

## Voters may decide who will run the Legislature

Just who will run the Kansas Legislature could be decided by voters this fall.

It's an important issue, as always, particularly because this session, for the first time in recent memory, the forces pushing for bigger government and more spending seemed clearly to be in charge.

It wasn't the Legislature that changed; the message coming back from the home front was that people agreed no further cuts were tolerable in social programs, public schools, roads or higher education.

And the Legislature listened. Even our own Sen. Ralph Ostmeier said as much. He voted for a 1-cent tax increase to help save schools and other programs from more cuts because he heard the message from back home. And he is about as conservative, anti-spending, anti-tax as anyone in the chamber.

And just what was the message? Across the area, but particularly in St. Francis and Cheyenne County, school superintendents and board members, teachers, hospital administrators and nurses, anyone whose check depends directly — as with educators — or indirectly — as with hospital employees — on state and federal money was calling for an end to the cuts.

It's natural that if you spent your life trying to provide a good education for children, or helping the sick, you hate to see schools cut and cut and cut again. No one wants to see their life's work whittled away, and schools have been cut a bunch.

Rural hospitals depend, even more than those in the cities, on state and federal dollars. So do nursing homes and clinics.

And people were scared. Scared that their jobs might be next. That their schools or hospitals might be crippled by lower income. That their lives would be altered, maybe forever.

Teachers' groups, school and hospital administrators, those who benefit from public

spending, and many supporters, helped organize the push. As many as 300 people turned out for a meeting with legislators in Bird City, an unheard of number.

And that got people's attention, especially the legislators and other public officials. They felt the ground begin to move. It was as if Kansas suddenly had awakened and realized that author Thomas Frank in his book "What's the Matter With Kansas," had been right, that people out here should be voting their economic interests rather than their conservative beliefs.

If that's true, it could mean a "sea change" in Kansas politics, which has for years been dominated by the anti-spending, anti-tax crowd. Before, the state always had enough money to pay for essentials like schools. When, after huge spending increases, the bottom fell out of state tax revenues because of the deep recession, ideas began to change.

It's not just that schools and hospitals and other programs were hurt by state budget cuts. It's that the reason for the "shortfall," as they call it in Topeka, was that Kansans in general were hurting: out of a job, making less than two years ago, worried about making ends meet.

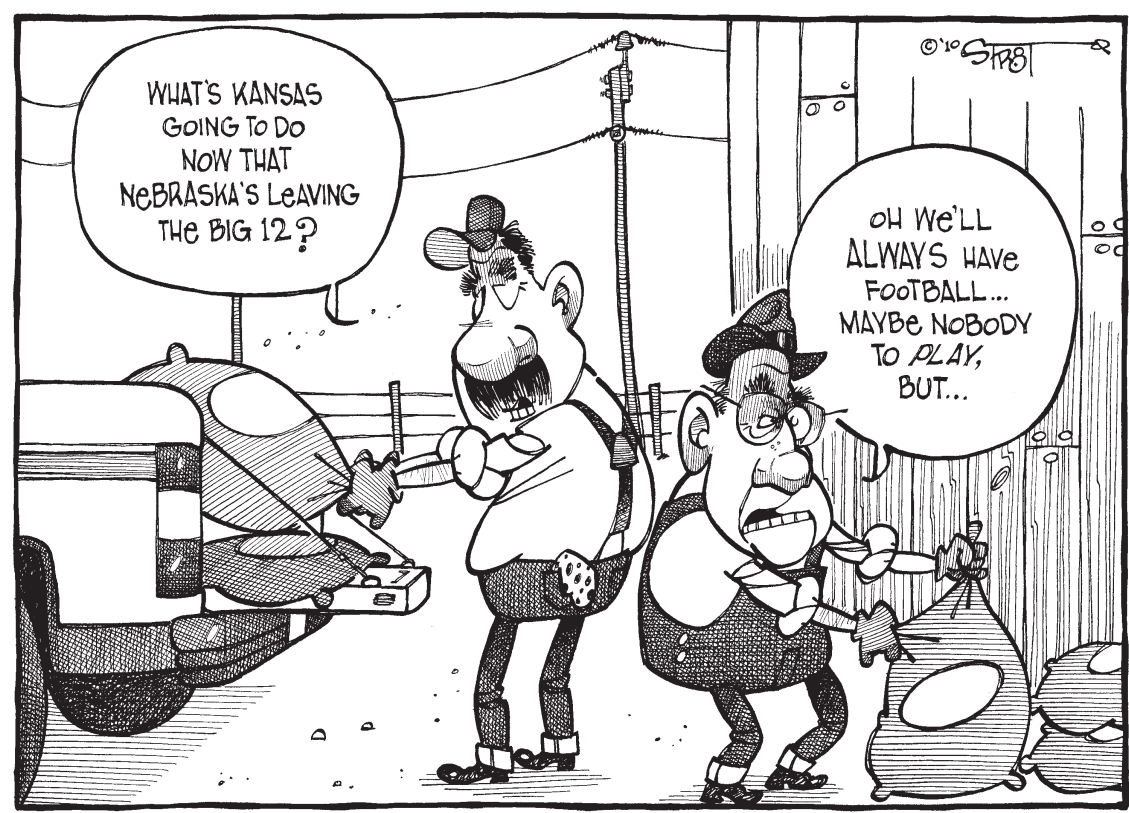
But despite the tough times, a lot of people realized that jobs depended on those state program, their jobs and others, and they made a cry loud enough to be heard.

