

from our viewpoint...

Deer control needs careful planning

State Rep. Ward Cassidy says he hopes to do something about the number of car-deer accidents in our area, noting that several bills introduced this year in the Legislature attempt to deal with the problem.

A committee substitute for House Bill 2295 would establish an early antlerless deer season, before the annual fall run, where hunters could take more does, or female deer. That could help cut the population. The bill also would allow for an antlerless or antlered deer permit and expand the use of crossbows in hunting.

The bill was introduced last year, but did not move. The Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism opposed provisions allowing out-of-state relatives of landowners to hunt on family land without a deer permit, which the department said would cost the state money.

Another provision would have established a \$2 mandatory contribution to something called the Kansas Hunters Fight Hunger fund. The department said this could be considered a diversion of license funds which would cost the state federal contributions.

The amended version of the bill passed out of committee and then passed the House 101-22 with two members present but not voting. The bill's future in the Senate is uncertain.

We get concerned, however, when legislators try to dictate game-management policy to the professionals at the wildlife agency. Lawmakers ought to be very careful not to undo the miracle of modern game management, which brought us a herd of deer worth hunting.

Many people remember the Kansas plains in the days when spotting a deer was Page 1 news. Hunters in the 19th century all but wiped out our deer herd. It took half a century of careful management to bring these graceful creatures back to the plains in huntable numbers.

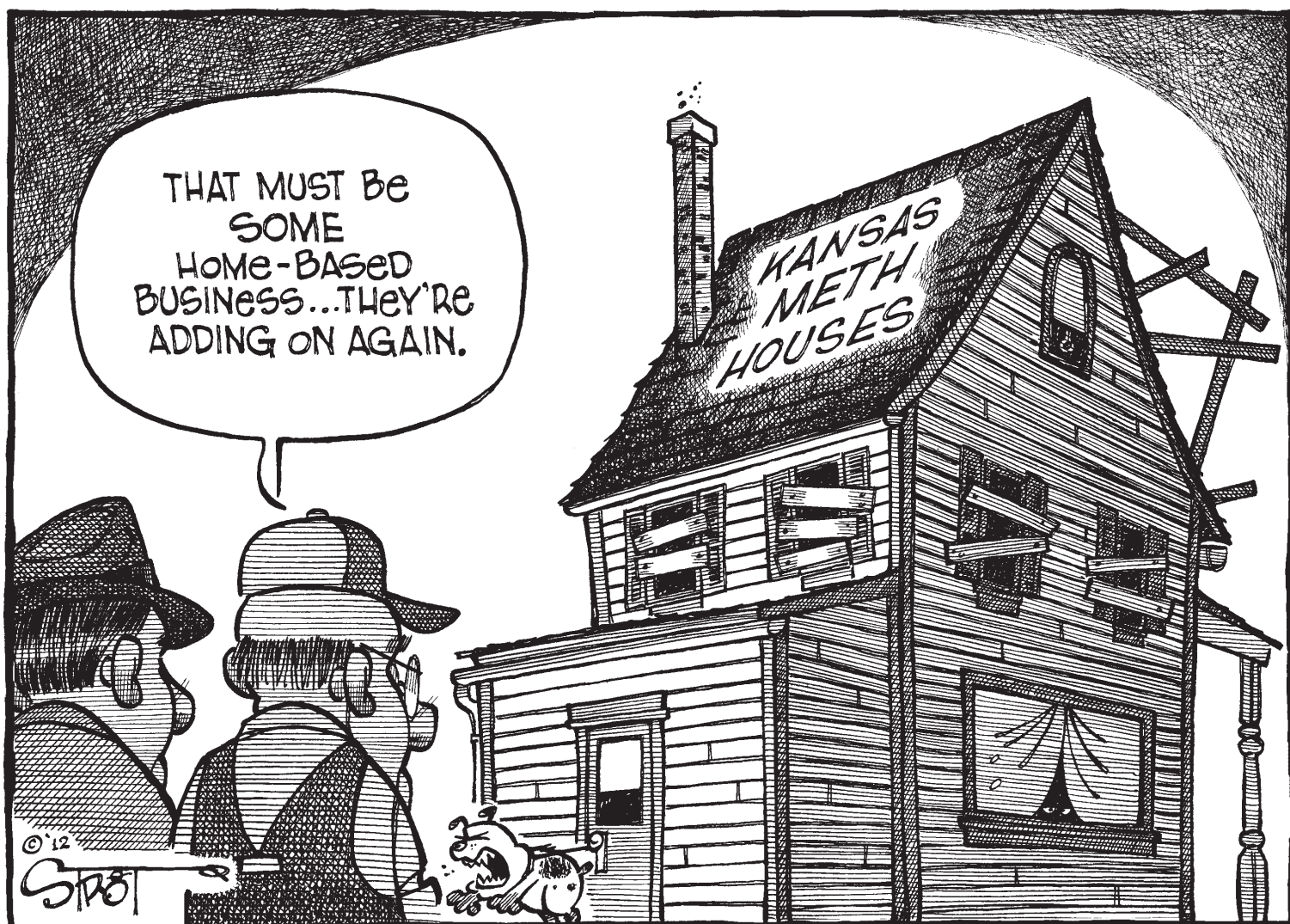
It's true, they cause a lot of damage and the herd could be thinned. However, most farmers probably would like to see fewer hunters, at least the irresponsible kind that open rifle hunting often brings. They don't want any more damage to buildings, crops and stock. They'd like to see better enforcement of our game laws.

