

16th amendment turns one hundred

Taxes have always been a controversial issue in our American history. After all, colonists dumping tea into the Boston Harbor to protest British duties is one of the defining events of America's birth. Colonists were not necessarily protesting all taxes, but they resented and opposed a far-off King and Parliament imposing taxes on them. No taxation without representation.

Many of these same protesting colonists, our Founding Fathers, maintained their same concern about an all-too-powerful federal government, and wrote a Constitution that permitted only the House - the direct representatives of the American people - to raise taxes or revenues. In a nation that valued freedom over the power of the state, it was supposed to be a big deal to raise taxes.

It still is, and it still should be. But for some in Washington, raising taxes is seen as no big deal.

With the passage of the "fiscal cliff deal" last month (which I opposed), 77 percent of all American households saw taxes on their incomes increase. Paychecks shrank for all workers as the Social Security tax holiday was not renewed. And, for many family farms and other small businesses, the President's tax increase agenda will hamper their abilities to hire new employees, invest in equipment, and pay for employees' health care. For the so-called tax on the rich pushed by Obama will trap many a Main Street business here in Kansas - taxing more of their incomes now and more of their estates later.

This February marks the 100th Anniversary of the Ratification of the 16th Amendment, which allowed Congress to tax individual income directly. Except during the Civil War - when an income tax was levied to pay for Union efforts - taxes were not imposed on wages and earnings. In fact, prior to the 1913 Amendment, a flat income tax had not passed constitutional muster.

While it is unlikely that the 16th Amendment will be abandoned, there is no reason why we have to continue suffering under the current complicated and convoluted system. When it takes Americans more than six billion hours to prepare their taxes and at a cost to them of \$168 billion, we have a problem. A tax code with four million words is destructive and full of danger: the complexity has negative economic impacts, is ripe for political favoritism and cronyism, and even an unintentional mistake may invite penalties and fines.

We can and must simplify the tax code to make it fairer, flatter, and smarter. Doing so not only lessens the burden on individuals, families and businesses, but might also address the challenges we have with revenue shortfalls. Make no mistake, the problem in Washington is still that we spend too much. But cleaning up a messy web of deductions, credits, exemptions - and reducing the rates - would certainly create a pro-growth economic environment that benefits everyone, not just large businesses like GE or billionaires like Warren Buffett who can afford legions of lawyers and accountants to avoid taxes other Americans must pay.

Tim Huelskamp (R-Fowler) represents the First Congressional District of Kansas. He serves on the House Small Business and Veterans' Affairs Committees.



Cold winter feat and tasty treats

Last week I ended this column with a bright prediction that Spring was drawing nigh and flowers would be bursting forth any minute. Boy! Was I wrong.

Not only is Spring not around the corner, but Old Man Winter seems to have moved back in...with the intent to stay awhile. I think about a foot of snow was dumped on this part of the country with drifts much higher than that.

Like a ninny, though, I thought I had to go to work for a few hours right in the middle of it all. Thanks to those hard working highway crews the roads were always kept open. We can't thank those guys enough. The rest of us come and go because we want to. They go out in the worst kinds of weather because it's their responsibility.

One responsibility I have, no matter the weather, are my chickens. Jim went out earlier the day of the storm to feed them. Later, I scooped a path and carried more feed and water to them. None seemed to be the worse for wear and even thanked us with a few eggs.

I scooped my way to the wild bird feeders too, but they eat faster than I can fill the containers. In fact, I saw they were empty Sunday night, but those feathered friends had to wait til Monday morning for more chow.

I'm not a devoted birdwatcher, but I

Out Back Carolyn Plotts



do love to stand at my kitchen window and watch the scrappy little sparrows fight for their share with the cardinals and one pretty little blue bird. The avian broadcasting system must be working fine because I've never seen so many birds at the feeders before. Probably a sign of how hungry they are.

-ob-

I got a reminder this weekend of why I don't cater parties any more.

Twenty plus years ago when I lived in Dallas, I needed to make extra money, but I didn't want a second job that would take me away from my girls any more than I had to. It dawned on me that the office where I worked paid a lot of money to have sandwiches and veggie trays for committee meetings and such. I told one of the directors I could make food trays that would be better and cheaper. Soon I was the unofficial office caterer. When they asked me if I could make "such-and-such", I would always answer, "Yes,"

then go home and look for a recipe. One thing led to another and I began to cater parties for other businesses; do wedding receptions; and company dinners.

There were many times when I would stay up all night cooking, grab a couple hours of sleep, load it all in my car, deliver and set up, serve, clean up, then take the left overs home.

Remember I said 20+ years ago. My memory of how much work it really was had faded and when a friend was being honored, I offered to prepare the refreshments for a small reception. It started out to be a simple little party, but like many of my plans they mushroomed.

