

commentary

from other pens...

Graves endorsement hasn't much impact

The Manhattan Mercury on Graves' endorsement of Shallenburger:

Gov. Bill Graves endorsement recently of his party's nominee to replace him was not much of a surprise, but neither will it likely have the impact it could have.

The governor endorsed state Treasurer Tim Shallenburger...not because he agrees with Mr. Shallenburger. Rather, calling party loyalty the "primary factor," Gov. Graves endorsed Mr. Shallenburger because partisan duty compelled him to do so...

Gov. Graves' endorsement can indeed benefit Mr. Shallenburger, if ... the governor becomes actively involved in the campaign ...

But the governor's endorsement falls well short of closing the rift between moderate Republicans and conservatives ...

Lt. Gov. Gary Sherrer ... didn't pull his punches reacting to the governor's endorsement.

"Integrity comes before unity," Lt. Gov. Sherrer said, adding, "We're talking about the future of the state, and I just don't think the folks who are his core supporters see the state the way I do."

Whether Mr. Shallenburger prevails in November could well depend on how many moderate Republicans follow Gov. Graves and how many "see the state" the way Lt. Gov. Sherrer does.

Hays Daily News on new role for lieutenant governors:

One of the best changes in state government in recent years is something that is not even codified in law. Gov. Bill Graves started a tradition that appears to be sticking, naming his lieutenant governor to a cabinet post. ...

Democratic gubernatorial hopeful Kathleen Sebelius last week announced that if elected to succeed Graves she would name her running mate, John Moore of Wichita, secretary of commerce and housing.

In Hays (Sept. 23), Moore credited current Lt. Gov. Gary Sherrer for remarking the position. Sherrer also has served as commerce secretary ... He has played the role of adviser to Graves and made the part-time job of lieutenant governor a full-time advocate for business and economic development in Kansas.

Moore seemingly would be a lieutenant governor not unlike Sherrer. A former executive at Cessna Aircraft Co. in Wichita, Moore has the credentials to do both jobs.

... Like the vice president of the United States, a state lieutenant governor does not have to do much, with few powers identified.

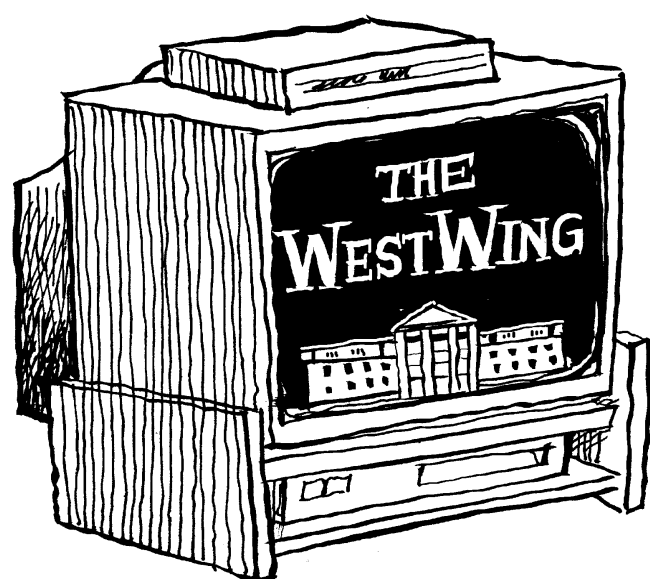
But Graves changed that with the dual role. Graves' first lieutenant governor, Sheila Frahm, served as secretary of administration.

... Positioning the lieutenant governor for another key job, such as commerce secretary, creates more opportunity to recruit a second solid professional to a campaign ticket.

... One more benefit to having a strong two-person ticket is it gives voters a reason to consider the credentials of the running mate, to consider his or her talents and the thoughtfulness of the gubernatorial candidate's selection. It requires the candidates for governor to consider traits in a lieutenant governor other than strategic geographic representation.

... Republican gubernatorial candidate Tim Shallenburger has suggested that running mate David Lindstrom of Overland Park will have an active role in his administration ... If he is smart, Shallenburger, too, will follow this welcome new tradition ...

STAHLER.
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WHAT WOULD PRESIDENT BARTLET DO?



Are people really too busy to enjoy themselves?

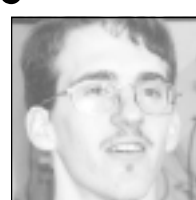
In an interview I did a while back, an older lady said people are too busy these days to enjoy themselves.

