

Other Viewpoints

State placed bet, must deal with cost

State officials shouldn't have any trouble finding productive ways to spend the \$1.2 million the Legislature has provided for the current fiscal year to locate and help Kansans addicted to gambling.

The funding allocation is about \$400,000 more than has been dedicated to the cause in earlier years, but the total still is a fraction of the amount collected each year from state casinos to combat gambling problems. The majority of the funds generated by a 2 percent surcharge on net gaming revenues at the casinos is diverted annually by the state to other programs.

If a recent survey is correct, and there's no reason to think it isn't, officials should find plenty of ways to spend \$1.2 million this year and in future years, when it would be a good idea to channel even more of the money collected for the Problem Gambling and Addictions Fund toward its intended purpose.

According to the survey, conducted by a Kansas City, Mo., firm, nine percent of Kansans are at risk of contracting a gambling disorder. The word "disorder" is somewhat vague, but the nine percent finding shouldn't surprise anyone given the ways and places there are to gamble in Kansas now.

The survey also found that 26 percent of Kansas adults could be affected negatively by uncontrolled gambling by a family member, friend or acquaintance. The 26 percent finding was surprising, but it probably shouldn't have been. A gambling addiction can destroy marriages, friendships and other person and work-related relationships. If nine percent of Kansans are at risk of contracting a gambling disorder, extrapolating the damage outward among the gamblers' family members, friends and acquaintances could account for 26 percent of the state's adults.

Jean Holthaus, manager of problem gambling services at the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services, said those involved in creating a new plan to help troubled gamblers recommend more advertising about the potential dangers of gambling, expansion of outpatient treatment and an improved hotline for problem gamblers.

Those sound like good places to start. Most addicts don't voluntarily seek treatment, even though they may realize they have a problem. That's probably one of the reasons why so little of the money collected to date to help gamblers has actually been used to treat the addiction. Increased advertising, however, could reach a gambler's friends and family members, who could try to convince the gambler to seek help, or seek help for any problems they are encountering due to their relationship with the gambler.

Right or wrong, the state decided years ago to get into the gambling business. Now, it's incumbent upon the state to deal with the social costs associated with that decision.

— *The Topeka Capital-Journal, via the Associated Press*



Exotic foods spell diet when trip is ended

Cynthia says the diet starts today. I can't say they didn't warn us.

After we were invited to tour Turkey for 10 days, the briefing material said we should learn to pace ourselves when eating.

"Try to take just a taste of each item of the delicious Turkish food you'll be offered," it said. "This is not considered impolite."

I don't think we paid much attention, though we've traveled enough to know that you will be fed pretty well wherever you go in this world. Sometimes, the menu is not what we'd serve — roast camel in Abu Dhabi, served by the hands of the sheik and his aides, comes to mind — but you never go hungry.

Friends warned us to expect inedible food in China, advising us to pack tuna, peanut butter and crackers. While there were some dishes we didn't exactly relish, and a few we never identified, we brought the tuna home — along with a few extra pounds from endless buffets.

Usually, there's plenty of good food, and you have to look for time to exercise. Turkey was no exception.

Turkish meals, at restaurants and in homes, turned out to be larger than we are used to, though not necessarily larger than an American restaurant meal. Typically, we were offered a salad, often tomatoes and cucumbers chopped and mixed, with some little appetizers that, if unfamiliar, were always tasty.

Then would come main courses, a stew one night, often kebab, with delicious yellow-fleshed potatoes, and always dessert. Other



Steve Haynes

- Along the Sappa

...nights, we'd get rice or more likely, bulgar wheat or cous cous, which drove one of our mates with a gluten allergy crazy. He had to keep asking what was what.

Kebab covered anything grilled on a stick, including vegetables and several meats, often chicken, and ground meat with spices, which might be beef or lamb. Many of us would ask for beef, and sometimes I think we got it.

Then there was Linda, who refused to touch anything Mary had raised. When the elongated ground-meat patties came out, sometimes we'd go "baaah," just to worry her. Chicken and sometimes the lamb was skewered as chunks, but beef usually came ground.

One highlight was lunch at a "pide" shop, where they served a sort of Turkish pizza, fresh pita dough topped with meat and cheese and baked in a hot pizza oven. These were simply delicious, and as often with the ground meat, if you had to ask, you really didn't want to know. Fresh bread was a point of pride, often wonderful.

Restaurant meals, generally good, came with one drink, soda, mineral water, tea or cof-

fee. We saw ice only once.

Only in the tourist places along the highway in central Turkey did quality suffer. Buffets presented the quality you might expect in a mass-market tourist town here or anywhere — nothing to write home about, but no one got sick.

While one of our mates refused to eat "anything that hadn't been cooked or peeled," especially fresh salads, most of us ate the lettuce and drank the water with no ill effect. In the tourist haven of Cappadocia, however, a sticker on the hotel mirror warned that the water was not for drinking. The same place had only expensive bottled water to drink at dinner and refused to let people bring their own; it was not a favorite.

Then there were the desserts, most of them dripping honey. I'm pretty sure I'll be in trouble with my doctor after my next blood test. The night we ate at a place called Baklava, it was so good, I ate all six pieces. And I seldom eat sweets. Really.

