

from our viewpoint...

Make the time to remember vets

As another Memorial Day fades away, so do the veterans of past wars.

The last veterans of the "War to End All Wars" slipped away over the last decade. In the U.S., only about 10 percent of the 16 million who wore uniforms during the second World War remain.

Still, nearly everyone knows or knows of one of these veterans. Soon, however, they will join the ranks of silent soldiers who have fought and died for this country — the veterans of the Civil and Spanish-American wars and other military adventures, great or not.

Many of us grew up knowing the World War II veterans and the service groups they joined after the war. Rather than starting their own, they fill in the ranks of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and others.

In most Kansas towns, life centered around one or the other of these service clubs. Nearly every member of the "Greatest Generation" belonged to one. Nearly every man that age had served.

And that continued with the Cold War draft right up through the Vietnam War era.

Today, however, our military comprises a relatively small group of volunteer professionals. Most of us know one of them, for many come from the ranks of the citizen-soldiers, the National Guard and Reserve forces scattered across America.

These men and women are serious soldiers, the kind who won World War I and World War II, yes, but better trained, better equipped and better led than ever. In a nation of 330 million, however, they are few in number, only about 1.4 million. That compared to 16.1 million who served in World War II out of a population of 136 million.

That was nearly 12 percent of the population then, but less than half of 1 percent today.

The service organizations continue today, with veterans of Vietnam, the Gulf war and returning vets from Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere, but like farmers, their influence may wane as their numbers decline.

As Americans, however, it's our duty and our privilege to honor all these veterans who served their country — our country — in times of need. Many volunteered, more were drafted, some against their will and better judgement. Nearly all did what was expected of them — and more.

Many gave the "last full measure." World War II alone accounted for 291,000 battle deaths and more than a million total casualties. Korea and Vietnam added to the ledger, but by the standards of another day, neither the Gulf War nor the current conflicts amounted to much: just 113 in the Gulf action and a few under 5,000 in the combined "War on Terror" so far.

Yet that is no comfort to those who lost a father, son, brother, sister, or other relative. And yes, most of us know someone for whom that loss is real. Someone they knew, someone whose son or daughter did not come home.

Each of us should take time, not just to remember those heros, but to thank the ones who came back from any of these military "adventures."

They have done what our fathers and grandfathers did, but what most of us will never have a chance to do: worn the uniform and served their country, and served her well.

It's a debt we cannot repay, but one we must acknowledge. Do not wait. Say something today. — *Steve Haynes*

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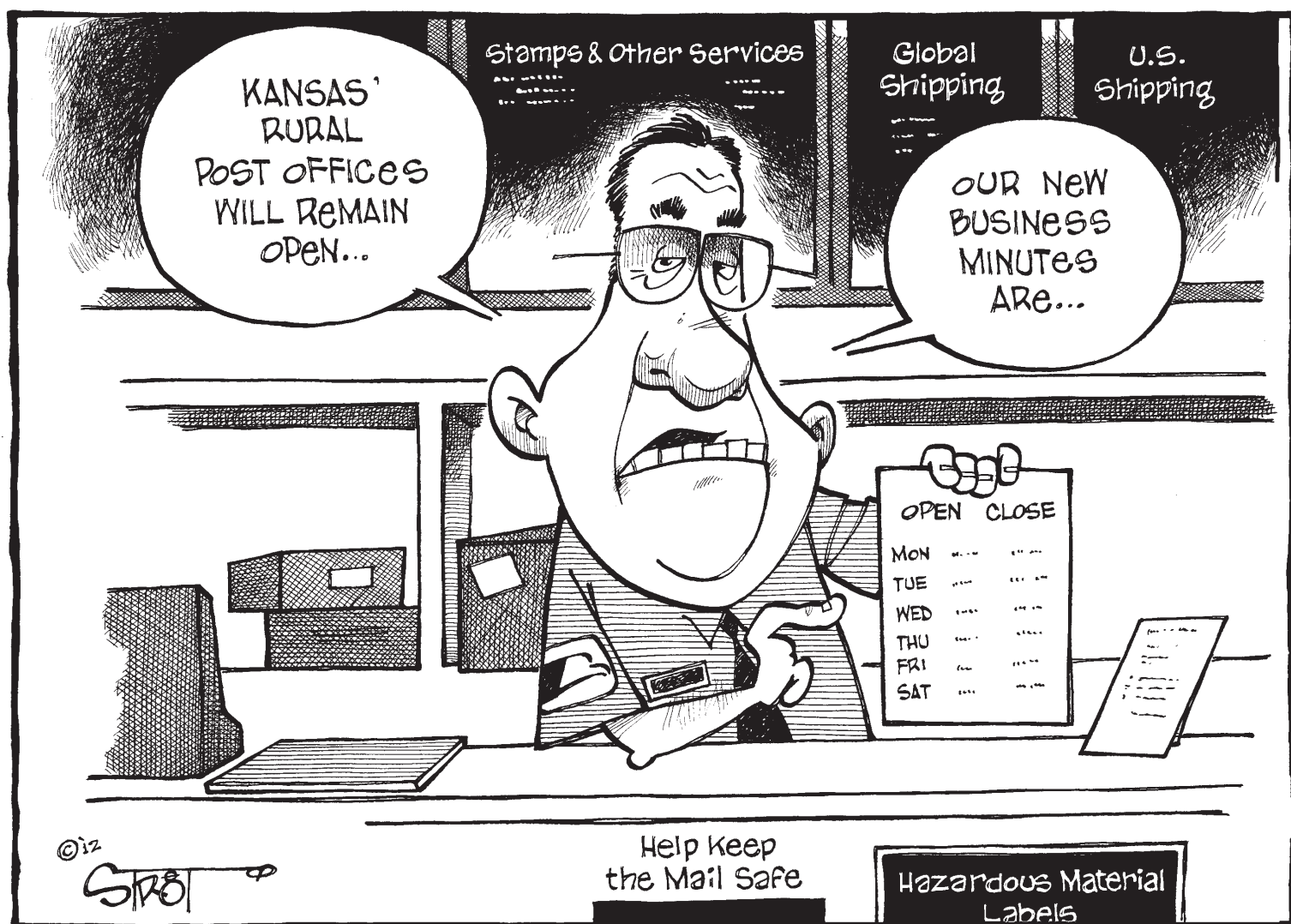
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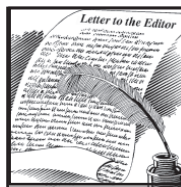
To the Editor:

