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Kansas And Nebraska

Two States, Wildly Different Pension Systems

By Frank Morris
NPR Morning Edition

Kansas and Nebraska are quite a bit alike: big, windy farm states, proud of their flinty pioneer heritage. But when it comes to the way they approach state pension funds, Nebraska's from Venus and Kansas is from Mars.

Nebraska has its pension funds in tiptop condition, while the fund in Kansas is in terrible shape.

The Traditional Pension — And Its Shortfalls

Lots of people don't have a retirement plan, but among those who do, there are two basic types: the 401(k) and the traditional pension plan. The traditional pension has just about disappeared from the private sector, but it's still quite common for government workers like police, firefighters and teachers. And it can be a pretty good deal.

"We are living right now on the same amount of money that we were living on when I was teaching full time," says Clifford Manning, who retired five years ago at age 59.

He adds, chuckling, "And when I get Social Security, I'll actually get a raise."

Manning was a high school band teacher in Topeka, Kan., with full benefits from the state retirement system.

Manning still works a bit, but there's a packed suitcase by the door. He and his wife do lots of traveling.

"My wife and I decide we want to go do something or take a vacation, we can just go do it," he says. "But at the rate Kansas taxpayers and state workers are contributing to the pension fund, the state can't sustain this kind of pension indefinitely."

Anthony Hensley, a Democrat and the Kansas Senate Minority Leader, says the chickens have come home to roost. He cites a Pew report that was released last month that analyzes state pension funds.

"I mean, it's been years and years of neglect," Hensley says. "Now [we] have an unfunded liability that makes our system, according to this new Pew report, the second-worst in the country."

The Problem With Kansas

At the beginning of last year, the pension fund was more than \$8 billion in the hole, less than 60 percent funded and losing ground.

"I don't know. I'm a native Kansan, and it is a little surprising," says Glenn Deck, who runs the pension fund from his office in downtown Topeka.

He says the benefits Kansas gives are relatively low, so that's not the problem. Deck says a bit of bad advice

set up the mess in Kansas. When the state raised benefits in the early '90s, an actuary told lawmakers that investment income would cover most of the difference.

\$1 Trillion State Pension Gap Feb. 18, 2010

"It was reliant too much on great investment returns during that time, and the belief that things would continue to go up. And the world changed," Deck says.

The stock market tumbled, and didn't fully recover. Most stocks are lower now than they were a decade ago. Gradually, the state began to raise contributions. Then it cut benefits sharply. New hires now have to work longer and contribute more before drawing pensions.

It's not enough. The fund is still deteriorating. But since pensioners keep getting their checks, Kansas Senate President Stephen Morris says it's hard to get his colleagues to pay attention.

"Well, it's difficult. Sometimes you see eyes rolling and people looking away, and it's like, 'Why do we have to do this?' But we do," he says.

Sickly pension systems do not right themselves; they snowball. Pension liabilities mount, relentlessly. But it doesn't have to be this way.

Down The Road Is A Different Story

About 3 1/2 hours north of Topeka, in Lincoln, Neb., state Sen. Dave Pankonin chairs the committee overseeing a pension system in near-perfect health.

"Nebraska has had this tradition of consistently looking at the plans — trying to take action as needed — instead of waiting and kicking the can down the road until it's a full-blown crisis," he says.

It's more than a tradition — it's state law. Unlike their colleagues in Kansas, Nebraska lawmakers are required to keep the pension funds flush.

That makes Phyllis Chambers' job easier. She runs the pension system. Her actuaries calculate the amount the state can expect to pay out in pensions. They balance that number against contributions made by workers and the state, plus investment income. If there's a shortfall, Chambers simply hands lawmakers the bill.

"It's not an 'if,' but it's more like, 'This is what it is,'" Chambers says.

Another difference is that Nebraska's pension fund is much smaller; there are fewer workers to cover. Most of them are on a 401(k)-type system, with the state more than matching worker contributions. It's almost impossible for the state to end

up with big pension liabilities. Judges, highway patrol officers and teachers have traditional pension plans, and, as you might expect, they sound pretty happy.

"All indications are to me that we're protected and everything's going to work out really well for us," says Robin Stevens, a school superintendent, who attended a recent retirement seminar in Omaha.

Stevens says he's heard about the trouble with the Kansas pension fund, and he thinks it might be making it easier for him to recruit new teachers.

"When we have openings in Nebraska, it seems like we're getting more Kansas applicants," he says.

Grasping For Solutions

Stories like this and various studies have turned up pressure on Kansas to fix its pension fund. It's not going to be easy.

Kansas Senate President Morris wants big increases in workers' mandatory contributions to the fund, and in the amount the state is putting in. But the state already faces an enormous budget shortfall, so it's hard to imagine where the money would come from.

There's also talk of phasing out the traditional pension fund and moving to a 401(k)-type system, more like Nebraska's.

Kansas State Holds Pep Rally Before Team Leaves For Utah

NCAA Sets K-State - Xavier Time

KSU Sports Information

No. 7 Kansas State (28-7) will play No. 25 Xavier (26-8) in the semifinals of the NCAA West Regional at approximately 8:37 p.m. CT on Thursday night at EnergySolutions Arena in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The contest will follow the conclusion of the first game between top-seeded Syracuse (30-4) and fifth-seeded Butler (30-4), which is set for 6:07 p.m. CT.

The second-seeded Wildcats earned their 17th trip to the Sweet 16 and first since 1988 on Saturday night with an 84-72 victory over No. 17/16 BYU at the Ford Center in Oklahoma City. The squad opened the NCAA Tournament with an 82-62 win over 15-seed North Texas on Thursday afternoon.

This will mark the eighth meeting between K-State and Xavier on the hardwood, including the second this season, with the Musketeers holding a 4-3 edge in the series. The Wildcats ended a three-game losing streak in the series with a 71-56 win at Bramlage Coliseum on Dec. 8, 2009. This will be the second meeting between the two schools in the NCAA Tournament with Xavier posting an 87-79 victory in the first round of the 1990 NCAA Midwest Regional at the old RCA Dome in Indianapolis on March 16.



