

Leader criticizes critics

To the Editor:
Evolution. Creation. Intelligent design. Is there any truth or facts that can come out of what has been bandied about in the media in the last few days?

Let me first comment a little about what my critics claim. Some of my critics claim that the state board has done is nothing short of trying to insert the supernatural into the science classroom. Others claim I am trying to insert creation into the science classroom via the back door. A few claim that I know nothing about science and that my doctorate must have come from a mail order catalog. (In fact, I earned it at Kansas State University, in veterinary medicine.)

The critics also claim that in the scientific community, there is no controversy about evolution. They then proceed to explain that I ought to understand something about this, because surely I can see that over a period of time, over many generations, a pair of dogs will "evolve." There is a high likelihood that the progeny several generations down the line will not look like the original pair of dogs. And then some of the critics will claim that this proves that all living creatures came from some original set of cells.

Obviously, that is one of the reasons we tried to further define evolution. We want to differentiate between the genetic capacity in each species that permits it to change with the environment as being different from changing to some other creature. We want to provide more clarity to this inflamed issue and we ask that the evolutionists reveal what they are doggedly hiding, but they prefer to misinform the media and assassinate the character of qualified scientists who are willing to shed some light.

In our Science Curriculum Standards, we called this micro-evolution and macro-evolution, changes within kinds and changing from one kind to another. Still, evolutionists want nothing to do with trying to clarify terms and meanings. Most of the critics that send me e-mail send four basic comments: They claim that we are sending Kansas back to the Dark Ages, or that we are making a mockery of science, or that we are morons for putting intelligent design into the science standards, or that they also are Christian but believe in evolution.

There are a few critics who want to present an intellectual argument about why intelligent design should not be included in the science curriculum standards. They claim that it is not good science. From the aspect that intelligent design is not a full-fledged, developed discipline, I would agree. But, if one takes the time to read the science curriculum standards, they would see that intelligent design is not included.

So, what are a couple of the main areas that our critics take issue with? It seems that instead of making it a "he said," and then "she said," and

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then "he said," and so on and on, it would make sense to go to the document about which everyone is supposedly commenting about: The Kansas Science Curriculum Standards. The critics claim that we have redefined science to include a back door to Biblical creation or the supernatural.

From Science Curriculum Standards, page ix:

Science is a systematic method of continuing investigation that uses observations, hypothesis testing, measurement, experimentation, logical argument and theory building to lead to more adequate explanations of natural phenomena.

Where does that say the field of science is destroyed and the back door opened to bring Biblical creation into the science classroom?

Another claim that our critics promote through the media is that we are inserting Intelligent Design. Again, if we go to the Science Curriculum Standards, Standard 3 Benchmark 3 Indicators 1-7 (p 75-77), this is the heart of the "evolution" area. It has only seven indicators, that the student:

- 1) Understands that biological evolution, descent with modification, is a scientific explanation for the history of the diversification of organisms from common ancestors.
- 2) Understands that populations of organisms may adapt to environmental challenges and changes as a result of natural selection, genetic drift and various mechanisms of genetic change.
- 3) Understands biological evolution is used to explain the earth's present-day biodiversity: the number, variety and variability of organisms.
- 4) Understands that organisms vary widely within and between populations. Variation allows for natural selection to occur.
- 5) Understands that the primary mechanism of evolutionary change (acting on variation) is natural selection.
- 6) Understands that biological evolution is used as a broad, unifying theoretical framework for biology.
- 7) Explains proposed scientific explanations of the origin of life as well as scientific criticisms of those explanations.

As anyone can see, intelligent design is not included. But many of our critics already know this. This is not about Biblical creation or intelligent design; it is about the last five words of indicator 7: "scientific criticisms of those explanations."

Evolutionists do not want students to know about or in any way to think about scientific criticisms of evolution. Evolutionists are the ones minimizing open scientific inquiry from their explanation of the origin of life. They do not want students to

know that peer-reviewed journals, articles and books have scientific criticisms of evolution.

So instead of participating in the science hearings before the state board subcommittee and presenting testimony about evolution, they stand out in the hall and talk to the media about how the Ph.D. scientists that are presenting testimony about the criticisms "aren't really scientists," "they really don't know anything," and "they obviously are in the minority and any real scientist knows there is not a controversy about evolution."

Instead of discussing the issues of evolution, noisy critics go into attack mode and do a character assassination of anyone that happens to believe that evolution should actually be subject to critical analysis.

