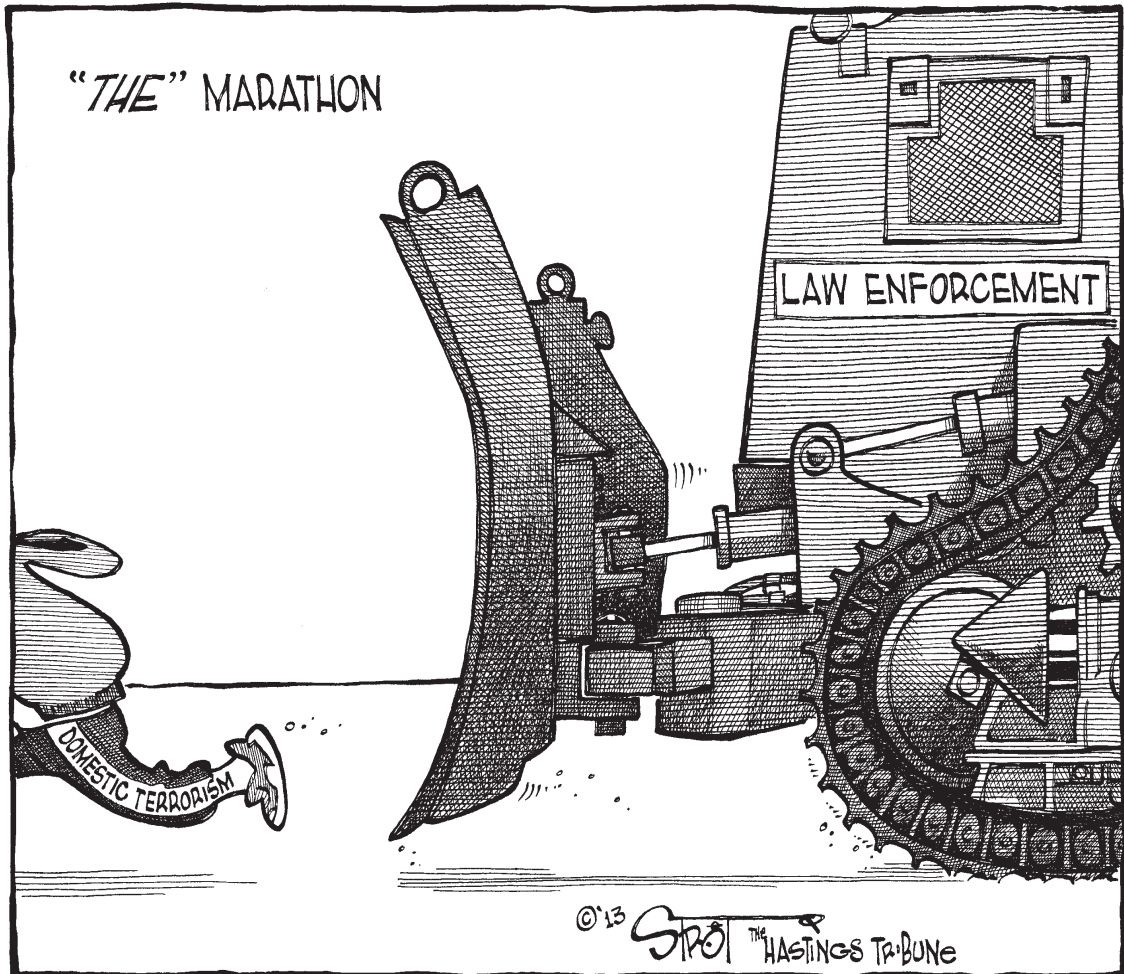


"THE" MARATHON



Sports

Legislator likes comments

I would like to thank everyone who contacted me during the session this year. The input from 120th District constituents is important to me.

On many issues, I hear both sides, but it helps me get a feel for how northwest Kansas wants to be represented. I have answered each e-mail received from our district, if it's not a form letter. I try to answer the day I receive the contact.

Receiving hundreds of form e-mails from a lobbying group really does no good, as every legislator I know simply deletes them. The other e-mail concern is when a response is forwarded to a lobbying group.

A few updates on some of the major areas that I received contacts:

Judiciary – the governor signed into law a bill granting Kansas governors greater influence over selection of judges to serve on the Kansas Court of Appeals. The federal model will enable governors to nominate judges for vacancies, pending confirmation by the State



**Letter from Topeka**  
By State Rep. Ward Cassidy  
ward.cassidy@house.ks.gov

Senate. The governor advocated for a move away from a nominating commission that he felt gave too much influence to lawyers.

The Senate approved a state constitutional amendment that would apply the same process to the Kansas Supreme Court. The House did not vote on the measure. It could be considered in the 2014 session in time to place the issue on ballots next year.

