

Wheat is looking good as the rains have come

Across the state, the northern half at least, wheat stands tall and headed out. Plants are thick with stems, and the berries are starting to form.

Harvest is coming, coming fast. Even if the cool weather continues, which is unlikely, it may be over before the 1st of July.

And it may just be one heck of a harvest. There is a lot of wheat out there, and most of it is doing pretty well. State reports show the worst crop conditions in the southwest, where the drought may be hanging on a little longer.

Not up here, not across the northern half of the state. There is wheat, lots of it, with plenty of rain to fill out the heads.

And for the first time in more than three years, farmers around these parts may have a bountiful harvest. That, and prices are holding up pretty well, too.

And as the drought fades, talk of not planting fall crops has all but disappeared. Subsoil moisture may not be in surplus, but hardly anyone is predicting another disaster.

Last summer, heat baked emerging corn and milo. Plants died halfway to heading. Even sunflowers died in the fields. With irrigated corn, some fields depended on wells that couldn't pump fast enough to save them. Meant to supplement, not replace nature, the sprinklers failed. Other fields wilted under the summer sun when they should have been pollinating.

Hardly anyone is willing to bet on a repeat this year. Farmers are grumbling that the wet weather has been keeping them out of the fields. Seed dealers complain that they're having to replace corn with later varieties.

These are problems we just didn't have a year ago.

Anyone complaining about the rain, well, they should just smile and enjoy the day off.

It's a different year, for sure. A year when a fine wheat crop is about to roll in and a fall crop seems a lot more possible.

A year, not to relax, exactly, not just yet, but to ease off a little and be thankful that nature does provide.

Most of the time, anyway. — Steve Haynes

Togetherness goes only so far

Oh, children. Eldest daughter, who is soon to be 29 and lives in Georgia, flew back this weekend to visit her grandmother and take in a cousin's graduation.

Her sister, the kid at 26, picked her up at the airport.

While their little brother is still in college, these two are not co-ed any more. After three years, eldest is assistant manager of her department in the Internet wing of a large national newspaper company. She makes more than either of her parents.

The younger one is finishing up her second year as a junior high science teacher in McLouth, north of Lawrence.

But while they are no longer college girls, they do try not to act like it. They planned to go out on the town. Of course, now that they're career girls, that means a drink or two and home by midnight, not the usual college girl stuff. But it makes them feel wicked.

I heard by the grapevine — namely their little brother — they had set a noon departure for their trip to Grandma's house. I asked why.

"Oh, they're going partying," he said. "They don't want to get up early."

So I called youngest daughter. "How drunk do you plan to get your sister, anyway?" I asked. She giggled.

"Enough that she'll forget about getting her nose pierced," she said. Huh?

"Oh, yeah," little sister said, a wicked grin in her voice. "It's her present to herself for her 29th birthday. Personally, I think it's a mid-life crisis thing."

I said I hadn't heard anything about her sister's plans.

"She thinks you might not like it too well," she said. "She told mom, though."

Oh, great. Now I'm the backward and unsupportive parent. But I got



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
shaynes@nwkansas.com

over it and I moved on.

"So, are you getting one, too?" I asked.

"Nooooooo," she said. "I'm a teacher in a small town. I can't do that. I don't even want to do that."

I thought this strange. They've always done these things together. They got belly-button piercings together when both were in college. They got tattoos together a year or two later.

I always thought the liquor came somewhere before the muddled thinking, not after, but you never know. I did think there might be some validity to the mid-life crisis thing, and figured maybe little sister would get one in a couple of years. Sometime after she gets tenure.

Of course, the eldest works in the Internet. Her crew works on the eighth floor of an office tower down the block from headquarters, where the entire bunch is regarded with some suspicion by normal corporate types.

"Those wacky kids on the eighth floor," that's how they think of them.

With one tiny stud in her nose, she won't stick out among the wild hairdos, trendy clothing and alternative lifestyles of the Internet generations. Her sister really doesn't have that advantage.

Anyway, they met us at the lake house outside Emporia on Saturday night. Eldest said she had to change the stainless steel piercing for a gold stud, and would her sister help?

"Sure," she said with some apparent glee.

