

## Other Viewpoints

# Kansas State Fair keeps broad appeal to all individuals

What the Kansas State Fair means to Kansans depends on the Kansan. One person's cherished tradition or food find may be another person's lame ride or culinary crime. Hence the State Fair's enduring appeal: Its charms are innumerable yet singular, as well as true to Kansas.

For some, the lure is as comforting and familiar as a bowl of chicken and noodles, a stroll through the swine barn, or a bumpy ride through Ye Old Mill.

For others, the fair is about what's new - this year, for example, deep-fried Kool-Aid, bacon-wrapped meatballs, corn-dog cupcakes, a pet art show and a zip line across Lake Talbot (inspired by the Wichita River Festival).

To their credit, fair officials have been open about their rethinking of grandstand safety and evacuation plans in the wake of the stage collapse at the Indiana State Fair, which killed seven people and injured more than 40. They even constructed the stage a little farther from the grandstand, where the coming days will bring concerts by Kenny Rogers, Daughtry, Darius Rucker, REO Speedwagon, Big Time Rush and others.

The Kansas State Fair has weathered the lousy economy, the state budget crisis and high gas prices remarkably well, cracking the 350,000 attendance mark reach of the past two years.

That's a testament not only to its able management but also its continuing value to Kansans.

To resist whatever urge calls one to Hutchinson every September is to risk regret come October. Better to head to the State Fair through Sept. 18 and be sure not to miss a thing.

- *The Wichita Eagle, via The Associated Press*

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roberts.senate.gov/public/

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**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

## Write us

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We do not publish anonymous letters.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.

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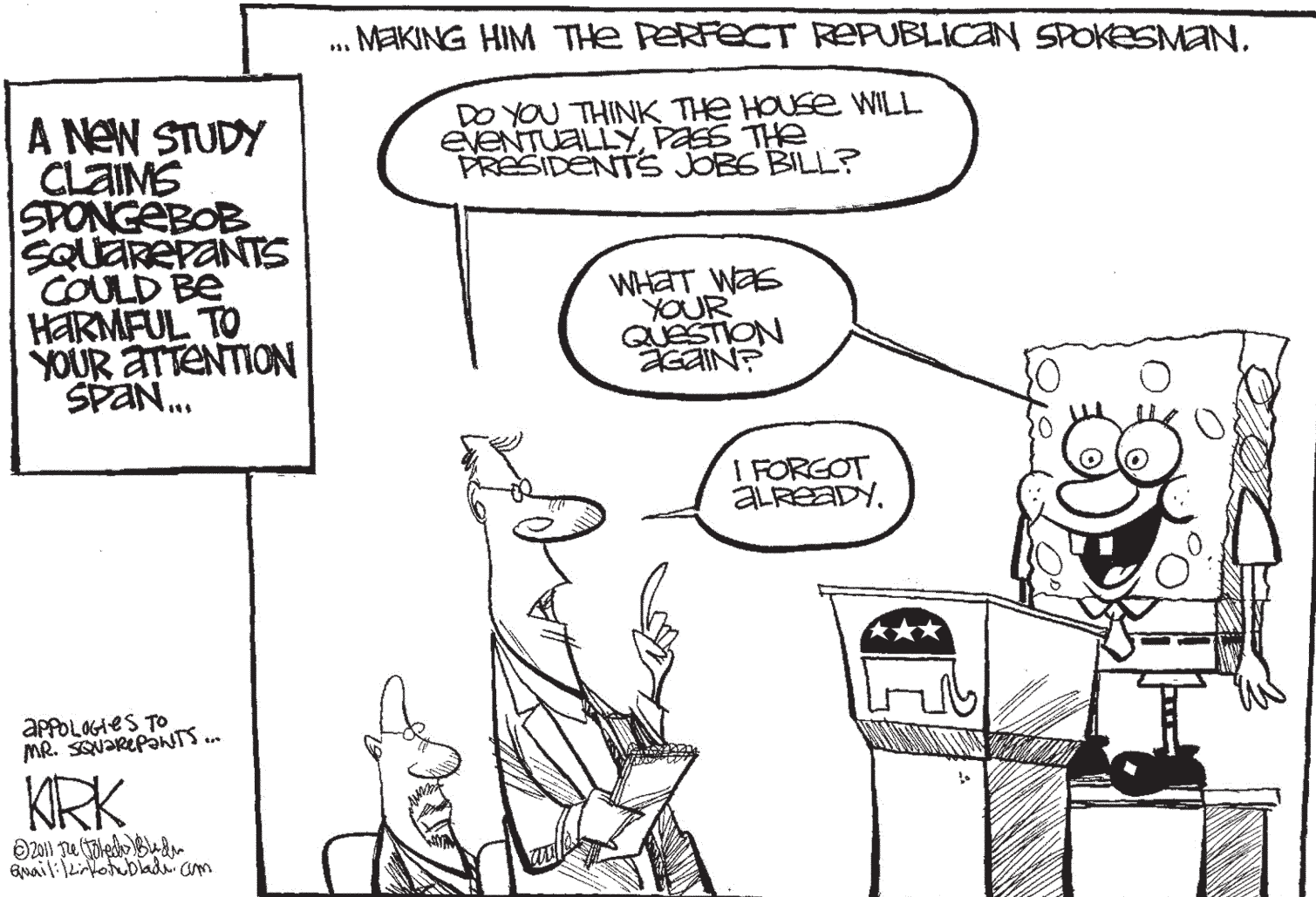
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# Keep tracks off moon; keep off tracks

