

from other pens...

Nebraskans to vote on gambling issue

There's not a whole lot Kansans can do about what voters in Nebraska decide, except pray.

And we should all be down on our knees, praying that the folks up north are smart enough to vote against an amendment to their constitution that will allow more gambling in the state.

Initiative 417 on the Nebraska ballot proposes a constitutional amendment that would allow people to vote on whether they wanted "to provide for the authorization, operative, regulation and taxation all forms of games of chance."

It sounds so innocuous, so simple, so safe. It's not. It's a prescription for a lot of headaches and heartaches.

Gambling is an addiction not much different from tobacco, alcohol or drugs, and allowing it to invade your state is not unlike having a family member with a drug problem.

And why should we be concerned if Nebraska has a gambling problem?

Gambling is social ill, and who wants to live next door to a person with a severe alcohol or drug problem? Our neighbor's problems will be our problems. They are just a few miles away.

Those problems will include husbands and wives spending the entire month's earnings in the casinos, people losing their homes, jobs and spouses to gambling, and increased crime.

About 16 years ago, the good folks of Colorado said it was OK to have small-stakes casino gambling in three mountain communities to breathe new life into some old mining towns and "protect their cultural heritage." You can go into Black Hawk, Central City or Cripple Creek today and see the "cultural heritage" in the historic buildings on blocks beside the road. The towns are full of glitzy casinos and little else. The social problems are enormous and the traffic is unbelievable. People who work at the casinos can't afford to live there.

When a second round of initiatives hit the ballot in Colorado four years later, they were soundly defeated. Voters had seen enough of this "progress."

Up in South Dakota, it is the same story. Ask those who were living in a gambling town if they are better now than before craps, blackjack and slots came to town.

Again, why should we care?

Because we live 35 miles from the border. If Nebraska allows gambling anywhere close to the border, Kansans will flock across to spend their money and the social ills of gambling will taint us as surely as it does our neighbors.

Are we anti-gambling?

We sure are. While the whole country cracks down on tobacco, alcohol and drugs, gambling seems to be gaining a greater and greater hold on the hearts, minds and pocket-books of our citizens, everything from state lotteries to casinos on Indian reservations.

We know that trends go back and forth, and we can't wait for this one to go back where it came from. — *Cynthia Haynes*

The Goodland Star-News

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562)

Member: Kansas Press Association
Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association
National Newspaper Association
e-mail: star-news@nwkanssas.com

Steve Haynes, President

Tom Betz, Editor

Pat Schiefen, Copy Editor

Sharon Corcoran, Society Editor

Greg E. Stover, Sports Editor/Reporter

Kathryn Gurfinkel, Reporter

Doug Jackson, Advertising Coordinator

Anne Hamilton, Robin Flax, Adv. Sales

Sheila Smith, Office Manager

Nor'west Press

Jim Bowker, General Manager

Richard Westfahl Ron VanLoenen Judy McKnight Betty Morris

Aaron Hickert Kris McCool Lana Westfahl



nwkanssas.com

N.T. Betz, Director of Internet Services

(ntbetz@nwkanssas.com)

Evan Barnum, Systems Admin. (support@nwkanssas.com)

Published every Tuesday and Friday except the days observed for New Year's Day and Christmas Day, at 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

Periodicals postage paid at Goodland, Kan. 67735; entered at the Goodland, Kan., Post Office under the Act of Congress of March 8, 1878.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Goodland Star-News, 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: star-news@nwkanssas.com. Advertising questions can be sent to: goodlandads@nwkanssas.com

The Goodland Star-News assumes no liability for mistakes or omissions in advertising or failure to publish beyond the actual cost of the ad.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: In Sherman County and adjacent counties: three months, \$20; six months, \$38; 12 months, \$72. Out of area, weekly mailing of two issues: three months, \$30; six months, \$45; 12 months, \$80. Mailed individually each day: 12 months, \$115. (All tax included.)

Incorporating:

