

from our viewpoint...

Rural offices closing, takes away state jobs

One by one, the welfare offices in western Kansas are closing. With them go precious state jobs that likely won't be replaced. Instead of being able to go to an office and talk to a case worker or other professional, Social Services clients now will go to a "kiosk" where forms and pamphlets will be stocked. They'll call a toll-free number and talk with someone they'll never see. Gov. Kathleen Sebelius and her staff have done nothing to stop this travesty.

On one hand, the state Department of Commerce says it's trying to help us find more plants and more jobs. On the other, the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services takes jobs away. This is nothing new. The Department of Transportation closed many rural shops a few years ago, taking scarce state jobs out of places like Jennings and Selden. The Highway Patrol consolidated all dispatchers in Salina, creating a staff that most likely will never see the roads they send troopers out to patrol.

It's true state jobs are not economic development, and it's also true the state is nearly broke. It needs to cut back and save money wherever it can.

But these consolidations save little, if any, cash. They are designed to create larger offices where workers are all in the same room. That makes them easier to control.

In fact, it's the workers who bear the brunt of these moves. They either have to uproot their families and move across the state, commute long distances to keep their jobs or find other work. Some veteran highway patrol dispatchers, looking at a move to Salina, simply pulled the pin. Others couldn't afford to retire yet.

Social Services workers are in the same boat. Many will be driving an hour to and from work as they shift to offices in Colby or Hays that will be open.

The department admits it isn't going to save much, if any, money by closing it's rural offices. It's just shifting things around. The fact that small-town Kansas and small-town employees suffer doesn't faze the welfare bureaucrats. Despite pleas from legislators and others, they've crammed their reorganization through.

The end result of all this is more state jobs in Topeka and in places like Hays and Salina.

Topeka has more than enough state jobs already. And while Hays and Salina, Garden City and Wichita might like to have a few more jobs, they don't need them as badly as Norton, Selden, Oberlin, Atwood, St. Francis, Oakley, Sharon Springs or Hoxie.

If the governor does care about the economy in rural Kansas, she should do something.

What's the point of one agency trying to find new jobs while others take state jobs and move them to the cities?

Instead, the state ought to be shifting jobs out of Topeka and into rural Kansas, not just the west, but all over, and not to the places that have jobs, like Garden City or Hays, but to places like Selden and Smith Center, Winona, Rexford and Grinnell. With modern communications, there is no reason why this can't be done.

Rural Kansas has been bleeding population and jobs for years. The state's not to blame for that, but it doesn't have to be part of the problem.

Governor, do you care? — *Steve Haynes*

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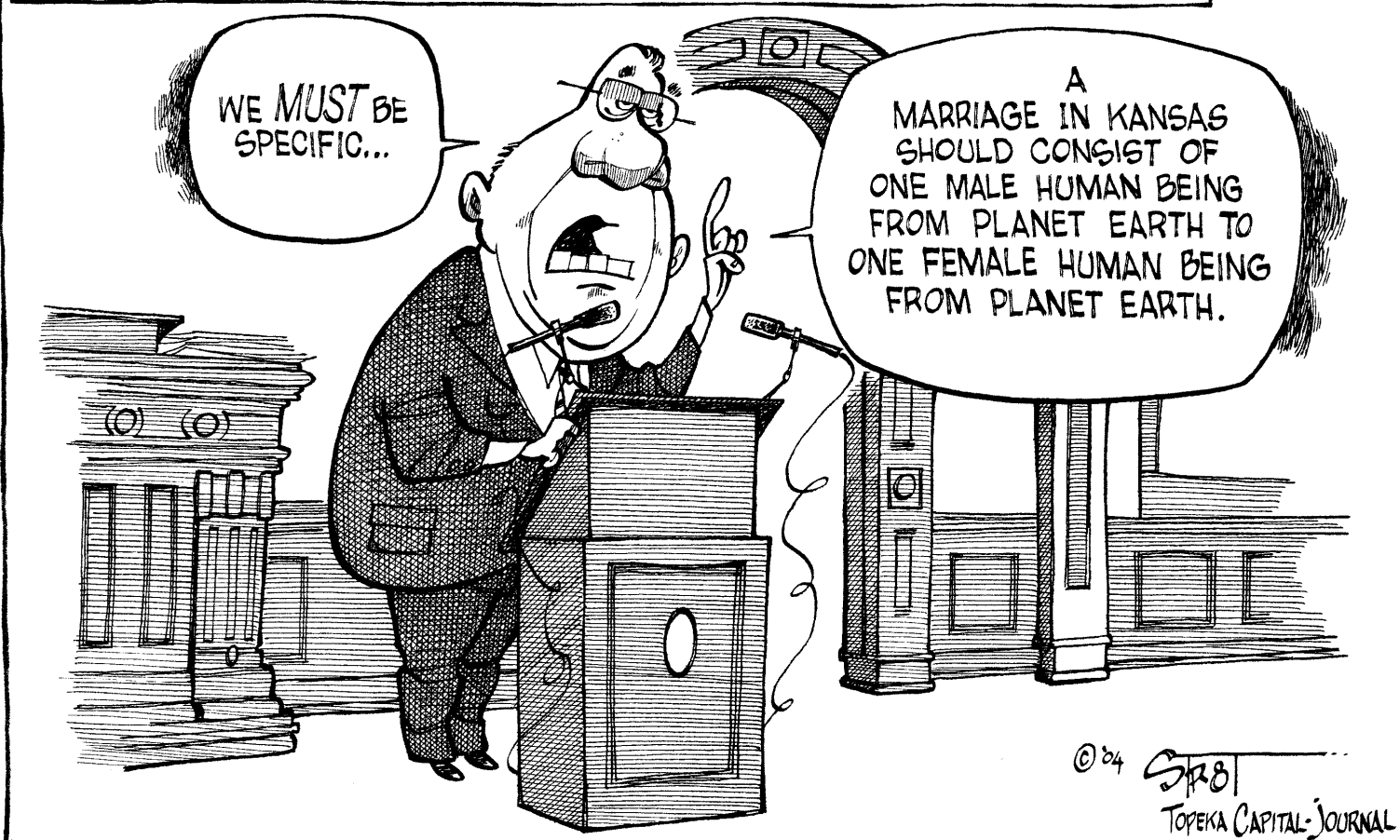
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Debate over Kansas' proposed marriage amendment continues...



