

The 50 year vision for Kansas water

Looking back through history, some generations have become known for key achievements, traits and ideals. Stereotypes are broadly applied across the United States but what about us? What will this generation of Kansans be remembered for?

It could be for putting personal politics and differences aside, rolling up our sleeves and working together to ensure future generations of Kansans have a reliable source of water to fuel our state's economy.

In calling for the development of a 50-Year Vision for the Future of Water in Kansas, Gov. Sam Brownback put it best when he said, "Water and the Kansas economy are directly linked. Water is a finite resource and without further planning and action, we will no longer be able to meet our state's current needs, let alone growth."

He's right. The writing is on the wall and if we don't act today, our future is bleak.

The Ogallala Aquifer is declining faster than it is recharging. Reservoirs, which are critical water storage structures for much of our state, are filling with sediment. At this rate, with no changes in the next 50 years, the Ogallala will be 70 percent depleted and our reservoirs will be 40 percent filled with mud.

The drought over the past three years has brought water issues to the forefront; we must plan for the future now.

That is what the Kansas Water Office, Kansas Department of Agriculture and Kansas Water Authority are doing. A Visioning Team has been established and is embarking on a one-year mission to seek input from water users, compile data, conduct research and chart a path forward.

It will not be easy. Some believe it's too late to save the Ogallala. There are differing ideas about how to better manage reservoirs and surface water.

We need to develop plans to ensure a reliable water supply for all Kansans, improve water quality, reduce our vulnerability to extreme events, like floods and drought, develop and maintain water infrastructure and improve recreational opportunities.

We need your help and advice in this process. Give us your feedback and ideas during town-hall meetings and other events. Be a part of the solution.

If we are successful, future generations will look back on the work we do this year and say that's the generation of Kansans that worked together to protect and conserve the state's water resources today and for the future.

To submit your comments or get more information about the Governor's Call to Action-50-Year Vision, go to www.kwo.org.

The 50-Year Water Visioning Team

Contact: Katie Patterson-Ingels, 785-296-3185
Kansas Water Office
katie.ingels@kwo.ks.gov
Beth Riffel, 785-296-2653
Kansas Department of Agriculture
media@kda.ks.gov

To the Editor:

For decades, the PC Police have intimidated Christians throughout America with their attacks on the symbols and language of Christmas. From nativity scenes to Christmas trees, those opposed to Christmas have sought to eradicate any reason for the season from the public square. And Congress has not been exempted.

Amazingly, since 1973, the U.S. House of Representatives has forbidden the use of "Merry Christmas" and deemed use of such words in any official mailing or e-mail an ethics violation. Instead, House rules demanded the use of "Happy Holidays." This month, the House Franking Commission accepted the position I have fought for since arriving in Congress – ignore the PC Police and let us use "Merry Christmas."

In 2011, during an interview on Fox News, I stated my refusal to comply with this decades-old policy, which reflects the continual leftist war on Christmas. I have continued that refusal through today, even as it has cowed many other public officials and many in private industry as well.

The new refusal of the U.S. House to cater to the PC Police moves us one small step away from that carefully crafted secular society devoid of any reference to our religious and cultural heritage. I am glad that finally Members of Congress can express their holiday joy in a manner that they see fit and consistent with our American history – without an ethics threat.

As I have done for the past two years, I personally wish you and all of America a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Rep. Tim Huelskamp, Fowler
Kansas 1st District



I would like to say Thumbs Up to Marie Hewett who will be 98 years old on January 3!!! Emailed in.

