

Stop for those red signs

You see it all the time, but it's much worse in June and October when harvest is in full swing.

A vehicle runs up to the highway, slows a little while the driver glances each way, then flies right past the sign onto the pavement.

There's all kinds of ways to rationalize this dangerous behavior: there's no traffic on the highway, the driver looked both ways, it takes precious time to come to a full stop, a big, heavy semi of grain is hard to stop and harder to get going at a stop sign.

All that ignores the fact that it's illegal to run a stop sign and dangerous, too. Maybe if you're driving a semi, and you're really careful, you're pretty sure nothing will happen. Until the day you miss a motorcycle approaching from the left, a car full of kids on the right.

Running stop signs is wrong year around, but it's especially dangerous during harvest,

where you're pulling a massive vehicle in front of any oncoming traffic. Other drivers depend on you to stop and take the safe course, and that's what every driver should be doing.

Sure, you've gotten away with it so far. What about the day you miss something? Will the minute or two you saved be that valuable then?

That load of corn isn't going to spoil before you get to the elevator. The seconds gained aren't worth the risk.

And just in case not everyone is listening, we hope the Highway Patrol and area sheriff's officers are watching for this violation. Even if they give the driver only a warning, the time lost should be a lesson.

Safety is a lot more important than shaving a few minutes off every trip to the storage bin. We hope it doesn't take a tragedy to convince people of that. — *Steve Haynes*

Yep, he's still a conservative

The Democrats are attacking Gov. Sam Brownback like he was the Creature From the Black Lagoon lately, acting like either they didn't know he was a conservative all these years, or there's something wrong with being against big government.

We'd have to say, though, that the stuff they are throwing seems to bounce off with about as much effect as bullets against the creature.

The party has been slinging a bunch of "Occupy Wall Street" rhetoric at the governor, casting him as everything from a corporate tool to — gasp — an opponent of abortion on demand.

What's wrong with that, we're not sure, but far as we know, Sam Brownback, a convert to Catholicism and a heartfelt social conservative, has always been against abortion and against growth in government.

In fact, you could argue, that's why people elected him. After two terms in the U.S. Senate, no one could say we didn't know where he stood. He's never made any secret of his conservative leanings.

But, backed by a conservative Legislature, Gov. Brownback has been more successful than any conservative in recent memory, at least in Kansas, at getting his viewpoint across. He's signed bills restricting abortion, improving the tax climate for business and slashing the budget. He sees that as the way to grow jobs, and wants to look at eliminating the state's corporate and personal income taxes.

Crazy, you say? Or maybe just good economic development policy: people move to states, such as Nevada, Texas and Wyoming, without an income tax. So do employers looking to please their people.

All of this is not to say everyone should agree with the governor. Many members of his own party, especially in the more liberal Senate, split with him over ending state subsidies for local arts programs. He won that fight with a veto.

Disagree with him if you like — and most of us will at one time or another — but the governor's conservative stance is no surprise. A lot of people like it. — *Steve Haynes*

Animals get smashed on van

My van is a wildlife magnet. No, that doesn't mean it attracts "party animals." It means every deer, pheasant, rabbit and raccoon in the county will, eventually, end up in my path.

Last November, we hit a deer that someone else had already hit, and it totaled out our red van.

We traded for a white van, and a few months later, in broad daylight, a doe ran out of the ditch into the driver's side. I never saw her coming until her head was mashed into my window. She went rolling, but regained her feet and darted into a field.

About two weeks later, another doe jumped out of the ditch and ran into the rear side of the van. Again, the deer wasn't hurt and only the slightest dent was left as evidence.

Most recently a big, fat raccoon tried to dart across the road in front of me.

It felt like we had hit a buffalo and took out my front bumper. Sadly, the raccoon did not walk away from our third encounter of the close kind.

It's to the point where I'm tempt-



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
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ed to keep the body repairman on retainer. We are definitely on a first-name basis.

-ob-

A town in a neighboring county has an annual fall event where, if you have something you don't want, you can put it on the curb and city crews will pick it up and haul it to the landfill. Some people call it a city-wide clean-up. I call it "thrill shopping."

My technique is to cruise the streets slowly, scanning front yards and driveways for the tell-tale signs of anything usable.

