

Other Viewpoints

Aviation contracts have high stakes

What's going on within Wichita's main industry inspires deep concern, raising the scary possibility that the canceled orders, scrapped plans and deep job cuts of the past two years might not be the prelude to the next boom after all.

Hawker Beechcraft is looking at moving work to other states and countries, with Louisiana and Mississippi among the contenders. Cessna Aircraft recently issued 75 more layoff notices (at its Independence plant), and recently opened its fourth facility in Mexico.

And the Machinists union just began contract negotiations with Hawker and Cessna, with the sides in both sets of talks agreeing that the times are beyond tough and the stakes are beyond high.

All eyes and hopes will be focused on those negotiations, especially because, according to what the union says in the case of Hawker, how they fare could determine whether the company stays.

Then again, Bombardier Aerospace recently recommitted to the city and state, thanks in part to a \$27 million bond-financing deal landing Wichita the assembly of the new composite Learjet 85. And Spirit AeroSystems saw its net income rise in the second quarter and continues to view Wichita as key to its solid performance companywide (which recently did expand to a plant in Kinston, N.C.).

A scenario in which Wichita ceases to be the Air Capital of the World would require one of two impossibilities to occur — for the world to never again need new aircraft, or for aviation companies to conclude there are better places than Wichita to build all those planes.

At a distance, other states or countries might seem to have some advantages over Wichita, especially cheaper labor and rich incentive packages. But the case to stay in Wichita is too compelling to be denied — at least by CEOs who care as much about the quality of their products as they say they do, or as the companies' founders always did....

Even if the Machinists union's new contract with Spirit fell short of winning workers' approval and has raised industry concerns because of its increased pension benefits, it's good for 10 years — standing out for the certainty it offers both company and workers during an uncertain time.

Local and state leaders can't be complacent about what the future holds for Wichita's aviation cluster. If there's something to be done to make a difference, including a special session of the Legislature, let's do it. But the infrastructure for building aircraft, the suppliers, the technical expertise and support, the decades' worth of investment in general aviation — it's not in another state or Mexico or China. It's in Wichita, where the industry belongs.

— The Wichita Eagle, via The Associated Press

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PROOF THAT PARANOIA ONLY LEADS TO MORE PARANOIA...



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Veggiemobile takes mountains seriously

The veggiemobile headed west last week.

We were starting out on our annual August trip to Creede, Colo., which at elevation 8,800 feet, has a growing season of about six days.

Well, I exaggerate, but I have seen it freeze in July, and by September you can get caught in a snow storm. This is not the place to grow much besides lettuce and spinach, and even those cool-weather crops have to fight like crazy to make a decent season of it.

So when I leave Kansas in August, I gather as much fresh produce as I can to share with my old friends and neighbors.

I started out with my sister. I called ahead and said that, since I was visiting our mother a week before I was scheduled to leave the state, could she please save me some of whatever was growing in her garden, especially half-ripe tomatoes.

She met me on her doorstep with enough zucchini to make about a dozen loaves of bread. We proceeded to the garden and picked every tomato that was even thinking about turning red. She also sent me off with a cantaloupe and some green peppers.

The cantaloupe didn't make it to Colorado.



Cynthia Haynes

• Open Season

We ate it for breakfast the next day. But the rest of the stuff did.

Next I hit up friends for cucumbers and yellow tomatoes.

I went out and picked all my yellow squash. For some reason, even though I planted an even number of zucchini and yellow squash plants, only the crook-neck squash made it, but five plants of yellow squash produce is more than enough — especially when I can get my sister to hand over her zucchini or just leave my car unlocked in her yard.

Before we left, I picked green beans, wax beans, corn, broccoli and yellow squash. I also found a couple more cucumbers, a few ready-to-turn tomatoes and a ton of cherry tomatoes.

We were ready to go.

College board raises eyebrows

To the Editor:

Noticing a trend started in Washington, I cannot help, even at the risk of committing political seppuku, but to think that the "We know what the people want better than they do" syndrome has hit Colby and landed squarely on the board of trustees at Colby Community College.

During their regular meeting Monday, Aug. 18, I witnessed a group of individuals engaged in less-than-sophomoric behavior, fueled by an outright contempt for the head administrator of the college.

On the college web page, the board's mission statement is described as:

"The Colby Community College Board of Trustees is composed of six individuals from Thomas County. They serve the college and community at no remuneration and exhibit diligence, patience and dependability in advancing the interests of the college and its many constituents in northwest Kansas."

The only accurate part of this is the part that says "The Colby Community College Board of Trustees is composed of six individuals from Thomas County." The rest of the mission statement is patently false.

