

The choice for governor has never been so clear

Kansas voters won't be able to say they don't have a choice for governor this fall. In fact, the choice has seldom been more clear.

The Republican candidate promises to continue cutting the state's budget and the income tax. Under his prompting, the Legislature has cut something like \$800 million to \$900 a year from the state's income-tax bite while holding onto a .45 from a .6 of 1 percent sales tax increase passed in the last administration.

Gov. Sam Brownback and his allies have halted the growth of state government, which had gone on year after year – no matter which party was in power – for the last half century. He says he'll continue to cut spending and taxes while protecting schools and a few other programs.

The Democrat, on the other hand, promises to undo the "damage" allegedly done by the governor and conservative Republicans in the last four years. Rep. Paul Davis of Lawrence, the long-time minority leader in the Kansas House, won't say exactly how he plans to restore the cuts to education and other programs, however.

The unspoken promise is that he'll raise taxes. No one has really pressed Mr. Davis on this issue so far, even as partisan reporters and partisan editors trumpet his campaign appearances. Thoughtful, neutral observers such as Professor Chapman Rackaway at Fort Hays State University, wonder when he'll be put on the spot.

The obvious answer is, unless he's going to continue Mr. Brownback's policies, he's going to have to raise taxes. So far, Dr. Rackaway writes, Rep. Davis has said only that if elected, he would appoint a commission to study the issue.

"In simple terms," the political scientist wrote, "Brownback has lowered taxes. If Brownback's tactic was as disastrous as Davis claims, the answer is to raise them. But this is politics, and it's never that simple."

Even if Mr. Davis does admit he'd raise taxes, however, it seems unlikely that the fall campaign will see much change in the Legislature, where allies of the governor – and many who are, if anything, much more conservative – likely could block any tax increase.

The result might be four more years of Brownback policies without Mr. Brownback, assuming Mr. Davis were to be elected. And while he claims a lead in some polls, a Davis victory seems far from certain at this time.

For one thing, the veteran House member is not exactly a household name. When voters realize that the only logical answer to the big question is that he will back more spending and higher taxes, they may think twice before they toss out the one they know.

Between now and election time, we're all going to hear a lot more about both men. This campaign has aroused national interest. Liberal forces – Democrats, public-employee unions, those who believe in big government – see the Brownback cuts as a real threat to their policies nationwide. They will throw millions into this campaign, as will conservative groups that see great success in the governor's policies.

But that's OK. It just means voters will have a real choice: Smaller government and lower taxes, or bigger government and higher taxes. Which do you like?

– Steve Haynes



Kansas, where we chose to live

Last week our four year old granddaughter asked her mother, "Mom, do we live in Kansas?"

After her mother assured her they did, the little one replied, "I ALWAYS wanted to live in KANSAS." (Sigh) I could almost hear my dad, her great-grandfather, applauding in heaven.

I haven't lived in a lot of states, but enough to know that the reason a person loves a place is all about how a place makes them feel. My nephew Craig when he was little described Kansas like this. He was talking with his older and wiser brother, Kirk, about the death of a bird he had found.

Craig asked, "Where do birds go when they die?"

Kirk said, "Everything goes to heaven after they die."

"Not me, I'm going to Kansas."

My father's response to this was, "I've heard Kansas referred to as many things, but not often as heaven."

My brother, sister and I all lived elsewhere while raising our families.

Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



Imagine my mother's surprise when eight of her 12 grandchildren decided to raise their children in Norton. We always told her it was because she made their annual vacations so fun and made them feel so good, not just about Norton, but about themselves. Part of what made these mostly city dwelling kids feel good about themselves was the independence they could experience, something that was less available in a more congested area.

Sometimes people try to use the physical surroundings as the basis for a great place to live, but although fun, those aren't the things that make you

feel good about who you are. Those things may be great to look at, or fun experiences, but they have little to do with what defines you. You see yourself reflected in friendships you enjoy, not in the experiences you share. How a place makes you feel is determined by your friends and your sense of community.

A friend of mine who moved here a couple of years ago told me recently, "I just realized how many people I know. It seems like wherever I go, I see someone I know." That makes a place feel like home.

