

College issues a lesson for our region

The news of the reconsideration of a transfer of \$318,000 from Northwest Technical College by the Technical Education Authority on Monday was a relief, and it was great news the Board of Regents voted unanimously Wednesday to keep the technical colleges money the same as this year.

Dr. Ed Mills, president of Northwest Tech, reached out to the Sherman County commissioners about the problem facing the college and to others in the community looking for ways to approach the governor-appointed members of the Technical Education Authority and the Kansas Board of Regents.

The transfer issue appeared to be an unfair approach to moving money from the smaller technical colleges to the larger ones in Manhattan and Wichita.

The plan had been presented by the Technical Education Authority in May, and passed 5-4 over the objections of Dr. Mills and his counterpart at North Central Technical College.

Approaching the issue from the outside, the first impulse was to raise the alarm and bombard the board of regents with letters, calls and anything else that might halt the transfer of money away from Northwest Tech.

A calmer approach was to take stock of where the issue might be addressed and contacts were made to determine if a majority of the regents would vote against the transfer plan. With the help of the governor's office and the president of the senate a special conference phone meeting was held by the Technical Education Authority on Monday and the plan was reversed on an 8-3 vote.

The efforts to change the outcome of the Technical Education Authority were successful, and the unanimous vote by the board of regents was the best outcome.

One thing made clear in the reconsideration of the Technical Education Authority plan was this was the opening round, and more efforts to enhance the larger technical colleges at the expense of the smaller could be expected in the future.

In pondering how to approach the issues facing Northwest Tech, an apparent truth came into clear focus. People in western Kansas are happy at times to let the political happenings in Topeka go without much thought as long as the politics doesn't affect those in the western portion of the state.

The problem the tech college faced pointed out that over the years the people of this area have not worked to be in positions within the state boards where their voices could be beneficial.

One person recently said it was not that people in northwest Kansas did not feel it was important to be involved in the state operations, but it was a long trip and the people in Topeka did not care about the problems of the western part of the state.

The same person said the technical college issue made him rethink his position, and realized it was important for the people of northwest Kansas to be involved to be able to tell the people in Topeka the western part of the state does matter.

He said it has been a long time since people from this area have sought to be nominated to many state boards and commissions, but it is something we need to be working at on a continuing basis to avoid facing decisions from Topeka without having our voices be heard on what those decisions might be.

The battle was won, and that is good.

More has to be done in the future to enhance the effort of this area to carry our story to Topeka to be in positions to speak up when such issues come up before it becomes a battle.

— Tom Betz

Fireworks laws in effect

Every year the same questions arise, what time can we shoot fireworks and when do we have to quit. The answers to these questions are found in the City Code under Article 3. Fire Prevention Code 7-305 which says in part under Section 22-6-5 Ordinance 1544 Sec 1

The sale, offering for sale, and shooting or firing of fireworks of every nature, shall be conducted only during the days of June 27 through July 5 of each year, both days inclusive. The physical shooting or firing of fireworks of every nature shall be prohibited between the hours of 11 p.m. and 8 a.m. of June 27 through July 5, except that on the evening and early morning of July 4 and 5 the shooting of firing of fireworks may occur until 1 a.m.

In short this means you can shoot fireworks from June 27 to July 3 from 8 a.m.



until 11 p.m. and on July 4 from 8 a.m. to 1 a.m. on July 5.

We also allow individuals to shoot their remaining fireworks on July 5 from 8 a.m. until 10 p.m.