The Kansas State Mens Basketball team was honored with a pep rally Monday. (Photo by Ben Brake)

President Of The Heritage Foundation Writes To America

Fellow Americans,

Late last night, in a narrow and partisan vote, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the most significant piece of social legislation in over seven decades. It did so in the face of overwhelming and principled opposition from the American people. Large majorities of Americans oppose this legislation because it offends the historic American dedication to the principle of self-government. They understand that this new law will accelerate Washington's intrusion into our most personal and private decisions.

This is why opposition to this bill will only grow. Supporters of this bill argue that popular hostility will recede upon its passage. But, rather than cementing our descent into a European-style welfare state, last night's passage of Obamacare is best seen as a historic turning point, a true catalyst for real change.

I write to reassure our supporters, the conservative movement, and the American people at large that The Heritage Foundation will do all within its power to keep this issue alive in the public square and make the intellectual case for the repeal of this act. We will bring all our resources to bear on behalf of those who believe America is and will always remain the Land of the Free. This, rest assured, can be done. The American people are never permanently thwarted. President

Obama's health care legislation can and will be repealed.

Those who supported this bill are our fellow Americans, and we do not question their good will or patriotism. In public policy, however, good intentions alone do not suffice. And let there be no mistake, our philosophical differences with supporters of this bill are profound. The reason government-run health care has been the holy grail of the left for decades is that liberals realize as much as we do that it is a giant step toward the creation of a European-style welfare state. This is an evolution Americans have always resisted because it is alien to our national character.

If there is one good thing about the past year—one in which we have witnessed unprecedented horse-trading, press stunts, midnight votes and political manipulation in both houses of the U.S. Congress—it is that the American people have come away educated as never before about the differences between these two visions for America. Americans are strongly opposed to this bill not because they have been hoodwinked but because they understand this bill both in its particulars and at an instinctive, gut level.

They understand this health care bill forces individuals and employers to buy insurance policies designed by government bureaucrats. This intrusion is intended to

follow us from cradle to grave.

Instead of empowering families and individuals to make their own choices, Obamacare empowers the bureaucracy to make those decisions for them. It is this unelected bureaucracy, unanswerable to the electorate, that will determine the content of health benefits packages, including medical treatment and procedures, and how much will be paid for those services. Yesterday's legislation brings us one step closer to fully government-run medicine, with expanded government power over the financing and delivery of medical services that is sure to ration care in the name of cost control.

You will hear the left say this new entitlement will be popular with the American people. Do not believe them for a second. Yes, 32 million people will gain the theoretical right to health insurance. But over half of that coverage comes from placing at least 16 million more Americans into Medicaid, an unpopular and overextended welfare program that already rations care.

Americans will not stand for it. The American love for liberty prevailed in our founding, and will prevail once again.

In December of 1773, to protest unjust taxation, a group of American colonists dumped tea in Boston Harbor. The punishment for that first Tea Party was a series of intru-

sive laws passed by Parliament that were so oppressive that they could only be described as the "Intolerable Acts."

Obamacare is today's Intolerable Act. And just as the colonists banded together to enact change after those acts were passed, so should America respond to Obamacare. This law must be repealed.

Much of the fight against this bill will be led by the individual states, a process we encourage. All told, 33 states have already taken steps to challenge various aspects of Obamacare, including its unprecedented mandate that every American purchase health insurance or face a steep penalty for noncompliance. Four additional states will have this question on the ballot in November.

On Capitol Hill, the initial battle over Obamacare will occur when Congress considers whether to fund the tens of thousands of new federal bureaucrats necessary to implement the new law. In the tradition of the Hyde amendment, which prevented federal funding for abortions through annual limitations appended to appropriations bills, conservatives should look to the appropriations process as our first line of defense. Straightforward funding limitations would prevent any Administration official or any bureaucrat from implementing the law.

Our health care system requires

reform, and we have long advocated measures to improve our system. We can and should strengthen the ability of American families to choose the coverage they want, rather than giving that power to Congress and its agency bureaucrats. We can also spur competition and choice to bring efficiency and lower costs to the health system, in place of the bill's deadening regulation and damaging price controls. And, above all, we should foster state innovation rather than Washington-based central planning.

But such reforms can only be considered once this tragedy of arrogance has been fully and completely repealed.

Fortunately, there are no permanent victories or defeats in Washington. For millions of Americans and for Heritage, Round One of this fight is over. Today, The Heritage Foundation is answering the bell for Round Two. Join our fight; become a part of our mission. Help us educate our lawmakers, as well as those who aspire to become tomorrow's lawmakers. Together we can make the persuasive case for repeal of this Intolerable Act and thereby return us to our American destiny.

Onward!
Sincerely,
Edwin J. Feulner, Ph.D.,
President, The Heritage
Foundation

City on the Grow: Annexation of Grande Bluffs

By Adam Reichenberger

On Tuesday, Assistant Director of Planning, Eric Cattell, AICP presented before the City Commission plans for the annexation and rezoning of a 60-acre tract of land located near the intersection of Miller Parkway and Leone Ridge Drive. The site, known as Grande Bluffs at Mill Pointe, is currently zoned County G-1, General Agricultural District and is proposed to be rezoned as R, Single-Family Residential District with AO, Airport Overlay District.

Cattell explained the logistics of the situation, "When considering an annexation request, the Manhattan Urban Area Planning Board makes a recommendation to the City Commission based on conformance with the Comprehensive Plan, Growth Vision, and the Capital Improvements Program..."

The proposed density of Grande

Bluffs at Mill Pointe is 0.93 dwelling units per net acre. The development will provide sidewalks on one side of all streets, which connect to the Miller Parkway Corridor sidewalks to the north, and Warner Park and other parts of the City. A pedestrian easement on the west side of the site, generally located along the Military Trail, will connect the Lee Mill Heights residential areas to the north of the rezoning site and to Scenic Meadows to the south. Steep slopes have been placed within conservation easements to protect hillsides from development. The proposed site is within the Conical Zone of the Manhattan Regional Airport. Therefore, the AO, Airport Overlay District, will be added to the proposed underlying R District.

