

Other Viewpoints

New governor has broad appeal

It's more than a point of trivia that Kansas' 45th governor is the first to have been born in the state's largest city and the first in 54 years to have been a Wichitan.

Gov. Mark Parkinson will represent the entire state, of course. And Johnson County can rightfully claim him, too, because that is where he has spent his adult life as a legislator, business owner and lawyer...

Southcentral Kansans can hope Parkinson's roots will make him particularly attuned to the challenges of Wichita and its aviation-manufacturing sector, which is so pivotal to the state's economy.

(The announcement by Cessna Aircraft that it was cutting at least another 1,300 jobs, extending its summer shutdown and suspending its Citation Columbus program was only the latest in a series of shocks felt around the state.

It likely won't be the last.

In the legislative wrap-up session..., the new Democratic governor and the Legislature's GOP leaders need to come together on an answer to the \$328 million budget shortfall that spreads the pain as it helps those already hurting in Wichita and statewide.

Fortunately, party switch and all, Parkinson seems well-regarded by many Republicans. That good will may help him deliver on his stated desire to balance "modest" cuts and "modest revenue enhancements."

One way Parkinson and state legislators can help Wichita's jobless is by approving House Bill 2374, which would draw down nearly \$70 million in federal stimulus dollars to replenish the state's unemployment insurance trust fund. The minor law changes will ensure that the money is there when unemployed Kansans need it, and won't have to be raised later from Kansas businesses.

Judging from his two years as lieutenant governor, Parkinson can be expected to dive in and get things done to move the state forward, especially on energy.

Even though he has sworn off a gubernatorial run of his own next year, Parkinson can't and won't be a placeholder.

If he finds success, his legacy will be lasting.

— *The Wichita Eagle, via The Associated Press*

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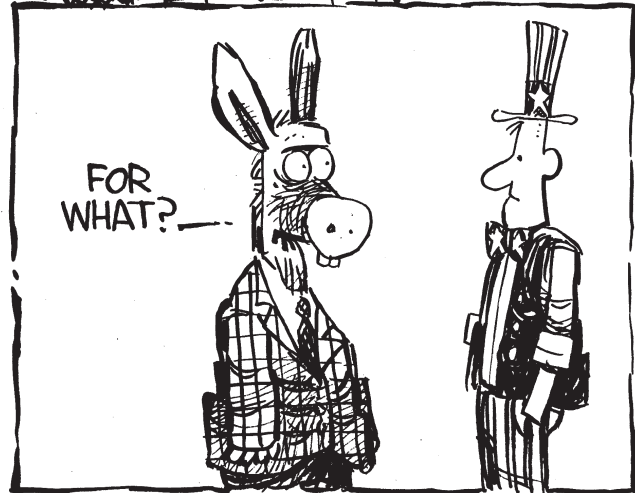
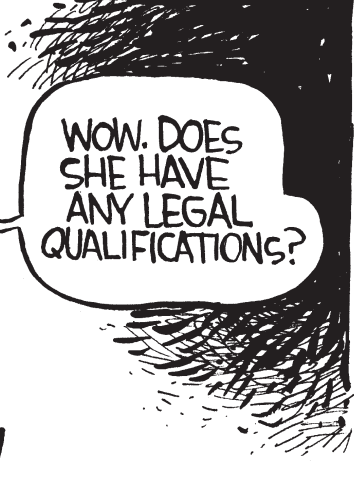
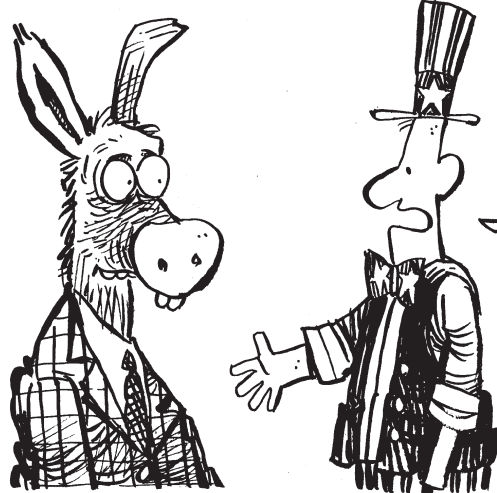
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Turn waiting into proactive waiting

As surprising as it may sound, I'm still learning how to wait.

I don't know what it is about waiting, but by being unable to control situations or direct certain outcomes, I have learned a lot about myself.

First, I don't trust people. Second, I don't trust myself. Third, I'm an impatient person.

Waiting started when I began to piece my summer together. I had gotten a full-time job on campus like I wanted, but there were still some things up in the air.

In particular, I was waiting to hear back about a sales associate job at Eddie Bauer, a casual, outdoor clothing store. Even though the job would be only 10 hours a week, a 50 percent discount made the job appealing, and I could continue to work there during school.

I felt that the interview had been great, but they told me that they had over 100 applicants. Having no retail experience, I assumed I wouldn't get the job.

But then the assistant manager who interviewed me called about a week later, asking if I was still interested. Immediately I said yes, not really thinking about another opportunity I had that would affect not only my summer, but also the following school year.