It's anyone's guess who will be in charge next year. Voters might throw the rascals out and elect a whole new bunch. Or they might not.

The anti-tax crowd might get a boost when the new tax tables go into effect this summer, or the tax-and-spend crowd might wind up running the show.

One thing for sure, things will be different. And as always in recent year, it'll be an interesting season.

— Steve Haynes



## Bugs have all they can eat

We got back from a week in Michigan to find the garden flourishing and the bugs having a wonderful feast.

My spinach was bolting, but that's OK. It was a good year for the spinach. We started enjoying it in early March and had enough salads to turn us green between then and mid-June.

The lettuce needs to be given away, since it has gone from a tender, baby mix to something resembling small multicolored bushes. Again we've enjoyed many a salad off this crop and have given away enough to make vitamin pills obsolete in our little corner of Kansas.

The radishes have come and gone without a great deal of success. I planted icicles this year, and Steve thought they were horseradish.

Not even, dear. He's not fond of radishes, I couldn't eat them fast enough and most of my friends prefer the round red ones, so some of that crop went into the compost heap. Oh well; they were fun to grow.

The first batch of corn had a couple of holes in the rows, so I planted a different variety for the second round. The second round has a huge area that didn't come up. I'm blaming the cats for laying on that spot, but Steve says that's silly. The cats have been laying on the newly planted corn for years, he said, and it's always come up before.

I tossed the rest of those two packages and will try something



### Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes  
c.haynes@nwkansas.com

different next year.

The peas are blooming and producing like crazy, but the heat last week has several of those vines starting to die. They will be replaced by my green beans, which love the heat and are growing like weeds, but haven't bloomed or presented me with any beans yet. They will keep me busy in a week or so, though.

Over by the dog's pen, the squash — yellow and zucchini — had to be thinned. I got them down to 19 plants.

Yes, I know, I know. Nineteen squash plants is way too many, and I'm sure I'll have to thin them again. Not only don't I have enough paper bags to put that much squash in to leave on the neighbors' doorsteps, I don't have that much room in the garden for 19 full-grown, taking-over-everything, squash plants.

The tomatoes have little green fruit. The cucumbers are setting on and the green peppers are flowering. So all is well with the really important garden plants.

But then there's the cabbage and broccoli.

The leaves looked like swiss

cheese. They had been eaten to pieces.

A careful examination produced no fewer than 24 little green worms, all of which got a bath in soapy water and a trip down my garbage disposal. I then carefully sprayed each leave front and back with an eco-friendly solution that said it would kill a dozen different bugs.

However, since then, I've found at least one or two more little green worms on my plants every day as I inspect them. I hate to bring out the big guns, but I'm getting tired of checking the backs of every broccoli and cabbage leaf in the garden.

Still, it's summer. Most days are beautiful, and we've had plenty of rain for my crops so I'm a happy, if sort of busy, gardener.

Now, if you think I can jabber on and on about my garden, don't ask Steve about his.

He's got wheat and milo in the back 40 — 40 square inches next to the fence, that is.

Hey, it's a square yard. 1,290 square inches, to be exact.

## Pre-teen herd causes accident

Our four calves, April, May, Junior and Julio, are rambunctious preteens. They are growing like weeds and don't know their own strength.

The other day, I had given them their morning bottles and was moving them to their daytime enclosure, the place we call the North Compound. I was leading them with a bucket of sweet feed and was more intent on staying ahead of the "thundering herd" than I was in watching where I was walking.

Boom! I walked right into a sheet of siding Jim had extended over the back of a trailer to give the feed pan some protection in case it rained. All I could say was, "Owee, owee, owee."

It really hurt and I was sure I had been scared for life. Fortunately, it only left a little scratch and a bump, both of which have almost totally disappeared.

-ob-

I'll soon be finding out who my real friends are. Friday will mark baking day for my third batch of Amish Friendship Bread. I've already given away six "starters" and am looking for the next three beneficiaries.

Jenn, a young friend from Colo-



### Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts  
quality-pro@webtv.net

rado, gave me my starter and the accompanying instructions to "mush" the bag of liquid starter every day.

On the sixth day, you "feed" the starter flour, sugar and milk. On the 10th day, you add more flour sugar and milk, measure out four, one-cup batches of starter: three to give away and one to keep for yourself and start the process all over again.