"Street access to the development is provided along the extension of Leone Ridge Drive. Topographic challenges in this area necessitate that the area be

served by this one entrance. As a result, most of the homes in the development will need to be served by in-house fire sprinklers to meet fire code requirements.

"The proposed annexation and rezoning conform to the Comprehensive Plan. The site is also located within the Urban Service Area and can be served by public improvements, including streets, water, fire service, and sanitary sewer."

In February the Manhattan Urban Area Planning Board held a public hearing to discuss the changes. With no opposition presented at the hearing, the Planning Board unanimously recommended the proposed annexation and rezoning.

The City Administration recommended that the City Commission approve the first reading of an ordinance to annex the proposed addition and rezone it as mentioned above.

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Regional Marketing Staff Honored for Sales Achievement

By Adam Reichenberger

The Topeka Regional Marketing Office of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas was honored recently for its performance during the fourth quarter of 2009, according to Mark G. Dolsky, vice president of sales and marketing.

As a result of their activities, the staff achieved the highest health enrollment sales percentage among the three Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas regions for the quarter. They achieved 148 percent of the sales goals.

Consultants for the award-win-

ning Topeka regional staff are Doug Martens, Donna Pashman, Lisa Toyne, Pateese Harden and Rocio Fernandez (from the Topeka office); Michelle Fell (Manhattan); Todd Chapple (Lawrence); and Cristy Mitchell (Pittsburg). Joe DeWerff is the regional manager and works from the Topeka office.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. BCBSKS is the state's largest health insurer, serving all Kansas counties except Johnson and Wyandotte.



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Minutes Continued

from page 3

Department asked the County Counselor's Office to draft Family Day Care Home Regulations for Riley County to be consistent with the City of Manhattan.

Cox presented information on the following:

The Health Department argument in support of inspecting registered family day care homes is that all child care should be inspected. The choice to be either a registered family day care or a licensed day care is not based on experience, training or quality. According to the Health Department, many parents do not realize that registered child care is not inspected.

An argument against inspecting registered family day care homes is that government should not be involved in regulating child care. Such regulation could result in loss of some registered family day care providers. However, this has not been the experience of those counties which have adopted Family Day Care Home regulations.

The City of Manhattan adopted similar regulations for registered family day care homes on January 5, 2010.

The proposed regulations require inspections for the purpose of obtaining or renewing a certificate of registration which authorizes the operation of a family day care home. Additional inspections are allowed to investigate complaints or to verify operator compliance for previously cited violations. Inspections fees are established by the Health Board.

Family day care homes will be inspected by the Health Department using the same proce-

dures and the same health and safety standards which are currently applicable to registered family day care homes.

The regulations require mandatory minimum training for all day care providers. All children in day care are required to obtain a health assessment with the day care operator maintaining the assessments on location.

When cited for non-compliance by either the Health Department or the Board of County Commissioners, a day care operator must make corrections within five days or submit a correction action plan within fourteen days.

Any day care operator cited for non-compliance by the Health Department has the right to appeal to the Board of County Commissioners for a review hearing.

An operator's failure to correct any non-compliance finding by either the Health Department or the Board of County Commissioners shall result in an administrative penalty not less than two hundred fifty dollars but not more than five hundred dollars, revoking or suspending the operator's certificate of registration or pursuing equitable remedies in district court.

Even though there are provisions for administrative penalties and revocation or suspension of an operator's certificate of registration, these are options of "last resort." The purpose of the regulations is to promote compliance with minimal health, sanitation, safety and education requirements so that family day care home operators in the unincorporated areas

of Riley County provide healthy and safe day care.

Inspection fees shall be deposited with the Health Department to fund the certification process. Administrative penalties shall be divided equally between the Health Department to fund the certification process and Riley County to the general fund.

Through KDHE grants and contracts, the Health Department has resources and capacity to carry out the additional inspections of family day care homes without any additional funding from Riley County. McCulloh asked how do we reach home day cares that are not registered.

Kufahl said we need to better inform parents of the need for registered day cares.

McCulloh said it is advantageous to have the same home day care regulations as the City.

Messer discussed what the fire department looks for when inspecting a home day care.

Cook said she has a registered day care.

Cook said she does not want government entering into her home. Cook said she feels it is an invasion of privacy.

Cook suggested during the inspection that there be more education rather than provider fines.

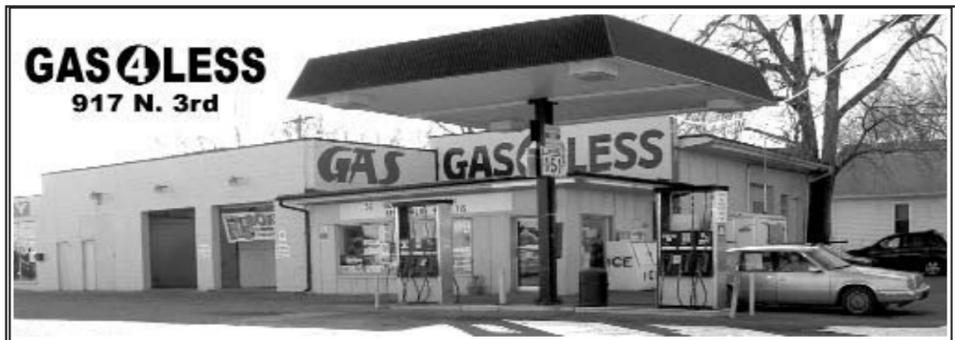
Robbins said it is a business.

Robbins said the Health Department will be respectful and work with providers.

McCulloh closed the public hearing.

