economic development mill levy issue.

For Sherman County voters a decision in favor will put a solid foundation under the economic development program. The 2 mills will replace the money the city and county have been giving the economic development program.

It was suggested we were squarely in the pocket of Economic Development – as if that was a bad thing. We were one of the many citizens who met at Gambino’s years ago and helped fashion the existing program under the county resolution.

Before moving to Goodland we were involved in a much larger economic development program similar to the Northwest Kansas Planning and Development District. The Southern Colorado Economic Development District covered 13 counties that ran west from the Kansas border to the headwaters of the Arkansas River. The district was headquartered in Pueblo, and we served as a board member for many years and as chairman for two years in the 80s.

That district has similar programs to what are administered in Hill City and Sherman County is a member of the district.

Today the Southern Colorado Economic Development District has a building in downtown Pueblo and a Small Business Administration 504 program with a loan portfolio of more than \$13 million. The economic development efforts have helped many businesses throughout the state of Colorado as the SBA program through the Southern Colorado office covers all of the state outside of Denver.

SCEDD was created in 1967 through a federal Economic Development Administration program and received an annual budget of \$60,000 plus dues from each of the participating counties. Northwest Kansas Planning and Development District was created through the same EDA program.

Working with SCEDD and working with the Prowers County Development organization for many years before moving to Goodland gave us an appreciation for what can be done with an economic development program with a solid foundation.

In the Congressional race Trace Mann is under fire from his opponents for saying that repealing Obamacare is unrealistic. His answer says the better path is to fix the Obamacare problems.

For those who believe Obamacare can be repealed here are a few mathematical facts.

Republican are hoping to take control of the House and Senate in November, but as the Republicans have demonstrated frequently it will take 60 senators to get a repeal of Obamacare passed. No one is predicting the Republicans to get that many seats.

Should the Republicans get control of either or both houses they will have trouble getting a repeal bill passed and then face a veto from President Obama. The Republicans will not have enough votes to override the veto.

Mann is facing reality and being honest in his appraisal of what is possible and the best approach is to take sections of the Health Care Reform and fix them. In that way both parties could move forward and the American people could receive the benefits of an improved health care system.

We encourage everyone to vote today to recorded their opinion through the ballot box. — *Tom Betz*

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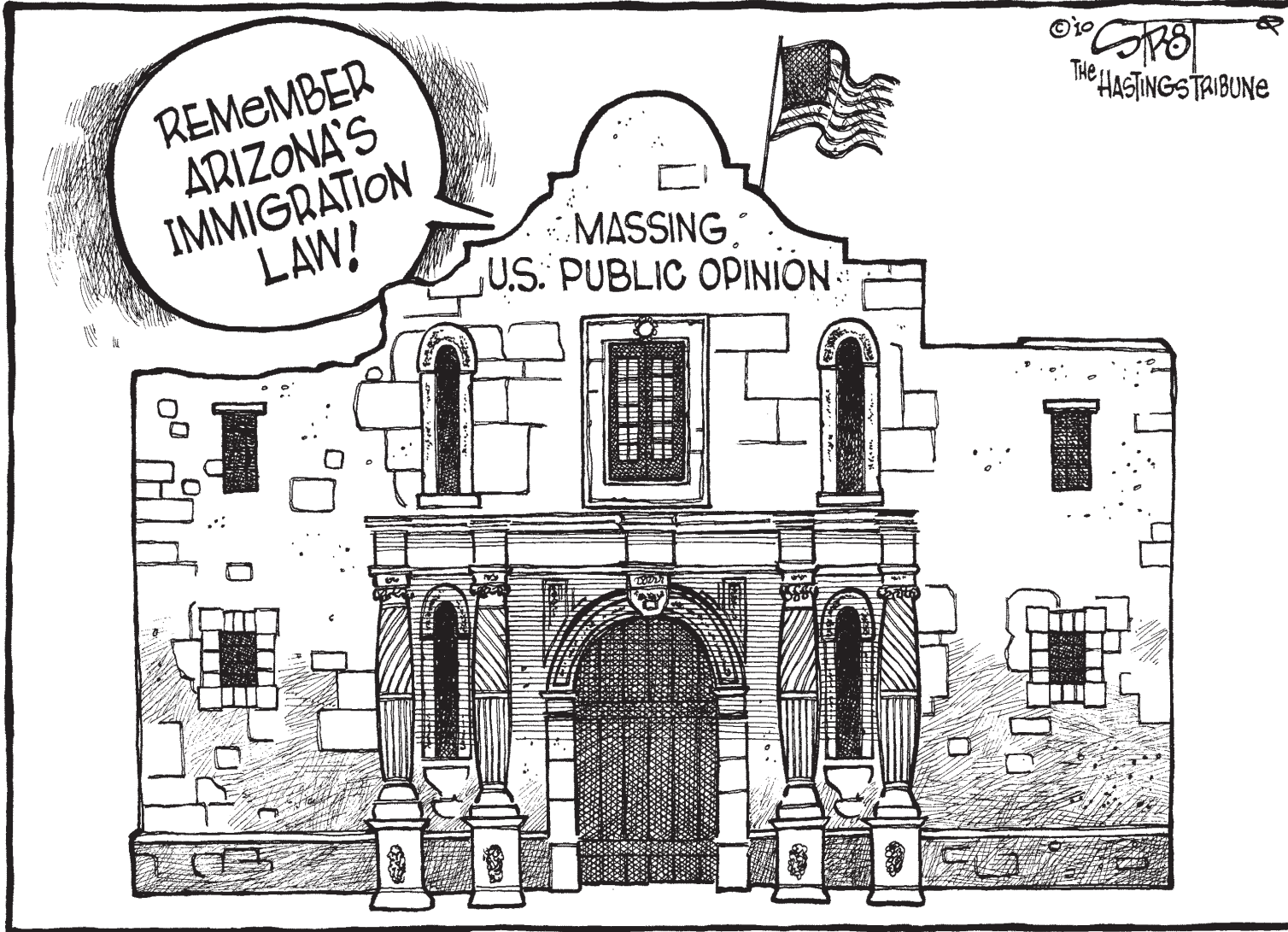
Incorporating:

