

Keep recruiting to avoid volunteer exhaustion

If you want to create an event or program to serve your community, the first rule is that successful organizations thrive only when they constantly recruit new workers, members and volunteers.

It's true for an army, a business and most certainly for volunteer groups, from churches to civic organizations of all kinds.

If, however, you want to work real hard for a few years, do some good, then see your baby die, ignore this rule. Do everything yourselves. Don't worry about bringing in new people, because it'll take more time to teach them the jobs that it'll save.

A couple of examples from Oberlin come to mind. At the risk of hurting some feelings, because volunteers have worked well and hard on these tasks, we'll share them. It's because we've learned there is a way to avoid the situation where "everyone" involved is sick and tired of the job, and there's no one to take over.

The first came a few years ago, when the volunteers who had run the county Amusement Authority announced that they were tired and would all quit, leaving the Decatur County Home-owned Carnival without leadership or workers.

As it turned out, a couple of board members did stay on, and they helped guide new volunteers that winter and over the next summer. The first year was rough, since the people who know how to fix and run the rides had quit, but the new crew was tough and resilient. They learned, usually the hard way.

The county's carnival, the oldest in northwest Kansas, has survived and grown, but this crisis could have been averted by making sure to bring in a new person or two each year.

Today, the 10-year-old, highly successful

High Plains ArtFest faces a similar crisis. The organizers, members of the Oberlin Arts and Humanities Commission, say they are tired after 10 years of putting on the show and sale.

If another group will step forward, they say they'll share their knowledge, but otherwise, the ArtFest has seen its last exhibition.

That would be a shame. The founding volunteers, nearly all past retirement age now, have done an outstanding job. The event has grown and prospered, creating a market for area artists that didn't exist before and generating a little excitement at The Gateway each spring.

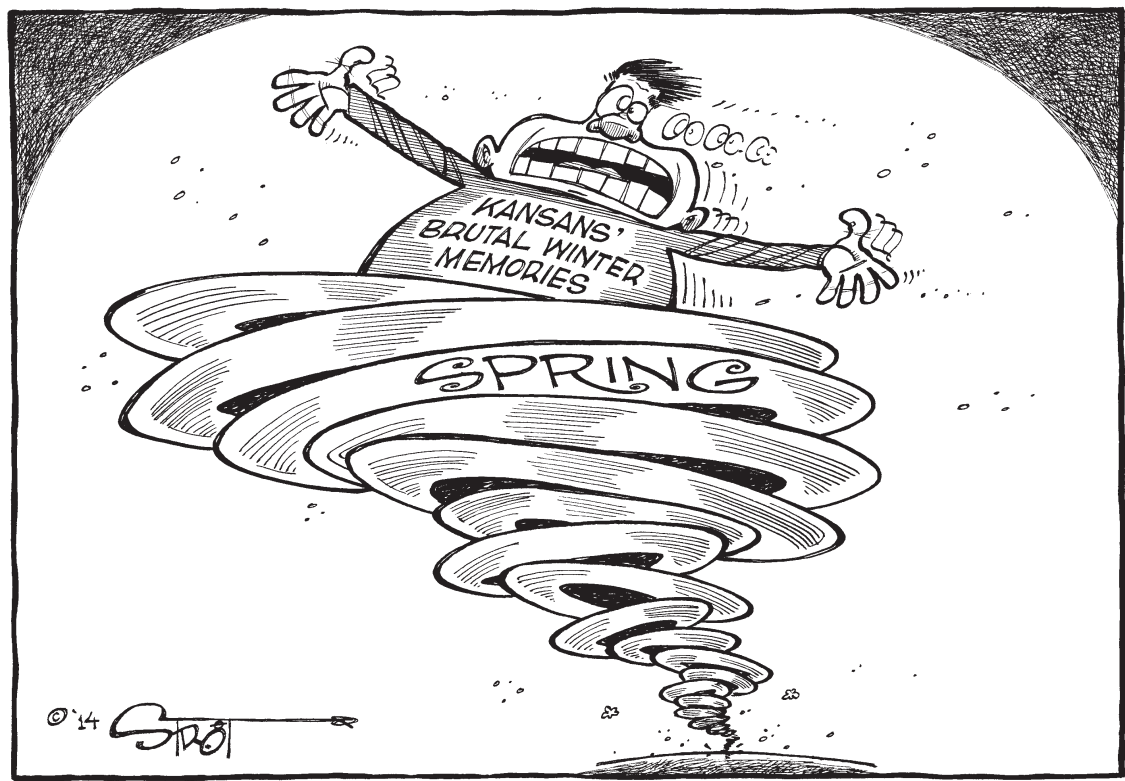
Perhaps others will step forward. Maybe the City Council can find some new members for the commission who will take the lead. That remains to be seen.

But one thing is for sure. It would have been easier to have a few new people coming on each year, teaching them the ropes a little at a time, so succession would not have to be painful.

Enduring organizations — churches, the Rotary and Lions clubs, many lodges, other successful civic groups, even city and county government boards — share one trait that less formally organized groups often lack. They rotate their leadership each year, building a cadre of experienced members without burning a few people out. They constantly recruit new members, at least the ones that make it, and they expect to replace a few now and then.

Most of these groups learned their lesson the same way everyone else has to: the hard way. But they did learn.

It's easy to say it can't be done, but if you create something and want it to be around after you're gone, it must be done. Let's hope it's not too late for the ArtFest, a wonderful program that fills a real need. — Steve Haynes



The Gardener

Jack Frost visits late



By Kay Melia

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Last week in this space, a few of you may remember that yours truly discussed the planting of tomatoes. The basis of my dissertation was that you should consider setting out your tomato plants a little earlier than you normally do each spring and therefore pick a fresh tomato a little earlier. My words were something like "plant early, have a plan to protect the plants in case of a late frost, and then eat a tomato earlier."

