



Free Press Viewpoint

What we want: a new approach

As Congress and the president come down to the wire next month, we're sure they will come up with a deal to raise the budget ceiling and avert a financial disaster.

When they do, they need to keep in mind what the American people want. That, we believe, is nothing less than a new approach to federal spending and the economy.

So what do we want? Here's a wish list:

- An end to endless deficits. As the states have been doing, the federal government needs to wake up and realize that resources are finite. We only have so much money, and we can't continue to overspend our income.

With Europe finally coming to its senses, Washington is about the last place on earth where financial reality has not settled.

- A simplified, fair tax structure, where everyone pays his share, rich and middle class alike. The tax code should not be about winners and losers, just about raising revenue and doing it fairly.

This may take time, but a general agreement is required now.

- No tax increase. The government has plenty of money. Instead of increasing the tax bite, except where fairness demands changes, the government just needs to learn to live with its income.

That's what the rest of us, taxpayers, states and local governments now have to do. The federal government needs to do the same.

- Transparency. The public needs to know what happens, what deals are struck, what the consequences will be. That will be especially tough for Congress and the White House. They are used to putting whatever "spin" they feel like on the news.

This time, they need to come clean. The American people are tired of getting the runaround. We're tired of those in Washington putting off hard decisions and letting the government drift from crisis to crisis, all the time telling us they are taking care of things.

If things had been taken care of, we wouldn't be in this mess, would we?

- A pledge that this is the very last time we'll have to put up with an increase in the debt limit. Everyone has been nodding and agreeing when the Treasury asks for more borrowing power. The "tea party" members are right when they decry this kind of business-as-usual approach to the deficit.

The national debt has piled higher and higher. This is the time for everyone to agree that enough is enough.

- As the smoke fades, a return to true bipartisan government, where the opposing forces put aside the next election and just do what's right for the country.

And if all that happens, maybe we'll re-elect some of them next year. Just maybe. — *Steve Haynes*

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MARGULIES
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Adapting to diabetes is tough for anyone

Diabetes is a nasty disease.

My father-in-law had it, and it was hard on the whole family.

Steve watches his diet, has his blood sugar checked regularly and exercises faithfully. But sometimes, nothing you do is enough and a member of your family succumbs.

We knew she had a problem. She started drinking increasing amounts of water. Then she started urinating — not just where and when she was supposed to, but everywhere and only small amounts at a time.

We both were pretty sure what the problem was, but we waited for the expert's opinion.

We were right. The doctor took a small blood sample and checked it on his meter. Her blood sugar was over 300, with normal being just over 100.

Molly has diabetes. She'll need at least one insulin shot every day for the rest of her life.

And that's not as easy as it sounds since Molly is a cat. Our gray and white, slightly overweight, very bossy cat, to be specific.

This is going to cause a major change in all our lives.

The veterinarian suggested that they keep her for a few days to get her stabilized and then show us how to give her the shots. Oh, and did we want to give the shots in the morning or the evening?

After some discussion, we decided on mornings. We tend to get going about the same time every day, but our nights can be really hectic. Sometimes we get home at 6 p.m., sometimes



Cynthia Haynes

• Open Season

at 9 p.m. and sometimes it's midnight to 1 a.m.

That didn't seem to be a very good regimen for insulin shots, which should be given at about the same time each day.

And since it's mornings, I'm sure I'll get to do the deed most days.

I never wanted to give shots. When Steve took allergy shots in the early years of our marriage, I told him he'd better learn to give them to himself because I didn't do shots.

And I didn't. For more than 60 years, I happily didn't give shots.

Then I was told if I wanted to keep my pharmacy job, I would learn to give shots.

I learned to give shots, and last year I gave flu shots to several dozen people.

Now, the operative word here is people. In fact, it's people who asked for a shot, not a cat who doesn't know what's good for her and definitely doesn't want a shot.

The technician says to grab the skin on the back of her neck and jab the 5 units of mixed fast and long-acting insulin in before she knows what's happened.

That's all well and good, but you gotta have the cat before you can give it a shot.