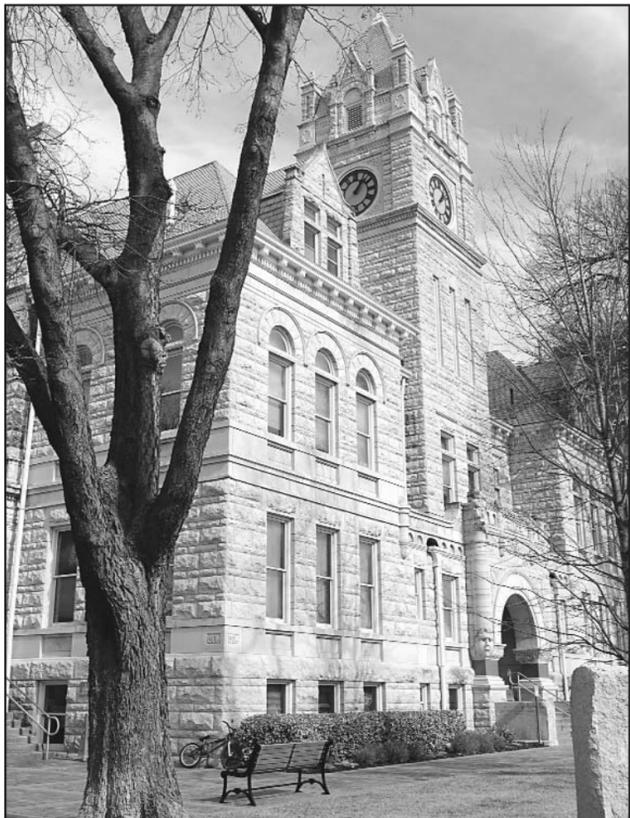
7:28 Adjourned.

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The Board of County Commissioners Minutes

The Regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners met at the Riley County Plaza East Building March 15, 2010 with the following members present: Karen McCulloh, Vice Chair; Alvan Johnson, Member; and Cindy Kabriel sitting in for Rich Vargo, County Clerk. Mike Kearns, Chairman, was absent. 8:30 Public Comment & Business Meeting Clancy Holeman, Counselor/Director of Administrative Services; Joyce Mermis, KMAN; Johnette Shepek, Budget and Finance Officer; Leon Hobson, Public Works Director/County Engineer; Cindy Volanti, Human Resource Manager; Shannon Wertzberger, Administrative Analyst; Lori Muir, Real Estate Specialist; Julie Merklin, League of Women Voters; Will Klusener, Manhattan Mercury; Steve Higgins, Zoning Enforcement Officer; and Pat Collins, Emergency Management Director, attended.

Volanti introduced Shannon Wertzberger as the Administrative Analyst in the County Clerk's Office. Volanti said Wertzberger previously worked at the Wabaunsee County Clerk's Office.

Shepek discussed a letter from Lyle Butler to the commission asking for an \$11,510.00 payment for the 2010 Airline Marketing Campaign in support of American Eagle Airlines jet service. Shepek stated the commission agreed October 26, 2009 to pay \$11,990.00 as a revenue guarantee, if the State of Kansas' 2009 contribution in the amount of \$1 million dollars and the City of Manhattan's contribution in the amount of \$300,000.00 are entirely depleted. Shepek said the commission did not agree to make any payments toward a marketing campaign.

Muir said she contacted Gina Scroggs, Executive Director with Downtown Manhattan, about opening the Riley County blood drive to donors downtown. Muir said Scroggs will send an e-mail to downtown businesses before the next donation. Higgins discussed the borrow pit on South Manhattan. Higgins said Riley County regulations do not address borrow pits of less than an acre. Johnson asked Higgins to contact Dee Dockins.

Higgins said he has been in contact with her about the borrow pit. P. Collins said the 911 bill will be discussed today in the Senate Utilities Committee. P. Collins said the Senate has a different version than the House version. P. Collins said he prefers the House bill.

Johnson moved to sign the Juvenile Justice Authority FY 2011 Judicial District Prevention, Incentive and Graduated Sanctions Block Grant Funding. McCulloh seconded. Carried 2-0.

Johnson moved to approve the Extension of Contract for Riley County Grounds Maintenance with Rothwell Landscape, Inc. for the year 2010. McCulloh seconded. Carried 2-0.

The Board of County Commissioners signed a Riley County Personnel Action Form for Brigitte Brecheisen, a new hire, as a Planning Intern, in the Planning and Development Department, at a grade B step 3, at \$11.57 per hour.

Johnson moved to approve a Contract Agreement with Mid-American Water & Plumbing for the Courthouse Cooling Tower Replacement in the amount of \$186,504.00. McCulloh seconded. Carried 2-0.

Johnson moved to approve the minutes of March 11, 2010 as amended. McCulloh seconded. Carried 2-0.

8:58 Rod Meredith, Assistant Public Works Director/Parks Director

Clancy Holeman, Counselor/Director of Administrative Services; Joyce Mermis, KMAN; Johnette Shepek, Budget and Finance Officer; Will Klusener, Manhattan Mercury; Julie Merklin, League of Women Voters;

and Leon Hobson, Public Works Director/County Engineer, attended. Meredith discussed Community Park Fund Allocations.

Johnson moved to approve the Purchase Authorization for the 2010 Community Park purchases as presented below and recommended by the Riley County Park Advisory Board for the Parks Department in the amount of \$30,000.00 to be funded by the General-Parks Fund.

2010 COMMUNITY PARK ALLOCATIONS

Approved by the Riley County Park Advisory Board on 3/09/10

Ogden Playground equipment 2,500

Riley Playground surfacing 2,200

Keats Playground equipment 2,500

Leonardville Walking trail 9,370

Playground equipment 2,310

Randolph Shelter 3,500

Concrete 2,000

Picnic tables 1,620

Fairmont Playground walkway 4,000

TOTAL \$30,000

McCulloh seconded. Carried 2-0.

Meredith discussed the Fairmont Park Playground Master Plan and Fairmont Park Comprehensive Master Plan.

9:18 Leon Hobson, Public Works Director/County Engineer

Clancy Holeman, Counselor/Director of Administrative Services; Joyce Mermis, KMAN; Johnette Shepek, Budget and Finance Officer; Will Klusener, Manhattan Mercury; Rod Meredith, Assistant Public Works/Parks Director; and Julie Merklin, League of Women Voters, attended.

Hobson presented a Public Works project update.

Hobson asked if the contractor that is replacing the Courthouse cooling tower can park in the commissioners' parking lot when the Board is not in session.

The Board of County Commissioners agreed the contractor replacing the Courthouse cooling tower could park in the commissioners' parking lot when the Board is not in session.

