

from our viewpoint...

Don't give up on damaged trees

Our trees took a beating from the ice last week, but bad as it looks, it could be a whole lot worse.

Most trees are still standing. What you see on the ground is trees' defense mechanism.

Trees shed branches to save the trunk.

Most aren't going to die.

Most are standing, ready to regenerate.

There will be casualties.

Some trees split down the middle like a wishbone. Some are broken, some defeated. Some lost too many branches to live come summer.

Most, though, will sprout new growth and start filling in the holes left by the ice.

Don't panic when you see the branches piled around your trees. Check the trunk and main growth. Wait until spring before you give up on a tree.

Even after a tornado strips off all the branches, most trees will grow back. Healthy trees that have been around for half a century or more won't give up after a single storm.

Be ready to plant trees come spring.

There will be plenty of demand for replacements. Between trees downed by this storm, lost to disease and missing already, the town needs plenty of trees.

Trees set us apart from the pasture country of the plains. They make life in town bearable in the summer, shade us from the heat, cut the knife of the north wind in the winter.

The settlers knew they needed trees when they came out there 125 years ago. Time and again, Kansans have seen the value of their trees.

Things are no different today. We need trees more than ever. When something threatens them, we see the need. — *Steve Haynes*

It's a trick?

The invitation to the governor's second inauguration Jan. 8 arrived with a reply card for \$75-per-ticket events in Overland Park, Wichita and Topeka, plus free celebrations next week in Garden City and Topeka.

Replies had to be returned to the inaugural office in Lawrence by Dec. 20, last Wednesday. The catch: invitations were mailed Dec. 20 from Topeka.

Guess people out here aren't expected at the big galas. Or there's a separate list for big-money supporters. The mail is a little slow here.

The Garden City event, 11 a.m. next Saturday, Jan. 6, at the Fiesta Courtyard, is free, no ticket required. Guess we're welcome there.

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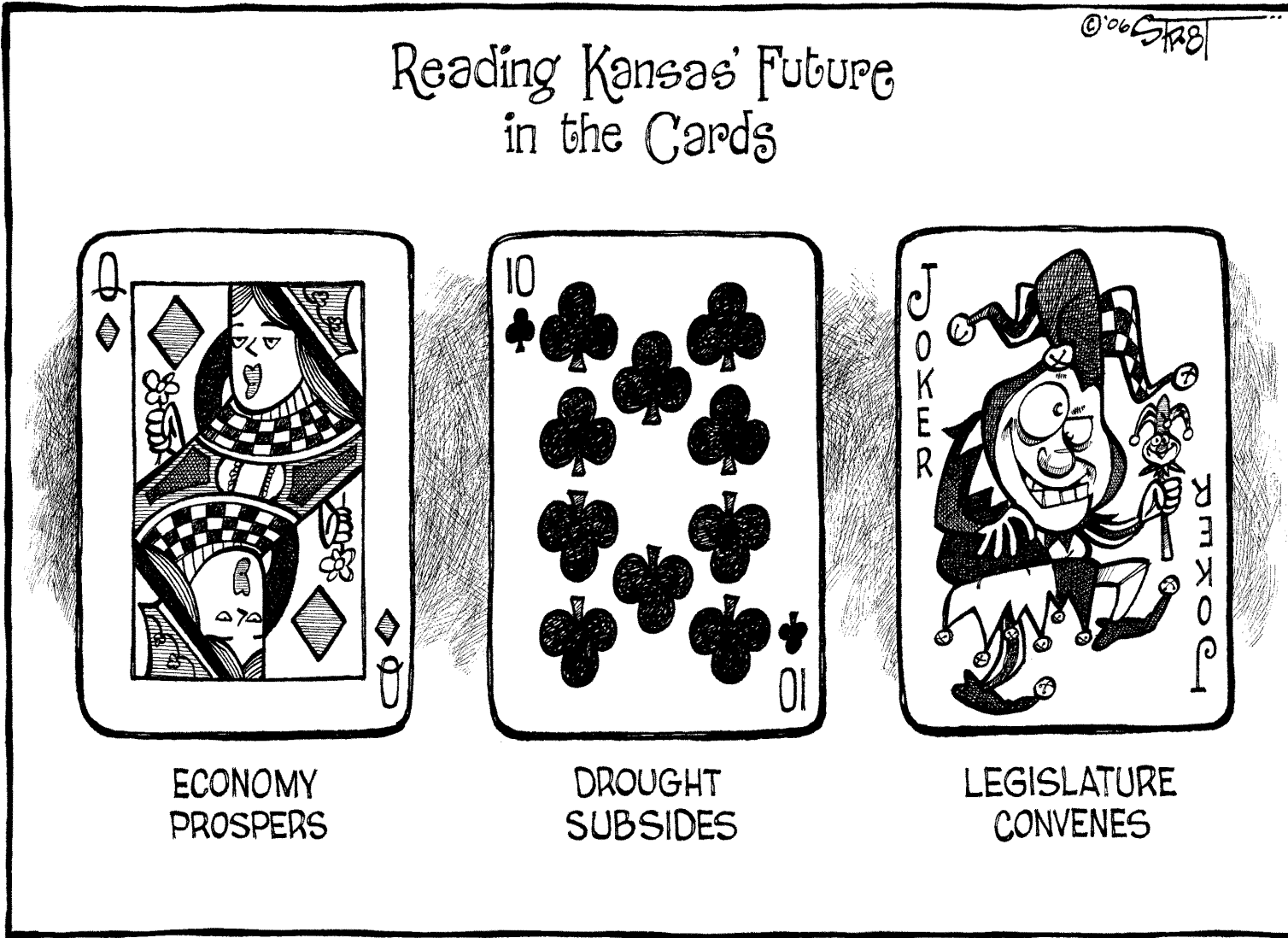
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I got my Christmas cards mailed on time