Selling more deer permits without angering farm groups will take some doing. Just slaughtering deer, or looking the other way at poachers, as some have suggested, would not help. Poachers steal game, damage property and laugh at the law, not traits we want to encourage.

We wish Rep. Cassidy luck in finding a way to reduce the herd more without endangering a valuable resource and a growing impetus to tourism. Attracting more out-of-state hunters, the kind who carefully plan their hunts and respect landowners and the law, would be a great idea. Expanding the drawings for regular and antlerless licenses might do this.

Just selling more permits for open hunts tends to bring the bad hunters, the ones who drink, trespass and poach. We'd be against that. Kansas landowners won't put up with those hunters, and shouldn't have to.

As long as the health of the overall deer herd is preserved and we have deer to hunt and watch, however, then by all means, let's limit the population. — Steve Haynes



Kansas tax dollars should go to Kansas arts

Regarding Steve Haynes' Jan. 27 editorial, the Goodland Arts Council Executive Board and director are glad that Gov. Brownback may reinstate the Kansas Arts Commission. Before he makes any final decisions, we hope he will take into consideration the role of the arts in our rural communities.

First, the arts will play into the governor's incentive program to help increase population growth of 50 rural counties, which includes Sherman County. This five-year program is designed to lure people back to our state with a tax waiver and assistance with college loans. This aligns with a recent study by Laszlo Kulcsar, director of Kansas State University's Kansas Population Center, which found that people — especially college graduates — look for good-paying jobs, a social life and good schools when relocating.

The arts are important to each. Rural developers know that a community's quality of life can be as important to prospective businesses as tax incentives, a *Kansas City Star* editorial pointed out recently. Many larger or higher-paying businesses develop in areas that can meet their employee's various social interests, including artistic entertainment. The Carnegie Arts Center provides entertainment, workshops, programs and events for people of all ages, networking with the High Plains Museum and the Public Library for the first month events, Thursday through Sunday.

The Carnegie Arts Center not only provides monthly exhibits but has expanded the arts city-wide with murals, permanent arts-in-parks — an extension of the giant outdoor Van Gogh painting — and displays of artwork in businesses on main Street. The Arts Center



from our readers

to the editor

has even formed a Photography Club with a growing membership.

As for schools, studies show an inclusion of the arts is part of a successful student's well-rounded education. Students educated in the arts are more likely to be accepted into the college of their choice: more music majors who applied to medical school were accepted than those who majored in English, biology, chemistry and math, a Phi Delta Kappa academic study found. Also, after studying 25,000 students for 10 years, James Catterall found that studying music improved scores on standardized tests and reading proficiency exams. *Neurological Research* found that students who study piano have a better understanding of math and science.

