

## Jobs given to offshore company by state

Outrageous. If you call the State of Kansas to ask questions about food stamps, you may well be talking to someone in India.

That's because the state Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services outsourced its "call center" for food stamps to a firm that moved the work offshore.

It may seem a little weird, but with modern communications and the difference in wages, it make perfect sense for someone halfway around the world to pick up the phone and answer questions about Kansas.

It's done every day for business. Businesses have to survive, and if they can get something done cheaper offshore, they will.

When the state does it, using tax money, though, people ought to be outraged.

The Kansas Legislature was, in fact, outraged. The House voted to ban the outsourcing and require the department to contract with a firm that would hire unemployed Kansans to answer the calls.

Then Secretary Janet Schalansky told the legislators that bringing the jobs back to Kansas would cost about \$600,000 a year, money the state does not have.

The Legislature backed down.

Here's how ridiculous this situation is:

Social and Rehabilitation Services — the same department that is closing all its county offices — runs the state's welfare programs. Many of these, including food stamps, serve people who are unemployed or underemployed.

The department could be hiring Kansas people to do its work, or at least hiring contractors who use Kansas workers. Then it might not have so many people on food stamps.

But the department apparently doesn't care. It's obsessed by an image of a streamlined organization that no longer includes jobs in Kansas, especially rural Kansas.

We thought it was awful when Secretary Schalansky started closing all the rural offices. She said Kansans would be served by toll-free phone lines and visits from the same caseworkers and others who served them before.

Eventually, the department admitted it wasn't saving money with the reorganization or cutting its staff. It just wanted to bunch them up in bigger towns.

Then the outsourcing came to light.

It's hard to tell if Ms. Schalansky, an appointee of former Gov. Bill Graves, is running the department well or not, because the agency will seldom discuss its operations. Everything is cloaked in a veil of secrecy when Social Services makes a mistake.

From what we've seen this year, though, you have to wonder why Gov. Kathleen Sebelius kept her on. If any of the department's offices ought to be closed, it's hers.

Why not outsource her work, and get someone who cares about Kansans and rural Kansas to run this department in her place?

— Steve Haynes

## ELECTED OFFICIALS:

★ Governor Kathleen Sebelius, 300 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-2332

★ U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774; fax (202) 224-3514

★ U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521

★ U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran, 1519 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715

★ State Sen. Stan Clark, State Capitol Building, Room 449-N, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7399

★ State Rep. John Faber, 181 W. Capitol Building, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7500

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Office hours:  
8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.  
Phone: (785) 877-3361  
Fax: (785) 877-3732  
E-mail: telegram@nwkansas.com

### STAFF

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## Music makes life all the more sweeter

Music, now there is a subject you could write about, but how to make it interesting has been a puzzle for me for several weeks.

I had an e-mail from a friend who said she thought I would have done a column on music from years ago — but where would you start?

Would you mention the love songs or Mairzy Doats and Dozy Doats and Liddle Lamzy Divey. (mares eats oats and does eat oats and little lambs eat ivy); Red Sails in the Sunset or some of the classics, which I liked too.

I grew up singing songs that were popular in my parents day as well, what music, I loved those songs.

Music just seemed like too large a subject to write about, but hopefully this comment will make you think about your favorite songs of long ago.

Then there is the noise that I hear sometimes now that does not seem to fit under the title of "music".

But that's also a subject too large and controversial for me to get into in this small column.

Last week I had the opportunity to be the piano accompanist for some of the high school vocal solos and small en-

### Memories

Sonya Montgomery



sembles.

Now that's music.

My opinion was that all of the students performed very well. Some, of course, had worked harder than others. But, I was proud of all of them for being there.

They were a small percentage of those students who could have been there. Some sang with their throats feeling dry and their knees knocking and still made beautiful music

Unfortunately, the judges were not giving very many Is, so many of the students received IIs, but in my opinion they were all winners.

Teachers tell the students to remember it is one person's opinion on one day of their life.

However, I remember the joy of winning when I received a I and the agony of defeat when it was a lower rating.

I had the opportunity to be a part of vo-

cal, remembering when I sang "bass" in the high school girls quartet as well as solos and other ensembles with the trombone.

