

from our viewpoint...

Governor building a winning party

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius continues building a Democratic party that could stand for decades as a viable force in Kansas politics.

Success is not sure, not yet, but the governor has succeeded in attracting many Republican leaders to her fold. She’s close to a realignment that would be nothing short of a revolution.

For most of a century — some would argue, since its founding, when Free State Republicans came to the fore — Kansas has been dominated by the Grand Old Party.

This one political reality means that many who might otherwise have become Democrats based on their beliefs joined the Republican ranks so they would stand a chance of holding of-
fice.

Kansas elects Democrats now and then, but only now and then. Most young politicians can read, especially the handwriting on the wall.

But dominance comes at a price. Holding, usually, the governor’s office and two-thirds of the Legislature, the GOP itself split into liberal and conservative wings. The liberals like to style themselves as moderate, but everyone knows better.

So does the governor.

And she is calling them home to her party.

Her running mate, Mark Parkinson, is a former Republican state chairman. Her candidate for attorney general, Paul Morrison, won office as a Republican for Johnson County district attorney. The former attorney general, the ever-liberal Carla Stoval-Steckline, came out last week for the Democrat.

If the governor keeps building this coalition, and finds someone to take her place, the results could change Kansas politics forever.

Succession is key, though. Unless the Democrats have someone to run, not just for governor, but for other major offices after she’s gone, the revolution could sputter and die.

What does this mean for Republicans?

First, they need to understand that the threat is real, but it creates an opportunity to focus their party.

Instead of two wings, based on radical-right-religious belief or big government cloaked in a moderate guise, the party needs to get back to its roots. It should be the party of freedom and prosperity, fighting against poverty, big government, slavery of all kinds, high taxes and oppressive regulations.

For too long, both parties have bought into the idea that bigger is better. Both wings of the GOP have bought into bigger government and more state control of everything. They argue mostly about whose beliefs will be taught in our schools.

Someone needs to stick up for the little guy, the small businessman, the minorities, the workers, the people who can’t afford more taxes and endless regulations.

That’s the opportunity the Kansas Republican party has today, to become the party not of just one small religious group or the narrow interests of big government, state employees and those who want to control every aspect of our lives.

But the party of, by and for the people. — *Steve Haynes*

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e-mail: star-news@nwkansas.com

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nwkansas.com

N.T. Betz, Director of Internet Services

(ntbetz@nwkansas.com)

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

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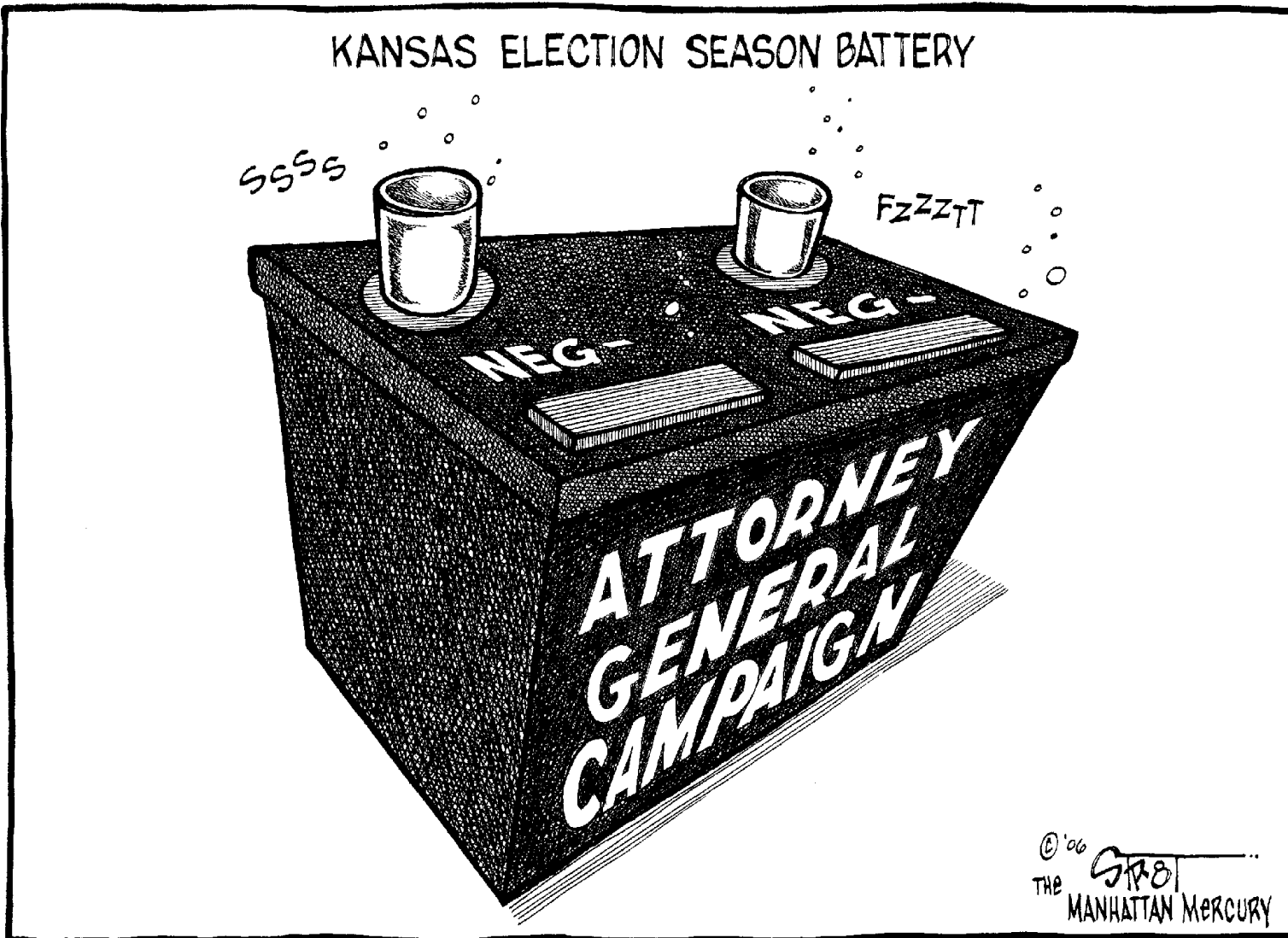
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Postal service plans to consolidate sorting