Yesterday I gleaned two decent kitchen chairs in one yard, a small kitchen table in another and a lidless

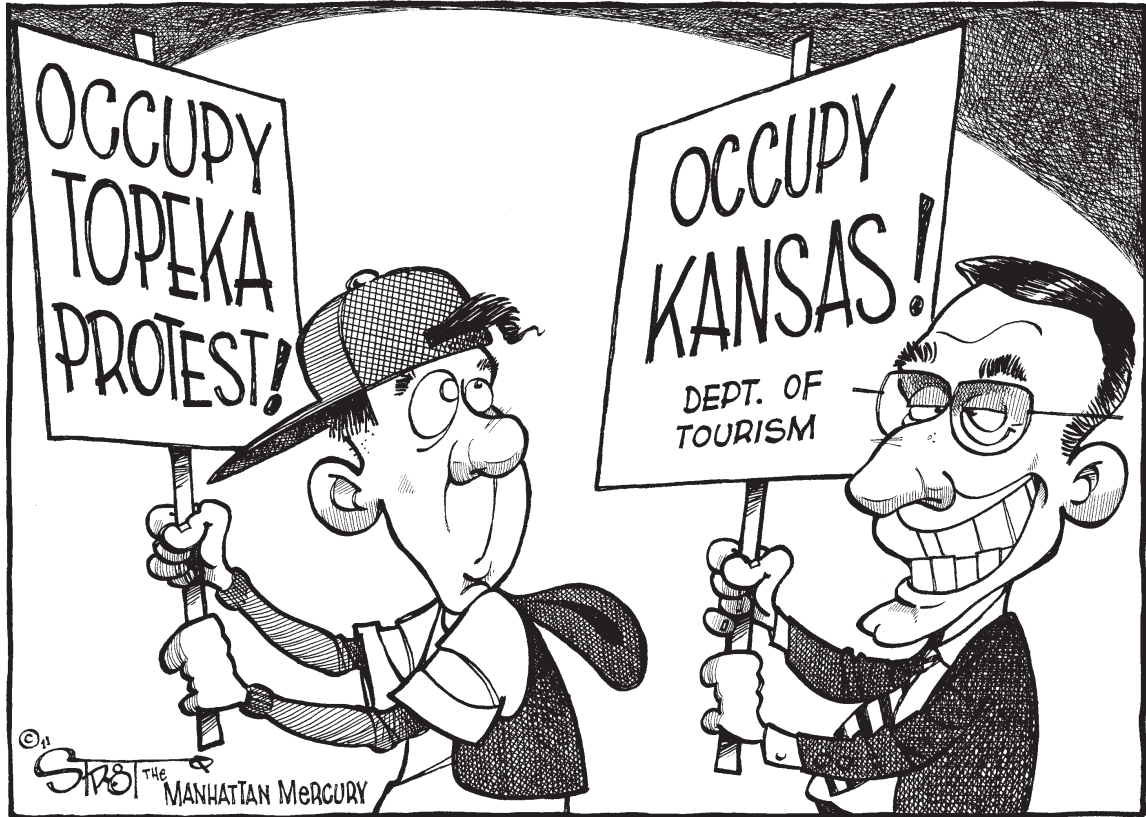
trash can in yet another. At this rate, it won't take me long to furnish the last apartment we have to rent.

-ob-

A senseless tragedy has occurred in our community. One bad decision lead to another, and two families are forever changed. Everyone is related to or knows one or both families.

During prayer and praise time at the little country church where Jim preaches, we prayed for everyone involved.

One woman in the congregation said, "I don't know which mother to pray for." The heartache of both must be tremendous.



Purse yields lots of treasures

Every woman's purse is a gold mine of interesting stuff.

I'm not the type of person who changes her purse with each outfit. In fact, I hate having to change bags. It's a pain, and I can never find anything in the new bag when I do.

A new bag is either too small for all my stuff or so large that I lose everything in the bottom.

However, now and then the old bag has to be cleaned out. Don't ask me how all the crumbs and bits get in the bottom. I certainly don't carry crackers around in it. Well, not for the last 25 years or so since my children started school.

Last week, my purse just got too much for me. I had to clean it out. Dump everything on the table, sort the contents, turn the bag inside out and shake it well.

Then it was time to inventory the contents, return the "good" stuff and toss out anything that I couldn't identify, was outdated or a duplicate.

First back in goes my wallet. I certainly need that, although it probably needs a good cleaning all on its own. Maybe another day. There aren't that many crumbs in it, anyway.

Checkbook, calendar, reading glasses, sunglasses, small notebook (how come I can never find that when I need to write someone's name down for a future outline?),



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
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spare card holder (and I still can't find my insurance card when I need it), four pens, sunscreen (I didn't know that was in there), gum and a small hairbrush all need to go back in.

The two only slightly used tissues and a lone calcium pill get tossed.

Now to clean the little pockets on the sides.

Let's see what we have — business cards (Dang, I was wondering where those were last time I was at a convention and didn't have a card) and three clean plastic bags, useful for leftovers or when walking the dog, although I usually keep recycled bags in my pocket for the dog.

Then there's my packet of condiments and sweetener.

I love coffee, but I can't stand it straight. I have to have cream and sweetener. And, it's always amazing to me that while McDonald's can stock every form of sweetener known to man, La Restauranté Ex-

pensiva keeps nothing but Sweet and Low, or saccharin, which I detest.

