

There are other ways to pay for things

By January, the Kansas Legislature will be looking for ways to help pay for higher school spending. The House and Senate, kicking and screaming all the way, put up almost \$286 million more for schools this year. No one knows for sure how the state will pay this bill. The governor wants to add casinos and slot machines, but most estimates don't show that bringing in enough to satisfy the court. Plus, a lot of backward-thinking Kansans just don't want a new casino on every block. Something about moral values and gambling, people who can't afford it losing their shirts, petty stuff like that. But we already have gambling, at the corner bar, out at the race track, at Indian casinos. Morality's not the point. It's revenue we need, and lots of it. It's just that slots and roulette wheels and crap tables wouldn't bring in enough bucks. What's the poor state to do? Here's a modest proposal: Let's legalize prostitution. Well, let's don't call it that. The churches won't like it. There'd be pickets out front, people taking pictures to send to your wife, you name it. Let's call it sexually oriented leisure activity. Make it local option, so communities could decide whether to opt in or opt out of the pleasure game. Dodge City, which has quite a history, and which is hot for a casino or two, might be a good place to start. An establishment called "Miss Kitty's" would be popular. Tourists could stop by for a sarsaparilla and a little entertainment, a quick trip upstairs, maybe a soak in the hot tub. All the bartenders and all the girls would wear period costumes. They could watch "Gunsmoke" reruns for hints on how to act. Tax revenues should be spectacular. The state would never lack for money again, at least until nearby states caught on to the revenue potential. The cities probably would want a cut. Wichita and Kansas City wouldn't mind having a house or two, we'd suppose. Some towns, of course, might want to just stay out. If the idea takes off, we might be able to find a use for all the abandoned school buildings out here in western Kansas. Instead of mail-order houses and flea markets, they could be ... well, you get the idea. Recreation is a good, clean industry which can provide a lot of jobs, create cash flow and generate tax money like crazy. Workers would move to town. Their kids would fill the schools. And if other states get into this, like they have with casinos, and the competition gets too tough, then Kansas could look around for still another opportunity. Drugs, maybe. Lots of money in that. You could tax the bejebbers out of drugs. And since the money would be for schools, it'd all be for a good cause, right?

— Steve Haynes



'Helpful hubby' is good thing to have

Alleluia, the water softener is in. My dishwasher quit a couple of months ago so I have been doing the dishes by hand. And, I noticed something — the cloudy glasses and streaked plates were starting to shine again.

The dishwasher at the new house was not hooked up and since the advantages of washing dishes by hand were "crystal" clear it didn't seem all that bad.

But for some reason it bothered the hubby to see me washing dishes. So he took the time (in the middle of harvest no less) to get the dishwasher in working order.

It was another week or so before I got some detergent. I was so used to washing dishes by hand I just couldn't remember to buy it.

In less than a week I started to see clouds on my glasses. It's too soon to say if the water softener will reverse this trend but I am hopeful. If things don't improve I will go back to washing by hand.

When summer is over and we are back to the empty nest thing there won't be many dishes anyway.

At our house it's difficult to just let a serviceman do his thing. In fact, the hubby had to "help" with the water softener.

I admit I don't get it. The hubby has never installed a soft water system and I

Back Home Nancy Hagman



sort of thought this was how the serviceman made his living. Surely he goes to some places where he doesn't have assistance from homeowners. What does he do then?

I wasn't home when the phone guy came but I got the impression the hubby helped him also. I asked the hubby how long he was here and he said about a half an hour.

Good, I thought, it cost \$30 for the first half hour and \$60 after that. With the "helpful hubby" discount it surely would only cost \$30.

Wrong! I got charged \$90 total and apparently there is no discount for helpful husbands.

But at least the hubby is happy when he gets to help. Woe to the poor satellite television guy — he came during harvest and there was no way the hubby could get loose to help him.

He came on a Saturday. He seemed clueless but also harmless. Since I have no idea how to install the things I just said, "Okay," whenever he consulted me with his plans.

I did feel I should stick around so he didn't trun off with the silver or something. So even though I needed to go to the grocery, I stayed around to give moral support. Tricia was in and out and I noticed whenever he wanted some assistance he seemed to be gravitating to her.

