

from our viewpoint...

Super committee fails to reach agreement

The failure of the "super committee" last week was not really unexpected, and the blame game continues to try to label President Obama as the culprit even though it is the Congress that failed to act in a responsible manner.

The gnashing of teeth and expected drop in the stock market that followed seemed to indicate the country has fallen off the cliff and are headed to disaster.

When the super committee announced they were not able to reach an agreement before Thanksgiving it had been touted as the automatic point when the previously agreed to cuts would become reality.

Now we are told the actual deadline for the massive cuts will be in December of next year. What we can expect is a continuation of the blame game as both Democrats and Republicans prepare for the election now less than a year away.

The options the country faces are not fun, but everyone agrees we need to find a way to cut the deficit and balance our budget. To do this cuts will have to be made in both the entitlement programs and defense plus the government must find a way to increase income through some sort of tax reform that will raise taxes on the very top 1 percent.

Already the defense supporters are saying any cuts will devastate the military and make it impossible to maintain America's position as the world's defender. Part of the cuts actually will come from winding down our two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. A large portion of the deficit comes from the 10 years of war we have been waging. When the soldiers come home the country will have another problem as they begin to look for jobs not related to war.

The other dire prediction is Congress will not allow the Bush tax cuts to end because that would cause a huge tax increase for everyone and hit the middle class plus those in the top income brackets. The flip side is allowing the tax cuts to expire would cut the deficit by about \$4.8 trillion and the other required cuts would add another \$1.2 trillion.

Most economists agree this is the kind of effort the country needs to really address the country's debt, but the shock to the economy could trigger an even deeper recession or depression. The expectation is the country could eventually recover, but how long it would take and how high unemployment might go are unknown factors.

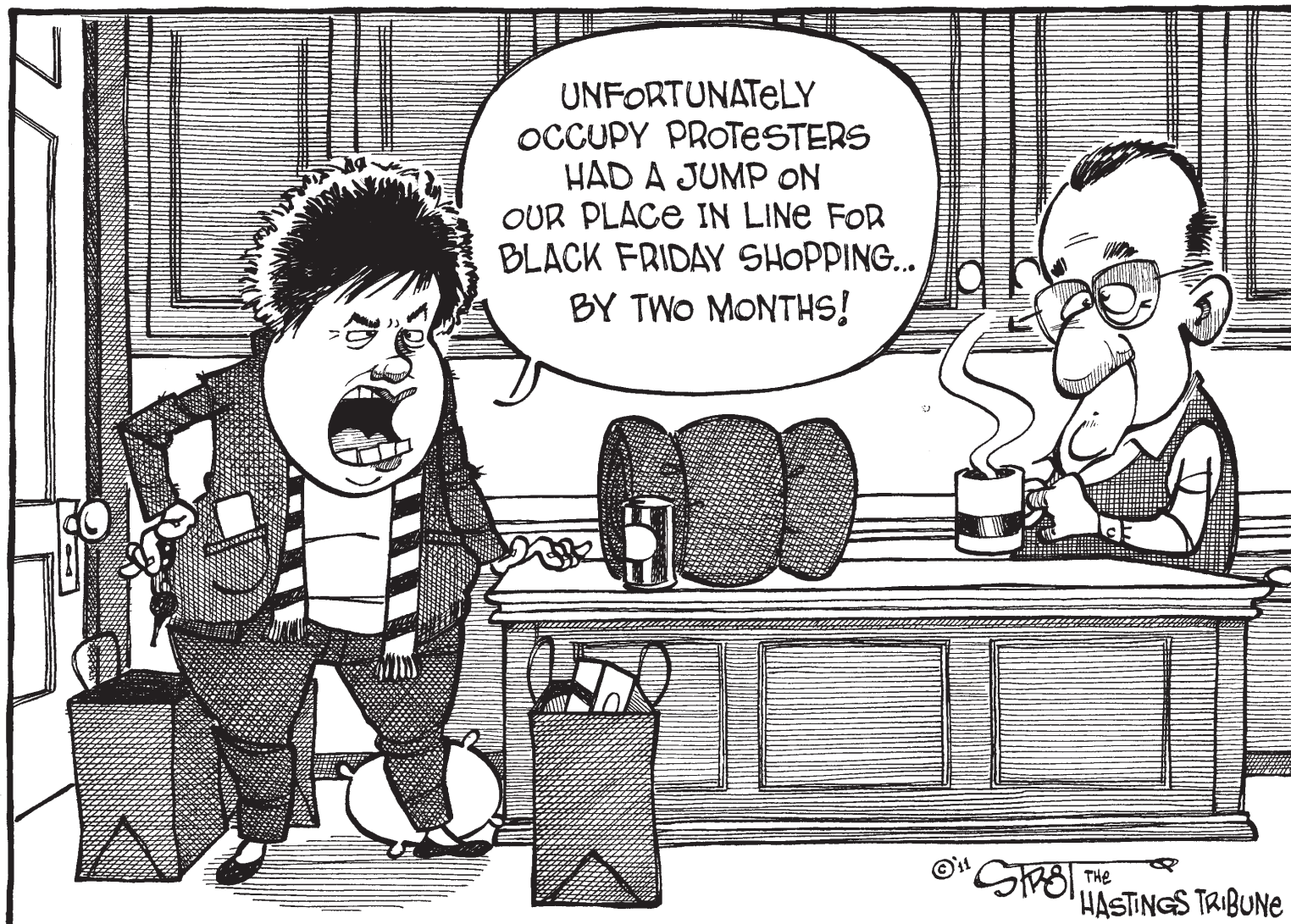
Those on the extreme right want big cuts in the entitlement programs such as Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security. Cuts have been proposed for all three including raising the age of eligibility and tightening the rules to reduce the number of people who qualify for the Medicaid program.

