

Edward Seaton, Editor in Chief  
Ned Seaton, General Manager  
Steve Stallwitz, Advertising Director  
Bonnie Raglin, Circulation Director  
Bill Felber, Executive Editor  
Walt Braun, Editorial Page Editor

103rd year  
as a daily  
  
No. 51

## Be ready for storm season

With any luck, we won't have much in the way of severe weather this spring. But we ought to know better than to count on luck.

The fact that we are enjoying 80-plus degree days in mid-March — officially, it's still winter — ought to be enough to convince skeptics that just about anything is possible. If we can have a warm, dry winter, we're more than capable of having a stormy spring.

Let's give state and local emergency preparedness people credit: Not only did they alert residents that sirens would go off Tuesday afternoon, but the scheduled day turned out to be nice and sunny, minimizing the possibility that someone might think the end was near.

Given that our weather is about a half-season ahead of schedule and given the number of tornadoes that have grabbed attention in this state and elsewhere, it isn't too early to prepare for severe weather. Fortunately, there isn't much to it.

It starts with paying attention to what's going on outside and to weather forecasts and heeding watches and warnings. That goes for severe thunderstorms as well as tornadoes; little captures the imagination like a tornado, but severe thunderstorms aren't only more common, they can be immensely destructive as well. They, too, can carry winds powerful enough to blow vehicles from roadways, snap trees and rip roofs from houses. Severe thunderstorms also often come with hail, heavy rain, and, of course, lightning. And they, too, can knock out power and cause flash flooding.

Storm or survival kits can be invaluable in such situations. Simple enough to compile, the hardest part often is making a point of doing it. Such kits should include first-aid equipment — in fact a first-aid kit for each car as well as the home is recommended. Also include enough food for three days, enough water so that there is a gallon a day for each individual; flashlights and spare batteries; cash; basic hand tools; and miscellaneous items ranging from insurance policies and prescription drugs to books or games to help pass the time.

Parents also would be wise to have rendezvous and contact plans in the event family members are scattered when severe weather strikes. It's remarkable how some simple, common-sense steps can improve our luck during storm season.

### Another view

## Continued cuts to CASA will prove even more costly

©2012 Garden City Telegram

Social service agencies have enough to do without worrying about ways to maintain sufficient funding for their operations.

But considering deep budget cuts at every level, many agencies must brace for change in how they do business.

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) is among organizations left worried about their future due to pending cuts in the nation's capital. CASA provides a voice for abused and neglected children. Appointed by court systems, CASA volunteers work for the best outcomes in the legal and social services systems for the children.

Unfortunately, those efforts could be hindered by plans to slash the national CASA budget — a move that could leave the local Spirit of the Plains CASA working even harder to generate funds to help local children.

Federal dollars for CASA trickle down to the state office, which makes grant funding available for local agencies. Grants through the state agency represent the local CASA's main funding source. Additional time needed for grant writing and fundraising inevitably would translate to less time available to devote to children and recruitment of volunteers.