I got the last of my Christmas cards mailed on Friday.

Hey, just because some of them were going to Washington state doesn't mean they were late. If they're mailed before Dec. 25, I got them out on time.

We send out a lot of cards. We send cards to our relatives; friends from Kansas City days; friends from Creede and Monte Vista, Colo.; friends from Colorado Press, Kansas Press, Missouri Press, Nebraska Press and the National Newspaper Association. This year, we also sent out cards to all the people who joined us to ride the nuclear submarine USS Nebraska.

That's a lot of cards, and it took me three weeks to get them all done, working mornings before work and evenings after supper.

I didn't have any problems with cards. I always buy mine the week after Christmas and store them in a cubby of the cabinet in the living room. I get them cheap and send them out by the score.

But over the years, I've started to develop a case of Christmas Card envy — an insidious



cynthia haynes

- open season

and difficult-to-treat malady.

As our circle of friends expands from going to national meetings, we've started getting "statey" cards.

Friends in Texas send us a card with Santa and his sleigh going across the full moon. The moon is surrounded by stars in the shape of Texas. At the bottom of the card, a longhorn steer and an armadillo with a jackrabbit on his back watch the jolly old man and his team.

From Arizona came a card featuring a cactus decorated with lights and ornaments surrounded by a rattlesnake, quail, an armadillo, a cottontail, a mountain lion and a roadrunner — and, I swear, a wild pig playing guitars. More cactus and yuccas are in the background.

The beast on the East River

These days, nobody but rock stars, actors and grade-school kids still seem to love, trust or have much confidence in the United Nations.

Nathan Tabor, a conservative columnist, political activist and founder of the Web site TheConservativeVoice.com, can tell you more than a few good reasons why. The title of his new book, "The Beast on the East River: The U.N. Threat to America's Sovereignty and Security," gives away his major theme. I talked to him by telephone on Tuesday from his home near Winston-Salem, N.C.:

Q: First we should get the nice stuff out of the way: What's the best thing the United Nations does for the United States and the world?

A: Very little. But of course the plans to eradicate world poverty, world hunger, stopping the spread of AIDS and stopping the genocide that's taking place in Third-World countries are all good objectives....

Q: Are any of these lofty goals being met?

A: In my opinion, no, because you have the oil-for-food scandal. You have reports of molestation and rape in Congo, Somalia and other places. And on the world peacekeeping efforts in Darfur, they are begging and pleading with the United Nations to come in and help and basically getting nowhere.

Q: Everyone is supposed to love the U.N. We're still taught that it's a wonderful global association of governments that's designed to bring the benefits of international law, international security, economic development and social equality to the whole world. Does it really?

A: In 1945, the U.N. was ratified as this world organization to help protect the sovereignty of nations, but at the same time be able to bring people to the table to discuss the issues. But, over the last 30 years, it has turned into an organization that wants full taxing authority, wants full court authority and wants full military authority.

Q: We've heard all these criticisms about the U.N. — about the bureaucracy, the corruption, the antisemitism, about its tenderhearted attitude toward terrorists and the creeps who run hellholes like China or Sudan. But what is its worst sin?