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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

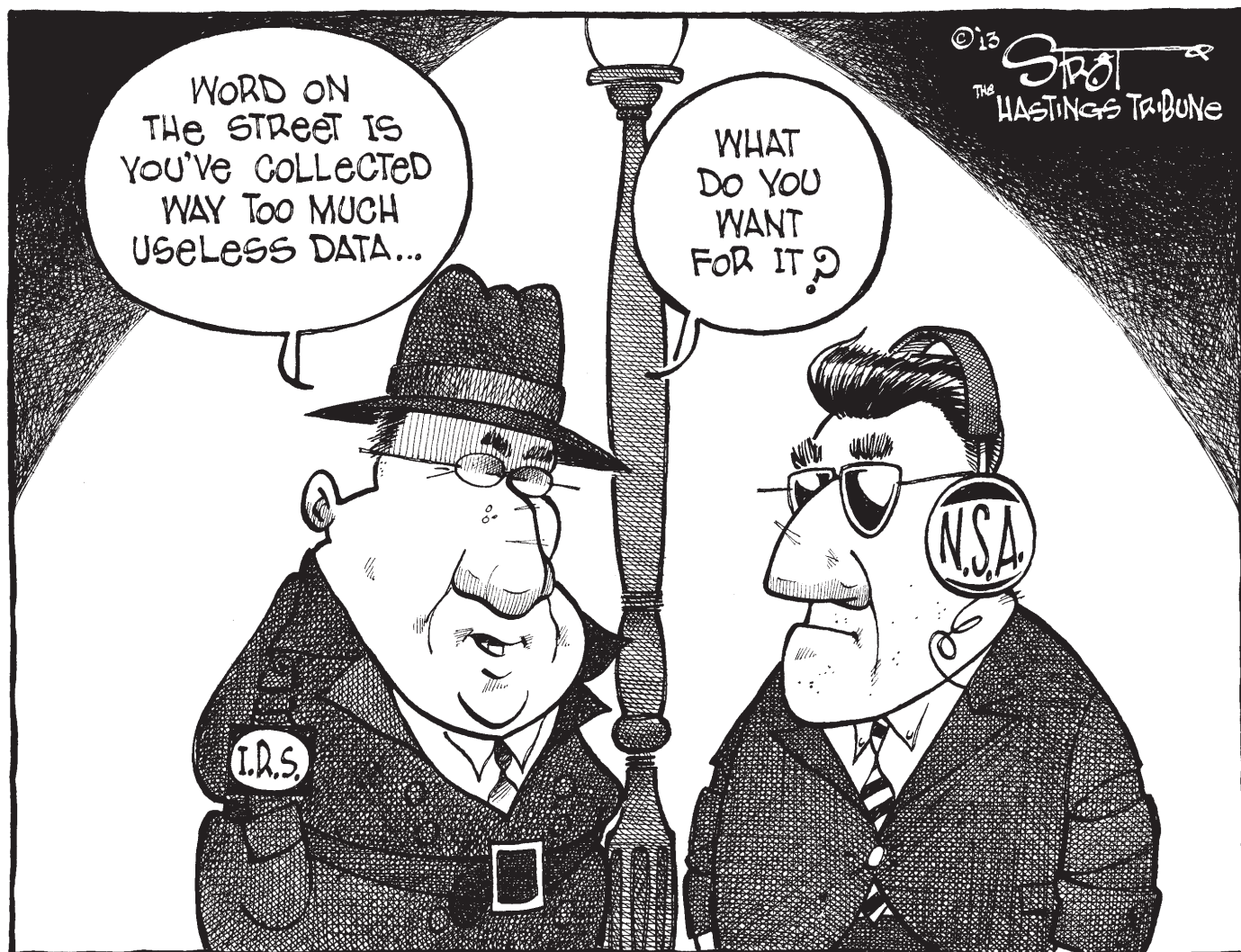
Dana Paxton..... General Manager
Advertising Director/Managing Editor
email: dpaxton@nwkansas.com

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



Christmas is past; look to the future

Christmas was great. The day after, not so much.

I was sick for two days. Perhaps it was the flu. I had the nausea, the chills and fever. Not a fun way to spend the holidays. Especially when I had so much to get done. Like some order restored to the house.

Jim was in fine form this year. He put Christmas lights where none had ever been before. Our block looked like the Griswold's. I think he had as much fun doing it as others have had driving by to see it. My only advice to him is to start earlier next year: like in August.

We spent Christmas Day with son, James, his wife, Charlotte, and her parents, Gerald and Judy. Lots of good food. Lots of good laughs and the introduction to a fun game called Mexican Train Dominoes. I love board games of any kind, but what my fellow game players failed to understand was that I don't care if I win or not. I just enjoy the laughter and good natured ribbing.

