

Opinion



Other Viewpoints

Legislature judges courts' money need

When the Kansas Supreme Court raised docket fees in 2006 to close a budget shortfall, the Kansas Legislature responded without ambivalence: Yet elected lawmakers have that authority; not the judicial branch.

The court is back at the Capitol this year, attempting to undo that three-year-old law. Facing a budget deficiency of \$5 million, the judiciary is seeking authority to raise docket fees.

And the court is finding support for its efforts — if only by a slim margin. The Kansas Senate passed SB 134 by a 21-19 vote, sending the bill to the House....

This doesn't have anything to do with the economy. It's the principle of which branch is authorized by the state constitution to appropriate funds.

All the governor can do is recommend a budget. Prior to the court overstepping its bounds a few years ago by dictating specific amounts for public schools, the judicial branch didn't dream of setting anything on the revenue side. It should be clear that tax rates and fees need the legislative seal of approval. ...

Support is one thing. Allowing the courts free reign to appropriate legislative duties is quite another. ...

— *The Hays Daily News, via The Associated Press*

Ex-Senator Bob Dole keeps giving to Kansas

Former Sen. Bob Dole continues to contribute to his home state in many ways.

Among the latest gifts was \$150,000 to support spinal research at the University of Kansas Hospital and the KU Medical Center.

Talking about the gift, Dole said he believed that those who had gone up life's ladder should reach back and help others make the climb. Having suffered spinal cord and other injuries in World War II, Dole is grateful for the help he received during his recovery and wants to lend a hand to others.

Dole noted that he had donated to other causes across the state, including the Washburn University law school, from which he graduated, and the medical center in Hays. Lawrence residents, however, get to enjoy perhaps the senator's greatest gift: the papers and artifacts now housed at the Dole Institute of Politics. More than a museum, the Dole Institute — at Dole's behest — strives to be a focal point for civil, bipartisan political discourse, a commodity sadly lacking in today's society.

Bob Dole is a favorite son of Kansas. It's wonderful to see that affection and respect returned on a regular basis.

— *Lawrence Journal-World, via The Associated Press*

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Send news to: colby.editor@nwkansas.com

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Steve Haynes - Publisher
s.haynes@nwkansas.com

NEWS

Andy Heintz - Sports Reporter
aheintz@nwkansas.com

Marian Ballard - Copy Editor
mballard@nwkansas.com

Marj Brown, Vera Sloan - Society Editors
colby.society@nwkansas.com

ADVERTISING

Jasmine Stewart - Advertising Manager
jstewart@nwkansas.com

Heather Woofter - Advertising Sales
hwoofter@nwkansas.com

Tyler Zolinski - Graphic Design
tzolinski@nwkansas.com

Jessica Estes - Classified Ad Desk
jestes@nwkansas.com

BUSINESS OFFICE

Tammy Withers - Office Manager
twithers@nwkansas.com

Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator
support@nwkansas.com

NOR'WEST PRESS

Jim Bowker - General Manager

Richard Westfahl, Lana Westfahl, Jim Jackson, Betty Morris, James Ornelas, Barbara Ornelas, Tasha Shores, Daniel Spillman

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Students learn to live a fearless life

My college is a little different. Being a Christian college, its focus is on the Bible, perhaps even more so than many other Christian colleges I have seen.

For example, the school administration cancels classes once a semester so that students can devote their day to prayer. The school used Martin Luther King Day to send students into the community to serve people. As a requirement for graduation, students are to be involved in a ministry every semester.

Therefore, student life is so much more than academics. It's so much more than making good friends or even finding a future spouse. It's a place where students are taught how to live and how to live with no reserves, no retreats and no regrets.

This week, classes were cancelled for the annual Global Missions Conference. Every year, missionaries from all over the world come to the campus to tell students about their work in other countries. Many have spent time in another culture. They come with knowledge and experience from their field of work. And they are anxious to recruit students who have a heart for meeting the spiritual and physical needs of people in foreign cultures.

To be honest, the week has been overwhelming. The presence of so many opportunities to change the lives of people felt like I was being pulled in 100 different directions.

Devote your life to the African people. Serve military families. Befriend the Muslims. Teach English in Indonesia. Design web sites for this



Michelle Myers

• A Moment with Michelle

organization.

How do you choose?

I entered this college with the desire to refine my journalism skills and to learn how to study the Bible and apply it to my life. I entered the conference with a passion for freeing victims of human trafficking (specifically those in sex slavery). I am in the middle of the conference and the path I must travel until my death is slowly coming into view.

No reserves. No retreats. No regrets.

This concept has a tone of fearlessness. It tells me that I must choose my path wisely because I might not be able to turn around or find my way back to the crossroads. Choices have results, some of them including consequences. What am I willing to live with?

I heard a pastor once say, "God may now be preparing you to not live here someday."