And that brings me to some exciting news. The monthly student newspaper, *The Voice*, needs an editor for next year, and the editor is going to be me. I would say that it's an honor to be given such a position, but the truth is that I am the only journalism student with enough experience who is willing to do it.

The editor's job means that I will lead ses-



Michelle Myers

• A Moment with Michelle

sions during the Newspaper Workshop class, which is when the staff meets to discuss the next issue of the paper. I will train students in photography and design and help them enhance their writing skills. I will also assign stories, write a column for every issue and pick up the slack, which will be the majority of my job.

Not only will the editor position be a nice touch to my resume, but the position also comes with a scholarship. Since the job will require at least 40 hours of work during production week, I'm taking only 12 hours worth of classes.

Even though being in a leadership position scares me, I am excited to take on a role that will challenge me. Delegating jobs isn't something I normally do. I tend to be more of a follower than a leader. But why settle doing the things I'm comfortable doing?

So, with much sadness and disappointment, I turned down the Eddie Bauer job. It's good to know that they wanted me, but who am I kidding? I would bring home only new clothes not a paycheck.

And with working six to seven days a week, there would be no time to put together the first

issue of *The Voice*, which, as the editor, I must do all by myself.

So what does this have to do with learning how to wait?

Well, I learned that there's more to waiting than just sitting there and waiting for everything to fall into my lap. I like to call it proactively waiting. Instead of putting my hope entirely in getting a job on campus, I applied at other places, which heightened my chances at getting a job somewhere, anywhere. I had Plans B, C, D, and I was working on Plans E and Plan F.

I didn't wait for the journalism professor to approach me about being editor of *The Voice*. I knew she needed someone to take on the job, so I told her I would be willing to do it.

I didn't wait for a loving, respectful, Christian boyfriend by sitting in my room with a Bible in my lap, hoping he would knock on my door and ask me for a date. Our love for God and for people moved us to action. We prayed and served people. It was the first thing we noticed in each other.

Basically, we collided while doing what we love to do. And I have to say that it was a beautiful collision.

I know waiting can be frustrating, especially when there is no end in sight. But proactively waiting can make it all worth it.

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.

Teach your children well about dangers

Before long kids will toss their schoolbooks and pencils into the far corners of their rooms, don their Magellan garb and embark on a summer course of outdoor exploration.

For many rural children, railroads, dumps, junkyards, abandoned properties and ponds make exciting places to explore. It is up to parents to decide what is a suitable adventure site.

Each year, though, hundreds of railroad trespassers are killed and injured, according to the National Safety Council. Children who crawl under or pass around lowered gates, walk the tracks, cross trestles, take shortcuts across railroad property, hop trains, or climb in, on or around railroad cars run a tremendous risk.

This spring, take the time to warn your children of these dangers, says Holly Higgins, Kansas Farm Bureau safety director. Instruct them to obey warning devices and insist they never cross a railroad track until they have looked both ways and are sure it is safe.

"Never assume children will act like responsible, mature adults," Higgins says. "Advise them often, because they forget."

Kids will be kids. For most, life is an adventure. Anything and anywhere is fair game for exploration.

When I was a boy growing up in northwest Kansas, there was always something magnetic about a junkyard. We had an abandoned dump within easy walking distance. We dug and sifted through the trash at the site for hours, collecting little treasures to add to our growing collections. Sometimes these "keepers," as we called them, included rusted iron spikes, neat-shaped bottles, broken wrenches and tools,



John Schlageck

• Insights Kansas Farm Bureau

discarded containers and other cast-offs.

While we weren't aware of it or didn't care, the risk of injury was always present. Wasps, snakes, rats, spiders and other creatures scrambled and slithered to move out of the way of our excavation projects. Broken glass and boards with rusty nails threatened to cut or puncture our small feet. I will never forget the pain and tears of stepping on a nail.

Dumps also feature trucks, bulldozers and other heavy equipment. It's difficult for operators to see children scooting among the debris. Such equipment can easily crush kids. Warn your children to stay away.

Dark deserted buildings — including barns and abandoned farmhouses — often have the reputation of being haunted. Such structures were always considered another adventure when I was a youngster.

Big kids often dare little kids to go in. I remember accepting the challenge and brushing my way through cobwebs and crawling around rodent holes and fleeing mice. Although I survived, I wouldn't advise any child of mine to do the same.

As a youth, my dad always warned me again and again about swimming ponds. I guess the repetition paid off, because I never swam in

such pools of water until I was in high school and an "OK" swimmer.

Remember to tell your children about ponds. They are deep. You can be into water up to your knees the first couple of steps and the next — over your head.

There are no lifeguards. Fencing off ponds may help. Warning signs also may serve as a deterrent, but kids always find a way into the water.

Warn children about such potential hazards. Then warn them again. Saving one child's life is worth the effort. Many times it takes more than once for them to grasp your warnings.

Lead by example and remember that as a parent, you have been entrusted with safeguarding your children's well being. Summer is a special time for kids. Having a child is indeed a treasure. Take care of, cherish and nurture this wonderful gift.

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.

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