



## Other Viewpoints

### Hazing needs vocal protestors

On some college campuses, hazing is one ritual that just won't die. Sadly, the University of Kansas currently is one of those places.

Last fall, a KU freshman hit his head after he dived into a makeshift pool at a Phi Gamma Delta fraternity party. That young man now is paralyzed.

Two months later, some members of the group that actually governs KU's 21 fraternities took turns paddling one another after they'd inducted new officers.

Both Phi Gamma Delta and the Interfraternity Council now are serving two-year probation terms for participating in hazing.

Those probations came with orders. Among them was a requirement that the council hire a consultant to review the hazing problem in the greek community and recommend initiatives. Some council members also must attend an intensive anti-hazing seminar. The Fijis are required to have an alcohol-free house this school year and they can't participate in KU events such as intramural sports and Rock Chalk Revue. In addition, there are community service requirements, as well as education programs.

But a nagging question remains: Will fulfilling those requirements be enough to end this potentially dangerous and degrading nonsense? Unfortunately, the actions of the Fijis and council members are not isolated incidents at KU.

It stands to reason that underage drinking and excessive alcohol consumption both play a role in this behavior, but there's more at work here. There's a culture of acceptance, at least tacit acceptance, of hazing. For that, every KU student, staff and faculty member must shoulder some responsibility. Where's the outrage? Who's standing up and demanding an end to hazing at KU?

Or has KU fallen victim to this complacent attitude: Students will be students, and KU's no different from any other school.

Why in the world wouldn't KU want to be different – very different – from other schools that have hazing problems? To say the university isn't alone is little comfort.

Instead, Kansas University must take the lead among colleges in solving this frustrating problem.

It's hoped that the university's new student conduct officer, who started work in January, is the person to ensure the cycle of hazing is broken. Really broken.

Nick Kehrwald promises a more proactive approach at KU. In addition, a new anti-hazing task force has been meeting to discuss the issue.

There's much important work to be done, for the good of the university and all of its students.

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

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155 W. Fifth St. (USPS 120-920) (785) 462-3963  
Colby, Kan. 67701 fax (785) 462-7749

Send news to: [colby.editor@nwkanssas.com](mailto:colby.editor@nwkanssas.com)

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**Steve Haynes - Publisher**  
s.haynes@nwkanssas.com