It's a scary thought, but I'm allowing myself to be open to the idea. Sure, it's hard enough being over a thousand miles from my family, who are thankfully just a phone call away. But if Nepal is where God is leading me, I cannot object and I will not object.

During the conference, we learned about a man named William Borden. At age 16, he traveled through Asia, the Middle East and Europe, and quickly developed a burden for the world's hurting people. He had a desire to be a missionary, a desire that only grew throughout his study at Yale and graduate work at Princeton Seminary in New Jersey.

Though he came from a wealthy family — he was to inherit a million dollars — he counted it all as a loss and gave it to those who needed it more than he did.

According to *The Yale Standard* (fall 1970 edition), Borden was determined to devote his life to the Muslims in China. After he graduated from Princeton, he was on his way.

He stopped in Egypt to study Arabic, but contracted spinal meningitis. Within a month, he was dead at age 25. On the flyleaf of his Bible, he had written, "No reserves. No retreats. No regrets."

I love my college. I love the friends I have made and the hours we spend in the cafeteria or the café discussing possibilities for the future. We don't know what the future will look like exactly, but we have our hopes and dreams.

But we have the example of William Borden. How now shall we live?

Michelle Myers, a Colby native, is a student at Multnomah University in Portland, Ore., majoring in Bible and journalism. She enjoys the 32 Starbucks found within five miles of her campus.

Healthy animals mean healthy food

Today, raising livestock on a farm or ranch is a dynamic, specialized profession, and the American livestock raiser has proven to be one of the most successful in the world.

Today's animal husbandry, or care and feeding of livestock, is no accident.

Rather, it's because of the dedicated men, women and children who raise and care for this state's livestock. For generations, Kansas farmers and ranchers have watched over and nurtured cattle, hogs, sheep, chickens and other livestock from sunup to sunset — every day of the year.

Few consumers are aware of stockmen's relationships with their animals. They don't know how the meat, milk, eggs and other food products wind up on their dinner table. But today, more and more are becoming interested.

Amy Saunders raises cattle in Jefferson County and markets her family's beef in nearby Lawrence and suburban Kansas City. Her customers want to know her and her family.

In the case of Saunders, when her customers buy her family's beef, they're buying the complete package.

"They're buying us," Amy says. "They're buying a quality product, and they know exactly who produces it."

On the open range in far southwestern Kansas, cattle have the right of way in Clark County. Here, rancher Roger Giles treats his cattle with care and respect. He understands to do so bolsters his bottom line and his reputation.

"We like what we do," Giles says. "Many people have a job and they recreate on weekends. We recreate every day, because we like what we do."



John Schlageck

• Insights Kansas Farm Bureau

For this southwestern Kansas family, raising cattle is a profession and lifestyle they enjoy. Still, Roger realizes his generation may be the last to have direct ties to the land.

"My children's generation and beyond... even in our little town, have no perception of production agriculture or the tradition of the family farm," he says.

That's why it's so important livestock producers tell consumers about this relationship with their animals.

Another producer who understands this mission is Lee Borck. He manages cattle feed yards in Kansas and Nebraska. The Pawnee County stockman knows a major part of any successful production plan includes caring for the animals.

"The more comfortable we make our animals, the more productive they're going to be and the better opportunity we'll have to make a profit," Borck says. "It starts when we load them on trucks and bring them into the feed yard. It ends when we load them back on the trucks to go to market."

Borck said his feedlots have been totally rebuilt and redesigned so the animals move smoothly and comfortably. This keeps the livestock from being excited. They eat and

perform better.

"I'd like to tell you we thought this up ourselves, but our business is consumer driven," Borck says. "Whatever the consumer wants, that's what we're obligated to provide as long as we can do it economically."

In southeast Kansas, Allen County dairyman Steve Strickler rises every morning before the crack of dawn. The health of his herd trumps everything else on the farm, even his own comfort.

"One of the famous quotes in the dairy industry by W.D. Hoard says the dairy cow is the foster mother of the human race," Strickler says. "Cows are very gentle creatures...and should be treated with respect."

Teenager LeaAnne Diederich cares for her horse and two Angus-cross steers on the family farm in Washington County. Through this experience, she has learned what it means to take charge of a life.

"It is a lot of work, but it's good to learn responsibility and to care for something more than just a pet," LeaAnne says. "I've learned to be there... or make arrangements to feed and water them daily. It's a big commitment."

These farmers and ranchers appear in the Kansas Farm Bureau documentary "The Care and Feeding of Farm Animals," posted at www.kfb.org. Parts of their interviews can also be seen at www.conversationsoncare.com.

John Schlageck of the Kansas Farm Bureau is a leading commentator on agriculture and rural Kansas. He grew up on a diversified farm in northwestern Kansas, and his writing reflects a lifetime of experience, knowledge and passion.

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

