

Olympics a disappointment for everyone

Friday we found out where the 2016 olympics will be held. Chicago was eliminated from the running at midmorning on Friday, which is midevening in Copenhagen where the Olympic committee meets. Rio de Janeiro was the chosen winner, much to the president's disappointment.

The president and first lady had been making a huge push for Chicago, even going so far as to go to Copenhagen to support the city's bid. He wasn't the only world leader there; Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama flew in to make the case for Tokyo. Interestingly, Tokyo was eliminated early as well.

Beginning this morning, the Olympic committee heard each city's final presentation. There were four cities up this year, with Rio de Janeiro and Madrid still in the running. Tokyo's proposal was for more environmentally friendly games. Rio's push is for the first South American Olympics in history.

Chicago's major draw was, of course, an internationally popular president leading the charge. Not that it wasn't a good candidate for the games; it's a major population center, has an already rabid sports fan base, a well-established international airport, a thriving nightlife and an ample tourism industry. Chicago is already a major convention destination and a trade capital, being the home of the Chicago Stock Exchange and the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

However, it does have its problems. While violent crime had been significantly reduced in recent years, 2008 saw those numbers rebound. Last year, the city had 510 murders, the most in the country. In 2007, 624 aggravated assaults and 555 robberies were reported for every 100,000 people. That makes for a lot of crime in a city of 9.8 million people.

However, crime problems plague any major city. Doubtless Tokyo, Rio and Madrid have their own problems with crime, poverty and gangs.

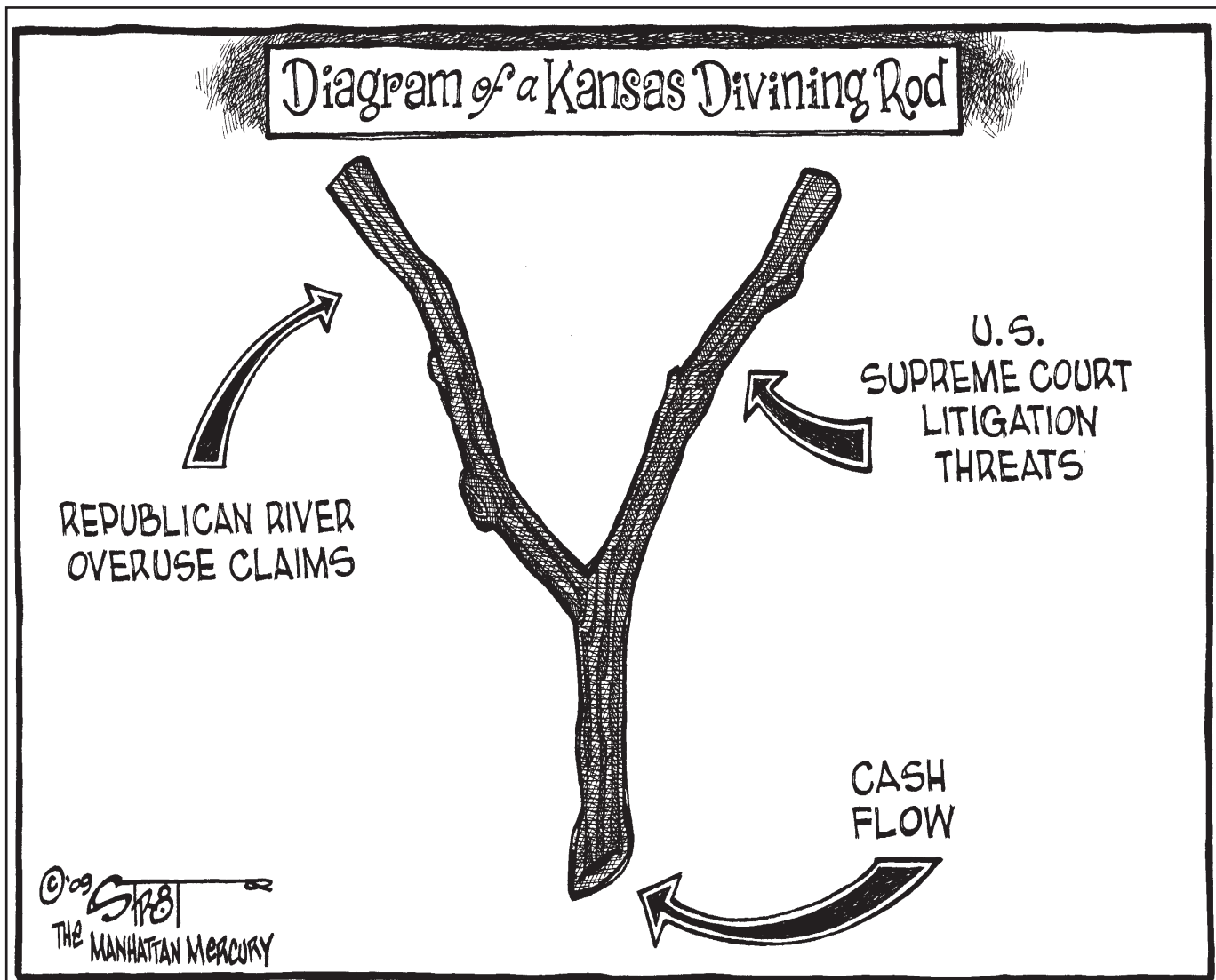
But the Olympic Games brings with them increased security. Athlete villages are guarded day and night. The crimes that do happen there are usually politically motivated, such as the killing of Israeli athletes by terrorists at the 1972 games in Munich or the bombing in Atlanta in 1996. These crimes rarely relate to street crime in the city.