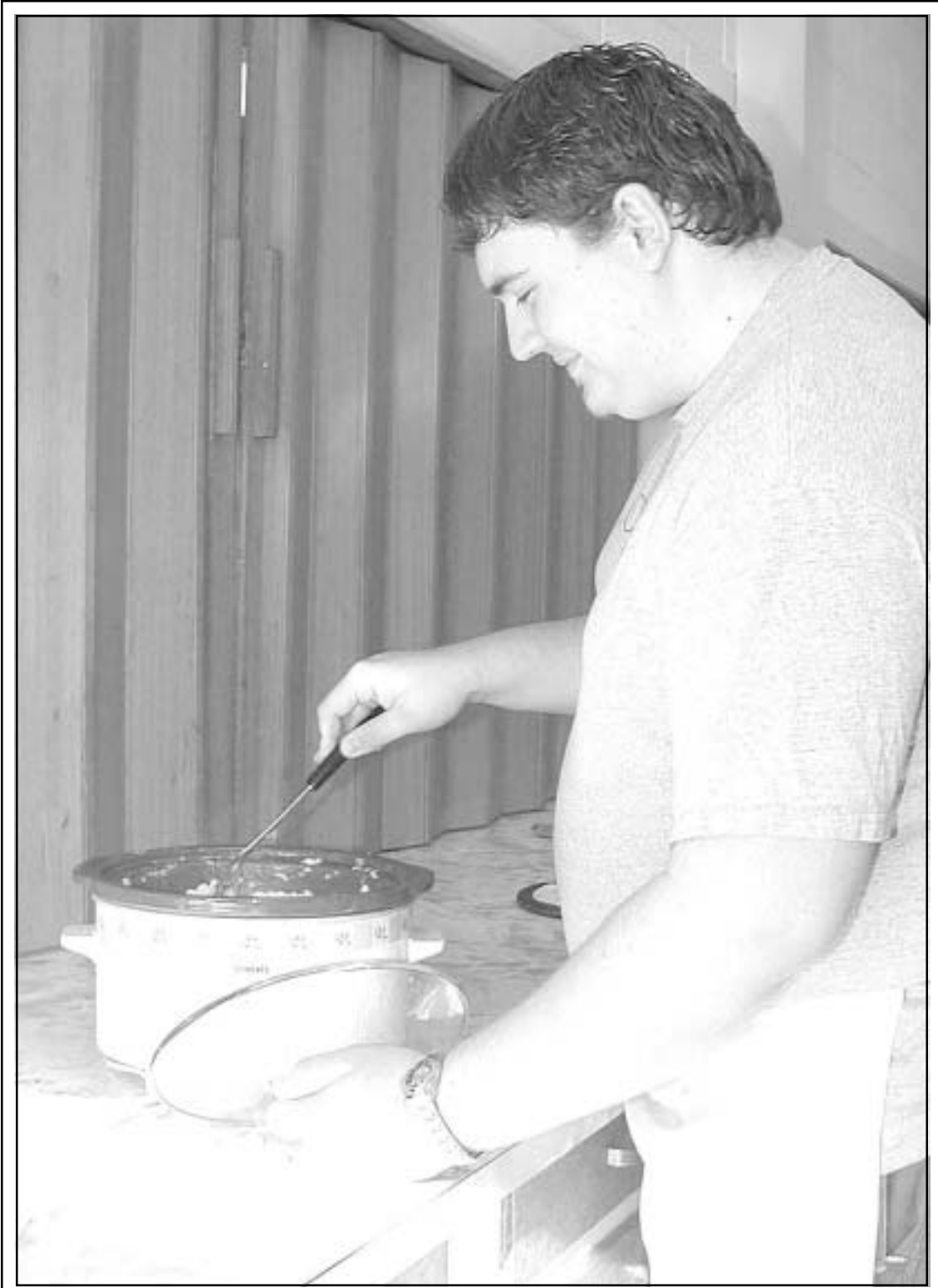
In spite of the fact that the state board approved Science Curriculum Standards that endorse critical analysis of evolution (supported by unrefuted testimony from many credentialed scientists at the science hearings) and did not include intelligent design, and add to that, the fact that scientific polls indicate that a large percentage of parents do not want evolution taught as dogma in the science classroom, what is the response from some of the superintendents around Kansas? They seem to indicate that, "We don't care what the state board does, and we don't care what parents want, we are going to continue teaching evolution just as we have been doing."

But I guess we shouldn't be surprised, because superintendents and local boards of education in some districts continue to promulgate pornography as "literature," even though many parents have petitioned the boards to remove the porn. Obviously that is a different issue than the science standards, but it still points out the lack of commitment on the part of administration in some districts to allow parents to control the education for their own children.

I have repeatedly stated this is not about Biblical creation or intelligent design; this is about what constitutes good science standards for the students of the state of Kansas. I would encourage those who believe we are promoting a back door to creation or intelligent design to actually do your homework:

READ and investigate the Science Curriculum Standards (www.ksde.org) and base your comments on them and not on the misinformation critics have been plastering in print and clogging the airways with, unless of course, your only defense really is baseless character assassination.

Steve Abrams, chairman
Kansas State Board
of Education
Arkansas City



Dinner prepared with love

ON THURSDAY, Quintin Cundiff (above) stirred vegetables during the community Thanksgiving dinner at St. John's Lutheran Church while his mother, Janice Cundiff got a cake out of the refrigerator. The group served 100 people and prepared 15 carry out dinners.