I would like to take this opportunity to address a recent ad put on the radio by Harlan D. House concerning his belief that the November 2010 election was not handled according to the Kansas State laws and also asking for someone to run against me in the upcoming election.

I and my staff have always run elections with the highest degree of integrity. We also have excellent election board workers who also strive to do their very best to abide by the laws and rules and regulations of the State of Kansas. An election school is held before the election, and also prior to the polls opening on election day. I and/or my staff are at the polling place all day to answer questions.

The November 2010 was no different than any other election except for two things. My son died two days before election day and his funeral was two days later. I was not at the polling place or the canvassing of votes during that week. Instead we were planning a funeral and dealing with the grief. Even though I was not there physically, I was on the phone with my staff giving them instructions on the things that needed to be handled and what to do if they had questions.

The second thing that was a little different was that there was a declared write-in campaign against the Commissioner in District 1. There were also at least two additional declared write-in campaigns in a couple of state races (which included the office of governor and lieutenant governor). Because of the registered write-in campaigns, we go by the "rules and regulations" that govern how to instruct the election workers so that people know that they should "darken the oval" next to the name, if the voter writes in a name on the line for that purpose. This is so the M100 vote tabulating machines count the number of write-in votes for each race. The write-in's still have to be checked and counted manually. The total write-in count should agree with the number shown by the tape from the M100 machines for that precinct. If the oval isn't darkened, the machine doesn't show it as a vote. It is a system



from our readers

to the editor

of checks and balances.

My Deputy Clerk was specifically asked by an election board worker right before the polls opened to go over what could and could not be said about the write-in positions. She told them: "they cannot tell anyone who to vote for but they need to tell each person to be sure to "darken the oval" next to any write-in candidates they have".

It was only sometime after the election that I found out that Mr. House was filing a complaint as the Itasca precinct committeeman because he had a call from "someone" who told him that an election board worker was telling them to write in the name of the Commissioner write-in candidate and darken the oval. When I heard this, I immediately called several of the election board workers and asked if they heard anyone say anything to that effect, including the election board worker that was named. The board workers all said "NO"! The "someone" never came forward and filed a formal written complaint to that effect. It has only been brought forward by Mr. House based on a supposed call from "someone." He was the one who filed a complaint with the Commissioners, Sheriff and Secretary of State. Where was the individual that was making these claims? The candidate that lost the election even demanded that the Sheriff's office investigate the matter. They did, and nothing was found to be out of order. The Secretary of State's office called me and said they had a complaint from Mr. House. I told them exactly what I had found out and I also had a copy of the information that the Deputy used at the election school. Why is Mr. House beating a "dead horse" after almost two years? I can't control who the voters vote for in an election.