Remember that? Good advice, huh? I thought it was. For the last six years I've put my plants outside about the 1st of May without a problem. This year, it was the 6th of May when before the first ones went out, and May 9th before I finished. They were nice plants, all homegrown, 5 or 6 of my favorite varieties, protected with the tall cages wrapped with 2 feet of black plastic on the bottom, and all that other good stuff.

On May 12th, here comes Jack Frost with his icy cold paint brush and proceeds to deal my plants a serious blow! On May 13th, another visit, as if old Jack was some kind of close relative. He returned

sometime during the early morning hours of May 14th and 15th and caused additional havoc out there. I even placed a newspaper page over every plant after the 2nd day, but the damage was apparently already done.

Actually, and perhaps miraculously, it appeared that about 15 or 20 of the original 51 plants may have survived. Several others have been or will be replaced. It's slow going for an older fella, and I haven't even planted my beans and cucumbers yet. Nor have I planted my one hill of zucchini. If only I had planted the zucchini earlier rather than the tomatoes!

Incidentally, the coldest temperature during that infamous four morning period, as recorded at the National Weather Service just 5 miles from my garden, was 30 degrees on the morning of May 13th. None of the other three cold mornings saw a temperature of less than 32.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained. My loss was infinitesimal compared to what is happening to the wheat crop over a wide area of the High Plains. A beautiful start

toward a decent wheat crop, and then no moisture. We are almost unbelievably dry!

On a related note, I thought Jason Graves, a District Ag Agent based in Salina and writes for the Salina Journal each Thursday, wrote a very timely article last week. He wrote about the stress our trees are enduring right now, and that it is vitally important to water them now. Not next week. Now! Jason noted that trees are tough, but many of our trees haven't had meaningful moisture since 2011. For those of you who are planting a tree this spring, failure to water it often enough will likely result in a loss. And that goes for trees that were planted anytime in the last five years. Until they establish a deep root system they are in serious danger without a regular watering schedule.

For information about tree planting and keeping those trees healthy, contact your Extension Agent, or a knowledgeable Master Gardener.

Reader enjoys quality of movies

Letter to the Editor:

A few years ago, I wrote an article in the Herald in conviction of a movie showing at our theatre about which, after hearing of it's contents, I'm pretty sure The Lord didn't approve. Now I feel

Letter to Editor

compelled to commend the theatre committee and or who ever else is involved, for the quality of good Christian movies they have shown lately. Judging by the attendance,

I think it's plain to see that people are hungry for the Truth in these last days. Thank you so much to everyone!

Dale L. Hill

Casey's Comments

The heavy price of a crusade



By Casey McCormick

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are the Dwight D. Eisenhower visitor center, museum, and presidential library. The home is where Ike grew up. And the statue is of General Eisenhower during World War II, in his own short cut jacket and army cap.

70 years ago, next June 6, marks the anniversary of what Eisenhower called the "crusade" the Allied soldiers would undertake to rid the world of Nazi Germany.

On that day, seven decades ago, over 5,000 ships carried 160,000 troops from England to Normandy, France. It was the largest armada in man's history. Also supporting the invasion were 13,000 aircraft.

A heavy price was paid to turn the tide of war. Along the 50 miles of coastline, 9,000 men were killed or wounded in the assault. But the foothold established allowed 100,000 of our soldiers into France and the push to reach Germany had begun.

Standing before the statue of Eisenhower on that gray and chilly morning last Friday brought so many visions of that horrible and wonderful day. I'm grateful we had a leader and brave men willing to take up that great crusade, and they will be in my thoughts this Memorial Day.

The 2014 Kansas Sampler Festival in Wamego is in the books, and what a tremendous festival it was! The festival set a record for attendance, with 11,728 people discovering what there was to see, do, taste, hear, buy, and learn in Kansas! This was a record attendance for the 25th annual event.

Although Cheyenne County was represented with pictures, events and attractions, a big draw to the Northwest Kansas Travel Council Tent was the smell of popcorn. Many thanks to Ken-

neth and Gloria Bracelin and Eddy and Sherry Schultz for the popcorn, Kary and Kim Zweygardt for the popcorn popper, and to the Cheyenne County Development Corporation for oil and salt. The Popcorn Poster was a real conversation starter, with lots of people picking up brochures and asking about St. Francis and Cheyenne County. Helen Dobbs, director of the development corporation, represented Cheyenne County at the festival.

For 25 years, the state's largest outdoor traveling festival, the



By Helen Dobbs

CCDC Director

Kansas Sampler Festival, has attracted thousands of visitors who are hunting for what there is to see and do in the state. This year, over 280 exhibitors from 150 communities helped the public learn about the architecture, art, commerce, cuisine, customs, geography, history, and people of Kansas in Wamego's 12 acre city park. Plan to attend the festival next year in Wamego on May 2-3.

Honor Roll

New and renewed Herald subscriptions: Matt Martin, St. Francis; Dylan Loyd, St. Francis; Ned Felzien, Wichita; Stanley Little, Mesquite, Texas; Loyd Crawford, Overland Park; Terry Crites, Kirk, Colo.; Sharon Blanchard, Salida, Colo.; Phyllis Zielke, Goodland; Delphine Norton, Ness City; Atwood Library, Atwood; Nancy Anderson, Omaha, Neb.

GOD SAYS
He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.
 Proverbs 28:13

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