

Sifting up some biscuits



From left, Shelby Harting, Busy Beavers 4-H Club, Dustin Harting, Busy Beavers 4-H Club, Devin Shearer, Cedar Ridge 4-H Club and Ryan Johnson, Busy Beavers 4-H Club learned how to make the perfect biscuits in the cooking group at the 4-H Fun Day Camp. -Telegram photo by Brandi Diederich

Debt turns "Dirty"

by Congressman Huelskamp

The House voted 97-318 against raising the country's legal debt limit from \$14.3 trillion to nearly \$17 trillion. There were no provisions to cut or to cap future spending, however, so I voted against it. In essence, this would have increased the credit card limit while making no plans to pay down the outstanding balance or to reduce the rate at which debt is accumulated.

As I have pledged, I will not vote for any increase in our nation's credit card limit unless there are both real spending cuts now in the short-term and long-term changes such as a balanced budget amendment. America's future depends on ending Washington's addiction to overspending. Our children and grandchildren are counting on us to secure their access to the same American Dream you and I have enjoyed.

This increase without any cuts was branded as 'clean.' In typical Washington fashion, the adjective selected to describe this expansion of debt was chosen carefully so as to confuse voters. 'Clean' is usually associated with something good, but in this case it was a misnomer. Instead, this increase was nothing but a dirty deal for America. The U.S. and its taxpayers deserve better than what the President sought.

The solution America needs

now is one that cuts the deficit, caps spending, and balances the budget. Alongside this fiscal reform should be reduction of regulation and repeal of Obama-care. These changes are necessary to restore confidence in the American economy.

America is becoming a credit risk, and that fact is not lost on anyone outside of the Beltway. Confidence in America's private sector lags as a result of Washington's comfort with adding to the country's red ink. Large actors, like Standard & Poor's, which downgraded America's long-term credit outlook see America as a dangerous bet, rather than as a bona fide borrower. Smaller actors, including businesses of all sizes are fearfully waiting for Washington to send its bills and past-due statements to them.

Unfortunately, there are too many examples of what happens when spending goes awry. One need only look to the situations in places like Greece and Portugal to see what the current course holds for America. In Greece, gross government debt is 152 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), and unemployment is 16 percent. In America, our debt is 99.5 percent of the GDP and growing. If 9 percent unemployment is uncomfortable now, imagine what it will be if Washington does not send a clear

message to job creators that it is serious about fostering a culture of prosperity!

Though Kansas' job situation is better than what many other states are experiencing and for that we are fortunate. Washington's debt crisis does not bode well for job growth here or in other parts of the country. Employers need certainty that from one year to the next, the taxes they pay and the regulations they comply with will not grow. If this debt crisis is not controlled, then employers will have to foot the bill through higher taxes. In other words, Washington's instability and irresponsibility translate into employer inability to create jobs.

It is more likely than not that Washington will have to increase the debt limit. Given that the country borrows more than 40 cents of every dollar makes this inevitable for the time being. The only responsible thing to do with this set of circumstances is to demand real, significant changes that cut deficits, cap future spending, and balance the budget in the very near future. These changes will truly clean up Washington's mess once and for all.

Congressman Tim Huelskamp represents the First District of Kansas. He serves on the House Budget Committee.

Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership announces new members

The Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership (KARL) program has announced the 30 members of its Class XI.

New class members for 2011-2013 were announced as part of a celebration at the Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure Conference Center near Salina, as Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership marks its 20th year. The program is a two-year educational experience offering intensive study, training and travel for emerging leaders in agriculture and rural communities.

"Since Class I (1991-93) Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership leaders have accomplished many admirable tasks in Kansas' development," said Jack Lindquist, president of Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership, Inc. as he spoke to members of the new class, as well as Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership board members, graduates and donors June 4. "Big shoes will be needed to walk in the path of those that stepped up before you."

Members of Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership Class XI from Norton include: Chris Tanner, Ag Producer/Contractor.

Class XI represents both the small Kansas community and urban viewpoints. The education, motivation and experiences that will come from within the group of 24- to 54-year-old members will be as important as the curriculum, Lindquist said.

"For me personally, I am in-

spired to be a part of a great community of lifelong learners," said newly selected Class XI member Tanner Ehmke, a farmer from Dighton. "Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership, I feel, is where one can be among others who value learning and teaching, who have a vision for the future, and who are not afraid to challenge their own beliefs or the status quo. Such qualities will be required of future farmers in an increasingly troubled and hungry world that is skeptical of their food supply and demanding of more government regulation in agriculture. Especially in today's politically volatile times, independent thinkers, leaders and teachers are needed more than ever. Thankfully, for organizations like Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership, there is a place for them to learn and grow."

The new class's two-year training, which begins this fall, will include nine in-state seminars; a "Blue Chip" seminar, which is an executive review of a Fortune 500 corporation's (Monsanto) strategic management processes; and a tour to Washington, D.C. where they will study decision making on the federal level. The class's capstone event will be an international study tour to Peru in 2013.

"Peru is a rapidly growing trading partner for the U.S.," Lindquist said. "The U.S.-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement (PTPA) entered into force on Feb. 1, 2009, opened the way to greater trade and investment

between the two countries," Lindquist said.

"Few Americans get to venture beyond our own borders. Just 10 percent of Americans speak a second language and fewer than 30 percent hold passports," said Marisa Larson, Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership, Inc. vice president at the announcement event. "How can we expect our country to address global problems when so few of us have seen the globe? Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership is unique in addressing that problem by offering an intensive study, training and travel program for future leaders in agriculture and rural communities. Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership graduates fill the need for level-headed, well-informed leaders for communities and organizations, affecting positive change in an ever-changing world."