I also was the accompanist for other students.

I encourage piano students to learn to accompany, we need you, and I have found it to be interesting. I have played for weddings, funerals, dinners and met a lot of people that I would not otherwise have had the opportunity to meet.

I am writing this while in Denver.

My husband, Rex, and I arrived at his sister's apartment complex, Cherry Creek Retirement Center, just in time to hear an hour of music performed by a very good ragtime piano player.

He played a lot of the old "popular" music which I enjoyed a great deal as did many others in attendance.

Yes, music has been a large part of my life, but to write about it, well it would take a book, and no one would publish or buy it because many people have their own memories of music.

Laughter and music have been proven to help heal physically, mentally and spiritually.

May you always have a song in your heart and on your lips.

## Library is the same, yet different

It was about 1914. The three of them would walk quickly into Edmond and wait on the drug store steps until the doors opened. Every two weeks the pre-cursor to the "Book Mobile" would stop there and bring books for the residents.

Each person could check out four books and keep them for two weeks. My mother, her sister and brother would check out the maximum and then share with each other. Consequently my mother and aunt grew up on Rover Boys and my uncle read Elsie Dunsmore.

Recently, while at the library, I couldn't help but notice how things have changed and yet how they remain the same.

Years ago when the library was down at the site of the museum, hushed voices echoed from the glossy floors and every-

### Phase II

Mary Kay Woodyard



one whispered. The children's reading center was toward the front where the sunlight shone in and warmed the room.

Tall racks held books of all kinds and I'm sure there was an area for periodicals but I don't remember where it was. If you wanted to do something different you could walk downstairs to the museum to see interesting things, my personal favorite was the ostrich egg.

Last week at our "new" library every computer was employed by children and adults chatting or finding information. In the children's section, the puzzle table occupied my grandchildren and a 2-year-old and his mother were playing a game on the computer. There were adults reading newspapers in the periodical section and still others viewing the displays and some checking out books. It wasn't a hushed environment; it was and is a living one.

The library in its prominent position in town says a great deal about our community. The well-kept lawn, the large inviting doors and handicapped accessibility plus hours open for all schedules signal the value we place on learning and growing.

We've come a long way from the drug store steps, but the value never changes.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

### Prayers and transplant make a difference in boy's life

To the Editor:

Many of your readers have prayed for my great-grandson, Dillon Jaap, who had a heart transplant in 2000, when he was 2-years-old. He is now 6 and a healthy little boy. He is home-schooled and very advanced mentally. He has to take his medication very promptly, twice a day, to avoid rejection of his heart.

George (Mr. Atkinson) and I accompanied my daughter, Karla Scriven, of Garden City, this past week to visit the Jaap family in Colorado Springs. While there we attended a "Little Hearts" luncheon in Denver. It was held at the Pepsi Center.

Children who had heart transplants or heart surgeries and treatment were all asked to model new styles of children's clothing. Dillon was asked to model swimming trunks and a T-shirt. With col-

ored glasses he was one "cool dude". Each child was accompanied by another person. Some were older teen-agers, who had been heart patients. Three members of the Denver Fire Department were there to walk with the children. A woman dressed in her uniform walked with Dillon.

Many of the doctors from Children's Hospital were on the program. This is a yearly event with proceeds going to a new children's hospital now being built in the vicinity of Fitzsimmons Hospital in Denver.

The Jaap family is making plans to go to Minneapolis, Minn., in late July for "Transplant Games". This is an event for anyone with a transplant to enter games for competition.

It is sponsored by the Kidney Foundation. Dillon has entered two events with

children in his age bracket. His closest friends are children who have had heart transplants in Colorado Springs. His mother has been making and selling cinnamon rolls to help fund their trip this summer.

We thought this information about transplanted organs interesting and wanted to share it with you.

Sincerely,  
Delores Atkinson  
Norton

(Dillon's great-grandmother)  
Editor's Note: Dillon's parents are Brandon and Laura (Scriven) Jaap; and his grandmother is Karla (Beaty) Scriven, Garden City. The Jaaps have two other children, Cooper, 3, and Hayley, 9 months.