Kansas Public Employees Retirement System – the House, but not the Senate, advanced a bill that would authorize sale of \$1.5 billion in bonds with money invested in the pension system to cover the

anticipated \$9 billion shortfall between pensions promised members and what the system projected to generate in revenue over the next 10 years.

Liquor – all the talk did not produce a bill again this session. The session began with a huge push from large grocery and retail shopping interests to alter Kansas law blocking them from selling wine and liquor. Under current state law, those beverages are the domain of individual retail liquor stores.

Over the next two weeks, I will highlight education, gun laws and other legislation of interest.

Expansion could cost billions

Leaders in Topeka are considering whether to expand the Kansas Medicaid program now that the Affordable Care Act has been ruled at least partly constitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court.

In doing so, they are presented with cost estimates from sources across the state and the country. Kansas Policy Institute's estimate from 2011 said that the "Mandate Effect" of the law would cost the state \$4.1 billion over 10 years, while an expansion of Medicaid eligibility would cost an additional \$625 million. That analysis was written before Medicaid expansion was a choice and a continuation of that analysis was released today by the same author at the institute.

Dr. Jagadeesh Gokhale, a sitting member of the Social Security Advisory Board and a former senior economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, disaggregates his earlier analysis in today's "Should Kansas Expand Medicaid Under the Affordable Care Act?"

"Our projections of Kansas' Medicaid cost growth under the ACA suggests that other entities' cost estimates are implausibly low," Gokhale writes. "The ACA is very likely to increase health care costs and health insurance premiums. At best, it will push state health spending to unsustainable levels. At worst, it could cause total chaos because, knowing that they cannot be denied coverage despite pre-existing conditions, people could very likely choose to pay the ACA's "tax" instead of sky-high health insurance premiums – until they actually need insurance and health care services."

Gokhale's analysis is within the range of other estimates for the number of enrollees poised to join the Kansas Medicaid rolls for both the Mandate Effect and the Expansion Effect. The Mandate Effect would account for those individuals currently eligible for Medicaid who

could be compelled to join the program under the ACA's individual mandate. KPI's Mandate Effect projection was 102,000 Kansans, well within that 30,000-162,000 range set by two separate studies from the Kansas Health Institute. The Expansion Effect projection from KPI is 130,000 (in 2023) new enrollees and falls between other projections of 100,000 (Kansas Health Institute) and 200,000 (Center for Budget and Policy Priorities).

Where KPI's estimate does differ is in the costs associated with these new enrollees. Gokhale identified 45 different enrollee categories, per gender, and utilized historical trends to determine the different costs associated with each different enrollee category.

These cost projections were then appropriately weighted by the trend-determined shares of future enrollees by demographic (gender/age/income/health) type. This stands in contrast to other studies done that utilize a global per-person cost estimate that is either kept constant or increased at a fixed, relatively low growth rate.

Gokhale writes in the brief, "(The study's) key advantages are, first, the implicit assumption that the same forces that escalated (or reduced) costs per person for particular categories of enrollees in the past would continue to influence cost growth in the future. Second, those cost rates per enrollee are appropriately weighted by the trend-determined shares of future enrollees by demographic (gender/age/income/health) type."