#### NEWS

**Kevin Bottrell - News Editor**  
kbottrell@nwkanssas.com

#### Sports

colby.sports@nwkanssas.com

**Marian Ballard - Copy Editor**  
mballard@nwkanssas.com

**Vera Sloan - Society Editor**

**Shelby Pulkrabek - Society Reporter**  
colby.society@nwkanssas.com

#### ADVERTISING

**Andrea Bowers, Kathryn Ballard**  
Advertising Representatives  
abowers@nwkanssas.com kb Ballard@nwkanssas.com

**Kylee Hunter - Graphic Design**  
khunter@nwkanssas.com

#### BUSINESS OFFICE

**Robin Tubbs - Office Manager**  
rtubbs@nwkanssas.com

**Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator**  
support@nwkanssas.com

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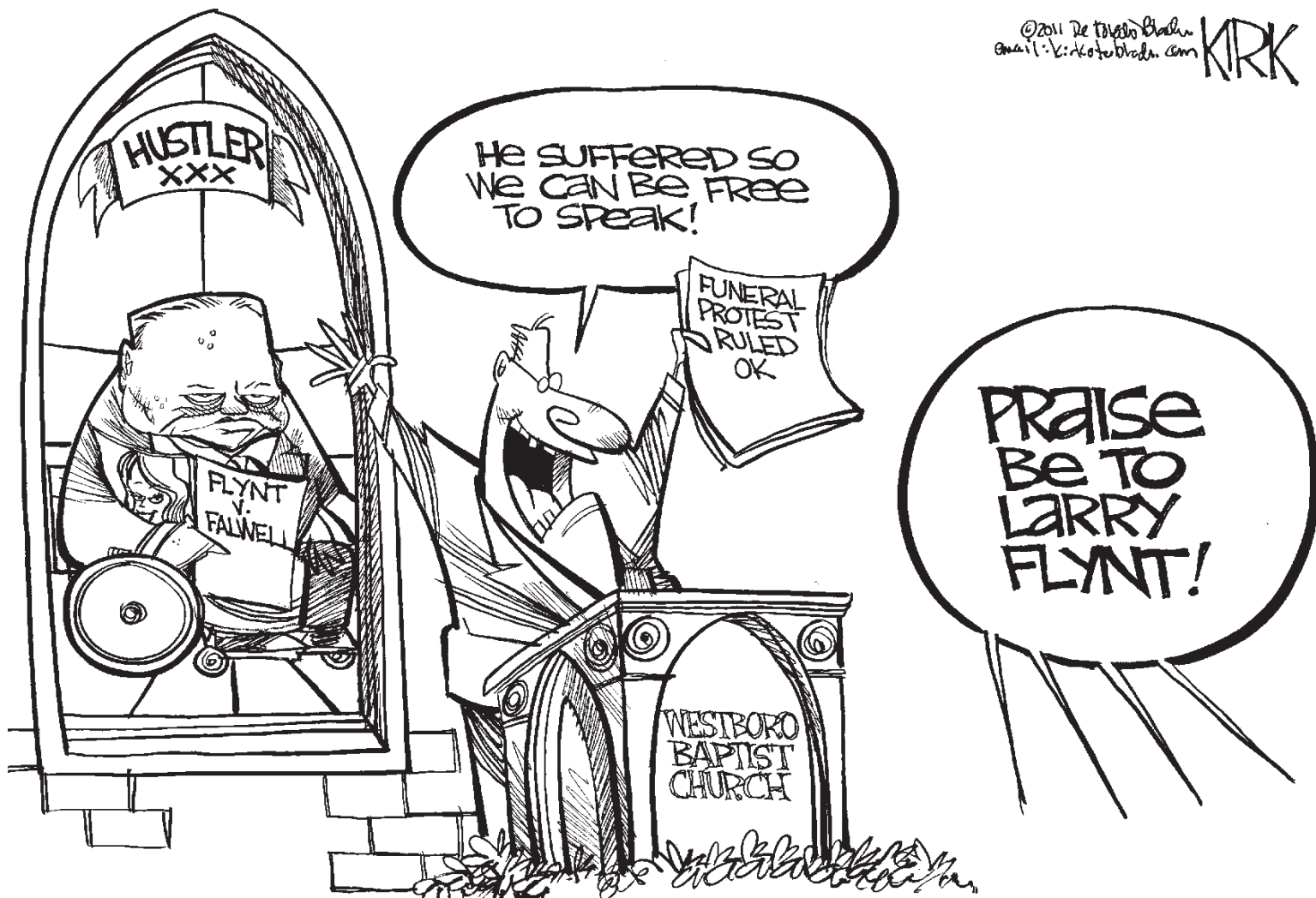
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### Old dishes never quite seem to die

Every once in a while I get an urge to bake. Usually, that means I have one serving for myself and start looking around for a way to get rid of the rest.

The other day it was corn bread. I made some to go with a pan of stew, and then wondered what to do with it all – but not for long. After all, any food that shows up in the news room has a habit of disappearing.

So, I gathered up the corn bread, some butter, some jelly – and a stack of saucers to warm it in the microwave and catch all that melted butter.

Saucers seem to be one of those things that multiply in my cupboard. When you get a set of dishes by any means – whether purchase, gift or hand-me-down – it comes with a full set of saucers. Two sets, if you count bread and butter plates, which are really about the same size. (Who actually uses a separate plate for bread and butter? Usually it just means one more dish to wash.)

Dishes with matching saucers, of course, also have coffee cups. I remember coffee cups – my parents used to use them. Haven't used anything smaller than a mug in years, personally. In fact, my mugs tend to get larger as the years go by. One that I like to use for hot tea is basically a quart canning jar with a handle.

Those matching cups may still be around somewhere, of course. They work as scoops for the flour canister, or pencil holders. They are not, however, in my cupboard.

The saucers are. In fact, they form the tallest stack of plates I have. For everyday dishes, es-



#### Marian Ballard

#### • Collection Connections

pecially in the microwave generation, they are great to put under a sandwich or a single serving of pizza/chicken/vegetables/dessert. They make useful saucers even, once in a while. After all mugs occasionally dribble, too.

Oddly enough, though, I seldom seem to break them. Plates get dropped. Bowls get chipped. Mugs crack. But saucers just go on forever. While a few find new homes under houseplants, most just hang around. They become orphans in the china kingdom. I have saucers from my mothers old set of Jewel Tea plates, the only survivors of the ravages of time. There are saucers from my first set of Corelle, in a pattern they stopped making years ago. Three larger plates – out of the original eight – also survive.