— Herald staff photos by
Cynthia Haynes



Congressman gives himself a raise

To the Editor:
Friday was a tragic, yet also a truth-exposing day for constituents of Congressman Jerry Moran.

On Nov. 18, Rep. Moran helped himself to a pay raise with your tax money — just hours after he helped to pass a cruel measure that will drastically reduce emergency food, basic health care, student loans, money for child-support enforcement, and other vital services to disadvantaged or disabled Kansans.

He and his co-conspirators are squeezing students, the elderly, and the poor to subsidize tax cuts for the richest — and pay-raises for Congress.

Your Republican congressman gave himself an approximate \$3,100 pay raise on Friday, now averaging \$165,200 a year per Congressman. He exercised his "right" to increase his own personal salary based on increases in the costs of living.

Moran seems to think (and he evidently may want you to also believe hook, line, and sinker) that the costs of living in America only increase

if you are among the "haves." If you are a "have-not," or if you have stumbled upon hard times, Moran's actions say, increases in your gasoline, heating, grocery, and health care costs won't hurt you.

Do you believe that? Moran voted to cut funding to services to the poor by \$50 billion. He will surely try to tell you that the Medicaid and Student Loan programs have been growing every year and that he is just being fiscally responsible by stopping the growth. He will without doubt fail to mention that these programs have grown each year because of costs of living and economic downturns.

Remember, Moran doesn't seem to think that cost of living is an issue for the poor.

He seems to think costs of living are only issues for the already rich. With his legendary charming smile set on full volume, Moran may try to earnestly convince you that the \$50 billion cutbacks he voted for in reduced funding to Medicaid, food stamps and student loans will not be detrimental to Kansans, or anybody

you have ever met. Moran may say these cuts won't hurt Kansans. Here are the facts. You decide.

Moran voted to cut student loan programs by \$14.3 billion. Over 83,000 Kansans currently rely on student loan programs for their education.

Moran voted to cut 220,000 people from the food stamp program. Currently, 170,000 Kansans rely on food stamps to put food on their family dinner tables.

Moran voted to eliminate \$11.4 billion in Medicaid funding. Right now, over 300,000 Kansans rely on Medicaid for the most basic and life-preserving medical services. Strangely, Moran also voted to force Medicaid recipients to bring more cash with them when they see a doctor or hospice worker.

By way of his actions, the message is, "If these folks don't have the extra cash — then, they just plain shouldn't be allowed to get these basic life-saving health care services."

Pam Pohly, Hays

November is Diabetes Month

To the Editor:
The theme for Diabetes Month is, "Get the very best care for your diabetes."

All diabetics are urged to keep their blood sugar in control, as well as their blood pressure and cholesterol.

Work with your family physician as well as a doctor who specializes in diabetes. Keeping these conditions in control will help prevent strokes and heart attacks.

In November, the American Diabetes Association is devoting extra

time to help people with diabetes become aware of the serious complications of the disease.

These important steps people need to take to protect themselves include: keeping blood sugar in control, along with blood pressure and cholesterol, and having annual dilated eye exams and routine foot exams.

Diabetes Under Control works with the American Diabetes Association and strives to do what they advise.

Research has proved that taking

care of diabetes can make you feel better and stay healthier. It has also shown that managing your diabetes, blood pressure and cholesterol reduces the risk for long-term problems such as heart attacks, strokes and kidney, eye and nerve disease.

Diabetes is a killer if not treated properly. Two out of three people will die from heart disease or stroke.

The more you learn, the better you can take control of your diabetes.

Elsie Wolters
Oberlin

Group picks telethon recipients

Seventeen community groups will receive money from the Seeds of Hope Telethon on Saturday, Feb. 11.

At a committee meeting Thursday, Nov. 17, members chose the groups from 24 letters. On the list are the Decatur County Fair Foundation, Kansans for Life, the Norcat Museum, Teens for Christ, Oberlin Area Concert Band, Cardinal Kids Connection, Decatur County Stand Against Violence,

Decatur County Relay for Life, Oberlin Lions Club, Creative Movement Gymnastics, Jennings Czech Museum, Oberlin Pool Project, Decatur County Museum, Special Olympics, Decatur County Ministerial Association, Tripple Creek Riders and the Salvation Army.

Each of the organizations will receive a letter telling what they will be responsible to bring for the telethon's soup supper at 5 p.m. on

Monday, Dec. 19.

Committee members are looking for volunteers to help the day of the telethon at The Gateway. If you want to volunteer, call one of the committee members, Jack Benton, Bill Duncan, Brenda Ulery, Kristi Smith, Regina Stanley, Dennis Brown or Kimberly Davis.

Anyone interested in performing at the telethon should talk with Miss Smith or Mrs. Davis at 475-2206 or 475-3510.

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