The vet's suggestion: Take up the big food bowl in the basement. Provide food once a day when it's time for the shot. This way, instead of searching a three-story house plus yard and garage for an elusive cat, she will come to me.

That's a good idea. Unfortunately, it means that the other three felines in the house will all have to start living under this new diet. They're not going to like it. I can guarantee that.

I emptied the big cat bowl this evening. In the morning, I'm picking up Molly at the vet for my injection lesson and a vial of insulin. I don't think I'll be late. I expect by about 6 a.m., there will be three cats on our bed complaining because the food bowl is, not only empty, but gone.

I'll report back in a couple of weeks as to how well everyone is adjusting to the new schedule.

I'll admit I'm a little skeptical. But then again, I swore I'd never needle Steve, and not only have been doing that for 40 years, I gave him his flu shot last fall.

Cynthia Haynes, co-owner and chief financial officer of Nor'West Newspapers, writes this column weekly. Her pets include cats, toads and a praying mantis. Contact her at c.haynes@nwkansas.com

Reports show dangers facing America

One set of gloomy news a month is common in education. But one day, April 28, saw three major reports that predict a bad future for America — all based on failure in U.S. education.

According to the International Monetary Fund, China's economy will surpass that of America in 2016. The Monetary Fund analysis uses "purchasing power parity" to compare what people earn and spend in their domestic economy. According to an April 28 report, "under PPP, the Chinese economy will expand from \$11.2 trillion this year to \$19 trillion in 2016. Meanwhile the size of the U.S. economy will rise from \$15.2 trillion to \$18.8 trillion. That would take America's share of the world output down to 17.7 percent, the lowest in modern times. China's would reach 18 percent, and rising. Just 10 years ago, the U.S. economy was three times the size of China's." Prof. Ralph Gomory of NYU's Stern Business School states the Monetary Fund report shows "a massive shift in capability from the U.S. to China. What we have done is traded jobs for profit. The jobs have moved to China. The capability erodes in the U.S. and grows in China."

In "Why ever fewer low-skilled American men have jobs," also released April 28, data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development show the dramatic decline in employment for U.S. males. In that report: "America has a smaller share of prime-age men in the workforce than any other G7 economy.... Around 35 percent of 25- to 54-year-old men with no high-school diploma have no job, up from around 10 percent in the 1960s. Of those who finished high school but did not



John Richard Schrock

• Education Frontlines

go to college, the fraction without work has climbed from below 5 percent in the 1960s to almost 25 percent."

Education is a major factor. The report notes that in America for the first time in U.S. history: "Those aged between 25 and 34 are less likely to have a degree than 45- to 54-year-olds." Massachusetts Institute of Technology's David Autor calculates that U.S. men "...are also less likely to have completed college than their contemporaries in Britain, Denmark, France, Ireland, the Netherlands and Spain. In recent years America's university graduation rates have slipped from near the top of the world league to the middle. Men are far likelier than women to drop out." Recent chief economic advisor Larry Summers estimates that even if the U.S. eventually returns to full employment, "...20 percent of men who have not been to college, 35 percent of those who did not finish high school and more than 60 percent of black male high-school dropouts will probably not be working."

Finally, if we are looking to our university system to save the day by producing quality graduates, *Times Higher Education* reporter Betty Hearn summarizes a report by Betty Huff, president of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, presented at a conference in Nottingham, Eng-

land. Ms. Huff described the ruthless for-profit institutions that have invaded U.S. higher education. Huff provided examples of the devastating effect of this new for-profit sector as a warning to the U.K.: "They are businesses and they are only (in it) for profit." She detailed the many abuses: nursing programs lacking any actual hospital experience, aggressive recruitment of students who are not college-able, students who account for 42 percent of the federal loan default rate that will bankrupt our student aid system, and exorbitant salaries for their for-profit presidents.

If the reports had come out on April 1, we could hope they were joking.

However, they came out on April 28. And the threat to American education and the economy is no joke.

John Richard Schrock, a professor of biology and department chair at a leading teacher's college, lives in Emporia. He emphasizes that his opinions are strictly his own.

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