Mexican Train is a game that can

Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



take hours to play and the object is to have a low score. When it finally ended, my score was in the 400s. A number the others had never seen before. So, in that regard, I guess I was a winner.

-ob-

My shopping trip with the little kids last week was a success. The nine-year old tried to convince me his mother would like a certain kind of trading card and the three-year old joined her brother in proclaiming to me how much their mother loved chocolate.

The shopping trip yielded two sacks of fine chocolates and a new make-up bag because her old one was "pretty

ratty." The nine-year old's words, not mine.

When we returned, their mother asked if they had behaved themselves. In typical kid fashion, they had been perfect for me. It was only when their mother showed up that they began acting out.

Why is that? My kids did it. These kids did it. I think everyone's kids do it. No wonder parents are reluctant for their children to go someplace with friends. They are afraid the children will act for their friends the same way they do for them.

-ob-

Hard to believe, but another year is rolling around. It is so cliché, but the older I get, the faster time flies by.

I will pray that in the coming year you have all you need, but not all you want. There has to be something left to desire.

Have a Happy New Year.

Moderation and balance to meet resolution

It's the New Year and like so many, I have vowed to shed those extra pounds. Losing weight is no easy task. Expectations often exceed the will to lose this weight gradually during an extended period of time.

Today, there are as many diets out there as there are people who attempt to stick to them. What it really boils down to is watching what we eat, caloric intake, and exercise. If we have the discipline to do that, each of us can meet our goals.

Still, when it comes to exercise and diet, myths are as plentiful as the calories in a piece of pecan pie – one of my favorites by the way. To clear up some of these misconceptions, I visited with a nutrition specialist during the holidays to set the record straight or at least point me in the right direction.

One common myth and core ingredient in several popular diets involves eating extra protein to build strong muscles and rev up your metabolism. Today, most Americans, whether they are weekend warriors (athletes) or not, take in plenty of protein from a normal diet.

Protein powders and amino acid supplements are unnecessary. That is unless you want to bulk up and look like the former governor of California whose most famous movie line was, "I'll be back."

The only healthy and safe way to increase the size and strength of muscles

Insight

John Schlageck



is to work out. Too much protein, if not burned as energy, turns to body fat.

Another myth would have us believe that sugary foods provide quick energy. While a candy bar, energy bar or soft drink before exercising may trigger an insulin response, that causes a rapid peak and then fall of blood sugar.

The most efficient source of energy comes from complex carbohydrates. That includes whole-grain breads and cereals, pasta, fresh fruits and vegetables.

So what about the popular diets that suggest staying away from carbs altogether?

Not such a good idea. The real key to a healthy diet is moderation and balance. It also includes a diverse, complete grouping of foods.

As for the so-called energy drinks and I won't mention even one of those flooding the convenience and supermarket shelves, most of these are caffeine, speed or some other stimulant. And we all know that speed kills, maims or throws your body out of whack.

Vitamins and minerals do not contain energy. However, some vitamins help the body use energy.

Unless there is a deficiency, supplements will not help performance. Taking unneeded supplement may do more harm than good. Too much vitamin A or D can lead to side effects such as liver damage over time.

Another myth suggests thirst is a good signal it's time to take fluid.

Wrong.

Vigorous exercise can blunt the body's thirst mechanism. Drinking plenty of liquids, especially water, is important during exercise to prevent dehydration. For every pound of weight we lose through sweating, we need to drink two cups of water, whether we are thirsty or not.

The last myth, but one we cannot forget, suggests that milk causes "cottonmouth." Nervousness and fluid loss, not milk, make the mouth feel dry before a game, match or other competition.

Drinking milk, water or other fluids before exercising is essential. The body needs to maintain its fluid levels during a workout. Cold drinks, with the exception of those containing alcohol, are the ideal beverage during physical activity because they help cool our bodies.

Good luck and try to remember, losing weight is not a sprint it's a marathon – a long term commitment.



Letters to the Editor and Thumbs Up:
e-mail dpaxton@nwkansas.com
or to write 215 S. Kansas Ave.



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.