Pat Morel
Chief of Police
City of Norton

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THE NORTON TELEGRAM

ISSN 1063-701X

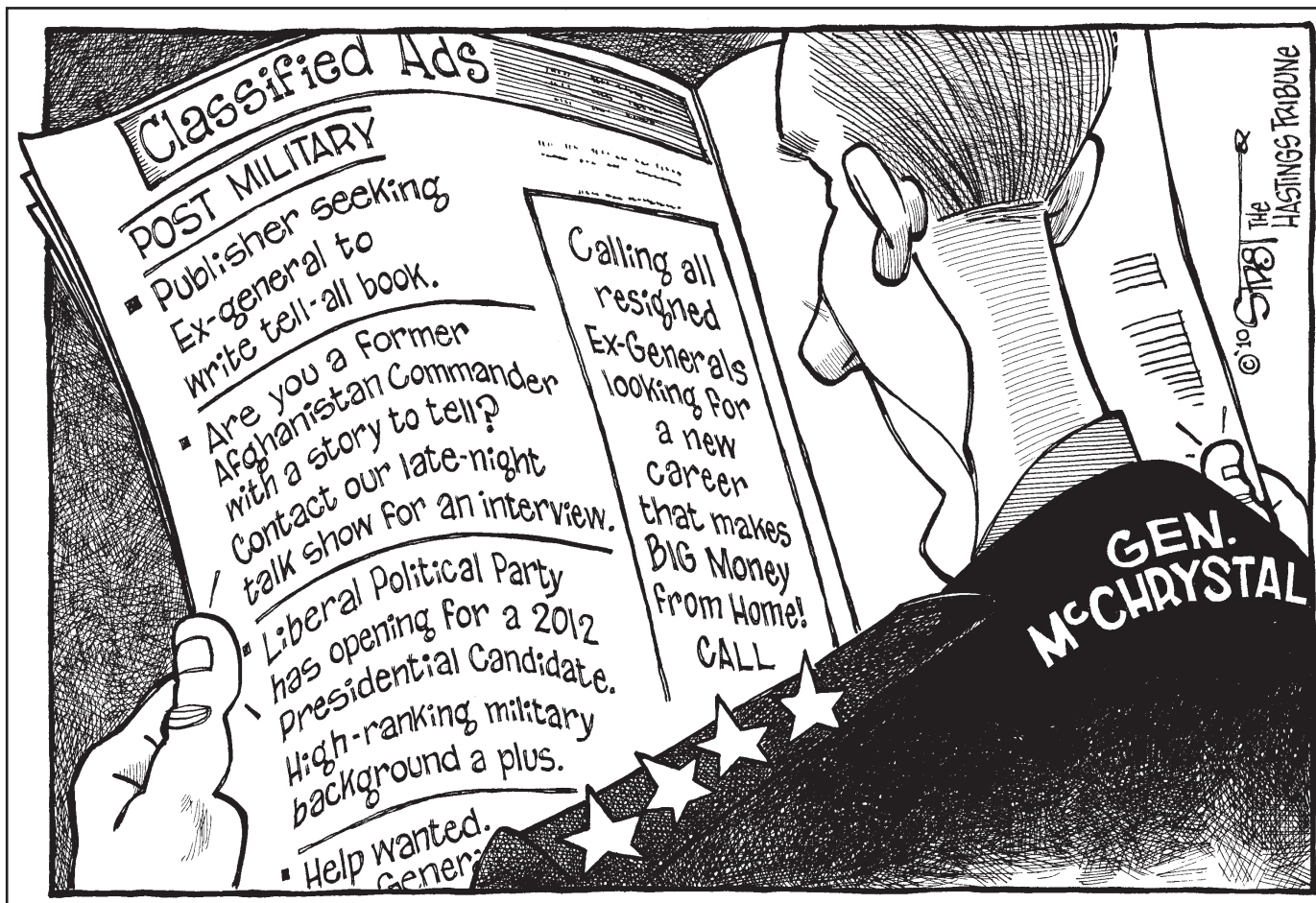
215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, KS 67654

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, 215 S. Kansas, 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

Kansas Press Association



Easterners go storm chasing

So, how do you entertain visitors from the East Coast on a Sunday evening?

Well, it's summer, so we did summer things.

First, we had snacks and drinks on the deck and chatted for a while. They'd been on the road all the way from Columbia, Mo., barely taking time for lunch along the way. It took a while to get them to sit down, but the weather cooperated and the storms to the south cooled things down a little.

And in the nearly 18 years we've lived here, the trees in our yard and the neighbors' have grown. The deck can be a shady paradise in the evening.

Then, we grilled thick, juicy burgers. I told Cynthia we'd have to cheat on our diets a little to make them thick, but it was company. A surprise to me, Mark, who's a big guy, if trim, ate two while college-age young Mark stopped after one.

I'm not sure I could eat two big burgers anymore. And I'm not trim.

After supper, we had to walk up the street and see the vultures roosting on the water tower.

Not every plains town has a unique wildlife show like that. Apparently, it's not too common in New Jersey, either.