And the Olympics can do a lot for a city. They bring not only athletes but fans from around the world. It would be a much needed boost to tourism, retail, and restaurant industries in a time when an influx of cash is just what the doctor ordered. If done right, it can raise the prestige of a city on the world stage and boost international opinion of the host country.

So it's too bad that the fair city of Chicago wasn't picked to bring the Olympic Games back to U.S. soil in 2016. But it's OK; we've had our fair share of games here in Atlanta and Salt Lake City, and we're sure to have them again.

For next time, we ought to make a proposal for Kansas City.

- Kevin Bottrell



New campaign manager

I have a new title: Campaign Manager. Not just any campaign either. It's a presidential campaign.

Our 10-year old granddaughter, Taylor Lane Bravo, a fifth grader, has announced her candidacy for president of the student council at her school in Texas. She called last night to get my opinion of her campaign slogans. Of course, Grandma had to add one of her own: "Stand up and cheer, Bravo's here." Taylor's two favorites are: "Forget the rest, Bravo's the best" and "I May Be Short But, Big Things Come In Small Packages. Vote Bravo For President." That, of course, referring to the fact that she has always been the shortest kid in her class.

Candidates are not allowed to make banners or signs - only one poster. But, here's the kicker, she has to make a speech in front of the student body. That would eliminate most of the competition right there. But, not Taylor.

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



I asked her what her campaign platform was going to be. I thought perhaps, she would promise better lunches or longer recesses. She's much more mature than that.

Her reply: "I want to be the kind of president who will really listen. I want the kids to know that I will schedule an appointment before school, during recess or after school to talk with them. I want them to know their opinion is important."

If only all politicians would take a few pointers from a 10-year old. I'm going to tell Taylor's mother to

hang on to that campaign poster. Because, in 2033, when Taylor turns 35-years old, we'll dust it off for the national presidential campaign.

People tell me it must be fun living with Jim Plotts because he's such a cut-up. And, I admit, I wouldn't have much to write about if it weren't for his antics. But, I have to know about them, first. I found out this week that he's been holding out on me.

On our way to church he confessed that he had pulled a real "doozy" in front of one of his friends. The friend said, "Well, I bet that makes it into the paper."

Jim said he told his buddy, "Not if you don't tell her it won't".

I'm afraid I really did pick the last rose of summer. It's perched on the shelf above my kitchen sink but, it's fading fast. Flowers seemed to be extra pretty this summer. And, as much as I love the fall, I will miss the splashes of color.

Today's chuckle

FOR SALE BY OWNER:

Complete set of Encyclopedia Britannica. 45 volumes. Excellent condition. \$1,000 or best offer. No longer needed. Got married last month. Husband knows everything.

Your political connection

★ **Governor Kathleen Sebelius**, 300 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-3232

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Once upon a time

Insight

John Schlageck

Each room contained approximately 20 wooden desks. Each had a hole in the upper right-hand corner to hold a bottle of ink.

A large American flag stood in the right corner near the blackboard that stretched the entire length of the north wall. A portrait of George Washington hung in solitary splendor on the left side.

Every day we began the day with the Pledge of Allegiance. We included the phrase, "One nation, under God" and each one of us stood at attention with our right hand over our heart.

My first day at school was memorable. Once seated in my desk, I promptly began to whistle. I'd grown up listening to Mom whistle while she worked around our house, so I just naturally began whistling at school.

This conduct resulted in a visit to the cloakroom where we hung our coats and stored our lunch boxes.

Here the door was closed behind me and I spent the next few minutes crying aloud. How was I to know a happy student wasn't to whistle while he worked? Seemed the right thing to me.

Well, that bad experience hardly proved a bump along the school highway. I loved attending school - always did.

Throughout my eight years in Seguin, enrollment at my two-room school never exceeded 35 students. I can't remember a class with more than five children.

With such a small enrollment, each room combined classes. First and second grade studied the same subjects while third and fourth had their own curriculum. Because we were in the same room, I could listen to and learn from both classes. Something I did with gusto.

As a youngster and throughout my 18 years of education, I was a sponge

- absorbing everything. Learning and listening always came naturally for me. Although I don't think it hurt that our teachers were strict. In fact, talking in class resulted in an automatic ticket to the cloakroom, or time spent at the chalkboard after school.

One of my favorite periods during my formative years at Seguin was the 15-minutes immediately following lunch. That's when one student was selected to read aloud from a book from our extensive library.

Don't scoff about the number and quality of books that might have been found in our small, rural northwestern Kansas community so many years ago.

The book I picked out during my 5th year in Seguin was Lorna Doone by R.D. Blackmore.

This was the first book I couldn't put down and I have read it several times since. It's a simple tale of the outlaw Doones who lived and pillaged in the depths of Bagworthy Forest.

The main characters are the beautiful, hapless heroine Lorna Doone and the man she weds John Ridds, whose father was killed by the Doones on his way home from market. Quite a read, if you haven't already.

The next best thing to reading was recess. What youngster would ever argue with that?

We enjoyed three periods which included approximately one hour of play-time each day. We played games called circle, pom-pom pole away, fox and geese, Annie, Annie Over and of course every one of us turned into a monkey on the steel playground equipment.

Life was good. Things were simpler. Time moved much slower in our little two-room school back in the mid '50s.

John Schlageck is a leading commentator on agriculture and rural Kansas. Born and raised on a diversified farm in northwestern Kansas, his writing reflects a lifetime of experience, knowledge and passion.