

# Amendment on ballot this year

AMENDMENT, from Page 1

of watercraft registrations to each county so appraisers will know who has registered their watercraft. Registrations and renewals cost \$32.50 each, and are valid for three years from the registration date.

To lower their property tax burden, some owners unlawfully register their vessels in a neighboring state. The only way county appraisers know if a resident owns a watercraft is for the owner to declare it for property tax purposes or to use the watercraft registration records. An estimated 10,000 Kansas residents register their boats in other states to avoid paying higher property taxes in Kansas. Kansas has about 85,000 registered watercraft.

The department uses registration revenues along with match-

ing federal funds – the amount of which is determined by the number of registered watercraft – to support boating-related programs such as developing, improving, and maintaining docks, boat ramps, toilet facilities; inspecting marinas; enforcing vessel operation, sanitation, sound muffling and boating under the influence laws; investigating accidents and thefts; officer training; search and rescue operations; administering boating education and water safety programs; publishing boating information; and appearing at fairs and boat shows.

The department does not receive the property tax revenues. Each county is responsible for how it uses its portion of the property tax receipts.

Boating registration information is available at ksoutdoors.com/Boating.

# Voting under way for general election

ELECTION, from Page 1

and Schmidt, a Democrat, were put into the same district during this year's redistricting process. The 40th district lost several counties to the south and picked up Ellis County, including Hays. Ostmeyer defeated John Miller of Norton in the primary.

In the Kansas House of Representatives, Ward Cassidy of St. Francis is running unopposed. Cassidy defeated Rick Billinger of Goodland in the Republican primary. The 120th lost Norton and Phillips counties this year, but gained Sherman, Wallace and half of Thomas County. Sherman County had been in the 121st District, which was moved to eastern Kansas to accommodate the

## Election 2012

population change since the 2000 Census.

15th District Court judges Glenn Schiffner and Scott Showalter are running for re-election. Both are unopposed.

In Sherman County, Ken Klemm is running unopposed for county commissioner from the Second District, which includes Voltaire, Shermanville and Llanos townships as well as Goodland Ward 1 and Ward 4 north of Sixth Street.

In the Third District, Republican Larry Witt will face Democrat Steve Evert. The Third District includes Grant, Stateline, Lincoln, Logan, McPherson and Smoky townships along with Goodland Ward 2.

For Sherman County Sheriff, incumbent Kevin Butts, having lost in the Republican Primary, is running as a declared write-in candidate against primary winner Burton Pianalto, who is currently serving as the investigator for the County Attorney's office.

For county offices, Clerk Janet Rumpel is running for re-election

along with Treasurer April Hall, Register of Deeds Billie Hoyt and Attorney Brock Abbey. All are running unopposed.

Voters will have to decide on retention of Kansas Supreme Court Justice Nancy Moritz. Moritz, 52, of Topeka, was appointed by Gov. Mark Parkinson in 2010.

Also up for retention from the Kansas Court of Appeals are Stephen Leben, Joseph Pierron Jr., David Bruns, Gordon Atcheson, Karen Arnold-Burger and Richard Greene.

# Residents can now check voter registration online

Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach is reminding voters they can check their registration online.

"I encourage any voter who is unaware of his or her voting registration status to check online using Kansas VoterView, a tool located at www.myvoteinfo.voteks.org," Kobach said.

Just by entering your first name, last name and date of birth, you can find your voter registration status, precinct, current voting districts and

even your sample ballot.

Kansas State law also requires that all voters show photo identification each time they vote. Acceptable forms of ID include driver's license, nondriver's ID, concealed carry license, U.S. Passport, government employee ID, military ID, college student ID, public assistance ID or Indian tribe ID. For more specifics and answers to frequently asked questions, visit www.getVoterID.com.