9:30 Press Conference

Gregg Eyestone, County Extension Agent; Doug Messer, Assistant Fire Chief; Clancy Holeman,

Counselor/Director of Administrative Services; Joyce Mermis, KMAN; Julie Merklin, League of Women Voters; and Will Klusener, Manhattan Mercury, attended.

Eyestone discussed spring yard grass preparations.

Eyestone said to use the 1/3 cut-off rule when mowing.

Eyestone said a Free Youth Lawn Mowing Clinic will be held Tuesday, March 23, 2010 from 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. at Pottorf Hall, CiCo Park.

Messer said pasture range management is preparing pastures for next season by burning.

Messer said research shows burning pastures can be done at anytime of the year.

Messer said preparation is key to safety. Messer said preparation includes: a current burn permit, making sure you have plenty of people to help, proper equipment, cooperation from neighbors, burn at the same time as your neighbors if that is an option, look ahead at the weather forecast 12-24 hours, communication between people helping, and dress appropriately.

10:10 Clancy Holeman, Counselor/Director of Administrative Services

Administrative Work Session Joyce Mermis, KMAN; Johnette Shepek, Budget and Finance Officer; Will Klusener, Manhattan Mercury; and Julie Merklin, League of Women Voters, attended.

Holeman said he would like to move the staff report on Riley County Prescription Discount Card and the work session for the revised draft Attendance Policy for Appointed Boards and Committees to Thursday's meeting.

The Board agreed. 10:15 Debbie Register, Register of Deeds Clancy Holeman, Counselor/Director of Administrative Services; and Lyndal Nyberg, League of Women Voters, attended.

Register presented the following New software company, CSA has started working with IT on conversion process

Will continue working with software supplier to discuss upcoming installation of new software. Working out final details. Implementation is scheduled for April.

Working on contacts to inform Ft. Riley of importance of filing DD214's

Revenue figures

2009 thru 3/11	2010 thru 3/11
\$175,268.73	
\$164,613.73	

10:25 Johnson moved to adjourn after the 7:00 p.m. Public Meeting to consider the adoption of Family Day Care Home Regulations. McCulloh seconded. Carried 2-0.

12:00 Law Enforcement Agency Meeting

7:00 p.m. Public Meeting to consider the adoption of Family Day Care Home Regulations Craig Cox, Assistant County Counselor; Susie Kufahl, Riley County-Manhattan Health Department Assistant Administrator; Mindy Robbins, Riley County-Manhattan Health Department Child Care Licensing Supervisor; Kris Johnson; Doug Messer, Assistant Fire Chief; Melissa Cook, Day Care Provider; and Joe Pieper, KMAN, attended.

McCulloh opened the Public Hearing.

Kufahl and Robbins presented a PowerPoint presentation on registered and licensed home day care centers.

Cox said in December 2007 the Health

See Commission page 2

Have You Read What The Free Press Said?
manhattanfreepress.com

70th Birthday Coffee



I like to tell people that I was born on April 2, 1940 just missing being a fool. Some have said that I didn't miss.

Anyway, Linda and I are planning a Birthday Coffee to celebrate my 70th birthday.

You are invited, we hope you can make it.

Jon Brake
Publisher

When: Saturday, April 3, 2010

Time: 1:00 to 300 pm.

Where: Community Building, Blue Rapids, Kansas (On the Square)

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Thoughts From The Prairie

A Day at the Capitol

My laptop and I, along with other Flint Hills Tea Party members Chuck Henderson and Larry and Chris Tawney, are in the gallery of the Kansas House of Representatives. We are here to support HCR 5032, The Kansas Healthcare Freedom Amendment. HCR 5032 requires a two-thirds majority, or 84 YEAS to pass. We are waiting anxiously as other business is being conducted.

Ok, the board just flashed and HCR 5032 is up for Final Action. A lot of the names of the representatives are turning green indicating YEAS but a lot are also turning red indicating NAYS. The final tally is 75 YEAS and 47 NAYS, short by 9 votes. Seven Democrats voted YEA, 5 Republicans voted NAY, 3 representatives did not vote. One Republican, a supporter of the HCR, switched his vote to NAY so that a procedural action may bring HCR 5032 back to the floor Wednesday. The outcome of this action will not be known before press time for this article.

Locally, Representative Carlson from St. Marys is a YEA, Representatives Carlin and Hawk both voted NAY. So for today it appears to me the House is saying, "There are 46 of us who don't want the people of Kansas to have the opportunity to vote on a constitutional amendment to protect the citizens from an unconstitutional healthcare bill."

While we wait for the final action, here is a news flash: The Thomas More Law Center has filed suit to stop the national healthcare bill from taking effect. Richard Thompson, President and Chief Counsel of the Law Center, commented, "This Act is a product of political corruption and the exercise of unconstitutional power. Our Founding Fathers envisioned a limited form of government. The purpose of our Constitution and this lawsuit is to insure it stays that way." The mainstream media is hailing the passage as "Historic!" Historic it is for not in the history of our nation has corruption in the legislative process been so blatant! The president is passing out political bribes with tax dollars as if it were monopoly money. My greatest agony was Bart Stupak abandoning his conviction for a piece of paper as whimsical as a Kansas thistle seed.

The Kansas House acted upon three resolutions that are noteworthy and positive. HR 6029 paid tribute to the 100 years the A.Q. School of Journalism and Mass Communications has been a valuable part of Kansas State University. Professors Gloria Freeland and Steven Smethers accepted commendations and a plaque from Representatives Hawk and Carlin. Professor Gloria Freeland, a native Kansan, is the director of the Huck Boyd National Center



