

## Last group off the boat always gets the worst jobs

A new study reveals that Hispanic immigrants in Kansas tend to get the lowest paying jobs.

That, in the finest tradition of sociologists the world over, tells us in scientific language what seemed perfectly obvious to begin with.

Of course Hispanics who move here get the lowest-paying jobs. The last guy off the boat has *always* taken the worst jobs. It's an American tradition.

The measure of how badly people want to come here is taken by noting the jobs they are willing to do. Washing dishes at a greasy spoon pays pretty well compared to any job in back-country Latin America. And the working conditions are pretty good, too.

That's why immigrants are willing to risk life and limb sneaking into this country. That's why they keep coming in droves, even as the Border Patrol tries to catch them and send them back.

It's always been that way. In the 19th century, it was the Irish and the Italians who worked on the docks and in the packing houses and trenches. Their sons became policemen and doctors — and gangsters, it's true — and settled into America.

They were replaced in the packing plants by eastern Europeans — Poles, Greeks, Croats, Serbs, Russians — just arrived through Ellis Island. It's always been that way. It's always been a little controversial.

And those who came before have always looked down on the newer immigrants, wherever they were from. That's human nature. Anyone who is a little different is outside the group.

Though we're nearly all sons and daughters

of immigrants, those who came first tend to look down on the newcomers, at least until they've been here for a while.

So there should be nothing to startle us about the current wave of immigrants from the south. It's just America. We grow stronger with each new group that joins.

There are a lot of myths about immigrants, though, and hardly any of them are true.

Immigrants are not taking American jobs, for instance. If Americans were willing to take these jobs, they could. There would be no place for immigrants. But that's not so.

Immigrants aren't coming here to go on welfare, either. They come here to work, and those who come often are the best and brightest their counties have to offer. And the hardest working. Welfare is a peculiarly American institution.

Immigrants may look different, they may speak another language, but there's nothing new about that. All the old immigrant groups, from the Irish cops to the Swedish farmers, were in the same boat.

Many of them saved and sent money back to their homeland, too. Many of them had trouble integrating into American society. Many of them clung to the old ways and the old tongue for a while.

But what they all wanted then, and now, more than anything, was to be Americans.

And we ought to feel flattered, not threatened, by that.

If good, hard-working people want to come make a home here, we should welcome them and give them a chance to be Americans. They'll make us proud.

That also is our tradition. — Steve Haynes



## Here kitty, kitty; who needs a cat?

Steve says our youngest daughter is an enabler.

Saturday night she called to tell me that she had access to a wonderful calico kitten that needed a home. Further conversation brought out the fact that there were actually two calico kittens, sisters, both in need of a home.

I was tempted by the first kitten, but knew two was not in the cards.

My personal cat limit is three. We have had more in the house, but only because we were catsitting — sometimes for a year or two — or one of our cats had kittens.

Since Kubla Khan disappeared a month or so ago, we have been down to a pair of felines.

Miss Molly and April Alice are like sisters. They fight all the time.

On the other hand, having just two cats is kinda nice.

There's just Steve and I now, so two laps and two cats work out just right. Two cats, however, do not work out to one on his side and one on hers on the bed at night.

Two cats in the bed equals one cat fight, with us as the mat.

I have to admit that I have been dreaming of a third cat. My preference would be for a young male — not a kitten, but not over 3 years old and preferably Siamese or part



### Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes  
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Siamese. My preference does not usually mean a ding dang thing when it comes to cats, however. They find us — not the other way around. We were after a young tom for my son when April Alice purred her way into my arms and my heart. She was the reason we had eight cats that spring. We knew she was pregnant when we took her home, but since we couldn't catch the tom, my son said he'd take one of the kittens. He got two. Actually, I know the two calicos youngest daughter is trying to pawn off on me. They lived at our place in Colorado last summer. Their owner, Rachel, spent the summer in Colorado at our house with her. She brought her cat and three kittens. Looks like it's one down and two

to go for Rachel. I thought she had them all given away. Well, that's not the first time I was wrong about a cat. Actually, I suppose I'm somewhat responsible for at least one of the kittens. I saved its life. I was reading when I noticed that the kitten had become tangled in a drapery cord and was in the process of hanging itself. Still, I don't think I could take one and not the other. They'd be about 7 or 8 months old now and probably very attached to each other. It wouldn't be right to take just one. And, as I've already said, three cats is my personal limit. However, if anyone out there is interested in a pair of really cute, playful cats, I know where to find them. Just call the paper and leave your name and number. I'll find you, because you know something? I'm an enabler, too.

## Winter arrives when it's cold

Roughly three weeks from now, some ignoramus will tell us that the "official" start of winter has arrived. That person was not out in the open last Sunday, when the wind was gusting 45 miles an hour out of the north, and the mercury plunged to a nippy 8 degrees.

No, that person must have been in Miami, where the "official" start of winter is marked by an increase in the trailer count at the state line.

What an odd concept. The "official" start of winter. Or spring, or summer, for that matter.

What the heck is that supposed to mean?

It's true that Dec. 22 is the winter solstice, the point in the earth's yearly journey around the sun where the days stop getting shorter (in the northern hemisphere) and start getting longer.

It marks the shortest day of the year, and the farthest south in the sky the sun will rise and set, the lowest angle of light for the year.