My condiment packet contains salt, pepper, mustard and ketchup, as we frequently stop at Sonic on trips for a quick burger and I hate to have to ask the carhop to go get me something I can easily carry, especially during a busy period.

My son-in-law was amazed and amused that I carry condiments in my purse, but he eagerly grabbed a couple of mustards for his hot dog last summer when we were all at a baseball game in Augusta, Ga.

Last in my cleaning project are the outer pockets. These seem pretty clean. The only things in there are lipstick, lip balm and hand sanitizer. All that goes back in and I'm in business for another year.

I wish my closet was that easy to clean — but then I haven't cleaned it out in more 10 years, so it's had more time to collect "crumbs."

Summer will soon be gone

On an Indian Summer afternoon, it's hard to think about work or columns or news.

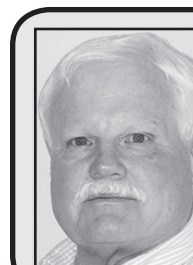
It's hard to think about anything except, perhaps, nestling into the hammock to read a good book. Heck, even a mediocre book would be OK on a day like this.

We've been blessed so far with a warm and comforting fall, but winter cannot be far away. In fact, by the time you read this, it could be snowing outside. That's the forecast, anyway.

And while the sun should return for the weekend, the days of balmy, summer-like weather may well be over. In just a few days (on Sunday, Nov. 6), Daylight Saving Time will end and sunset will start coming before 6 p.m.

Before you know it, winter will be here to stay, with its cold north wind and long, dark nights. Many days will be sunny, but we'll hardly notice as the shadows grow long by 3 p.m. and Christmas lights start to go up.

Many people, in fact, are getting a head start on the holiday lighting with orange Halloween lights and big decorations out in the yard.



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
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That's OK, I guess, but it's hard for me to get worked up to decorate for a non holiday.

Halloween, after all, is just the evening before All Saints Day. Candy makers are the only ones with a real reason to celebrate. Little kids have a great time and adults have fun watching them, of course. Our granddaughter is going as a little monster, which her mother says is typecasting, but cute.

At least we got to spend Sunday working in the yard — after the nap, anyway — and parts of Saturday outside, enjoying the weather. The last few weeks have amounted to a wonderful October.

Gardeners have had time to work in the yard, farmers to pick their abundant corn. We've had lots of

sunshine and plenty of excuses to be out in it.

Sunshine may return for the weekend, but it won't be quite the same, not until spring. Warm days will be in the 50s and 60s from here on out, and cool nights will get a lot cooler. If you haven't picked all the tomatoes and squash and peppers, my advice is to get out there today and beat the coming freeze.

Our growing season has about reached the end of its string.

The dark months are coming. Christmas lights and holiday bustle will help us get through the rest of the year, but three months of winter can be a long time.

Here's hoping you got out and enjoyed the warm sun while it was with us.

Rural Health Day set for Nov. 17

To the Editor:

We're approaching a first-time observance for the State of Kansas, and for me, this celebration is something that hits close to home.

National Rural Health Day is Thursday, Nov. 17, and I'm part of the nearly one in three Kansans who have invested time and energy into the small towns and farming communities we know and love.

I think most will agree that these rural areas are the essence of Kansas.

In these rural towns, though, you will find unique health-care challenges with access and capacity.

Before my appointment this year as the secretary of health and environment and state health officer, I practiced family medicine in western Kansas for more than 20 years with Greeley County Health Services. I've seen a great deal of innovation from health-care providers in rural Kansas, and those efforts haven't slowed.

Rural towns have promising opportunities on the horizon to reshape the way health care is delivered.

Letter to the Editor

We're focused on expanding healthy behaviors; knitting together an improved, integrated health system; bringing quality doctors through the Smoky Hill Family Medicine Residency Program; and planning better care management for the chronically ill.

We have a shortage of providers in many areas of Kansas and an aging population suffering from chronic conditions and more uninsured and underinsured citizens. Rural hospitals and providers struggle as financial pressures make it challenging to serve their residents.

We have hope, however, because rural health-care systems are innovative, and the state of health care in Kansas is changing for the better.

On Nov. 17, Kansas will join other states in celebrating National Rural Health Day and the Power of Rural. While we recognize the unique challenges facing Kansas' 89 rural counties, we reflect on the

prevailing innovation, resilience and commitment to excellence demonstrated year after year.

For more about rural health care in Kansas and National Rural Health Day, visit our website at www.kdheks.gov/olrh/ruralhealthday.

Dr. Robert Moser, secretary and state health officer
Kansas Department of Health and Environment

From the Bible

He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed. Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child.

— Exodus 22:20-22

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