Then we got to watching the thunderstorms to the south. A big one was

On the Prairie Dog

Steve Haynes



growing just east of Selden, beautifully lighted by the setting sun.

The business end, where tornadoes sometimes form, was clearly visible, so I offered to run them down to the junction for a closer view.

The storm started to peter out about the time we got down there, but it was still spectacular to watch. And hey, easterners don't get much storm chasing time — except with the weather shows on television.

We wound up touring Dresden, where they asked a lot of questions about grain elevators, some of which I could even answer.

On a Sunday night, there was no one in the office to ask.

We drove home up the "old" gravel highway to Oberlin along the Bremer Road, stopping several times to avoid deer. We talked about the crops in the fields and some of the history of that area.

And got home in time to give a tour of our house. They were more than ready for bed, but the storm chasing did seem to keep them awake.

Mark and Liz and young Mark planned 11 hours on the road Monday to Dubois, Wyo., where they planned to camp for a couple of days until they could get into their condo in Jackson Hole.

They left at midmorning, their huge canoe and two bikes weighing down their little van. (Our cats thought this was a pretty cool place to explore, and I was a little worried one of them might just join the road trip.)

Young Mark put on his headphones and crawled into his nest in the back seat. I think he likes books better than scenery.

They declared it to be the best visit ever, but I'm inclined to think no one else ever took them storm chasing.

They planned to stop and visit other newspaper friends in Imperial, Neb., on the way to Wyoming.

I'm sure Imperial doesn't have vultures on its water tower, though it's a nice little town.

But you never know.

Anyway, it's always nice to show off the local landmarks and such, and we do have a lot of grain elevators and deer out here.

Muttonhead musings

Insight

John Schlageck

Food has taken a bad public relations rap for far too long. As one of my favorite comedians Rodney Dangerfield would have said, "I'll tell you Johnny, food get's no respect."

It all started with Adam and Eve. What caused them to sin?

An apple, of course. Everyone knows what one bad apple does to a barrelful, right?

When a friend buys a car and problems arise, he does not call the car lousy, does he? No, instead it's labeled a lemon.

When someone receives bad advice, the suggestions weren't bad, instead the person was given a bum steer. And a bad joke is not called stupid; it is referred to as corny.

Pits from fruit will grow an orchard, but if something is awful it is considered the pits.

Extremely homely girls are distastefully referred to as pigs. Homely guys are labeled turkeys or boars. Someone who lacks gray matter is often called a muttonhead.

You gotta be careful of corn at night.

They can be really creepy with their husky voices and seedy appearance. Why, they even cob right out and tell you to shuck it right to your face.

Rosemary was always late delivering packages. This prompted the head of International Herbs & Spices to call her supervisor, demanding to speak to the parcel sage about Rosemary and time.

There's no other food that inspires as many cringe-worthy puns as nuts. Yes, we know they're salty, and we're also aware we have the option to lick them, but if you were going to insist on making joke after joke we'd rather just run to the store and buy our own. There's more but this is a family column.

All children know that Cinderella's beautiful carriage turned into a pumpkin at midnight.

A gingerbread house landed Hansel and Gretel in the witch's oven and a

poison apple was the downfall of Snow White.

And the bad stories related to food are never ending. One of my favorites involves a hungry traveler who stops at a monastery and is taken to the kitchens.

A brother is frying chips. 'Are you the friar?' he asks. 'No. I'm the chip monk,' he replies.

Or, I decided recently that becoming a vegetarian was a missed steak. And one more—did you hear about the cannibal who showed up late to the luncheon, they gave him the cold shoulder.

I'll tell you food gets no respect. No doubt, the food industry needs an image facelift — some "good old PR hype."

To be honest, it all leaves a bad taste in this writer's mouth. But then I guess it could just be a case of sour grapes?

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.



To . . . Jeremy Wetter and his volunteers for showing the movie at midnight for the Relay for Life people. It was a great movie and was very much appreciated. (E-mailed)

To . . . Bob and Rita Speer and all the volunteers that made Relay for Life the wonderful success that it was. Congrats to the Rule Crew for raising over \$3,000! (E-mailed)

To . . . Doris and R.W. Yeager for all they do for Norton. (Called in)

To . . . the Learning Center graduates on their accomplishments. They should be proud! (E-mailed)