

from our viewpoint...

Driving a privilege not a right for all

A near-capacity crowd at last Monday’s meeting wanted the City Commission to find a way to allow kids over the age of 10 to ride electric scooters on city streets in defiance of state law.

Kansas law says that all motor vehicles have to be registered, and drivers have to be licensed to operate those vehicles. Gas scooters that have the proper documentation — a manufacturer’s statement of origin — can be registered and driven by licensed drivers. Electric scooters can’t be tagged under state law, and they are the ones people are complaining about.

“Why don’t we just ignore the state law?” one citizen asked.

“Why can’t the city pass an ordinance allowing this in our city?” another asked.

City Manager Ron Pickman and City Attorney Perry Warren tried to explain that a city cannot override state law except to be more restrictive than the state.

Electric scooters are not new, but their popularity has grown in the past couple of years. Mostly, they’re being used by kids — unlicensed, underage drivers — who have been caught using the scooters to get around town.

It would be easy to blame the people who are selling the scooters, but at least some of them have been trying to explain what the law says. One merchant called and got information about licensing and registration from the state motor vehicle office in Topeka.

Those who wish to scoot legally must be on a properly documented gas-powered scooter and must have a driver’s license.

There is no way for the city to get around the state law. The idea of having a safety course to allow kids from 10-16 to drive won’t work. It sounds fair, but that doesn’t change the fact it is illegal for non-licensed drivers to scoot down the streets. It’s unsafe to have powered scooters on sidewalks.

It’s hard to believe that any parent would want their 10-year-old out in the street on one of these things, low, quick and hard to see, but a lot of people seem to think they’re pretty cool.

Parents who have purchased electric scooters might trade them in for bicycles. Kids can ride them on private land, but they have to stay off of public streets.

Unless someone goes to court and challenges the law, or gets the Legislature to change it, it’s just not legal for any kid under 16 to be out on the street on a scooter, gas or electric..An undocumented electric scooter, even when driven by a licensed driver, is illegal on any street.

This is a statewide issue, and is not going to be solved by the Goodland City Commission. — *Tom Betz*

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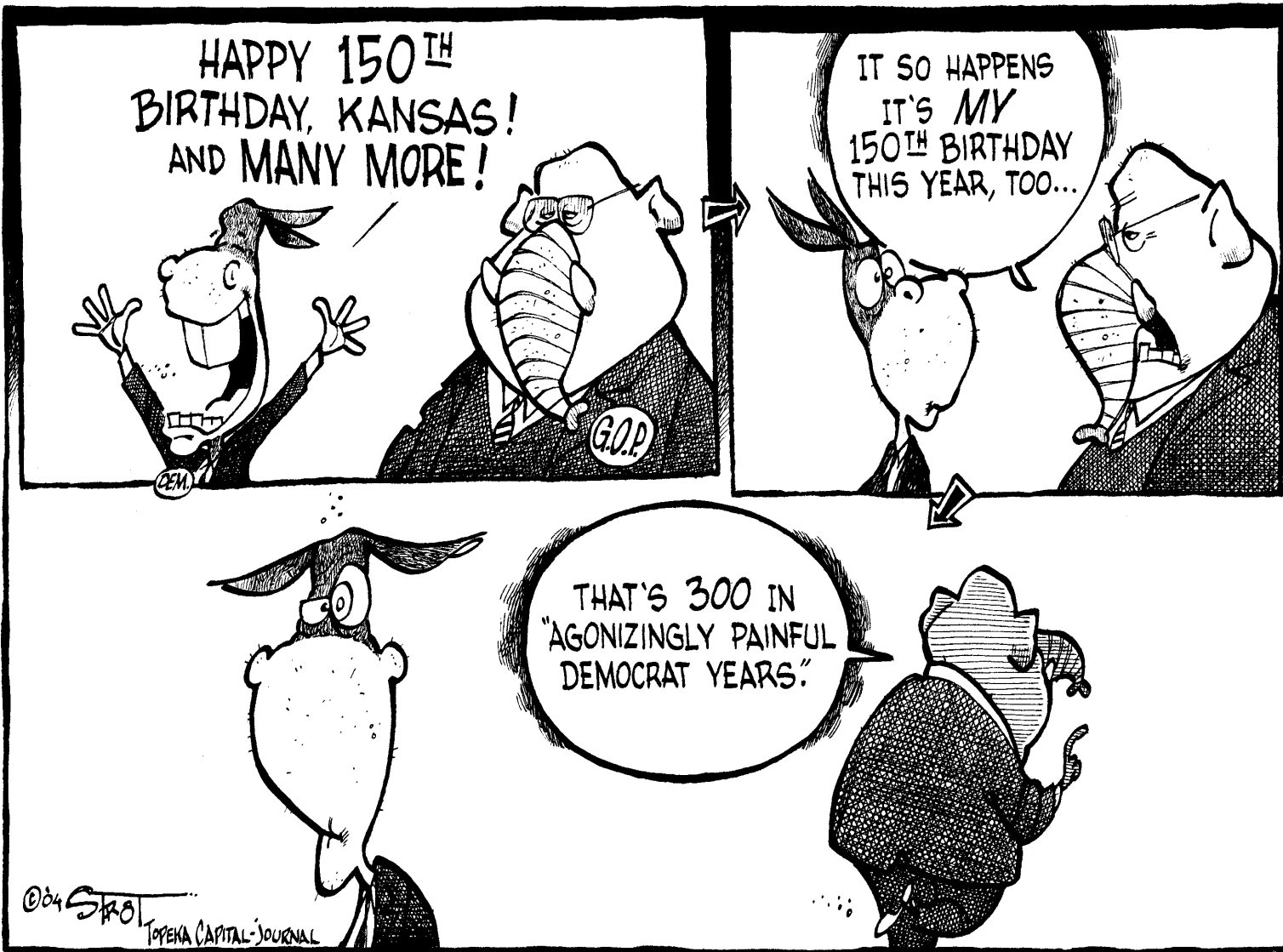
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Check the details of pre-funeral plans