New photos from moon orbit show clearly the tracks of the Apollo astronauts and some of the space junk they left behind.

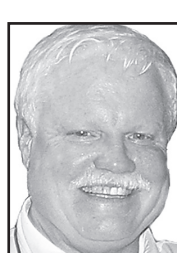
One scientist estimated that it'd take 10 million to 100 million years for the faint movement of moon dust to erase man's tracks. In 40 years, hardly a grain of dust has moved.

The litter on the moon's surface - parts of the lunar landers, used moon buggies, backpacks, insulation, packing material - that will be there until someone cleans it up.

All of which points out that we should be treating the moon - and whatever planets we visit - as if they were wilderness areas.

Shouldn't we be observing the "leave no trace" ethic of a modern conservationist, and not the plunder-and-pillage scenario of early European explorers in the New World? Seems like leaving tracks and junk all over the moon is a little like throwing beer cans out the window in a national park.

There are no park rangers to enforce anti-litter laws up there, of course, but maybe there should be. I know, the Apollo teams had no way to haul that junk back, but future expedi-



**Steve Haynes**

• Along the Sappa

tions will.

One more thing: the moon is fairly sterile, a benign place compared to the planets. We'd do well to be very careful visiting anyplace that might harbor life, no matter how simple.

A Martian bacterium, after all, might be harmless at home, but create a plague on Earth.

Finally, the wires bring the tragic news of a coed who lost her legs trying to hop a freight train during a weekend excursion to Denver. Seems three students tried to catch a ride back to campus when the accident occurred. It was supposed to be a lark.

It's the kind of crazy stunt that kids will

try, but most don't have a clue how dangerous hopping a moving train can be. The injury rate was high enough that railroad employees are no longer allowed to board moving equipment, and a freight leaving town can easily pick up enough speed to be almost impossible to board safely.

A bunch of college kids with no experience around railroad equipment has no business trying to hitch a ride. This is one reason the railroads are getting tougher on trespassers: no one wants to see someone maimed or killed.

Railroad tracks are no place to play, to walk or to fool around. It might seem like fun, but it's not, not when someone gets hurt. Train crews dread dealing with accidents, because the results are so unpleasant.

The best advice is, stay off the tracks. Stop at all railroad crossings and look both ways. Then look again.