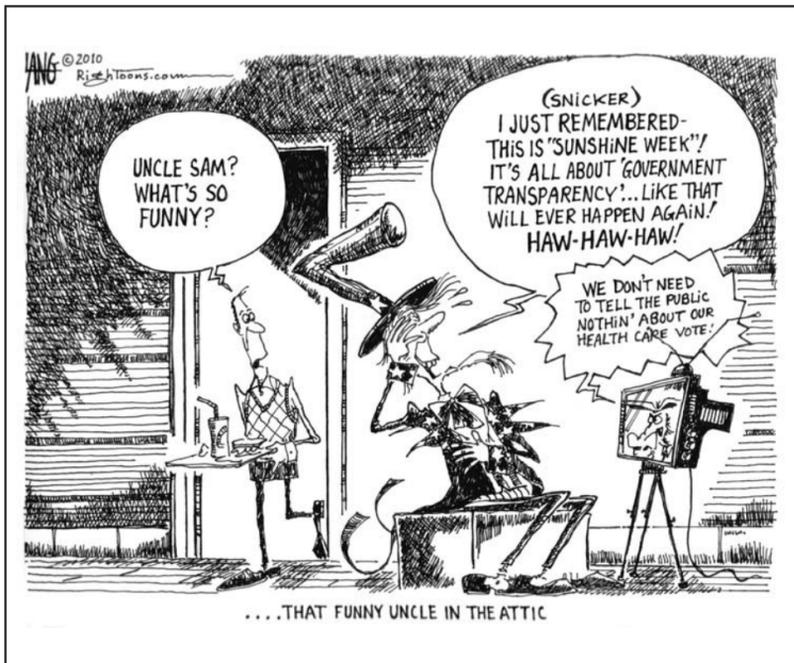
Dick Miller

for Community Media and the coordinator of the 2010 centennial celebration for the School. Dr. Steven Smethers is a Professor of Journalism and Digital Media and is the Associate Director for Graduate Studies in the A.Q. Miller School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

HR 6032 recognized that Boeing has been awarded the largest single contract in U.S. history, purported to be a 35-billion-dollar contract to build a new tanker for the U.S. Air Force.

HR 6031 cited Max Archer, Preston Mossman, Adam Porter, Jacob Reese and Joel Piper, the Residential Construction Management Team from McPherson Kansas High School, for being named National Champions of the Residential Construction Management Competition in Las Vegas January 21, 2010. Team coaches are Arlan Penner and Don Willits. Mossman was given an Outstanding Student award. The team developed a complete set of working drawings, a detailed materials estimate, and a complete construction schedule for a custom home to be built in St. Louis, Missouri. The team had to meet the Bronze level of the NAHB National Green Building Standard. The competition was held during the International Builders Show that is sponsored by the National Association of Home Builders and the Home Builders Institute. It was my privilege to personally congratulate each member of this outstanding team.

These cited examples of individual and team exceptional achievements are as visualized by President Ronald Reagan: "The American dream is not that every man must be level with every other man. The American dream is that every man must be free to become whatever God intends he should become."



... THAT FUNNY UNCLE IN THE ATTIC



"Conscience of Kansas"

Hanks for the New Memories: A Look at the Skewed Mentality of Hollywood

Some wonder how the Hollywood elite manage to make movies, build castles on prime real estate, fill their factory-sized garages with foreign sports cars, and still find the time to impress the great unwashed with their unequalled intelligence on political matters. As is often the case, sometimes it is best to stick with your day job.

With the release of the HBO military special The Pacific, Tom Hanks, while talking about his new film series, characterized World War II as a war of racism and terror and paralleled it with today's war on terror. These statements are unfortunate for two reasons. The first reason is that they create a negative wind around what may be another well-created Hanks/Spielberg production. Of course, even more heckling will come from the fact that while he is a masterful actor-producer in front of and behind the camera, Tom Hanks knows nothing of history. Worse yet, Hanks tries to create new memories for the public outside the cinematic screen of World War II, void of the most pivotal event that caused the United States to go to war with Japan, that being the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Also, Hanks fails to grasp the dynamics of what is taking place in the current war on terror. The battle that is being waged by radical Islamic extremists against the United States and its allies today is not a war on race but a confrontation of ideologies. While Hanks earns only half a star, a "thumbs down", or a low box-office rating at the brain stem for his knowledge of history, he certainly does not stand alone.

When we look to Hollywood, there is an overwhelming tendency to find great actors that have a skewed mentality of the world. Through the politically correct dialogue of today, we are urged to describe these individuals as moderates, progressives, or whatever is the smallest imposition to everyone, especially those in question. For conservatives like myself, I find the need to pitch such deceptions as one would a faulty script and call these lurid, leering, latte-loving lunatics what they really are—the modern day liberal.

In defense of Hanks, he is simply one of a long line of Hollywood liberals who have uttered nonsensical statements that have been spread throughout mainstream media. In 1988, Cheers TV star Ted Danson stated that the oceans would be dead with the rest of humanity within the following 10 years. Obviously, Danson's words of oceanic wisdom were faulty, and when it comes to facing his detractors for this environmental doomsday prediction, Danson may be slow to go where everybody knows his name.

Additionally, in a sad conga line of silly statements and character-defining actions, Hollywood liberals Danny Glover, Harry Belafonte, and most notably Sean Penn found the public spotlight at the altar of communist dictator Hugo Chavez. Penn, who served as Chavez's most utilized puppet, was reported by the Associated Press in 2007 to be present with the Venezuelan dictator in Caracas as Chavez repeatedly attacked President George Bush and the war on terror. Chavez characterized Americans as a duped populace restricted from fomenting revolution only by their ignorance of the evils of the Bush administration.

It's always a toss-up as the envelope is opened but I think the "cake taker" of liberal wackiness is still held by movie star and for-



