

## Be a rock star by giving blood

Dear Editor:

Good Golly Miss Molly, helping to save lives through blood donation makes you a rock star.

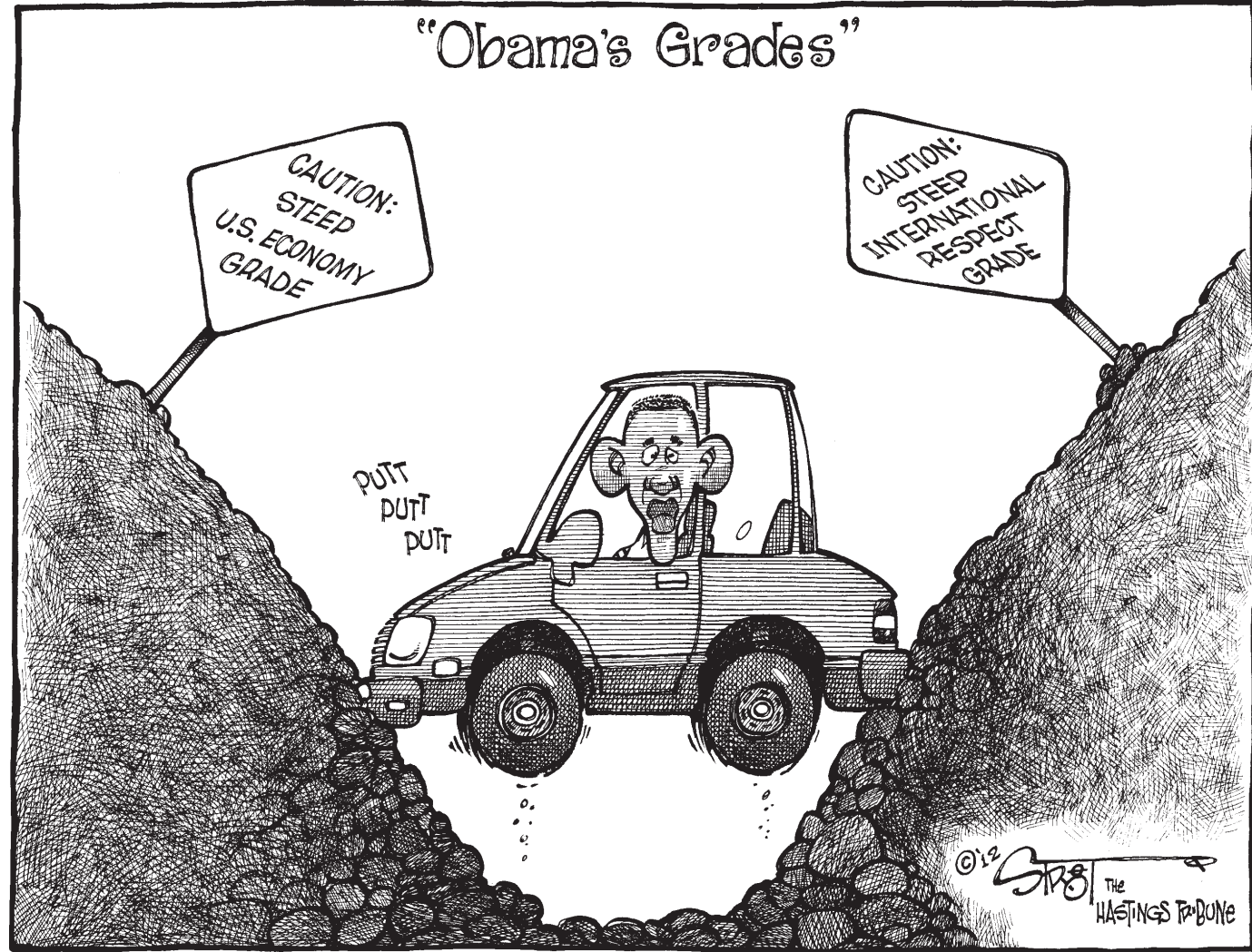
Did you know donating blood can help save up to three lives? That's because your blood is separated into its components – red cells, plasma and platelets – to treat patients with different needs. Donating platelets primarily benefits cancer patients. When a patient is undergoing chemotherapy, the production of blood cells is affected and the platelet count may drop to a critical level.