I might also point out that there were two

staff members from my office at the polling place the entire day of the election to see that things were going smoothly and done right. Not one "someone" came to them and said that an election board worker told them to vote for a certain write-in candidate. If this really was a problem, you would think the person would have complained about it right then and there so it could have been checked out and corrected, if it indeed was true.

Obviously, Mr. House thinks that I am to blame for something because his candidate didn't win. Not only is he questioning my integrity, but also that of my staff, the election board workers and "you" the voters.

Elections are very trying and there are many laws that govern how to run an election. I have been in charge of a lot of elections since I have been county clerk. It is a huge challenge that takes many hours of work and it takes a dedicated staff and also election board workers to have an election. I can say with honesty and confidence to each and every voter that I have done the best job I can do to run all elections according to the laws and the rules and regulations of this State and I have done so with the utmost integrity and to the best of my ability.

I am also sorry that my election board workers and staff have had to go through the accusations made by Mr. House. It is hard enough to get good election board workers the way it is. Now we have to wonder, "how much harder is it going to be to get election board workers knowing that they can be raked over the coals as they were after the November, 2010, election".

If anyone would like to come to my office and see the copies of the state statutes and the rules and regulations, I would be more than happy to have them come and talk to me and see what all we go by to run an election.

I appreciate your time and hope that if you have concerns that you will come to me with them.

Janet R. Rumpel

Sherman County Clerk/Election Officer

A great time to be outside

Ah, the love of the outdoors.

The smell of newly mowed grass, the beauty of the trees and flowers and the birds at the feeders, all wonderful.

And the garden; I love my garden. I love planting and harvesting. I don't even mind watering and weeding.

I don't, however, feel that my garden is a money-saving exercise in grow-it-yourself vegetables.

In fact, it's sort of an expensive hobby. Not as expensive as skiing or growing hothouse orchids, but not as cheap as you might think, either.

It starts first thing in the spring with tilling. You need to hire someone to till your garden, you rent a rototiller or you get yours out of the garage and pay someone to repair it so you can get it running.

My favorite is to hire someone. One year, the guy we hired charged me \$50. This was a reasonable price, and what I had expected to pay. I wrote the check without another thought.

It was also a reasonable price to Steve, and when the guy asked him, he also paid \$50.

The last two years, Steve has rented a tiller and done it himself. That tends to be excruciating for all concerned, but it does work.

If you use raised planters, like our oldest daughter, the tilling has its own special problems, and you have to keep repairing or replacing the planters. This year, she purchased four stock tanks to supplement her raised beds. At \$159 each, she'd better be using them for a long time. Then she went out and bought bags of gravel and soil to go in them. She's such a

**cynthia
haynes**

open season

city girl now.

Once your garden is tilled, you get to start planting. Your choice is seeds or plants. I use a mixture.

I have no idea why, but I always buy plants for my tomatoes, peppers, broccoli, cabbage and cucumbers and I always get seeds for everything else — corn, peas, beans, squash, zucchini, turnips, carrots, beets and, this year, parsnips.

Once your plants and seeds are in the ground, you need to prop them up and protect them. For us, that means a three-foot fence all around the garden. Anything lower is an invitation for the dog to do high hurdles.

The fencing is \$12 to \$15 a section. The garden takes about five sections and it lasts about four years. And, oh yes, it has to be

where to write

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774; E-mail address — <http://roberts.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=EmailPat>

U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran, Russell Senate Office Building, Courtyard 4, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521; Fax (202) 228-6966.

special ordered.

Down in oldest daughter's garden in Augusta, Ga., her fence is five feet high with a trellised gate. I didn't even try to guess what all that cost, but it looks real nice and keeps her dogs, which are twice as big as mine, out of the vegetables.

Daughter says that she does save some money by starting most of her plants from seeds. She bought a \$100 seed starter just so she could, though she claims she only paid \$50 on eBay.

After tilling and planting, you have to weed and water. That's probably the cheapest part of the operation as long as you look at it as exercise and don't try to charge your normal hourly rate.

By the time you pick your vegetables, you can really enjoy your \$35 tomatoes and \$12 carrots, knowing that you are saving the planet, saving money and getting great exercise and a sunburn.

Enjoy!

E-mail address — <http://moran.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/e-mail-jerry>

U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp, 1st Congressional District, 126 Cannon House Office Building, Washington D.C., 20575-1601. (202-225-2715) E-mail address — <https://huelskamp.house.gov/contact-me/email-me>