



Other Viewpoints

K-State leaders face tough issues with coach's payout

Imagine you're Kansas State University's incoming president Kirk Schulz and newly hired athletic director John Currie — and then be grateful you're not.

Currie and Schulz, who replaces KSU President Jon Wefald on July 1, are walking into a hornet's nest of questionable financial dealings in the university's athletic department. The latest incident involves former athletic director Bob Krause and Ron Prince, the Wildcats football coach forced out last year.

Krause allegedly negotiated a deal with Prince's attorney without the consent and knowledge of Wefald or any other university official.

The secret dealings purportedly could cost K-State \$3.2 million — in addition to the \$1.2 million the university paid Prince to step down....

This, along with questions about the athletic department's budget and a depleted reserve fund, lands in the laps of Schulz and Currie. And initial signs point to an ugly chapter for K-State sports history.

Prince's lawyer, Neil Cornrich, claims the contract is valid. Allegations the agreement was done in secret, he said, are inaccurate since a university official — Krause — not only knew of the deal but signed off on it.

The Krause/Prince agreement is among several questionable dealings that have occurred in the KSU athletic department over the last 17 months....

Schulz and Currie are going to need some big mops just to clean up the mess. All of which dampens some of the enthusiasm brought about earlier with the rehiring of the beloved (former coach Bill) Snyder.

... Donors to K-State athletics ought to hold onto their dollars while demanding accountability for the shenanigans in the athletic department over the last several months.

And officials at the University of Virginia, where Prince is now an assistant coach, well, they likely have some questions for their new hire.

— *The Hutchinson News, via The Associated Press*

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COLBY FREE PRESS

155 W. Fifth St. (USPS 120-920) (785) 462-3963
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State award-winning newspaper, General Excellence, Design & Layout, Columns, Editorial Writing, Sports Columns, News, Photography. Official newspaper of Thomas County, Colby, Brewster and Rexford.

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THE COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920) is published every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, except the days observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, by Nor'West Newspaper, 155 W. Fifth St., Colby, Kan., 67701.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE paid at Colby, Kan. 67701, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth St., Colby, Kan., 67701.

THE BUSINESS OFFICE at 155 W. Fifth is open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday, closed Saturday and Sunday. MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, which is exclusively entitled to the use for publication of all news herein. Member Kansas Press Association and National Newspaper Association.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In Colby, Thomas County and Oakley: three months \$35, one year \$85. By mail to ZIP Codes beginning with 676 and 677: three months \$39, one year \$95. Elsewhere in the U.S., mailed once per week: three months \$39, one year \$95. Student rate, nine months, in Colby, Thomas County and Oakley, \$64; mailed once per week elsewhere in the U.S. \$72



Summer not what it used to be

Summer is the best time of the year. I get to be carefree, class free and cafeteria free while spending my afternoons soaking up the sun instead of listening to lectures. I wait all school year for the summer to arrive.

But this year, I decided to go from full-time student to full-time employee.

Having a full-time job isn't new for me. When I worked for the *Colby Free Press*, I worked 30 hours a week the first summer and about 40 hours the second summer. But living away from home and working full-time for the summer is a new experience, and it is taking some adjustment.

After getting kicked out of the dorms — students can be fined for every 15 minutes they remain in the dorms after they are closed — I moved into a tiny apartment that I share with three other girls.

I spent the weekend shopping for groceries and supplies so I could be ready to go to work on Monday. Up until now, I never needed to buy things like cooking pans, spatulas or Tupperware. I always figured that's what bridal showers are for. I had neglected to consider the ramifications of not living at home for the summer and prior to marriage.

As I purchased my canned goods and microwaveable plates, I realized that summer isn't what it used to be.

Six fifty-five came Monday morning, and it was time to start my eight-hour training for



Michelle Myers

• A Moment with Michelle

custodial work. I harnessed all my strength to resist coffee and headed out the door to make the two-minute walk to work.

Instead of sleeping in until 11 a.m. like two of my roommates, I watched videos on asbestos, blood-borne pathogens, how to not fall off a ladder and other cleaning-related information. Training lasted two days before we could begin our cleaning assignments. For some reason, I felt like I was still in school.