To the Editor:

The U.S. Postal Service is under attack, both across the country and in Goodland. The service was forced to reveal a secret list of facilities it is targeting for consolidation across the country. Up to 140 facilities could face the chop.

One of those facilities is the Colby Post Office. The Postal Service wants to take all the mail that is now worked in Colby and truck it all to Hays to be sorted. Mail will likely be collected earlier in the day and arrive later in the day — perhaps even in the evening. And we expect delays of up to a week sending and receiving our mail.

Those are serious implications for all those who depend on mail service. But let’s think about the impact they could have on the vital service that residents in your community depend on. Checks will arrive late, bills will not get paid on time and important medications could take too long to arrive. Businesses that rely on timely delivery of mail will suffer. Those are real problems facing the people of your community. Real disruptions to service that will affect the quality of their lives.

Now of course, the folks back in Washington argue that the consolidation of these facilities will lead to greater efficiency. But the fact is that there is simply no conclusive evidence to support this. In fact, the General Accountability Office has been critical of such plans, citing a lack of transparency and accountability.

So why is Washington pushing this ill-advised plan? They might tell you that they are trying to create more efficiencies but there is no proof that money will be saved. The reality



from our readers

- to the editor

is that this plan was created to help big corporate special interests — advertising mailers who presort their mail and will save more money this way. Their lobbyists have been pushing this plan for years so they can make more profits at the expense of the rest of us. It’s no surprise that a recent report shows that the Postal Service is planning to undercharge these big corporations at the expense of individual customers and small businesses.

The Postal Service has refused to give postal workers full details of their plan or their process for targeting facilities for consolidation. This secret plan could have a deep effect on all postal service for everyone in the country and here in Goodland, but ordinary citizens are not even being consulted about it. That’s just not right. The Postal Service was created to serve all citizens, not just the big special interests.

This week, postal workers across the country are asking you to get involved and help stop this attack on our service. Please, call the Save Our Service Hotline at 1-8-777-OUR-MAIL. We’ll tell you more about this issue and get you involved to preserve reliable mail service for everyone.

The Postal Service was created to serve the interests of the American people by providing reliable and effective service. This is not what this plan does and we must stop it. Many people

in Goodland are depending on it.

Marcia Standy, president
Kansas Postal Workers Union
Great Bend

Dear Sirs

My first two mistakes have already been expressed! You are not DEAR! and you are not Royalty!

Next, I took JOURNALISM in high school, from which I graduated in 1932, repeat 1932, and I don’t remember very much of what I was taught! I have accumulated a lot of prejudices. A.A. Gilspie, as I recall, published the *St. Francis Herald* for ONE DOLLAR per year! *The Flagler News* cost one dollar per year, and each of them was printed on PAPER, not thin lifeless material that takes a magician to hold in a readable position.