Part of our problem is we've really ratcheted down our food intake over the last few years. We often share a dish when eating out and split a small steak or a chicken breast at home. But the food in Turkey really was too good to turn down — and I suspect the scale will prove that we enjoyed it all way too much.

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.

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Long view benefits future generations

"The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountain" is a Chinese fable about an old man who is constantly digging to tear down a towering mountain for eventual farmland. When others ridicule him over the impossibility of the task, he replies that "When I die, my sons will carry on; when they die, there will be my grandsons, and then their sons and grandsons, and so on to infinity. High as it is, this mountain cannot grow any higher. And with every bit we dig, it will be that much lower. Why can't we clear it away?"

The moral of this story: take the "long view." Here, there is an ancestor-descendent consciousness. Families do not want to disappoint ancestors. And they plan for the future of their great-great-grandchildren they will never live to see.

Here I can ride on a high-speed train, the fastest in the world, that runs on track built 50 feet above the rice and wheat fields so it does not take up farmland. The cost of this system cannot be paid back in one or even two decades. Along with an interstate system bigger than that in the U.S., but built in just the last 20 years, these investments make no sense in terms of cost-benefit analysis, unless extended far into this next century.

And that is exactly what they are doing, planning not for tomorrow, but for the next generations. What we took two centuries to develop, they will surpass in the next two decades.

Last year, Yale President Richard C. Levin was interviewed on Chinese television concerning the future of higher education. He described the massive expansion of Chinese universities as obviously an overreach. China is producing far more Chinese college graduates than there are jobs that need those skills today.



John Richard Schrock

- Education Frontlines

His "education follows today's marketplace" perspective was classic "American-think."

The second portion of that program was a separately-recorded interview with the President of Hong Kong City Polytechnic. He very clearly described how, in order to become a fully developed country, China would need a much higher percentage of college graduates. Forty-two percent of all 25 to 64 year-old Americans have a higher education. China is at half that percentage, but coming up fast. You do not wait until the market demand is there in order to begin producing them.

This plays out not just at the higher governmental level of centralized plans for high-speed rails and university cities, but also in nearly every family's life choices.

"When I get a little money I buy books; and if any is left, I buy food and clothes" is a famous saying by Erasmus. The Chinese equivalent is "When I get a little money I save it for my child's education and schoolbooks; and if any is left, I buy food and clothes."

On the nightly news here, when a flood or fire destroys a home, or a serious illness drains family resources, the adults grieve, not over the material things that they have lost, but over how they will ever be able to pay the tuition for their child or grandchild.

Their eyes are focused way down the road. And they will sacrifice today for that far-dis-

tant future.

Our early settlers had this same philosophy when they worked to build up a farmstead to leave to their children and grandchildren. And you can still hear some Kansans express this value today, especially among the less than one percent in the U.S. who still live on farms.

But what do the remaining 99 percent of us value? On the far right are the self-made greedy who feel that every cent spent on building long-lasting community infrastructure is a cent taken from the pocket of private enterprise. And on the liberal side are proponents of electric vehicles who resist taxing the electricity used without regard for how we will pay for the roads that currently are maintained by fuel taxes. On all sides, the short-term payoff in dividends to shareholders appears more important than building infrastructure to benefit a generation not yet born. And schools are the most important infrastructure of all.

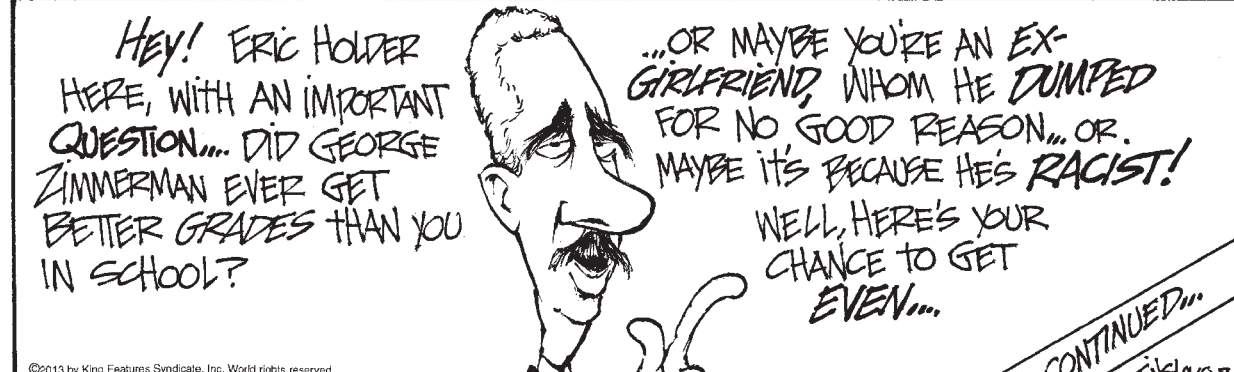
For us foolish old teachers, whose job is to forever work on cutting away at that mountain of ignorance, it can be more rewarding to work where you often hear the words "sacrifice" and "future" than where you hear "I deserve" and "I want it now."

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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Mallard Fillmore

- Bruce Tinsley



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