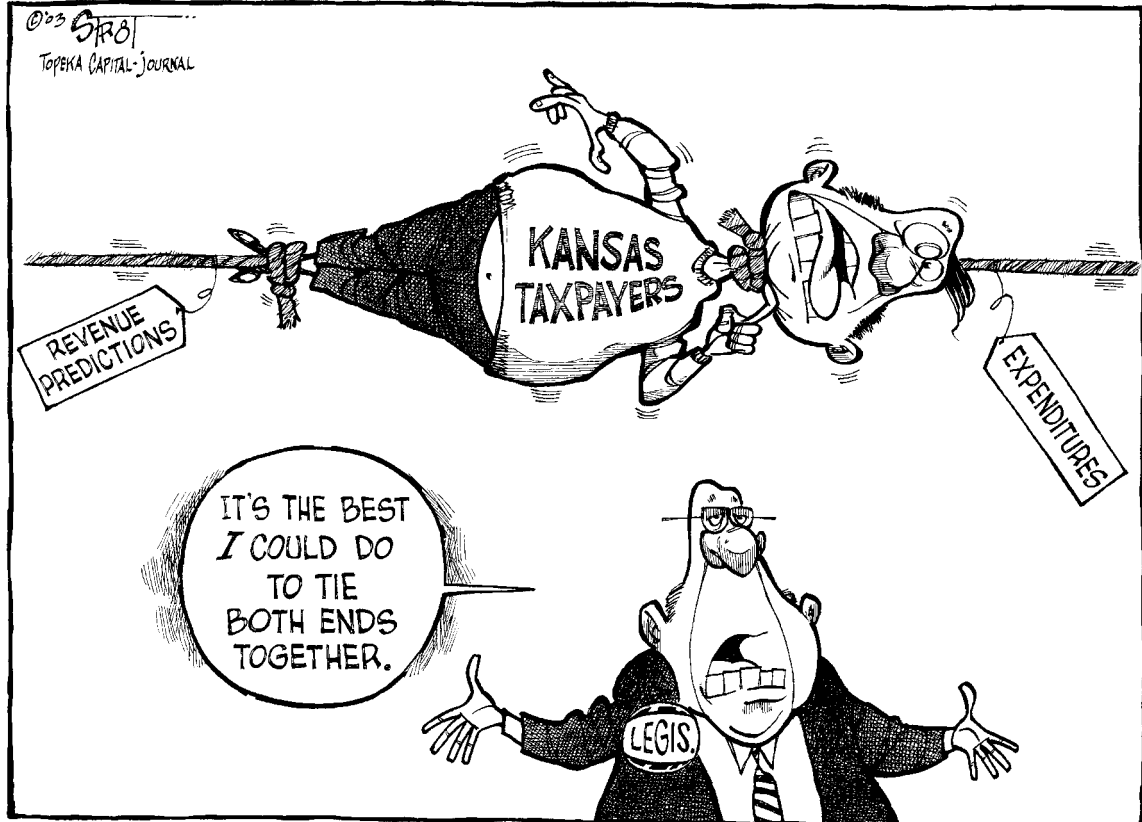
There ensued an hour of grunting, cries of pain and moaning, after which they discovered she was trying to twist the little corkscrew into a new hole rather than the one the piercer had so thoughtfully provided. Little damage done, though, and you'll hardly notice the new stud once the swelling goes down.

They called Sunday from Lawrence to say that her last-of-the-night flight to Atlanta had been canceled, and she was spending the evening with her sister again. The bars are closed, so I suppose they'll behave.

And stay away from the piercing parlors as well.

From the Bible

Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. Proverbs 4:7,8



Thanks for sharing Della with us

How much do we really know about another person?

How much do we pay attention to those around us?

I pondered these questions last week after the death of Della Klima.

Della worked in our back room for almost eight years. She was always cheerful and hard working. She and her daughter Marsha showed up every week to spend three to four hours doing a hard, dirty job and neither ever complained or was even late.

The two of them were there last Tuesday, hauling newspapers out of the delivery truck, labeling them, bagging them and throwing the heavy sacks back in the truck for the trip to the post office.

Della liked to cook and she frequently brought in some goody for the crew. Tuesday, it was Rice Krispies treats, which she shared with everyone who entered the back room.

Wednesday they found her on the floor of her home. The emergency medical technicians could not help her. She was gone.

It was a shock for everyone, her family especially, but for all of us.

"But, she was just here. She gave me Rice Krispies treats," at least three people said.

But, this kindly mother, grandmother and great-grandmother



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
chaynes@nwkansas.com

won't be bringing us any more treats. Nor will there be extra vegetables from her garden on the front counter in the later summer and fall, like there has been for so many years.

We will miss her. We will miss her a lot.

But, her family — husband, children, grandchildren will miss her more.

She was the center of family gatherings. Each holiday, everyone would gather at the Klima home to celebrate and enjoy the bounteous dinners she and the other women of the family would provide.

