

Legislature stalling until compromise can be found

So far, the special session of the Legislature in Topeka is a mess. We expected that.

A week before the session began, our representative, John Faber of Brewster, said he thought the mood in the House was "not to do anything."

And so far, things are stalled in the House, where conservatives who don't want to take orders from the state Supreme Court refuse to pass a spending bill, but don't have the two-thirds majority required to pass a constitutional amendment slapping down the high court.

Just as well. An amendment is unlikely to pass the Senate, either, but the conservatives are going to have a big say in whatever passes.

The governor, noting a big jump in state revenues, proposed a \$162 million package for schools with no tax increase, a real sticking point for the conservatives.

It hasn't moved in the first five days of the session. There are problems.

For one thing, while it's more than the amount the court demanded — \$142 million — there's no guarantee the state can raise that much again next year.

Legislators who cut taxes in the early '90s are standing firm against an increase today, and with good reason. That's what voters say they want.

The tax-and-spend crowd, after losing on the floor of the Legislature, is happy to back the school lawsuit. The unelected Supreme Court seems to believe the mantra that schools need ever-increasing money supplies, and hang the budget.

But it's the Legislature's job to divvy up the state's money, not the courts', and something is going to have to give.

We suspect there will be a compromise.

Expect a move to limit the court now or later. Next year, perhaps, there'll be a constitutional amendment to require justices to run for office again, rather than being appointed for life.

Also, it's quite possible there will be a campaign to have voters mark "no" when current justices come up for approval.

No justice has ever been voted off, but unhappy taxpayers might just send them a message.

Whatever happens, the Legislature has to deal with the fact that the state has other needs besides schools. Overall, Kansas schools perform well, and they are not the state's only priority.

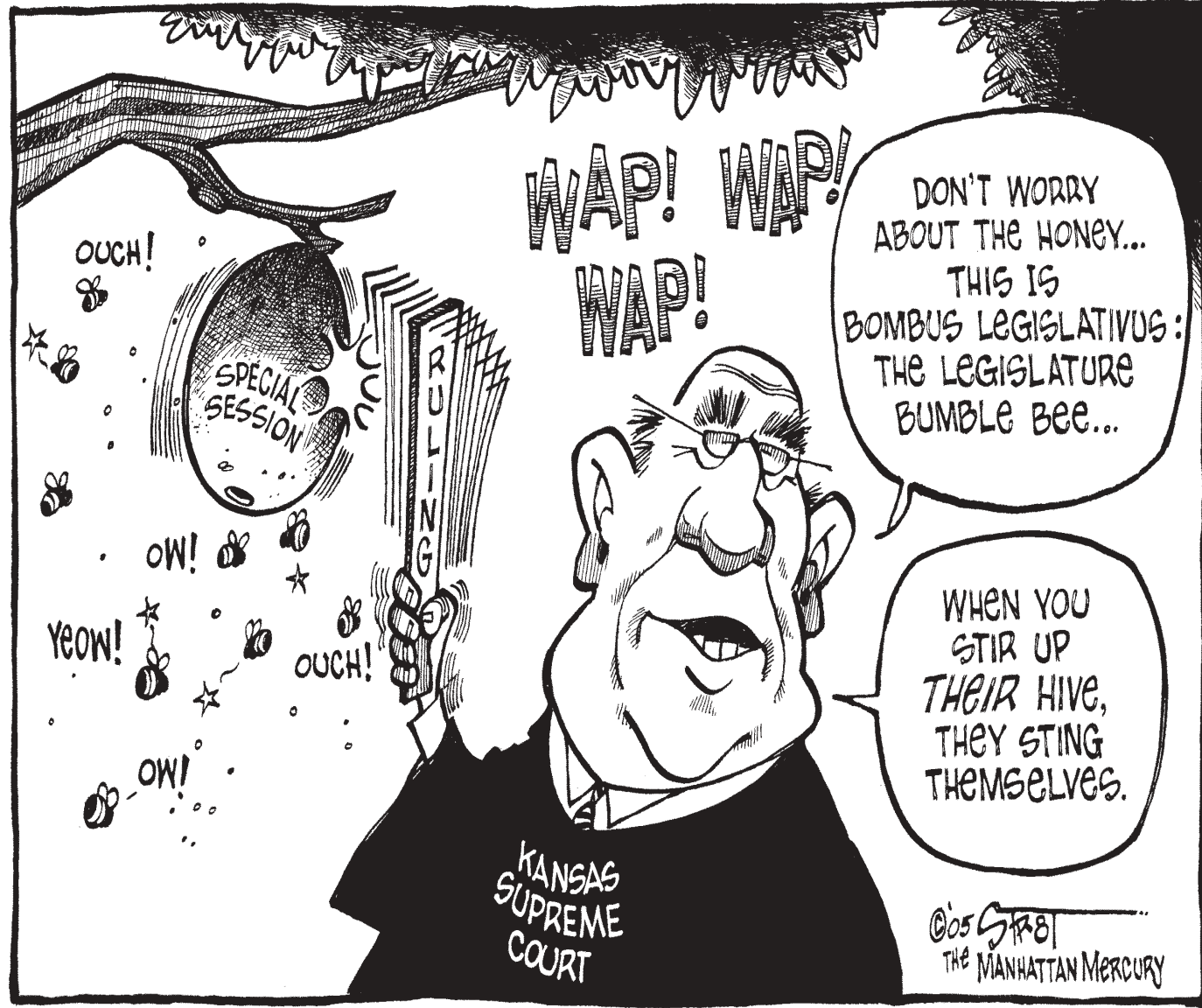
Higher education has been cut sharply, and colleges are short of money. Tuition has shot up, though Kansas universities are still a bargain.

Other state agencies have seen nothing but cuts. State employees will want a raise.