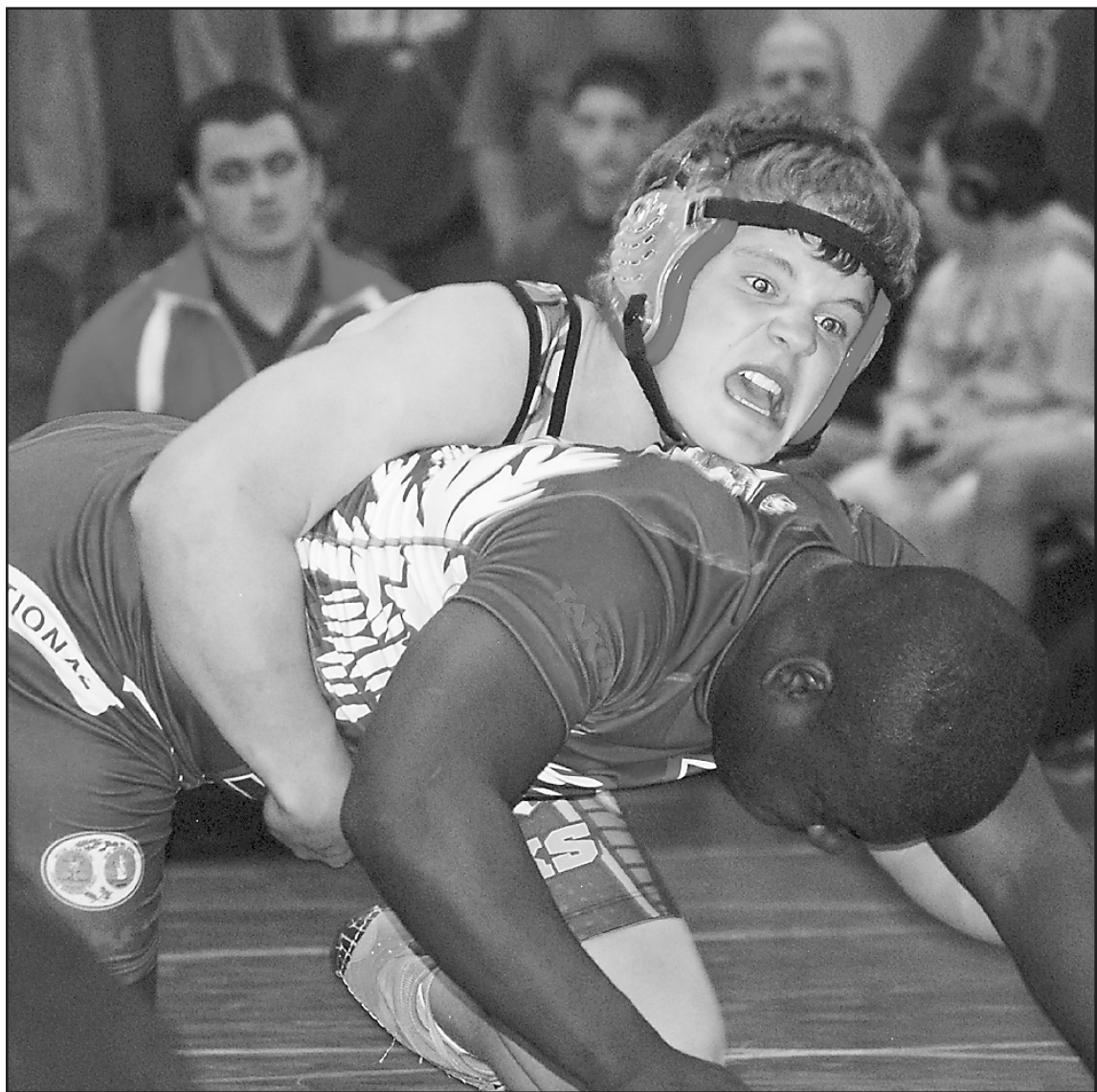
Institute President Dave Trabert said, "If Kansas chooses to spend \$625 million on Medicaid expansion, on top of the \$4.1 billion we're projected to spend under the ACA,

we have to ask where that money is going to come from? And what happens when the federal government finally admits it has to cut spending and can't afford to cover most of the cost?"

"Medicaid's share of general funding revenue increased from 3.7 percent to 17.8 percent between 1998 and 2012 and will reach 31 percent by 2023 with the implementation of ObamaCare and Medicaid expansion. The crowd-out effect that has already occurred on education and other services will only get much worse unless other steps are taken.

"Kansas needs health-care reform, but the answer is less, not more government intervention. Health care can be made more affordable and accessible by removing restrictions on group formation, allowing people to purchase the coverage they want instead of mandate-heavy policies, allowing insurance to be purchased across state lines and other consumer-focused reforms."

*The Kansas Policy Institute is an independent think tank that advocates for free market solutions and the protection of personal freedom for all Kansans. Our work centers on state and local economic policy with primary emphasis on education, fiscal policy and health care. We empower citizens, legislators and other government officials with objective research and creative ideas to promote a low-tax, pro-growth environment that preserves the ability of governments to provide high quality services. To contact the institute, call James Franko (316) 634-0218.*



OBERLIN EIGHTH GRADER Dayton Kempf helped his team, the Tin Men, take seventh overall in the Middle School National Classic Duals wrestling tournament in Iowa earlier in the month.

— Herald photo by Jennifer Juenemann

Junior High boys get chance to wrestle in national tourney

Four Oberlin junior high wrestlers attended the Middle School National Classic Duals in Des Moines on April 13 and 14.

Kansas had enough wrestlers for five teams, which called themselves the Tin Men, Lions, Flying Monkeys, Scarecrows and Wizards.

Jennifer Juenemann, who helped organize getting the wrestlers to the tournament, said about 30 other states were represented.

The boys qualified for the national tournament by being among the top five finishers in their class at Lindsborg on March 17, Mrs. Juenemann said.

Oberlin seventh grader Kel Grafel at 85 pounds and eighth graders Jeff Juenemann, 130, and Dayton Kempf, 171, wrestled for team 5, the Wizards, because they all took fifth in Lindsborg.

