



Legislature wasting cash by fighting over budget

With the Legislature deadlocked and the state desperate to pay for increased caseloads in human and health services, what we used to call welfare, Gov. Sam Brownback has ordered cuts to balance the current budget.

That's not an option. It's required by Kansas law, which prohibits the state from running a deficit.

In making \$56.5 million in cuts, the governor had to take \$50 million from schools to keep the social welfare operation going. That's not going to be popular, and it leaves a lot of budget problems hanging.

The Legislature could have solved this problem, and should have, but the still-liberal Senate refused to compromise in a battle over money for special-education programs. As with other decisions, the state would have been better off if the Legislature had done its job.

We suffered when the Legislature abdicated authority over the school budget several years ago, cramming an additional \$1 billion a year in to satisfy the state Supreme Court. Then over the last few years, everyone from schools to taxpayers had to pay for that decision as ever-declining state revenues required the state to take all of it back - and more.

Gov. Brownback has found, as did Gov. Mark Parkinson before him, that expecting the Legislature to make tough decisions is a waste of time. Gov. Parkinson was forced to make dozens of painful cuts last year, despite a 1-cent increase in the state sales taxes he pushed through, when the Legislature refused to act on the deficit.

Now Gov. Brownback, who rode a large majority into office on the promise of building the state's economy by growing private business

and jobs, finds that he, too, must be the adult.

Many senators apparently do not realize that the new era requires some sacrifice. They are fighting to save school budgets from the axe and even want to save the state Arts Commission from a well-deserved fate. They seem oblivious to the fact that the state is flat broke, that we've had to cut schools back to 1992 levels and still may not be able to balance the budget.

(And right here, let's just say that our Sen. Ralph Ostmeier is not part of the problem in the Senate. He's pushed for fiscal integrity when the liberal block back east has not.)

There's not much left to cut but the sacred cows, so we might as well get to it. And every program is someone's sacred cow, believe us.

The governor points out that the rescission bill he proposed at the start of this year's session would have solved the state's current budget crisis and left the state with a few million to play with as next year's budget goes into effect July 1.

Our own Rep. Ward Cassidy points out that had the rescission bill passed, the state would have \$37 million in its ending balance June 30, rather than nothing under the current plan. That is the price of delay, and it is more than enough money to solve the special education problem.

It won't happen, though, thanks to a stubborn and intransigent few.

The Senate needs to stop defending the tax-and-spend policies of yore and get with today's program, which requires responsible spending, living within the state's income.

That's what Kansas taxpayers voted for last fall, and that's what they expect now.

- Steve Haynes



News From the Past

5 years ago - 2006

Placing first at the regional journalism contest in Hays were McKenzie Grace, Editing, Editorial Cartoon; Dara Loyd, New Writing; Grace Hnizdil, Newspaper Design and Sheryl Miller, Newspaper Design.

By the end of March, the hospital and clinic campus will become tobacco free.

There will be one last meeting for questions and answers before members of the St. Francis Equity, who are present, can vote if they want to merge with Frontier Equity in Goodland. When the final vote was taken the merger was voted out.

The OnStage musical "Guys and Dolls" will be presented March 25 and 26. Ashley Dowgwillo will play the part of Sarah Brown and Gavin Smull will be Sky Masterson. The 4-H Shooting Sports Program is now being offered in Cheyenne County.

A U.S. Highway 36 Treasure Hunt is being proposed. The Treasure Hunt will run from the Missouri border to the Colorado border, right

down the U.S. 36 corridor and will be held the middle of September.

Construction in the physical therapy department of the hospital has begun, Les lacy, administrator, told the board at the Cheyenne County Hospital Board meeting that the walls have been framed and the hole for the therapy pool has been prepared for the concrete. The therapy department is located in the new basement area of the hospital. Several fund raisers have helped with the installation of the therapy pool.

40 years ago 1971

Volunteer workers who are seeking to have a Recreation District proposition placed on the April school election ballot expect to succeed in getting sufficient names on petitions to let voters decide the question in April.

The proposition would, if approved, allow for the school board and city council to appoint a recreation commission.

County 4-H Day was held in Bird City on March 6. Those selection to advance to Re-

gional 4-H Day in Colby on March 27 include: Jeff Raile and Cindy Curry in Junior Demonstrations; Debbie Gorthy in Senior Demonstrations; the Plum Creek vocal ensemble of Laurie Mills, Laura Lee Keller, Stephanie Harris, Donita Zwegardt and Gaye Henderson, the Bird City Go-Getters club chorus and Nancy Kramer with a piano solo.

Robin Wiley, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Wiley, was awarded the highest sugar yield per acre at the Idalia Station of the Fort Morgan District after last year's best harvest.

Melanie Alsup has been selected as delegate to the 1971 Kansas Girls' State at Kansas University campus. The alternate delegated for this year is Diane Herman.

W.E. Touslee has been watching the progress of the Touslee Ford Sales in St. Francis. The modern metal building with glassed in display area will be constructed on a 200 by 300 foot lot just west of the ASCS office on Highway 36.

The Gardener

Kay Melia

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And now, soon to come, one of the most enjoyable and productive gardening projects of the year. That's my humble opinion. It is time to grab a few seeds and some quality starting soil mix and grow a few of your own transplants! It's a project more of us should tackle, and here's why.