For those who have been paying into Social Security for more than 40 years of working the notion of cutting the benefits is horrifying, and would create quite a backlash probably for both political parties.

The failure of the super committee has put a spotlight on the non-performance of our Congress and the ideological barriers both sides have created over the past 10 years. The answers are not going to be easy, and it will take better understanding on all sides to find a way to wind our way through the sticky political rhetoric over the next 12 months.

Doing nothing will accomplish debt reduction on a devastating level, but will put us in an economic slide worse than what we are working our way out of presently even if on a slow basis.

-Tom Betz



Old cookbook still has what you need

Steve was looking up a recipe the other day, and he pulled out my old copy of "Joy of Cooking".

"Was this a wedding present?" he asked, noting that it was the 1971 printing.

No, not quite. I bought it about a year after we were married.

For some reason, I wanted to make egg rolls and the only cookbook I had didn't have them in it. I stopped at a bookstore near where I worked in Kansas City and bought two books, "Joy of Cooking" and a Chinese cookbook.

I have no idea what happened to the Chinese cookbook, but "Joy of Cooking" became my kitchen Bible.

I suppose I made the egg rolls. I really don't remember. It's not a recipe I've used since.

However, I learned how to cook a turkey the next Thanksgiving by following the directions in my new companion.

Then, a few years later, when we bought a case of Jonathan apples from the area around Weston, Mo., I learned how to make an apple pie.

I remember peeling, coring and slicing apples in the evening after I got off work at 9 p.m. Then I would mix them with the spices and freeze them in one-pie bags. All I had to do



cynthia haynes

• open season

then was get the "Joy of Cooking" down and check the recipe for pie crust, thaw my apples, and I had a pie.

"The Joy of Cooking" is 75 years old. It was written and self-published by Irma Brombauer and illustrated by her daughter, Marion Becker, in 1931. Since then, editions have been published in 1936, 1943-'46, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1997 and 2006. Somewhere in the 60s, it lost the "The" in its name. Today, the fourth generation of the family is working to update the book.

Over the years, we used "Joy" when I decided I wanted to make quiche. I still get the book out each time to check the recipe just so we don't forget anything. We've only made that quiche recipe about a hundred times.

The other thing we grab the book for about every other month or so is the recipe for Caesar salad dressing. When we wanted to make it, it was there in the book.