Repetition makes me weary

I don't know about you, but sometimes there seeps into my consciousness the fact that repetition makes me weary.

It happens not only in my living and habits, but also in our language.

Things that never used to bother me at all, all at once are almost unbearable. They make me want to scream.

For instance: Am I the only one who gets tired of daily grooming routines?

Some days I just would like to forget to comb my hair and put on makeup. Of course I realize I probably couldn't step foot outside the house, but it would be worth it!

And then every night, there's the ritual of taking off the makeup, properly washing my face, taking my shower, brushing my teeth, etc.

Sometimes, wouldn't you just like to fall into bed and forget all that?

Well, I would.

Within the past few months, I have realized that some words get over-used and irritating to the ear after awhile. Words that really weren't a great part of the American vocabulary sud-



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• commentary

dently become front and center.

For instance: During the Iraqi War, reporters were "embedded." We heard that word repeated, and repeated, and repeated. Reporters were assigned to every fighting unit and moved with it right into the action. Even though every war has had its "reporters," for the first time we were actually hearing the news almost before it happened. The descriptions from embedded personnel allowed commentaries which grew burdensome to me.

Embedded, embedded, embedded. Enough already. Whatever happened to "among" or "amid" or "traveling with."

Then after I grew irritated with that repetition, we got the fiasco of Michael Jackson's — once again — being charged with indecent lib-

All seniors, parents should be honored

To the Editor:

Saturday was the last home basketball game for Goodland High School. It was also the time when the senior basketball players, cheerleaders and other seniors were recognized for their hard work.

This parent called the school to see why they were not going to recognize the senior pep band members. I was told the band members, even the football cheerleaders, were only recognized once in a year. Since they were honored at a football game, they would not be honored again.

However, the football cheerleaders are no longer referred to as football cheerleaders; they are now wrestling and basketball cheerleaders. They were honored again. The band is not the marching band anymore, they are the pep band, and they were not recognized. I sat there and watched the athletes, cheerleaders and other helpers recognized once again.

As a parent of a senior in the pep band, I felt this was not fair. Some of these kids have been in band since the fifth grade. They watched as their classmates were honored for their hard work while they are there working hard trying to help them win their game.

The marching band and the pep band add to the atmosphere of the football games and also the basketball games. They deserved to be recognized along with their classmates again.

Dan and I had parents, junior high kids and even the parents of the basketball players wondering why the band seniors were not included in this ceremony.

So if you see one of the senior band members, give them the thanks they deserve. I know it will mean a lot to them. They will be missed next year.

Charlene Mangus
Kanorado



**from our
readers**

• to the editor

To the Editor:

In response to editorials in the *Salina Journal* and other Kansas newspapers, there is a proven way to avoid car-deer collisions.

Several years ago, the Kansas Highway Patrol installed on the front bumpers of its cars, the Sav-A-Life deer alert-animal warning device and reduced their deer-car collisions by 90 percent.

When I learned that the Highway Patrol had a 90 percent reduction in car-deer crashes, I installed this deer alert whistle on the front bumpers of my vehicles. This product was developed and used in Austria and later brought to the United States.

I have proven their value on my vehicles. When deer in the road-side ditch or in the field

where to write

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U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521; web e-mail address — brownback.senate.gov/CMEmail.me

U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran, 1519 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 225-2715; e-mail address — jerry.moran@mail.house.gov

near the road hear the high-pitched sound made by air passing through the deer alerts (a sound not heard by the human ear), the deer will freeze like a statue. The deer will not move until the car passes and gets down the road out of hearing of the deer.

If anyone concerned about car-deer crashes will install the quality Sav-A-Life deer alert-whistles on the front bumpers of their vehicles, I can assure you that from the experience of the Kansas Highway Patrol and my personal experience, you will avoid deer-car crashes.

I would never buy a different brand or discount deer whistle. When you can buy a proven quality deer alert, why trust your car and your life to an inferior product?

For information about the Sav-A-Life deer alert, phone (800) 654-3337. They will give you the name of the dealer nearest you. (There are some in this area.)

If you have a question or want further information, give me a call at (785) 890-7201.

The Rev. Gene M. Tromble
Goodland

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