The Goodland Daily News
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**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
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Food for thought

To the Editor:

Here’s a novel idea. Rather than the County Commissioners raising our taxes again to fund Economic Development, transfer the \$250,000 of our tax money that has been paid to have the right-of-way weeds mowed throughout the county over to the Economic Development Committee.

I read recently in *The Goodland Star News* the commissioners decided no more mowing would be done until September. Judging by the 4-foot high weeds lining County Rd 67, by that time the weeds should reach 6-1/2’.

Besides, more and more property owners



from our readers

• to the editor

are doing the mowing themselves when they reach 4’.

Also, the Economic Development committee should be willing to not only welcome new businesses to the area, but welcome new individuals who have a lot to contribute business-wise to the community.

Handle with care



Insight this week

• john schlageck

focused on the task at hand, at all times. Never think of other things – it’s too dangerous.

When applying anhydrous in the field, some of the key accident situations include:

- Filling the tank more than 85 percent.
- Leaky valves and deteriorated or out-of-date hoses.
- Handling hoses by valve handles.
- Not using protective equipment – gloves, goggles and long sleeved clothing.
- Not bleeding anhydrous from the hose before connecting or disconnecting.
- Lack of water to flush burns caused in case of an accident.
- Tipping over an applicator tank by pulling at an excessive speed. Never pull a tank more than 25 miles-per-hour. It wasn’t designed for high-speed road travel.

No one should ever handle anhydrous ammonia without proper-fitting goggles and rubber gloves with the cuffs turned back so anhydrous doesn’t run down your sleeve when you raise your arms. Heavy duty, long sleeved shirts are also recommended for anyone handling anhydrous.

Regular glasses do not provide adequate protection. The vapor will simply swirl around the lens and seek out the eye. Never wear contact lenses when working with anhydrous ammonia.

What’s all the yelling about?

I hate to say I told you so, but I did. In June, USDA published a new draft rule regarding how meatpackers must deal with farmers and ranchers in the procurement of livestock and poultry. But the packers don’t like it and are pitching a fit, just as I said they would.

As my mother used to say, “So, what’s all the yellin’ about?” For four decades USDA has allowed packers to discriminate against family farm and ranch livestock producers by paying

them less than they pay mega-producers for the same quality hogs and cattle.

These purely volume-based premiums packers give to large-volume producers are violations of the Packers and Stockyards Act, despite USDA’s lackluster record of challenging such price discrimination.

The Packers and Stockyards Act specifically prohibits price discrimination by meatpackers, making it unlawful for packers to “...make or

give any undue or unreasonable preference or advantage to any particular person or locality in any respect whatsoever...” USDA’s draft rule provides a fighting chance of enforcing that law for the first time in 40 years (see the rule at www.cfra.org/competition).

The packers and their allies at the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association and the National Pork Producers Council can whine and complain all they want. But competitive markets are the foundation of America’s economy and family farmers and ranchers asking for a level playing field where the value of their livestock determine price, not the volume, are making a request that is not only eminently reasonable, but long overdue.

By John Crabtree, johnc@cfra.org, Center for Rural Affairs. The Center for Rural Affairs was established in 1973 as an unaffiliated nonprofit corporation under IRS code 501(c)3. The group was formed by rural Nebraskans concerned about family farms and rural communities, and we work to strengthen small businesses, family farms and ranches, and rural communities.

where to write

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