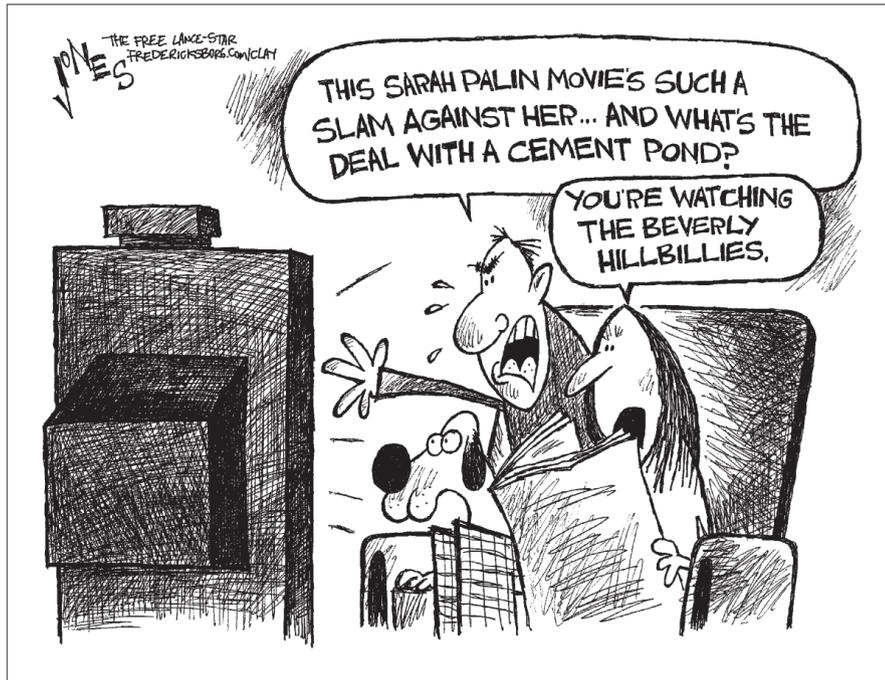
Spirit of the Plains CASA served more than 200 children last year. When children have less representation because of budget cuts, it's more difficult to achieve positive outcomes. Local CASA representatives have tried to minimize the impact of previous funding cuts with fundraisers. Knowing how important it is to help some of the community's more vulnerable children — including victims of sexual abuse, physical abuse, abandonment or neglect — it's heartwarming to know many generous individuals offer contributions of time and money. Their hearts are in the right place.

And the investment pays off: National CASA estimates every dollar devoted to CASA yields \$23 in savings in the foster care and family court systems. But when the choice is to raise taxes or slash budgets, too many policymakers find it easier to opt for the latter — even though long-term consequences could prove even more costly.

Count continued cuts to CASA budgets as unwelcome moves that promise to do more harm than good.

### Etcetera...

Someone is always — always — watching... A 50-year-old French man took Google to court for posting on its Street View service a photo of him urinating in his yard. The man says that even though his face was blurred out, he's become the laughingstock of his small village. What did he expect, a reality TV show?



## Expand concealed carry to campuses

Robert D. Auten  
Contributing Writer

In 2006, the Kansas Legislature passed the Personal and Family Protection Act. With the first licenses being issued Jan. 3, 2007, more than 40,000 Kansans have chosen the option to carry a concealed handgun as a means of personal self-defense against the threat of great bodily harm or death.

There remain barriers in Kansas to those who carry legally and responsibly, and it is time for the voices of these citizens to be heard in Topeka. Students for Concealed Carry advocates decriminalizing self-defense on campus and allowing concealed handgun license holders to carry concealed handguns on public university and college campuses in the state.

The Kansas Senate is now considering HB 2353 by Rep. Knox, a bill that would expand the rights of individuals who have chosen a concealed handgun as a self-defense option. If passed, it would allow concealed handgun license holders to carry concealed in state or municipal buildings unless such buildings have adequate security measures to ensure that no weapons — carried legally and more important, those carried illegally — are brought inside.

For all Kansans, those who choose to carry and those who do not, this is a momentous step forward in enhancing safety by removing the impotent attorney general "No Firearms" signage that in no way prohibits criminals from carrying illegally and leaves law-abiding citizens defenseless.

There is no such thing as a law-abiding criminal, and it is just as easy for a criminal to carry a backpack full of guns onto campus, a "gun-free zone," as it is a backpack full of books. Those who are licensed and choose to carry would have the option of carrying into state and municipal buildings. For those who do not carry, deterrence would make criminals think twice because they would not know who is carrying a concealed handgun and who is not.

The passage of this bill would also remove the imaginary boundary around college campuses

**"The passage of this bill would also remove the imaginary boundary around college campuses disarming students, faculty and staff who legally and responsibly carry off campus..."**

disarming students, faculty and staff who legally and responsibly carry off campus, allowing them the option of carrying on campus should they choose. HB 2353 wouldn't change who can carry, just where concealed handgun license holders can carry. What changes when these individuals, legally able to carry almost everywhere else in Kansas, step across that invisible boundary that separates off-campus from campus? Students for Concealed Carry supports allowing license holders the same options to safety and self-defense on campus that they have off-campus.

