

Governor Sebelius right to wash hands of sheriff

It was an unusual move. Gov. Kathleen Sebelius refused to sign appointment papers for a former Smith County sheriff, naming him to a job he had to leave more than a decade ago because he had broken the law.

Good for the governor.

By now, Ellsworth Murphy probably is back in the saddle as Smith County sheriff.

It shouldn't be, but the governor has no real authority to block an appointment by a county party committee to fill a vacancy in local office. The law says either she signs the documents, or the appointment goes into effect without her signature.

It sort of makes you wonder why the governor is involved at all, but that's not the point.

The point is, the governor was right. There's no way Murphy should be a sheriff again.

He was removed from office for violating state law by putting an illegal bug in the police chief's house. Witnesses said at the time he claimed he was investigating her involvement in a supposed drug ring.

That never panned out, but even if it had been true, it's wrong for a law enforcement officer to break the law.

Bugging a person's home without a warrant is a violation of their constitutional rights, and a serious offense in this country.

It's never justified to break the law to catch bad guys, assuming they are bad guys, especially for an officer sworn to uphold the law.

But the offense was just a misdemeanor, so technically, Murphy was not barred from re-appointment. All he'll say is that it's in the past.

The county Republican committee showed poor judgment and poor taste in making the selection. There had to be someone more qualified for the top law enforcement job in the county, where the elected sheriff quit and left town.

To further establish his credentials as an all-around good guy, Mr. Murphy filed a lawsuit against one Smith County resident, charging slander because the man referred to him as a "convicted felon" after the party meeting.

He claimed he was suffering "extreme emotional distress."

Kansans may have something close to that, getting a guy like this as a county sheriff.

The only hope is that the state Law Enforcement Training Commission will deny him a certificate, which would bar him from staying in office.

Whatever, we applaud the governor's good sense in refusing to sign the appointment.

It was the right thing to do.

— Steve Haynes

Novice bread bakers 'superb'

So much for basking in the warm afterglow of my vacation.

I walked into my office last Wednesday and it was, "Good morning. Did you get that story done on (whatever)? Have you seen (whoever) about their ad? Grab the phone, can 'ya?"

The push to get everything done before you leave and the stack of work awaiting you on your return makes you wonder if it was worth leaving in the first place.

Then I remember the cool mountain air, the lazy mornings, and the afternoon naps. Yeah, it was worth it. Oh, boy, was it worth it.

—ob—

I'm no fan of Bill Maher, the host of "Politically Incorrect," but he just wrote a book about his impressions on life and is hawking it on the morning news shows. I thought this was funny.

He said, "It's time to stop kidding yourselves about those baby-changing tables they have in men's restrooms now. They are never going to be used, and should be removed. Otherwise, you're just tempting a short, homeless man to use it as a Murphy bed."

—ob—

When women friends get together, silly things happen.

I volunteered to help a friend bake the rolls for her daughter's wedding in September. She liked the crescent rolls I've baked for church dinners and I assured her they are very easy to make.

We set the date for this project and then she called to ask if it would be OK for a few others to join us. They wanted to learn how to make my rolls, too. And her sister-in-law from Topeka wanted to come.

Ohmigosh. People were going to drive several hundred miles for these rolls. The pressure. But I said,



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts, cplots@nwkansas.com

"Sure. The more, the merrier." I think we ended up with a "class" of seven. How can I best describe the varying levels of competency? At one end of the spectrum, we had an aspiring gourmet cook, so she was "all over" this. At the other end, we had a baker "wannabe" who didn't want to break a nail.

The others fell somewhere in between. I knew we were in trouble when one baker couldn't get the bowl off of the food processor base. She ended up lifting the entire unit to dump the contents into the mixing bowl.

All bread bakers know you need a nice, warm place to let the dough rise. But, in the air conditioned building where we were working, there was no such place.

Yankee ingenuity kicked in and someone came up with the idea of using the back seat of a car. Temperatures there easily reach 120 degrees, perfect for raising bread. Luckily, one of the bakers had an SUV with a large, flat back end. Just enough space for the six bowls of

dough we had ready to "set." Ninety minutes later, we had beautiful "poofy" dough, ready to be punched down, rolled out and shaped.

With flour flying everywhere, my team of novices rolled, cut, shaped and formed 24 dozen crescent rolls. These are safely in the deep freeze waiting for the morning of the wedding, when I will bake them.

We did a quality-control test on a dozen and judged them to be "superb."

