

from our viewpoint...

Fear driving force behind amendment

We've heard a lot of rhetoric back and forth on the Constitutional amendment on marriage from people with strong convictions and firm beliefs.

After looking at all that has been said about the issue, we agree with Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh's assessment of it:

Beware the law of unintended consequences.

It's always amazing that something that seems so simple can turn out to be so complicated; that something that seems so clear can be muddled; that something that seems so basic can be so infinitely varied.

As it stands today, Kansas law states that marriage is a contract between one man and one woman. Period.

Why then do we need a constitutional amendment?

What good will this do us?

Will it change our law? No.

Will it make it harder for that law to be changed? Yes.

Is there any great pressures to change Kansas law to allow polygamy or same-sex marriages? No.

The law we have is enough. We believe that fear of same-sex marriages is driving those in favor of this amendment.

Fear is not a good reason for making new laws, as we have seen with the ridiculous regulations of the Patriot Act and many others.

The Patriot Act was passed quickly to deal with the threat of terrorism after the Sept. 11 attacks. It has become so invasive to personal privacy that 200-year-old liberties are being tossed out.

Drug laws, passed due to fear, are causing people to be told that suspicion of wrongdoing is the same as conviction. If you don't believe this, take \$10,000 in cash, put it in your pocket and go speeding on I-70. You will soon find that the police have your money and you have the responsibility to show that you got it legally.

So where does that leave us with the marriage amendment?

The amendment doesn't just say marriage is between one man and one women. It goes on to say that, "No relationship, other than a marriage, shall be recognized by the state as entitling the parties to the rights or incidents of marriage."

Does this mean that the child of lesbian or gay parents won't be able to get health insurance?

Will an elderly woman, who has lived with an elderly man for many years without marriage because it reduces their Social Security benefits, not be able to collect his life insurance or be the one to say how and where he is buried?

We're all for marriage. We believe it is between one man and one woman. But we feel that we might live to regret the unintended consequences of this amendment.

Vote no. — Cynthia Haynes

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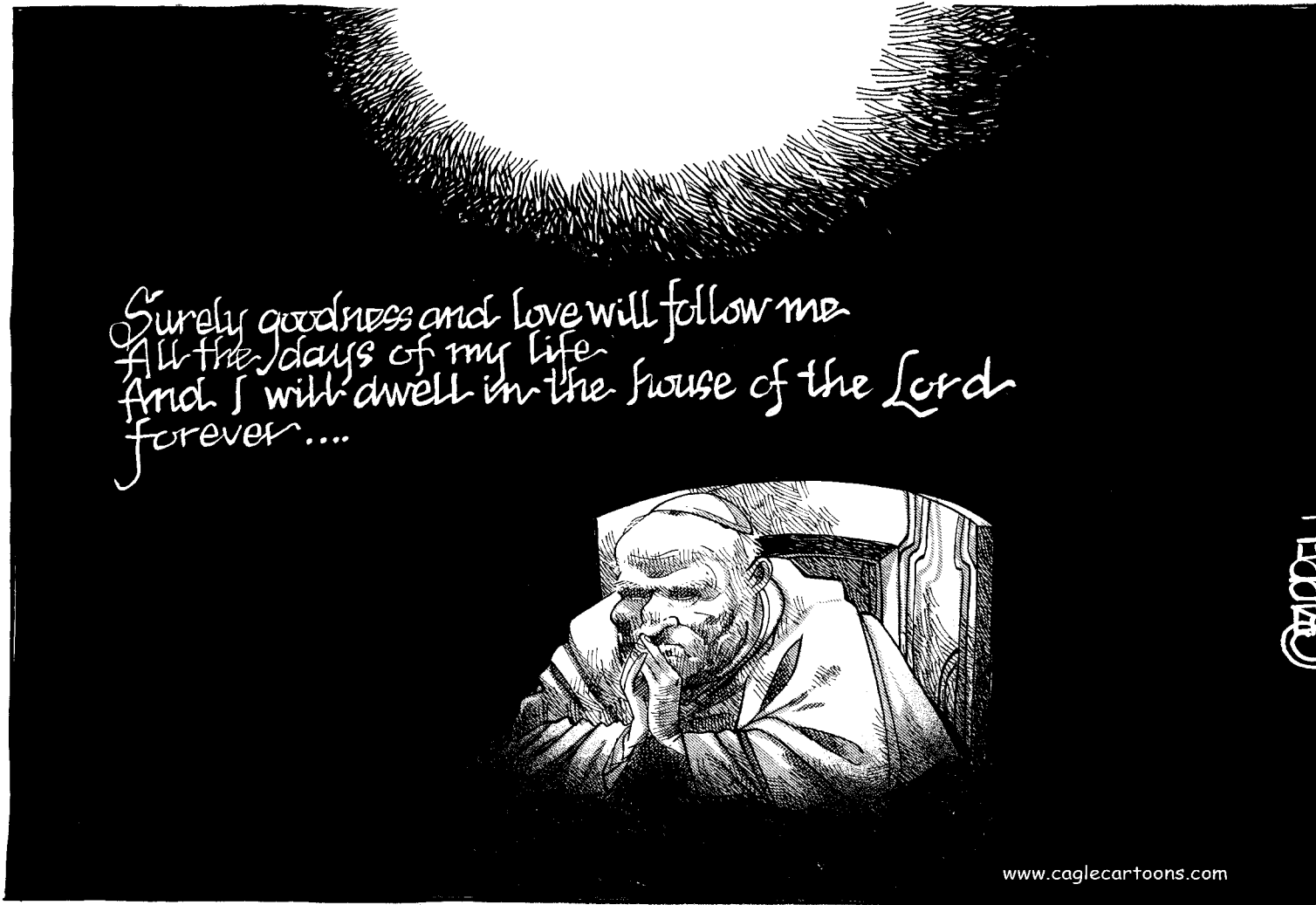
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Battle focused on traditional marriage