But it's seldom the first day of winter.

To start with, Mother Nature is no respecter of calendars or rules. She does as she does.

Some years, in this country, the first freeze of fall comes in September. Some years, it comes closer to November. The first blizzard might howl through in December, but some years, it's before Halloween.



### Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes  
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Climatologist will tell you that winter usually begins about Dec. 1 at this latitude, but that's like saying that it usually rains in May.

It might. It might not.

The point is, there's nothing "official" about the start of winter. It's winter when it's cold out. And it isn't really that cold or dreary here most of the time.

Similarly, spring starts about March 1, if you figure the weather, not with the vernal equinox on March 20. The equinox marks the day when day and night are the same, but the weather has been changing for two to three weeks by then.

Usually. You have to remember that March is to May as November is to September. The M's are both spring months, but then spring and fall are transitional seasons. The weather is not much alike from start to finish.

By now you should have the idea that this whole solar calendar thing is suspect. The sun dates mark spe-

cific events, but you can't gauge the change of the seasons by them.

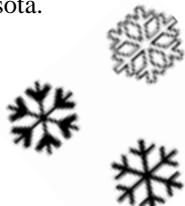
Astronomers may be counting the days, but Mother Nature most assuredly is not. If she feels like snow, she sends snow. And if she feels like sun, it'll be warm out.

We could talk about surface heating, degree days, jet streams, global weather patterns and such, but the bottom line is, winter begins when it begins. There's nothing "official" about it.

We'll know when we stick our heads out and it's cold.

And last week, it was winter on the plains. This week, it's more like spring, I admit.

But just wait. Some idiot is going to tell us when winter officially begins. I say we buy him a ticket to Minnesota.



## Sarcasm just lost on little kids

Subtlety is lost on a child. If you have something to say, say it.

A trip to Texas is not complete without a sit-down-let's-catch-up-on-the-last-year-visit with my long-time friend, Sonia. We had just returned from a lovely luncheon at a quaint little eatery called "The Abbey" and had settled into Kara's kitchen for an afternoon's gabfest when I saw Taylor emerge from the bathroom and head for the front room.

"Taylor," I asked, stopping her forward progress, "did I hear the toilet flush?"

She turned, and in all innocence answered, "I don't know. Did you?"

Sonia and I fell out of our chairs laughing. Taylor didn't know what was so funny. She had merely answered my question.

—ob—  
Our old tomcat must have missed me while I was gone. He can't seem to get close enough and is on my lap every time I sit down. Right now, he and my computer keyboard are vying for space and Max is about to win. He steps on keys as he maneuvers for position. I have to turn him sideways so I can prop the keyboard up against him. He tolerates it, but you can tell he doesn't like it.

—ob—  
Jim and I had recently agreed that when our aged feline friends, Max and Snuggles, are finally gone, we will remain petless. That resolve, however, was shaken this past week after meeting Winston.

"Winnie" is Taylor's 8-month-old Shih Tzu. And we both fell in love with that little scamp. I know Kara checked our luggage before we left to make sure we weren't smug-



### Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts  
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gling him home with us.

He has an adorable, expressive little face with great big eyes and, of course, the signature topknot on top of his head, secured with one of Taylor's pony-tail bands.

Winston is absolutely tireless when it comes to playing fetch. You will wear out long before he does. He has a braided tug-toy which, if we threw it at the proper angle, would slide on the hardwood floor under the chaise in the front room. Winston would go at top speed, then spread out flat, slide under the chaise, grab his toy, jump up onto the chaise then down again, and bring it back to you for another turn. We laughed every time we watched him go, and told Kara she never has to worry about dusting under the chaise. Winston had taken care of that.

I know he's a part of their family. Taylor joined her mother and me at the kitchen table carrying a container of yogurt and two spoons. I asked her what the two spoons were for.

She informed me that Winston liked yogurt, too. I said, "Are you and Winston going to share a spoon?"

"Oh, Grandma," she said indignantly, "Who would want to eat af-

ter dog slobbers?"

Then she nonchalantly dipped her spoon in for a bite, gave Winston a bite off his spoon and dipped both back into the yogurt for another spoonful. Yes, who indeed?

I looked at Kara for her reaction. "Hey, her dad says dogs have fewer germs in their mouths than we do," was her only comment.

Oh, my! I just had a flashback of Taylor's mother and her Aunt Halley eating kibbles out of the dog's dish when they were little. Guess it didn't hurt them, either.

### From the Bible

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. I Corinthians 3: 16-18

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Published each Wednesday by Haynes Publishing Co., 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749. Periodicals mail postage paid at Oberlin, Kan. 67749.

Steve and Cynthia Haynes, publishers  
Official newspaper of Oberlin, Jennings, Norcatur, Dresden and Decatur County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, Colorado Press Association, Nebraska Press Association and Inland Press Association.

Subscriptions: One year, \$28 (tax included) in Decatur, Norton, Rawlins, Sheridan, Thomas and Red Willow counties; \$32 (tax included) elsewhere in Kansas; \$35 elsewhere in the U.S. Foreign subscriptions, \$20 extra per year (except APO/FPO). POSTMASTER: Send change of address to 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749-2243.

Office hours: 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri. (Also open most Saturdays when someone is in.)



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