The American Red Cross invites you to Shake, Rattle and Roll into a Red Cross blood drive May 22 – July 31. You'll be eligible to win a Gibson guitar, courtesy of The Gibson Foundation. The Red Cross will award eight guitars and 50,000 guitar picks, co-branded with the Gibson and Red Cross logos, during this campaign. In addition, you'll receive a rock and roll themed t-shirt, while supplies last.

As a special incentive for our young donors, anyone aged 16-22 can enter to win a \$5,000 scholarship! Plus, high school students are invited to join the Youth Leadership Team and host school blood drives this summer. These students have the opportunity to earn a letter of recommendation from a member of the American Red Cross senior management team and a chance to win a \$3,000 scholarship. For more information on the Youth Leadership Team, visit [redcross.org/summeryouth2012](http://redcross.org/summeryouth2012).

Whether you're a fan of Bill Haley and his Comets, the Rolling Stones or Bon Jovi, the Red Cross invites you to Rock and Roll Up Your Sleeves this summer to give blood or platelets.

Sincerely,  
Catherine Younger - Donor Recruitment Rep  
American Red Cross  
316-641-1193



## This year's harvest is on the horizon

Harvest is just around the corner. I am writing a friend who lives in Rhode Island and perhaps has never seen a wheat harvest before. I told her I would try to send a picture. Unless you've seen a beautiful, golden wheat field stretching to the horizon and beyond you can't understand how impressive it is. Perhaps the picture will describe it better than mere words ever could.

My daughter, Halley, was going to come this week but the closing on a house she sold was moved ahead so her plans changed. I told her it would be better if she came a few days later, anyway. That way she could get in on harvest, too.

I know my girls remember the year we "helped" their Aunt Donna cut wheat. It was one of the years my brother, Dick, was in Saudi Arabia and it fell on Donna's shoulders to bring in the harvest. They didn't have a huge amount to cut, but, still, it was their cash crop. It was important. So, with the help of Dick and Donna's three boys, me and my two girls we got the job done. Granted Donna did all the work, but she was a great supervisor and managed not to kill anyone.

-ob-

I have a young friend who has two children; a boy, 8, and a little girl, about 20 months. The mom had to be away from her home for a few hours and it would not work for her to take the children. Since the kids already think

### Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



reached for a ripe cherry. I tried to stop him by saying, "Better not. The cherries are very sour. You won't like it."

Perhaps it was the reverse psychology, but he said he loved it and ate a few more to prove it. He promised to help me pick cherries so looks like I will owe one little boy a cherry pie.

When supertime rolled around I knew I would be safe with spaghetti. There's not a kid in the world who doesn't like spaghetti, is there?

I still haven't restored the use of my dining room so we were eating in the family room. The baby would open her mouth like a little bird and I would poke in spaghetti and sauce. If a piece slipped out she knew how to "slurp" it back in. We had spaghetti everywhere.

About that time one of our three cats decided to sidle up to this pint-sized person and see if she couldn't get a good petting. The baby didn't see the cat coming and when the cat rubbed against her she screamed and jumped. That made the cat jump and head to safety upstairs. I had a good laugh, but the baby didn't think it was too funny. But it was nothing that another bite of spaghetti couldn't cure.

Moral of the story: I really miss having little kids around. They are lots of fun and bring a curiosity about everything to life.

Maybe my friend will let me "Rent-A-Kid" once in awhile.

of me as a surrogate grandmother, I volunteered to keep them.

Car seats properly installed, the kids were loaded into the van and away we headed to our house. They marveled at the tiny puff balls of baby chicks and wondered about the eggs in the incubator. In fact, the little boy, who is very bright, asked, "Which came first: the chicken or the egg?" Immediately, he answered his own question. "I know. The chicken did. Because it had to lay the egg."