I liked the old-time items. My ancestors, the Hartzlers, came to Sherman County in 1885. The Gattshalls arrived in Ruleton in 1906 via an emigrant train with all their worldly possessions, in the month of March with a raging blizzard initiating them.

In the good old days, one had to print a paper. Pictures were not used of every girls’ volleyball or basketball game to exhibit their bare legs.

No one remembers Dr. Renner, but Nuefeld WOULD gladly destroy Renner’s shrine just to get elected county commissioner!

You ask for my bellyaches, but I’ll bet you still cash my check.

Oh, for the *Goodland News* when McCants published it!

Wallace Gattshall

Goodland

There goes the GOP base, and both houses

There Goes The GOP Base — And Probably Both Houses

The Republican base, that vaunted entity whose every mood swing has controlled the zigs and zags of the Bush administration policy, has moved out, according to the latest Gallup polling. Karl Rove’s heroic efforts to preserve its fealty have failed to move Republican base voters. Karl cannot compensate for Bush’s failure to project his issues as the midterm disaster for the Republican Party nears.

The Gallup poll of Oct. 6-8 shows that, in the wake of the Foley scandal, the number of “white frequent churchgoers” who are planning to vote Republican has dropped from 58 percent to 47 percent since last month. The margin of their support for Republicans over Democrats, 26 percentage points in September, has entirely disappeared and the parties are tied among this core element of the Republican base.

The Gallup poll also reveals that Democrats now win all eight major issues, including terrorism and morality. Asked which party would do more to enhance “moral standards in the country,” Democrats now win 47 to 36! And on terrorism, Democrats now have a 47-to-42-percent advantage.

The Foley scandal has wrought extraordinary damage to the Republican Party and appears to have had a particularly negative impact on the base. No amount of blame shifting onto Democrats for breaking the story or for holding it until September is likely to compensate for the evidence that House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) did not act promptly to expose it himself. According to the latest Fox News poll, 61 percent of voters believe that Hastert knew about the Foley affair early on and did nothing to stop it.

Churchgoing whites are the core of the Republican base. The fact that they are now breaking even in the approaching midterm elections foretells total disaster for the GOP. For this



dick morris

- commentary

group to leave is, quite literally, the political equivalent of the last dog dying! It is now likely that they will lose both houses of Congress.

With this kind of defection, Republican Sens. Mike DeWine (Ohio), Conrad Burns (Mont.), Rick Santorum (Pa.), Jim Talent (Mo.) and Lincoln Chaffee (R.I.) seem likely to be gone. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist’s (R-Tenn.) seat seems likely to go to Rep. Harold Ford (D-Tenn.). And Sen. George Allen (R-Va.) may also be on his way out. In New Jersey, after trailing Tom Kean Jr. for most of September, Sen. Robert Menendez (D) seems to have moved out to a small lead that will probably grow.

And all of this trend is before the final weeks when downscale Democrats, who have not yet focused on the elections, “come home” and vote their historic party loyalties.

The defection of the Republican base is likely to be felt even more keenly in the House races. The very gerrymandering that GOP leaders had hoped would leave their House margin invulnerable may now backfire as the Republican white churchgoers, whom the district lines had incorporated into swing Republican districts, now defect and vote Democrat or stay home in massive numbers. The gerrymandering designed to keep Democrats out may have the perverse effect of keeping disaffected Republicans in the swing districts, magnifying their effect on the election.

Can the Republican Party reunite with its base? It’s hard to see how they can win it back until the 2008 election. A Hillary Clinton candidacy would obviously help them to regain the

fierce loyalty of their base, but she would also bring in millions of single women voters who would support her candidacy by huge margins. The recent census data showing that half of all households are unmarried indicates how extensive a political force single women can become.

In the long term, of course, Democratic policies on same-sex marriage and abortion are likely to bring the base back to its traditional bearings, but these issues seem to be having little impact on holding the Republican majorities in Congress.

Eileen McGann coauthored this column.

Dick Morris was an adviser to Bill Clinton for 20 years. Email for Dick Morris is dmredding@aol.com.

Eileen McGann, an attorney and consultant works with Dick Morris on campaigns and around the world, specializing in using the Internet to win elections.

where to write

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774; web address — roberts-senate.gov

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, 2443 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715; Fax (202) 225-5124 e-mail address — jerry.moran@mail.house.gov

State Rep. Jim Morrison, State Capitol Building Rm. 124-N, Topeka, KS 66612. (785) 296-7676; e-mail address — jmorrison@ink.org

State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol Building, Rm. 128-S, 300 SW 10th, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785-296-7399; e-mail address — ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us