Her obituary says that she was a homemaker. She certainly was that, and a gardener and a caretaker and a friend and a wonderful person.

How well did I know her?

Not very well, at all.

I know that she didn't drive. That was one of the things that made her and her daughter Marsha so close.

Marsha took her mother everywhere.

I suppose there were the usual tensions between them, but I never saw it.

I know she loved to garden and had a running battle going with both deer and rabbits, since she lived at the edge of town. They came up from the creek to sample her produce, which usually included carrots, green peppers and eggplant. There were probably a lot of other things out in the garden but the carrots, green peppers and eggplant were especially prolific and came to the office to be given away each year.

I know several of her grandchildren and have seen pictures of the great grandchildren. She always had pictures.

What do we really know about another person.

So little for such a wonderful person.

Teen-agers haven't changed

Last week, I made light of Jim's experience with kidney stones. Then his situation got dramatically worse.

Last time this happened, he passed the stones and was back at work the next day. Not so this go-around.

He continued feeling bad and finally went back to the doctor. X-rays were ordered which revealed one kidney wasn't functioning, indicating a blockage.

An appointment was made the next day with a specialist and more x-rays were ordered. Yup! That kidney wasn't working. Gotta go in and get that little culprit.

All Jim knows is, he's glad they knocked him out for the procedure. —ob—

I helped a friend get ready for her son's graduation party over the weekend. It gave me a chance to observe teen-agers again. It's been almost 15 years since I had teen-agers in the house, but they haven't changed much.

There's still the "room thing." Mother still wants a semi-clean room; teen-agers still couldn't care



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
cplotts@nwkansas.com

less. Except when it's a requirement for release to leave the house.

There's still the "chore thing." Gotta pay before you play. Siblings still think they are the only ones "who do anything around here." They're all convinced their brother/sister doesn't do a thing. And they are totally convinced they're horribly abused.

There's still the pull between parents wanting to keep their kids close to them during this milestone occasion — and the youngster's wanting to pull free. They're not really kids anymore, but not quite adults, either.

Watching these young people gives me confidence, though. I see such talent, such focus, such character. If tomorrow is in the hands of

the youth I have seen, then we are in good shape. We might be handing over a mess in some regards; but I think they can handle it.

Admittedly, most of the teen-agers I know are those who go to our church, so maybe I'm seeing the cream of the crop.

But what I don't see are "pew warmers." They're not there just because their parents drag them. In fact, some are there without their parents. They are active, sincere and full of faith.

These are tomorrow's teachers and missionaries, tomorrow's moral leaders, tomorrow's parents to the next generation.

And that really gives me confidence.

Reader finds privacy act a pain

To the Editor:

Is all of the privacy act really necessary? To me, it is not. People cannot get your information off of your records unless you signed. Parents could only get their children's health records if they were minors.

I sincerely believe some of this big government is going too far, continuing to tell us what to do. Does the opinion of the people make any difference? It should. That is why our forefathers fought for our country, to keep it for the people and by the people.

I was in the Decatur County Hospital not long ago, only to find the phone service was not right while I was there as a patient. My son never did get through on the hospital phone lines while I was there, after trying many times. This is very sad in a hospital of this size, and a small town. He had to pay extra money, and he never got through to me.

My daughter also had a hard time when she asked to speak to her mom. She finally did get through to me, but she was put on hold, which could have been upsetting to her, as well as costing her extra money. And

these were all long-distance calls. Is this what the rights to privacy is all about?

We should not have our rights taken away from us, yet we should still be able to have our privacy.

If a patient wants their name on the board so their friends can come, or if they do not wish their name posted, that should be their right, not the choice of big government.

Who is paying for my hospital bill? I am, with my insurance. Then whose right is it to say what I can do

or not do?

I could see the precautions in a large city, if someone is going to the drugstore to get your medications. In a big city, if someone wanted to steal your medication, I am sure they could find a way to get it.

It seems to me this is just another way for government to let you know they can do most anything they would like to, to you and others.

What will it be next?

Elsie Wolters
Oberlin

Letter to the Editor

Write

The Oberlin Herald encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of public interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author. We do not publish anonymous

letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise.

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170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749-2243

Phone: (785) 475-2206 Fax (785) 475-2800

E-mail: obherald@nwkansas.com

Nor'West Newspapers

STAFF

- Steve Haynes editor
- Kimberly Brandt managing editor
- Mary Lou Olson society editor
- Judy Jordan proofreader
- Carolyn Kelley-Plotts columnist
- Cynthia Haynes business manager
- David Bergling advertising manager
- Sherry Bergling advertising
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