"To ensure Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership can continue its work developing leadership excellence, we need your support," Larson told attendees. "The new Class XI members will soon begin attending seminars."

"Their first year includes economic literacy instruction, communications training, conflict management exposure and the development of valuable contacts at the local, state and national levels."

"The second year focuses on biosecurity, water conservation, food safety, trade balance issues and ends with a study tour to

experience the culture, political system and agriculture of a trading partner. By learning about the world, as well as local and national issues, Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership graduates are prepared to take on today's critical challenges."

Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership's mission is to provide first-class leadership development for agricultural and rural stakeholders by designing and offering challenging and illuminating education and enrichment programs as well as a forum for continuous engagement, Lindquist said.

Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership training carries a value of nearly \$17,000 per person. Since no tax revenues are utilized for the program, funding is provided by contributions from the private sector, he said. Donations from individuals, organizations, companies, corporations and foundations provide over four fifths of the program's budget. Participants pay a tuition fee of \$1,500 each of the two years for the remaining costs.

Anyone wishing to invest in their own future by supporting the program can make tax deductible contributions directly to Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership at 101 Umberger Hall, Manhattan, KS 66506. Call (785)532-6300 for more information.

For more information about the new class, alumni, the curriculum or program goals visit the website at www.karlprogram.com.

Driving Responsibly

Summer season almost always proves to be the most dangerous for teen driving.

A new study by Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) and Liberty Mutual Insurance gives parents reason to pause before handing over the keys to their young drivers.

According to the study, 68 percent of teens admit to having narrowly avoided a crash. Yet teens are more likely to blame external factors than to point the finger at themselves.

Indeed, one in three drivers (34 percent) who say they have had a "near miss" blame another driver, while 21 percent say weather was the primary cause. Yet when asked what they were doing in the car at the time of the incident, teens admitted to an array of distracting or dangerous behaviors: 30 percent were speeding, 21 percent were texting, 20 percent were talking to their passengers, and 17 percent were changing songs on their MP3 player.

Ironically, only 9 percent of teens believed excessive speed was the primary contributor to a close call, while 13 percent said texting while driving was to blame. Another 6 percent passed along responsibility to friends who distracted them.

It's no surprise that our 'close call kids' are likely to report they regularly engage in dangerous or distracted driving behaviors:

36 percent say they regularly talk on the cell phone while driving; and 33 percent say they regularly text behind the wheel. Those numbers are significantly lower for the 32 percent of teen drivers who report never having had a close call.

Despite these disturbing statistics, 92 percent of teens consider themselves to be safe, cautious drivers. And few seem to sense the dangers lurking on the roadway once school's out for sum-

mer - despite the fact that young drivers are behind the wheel 44 percent more hours each week in the summer than during the rest of the year or that summer is the most popular time of year for kids to be driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, June, July, and August are the deadliest months for teen motor vehicle fatalities when almost 1,000 teenagers die (994 in 2009).

Close calls cause the majority of teens to change their driving behaviors, but only for a while. In fact, nearly half of them say their renewed commitment to more responsible driving lasted only a month or less. And what improvements in driving habits teens do report are more likely to involve paying better attention to other drivers than to texting or speeding less.

Apparently, it takes a tough lesson - actually getting in a crash - for teen drivers to significantly change their driving behaviors. Nearly 70 percent of teen drivers who have been in a collision say the experience changed their driving habits, with the majority of them (58 percent) saying those improvements are "forever." There's got to be a better way.

Keeping young drivers safe behind the wheel has never been timelier, and some new help is on the way. The Parent/Teen Driving Contract developed by Liberty Mutual and Students Against Destructive Decisions which can be found at www.libertymutual.com/teendriving is both a conversation starter about safety and a customized agreement that promotes dialogue and saves lives. In short, it helps families create and sustain important driving rules for both sides - because responsibility is, indeed, a two-way street.

Health Champion

The Governor's Council on Fitness calls for nominations for the Kansas Health Champion Award, due July 15. One individual and one organization will be honored by the Governor at the State Fair in September.

As part of the effort to help Kansans improve their health, the Governor recognizes an individual and an organization annually who put forth an exceptional effort to model, encourage and promote fitness in Kansas.

"Besides recognizing exemplary contributions," explains Virginia Elliott, Awards Committee Chair and Vice President of Programs for the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund, "the awards program identifies models of effectiveness in increasing physical activity that can be reproduced in other organizations and communities."

Eligible nominees might include an outstanding volunteer, a school, a local community, a newspaper or individual reporter,

a local or state policy maker or an employer, among others. Nominees would be expected to have demonstrated work that goes above and beyond what is expected to model, encourage, and promote fitness, far-reaching impact and sustainable influence or activity.

Now is the time to nominate a favorite health champion for this award and special recognition by the Governor. A health champion is an individual or organization that has made a difference in improving fitness.

For more information and to submit a nomination, go to www.kansasfitness.org and click on the link "Health Champion Award" or contact Anthony Randles at 785-296-8060.

The Governor's Council on Fitness advises the Governor and others on ways to enhance the health of all Kansans through promotion of physical activity, good dietary choices and prevention of tobacco use.

Email bdiederich@nwkansas.com with your society news!

Criminal

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6/12/2011

Sudoku Solution #2201-M

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8	6	1	7	3	5	9	4	2
7	3	4	2	1	9	5	6	8

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