

# Opinion Page

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## KU reveals salaries, but pay questions remain

At least the University of Kansas has the sense not to drag out the fight over disclosing athletic salaries any longer.

KU lost, but the university's lawyers could have dragged the court battle out for another year or more with appeals and motions and obfuscation.

After a district court judge ruled that the Kansas Open Records Act says what it says, though, Chancellor Robert Hemenway smiled and called a press conference.

He revealed that Athletic Director Lew Perkins is paid \$420,000 a year, plus \$100,000 a year for "media appearances," such as his weekly radio and television shows.

The director is eligible for bonuses up to \$25,000 per year if he reaches certain goals. His pay comes \$165,000 from the state budget, \$210,000 from the university's athletic corporation and \$170,000 from the Endowment Association.

And if he stayed through June 30, 2009, Perkins is eligible for a \$2.1 million "retention bonus." That's payable at \$216,000 per year if he's fired or dies before then.

"I think he's worth every penny he receives," Chancellor Hemenway said.

He may be right. University athletics is a big-time business, and Mr. Perkins was an outstanding chief executive, highly sought after, before he was lured away from the University of Connecticut.

What wasn't, apparently, in the papers released by the university was who put up the

money to hire Mr. Perkins or what interests might have a stake in — or a say in — how he runs the university's programs. That kind of money comes from rich alums and others who love a university. Or might have an ax to grind.

Neither is there any answer to the question of why, when KU and all Kansas state colleges are crying for money, the university was willing to waste thousands and thousands of scarce dollars fighting a lawsuit over the open records violation.

What was there about Mr. Perkins' pay, and the contracts of coaches Bill Self and Mark Mangino, that was so worth keeping secret?

There was little in the contracts as released that was news. There's not much of a matter of principle, since the wages of public employees have always been an open record.

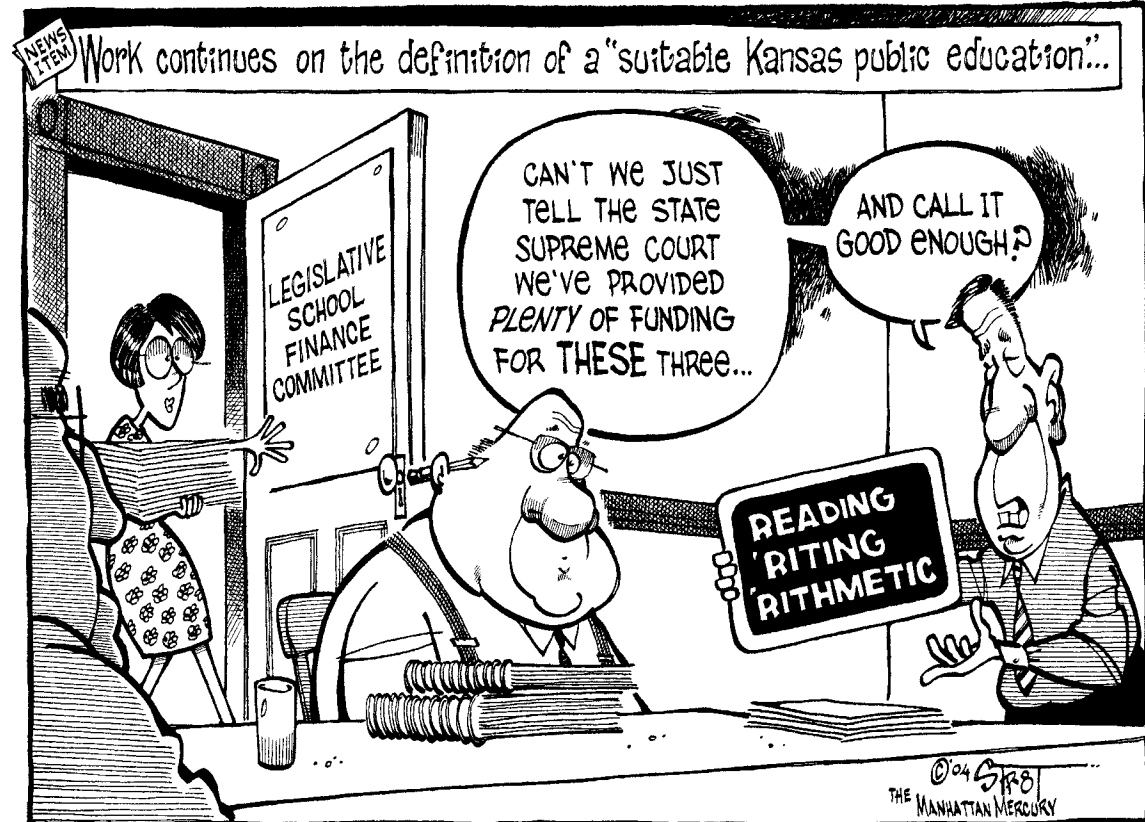
It's true that with his base pay, Mr. Perkins makes more in a week than many low-income Kansans get in a year. Heck, the price of his university cars could keep a family going for a year.