While I tend to make the quiches, Steve has taken over the Caesar dressing. He's gotten to be a master at that dressing and a big salad for two with fresh Caesar dressing made in a blender - he uses the whole can of anchovies instead of three filets - is supper.

(Well, what would you do with two-thirds of a can of anchovies? And, don't say pizza!)

The book that Steve was thumbing through was my old one, complete with food stains and a broken binding. It has been well used and appreciated.

I have a newer copy. It's got some updates, but seems to have all the old favorites.

Over the years, as my children have grown up and moved away, I've gotten each of them their own "Joy of Cooking." It's always a good thing to have around, when you need to look up how to make a meringue or stuffing for the turkey.

You can learn how to fix just about anything if you have a "Joy of Cooking."

So, put that antique away, Steve, and hand me the new one. Thanksgiving is coming up and I need to look up pumpkin pie. No, don't worry, I'll make you an apple pie, too. Yes, with Jonathan apples and a lattice crust. The instructions are all in the book.

America's pizzazz president

President Obama has shown himself to be very far from what he said he would be. He promised hope, change and transparency; we get closed door meetings, a falsified birth certificate, no hope and only change of the worst sort. He has spent more of our money than all previous presidents combined while real unemployment is still well over 15 percent. Folks are losing the hope he promised and feeling like they've been had.

Of course, before the election, his weaknesses and penchants for freedom-grabbing, budget-busting Marxism were easy to spot. His spiritual mentor, Jeremiah Wright, openly preached hate of America and of whites as well. His intellectual mentor, and likely co-author for his books, Bill Ayers, was a domestic terrorist that participated in bombings on American soil. One reading of Obama's, Audacity of Hope should have provided ample proof of Obama's intellectual underpinnings.

Any responsible voter should have seen then Senator Obama had zero executive skills. His educational record, what little has been released (more opacity from a self-described transparent man), is surprisingly unremarkable as was his term as congressman in Illinois. His term as U.S. Senator was most remarkable in that it was essentially nothing more than a paid position that allowed him to run for the presidency. His signature work experience was that of a community organizer (read, one who can motivate folks who are too ignorant to know they can motivate themselves without a paid outsider to manipulate them). It was obvious that this man was at best, a rank amateur, and



guest columnist

• ken klemm

at worst a Manchurian candidate of sorts. All of his weaknesses were easy to discover well before Election Day and millions of Americans missed it.

Obama got elected because these millions pooled their ignorance at the voting booth. Our electorate is woefully uneducated on matters of real importance and as such can be easily swayed by such shallow things as the color of skin and oratory skills (even supposed oratory skills will do since without a teleprompter he falls flat).

Hopefully millions of voters have since educated themselves and have discovered why he's the wrong guy for America. And hopefully millions more have discovered it's better not to vote than to vote in ignorance.

Would our Nation ever vote for a man (or woman) who is stick ugly and a mediocre speaker but yet a person with a clear intellect, a mastery of American principles, a deep understanding of our Constitution as intended by the Founders and a possessor of impeccable character? Sadly I say, not yet. George Washington himself couldn't get elected in the America of today.

America now craves rock star politicians and sadly we're willing to trade substance for pizzazz. Even the equivalent of lip-synching

will do as evidenced by our acceptance of the teleprompter.

Great Britain once rejected an able leader but reconsidered after the horrors of war made pizzazz and show biz seem less important than content. When faced with the reality of possible annihilation at the hands of Germany's National Socialists (Nazi's), Great Britain reconsidered their pooled ignorance, became adults and chose a decidedly plain Winston Churchill to lead them from their terrible darkness. It was his leadership that was the rock that held Britain together and inspired them to repel the Nazi's.

May God favor America with such a leader. May America mature enough to recognize greatness if even in a plain wrapper. May America wake up before we're faced with the horrors Great Britain was faced with. Our government is not merely another episode of some so-called "reality" show. If we as a Nation remain ignorant and continue to vote for candidates who can swoon us with empty promises of hope and change while openly embracing Marxism we will certainly be doomed. A nation largely gets the sort of government it deserves. I pray we will wake up and deserve better than what we have now.

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The Goodland Star-News

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

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Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association
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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
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