Five and a half hours later he decided he was done. He thought he needed to give operating instructions to everyone, i.e., Tricia. I told him she went back to the field. He looked at me and suggested I get a piece of paper and write some things down. He stopped short of asking for her phone number.

I felt sorry for the guy. It was a very hot day and he drove two hours to get here. He told me he had two other calls to make yet. He had to climb up and down and fight off the barn swallows who took exception to his wires running by their nest. And, he didn't have lunch. I thought about offering him a sandwich but I just wasn't sure of the protocol — the longer it took him the worse I felt.

Of course, the hubby was not happy with anything. I thought he would be thrilled. It was his birthday. There was a Nascar race the next day.

In contrast he loves the water softener guy.

Not only does he let him help, he looked at the mess of wires left behind by the television guy and said, "This isn't right, he shouldn't have left things like this."

Vindicated, the hubby got right on the phone and called the satellite company. They are sending someone else out.

I just don't understand why you can't trust people who are selling you their services to do their jobs. What if I was an old lady? (No comments, please!)

What if I didn't have a "helpful hubby"? The upside is we are getting settled and everything is about done.

The downside is we have been at this so long the notices are starting to come for extended warranties. I think I will just go with the "helpful hubby" plan on that, thank you very much!

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Water plant should last a long time for what it's worth

Letter to the Editor: In reading the letter that the City of Norton sent out, I was, of course, most interested in what was said about the water treatment plans.

None of us are happy about the raise in water rates that is going to pay for the new system, but it is something we have to live with if we want decent water to drink.

They tell us that it will take 40 years to pay for it all. Are these figures based on having a relatively stable population base for that 40 years or have they figured it to

take in the fact that Norton may lose population in that time?

Will the system last 40 years? I think it should serve us for 40 years and beyond. After all, anything this big and expensive should at least outlast the years it takes to pay for it.

By the way, has anyone stopped to think how long 40 years is?

It is approximately half a lifetime!

People in their 20s now will be paying until their retirement years. Anyone older will be paying well after they are retired.

Your kids and even your grandkids will be paying for the system. I'm not saying this is bad, but we do have to know it will last.

I understand that they are going to dig a well field to supply us with well water.

If that is the case and we no longer take it from the lake, then we should have much better water as it will take only a small fraction of the chlorine that is used now to make it safe to drink. That factor alone will probably increase the life of the treatment system.

Answers and corrections to my understanding of this are welcome.

June Prout Norton

WRITE:

The Norton Telegram encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of public interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise.

We do not publish form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous should be submitted to the Want Ad desk.

Letters will not be censored, but will be read and edited for form and style, clarity, length and legality. We will not publish attacks on private individuals or businesses which do not pertain to a public issue.

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Summer is all around us

We call him Toadly. It's not very imaginative, but it fits him. He lives under a bush near the garage during the day, and at night he hops out to catch his supper by the lights we have up on the garage.

He started out small, but he's growing. With the population of bugs around the garage, this toad could grow to monumental proportions.

We have to watch him pretty carefully, however, because he's hopped into the garage several times when we've gone in to get dog food, charcoal or a screwdriver.

We always chase him out because, while there's plenty of bugs in the garage, it would get too hot for him the next day and we like him like he is — big, fat and warty. By toad standards, he's a beaut.

It seems that every summer we get new pets. Other people adopt cats and dogs; we gather toads, turtles and spiders.

And speaking of spiders, we have a lovely one living on the side of the back deck. Every night, she spins a beautiful web, and when we're home, we watch her at her work.

There are a half dozen wolf spiders making webs on the grass. I was worried that when Steve mowed he would destroy them. He said that when he mows, though, they would be near the ground and would

Open Season

Cynthia Haynes



just rebuild their webs that night.

Every night as we go for our walk, we listen to the night sounds and watch the fireflies. Steve is especially glad that the cicadas have come out.

I like the crickets, but Jiminy seems to have set up shop in my kitchen, and can he sing! I'm getting night sounds at all times of the day, and I don't even have to be outside.

We heard a woodpecker last night as we meandered down the street and the sounds of boys whispering and girls giggling. A whole tribe of teens were on the back of a flatbed truck parked at the curb. There was a shriek as the dog bulleted past and then some cheery comments as we walked by at a more leisurely pace.

As we ambled on down the road, they resumed chatting with each other and we smiled in the dark.

It's summer, and a good time for an evening walk.