Schools are the most important thing in the state budget, but they can't and shouldn't have it all.

And it's the Legislature's job to sort all that out and make some decisions, not the court's. They need to get to it.

— Steve Haynes



Farming is in the heart, not head

You can take the boy off the farm, but you can't take the farm out of his heart.

My usually fired-up, can't-wait-to-get-to-work husband is waiting around the house for "the" call.

A friend of ours who has a very full-time job in town also farms. Visiting with him after church Sunday, Jim learned he and his wife are harvesting by themselves and he offered his help. A phone call this morning confirmed they wanted him. They'll call back when they're ready to go to the field.

I just heard Jim's end of the conversation, but it involved the merits of one brand of combine over another, moisture and repairs. Now, if that phone would only ring. He's like a little boy waiting to go play.

—ob—

"Backstage mothers" aren't limited to the theater. In fact, it's not limited to mothers. You know the parents I mean. The ones who push, push, push their kids into activities THEY want. Not, necessarily, activities the kid wants. They are the ones who question the umpire's heritage and

Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



belittle their child in front of his friends.

I thought, perhaps, the "horsey crowd" might be immune to this malady. Not so. Recently, I attended a horse show where competitors ranged in age from 3 to adults.

I watched one teenage girl put her horse through its paces during a reining class. Perhaps not a stellar performance, but adequate. When she left the ring, guess who was waiting? Mom.

Like a hawk, she pounced on her daughter using expletives formerly relegated only to sailors. (No offense intended toward sailors.) She reminded the girl how much they had paid for that blankety-blank horse and that she would blankety-blank sell him if she ever messed up like that again.

You gotta love smart children...

As with most things it started innocently enough. Because my computer was more than 24 hours old, it was hopelessly obsolete and with the move it seemed like a good time to upgrade.

After doing some checking I announced my decision to the family.

"I'm getting a laptop."

"But I want a laptop," Tricia replied.

A word to the wise — don't get in her way when she goes on a mission.

I think she took a class in "Steammrolling Your Parents" at college. I'd say it was preschool but I was her preschool teacher and I only remember covering the ABCs and how to spell your name.

After careful consideration I realized she was right. A laptop made a lot more sense for her. She could just pick it up and go back and forth to school or whatever.

Me, I'm not moving again until they put me in the home.

Since her computer is considerably newer than mine (although still close to being obsolete) I would take her computer.

I decided to sell my old computer. But first we had to get my records off it and on to the new machine.

Tricia took all three of the computers apart. The laptop was up and running in no time — you can see where her priorities are.

I'm glad I didn't get that one. The screen saver says "I love K—!" I would have no use for something like that.

How did Dell know her boyfriend's name? What if she changes boyfriends? (I'm kidding, I know you can change your screen saver, don't ask me how, but I know it can be done.)

Meanwhile, she had computer "guts" all over the place.

Her father was pretty concerned. But he and I freely admit we are technology chal-

Back Home

Nancy Hagman



lenged so at that point we really had no choice but to trust her.

She had some problems reinstalling the bookkeeping program — those key codes are very important.

"Yes ma'am," company rep says, "I see you registered but I cannot give you the key code. The only option available is to sign up for tech support for a year. The first month's cost is \$49.99. Do you want me to set that up for you?"

Me: "Uh, no thanks."

Rep: "Okay, well remember we are always here to help"

Me: "Yeah, for a price."

He laughed.

The next day I called back and a very nice lady gave me the key code. She must have been able to tell I was on the edge.

Everything on my "new" computer now seems to be working. And I have I-Tunes — 477 titles. There used to be more but Tricia censored some of them.

"I know you won't appreciate these," she said.

As with all new things, the new computer is an adjustment. Getting online seems more complicated.

Kate says, "It's just like the old computer."

Well, it isn't — but never mind.

If you turn the volume on I-Tunes up high enough you don't have to listen to things you don't want to hear. (Like children and husbands.)

We just have one last little item to deal with. We must get all our financial information off the old computer before we turn it over to the new owners.

Tricia thinks she can do this (Why not? She seems to be able to do everything else). How did she get so smart?

But we got to thinking maybe we should take it to the computer shop to be sure. Then we got to wondering how much would that cost. Probably more that we are getting for the computer.

It seems there are usually two ways to do things. The right way and the way I do it.

Ah, well it is great to be back at the keyboard and online. Thank heavens for smart children. Whoever it was that taught Tricia about computers, you did it well.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Where were all of the sellers?

To the Editor

I read about the farmer's market being moved to Elmwood Park on Thursday mornings. So I went down to Elmwood Park Thursday a little before 7:30 a.m. to see what was for sale.

Even though there was a sign saying "Farmer's Market" and a few more people showed up to wait, no one showed up to

sell us anything.

I waited until 8:10 a.m. then left. I went back around 10:30 a.m. and not only was no one there, even the sign had been removed.

What happened?

June Prout
Norton

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

ISSN 1063-701X

215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, KS 67654

Published each Tuesday and Friday by Haynes Publishing Co., 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, Kan. 67654. Periodicals mail postage paid at Norton, Kan. 67654.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Norton Telegram, Norton, Kan. 67654

Official newspaper of Norton and Norton County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, and the Nebraska Press Association

Nor'West Newspapers

Dick and Mary Beth Boyd

Publishers, 1970-2002

Incorporating the Norton County Champion

Marion R. Krehbiel, editor

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

STAFF

Cynthia Haynes editor and publisher
Veronica Monier staff reporter
Dick Boyd Blue Jay sports editor
Carolyn Plotts society editor
Sherry Hickman circulation manager
Rich Meyers advertising representative
Vicki Henderson computer production
Susie Marble computer production
Sonya Montgomery bookkeeping



August H. Muehe
Norton