In this meeting, the college staff pleaded with the board not to reduce the procurement limit so that the college is not crippled. That limit currently stands at \$20,000 and the board now proposes to reduce the president's authorization to \$2,500. These pleas were heard by the board and subsequently ignored. My humble opinion is that this board is doing way more damage than good, and that their personal agendas are taking precedence over valid need.

Dramatically and with absolute ire in his eyes, board member Bill Shields stated that his problem was with Dr. Krieder and that he would resign from the board if Dr. Krieder would also resign.

Have you heard about the chicken and the pig who wanted to make a ham and egg breakfast for their masters? The pig says to the chicken, "This is merely an inconvenience for you, but a life-changing event for me." In this



Free Press Letter Drop

• Our readers sound off

context it was real "big" of Mr. Shields to offer to resign a nonremunerated position in return for Dr. Krieder giving up his livelihood. Mr. Shields, please consider your offer to resign duly noted and accepted.

I am not suggesting that the administration and faculty are innocent in this problem. I am sure that there have been issues that have angered the board. (These issues should not have "angered" the board; they should be above that type of behavior; they just are not.) The solution is not in attacking their staff and administration. The solution is to "exhibit diligence, patience, and dependability in advancing the interests of the college and its many constituents in northwest Kansas!"

As blame goes, I place 25 percent on the administration and staff, 75 percent on the board, with an overwhelming 51 percent going directly to board President Cindy Black, who did in no way act presidential, try to find a reasonable solution or stop her board minions from their attacks.

Cindy, I think you should resign post haste along with Bill.

The college is an important and integral part of our community, and as citizens of Colby, we have to hold the board accountable to their mission statement.

W.E. Stoke, Colby

Coffee Party 'civil'

To the Editor:

This is the first in a series of letters to inform your readers what the Kansas Coffee Party Movement is about and what it stands for.

This movement is about civil, productive dialog in politics. We believe that of Kansas are polite, sensible, intelligent and hard-working people whose lives are built on common respect. The vast majority want their political representatives to be civil and respectful, even when there is a difference in opinion.

The movement is NOT the opposite of the Tea Party. Our group is nonpartisan; it is not affiliated with any political party. It does not endorse any political candidate, but it recognizes candidate's actions, words and behavior that further civility in politics.

The group stands for "Putting Kansas First," before party affiliation. The group stands for putting our country first and doing what is right for our country, before party ideology.

The movement welcomes all people who seek meaningful, constructive discourse in matters that affect our towns, our state and our country.

Your comments are welcomed. The movement is on Facebook or may be reached at CoffeeParty.Kansas@yahoo.com.

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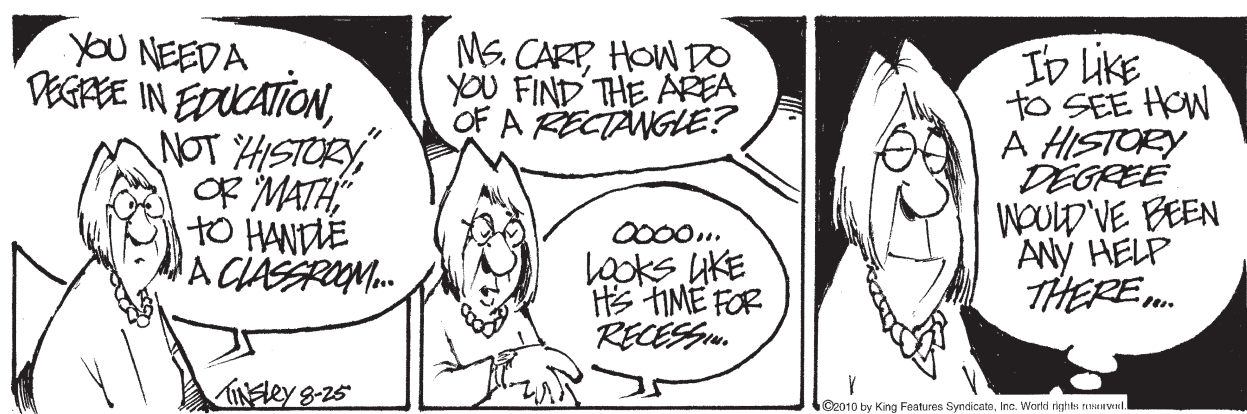
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We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise. Nor do we run form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous from this area should be submitted to the Want Ad desk.

Letters will not be censored, but will be read and edited for clarity, length and legality.

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley



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