The Goodland Daily News

1932-2003

**The Sherman
County Herald**

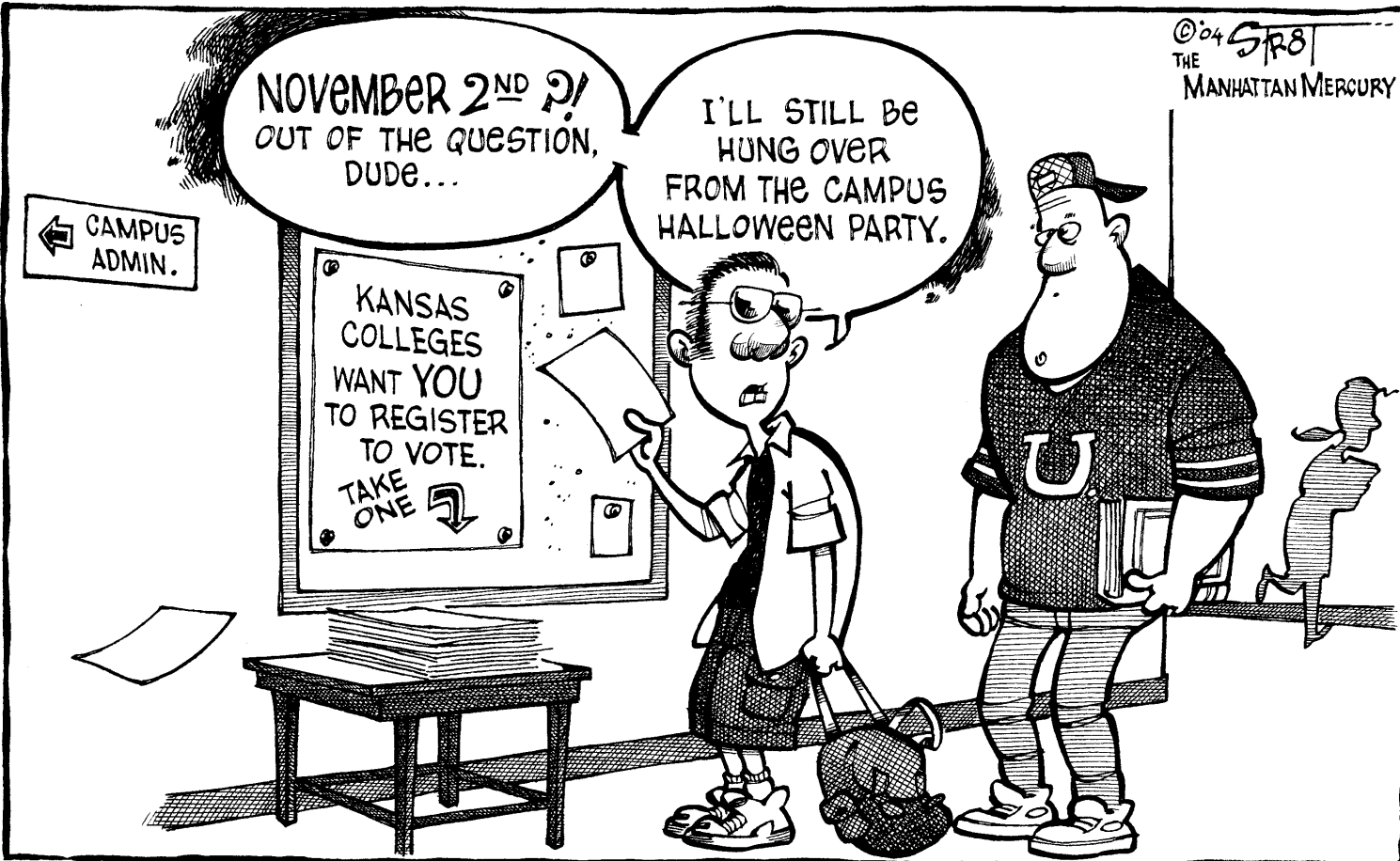
Founded by Thomas McCants
1935-1989

THE SHERMAN COUNTY
STAR

Founded by Eric and
Roxie Yonkey
1994-2001

Nor'West Newspapers

Haynes Publishing Company



Rainy days let me catch up on studying

I don't know about you, but I'm enjoying a rainy day.

It isn't a hard rain. It's a wonderful soaking rain, one that makes farmers rejoice — especially now when the fall wheat is in the ground.

We have had several weeks of drought (which in the Bible means God's punishment), so having the heavens open and rain descending is comforting in many ways.

Today I am catching up on some studying. We are having a church Bible study about the Old Testament prophets, so the names, locations and time lines are all pertinent and challenging.

One of our group remarked that the prophets all seem to be saying the same things.

That's probably true — since the ones we've studied so far all lived at about the same time. They all warned about society's ills and corruption, people's readiness to overlook God in favor of accumulating things and money, and the mistreatment of the poor and unfortunate.

They decried rulers and courts who weren't ruling justly, and they particularly singled out religious leaders who weren't spiritually guiding the people.

Great calamities were forecast if individuals and society didn't wake up and begin trusting God.

Well, the old time prophets might have all



**lorna
gt**

• commentary

been saying the same things, but I can't help but put their warnings in a modern setting.

How well would the United States receive a modern Isaiah, Hosea, Micah or Jeremiah? How would we react to hearing that we have turned away from the one source of strength and trustworthiness to follow false gods?

Be careful about denying these things in your life and community. We think we're pretty invulnerable, don't we?

Beware! God has a way of humbling the proud and arrogant.

Listen to the King of Assyria brag just before God stopped using him to punish the Israelites: "By the strength of my hand, I have done this (defeated God's people), and by my wisdom, because I have understanding, I removed the boundaries of nations, I plundered their treasures; like a mighty one I subdued their kings. As one reaches into a nest, so my hand reached for the wealth of the nations, as men gather abandoned eggs, so I gathered all the countries; not one flapped a wing of opened

Debates show there are 'truths' on both sides

The presidential debates are over for this campaign, and the American electorate will have the final say about who won on election day, Nov. 2.