As it was, I still got carried away. There was the layered Mexican dip; dill dip, fruit dip, shrimp dip, cheese tray, veggie tray, fruit tray, Texas sheet cake, chips, crackers, jalapeno roll-ups, chocolate covered strawberries, little wieners in a cranberry/picante sauce, white chocolate candy hearts, and fruit punch.

What I had forgotten were those long hours on your feet peeling carrots, mixing, stirring, arranging, wrapping, storing, packing, serving, cleaning. By the time it was all over, the only dip I wanted was one in the deep end of our Jacuzzi bathtub.

Waste not...want not when it comes to food safety

During the last couple of decades, some environmental groups have been less than kind to agriculture. They have bombarded the public with figures on soil loss, pesticide-related mishaps and alleged failed attempts at using herbicides and other crop protectors. Their figures are oftentimes unverifiable.

Technology is often labeled as the No. 1 environmental enemy by some of these groups. Food producers, farmers and ranchers view technology as the application of knowledge. As humans, we survive by adapting the environment to our needs.

Take away technology and humans would be just like other primates, confined to tropical regions and subject to extinction due to environmental changes. To survive, mankind has changed his environment while conserving resources and continually creating new ones.

Resources are made not born. Land, ores, petroleum - the raw materials of our planet - do not inherently further human purposes.

Man determines what is useful and how to use it. Topsoil becomes a resource when a farmer prepares the soil and plants wheat seed, for example. Ores become resources when metals are extracted from them.

During the past two centuries, technology has been creating resources

Insight John Schlageck



more rapidly than humans have been consuming them. By every measure of price and availability, resources have become more abundant.

Without science and technology today's farmers and ranchers would be unable to feed the masses. Farmers use technology responsibly and adopt new farming methods and practices by attending training sessions and courses.

But new farm technology is expensive. It is in the best interest of farmers to use it carefully and sparingly. Misuse would add to the cost of production, which would result in an even lower return on their investment.

Farmers use agricultural chemicals only when necessary. When they use chemicals, farmers follow label directions designed for public health and safety. When a rancher uses antibiotics and other animal health products for their stock, they follow proper drug use practices. When new advances in biotechnology are discovered, farmers must abide by stringent testing and monitoring practices that ensure only

safe products in the marketplace.

Food produced in the United States is safe. More than four decades of Food and Drug Administration testing has shown the majority of our fruits and vegetables have no detectable pesticide residues. This underscores that American farmers use pesticides properly. Our grain and cereal crops are among the cleanest and most wholesome in the world.

Countless laws help ensure our food is safe. Billions of dollars are spent to support food and agricultural safety and quality inspection. The private sector, combined with state and local governments, also spends billions on similar activities.

Farmers and ranchers support efforts to evaluate and enhance the current regulatory and food monitoring system. Agricultural producers want to work with all parties toward maintaining safe food, but this industry must avoid policy changes that are based solely on fear or false information.

Decisions affecting the course of agricultural production remain critically important and will have far reaching implications on our quality of life. We must be careful in determining long-term policies. Farmers and ranchers will continue to maximize their production capacity with an ever-watchful eye on food safety, quality and our environment.

Dear Editor:

Someone needs to explain this to me because I certainly do NOT understand how some of the people who live in this town function or behave the way that they do.

I have now lost the 3rd trash can in about as many months. I assume that the people who have taken my trashcans need them more than I do or think that I have money running out of my ears. And before you ask me if the wind blew it, no because when I looked out at 10:30 AM the trash can was there, and again at noon it was there. I thought then that I should go get it. Low and behold when a friend stopped in at 2:00 p.m. no trashcan.

I hope that you enjoy the trashcans whomever you are; I think that you are not a nice person and you need more than my prayers to help you. Your momma and pa would not be proud of your behavior. Would you maybe drive to Almena, Norcatour, Lenora or out in the country to find a nicer one next time you need a trashcan? Would you then go to the library and find out the definition of morals and ethics, then find the Bible and read about the Ten Commandments and how they apply to you? Would you then find a job, buy a trashcan for yourself and then one for me and put it on my front porch with an apology note? I'll keep praying for you as Miracles Happen everyday.

Thank you
Denise A Schmitz
Norton Kansas



THUMBS UP! Thumbs up and a grateful thank you to those friends and neighbors who helped those of us who needed to have driveways and sidewalks cleaned of snow. Your willingness to help is very much appreciated. Brought in.

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.

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

OFFICE HOURS:
8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mon.-Thur.
8 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Friday
Phone: (785) 877-3361
Fax: (785) 877-3732

STAFF

Dana Paxton..... General Manager
Advertising Director/Managing Editor
email: dpaxton@nwkansas.com
Dick Boyd.....Blue Jay Sports
nortontelegram@nwkansas.com
Michael Stephens.....Reporter
Society Editor/Area Sports
mstephens@nwkansas.com
Vicki Henderson..... Computer Production
Marcia Shelton Office Manager

E-mail:
nortontelegram@nwkansas.com

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