The Carnegie Arts Center supports the arts in the schools. Elementary students attend our Summer Art Institute, learning visual arts, dance and instrumental instruction. Thanks to the Max Alderman Endowment Fund, the Arts Center offers six violins for student lessons during Goodland's new elementary after school program. The Arts Center uses endowed funds to send Judy Hayden to elementary classrooms — something the school district cannot afford — and pays Heather Spinney to teach Saturday Elementary Art Classes at the Arts Center.

It is our hope that Gov. Brownback can see

that the arts play an important role in his plan to increase the population in rural communities and will reinstate the appropriate funding needed for arts in the state.

The Carnegie Arts Center is fortunate to have the support of many in the tri-state area, which enables us to survive despite budget cuts. We are very grateful for the city government's continued support and the county's past support.

Maybe Gov. Brownback should consult former conservative presidential candidate, U.S. Rep. Michele Bachmann of Minnesota. She voted against the stimulus plan, but, once it was passed, wrote seven letters to federal agencies on behalf of grant applicants who were seeking the plan's funding.

The federal and state governments are funded by our tax dollars. If the National Endowment of the Arts offers to return our tax dollars to the state of Kansas, why should we be the only state to refuse it? Will the NEA just set it aside for us to use at a later time? No. They will give our dollars to the other state to use to compete with Kansas. Arts organizations in our state have recently been informed they may now be allowed to apply directly to the NEA for federal funding. Wouldn't state and local control of our arts organizations have been better than federal control, Gov. Brownback.

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Don't worry about fashion in the field

If Billy Crystal's Fernando character were to visit a Kansas farm this spring you can be sure he wouldn't be telling too many farmers, "Darling, you look marvelous." You can also bet not too many farmers step into the cab of their tractors wearing any of the high fashions portrayed on the pages of GQ or Esquire.

Looking good is great when you go to town, but safety and comfort are much more important when dressing for farm chores.

Let's begin with the head, after all that's where thinking about safety should start, says Holly Higgins, Kansas Farm Bureau safety director.

Head injuries are common on the farm and tend to be serious, Higgins adds. When doing work that involves head hazards trade your familiar ball cap or straw hat for a hard hat.

"When you're spraying chemicals, wear a wide-brimmed hat that is impervious to liquids," she notes. "Make sure the brim is wide enough to keep chemical spray from drifting down on the back of the neck or face."

Eyes have been labeled the "window to the soul" but just like all windows they can break if something is hurled, splashed or sprayed into them.

Safety goggles and sunglasses should be just as much a part of your daily garb as a good pair of steel-toed shoes, Higgins says. Throw away those athletic shoes unless you're slated for a track meet somewhere off the farm. Sunglasses are important because they



Insight this week

john schlageck

lessen eye fatigue after long hours in the bright Kansas sun. Some believe quality eyewear can also lessen the chance of cataracts in later life.

While people often consider the farm a place of quiet tranquility, many farmers experience hearing loss, the safety specialist says. As a general rule, whenever the noise level reaches 85 decibels, farmers should reach for ear protection. While farmers don't carry testing equipment to measure decibel level, they should wear protection when in doubt.

Higgins recommends ear muffs rather than ear plugs because the latter can cause compaction of ear wax which is difficult to remove.

"Loose fitting clothes remain a definite no no," she says. "If you plan to stay in the

sun most of the day wear long-sleeved cotton clothing. Natural fibers allow the skin to breath and offer protection from the sun's harmful rays."

Avoid wearing sweats with long draw strings that hang from the waist or around the neck. These strings are made of extremely strong nylon or other artificial fibers, Higgins says. These fibers don't rip or tear as easily as clothing like cotton. It's easy for dangling draw strings to catch in augers, power take offs or other moving parts.

Proper fitting clothing is important for both daylong comfort and stability, she says. When spraying chemicals, wear waterproof or impervious footwear that won't absorb chemicals.

Take off your jewelry in the field. Rings hang up on bolts, sharp corners — just about anything found around a farmstead. Don't risk losing a finger or some other limb.

While the safely dressed farmer will not make the fashion pages of GQ or even his local newspaper or social media, you won't find him/her on the obit pages either.

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