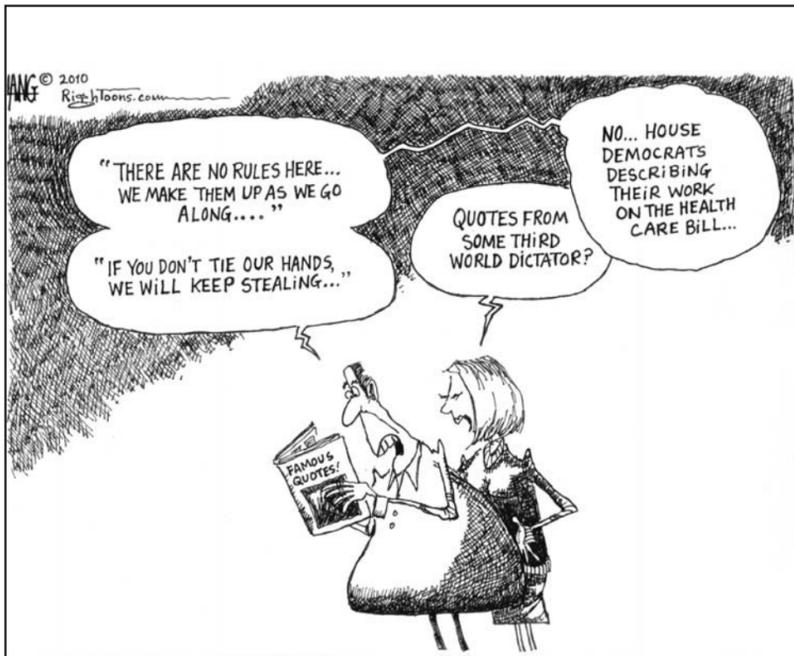
Paul A. Ibbetson

mer bully of The View, Rosie O'Donnell. O'Donnell decided to allow her hatred of the war on terror to cause her to defy common sense as she stated that 9/11 was the first time that fire had melted steel. Besides the fact that fire is how you melt steel, Popular Mechanics' 2006 book Debunking 9/11 Myths made short work of O'Donnell's conspiracy theories on Tower 7 with scientific data on the melting point of steel and the temperature at which steel loses its (structural) strength. Oh Rosie, Rosie, Rosie.

So what gives these Hollywood elitists such a skewed, anti-American view of the world? What makes them take time from their busy and lucrative careers to seek out the vilest communist dictators to help spread propaganda against their own countrymen? What it is not a product of their money, houses, cars, facelifts, or fancy bling-bling. The foundation behind the skewed mentality of many in Hollywood is nothing more than an elaborate, sugar-filled version of the ideology of the modern day liberal found in every place in America. For regular folks, you just have to apply a little low-budget imagination to prove this true. Think of your neighbor with the Obama 2008 rainbow sticker on his Smart Car in the driveway and the "Ration Toilet Paper for Mother Earth" sign in the yard. Deposit 20 million dollars in his or her bank account and Voila! You're living next to Tom Hanks, Rosie O'Donnell, or the equivalent.

Whether this truth makes Tom Hanks and others a little more ordinary or your liberal neighbor a little more exotic is for you to decide, but decide quickly as liberals of all tax brackets would love for you to share their skewed mentality of the world. For me, it's "Hanks, but no Hanks!" Feel free to share that with your liberal neighbor next door.

Paul A. Ibbetson is a former Chief of Police of Cherryvale, Kansas, and member of the Montgomery County Drug Task Force. Paul received his Bachelor's and Master's degree in Criminal Justice at Wichita State University, and is currently completing his PhD. in sociology at Kansas State University. Paul is the author of the books Living Under The Patriot Act: Educating A Society and Feeding Lions: Sharing The Conservative Philosophy In A Politically Hostile World. Paul is also the radio host of the Kansas Broadcasting Association's 2008, 2009 and 2010 Entertainment Program of the Year, Conscience of Kansas airing on KSDB Manhattan 91.9 f.m. www.ibbetsonusa.com. For interviews or questions, please contact ibbetson91.9@gmail.com



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Street Address:
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jonbrake@kansas.net or freepress@kansas.net

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"Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."
- Thomas Jefferson, 1787

Food Safety Inspection at Crossroads

By Adam Reichenberger

For over two decades the Riley County-Manhattan Health Department has been performing food service inspections under local ordinance. During those years the state of Kansas performed overlapping duties through the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. However, recently the state transferred those responsibilities to the Kansas Department of Agriculture and in an effort to cut down on waste eliminated several local contracts including Riley County's.

This cut removed \$60,000 in annual funds from the state that had been used to employ a full-time food safety worker and has thus eliminated that local position.

In February the Board of Health took action and spoke to the City Administration, seeking local funds to maintain the food-safety inspector position. The request

outlined all duties previously performed by the food-safety worker and a breakdown of the requested \$60,000 annually. The fund would come 55% from Riley County and 45% (\$27,000) from the City of Manhattan.

But in response to their request, the Board of Health only received a tentative letter of rejection from the City Administration. The Assistant City Manager, Lauren Palmer explained, "In general, the City believes the local government should not reinstate a local food inspection program that would effectively duplicate the inspections now being provided by KDA. The new arrangement with the State should be given an opportunity to perform. If performance suffers, local leaders should hold KDA accountable for its decision to revoke the local contracts. Creating a local program now

would allow the State to abandon its responsibilities and would create an additional cost burden for local businesses and taxpayers."

Palmer did concede the large number of duties performed by the previously employed food-safety inspector that fell outside the realm of the KDA program and therefore would go undone under the present arrangement. However, Palmer expressed that the City feels it is necessary to explore other, more affordable options before reinstating a position containing many redundancies.

On Tuesday, March 23, Charles R. Murphy, an Administrator for the Riley County-Manhattan Health Department was invited to speak before the City Commission to further present the department's request and discuss possible alternatives.

2010 – 2014 Consolidated Plan Notice of Public Hearing

By Adam Reichenberger

In 2010, the City of Manhattan will be eligible for Entitlement funding through the Community Development Block (CDBG) Program operated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In order to participate in this Program, the City is required to develop a Consolidated Plan, which sets forth community needs and proposes projects and activities to address these needs. The Consolidated Plan includes a Five Year Strategic Plan, One Year Annual Action Plan and Citizen

Participation Plan. It is expected the City will receive approximately \$499,000 in CDBG funds in the 2010 fiscal year; however that amount is dependent on final funding from HUD.

The City encourages all interested citizens to offer comments regarding the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and Citizen Participation Plan. Beginning March 23, 2010 through April 22, 2010, these documents will be available for review at the Community Development Department, City Hall, 1101 Poyntz, the Manhattan Housing

Authority, 300 N. 5th Street, the Manhattan Public Library, 629 Poyntz Avenue and on the City's web page. Comments may be submitted in writing or via email to the addresses below.