Campus carry is not an untested idea. Currently, more than 2 percent of America's college students attend a university that allows

### Short take

## A reprehensible campaign insult

A lot of ugly things were said during Australia's latest leadership brawl. Attacks on policies and even governing styles are to be expected, and Kevin Rudd lobbed plenty of those at Prime Minister Julia Gillard when he tied unsuccessfully to unseat her as Labor Party leader.

But then he got personal, denouncing Gillard as a "childless, atheist ex-communist." Rudd isn't the first to use "childless" as an insult. Other Aussie politicians — all men, of course — have done the same. They tend to cart their wives and children on campaigns, using them as political accessories. The implication is that a woman who has no children is selfish.

If childless by choice, she's seen as heartless and unfeminine, someone who doesn't know how to love. If it's merely that biology got in her way, then she's called barren, with the word's implications of emptiness and pointlessness.

Up to one-third of Australian women, like me, do not have children; we should hardly be demonized for a condition often accompanied by unbearable grief. It is reprehensible to hurl the word "childless" as a pejorative.

Gillian Guthrie, Sydney Morning Herald

campus carry. More than 220 campuses in seven states (Utah, Colorado, Oregon, Washington, Wisconsin, Virginia and Mississippi) allow campus carry, and have for years without incident. In fact, the New Mexico State University chief of police has stated, "Allowing people to carry on school grounds generally makes those places safer."

A researcher at Colorado State University found that crimes against persons on campus dropped by 44 percent after concealed carry was allowed there in 2003. Though we cannot

show causation, we can show correlation between the allowance of this option of self-defense on campus and a decrease in relevant crime. We have shown campus carry has done no harm, and it can potentially do a world of good in preventing sexual assault or saving someone's life. Students for Concealed Carry ([www.concealedcampus.org](http://www.concealedcampus.org)) advocates the decriminalization of self-defense via carrying concealed on campus, because we recognize there is a huge, life-changing difference between feeling safe and actually being safe on campus.

The time for Kansans to act is now. Support HB 2353 by participating in the nationwide Empty Holster Protest April 2- April 6 by showing unified support for the decriminalization of concealed carry on public university and college campuses. More important, contact your state senators and urge them to support HB 2353.

Robert D. Auten, a Manhattan resident and KSU employee, is Kansas director of Students for Concealed Carry.

## Obama seems to fight war half-heartedly

©2012 Washington Post

President Obama spoke up forcefully on Tuesday about the massacre of Afghan civilians, allegedly by a U.S. soldier. He said that the United States "takes this as seriously as if it was our own citizens and our own children who were murdered" and promised to "spare no effort in conducting a full investigation." Those were the right words.

Following through with his commitment to "make sure that anybody who was involved is held fully accountable with the full force of the law" could help to repair damage with the many Afghans who are understandably outraged by the killings.

Yet Mr. Obama's follow-up comments, on his strategy in Afghanistan, were troubling. While saying that he was "confident that we can continue the work of meeting our objectives," the president said his goal was to "responsibly wind down this war" and "bring our troops home." He promised to "continue the work of devastating al-Qaida's leadership and denying them a safe haven," but he made no mention of defeating the Taliban or of peace for the Afghans themselves.

There are many reasons why both Afghans and Americans are souring on their alliance, including a few over which this White House has no control. But Mr. Obama and his aides have done much to damage the relationship between the two countries and public morale on both sides. Tuesday's comments were but one more example.

The president came to office pledging a revitalized campaign in Afghanistan. But he began by terminating President Bush's practice of regular personal communications with President Hamid Karzai. Several of his envoys treated Mr. Karzai roughly and disparaged him in public.

The U.S. official most able to work with the Afghan leadership, Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, was abruptly pushed out of his post because of a hyped magazine article. Mr. Karzai is an erratic personality — but is it any wonder that he has grown increasingly resistant to the Obama administration?