Eighth grader Tabor Erickson,

160 pounds, was a champion at the Kansas tournament, so he was on team 1, the Tin Men.

The Wizards placed seventh in their division and the Tin Men placed seventh overall out of about 42 teams, Mrs. Juenemann said.

The Kansas boys all met in Topeka, she added, and went to Iowa together.

Weather spoils sports events

It's hard to play golf in a snowstorm. The balls just sort of disappear in the swirling white.

So as the flakes fell last Tuesday, so did the chances for the Decatur Community High golf team to show well at the McCook High Tournament at the tough, hilly Heritage Hills Golf Course. The team did not go because of the weather.

The same storm disrupted the Decatur Community Junior High

track team, which was scheduled to compete in St. Francis last Tuesday and in Hoxie on Thursday.

Both meets have been canceled, school officials said.

The golf team was to be in Hoxie on Tuesday and to make up for the loss of the McCook tournament, the Oberlin players should be in Gothenburg, Neb., for an all-day event on Thursday. The junior varsity team will go to a tournament at 2

p.m. Friday in Oakley. The varsity golfers also are scheduled to play at 9 a.m. Saturday in Atwood and at 9 a.m. Monday in Hays in a tournament sponsored by Thomas More Prep-Marian High School.

The junior-high track and field athletes were to go to Hill City on Monday and then will be at home this week for a 3 p.m. Thursday meet in Oberlin – if the weather co-operates.

Guest Opinion

Sports Schedule

- Thursday:** Oberlin junior high track meet, 3 p.m., here.
  - Friday:** Golden Plains middle school track at Quinter Invitational, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
  - Oberlin high school junior varsity golf, 2 p.m. at Oakley.
  - Oberlin and Golden Plains high school track at Quinter Invitational, 3 p.m. to 8 p.m.
  - Saturday:** Oberlin high school golf, 9 a.m. at Rawlins County.
  - Monday:** Oberlin high school golf, 9 a.m., at Thomas More Prep, Hays.
  - Tuesday:** Oberlin Invitational high school track meet, 3 p.m., here.
  - Golden Plains high school track at Logan Invitational, 3 to 8 p.m.
  - Thursday, May 2:** Golden Plains middle school track at Logan Invitational, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
  - Oberlin high school golf, 3 p.m. at Colby.
  - Oberlin junior high track, 3 p.m. at St Francis.
  - Friday, May 3:** Golden Plains high school track at Colby Invitational, 3 to 8 p.m.
  - Oberlin high school golf, 3 p.m. at Hill City.
  - Saturday, May 4:** Oberlin high school golf, 9 a.m. at Ulysses.
  - Monday, May 6:** Oberlin high school golf, 3 p.m. at Phillipsburg.
- To add items to the community sports schedule, call The Oberlin Herald at 475-2206 or e-mail oberlin.editor@nwkansan.com.

Honor Roll

- Welcome and thanks to these recent subscribers to *The Oberlin Herald*:
- Elsewhere:** Myra Canfield, Niles, Mich.; Tom Railsback, Great Falls, Mont.; Dale Dufrene, Harahan, La.; Zola Branch, Tucson, Ariz.
- Texas:** Marvin Fedro, Robinson; Steve New, Big Spring; R. Dee Temple, Corpus Christi.
- Nebraska:** Jerry Fidele, Chappell; Dwayne Gipe, Omaha; Rhonda Mertz, Arlington.
- Kansas:** Gerald Meitl, Basehor; Joan Dark, Salina; Jerry Coleman, Marysville; Sherri Ramsey, Arkansas City.
- Topeka:** Ruth Meyer, Doreen Lindberg.
- Area:** Lila Rule, Norton; Mike Cook, Clayton; Larry Sumner, Norcatar.
- Oberlin:** Curtis Walston, Sherry Bergling, Brendan Moore.

**Happy Anniversary**

Come help celebrate Penn Avenue Boutique's First Anniversary on **May 1st**. Join Jill for some cookies and enter a drawing for a free \$25 gift certificate. No purchase necessary. 101 S. Penn Avenue, Oberlin. (785) 475-5861.

**EASTON CORBIN**  
Fri., May 10

**CHEAP TRICK**  
Tues., May 28

**JOAN BAEZ**  
Tues., June 4

Jethro Tull's Ian Anderson July 12  
Boz Scaggs July 26  
Rick Springfield July 28

stiefeltheatre.org ticketmaster facebook Stiefel Theatre for the Performing Arts  
151 S. Santa Fe, Salina 785-827-1998 Buy direct or online.

**Remember your loved ones with flowers for Memorial weekend.**

Silk or Fresh Available - Early orders preferred. Will deliver to area cemeteries.

**Prairie Petals**  
"It's not just flowers - It's Feelings"  
785-475-3241