

commentary

from our viewpoint...

Have you voted?

This is a day the citizens of Sherman County, the Goodland school district and the cities of Kanorado and Goodland have the opportunity to express their opinion through the ballot box.

There are a number of issues and contests in each of these elections, and there are plenty of reasons to make the effort to get to the polls and vote.

It is a day for the citizens of the county to give their opinion on whether there should be a request made to the U.S. Department of Transportation about changing the time zone from Mountain to Central. The straw poll, sponsored by *The Goodland Star-News*, is being held at the county courthouse, and is for all Sherman County residents over 18.

This is not the first time the citizens have been given a chance to vote on the time issue. It was brought up in April 1989, and with over 1,600 voting the decision was 1,059 for Mountain and 579 for Central.

The general election is being held at the Veterans of Foreign Wars hall on Main. The citizens of the school district and the cities are voting for board members and city commissioners.

The school board has the biggest chance for a change with eight people vying for the four seats, and the four receiving the most votes will have 4-year terms.

There has been a lot of excitement in the district with talk about closing a building, the use of drug and gun dogs at the high school and a sense that maybe there needs to be a change in direction.

The interesting thing is that all of the 10 who filed to run for the school board had signed up before the gun fracas at the high school.

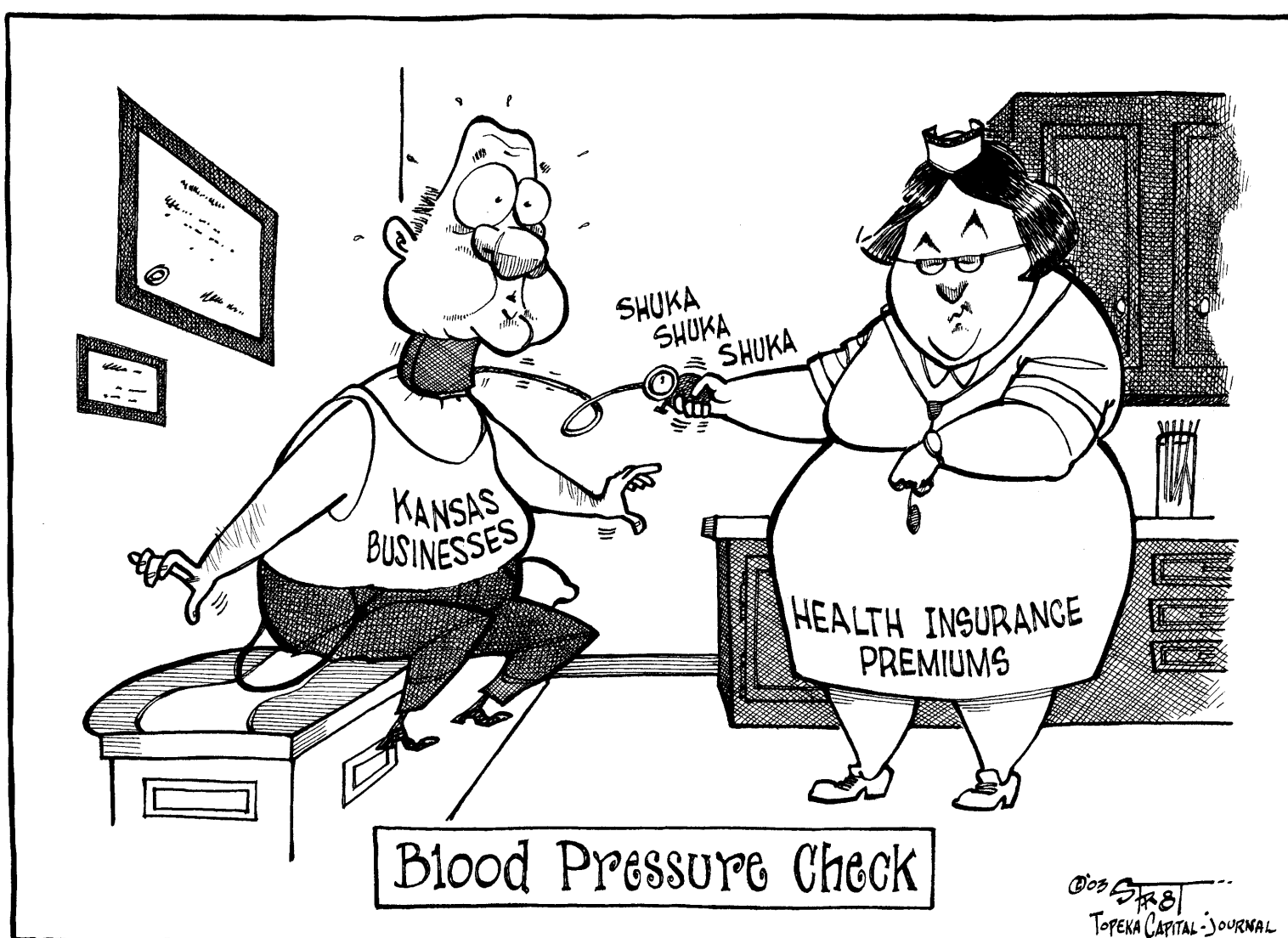
Those voting on the school board can vote for four or fewer on the ballot. For those who only feel there are possibly two or three good candidates there is no reason to select that fourth person. By only voting for those a person believes are the best candidates, regardless of the number, the vote can be more weighted toward those who are the best and be less diluted.