The after-debate shows have been as interesting than the actual debates, as the media fans out to present the spin from both sides and to debunk some of the charges both men are throwing around.

An e-mail we received is an example of the dogmatic half truths being presented in this campaign. Both sides have been doing some of the same.

The e-mail had a list of things presented to put Bush's record in the best light.

"When some claim President Bush shouldn't have started this war, consider the following:

"Franklin Delano Roosevelt led us into World War II. Germany never attacked us: Japan did. From 1941-1945, 450,000 lives were lost, an average of 112,500 per year."

History shows we did declare war on Japan as well as Germany and Italy. This was the first 'Axis of evil' we had faced, and the attack of Dec. 7, remains the "Day of Infamy."

"Harry S. Truman finished that war and started one in Korea. North Korea never attacked us. From 1950-1953, 55,000 lives were lost, an average of 18,334 per year."

South Korea was attacked on June 25, 1950, and nearly driven out of their country before the United States led United Nations coalition — United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, South Africa, India, France, The Netherlands, Belgium and Luxemburg, Colombia, Greece, Ethiopia, the Philippines, Thailand and Turkey — put troops ashore under the command of General Douglas McArthur. The combat phase of that war lasted until 1953.

President Dwight Eisenhower ran for office in 1952 on the premise of having the boys back home by Christmas. On July 27, 1953 he managed to get an armistice, and that is what we



tom betz

• t, t & o

have had since.

"John F. Kennedy started the Vietnam conflict in 1962. Vietnam never attacked us."

Actually the first American troops were sent to Vietnam in 1954 by President Eisenhower, and then Vice President Richard Nixon told the French we would help them at Dien Bien Phu in 1954.

"Lyndon Johnson turned Vietnam into a quagmire. From 1965-1975, 58,000 lives were lost, an average of 5,800 per year."

Nixon ran for office in 1968 on the premise of bringing the boys home and finding peace in Vietnam. He expanded the war by invading Cambodia in 1970 before he started peace talks. Since Johnson left office in 1969, the deaths from 1969 to 1973 (29,000 based on the average of 5,800 per year) were Nixon's, and from 1973 to 1975 (11,600 after Nixon resigned from office) when we evacuated Saigon were President Gerald Ford's.

"Clinton" was offered Osama bin Laden's head on a platter three times by Sudan and did nothing. Osama has attacked us on multiple occasions."

The Sudanese offered to arrest Osama bin Laden and turn him over to President Clinton, but the Justice Department at that time did not have the evidence to bring him to trial under the requirements of our court system. When they finally had the evidence, he was no longer in Sudan. He is not yet in custody, and there has been little information about the American efforts in Afghanistan to find him since we invaded Iraq.

"The Democrats (and media) are complaining about how long the war is taking, but it took

its mouth to chirp." (Isaiah 10:13-14).

Thinks he's pretty special and powerful, doesn't he? Quickly, he's put back in his rightful place.

God heard the king's boasting and sent this punishment: "I will punish the king of Assyria for the willful pride of his heart and the haughty look in his eyes." (Isaiah 10:12b).

"I will send a wasting disease upon his sturdy warriors; under his pomp a fire will be kindled like a blazing flame." (Isaiah 10:16).

And the king and his armies were defeated and sent home.

God can use any person or any nation to do God's will — as long as they humbly submit. But once that person or nation begins to take the credit and fails to trust and obey God, watch out!

Where do we stand at this critical time in history — even as we approach another important election?

Are we trusting God or a man who carries the earthly title "President"?

Looking in the mirror, do we see pride and arrogance reflected back at us?

Maybe we need a modern-day Isaiah. But would we listen?

Today God is giving us rain.

I can't take the credit for it. I think I'll just be thankful.

less time to take Iraq than it took Janet Reno to take the Branch Davidian compound. That was a 51 day operation."

The Democrats — and some leading Republicans — are not complaining about how long the war is taking, but rather that there has not been a good plan presented to get our troops out.

Comparing the War in Iraq to the disaster in Waco is ridiculous and demeaning to the over 1,000 American soldiers we have lost in Iraq.

"We've been looking for evidence of chemical weapons in Iraq for less time than it took Hillary Clinton to find the Rose Law Firm billing records."

No one has said Saddam did not need to be taken out, but there has been no evidence found for the major premise that we went to war — weapons of mass destruction. We expect when Saddam comes to trial he will make it a point to say he has been telling the world for years he did not have any weapons of mass destruction and now he has evidence to support that.

"The biased media hopes we are too ignorant to realize the facts."

The idea that the media is biased is a concern because we believe the job of the media is to present the facts and allow the American people to make up their own minds about the issues.

"Be still and listen."

We have been still and have listened, but anytime someone makes dogmatic claims we are driven to take action to reveal how narrow and wrong such statements can be. Every young journalist is told not to assume anything, but to check and double check everything.

We are not perfect, and we admit we make mistakes. Something the President was unable to do in a recent debate.

The most important fact is that people should make sure they are registered to vote — registration in Kansas closes on Monday — and vote for the man of their choice on election day, Tuesday, Nov. 2.

garfield