But, of course, that's just our opinion.

From the Bible

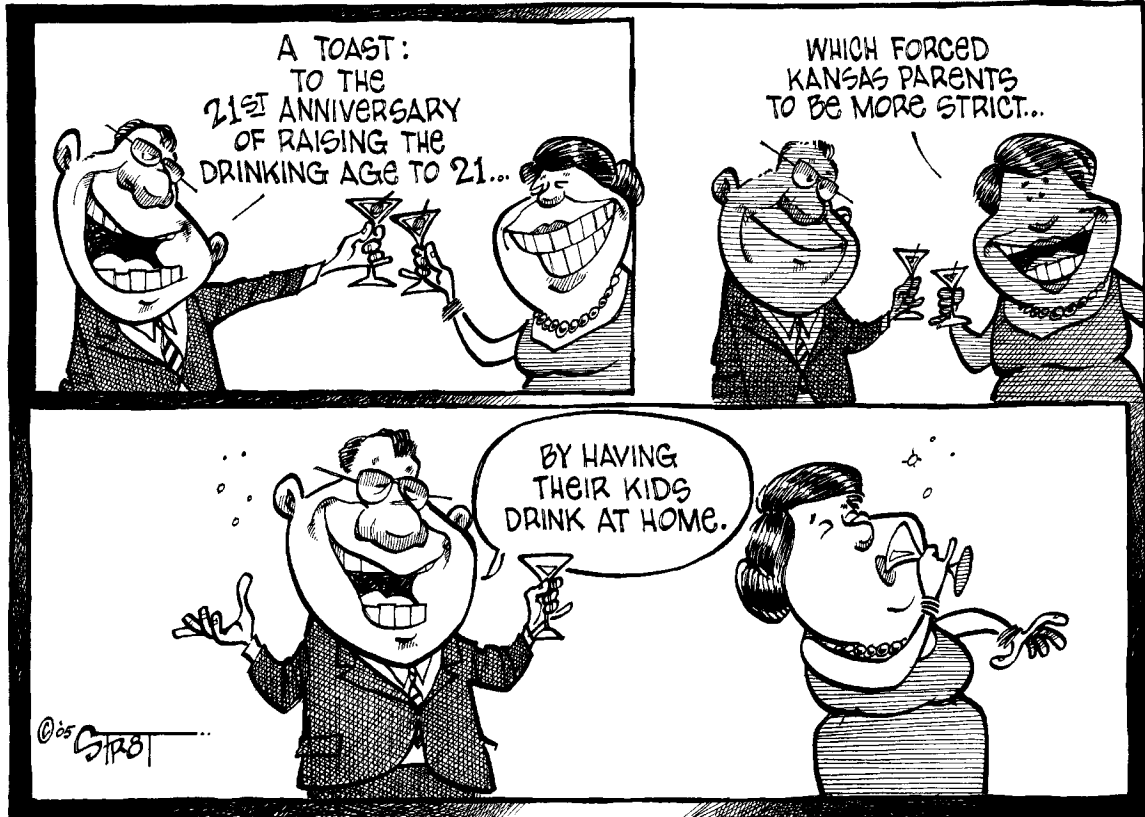
There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God. Ecclesiastes 2: 24

Write

The Oberlin Herald encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of public interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

Mail letters to 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan., 67749, or by E-mail to oberherald@nwkansas.com.

We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise.



Moran passes governor's race

Rep. Jerry Moran has decided to stay in Washington, passing on a firefight with Gov. Kathleen Sebelius.

Smart move. While Mr. Moran is widely regarded as the only Republican with a chance of uniting the party and whipping the popular governor, there's no saying that he would have won.

Maybe. A year and a half, a lot of work, a ton of money and a few truckloads of dirt later, he might have won.

Probably would have won. Though he wouldn't have seen his family much in the meantime.

Most Kansas Republicans fall more or less into one of two warring camps, conservative or "moderate." While individual members of each group are diverse and hard to pigeon hole, the bottom line is they don't much get along.

Jerry Moran rises above all that, going back even to his days in the state Senate. The Hays Republican has the respect, and the ear, of nearly every Republican in the state.

His position as a five-term incumbent in the Big 1st District, now 69 counties strong, gives him great name recognition.

But he's still "just" a congress-



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes, schaynes@nwkansas.com

man. There's the temptation to move up, to the Senate or the governor's chair.

