

## It could've been great if it would've gone another way

Rep. Jerry Moran has decided to stay in Washington, passing on a firefight with Gov. Kathleen Sebelius. Smart move.

While Mr. Moran is widely regarded as the only Republican with a chance of uniting the party and whipping the popular governor, there's no saying that he would have won.

Maybe. A year and a half, a lot of work, a ton of money and a few truckloads of dirt later, he might have won.

Probably would have won.

Though he wouldn't have seen his family much in the meantime.

Most Kansas Republicans fall more or less into one of two warring camps, conservative or "moderate." While individual members of each group are diverse and hard to pigeon hole, the bottom line is they don't much get along.

Jerry Moran rises above all that, going back even to his days in the state Senate. The Hays Republican has the respect, and the ear, of nearly every Republican in the state.

His position as a five-term incumbent in the Big 1st District, now 69 counties strong, gives him great name recognition.

But he's still "just" a congressman. There's the temptation to move up, to the Senate or the governor's chair.

A race for governor, though, is no picnic. You'd have to hit all 105 Kansas counties. You'd have to be on the road all year. You'd have to step in some stuff that most of us would rather avoid.

And did we mention the money? You'd have to raise a boatload of it.

Gov. Sebelius has proven herself a tough and able campaigner. Running against her would be no walk in the park.

Bob Dole says Jerry Moran should be a senator, and he should know.

My guess is that will happen some day. Either Sam Brownback will run for president or Pat Roberts will retire.

Mr. Moran has passed his chance to be governor, and it may not come back his way. Who knows; Ms. Sebelius might run against him.

It's probably just as well. Two terms as governor, and you can retire into gentile obscurity.

Jerry Moran is not cut out for that.

He's going to be with us for quite a while. When his girls are out of school and he's nothing better to do, we expect he'll make it to the Senate some day.

Until then, he's doing a pretty good job for us where he is.

In terms of politics, it's too darned bad he's not running.

We'd have had a dandy fight for governor, and maybe a real battle for the 1st District seat.

As it is, Mr. Moran will walk, not run, to re-election. The governor may strain a muscle or two, but nothing like the contest we could have seen.

It was a sensible move on Mr. Moran's part, but oh, what might have been.

— Steve Haynes



## A little water can make all the difference

Isn't it funny how things eventually all work out even if the timing is a little off?

Back in May, before her birthday, I made the mistake of asking Kate what kind of cake she wanted.

Burnt sugar was her reply.

Where did that come from? My mom made great cakes — chocolate and burnt sugar. My favorite was burnt sugar. But I only remember trying once and it was a disaster.

Being the good mother I am, I got the recipes out and tried to figure out where I went wrong and how I could fix it.

I ran into local attorney K.G. (short for Karen Griffiths and maybe "Kitchen Goddess"). She, too, had fond memories of burnt sugar cake and she said she had a recipe. She ran home and got a fabulous cookbook. I looked it over and decided the main difference was her recipe had you use more water to the burnt sugar than my recipe did.

Home I went. In my recipe you use a cup of water in the actual cake batter so I decided to subtract the extra water I was putting into my syrup from that. Since most of the water you put into the burnt sugar evaporates, my batter was too thick so I ended up adding more water. The cake was tasty but full of tunnels. Still, much better than my former efforts.

### Back Home Nancy Hagman



Later I compared notes with Karen. She had tried the cake also. She complained hers just did not taste right. This was around fair time.

"Do you know they have a class for burnt sugar cake at the fair?" she asked.

I had indeed noticed that. Although, neither of us was willing to work on perfecting our cakes, Karen did well with some photography. I hadn't unpacked enough boxes to find anything to enter.

Even if we weren't going to enter the fair, we were still wondering just what the secret was. I continued looking for recipes. It sort of became an obsession.

Then, just like she could read my mind, fellow columnist Liza Deines gave us her mother's recipe her in Aug. 2, "Cook's Corner".