Dear Attorney General Phill Kline:

I recently read an article regarding the rising cost of funerals.

Though I had taken out a life insurance policy many years ago to cover this expense, I am starting to worry that the policy is no longer sufficient. Should I make “pre-need” arrangements now to guarantee my loved ones aren’t left the unexpected financial burden of covering my funeral?

Dear Kansas Consumer:

Pre-need funeral arrangements are increasing in popularity due to the fact that many individuals are taking a more active role in planning and paying for their own funeral before their time of death. While pre-need planning has its advantages, it is important to understand the difference between pre-arrangement and pre-paying to make an educated decision on what is best for you and your loved ones.

Pre-planning allows you and your family to plan a funeral preceding death. By so doing you are able to:

1. Make an informed decision on the type of service you wish to have without the dis-



**phill
kline**

• attorney general

tress of your recent loss;

2. Compare prices at area funeral homes;

3. Get an estimate of how much the funeral you would like would cost today, remembering inflation may cause the price to change.

Many funeral homes and cemeteries offer this service as a courtesy. However, you should ask whether or not there will be a charge for this service at the time you call to set up your appointment.

Pre-paying for funeral expenses may be done in a variety of ways, all of which should be fully understood before signing any type of contract.

Pre-arranged funeral agreement: A pre-arranged funeral agreement gives the purchaser full control of the money and can only be withdrawn prior to death by that person. The money is placed into a bank, credit

union or savings and loan association in the name of the purchaser and the seller. Once a verified statement and certified copy of a death certificate is furnished to the financial institution, the institution will allow the seller to withdraw the amount of the funeral bill. All remaining funds will go into the purchaser’s estate.

Insurance: If you plan on purchasing an insurance product to cover the expense of a funeral, take into consideration whether the pre-arranged funeral contract is guaranteed. If not, inflation may cause prices to increase beyond the amount of the insurance policy leaving a balance due at the time of death.

Attorney General Phill Kline offers this public service to help you avoid becoming a victim of consumer fraud. Although some of the details have been changed, the cases appearing in this column are based on actual complaints or questions. For further information or to file a complaint, please write Attorney General Phill Kline, Consumer Protection Division, 120 SW 10th Ave., 2nd Floor, Topeka, Kansas 66612, or call the toll-free Consumer Hotline, 1-800-432-2310.

Check-off is taking profits out of pockets

To the Editor:

If the cheat-off-crowd thinks the \$1 check-off is doing them good, why don’t they put in \$20 for more profit? Quit rustling from everybody else. How many agents do they have hunting, persecuting and damaging those who want to do their own promoting!

Churches have the same goal — Heaven, not hell! They disagree on how! Therefore the 1st Amendment of the Bill of Rights: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press....IV: The right



from our
readers

• to the editor

of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated....V: ...nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law....VIII: Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor

cruel and unusual punishment inflicted.

Protect ownership! And prohibit excessive fines, cruel and unusual punishment. Where doth the Constitution grant the cheat-off crowd their monopoly?

Let them that stole, steal no more...Eph. 4:28

Frank Sowers

Benkelman

PS: If there is not evidence to convict and execute Saddam Hussein, why the war?

Letter Policy

The Goodland Star-News encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten, and must include a telephone number and a signature. Unsigned letters will not be published. Form letters will be rejected, as will letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and good taste. We encourage letters, with address and phone numbers, by e-mail to: <star-news@nw-kansas.com>.

garfield