Whether it is a friend or a community of friends, this quote by American author Henry David Thoreau says it best, "<http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/h/henrydavid132897.html>Friends... they cherish one another's hopes. They are kind to one another's dreams." mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net

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THE NORTON TELEGRAM

E-mail: nortontelegram@nwkans.com

ISSN 1063-701X
215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, KS 67654

Published each Tuesday and Friday by Haynes Publishing Co., 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, Kan. 67654. Periodicals mail postage paid at Norton, Kan. 67654.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Norton Telegram, 215 S. Kansas, Norton, Kan. 67654
Official newspaper of Norton and Norton County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, and the Nebraska Press Association

Nor'West Newspapers
Dick and Mary Beth Boyd
Publishers, 1970-2002

Kansas Press Association



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Looking at the small stuff in life

It was a great Fourth of July. The grandson was here. The cats left.

Mo was into snaps. He falls asleep before dark. 8:00 is too early to get the full effect of a light show but we tried! Neither he nor the dog liked the loud noises. Who knows what the cats thought?

Overall the cats were content during their visit.

And Mo has a great time most of the time. This was his first visit since he began walking. He quickly figured out Grandma's house! Each new discovery brings smiles and laughter!

His momma reports he found his nose just yesterday! (Was it missing?)

After all the excitement, it's quiet! Time to clean the cat's domain: the basement. They shed all the time. One of my quilting buddies is allergic to cats and we sometimes sew there. It had to be done!

Of course we never recognize our own follies. I do not think I'm obsessive about cleaning. And yet----

You can't leave bits of kitty litter or excess kibble near the areas designated for such activities, right? Have to mop the floors. And vacuum the carpets and furniture.

Must wash all the bedding and the throws the cats had contact with. The excess pillows and comforter which were put away before the cat visit must be returned to their usual places.

The vases that were bound to be tipped over retrieved from a storage room, which needs reorganized and swept. The décor I thought was unbreakable had been knocked, rolled into in accessible places. Wish Mo was

This Too Shall Pass Nancy Hagman



here to crawl into the corners though I'm not certain he understands how to find anything but his nose!

Nonetheless I wish Mo was here!

The exterminator was here recently thus there were a lot of bug carcasses to dispose of. (At least they are dead).

All the wood needs a nice application of oil because a lot of it is old and wood gets dry.

Kate traded the cats for a table she no longer needs. I had to reassemble that. Then rearrange the area where it is to go. I thought I would have to get rid of the other table, but it all seems to fit.

No something must go: either the Gracie quilting table or the reproduction roll top desk or the round oak antique dining table or all of it. Give me a call if you are interested.

Whew, I'm exhausted. Finally I sit down at the computer where I find a charming story: The Pickle Jar.

Take a jar, fill it with golf balls. Is it full? Now add all the pebbles you can. Think is full? Add sand. Full? Wait, pour in some chocolate milk.

Yuck, time to clean---not the lesson we are supposed to get.

The golf balls represent the BIG things: your family, your health.

The pebbles are the necessary things: your job.

The sand is the small stuff. If we fill our jars with small stuff first there is no room for the big stuff!

The chocolate milk? There is always room for chocolate.

What a beautiful philosophy. I let out a great sob.

Not because I was so touched, but because the example they used of something that is sand (the small stuff that fills our lives and crowds out the BIG things) was cleaning house!

Plus I don't like chocolate all that much and I'm lactose intolerant.

I felt as though someone had physically assaulted me. It hurt. My whole day's effort seemed futile. My life: sad and out of kilter.

Why is it important my house be clean? I don't mean antiseptic; I simply can't stand clutter or nasty little corners of dust and cobwebs. Or disorganization. Or keeping things you do not need! Or odd smells.

The basement? I had to make it safe for my cat allergy friend. Is that small? I don't want Mo eating left over bits of kibble or crickets of whatever. Health was a BIG thing, right?

Funny how life altering moments occur when we least expect.

What else have I been wrong about? Many, many things I am sure!

A part of me thinks whoever came up with the "Pickle Jar" was just searching for an excuse to be a slovenly housekeeper.

Another part wishes Mo was here.

I maybe a little confused about big things and small things, but Mo? He is BIG!

Call Dana for your next ad. 785 - 877 - 3361!