Good boy. He's well on his way to understanding Creation.

They helped with chores. They picked the eggs and fed the calves and chickens.

We were walking in the back yard where our mulberry tree is heavy-laden with ripe fruit. I suggested we try some of it and popped a juicy berry into the little girl's mouth. She loved it and that must have given her brother (who is a notorious picky eater) the courage to try it himself. He loved it too and soon his fingers were purple with juice.

Emboldened by this success, he

## Farm families are a special breed of people

People outside of agriculture routinely try to define the family farm. These same folks have a tendency to question corporate farming whether family owned or not. Farm organizations often fall under the same scrutiny.

Let's take a look at the family farm. In Kansas, farm and ranch families grow up with the feel of the prairie earth beneath their feet, the wide-open sky overhead and the rhythm of the seasons in their blood.

Throughout their lifetime, these farms and ranches remain their pride and joy. They love, care and respect the land entrusted to them. Ag producers adhere to an ethic that enlarges the boundaries of our community to include soils, waters, plants and animals – collectively – the land.

This entity known as the family farm is based on owner operation. This means the rights and responsibilities of ownership are vested in an entrepreneur who works the farm for a living.

Another key ingredient of the family farm system is independence. Independence means financing from within its own resources using family labor, management and intellect to build equity and cash flow that will retire the mortgage, preferably in the

### Insight

John Schlageck



lifetime of the owner.

Economic dispersion is another integral part of the family farm. Economic dispersion includes large numbers of efficient-sized farms operating with equal access to competitive markets worldwide.

No family farm would be complete without the family core. This family centered operation must have a family that lives its life in harmony within the workplace. All family members share responsibilities and the children learn the vocation of their parents.

At an early age, these young men and women learn to work with their dads and moms on the family farm. Here, they develop self-reliance and initiative. They often rise with the sun and finish work when it sets. Yet, they rarely take this place called home for granted.

The ideal family farm is commercially diversified. Productions of diversified

commodities help reduce price risks and maximize the use of farm resources to produce crops and livestock that in turn provide greater self-sufficiency.

One final attribute necessary in defining today's family farm would be the acceptance and use of innovative technology. This would not only enhance farm labor but also help boost production.

Family farming carries with it a commitment to specific, independent values. These values become part of the community and include conservation, frugality, responsibility, honesty, dignity in work, neighborly, self-reliance and concern and care for future generations.

While it's rare indeed that one particular family farm may possess all of these attributes, together they have created a system of agriculture that has been a part of our rural culture since this nation's beginning.

Today, detractors of this profession are making it increasingly difficult for this vital industry to progress and prosper. Maybe they should tend to their own business and let farmers and ranchers continue doing what they do best – responsibly producing the healthiest, safest food in the world.

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- ★ **Governor Sam Brownback**, 300 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-3232
- ★ **U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts**, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. [roberts.senate.gov/public/](mailto:roberts.senate.gov/public/) (202) 224-4774
- ★ **U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran**, Russell Senate Office Building Room C-4, Washington, D.C. 20002. [moran.senate.gov/public/](mailto:moran.senate.gov/public/) (202) 224-6521
- ★ **State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer**, State Capitol Building, Room 300 SW 10th St., Room 262-EA, Topeka, Kan. 66612. [ralph.ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us](mailto:ralph.ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us) (785) 296-7399
- ★ **Congressman Tim Huelkamp**, 126 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. [huelkamp.house.gov](mailto:huelkamp.house.gov) (202) 225-2715 or Fax (202) 225-5124
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Kudo's to Mary Kay Woodyard on her column about the pool. If we want to be a progressive community we need to support such efforts. Called in.

Letters to the Editor and Thumbs Up:  
e-mail [dpaxton@nwkansas.com](mailto:dpaxton@nwkansas.com)  
or to write 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, Kansas 67654  
785-877-3361

Remember there is no charge for rendering a Thumbs Up. Thumbs Up are meant to give recognition for a positive person or event in the community. Also remember all Letters to the Editor must be signed.

Call Dana for your next ad. 877-3361!

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