# Now is the best time to do weed control

Late October to early November is the most effective time to control broadleaf weeds in lawns. Dandelions usually produce a flush of new plants in late September, and the winter annual weeds henbit and chickweed should have germinated in October. These young plants are small and easily controlled with herbicides such as 2, 4-D or combination products (Trimec, Weed-B-Gon, Weed-Out) that contain 2, 4-D, MCPP and Dicamba. Even established dandelions are more easily controlled now than in the spring because they are actively moving materials from the top portion of the plant to the roots. Herbicides will translocate to the roots as well and will kill the plant



**dana belshe**

• ag notebook

from the roots up. Choose a day that is 50 degrees or higher. The better the weed is growing, the more weed killer will be moved from the leaves to the roots. Cold temperatures will slow or stop this process.

Weed Free Zone (also sold under the name of Speed Zone) contains the three active ingredients mentioned above, plus carfentrazone. It will give a quicker response than the other products mentioned especially as temperatures approach 50 degrees.

# Governor's School Efficiency Task force launches

Kansans who interact with the state's K-12 educational system and have examples of inefficiencies that they have witnessed or experienced now can go online to share their firsthand experiences with the Governor's School Efficiency Task Force. The task force launched an online portal Wednesday where students, parents, involved citizens, teachers and administrators can submit information anonymously.

Recently, Gov. Sam Brownback announced the formation of the task force to examine school spending and to develop guidelines on how to get more funding into the classroom where teachers teach and students learn. As reported to the Kansas Department of Education by the school districts, only 54 percent of total funding goes into the classroom and for instruction.

"While task force members are researching and analyzing where inefficiencies are occurring in our educational system, we also want to hear directly from Kansans who have their own ideas and suggestions on how to make our schools more efficient. We hope to hear from a lot of Kansans who take a few minutes to go online and share their thoughts with us," Task Force Chairman Ken Willard said

Kansans can submit their suggestions at governor.ks.gov/efficiency.

Willard also announced the group's next meeting scheduled for 10 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 9, will focus on spending decisions made at the district level. He said the task force will receive a report from a representative of the Kansas Association of School Boards Efficiency Task Force and presentations from other district level education officials. Presenters will be asked to identify best practices for reductions in administrative overhead and shed light on policies that limit their efforts to spend taxpayer money as efficiently as possible.

Gov. Brownback said it was important for the task force to have

a clear understanding of how state decisions impact local decisions.

"Inefficient spending impacts Kansas taxpayers at every level, from the State General Fund to local property taxes. The state has increased total spending on education by almost \$1 billion since 2000. Many school districts have raised taxes on local property owners during that same time period. Moving forward, we owe it to Kansas taxpayers to ensure those resources are used as efficiently and effectively as possible," Brownback said.

Gov. Brownback also announced Iola/USD 257 Superintendent Brian Pekarek will join the task force. Governor Brownback said, "Brian is well known as a Superintendent who is open to new ideas. He will make a great addition to the task

force as they narrow their focus to the local level."

Pekarek joins a number of current task forces members who have district level budgeting experience,

including Chairman Willard, Dave Jackson and Jim Churchman who all served on local school boards.

## Bids needed for dead tree removal



The City of Goodland is accepting sealed bids from licensed tree arborists. The bids are for the cost to cut down and remove thirty (30), 100% dead trees across the City of Goodland. The bidder will tell how much it will cost to remove a small, medium, large, to very large dead tree. All sealed bids will be accepted no later than 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 14, 2012. The winning bidder will be notified on Tuesday, November 20, 2012. If you have any questions, please give either the City Manager (Doug Gerber), or the Building Inspector (Brian James), a call at: 785-890-4500.

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## Enjoy a night at the movies!

TONIGHT 7 PM:  
Hotel Transylvania 3D (PG)  
Starts Fri. 7 PM: Taken 2 (PG-13)

## ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

The Sherman County Race Association will be having their **annual meeting and election of officers** on **November 3 at 1 p.m. MST** at the 4-H building at the Sherman County Fair Grounds, Goodland, KS.