"So involved in zipping back and forth they don't notice the scenery as they whiz by," was the way she put it.

I don't know if people are busier today than they were 40 years ago, but it often seems that I don't have enough time to do everything expected of me. I do know I couldn't talk to that woman as long as I would have liked to because I had to run back to the office to meet a deadline.

Every day we have to work, work, work, and it seems sometimes we don't have much to smile about. I mentioned this to some friends and they suggested we put together a list of simple pleasures in our day-to-day lives which we can cherish as they come along.

Naturally, some of these ideas weren't fit to print in a family newspaper, but I was surprised to find that most of them focused around spending time with families and friends.



doug stephens

• wisdom from babes

There were a lot more simple pleasures around than I would have thought. You don't have to look around to find ways to enjoy yourself, it turns out. You can find them everywhere.

Some of these pleasures were originally mine and some I borrowed from my friends, but all of the following have put a smile on my face at one time or another.

- Clean, crisp bed sheets.
- The smell of cooking turkey.
- Being amazed at how clearly you can see after washing the windshield of your car (or your glasses).
- Falling asleep with a cat snuggled up to you.
- Waking up with a cat snuggled up to you.

- Getting a super-hot bath on a cold winter night.
- Taking off your shoes after a long day at work.
- Seeing a little kid smile.
- Somebody laughing at your silly jokes.
- Watching kids at Christmas.
- Back rubs.
- Tickle your wife.
- Putting on clothes straight out of the dryer.
- Sharing an old joke with a friend.
- Sore muscles after a workout.
- Eating dinner at the table with your family.
- Someone you've met once remembering your name.
- Sleeping in.
- A newly clean house.
- Hearing a favorite song on the radio you'd forgotten about.
- The smell of a new book.

Some of you might be surprised to see this list under my byline. I know, this isn't something I would normally write, but what the heck. Sometimes you just have to be sappy.

The unhandy man



jim mullen

• the village idiot

Sue can always find some silly excuse to go to Home Depot. Like if we don't patch the roof, the ceilings will collapse. If we don't replace the three missing risers on front porch steps, someone will sue us. If we don't get a new freezer, all the food will spoil. She needs grout. She needs spackle. I am a city boy; I know nothing about this stuff.

Half the time I think she's talking about making dinner.

"Pick up a nice little wine, dear, we're having 'Braised Grout Stuffed with Spackle on a Bed of Wilted Frisee and Sauteed Wild Mushrooms.'"

And I don't want to know anything about it. The three scariest words in the English language to me are "Do It Yourself." Why on Earth would you want to do it yourself when you can pay someone else to do it for you?

The sheer size of places like Home Depot and Lowe's prove I'm in the minority here, but their size should also be a warning sign to all homeowners. When we were renting an apartment in the city, our friends would always wag their fingers and say, "You're just throwing money away on rent. If you bought a house all that rent money would be equity." So we bought a house in the country. Now all that money is equity. For Home

Depot.

Don't believe me? Try to find a parking space at one. You have to drive around for a half hour waiting for someone to leave. Some of them are open 24/7. I saw a sign in their lumber department once that said, "No wood cut after 10:30 p.m." If so many people wanted their wood cut after 10:30 p.m. that they have to make a sign, we are in the middle of a national do-it-yourself epidemic. No contractor I know is working at 10:30 p.m. It's hard enough to get them to work at 10:30 a.m.

The Home Depot shoppers are obsessed with kitchens and bathrooms. If they're not remodeling them, they're adding new ones. I expect to start seeing real estate ads soon that read "Nine bathroom, two-bedroom home, newly remodeled professional kitchen with cathedral ceiling, granite countertops, Viking stove, sink carved from a solid

block of Carrara marble. Second bedroom could be turned into a 10th bathroom."

Home improvement stores are full of guys (well, except for my wife and scads of other women like her with lazy, loser, good-for-nothing, butt-glued-to-the-sofa husbands) who are going to install hot tubs and Jacuzzi's by themselves. Guys who are buying pressure hoses to clean their decks, decks that they built with wood that they bought here and presumably had cut before 10:30 p.m. There are guys buying tools to cut bathroom tile, tools to cut pipe, tools to cut wire.