A: I would say the worst sin of the United Nations is its education program. It was set up by Sir John Huxley, a Marxist sympathizer who stated that there were no universal moral absolutes. This is a verbatim quote: "As long as the child breathes the poisoned air of nationalism, education and world-mindedness can produce only rather precarious results. As we have pointed out, it is frequently the family that infects the child with extreme nationalism."



bill steigerwald

- newsmakers

Q: Is the U.N. succeeding in this devious mission?

A: I would say overall in the United States, yes. Pick up your child's history book or social studies book and look: Are they teaching the Constitution? Are they teaching the Bill of Rights? Are they teaching about the Founding Fathers? Or are they teaching that Thomas Jefferson was a deist? That the Constitution is not a living document; that it only served its purpose 200 years ago and we all need to be looking at becoming part of this global community.

Ronald Reagan got us out of UNESCO. George W. Bush put us back into it because he said it had reformed its "millennium development goals." The eighth purpose in the millennium development goals is to advance a global partnership for development. "No Child Left Behind" was a U.N. program adopted by Ted Kennedy and put into place by George W. Bush. That was a liberal Democrat plan and Bush adapted it and pushed it through.

It's teaching this stuff about being part of a global community — which sounds good on paper: "Oh, everybody love everybody and everybody get along and everybody be peaceful." I have no problem with that. What I have a problem with is not teaching the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

Q: If you found yourself sitting next to a member of *The New York Times* editorial page on a plane, how would you prove to that person that the United Nations was, as you say in your book, set up "to deliberately usurp national sovereignty"?

A: One of the most shocking and interesting examples out there is the military. I would say to *The New York Times* editor, "Look, in 1995, then-President Bill Clinton signed Presidential Directives 13 and 25. At the time they were secret documents, but now it is all public history in the Library of Congress. These directives essentially put loopholes all through the Constitution to allow U.S. soldiers to be under the control of U.N. generals. Article II, Section 2, of the United States Constitution says the president, the commander in chief, is to be over all the Army and Navy."

Another example that would be shocking is world heritage sites. The Statue of Liberty, Yellowstone National Park, the Great Smoky Mountains, the Liberty Bell, Mount Vernon are

From our favorite Missouri fan came a card with a tiger in the snow — simple but elegant.

I do think that our Louisiana friends have them all beat, however.

They are Louisiana State fans and their card shows Santa's sleigh being pulled by alligators and led by one with a red nose. Santa has a tiger with a football and crawdad on its tail in the sleigh with him and he's circling a football stadium, where the marching band has spelled out LSU. The fans in the stands have spelled out Merry Christmas and "Geaux Tigers."

My cards have wise men, nativity scenes and Santas on them.

I'm not saying they don't make them, but I've never seen a really fun "Kansasy" card.

Steve and I decided we needed cards with a Santa's sleigh pulled by buffalo on top of a tornado coming over a field of sunflowers and wheat.

Well, maybe I'll stick with the wise men, nativity and Santa. They're not too memorable, but they're all on sale this week.

all under control of the United Nations.

Q: We hear about this all the time on the right-wing talk shows — that the U.N. is taking over the national parks. How would you prove that to someone?

A: I would direct them, hopefully, to buy my book. But if not, go to Google and search "world heritage sites." This was a treaty in 1972. It was UNESCO's Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Culture and National Heritage. This was ratified by the United States. Currently, there are 812 properties in 137 nations. This is what it says on its Web site: "World heritage sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located."

Q: There's nothing that has been implemented? No U.N. blue helmets at Yellowstone?

A: No, not yet. But if you go to Yellowstone, there are plaques that say this is a world heritage site designated by the United Nations. But there is an example of this. In 1995, then-President Bill Clinton got the U.N. to declare the Yellowstone Park a "world heritage site in danger." That gave them the so-called "international obligation" to close down a proposed gold mine about to begin operation on private property three miles away.

Q: How well is the United States doing at resisting or thwarting this U.N. power grab?

A: Right now I would say it is kind of 50-50. Bush puts us back into the global education agenda but he takes us out of the international criminal court, which Bill Clinton put us into.

Bush has been good at fighting the U.N.'s agenda to try to get gun registrations across the United States. He's been good at fighting the Law of the Sea Treaty. John Bolton has been the U.S. ambassador to the U.N. But now with the Democrats taking over control of Congress, it's almost assured that John Bolton is not going to be ambassador come January.

Q: So what should we do with the United Nations beast?

A: I was just on the Glenn Beck radio program this morning, and he had the idea that we should put everyone in a boat and ship them back. I think we should hook a tug boat up to Turtle Bay, to the building, and just pull it.

In all seriousness, I think we need to elect officials who believe in the sovereignty of the United States, who believe in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The second thing is that people just need to become educated on what's taking place in the U.N. and what its true agenda is.

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