When you start your own transplants, you have the freedom of selecting the variety of tomato or the type of pepper you really want to grow in your garden. If you haven't been overly pleased with the variety [or quality] of the store bought transplants in the past, it

just makes sense to try growing your own. It also gives you the opportunity to get yourself involved in the gardening process earlier in the season.

Let me be very clear here. Very few of us ever have a quarrel with the transplants we purchase each spring at the community's reputable greenhouse and garden center, if we're fortunate enough to have one. But for those of us who don't, or if we are insistent on growing a specific variety, this "grow your own" project is most worthwhile.

It's simple to determine when to start your transplants. In the case of tomatoes or peppers, remember that it will be May 10 to 15 before you should plant them outside. To grow a garden-ready transplant requires about seven weeks of indoor care before they are ready to go outside. Cabbage and broccoli plants can withstand a bit of frost, so they can go outside about May 1, or earlier. So, just count back seven weeks from the outside planting dates and you should come up with March 22 to 27. The time to act is very near.

So, pick up a small bag of seed-starting formula soon. Do not try

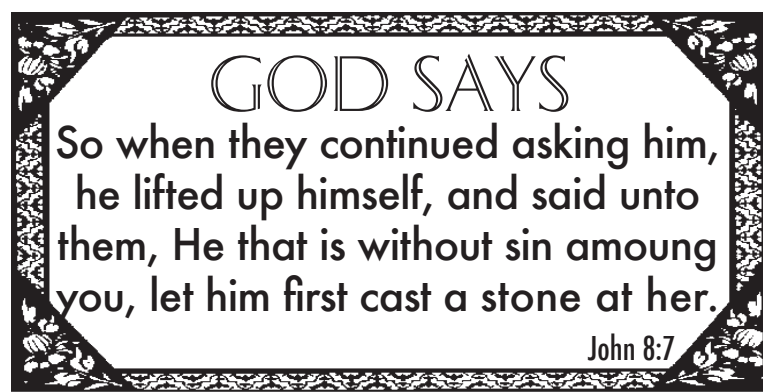
to start your seed in regular garden soil. Locate some kind of plastic tray or pan in which to start your seeds. Now comes the most critical part of the procedure. Just as soon as the plants emerge, move the tray into an area of very bright light, but not direct sun. Failure to follow that step in the process will result in tall, leggy, yellow, useless plants. So-called "grow lights" are best, but there are very few homes that cannot provide an area where there is 10 to 14 hours per day of very bright light. Again, failure to do so will result in project failure.

When the little plants get their first set of true leaves, repot them into their own individual little 2-by 2-inch peat or plastic cubicle. Keep them in the intense light until outdoor planting time. During their final week of indoor captivity, let them outside on nice days for a couple of hours so that they will get used to what is in store for them at planting time.

It's a fun project, allowing you to plant what you specifically desire. It also allows you to get your hands dirty just a little earlier. Questions? Call me or send me an email at vkmelia@yahoo.com.

Honor Roll

New and renewed Herald subscriptions: David Busby, Napa, Calif.; Ana Enfield, Severance, Colo.; Frontier Ag, Bird City; Joyce Steinkemp, Anniston, Ala.; Joyce Dabney, St. Francis; Darline Price, Gothenberg, Neb.; Debbie Lindsten, St. Francis; Wendy Krishock, Manhattan; Sherre Downs, Golden, Colo.; Daryl Loyd, St. Francis; Edna Schiltz, Selden; Marjorie Mann, Overland Park; Dean and Joyce Blanka, Wamego; Robert Phillips, Manhattan; James Witt, Oberlin; Larry Schultz, St. Francis; Wilhelm Lippert, Idalia; Shirley Caswell, Laguana Wood, Calif.; Ron Popp, Albany, Ore; Sophia Zuege, Haigler, Neb.; Jason Howard, St. Francis; Robert Gross, St. Francis.



Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick



By Casey McCormick mccormickcasey@rocketmail.com

This Thursday will mark another Saint Patrick's Day. It might not be such a big deal here in north-west Kansas, but other places will see revelers fill themselves with green beer and act silly as a result. I doubt if the old saint would be too impressed with that behavior. His memory deserves a bit more respect.

Saint Patrick was actually from Scotland. Born in 385 AD, he

was kidnapped by a raiding party and taken to the island of Ireland when he was 14. Sold into slavery he learned the language and customs of the Druid and pagan land.

At the age of 20 he escaped by making his way to the coast and finding a group of sailors who transported him back to Scotland. He had experienced a spiritual awakening while in Ireland and followed his faith to join the Catholic priesthood and was or-

dainated as a bishop.

Through a dream he felt that he must return to Ireland and bring Christianity to its people. And that he did.

Saint Patrick may not have driven the snakes from Ireland, but he sure gave the boot to some Godless folk. Just a little food for thought as you observe this Saint Patrick's Day.

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www.sfccfamily.com
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Worship Service 10:30 a.m.
Potluck & Communion - Every 2nd Sunday
Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

Peace Lutheran Church, AFLC
202 N. College
Pastor Ken Hart
332-2928 Pars. 332-2312
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Worship 10:30 a.m.
Communion 1st Sunday of the month

St. Francis Equity

St. Francis Herald

Praise the Lord