*Steve Haynes is president of Nor'West Newspapers. When he has the time, he'd rather be reading a good book or casting a fly.*

# What Colby needs is a factory

Jim and I were visiting the other day about what Colby needs to prosper. That's when we decided that Colby needs a factory - but what kind of a factory?

We talked about possibly farm implements, auto parts or maybe clothing. I thought that would be really exciting to buy an item of clothing with a label that read "Made in Colby, Kansas," instead of "Made in Timbuktu."

Of course we soon realized that a factory in this area wouldn't be able to get parts to keep up with production, so we would also need more stores able to supply their needs.

It's easy to sit around and talk about things like that when you are old and know that no one will expect you to be able to do anything about the real needs of a community. We no longer have the energy it takes to achieve a project such as that and, most important, we don't have the money.

I know that even if we did have a factory here it would probably only supply average paying jobs, and what Colby needs are jobs that pay a large enough wage that our children who leave Colby for college could come back and earn a wage they can live on without working at two and sometimes three jobs per family.



**Marj Brown**

• Marj's Snippets

Maybe we should set our sights higher, perhaps for a factory that requires principally skilled workers. Perhaps it could be something like a laboratory that grows algae to be used to make fuel, or where they experiment with other ways to make sources of energy. I see no reason why we couldn't do that here in Colby.

Actually, in years past there were two factories in Colby, but that was way before my time. Jim says he remembers a potato chip factory here in the late 1930s or early 1940s. He said it was located somewhere around 560 W. Summit Street. I remember reading about Colby having a brick factory when I was writing for the *Prairie Drummer* newspaper. I don't know when it was or where it was in town, but at the *Drummer* we even had a couple of pictures of it and some pictures of men who worked there.

That must have been many years ago.

I wonder if it might have been the reason the WPA workers paved Franklin Avenue in the Depression did it with bricks. It could have been a simple case of supply and demand. Colby had the bricks and they were in demand at that time.

The W.P.A., or Works Project Administration, was a public works program thought up by President Franklin Roosevelt and his advisor Harry Hopkins to give many people work. It was in operation from 1935 to 1943 and gave almost 8 million people jobs. Many small towns have parks and paved streets due to that program. We could probably use a program like that today.

Jim and I also talked about what Colby has a lot of that might be used to make a product. We came up with wheat straw, corn husks, fertile soil for new crops, a city dump with a lot of trash that could be used to make fuel and a lot of good people who aren't afraid to do a good hard day's work.

*Marj Brown has lived in Colby for 62 years and has spent a good deal of that time writing about people and places here. She says it's one of her favorite things to do.*

# Stop spending; don't take from retirees

To the Editor:  
In our childhood my parents taught us to sing and it seems that when something important comes to mind a song fills my memory. This one sticks with me now:

"Stars are going to twinkle and shine, this evening about a quarter to nine.... In the shank of the night when the going is right tell them I'll be there."

Too early the morning of Aug. 28, on C-Span four people gathered to talk about Social Security. This is when people from Congress talk about Social Security. I was sleepy, but stayed up and tried to watch and listen.

A fellow who had been in office during the Bush administration was present. The U.S. government owes the Social Security Trust



**Free Press Letter Drop**

• Our readers sound off

Fund over \$2 trillion. No mention was made of this. I'd like to know how much of it was spent on the Iraq war and how much was used before that for a "Rainy Day Fund."

When Social Security was established, the Democrats' and Republicans' rules for the trust fund were unsettled. Many Republicans

want the trust fund now. It is evident that the trust fund should not be part of the federal budget because there are too many with sticky fingers who do not even know how much is in the federal budget and spend, spend and spend.

One can see why the clamoring Tea Party was founded with not wanting to spend federal money for anything in government. However, wanting to take the money of current retirees is wrong.

However, the Tea Party's desiring to take retiree's life savings instead of taxing the overdue taxes of the super-rich shows that educating of voters both while in school and after graduating needs remedying.

Edna A. Hatcher, Colby

## Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