On one trip I had to use the restroom, which always seems to be a two-mile walk from the front door, past guys who are buying screen doors, 4x8s, miter boxes, arc welders, PVC pipe, crushed marble and hardware cloth. I get to the Men's Room, walk up to the urinal, and it's full. It seems I have discovered the one thing do-it-yourselfers can't do. I'm in a store full of guys who can install a toilet, they just can't flush one.

Jim Mullen is the author of "It Takes A Village Idiot: A Memoir of Life After the City" (Simon and Schuster, 2001). He also contributes regularly to Entertainment Weekly, where he can be reached at jim_mullen@ew.com

Source of supplies catalog has recipes

I like getting the Pampered Chef catalogs because they always have interesting recipes. Pampered Chef is a good source for people who need to know which tools to use for what and where to get them.

Strawberry Spinach Salad

- Dressing
1 lemon
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
1/3 cup sugar
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 teaspoon poppy seeds
Salad
1/4 cup sliced natural almonds, toasted
8 ounces (1 1/2 cups) strawberries, hulled and quartered
1/2 medium cucumber, sliced and cut in half
1/4 small red onion, sliced into thin wedges (1/4 cup)
1 package (6 ounces) baby spinach
Zest lemon to get 1/2 teaspoon zest. Juice lemon to get 2 tablespoons juice. Combine zest, juice, vinegar, sugar, oil and poppy seeds in small bowl. Whisk until well blended. cover and refrigerate until ready to use.
Preheat oven to 350 degrees. For salad, spread almonds in single layer over bottom of small pan. Bake 10-12 minutes or until lightly toasted. Remove from oven and cool.
Hull strawberries and quarter. Score cucumber and cut in half lengthwise, remove seeds, and slice. Slice onion into thin wedges. Place spinach in large bowl, add strawberries, cucumber and onion. Whisk dressing, pour over salad and gently toss to coat. Sprinkle with almonds. Serve immediately. Yields 10 servings.



pat schiefen

• postscript

- Pan-Seared Salmon with Julienne Vegetables
2 large carrots
2 medium yellow summer squash
2 medium zucchini
3 tablespoons butter or margarine
2 tablespoons snipped fresh parsley
2 garlic cloves, pressed
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
4 skinless salmon fillets (406 ounces each), about 1 inch thick
Peel carrots. Cut carrots, yellow summer squash and zucchini into long julienne strips, avoiding seeds, to measure vegetables. Microwave butter until melted. Stir in parsley snipped with kitchen shears, garlic and black pepper. Save 1 tablespoon of butter mixture. Brush salmon with remaining butter mixture. Heat grilling pan over medium heat 5 minutes. Add vegetables and saved butter mixture and toss to coat. Cook and stir 2 minutes or until vegetables are crisp and tender. Remove from pan and keep warm.
Return pan to heat and increase heat to medium high. Place salmon in the pan and cook 3 minutes. Turn and cook 3-4 minutes or until flakes with fork. Serve over vegetables. Yields 4 servings.
Bananas Foster Stir Fry
5 medium bananas

- 1 lemon
1 jar (12.25 ounces) fat free caramel ice cream topping
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon rum extract
1 quart frozen vanilla low fat yogurt or ice cream
Slice bananas. Zest lemon and juice to 1/4 cup juice. Combine ice cream topping, lemon juice and cinnamon in stir fry skillet. Bring to a boil over medium high heat, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat. Gently stir in bananas and rum extract and toss. For each serving spoon about 1/3 cup of the banana mixture over yogurt or ice cream. Garnish with lemon zest. Yield: 8 servings.
These recipes are from "Casual Cooking - Easy Recipes for Indoors and Out" by The Pampered Chef.

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The Goodland Daily News

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562)

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Published daily except Saturday and Sunday and the day observed for New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day, at 1205 Main St., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

Periodicals postage paid at Goodland, Kan. 67735; entered at the Goodland, Kan., Post Office under the Act of Congress of March 8, 1878.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Goodland Daily News, 1205 Main St., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: daily@nwkansas.com. Advertising questions can be sent to: gdnadv@nwkansas.com

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SUBSCRIPTIONS: In Sherman County and adjacent counties: three months, \$25; six months, \$42; 12 months, \$79. Out of area, weekly mailing of five issues: three months, \$30; six months, \$45; 12 months, \$80. By mail daily in Kansas, Colorado: 12 months, \$115. (All tax included.)

Incorporating:

The Sherman County Herald
Founded by Thomas McCants
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Founded by Eric and Roxie Yonkey
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