On Tuesday, April 6, 2010, at 7:00p.m., the Manhattan City Commission will conduct a public hearing on the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan and Citizen Participation Plan. All interested persons are invited to attend the hearing, which will be held in the City Commission Room at City Hall.

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Wildcats Headed to Sweet 16

KSU Sports Information

Kansas State erased two early double-digit deficits and guards Jacob Pullen and Denis Clemente combined for 53 points as the seventh-ranked Wildcats advanced to the Sweet 16 with an 84-72 win over BYU Saturday in NCAA Second Round action at the Ford Center.

With the win, the Wildcats (28-7) advance to their first Sweet 16 since 1988 and will face the winner of Sunday's Pitt/Xavier matchup next weekend in Salt Lake City, Utah. Tickets for the West Regional are available at www.k-statesports.com.

The matchup Saturday was hyped to be a battle of top guards and Pullen provided the firepower with a game and career-high 34 points, which included seven three-point field goals. Clemente added 19 as the two combined to go 13-for-13 at the free throw line to pace the Wildcats. Curtis Kelly chipped in 10 points, while Wally Judge had eight points and eight rebounds in the winning effort.

The Wildcats shot 41 percent from the floor in the game and hit 11 three-point field goals. But, the Wildcats' performance at the free throw line was the story as they went a season-best 27-of-30 (90 percent) on the night, which included an 11-of-12 effort down the stretch. The percentage tied for the third-highest in school history for a game (20 or more attempts).

Kansas State had to play catch up in the first half as BYU (30-6) opened the game with a 10-0 run to take control early. Pullen's three at 15:17 cut the lead to 12-7 and Clemente's runner

made it 12-9. But, the Cougars made another run to put the lead back to 10, 23-13.

A Clemente three brought the Cats to within six at 25-19 with eight minutes left and two free throws from Kelly tied the game at 25 with 5:31 left. Pullen's third three of the half gave the Wildcats their first lead at 28-27 with 4:17 left. The Cats would then connect on seven straight free throws to go up 35-29 and Pullen's three at the 1:32 mark capped a 10-0 run to give K-State a 38-29 lead.

Pullen, who scored 20 points in the first half for the third time this season, hit his fifth three of the half to give the Wildcats a 10-point advantage at the break, 41-31. K-State hit on 13-of-14 free throws in the opening half and connected on six three-point attempts while holding BYU to 37 percent shooting and forcing nine turnovers.

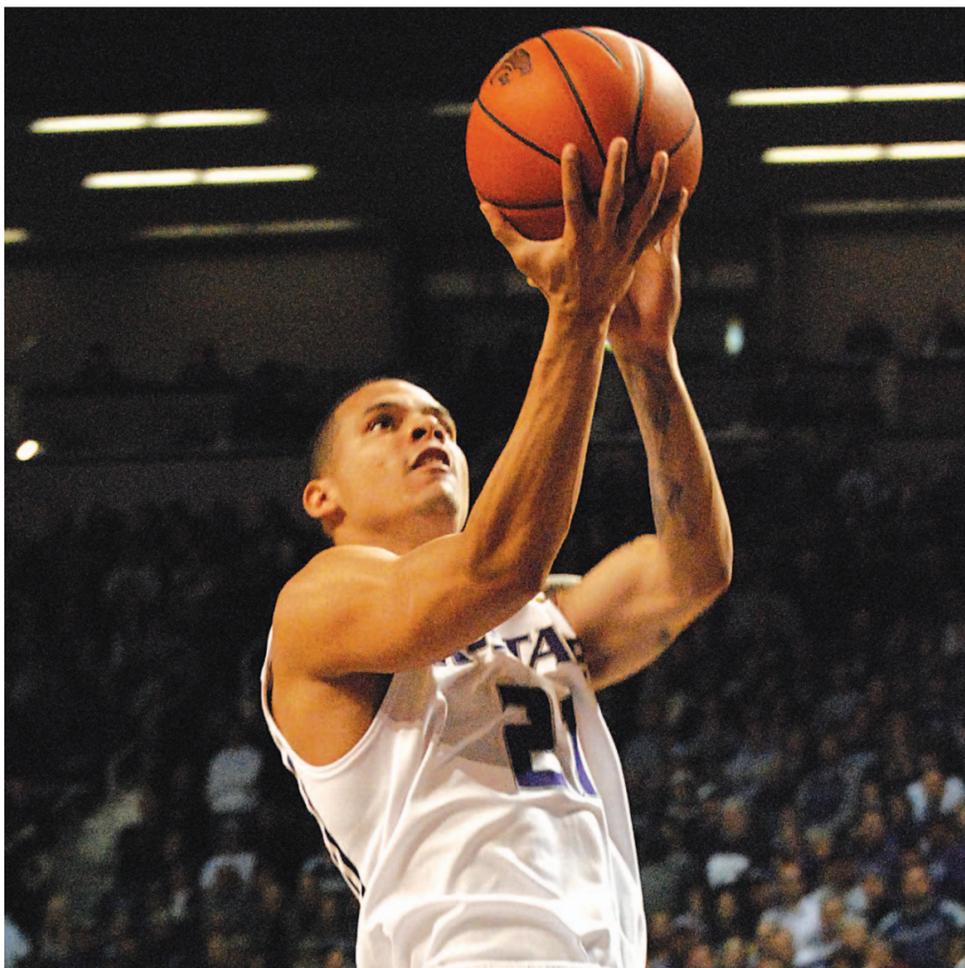
K-State maintained a 10-point lead in the opening minutes of the second half until BYU closed to within 45-40 with 16:25 left. A Judge jumper and another Pullen three upped the lead back to 10 at 50-40 with 15:31 left and Clemente's runner upped it back to seven at 55-48 after BYU cut it to five.

BYU would only get as close as 55-50 the rest of the way as Clemente and McGruder each hit big three's to keep the lead at double digits. After a Judge slam and a Pullen layup, BYU closed it to 66-59 but Pullen answered yet again with a big three and a defensive stand that culminated with a Samuels block secured a 71-61 lead.

K-State went on to hit 11 free throws down the stretch to close out the win.



Luis Colon (15) looks to hit the open man. (



Denis Clemente (21) had another great game.

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