

## Other Viewpoints

### Repealer office won't reduce size of bureaucracy

Kansas governor hopeful Sen. Sam Brownback's recent call for creation of a state Office of the Repealer was little more than a shout-out to members of the "tea party" movement, which often rails against government regulations and rules.

Brownback's idea, which is not original, still lacks details, according to a recent story by *The New York Times*, but seems acutely in tune with tea-party politics of getting big government off the backs of every American.

The Office of the Repealer - which doesn't exactly roll off the tongue - would be tasked with eliminating unnecessary rules and regulations. That raises the issue of subjectivity - one repealer might see a particular regulation as necessary while another views it as government interference.

But Brownback claims some "just love this idea." They feel like they're getting their brains regulated out of them, he told a gathering in Salina.

Ironically, though, while Brownback argues against overbearing and needless government regulations, the establishment of the Office of the Repealer would create more government and add another government-paid salary.

A nugget of value can be found in the senator's idea. There are some silly and archaic laws on the state's books and in cities across the state. But the chore of getting those laws and regulations off the books falls to state lawmakers and local government officials. And it can be accomplished without creating another government office.

Surely legislative aides or a task force could be assigned to review current government regulations that have outlived their usefulness. A similar effort could be undertaken at the city and county government level. But ultimately, lawmakers should decide which regulations ought to be eliminated, with county commissioners and city councils doing the same at home.

Brownback's idea for the Office of the Repealer ought to be shelved. To paraphrase the senator's unique use of the English language: Voters feel like they're getting their brains gimmicked out of them by politicians sporting superficial agendas

- *The Hutchinson News, via the Associated Press*

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### Sneak attack comes from potato chip bag

I have to tell. My boss, Steve Haynes, did an evil thing today. He brought a bag of barbecue-flavored potato chips into the newsroom, set them down on my desk and walked away.

Making good use of the time spent at work, without turning into a total drudge, is always a challenge. An occasional break from the grind is essential.

Here at the *Free Press*, one of the things we do fairly often is share a meal, a box of donuts, a round of soft drinks or coffee - almost anything to break the day up a little. We even plan holiday parties. We even celebrated Cinco de Mayo with tacos, which is about as ethnic as we get around here.

Though I don't remember potato chips every being on the menu before, the idea was not totally beyond the range of what goes on.

I have to give the boss a little credit. There's no way he could have known that I was about due for a potato chip binge. I probably looked just like I always do. He probably doesn't even know I'm a secret potato chip junkie. After all, he's never seen me eat potato chips.

And there's a reason for that.

I confess. I can't stop. Those little "individual" bags are a joke. When I start a bag of potato chips, I want the BIG bag. For myself. Dip is good, but optional.

By the end of the bag, my binge has burned



**Marian Ballard**

#### • Collection Connections

itself out. All those salty, greasy chips, along with lots to drink, have tamed the beast for another year or so.

Some people binge on Rocky Road ice cream. Some people binge on corn on the cob. I binge on potato chips. I acknowledge my weakness.

Sadly, for all those office binging-over-food moments, the spot next to my desk seems to be the logical central location. It's handy, with a flat surface that doesn't belong to anyone. It's near the printer, so the ad staff as well as the news staff drop by frequently. It just happens to be about six feet too close to my desk, though I'll admit moving the potato chips across the room didn't really help much.

It never used to be this way. B.F. - that is, Before the Flood - donuts and such were put in the work room, or break room, or whatever its official name is. When the waters rose, that room flooded. When the waters fell, that room

was unusable for weeks. Since an office under stress, deprived of heat, space, and all the rest, runs on donuts, we had to find a new place to keep the them. That became the spot by my desk.

The flood cleanup is done, the desks moved back, and the break room looks better than ever. The shelf by my desk, though, is still cookie central.

Last week it was fudge. Special, souvenir fudge from Michigan. Since chocolate is one of the basic food groups, along with caffeine, this was a challenge for me, but common-sense prevailed. That, and that fact that too much fudge is more likely to make me comatose than thirsty (see potato chip binge, above).

There will be food at the office again this week. There are birthdays to celebrate and a co-worker to bid farewell to. Now if only they will keep it out of my reach...

**Publisher's Note:** She thought I was going to leave that bag of chips at home where I'd eat them all? Not on my diet.

*Marian Ballard has collected careers as counselor, librarian, pastor, and now copy editor for the Colby Free Press. She collects ideas, which are more portable than other stuff.*

### Muttonhead offers musings on food

Food has taken a bad public relations rap for far too long. As one of my favorite comedians, Rodney Dangerfield, would have said, "I'll tell you Johnny, food get's no respect."

It all started with Adam and Eve. What caused them to sin?

An apple, of course.

And everyone knows what one bad apple does to a barrel, right?

When a friend buys a car and problems arise, he does not call the car lousy, does he? No, instead it's labeled a lemon.

When someone receives bad advice, the suggestions weren't bad. Instead, the person was given a bum steer. And a bad joke is not called stupid; it's corny.

Pits from fruit will grow an orchard, but if something is awful, it is considered the pits. Homely girls are distastefully referred to as pigs. Homely guys are labeled turkeys or boars. Someone who lacks gray matter is often called a muttonhead.

You gotta be careful of corn plants at night. They can be really creepy with their husky voices and seedy appearance. Why, they even cob right out and tell you to shuck it right to your face.

Rosemary was always late delivering packages. This prompted the head of International Herbs & Spices to call her supervisor, demand-



**John Schlageck**

#### • Insights

Kansas Farm Bureau

ing to speak to the parcel sage about Rosemary and time.

There's no other food that inspires as many cringe-worthy puns as nuts. Yes, we know they're salty, and we're also aware we have the option to lick them, but if you were going to insist on making joke after joke, we'd rather just run to the store and buy our own. There's more, but this is a family column.

All children know that Cinderella's beautiful carriage turned into a pumpkin at midnight. A gingerbread house landed Hansel and Gretel in the witch's oven and a poison apple was the downfall of Snow White.

And the bad stories related to food are never ending. One of my favorites involves a hungry traveler who stops at a monastery and is taken to the kitchens. A brother is frying chips. 'Are you the friar?' he asks. 'No. I'm the chip monk,' he replies.

Or, I decided recently that becoming a veg-

etarian was a missed steak. And one more - did you hear about the cannibal who showed up late to the luncheon, they gave him the cold shoulder.

I'll tell you, food gets no respect.

No doubt, the food industry needs an image facelift - some "good old PR hype." To be honest, it all leaves a bad taste in this writer's mouth. But then I guess it could just be a case of sour grapes?

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

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### Mallard Fillmore

#### • Bruce Tinsley