The president reluctantly accepted the advice of his generals that he adopt a strategy of counterinsurgency against the Taliban and send additional troops to carry it out. But he arbitrarily cut the number of troops sought by commanders; set

an equally arbitrary deadline for beginning their withdrawal; and rejected the military's advice that the pullout be staged after this year's summer fighting season. Now his aides are reportedly pushing for further troop withdrawals next year, once again against the Pentagon's recommendation. Meanwhile, negotiations with the Taliban are being pursued over Mr. Karzai's head, and sometimes in spite of his objections.

As they watch these moves, Afghans, the Taliban and neighbors such as Pakistan can reasonably conclude that the United States, rather than trying to win the war, is racing to implement an exit strategy in which the interests of Afghans and their government are slighted. Americans, meanwhile, rarely hear Mr. Obama explain the mission or the stakes.

In this context, it's not surprising that Afghans show little tolerance for U.S. failures — whether it is this week's shooting or the accidental burning of Qurans. And it's little wonder that most Americans favor withdrawing troops as quickly as possible. If it's evident that the president won't defend the war, and is focused on "winding down" rather than winning, why should anyone else support it?

## Fledgling U.S. recovery needs more help

©2012 N.Y. Times

The Federal Reserve acknowledged Tuesday that it is not certain which way the economy is going. It saw signs of improvement, but its outlook is cautious.

It plans to continue near-zero interest rates through 2014 and bond purchases through June to keep borrowing costs low. The stock market responded enthusiastically. Without more help — from Congress, the White House and the Fed — it is hard to see how the fledgling recovery will take off.

While the jobless rate has declined swiftly, from 9.1 percent last summer to 8.3 percent in February, the slow pace of economic growth suggests those job gains are not sustainable. Similarly, the strong retail sales report for February largely reflects higher spending for gasoline, suggesting that consumers are more stressed than free-spending.

Here are some of the pressure points worth watching:

**Jobs vs. good jobs:** At least 40 percent of the new private sector jobs fall into low-paying categories. Health care has contributed 15 percent of

job growth in the private sector since February 2010, but many of those jobs were in home health care and nursing homes. Leisure and hospitality contributed 16 percent of new private sector jobs, but most were in bars and restaurants. Ditto business trades and professional services, where a large chunk of growth has been in retail sales and temporary jobs.

Over the last two years, governments at the federal, state and local levels have lost nearly 500,000 generally better-paying and more secure jobs — teachers, librarians, road workers. Worse, even with recent private-sector job growth, labor supply still far outstrips demand, depressing wages — with no turnaround in sight. Currently, the ratio of job seekers to job openings is nearly 4 to 1. In a healthy market, the ratio is closer to 1 to 1.

**Exports falter:** Hope for a trade-led recovery has also taken a hit, with the U.S. trade deficit surging in January to its widest imbalance in more than three years. Part of the reason is rising oil prices. Another reason is a fall in exports to Europe's faltering market. The depth of the European downturn is not yet clear, nor is the extent to which weakness in Europe will weaken China

and other nations that also rely on exports, with knock-on effects for U.S. growth. What is known is that a widening trade deficit translates into slower economic growth.

**Washington's follies:** Federal budget cuts have already shaved about half-a-percentage point from recent growth; calls by some House Republicans to make even deeper cuts than those agreed to in last year's budget agreement would slow growth even further. The Fed chairman, Ben Bernanke, deserves credit for trying to talk sense to lawmakers, telling them repeatedly that near-term policies to support jobs, housing and the broader economy should be coupled with long-term plans to control the budget deficit. The message, unfortunately, has not gotten through. The Fed, so far, has correctly resisted calls from its hawkish members to tighten its policies. Barring a dramatic, and unlikely, upsurge in the economy, it must be prepared to loosen policy further.

The Fed should not be the only one doing battle for the economy, but given lawmakers' inability to agree with President Barack Obama, or each other, on even basic stimulative policies, its economic leadership is essential.