Other ingredients like eggs, baking powder, soda, cinnamon, salt and more sugar and flour are added to the remaining starter and you have enough batter to bake two nice loaves.

The bread itself is very moist and tasty, with a sugar-and-cinnamon crustiness. Actually, it's more like a coffee cake than bread. It's very easy to make, and if you want to be my friend, I'll put you on the list.

-ob-

What do you say to a 47-year-

old woman who tells you she is pregnant?

Congratulations!

I have a friend who is that woman. The baby girl is due in less than a month and the mother has only known for two months. Finances are an issue for my friend, so I am "in the market" for a baby bed, baby clothes and one of those wind-up swings.

My friend has survived cancer, operations and personal tragedies. She will survive this, too.

### From the Bible

The father of a righteous man has great joy; he who has a wise son delights in him.  
Proverbs 23:24 (NIV)

## Easterners get to chase storms

So, how do you entertain visitors from the East Coast on a Sunday evening?

Well, it's summer, so do summer things.

First, we had snacks and drinks on the deck and chatted for a while. They'd been on the road all the way from Columbia, Mo., taking time for lunch along the way. It took a while to get them to sit down, but the weather cooperated and the storms to the south cooled things down a little.

And in the nearly 18 years we've lived here, the trees in our yard and the neighbors' have grown. The deck is a shady paradise in the evening.

Then, we grilled thick, juicy burgers. I told Cynthia we'd have to cheat on our diets a little to make them thick, but it was company. A surprise to me, Mark, who's a big guy, if trim, ate two while college-age young Mark stopped with one.

I'm not sure I could eat two big burgers anymore. And I'm not trim.

After supper, we had to walk up the street and see the vultures roosting on the water tower. Not every town has a unique wildlife show like that. Apparently, it's not too common in New Jersey, either.

Then we got to watching the thunderstorms to the south. A big one was growing just east of Selden, beautifully lighted by the setting sun. The business end, where torna-



### Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes  
s.haynes@nwkansas.com

does sometimes form, was clearly visible, so I offered to run them down to the junction for a closer view.

The storm started to peter out about the time we got down there, but it was still spectacular to watch. And hey, easterners don't get much storm chasing time — except on the cable shows on television.

We wound up touring Dresden, where they asked a lot of questions about grain elevators, some of which I could even answer. On a Sunday night, there was no one in the office to ask.

We drove home up the "old" gravel highway to Oberlin along the Bremer Road, stopping several times to avoid the deer. We talked about the crops in the fields and some of the history of that area.

And got home in time to give a tour of our house. They were more than ready for bed, but the storm chasing seemed to keep them awake.

Mark and Liz and young Mark planned 11 hours on the road Monday to Dubois, Wyo., where they

planned to camp for a couple of days until they could get into their condo in Jackson Hole.

They left at midmorning, their huge canoe and two bikes weighing down their little van. (Our cats thought this was a pretty cool place to explore, and I was a little worried one of them might just join the road trip.)

Young Mark put on his headphones and crawled into his nest in the back seat. I think he likes books better than scenery.

They declared it to be the best visit ever, but I'm inclined to think no one else ever took them storm chasing. Or to see vultures on the water tower.

They planned to stop and visit other newspaper friends in Imperial, Neb., on the way to Wyoming. I'm sure Imperial doesn't have vultures on its water tower, though it's a nice little town.

But you never know.

Anyway, it's always nice to show off the local landmarks and such, and we do have a lot of grain elevators and deer out here.

# THE OBERLIN HERALD

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170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749-2243

Phone: (785) 475-2206

Fax (785) 475-2800

E-mail: oberlin.herald@nwkansas.com

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### Nor'West Newspapers

#### STAFF

Steve Haynes ..... editor  
Kimberly Davis ..... managing editor  
Mary Lou Olson ..... society editor  
Leslie Nolette ..... proofreader/copy editor  
Carolyn Kelley-Plotts ..... columnist  
Joan Betts ..... historian  
Cynthia Haynes ..... business manager  
Pat Cozad ..... want ads/circulation  
Tim Davis ..... advertising representative  
Linda Bunney ..... advertising makeup



### Photo Policy

The Oberlin Herald wants to emphasize photos of people doing things in the community. If you know of an event or news happening that we should attend, please call 475-2206.

Please be sure to allow a couple of days' notice so we can arrange to be there.

Space in the paper is limited and so is the time of our staff, so we may not be able to get to every event, but we will try.

Because space is so limited, we cannot run team or group photos, any pictures of people lined up or of

people passing checks, certificates and the like. (We will always try to make room for a story about any of these events, however.)

We do run wedding and engagement pictures and "mug" shots with stories and obituaries, when they are provided to us. Please remember that we need a clear, sharp picture. Dark or fuzzy prints will not work.

We cannot return photos unless you submit a self-addressed, stamped envelope with clear instructions for return. Other photos submitted may be picked up at our

office within two weeks. After that, they will be disposed of.

Laser proofs of photos which have run in The Herald are available, first come, first served.