To the Editor:

Today will be a very important day in the battle for traditional marriage in the state of Kansas.

We have the opportunity to join 17 other states that have approved constitutional amendments so that marriage will be defined as it has been for the last 5,000 year as being between one man and one woman.

It is not discriminatory toward homosexuals; rather they are seeking special rights to be allowed to marry persons of the same sex.

Marriage has been the basis of our society and has given our children both a mommy and a daddy since the beginning of time. Anyone who has ever worked with children can tell you how important a stable family is to them.

It is important that we clearly define traditional marriage so that unelected activist judges can't impose their personal agenda upon us. If we change the definition of marriage so that anyone can marry, we will destroy our families.

If you are thankful for the wonderful country we live in and the many blessings we have been afforded in America, then you need to run to the polls on today and reaffirm the greatest gifts we have here on this earth, "our families."

Stand and be counted by going to the polls and voting yes for the marriage amendment for our children's sake and to protect our heritage and our nation.

Patty Thompson
Goodland

To the Editor:



from our
readers

● to the editor

Whenever I read or hear the proponents, arguments for the upcoming Kansas marriage protection amendment, I recall what the late astronomer Carl Sagan said about astrology. Amused, Sagan said an obstetrician, inches from the birth canal, had more impact at birth than did planets and stars, orbiting billions of miles away.

Sagan's wisdom is analogous to the current Kansas amendment about "protecting" marriage by outlawing same-sex marriage. Any two individuals in a marriage — two complex, ever-changing persons trying to co-habitate harmoniously over time — have more of a direct, profound impact on protecting the institution of marriage than any gay couple living next door, down the street, on the other side of town or even miles away.

A threat is something with intent to destroy. The only way to destroy a marriage is divorce. And, divorce is the only true, real threat to the institution of marriage. Over the past decade, 43 percent of Kansas marriages cast aside the sacred, moral vows of matrimony to file for divorce. Clearly, for nearly half of Kansas married couples, the institution has some serious problems.

Even if gay Kansans married at the same

proportion as straight Kansans, then there would still be five times as many destroyed Kansan heterosexual marriages as happily married gay Kansans.

If divorce destroys marriage for Kansas heterosexual couples, where is the fury of moral outrage from the pulpits and conservatives driving an amendment to "protect" marriage from divorce?

It's conveniently unaddressed by the amendment's conservative and Christian proponents. Surprising? No. The Barna Group, a religious research group, found that 27 percent born-again Christians divorce, with 23 percent having multiple divorces.

Even with the Gospels frowning on divorce, the amendment's proponents lack the courage and willingness to control their own lifestyle. The threat to marriage is conveniently diverted onto a homosexual minority who cause no threat to any heterosexual marriage.

This amendment is unadulterated bigotry, and not the soft bigotry politely spoken at weekend Bunko clubs, but the hard bigotry of the bullying, cross-burning-white-hooded variety, shrilly espoused from the pulpits and by conservative politicians: if we can legislate, we will discriminate.

Face it, if you let any Kansas gay married couple who you've never met, seen or know where they live get between you, your spouse and your marriage, well, you have problems no constitutional amendment could ever solve.

David Guayasamin
Olathe

Youth not a shield of immortality

The young tend to think they are immortal. Old age, death, these things are light years away.

They think they can do as they will, and their youth, like a shield, will protect them.

Until the day, with cruel and sudden finality, reality comes crashing down.

It's happened in many areas in the last year. It shouldn't happen, but it does.

Speed, a little too fast on a gravel road.

Didn't see the stop sign. The curve. The dead end.

Until it was too late.

The car rolls. The occupants are thrown out.

The human body was not meant to hit the ground — or a telephone pole, a tree the curb, whatever — at 60 miles an hour.

When it happens, there is no time to think or react. No time to duck.

No time to fasten that seatbelt.

There will be time later for the survivors to think.

A lifetime.

These things can never be undone.

You see it time after time.

"No one in the car was wearing a seatbelt."

You never hear about the ones who were wearing their seatbelts.

You know why?

Because they lived.

No news there.



steve
haynes

● along the sappa

If there is anything teen-agers should know about cars and immortality and simple physics, it is this:

Wear your seatbelt.
Make everyone in your car wear a seatbelt.
It won't hurt you. It could save your lives.
You're in a hurry, but wearing a seatbelt won't slow you down.

where to write

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