At the end of day two, I was unsure of what I had gotten myself into, but I have been unsure many times. As I get older and continue to create new "normals" in life, I have watched God push me to new limits. I guess since I have succeeded before, he wants to challenge me to keep climbing.

But uncertainty creeps into my life too often, making me wonder if perhaps I should have just perched myself on a steady branch.

Uncertainty can be the enemy of trusting. When I don't trust that God is carefully holding my life in his hands, I am a miserably

stressed, lonely human being.

I remember several days ago the realization that I wouldn't be able to go home for Memorial Day weekend. Going to school over 1,000 miles from home never bothered me as much as it did then. I felt sorry for myself for a couple days, then realized that self-pity wasn't helping me feel any better. I told God that I needed strength to make it through the summer.

I then realized that I actually enjoy my job. Sure, scrubbing bathroom floors and cleaning heating vents with cotton swabs is less than glamorous. But I like the people I work for and the people I work with. My crew is three girls and three guys. All are diligent and complain-free coworkers who put a smile on my face every morning when I walk into the meeting room.

More often than not, it's the people who determine whether someone is going to enjoy his or her job. I thank God for these people.

Even though my summers will never be what they used to be, I intend to make the best of them, to squeeze joy out of each day and to praise God for every opportunity that will push me to new heights.

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.

Agriculture benefits from '09 Legislature

Tallying this year's legislative scorecard reveals a successful session for agricultural interests across the Sunflower State.

Major victories included an energy deal, fending off attacks on estate and franchise tax phase outs, surface owner notices from oil drillers and water rights protection. All are significant for farmers, ranchers, landowners and rural Kansas.

The energy bill passed by the Legislature gives regulatory certainty to Kansas agriculture and other businesses by ensuring Kansans will not be subject to environmental rules or regulations more stringent than federal law. This agreement also advances farmers' and ranchers' support of energy derived from biomass and wind power by requiring Sunflower Electric to use renewable energy as part of its portfolio and to build high-voltage electric lines that will allow increased transmission of wind-generated electricity to Colorado.

"This legislation has been a priority for our members during the last two years, and we thank Gov. Mark Parkinson, Senate President Steve Morris, Speaker Mike O'Neal and all the lawmakers for working hard to ensure Kansas has a comprehensive energy bill free from additional regulation," said Kansas Farm Bureau President Steve Baccus.

Another bill will require notification of surface owners prior to drilling of any oil and gas well, including estimates of the placement of roads, pipelines and tank batteries. This bill also requires notice when there is a change of operator or prior to the plugging and abandonment of any well. The focus is to improve communications between oil and gas producers and surface-rights owners.

Lawmakers also passed a bill tightening the process by which county commissions are required to review annexations to deter-



John Schlageck

• Insights

Kansas Farm Bureau

mine whether services promised in the cities' service plan are actually being extended into recently annexed areas. This law prohibits counties from approving the annexation of a parcel consisting of more than 65 contiguous acres. In addition, it prohibits "shoestring annexation," a process by which a city could annex a narrow section of land, for example, the roadside leading to a casino or other desired property.

Another bill requires a sworn statement that legal access to private property has been granted before the state is allowed to accept an application to appropriate water. This law will provide important protection for farmers, ranchers and landowners and their property rights.

A conference committee report containing several tax policy provisions, including clarification on value determination of ag land held in estates, is awaiting the governor's signature. Efforts to end the phase-out of the estate tax and the franchise tax were defeated. The estate tax will go away in 2010 and the franchise tax in 2011.

While the Legislature was able to close a \$328 million deficit in the state's 2010 budget, which takes effect July 1, budget woes loom large next year.

The budget deal reached is projected to leave the state with an ending balance of only \$17,000 on a \$13 billion budget. While

the budget agreement avoided pay cuts or furloughs for state workers and was accomplished without a tax increase, a large drop in state revenue in the next several months would force further cuts to state agency budgets and possible tax hikes next year.

Discussion of this issue will take place against the backdrop of an election year, so the possibility exists that, as in past years, one or two hot-button issues will consume the legislature while other policy issues may receive less attention.

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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Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