A race for governor, though, is no picnic. You'd have to hit all 105 Kansas counties. You'd have to be on the road all year. You'd have to step in some stuff that most of us would rather avoid.

And did I mention the money? You'd have to raise a boatload of it.

Gov. Sebelius has proven herself a tough and able campaigner. Running against her would be no walk in the park.

Bob Dole says Jerry Moran should be a senator, and he should know.

My guess is that will happen some day. Either Sam Brownback will run for president or Pat Roberts will retire.

Mr. Moran has passed his chance to be governor, and it may not come back his way. Who knows; Ms.

Sebelius might run against him.

It's probably just as well. Two terms as governor, and you can retire into genteel obscurity.

Jerry Moran is not cut out for that.

He's going to be with us for quite a while. When his girls are out of school and he's nothing better to do, we expect he'll make it to the Senate some day.

Until then, he's doing a pretty good job for us where he is.

Intervals of politics, it's too damned bad he's not running.

We'd have had a dandy fight for governor, and maybe a real battle for the 1st District seat.

As it is, Mr. Moran will walk, not run, to re-election. The governor may strain a muscle or two, but nothing like the contest we could have seen.

It was a sensible move on Mr. Moran's part, but oh, what might have been.

Join violence awareness program

To the Editor:

The Northwest Kansas Family Shelter would like to thank the Decatur County commissioners for their donation of \$500 to help victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

The shelter is the only accredited agency providing services to domestic violence and sexual assault victims in the 18 counties of northwest Kansas.

Decatur County is fortunate to have an anti-violence task force, Decatur County Stand Against Violence, which began operation in 1998. The task force is seeking people to join in its mission of "Providing awareness and a positive image to Stand Against Violence in Decatur County."

The shelter values its affiliation with Decatur County Stand Against Violence and salutes the members of the organization who work on a daily basis to combat the crimes of domestic violence and sexual assault. If you would like to join Decatur County Stand Against Violence, contact Pastor Charlotte Strecker-Baseler or Bev Reiter.

Shelter personnel are often asked, "Is there domestic violence in the community?"

Unfortunately domestic violence and sexual assault occur in all parts of northwest Kansas.

The American Medical Association in its 2002 annual report said that domestic violence is the No. 1 cause of injury to women from 14-44. Sixty percent of American homes will experience at least one incident of domestic violence. In 2003, northwest Kansas suffered the deaths of three women due to domestic violence, with another in 2004.

Sometimes we are asked, "Why do victims stay in the relationship if

Letters to the Editor

they are being abused? They must like it or they would leave." Leaving an abusive relationship is not as easy as it sounds. It takes courage and fortitude.

Victims of abuse are degraded each day, in many forms: verbal attacks, humiliation in front of family or friends and physical attacks by someone who claims to love them. Victims stand at a 75 percent risk of being killed if they leave.

Victims do leave abusers, but abusers often refuse to leave the victim, often stalking their victims. The stalking, which can occur on an average up to two years, takes many forms: constant phone calls, showing up at the victim's job and often causing a scene, or following the victim at all hours of the day and night.

The stalker might try to run over the victim or force her to have an accident, put something in the gas tank or fix the vehicle so it will not start or run, put spy ware on the victim's computer, use friends and family to send messages or coerce the victim to meet with the him "one

more time."

Abusers also may threaten to harm children or a member of the victim's family or the victim themselves, manipulating the victim by making them think they are crazy, and using the children as pawns to keep the abuser informed of the victim's whereabouts and actions.

If you are experiencing any of this, you are not alone or crazy. We work with victims to educate them about how to live an abuse-free life. Shelter services include a 24-hour crisis line, 24-hour crisis intervention, a safe shelter, referrals to community assistance, legal and personal advocacy, and personal-confidential-non-judgmental support for all victims and their families.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence or has been a victim of sexual assault, call (800) 794-4624 24 hours a day, seven days per week for support and assistance.

Charlotte A. Linsner, director Northwest Kansas Family Shelter Hays

Why dump paint here?

To the Editor:

I wish the person or persons who put a paint can in the trash at 403 Penn Ave. had the mess the truck

made picking that trash up in front of their own house.

Betty Brown Jennings

Music in park welcome

To the Editor:

Those who missed the barbecue and Oberlin Area Concert Band in the park on Sunday evening missed

a real treat.

It was wonderful to see the band shell used for what it was made for.

Mary Henzel, Oberlin

Honor Roll

Welcome and thanks to these recent subscribers to The Oberlin Herald:

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