You use one half cup water to the burnt sugar syrup. And you use one cup in the cake. It works a whole lot better.

The recipe Liza uses and mine were

pretty similar. So for the rest of it I stuck to my mother's. It turned out great — no tunnels and moist. Yummy.

The biggest difference was the frosting. Instead of saving the extra syrup, Mom made her icing with it. I put half of the syrup in the cake and left the rest in the pan. I burned the sugar in.

After your cake has cooled, add 1 cup sugar, one half cup cream and two table-spoons butter to the syrup. Cook until it forms a soft ball (240 degrees on a candy thermometer.) Remove from heat and beat until it begins to thicken.

The neat thing about this frosting is it really cleans up the pan you burnt the sugar in. Plus, you can undercook it, but if you cook it a little too long, it just gets hard. It then cracks when you cut the cake.

I don't see that as a problem. As the server, you can just discreetly nibble on the little pieces that break off.

It's a long time until the next fair but I would like to challenge all you bakers to enter a burnt sugar cake next year.

I am planning to provide a special prize; all the fair board has to do is let me be the judge.

If they aren't agreeable to this, I would like everyone to know that while it is too late for Kate to get a quality cake for her birthday this year, my birthday is Dec. 10.

## An unexpected stop brought joy

The sign said "Escuela el dos San Ramon Tilaran." As our bus drew up in front, curious children stopped their games and came to see why the tourists were stopping in their little part of the world.

The cinder-box schoolhouse had two classrooms with desks, a kindergarten room out back and a kitchen housing a wood stove.

Recess was just getting over when we got off the bus. As the tour guide asked those of us who hadn't been able to hop off almost before it stopped to wait for him to speak to the teachers, the first of our editors on the ground were handing out pens and trinkets.

The children were enchanted by the strangers with gifts and the publishers on the bus, all members of the National Newspaper Association, were taken by the youngsters, with their shy smiles and open welcome.

There were 33 of us, but we crowded around the edges of the classroom while our guide relayed our questions to the teacher, Edel Cascante Navarro, a middle-aged woman who said she was both the principal and teacher for grades 3, 4 and 6. She had a master's degree and had taken English in school but did not speak it.

There were 34 students in six grades, she told us, broken up into two classrooms. The teacher for grades 1, 2 and 5 was sick, so those students were not in class. Apparently, there is no substitute teacher in San Ramon.

We were on a study mission in Costa Rica learning about volcanoes, rain forests and the culture of this tiny Central

### Open Season Cynthia Haynes



American nation.

We had already visited the country's largest newspaper, La Nacion, where we learned that Costa Rica has a free press which fights government corruption and prints books.

The books, all by well-known authors with expired copyrights, cost about 40 cents each. They are about the size of comic books with lurid colors on the cover and cheap newsprint inside. Titles include works by Henry James, Edgar Allen Poe and Jack London, among others — all in Spanish.

At the school, we noticed that the children, while cleanly dressed in mismatched uniforms, had little play equipment and few books.

The newspaper people passed out the trinkets we had brought for the kids — ink pens, pins, and hats.

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They wanted to know our names and some of the more enterprising got our autographs. Mostly, they are the children of small dairy farmers, our guide said. Their parents probably make about \$350 to \$450 a month, the average for Costa Rica. They aren't poor for this region but their school lunch of rice, beans and cabbage would be cooked over a wood stove and they would walk the few blocks or several kilometers home at the end of the day.

Our tour guide was nervous. This stop was not on his regular schedule. He didn't quite know what to do about Americans who wanted to stop and visit a country school.

But it turned out to be a good stop for all of us. We enjoyed the children. The kids enjoyed the attention, and the photographs we took. And the teachers will soon be enjoying a whole stack of books we persuaded La Nacion to give them.

Meanwhile, back in the states a high school in New Jersey is about to find out that it's becoming a sponsor for a little two-room school in the middle of Central America.

One of the publisher's had a daughter on the tour who was just looking for a project, and she found it in Escuela el dos San Ramon Tilaran.

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