A PROPOSITION to amend section 1 of article 11 of the constitution of the state of Kansas, relating to classification and taxation of watercraft, to be submitted to the electors of the state at the general election to be held on November 6, 2012.

House Concurrent Resolution No. 5017

§ 1. System of taxation; classification; exemption. (a) The provisions of this subsection shall govern the assessment and taxation of property on and after January 1, 2013, and each year thereafter. Except as otherwise hereinafter specifically provided, the legislature shall provide for a uniform and equal basis of valuation and rate of taxation of all property subject to taxation. The legislature may provide for the classification and the taxation uniformly as to class of recreational vehicles and watercraft, as defined by the legislature, or may exempt such class from property taxation and impose taxes upon another basis in lieu thereof. The provisions of this subsection shall not be applicable to the taxation of motor vehicles, except as otherwise hereinafter specifically provided, mineral products, money, mortgages, notes and other evidence of debt and grain. Property shall be classified into the following classes for the purpose of assessment and assessed at the percentage of value prescribed therefor:

- Class 1 shall consist of real property. Real property shall be further classified into seven subclasses. Such property shall be defined by law for the purpose of subclassification and assessed uniformly as to subclass at the following percentages of value:
  - (1) Real property used for residential purposes including multifamily residential real property and real property necessary to accommodate a residential community of mobile or manufactured homes including the real property upon which such homes are located.....11 1/2%
  - (2) Land devoted to agricultural use which shall be valued upon the basis of its agricultural income or agricultural productivity pursuant to section 12 of article 11 of the constitution.....30%
  - (3) Vacant lots.....12%
  - (4) Real property which is owned and operated by a not-for-profit organization not subject to federal income taxation pursuant to section 501 of the federal internal revenue code, and which is included in this subclass by law.....12%
  - (5) Public utility real property, except railroad real property which shall be assessed at the average rate that all other commercial and industrial property is assessed.....33%
  - (6) Real property used for commercial and industrial purposes and buildings and other improvements located upon land devoted to agricultural use.....25%
  - (7) All other urban and rural real property not otherwise specifically subclassified.....30%

Class 2 shall consist of tangible personal property. Such tangible personal property shall be further classified into six subclasses, shall be defined by law for the purpose of subclassification and assessed uniformly as to subclass at the following percentages of value:

- (1) Mobile homes used for residential purposes.....11 1/2%
- (2) Mineral leasehold interests except oil leasehold interests the average daily production from which is five barrels or less, and natural gas leasehold interests the average daily production from which is 100 mcf or less, which shall be assessed at 25%.....30%
- (3) Public utility tangible personal property including inventories thereof, except railroad personal property including inventories thereof, which shall be assessed at the average rate all other commercial and industrial property is assessed.....33%
- (4) All categories of motor vehicles not defined and specifically valued and taxed pursuant to law enacted prior to January 1, 1985 .....30%
- (5) Commercial and industrial machinery and equipment which, if its economic life is seven years or more, shall be valued at its retail cost when new less seven-year straight-line depreciation, or which, if its economic life is less than seven years, shall be valued at its retail cost when new less straight-line depreciation over its economic life, except that, the value so obtained for such property, notwithstanding its economic life and as long as such property is being used, shall not be less than 20% of the retail cost when new of such property.....25%
- (6) All other tangible personal property not otherwise specifically classified.....30%

(b) All property used exclusively for state, county, municipal, literary, educational, scientific, religious, benevolent and charitable purposes, farm machinery and equipment, merchants' and manufacturers' inventories, other than public utility inventories included in subclass (3) of class 2, livestock, and all household goods and personal effects not used for the production of income, shall be exempted from property taxation.

Explanatory statement. This amendment would allow the legislature to classify and tax watercraft upon a basis different from other property. A vote for this proposition would permit the legislature to provide for separate classification and taxation of watercraft or to exempt such property from property taxation and impose taxes in lieu thereof. A vote against this proposition would continue the taxation of watercraft in the same manner as all other property.

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