Many folks, of course, can identify with the image of a kitchen cupboard filled with odds and ends. It's not that I don't have china. At one time, I had three or four kinds of china, though I've managed to give some of it away.

What I do have, though, is dead relatives. My grandmother died; I got dishes. My aunt died; I got dishes. Someone else's grandmother died; I got dishes. My parents died; I got

dishes. Some were wonderful. Some were just dishes – a few more to fill in the gaps for the plates broken when a kid dropped them.

Then there is that most hazardous of recreational activities – the garage sale. Mostly, that's where I find mugs. Occasionally, though, they also are a gold mine for dishes.

Consequently, my cupboards are a hodgepodge. I have picnic-weight plastic I got when I moved and couldn't find anything. I have melamine that isn't nearly as pretty as it was when we first got it and I was 10 or so. I've got the above-mentioned strays.

I console myself with something I read once. It seems that some oriental cultures' idea of a beautiful table setting would never include matching dishes. That would lack creativity. Rather, each dish makes its own creative statement. So it should be OK to mix Haviland china with Franciscan wear. As for those old melamine dishes, well, we don't ban people from the table when they get a few wrinkles, do we? So that faded plastic just conveys a little character, gained from a hard working life feeding a family.

Just don't suggest I start fresh. Every plate I grab holds a memory. And even all those saucers serve a useful function while reminding me of something special.

*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.*

### Stalled trade impacts food pipeline

Three stalled trade agreements are jeopardizing a vital cog of this country's economy. The inability of Congress and the Obama administration to compromise on free trade agreements with Colombia, Korea and Panama is costing the United States \$3 billion in lost agricultural trade.

Here's the breakdown. If it is ever fully implemented, the Korean free trade agreement would result in approximately \$1.8 billion annually. Gains in exports through the Colombian agreement are expected at \$815 million. The Panama agreement would bolster U.S. ag exports to more than \$195 million.

These trade agreements are crucial for the economic well being of this nation's farmers and ranchers as well as the economic health of their rural communities and the whole of the U.S. economy.

Make no mistake about it, there is a correlation with the beginning of the supply chain on this nation's farms and ranches and the workers who package and move the livestock, grain, fuel and fiber to foreign consumers.

A decline in U.S. exports will result in a decline in work for those who are part of that food pipeline. Every billion dollars in agricultural exports creates work for approximately 9,000 workers, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

While the United States has dallied with these free trade agreements for years, other nations – our competitors – are pursuing and in some cases have secured their own trade agreements. Case in point is Canada. They have completed negotiations with Colombia and their agreement awaits implementation.

This debate on free trade is no longer just about generating potential export gains but



#### John Schlageck

#### • Insights

Kansas Farm Bureau

about the loss of existing U.S. exports. This nation and its farmer and rancher producers are losing billions of dollars to competitors with our stalled agreements.

Here's an example of what I'm talking about. During the 10-year period from 2000 to 2009, the Chilean wine market share in Korea rose from 2.4 percent to 21.5 percent. During this same time period, the U.S. share fell from 17.1 percent to 10.8 percent.

Here's another. The U.S. agriculture peak market share with Colombia totaled 46 percent in 2008. Last year it dropped to 21 percent as Argentina took our share of the ag export pie.

Just one more. A recently completed trade deal between Canada and Panama has given our neighbors to the north a competitive edge over us for products such as beef, pork, beans and various processed foods – if the Canadian trade deal goes into effect before the U.S. agreement.

This country's inability to take action on the trade front has resulted in a loss of market share and economic growth during a period of time when we cannot afford it. The U.S. government's inability to move these free trade agreements forward will continue to benefit our competitors around the world while damaging U.S. agriculture producers and American food-supply workers.

It's past time for this continuing political posturing and lack of cooperation on both sides of the aisle. Our elected leaders were sent to Washington on behalf of this nation's people. It's time for them to lead. It's time for them to implement free-trade agreements.

*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.*

### Where to write, call

**U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran**, Russell Senate Office Building, Courtyard 4, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 224-6521. Fax (202) 225-5124 moran.senate.gov/public/

**U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp**, 126 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715 or Fax (202) 225-5124. Web site: huelskamp.house.gov

**State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer**, State Capitol Building, 300 SW10th St., Room 225-E., Topeka, Kan. 66612, (785) 296-7399 ralph.ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us

**State Rep. Rick Billinger**, Docking Building, Room 754, Topeka Kan., 66612, (785) 296-7659 rick.billinger@house.ks.gov

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