There are five candidates for the Goodland city commission, and there is a chance for a change there with a couple of challengers. With three incumbents running at least one of them will be re-elected. Again here the two who get the most votes will receive 4-year terms and the third highest will have a 2-year term.

Kanorado citizens will be voting on the mayor's position as well as the one person who filed for the city council.

Election day is our opportunity to perform our duty as a citizen through voting. This is one of the fundamental things that makes the United States of America different from many other countries.

No matter who you are voting for or how you feel about the time issue, the most important thing is for you to make the effort to vote. —Tom Betz



Washington is the city of monuments

Washington may be the city of government, but it is also the city of monuments.

The Department of Agriculture, for instance, begins as a tidy and not overly large marble edifice on The Mall. Behind the venerable structure, though, the faceless brick warren of the bureaucracy sprawls for three blocks in each direction.

Along The Mall, all the way from the Capitol to Arlington across the river, there is a stretch of green broken only by monuments, large and small. We did not have time to see them all.

Thursday brought record-breaking rains, and Friday dawned gray and humid, perfect weather for reflecting on war and memorials.

Time was, great monuments were erected to great leaders who won great wars. So it happens that the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial face each other across the Reflecting Pool, flanked by the memorials to Korean and Vietnam veterans, and to the heroes of World Wars I and II.

Around the town are scattered memorials and equestrian statues dedicated to other victorious heroes, from Stephen Decatur to Franklin D. Roosevelt to John F. Kennedy and the Unknown Soldier.



steve haynes

• along the sappa

As a nation, our attitude toward war has changed. We often are reluctant to fight, but a century or so ago, when Teddy Roosevelt was leading Rough Riders up San Juan Hill, and young men stood eagerly in line to join the battle in Europe, war was seen as romantic.

Today, we are in danger of viewing war as just one more video game, where buttons are pushed and rockets launched and bombs dropped, and somewhere far away, things go boom.

Our armed forces are the most capable in the history of the globe, without peer in the modern world.

But war is not a video game.

In the first Gulf War, only 135 or so allied troops died, many of them in accidents. This time, so far, the statistics are similar.

But we forget that 150,000 to 200,000 Iraqi troops lost their lives in that battle. And we sent the survivors back to spend another decade with Saddam Hussein.

Such sacrifice it not to be taken lightly. We are not so far removed from Vietnam to have forgotten the horrors of war. Thursday, I was trying to take a picture of tourists lined up along the Vietnam Wall, some just gawking, some running fingers down the list of names.

We had come in behind a platoon of Am Vets from Eliya, who marched up and presented the colors at Vietnam, then marched over to Korea and did the same. Tourists were chatting and pointing. Then the ones I was photographing moved on, leaving a solitary woman in her 50s, well dressed and well beyond the raucous days of the '60s.

She knelt on the cold, damp granite and bowed her head in prayer before a name. There was no way to tell, but it seemed she had been there many times before.

I turned to ask, but she was gone. A brother? A husband? A lover? A friend?

After all these years, she remembered.

She knew the cost of war.

War may be necessary. War may be just. War may be right.

But, on a damp and gloomy day in Washington, you knew what mothers and wives and sweethearts have always known.

War is never cheap.

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 phone numbers, by e-mail to: <star-news@nw-kansas.com>.

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STAR
Founded by Eric and Roxie Yonkey
1994-2001

Nor'West Newspapers
Haynes Publishing Company

Sorority wanted recognition for donation

To the Editor:

First of all, the Gamma Rho sorority would like to apologize to the board members, staff and clients of the Topside Tots Daycare for not receiving the recognition that was intended.

We had good intentions of promoting a local business by a local organization in the local newspaper of our local community; but those intentions were defeated when the "Boss" refused to publish the picture in this local newspaper.

We were told, "The Goodland Star-News doesn't use pictures of people just standing. There needs to be action." Well, excuse us; but we were presenting a check to the board members of the Topside Tots Daycare for the proceeds from the raffle of two baby afghans sponsored by the Gamma Rho sorority.

If you would have published the article written to go with the picture, everyone would have known there was action.

But no, you couldn't do that. You wrote the article over, you combined it with another article (which by the way, had nothing to do with Topside Tots Daycare; Marilyn Pruitt and the Jared Hall Medical Fund should have had their own recognition), and then you buried it on page 7. Topside Tots Daycare did not deserve this.

Just what action was in the picture placed on the front page of your March 7 issue?

You didn't even have to go get the news. We brought it to you. We tried to get you to come



from our readers

• to the editor

and take the picture, but our hours were not accommodating to you.

For a local newspaper, you should be supporting the news of our local businesses, local organizations and local community; just as you expect all of us to support your local newspaper.

Arlea Stasser, Carolyn Morton, Linda Bowen, Kathy Rohr, Marcia Way
Goodland

where to write

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