Though their \$128,000 base pay is fairly low, the coaches stand to make \$1 million a year or more each year with incentives and bonuses.

Everybody knows sports is big business. It's the source of the wealth, apparently hidden in athletic corporation and endowment records, that isn't showing.

That's a question the university ought to be prepared to answer.

—Steve Haynes



## Cats do not do wake up calls

Cats make lousy alarm clocks. I usually get up between 6:30 and 8 a.m. My preference is 8, but sometimes, duty calls.

Last week, I worked until 2 a.m. Monday night to get two newspapers ready to go. I was beat.

Tuesday mornings, I usually go to Norton to help put out *The Norton Telegram*, but I had gone over Monday night so that I could leave for Denver on Tuesday.

Theoretically, I could have gone to Norton on my regular schedule and still finished in time to leave for Denver at 11 a.m.

Practically, I knew that wouldn't work. There are always people who want, need, have to talk to you as you are trying to walk out the door. That's just life.

So we did the Norton paper Monday night and I drove home in the early morning hours to fall into my bed, exhausted.

By 8 a.m., though, April Alice had started to worry. The human on the right side of the bed always leaves by then. I guess she thought there must be a problem.

She moved from her comfortable position at our feet to my head and gave me a couple of wake up licks. Then she kneaded my shoulder with her clawless paws. Finally, getting no response, she curled up by my



## Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes  
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chest and started to purr loudly. Mostly, though, she purred herself back to sleep.

It's tough being a cat and trying to be an alarm clock. They're just not made for the job. A dog could bark an alarm. A cat just purrs.

Before I left for Denver, I tried to figure out whether the cats had learned to use their new pet door. We had it put in an inconspicuous basement window.

So far, I had been able to push April Alice through from the outside and had tried to push Molly Monster through with no success. Molly is a big, muscular cat. It's hard to get her to do something she doesn't want to do.

I figured the cats would still hang around the back door most of the time to wait for us to let them go in and out and in and....

Still, it would be nice to know that, if one got caught outside when we

were gone, it could get back to the food and water bowls.

I had already put a pet door on the garage and had equal success, or lack thereof, getting the cats to try it.

I had thought of putting cat food on the inside near the pet door to entice them in, but decided I might entice more than cats. There are plenty of raccoons, opossums and skunks around, and I don't need another pet.

I'm not sure if April Alice has yet figured out the magic door but Molly, for all her stubbornness, has mastered it. We put her out each night and each morning I find her sleeping in the middle of the dining room table — where she knows she's not supposed to be.

She doesn't even pretend to be an alarm clock. She's more of a paper-weight.

## Husband sure about tenure

It was on Oct. 8, 1994, that Jim and I said, "I do."

I only mention that as a lead-in to a recent conversation we had. I had commented that our anniversary was fast approaching and that we should consider doing something special.

Jim agreed, but added, "At least I know my position is secure."

Since anniversary time usually brings on the usual wisecracks about "renewing contracts," I asked him how he could be so sure.

In his most serious tone he answered, "Because I've got tenure (ten-year)."

I know it's kind of a groaner. But cute, don't you think?

Speaking of weddings, we got to be part of our friends Dwight and Teresa's wedding over the weekend. They had asked Jim to officiate at their wedding. I stood up with Teresa as her matron of honor while their friends and family gathered for a simple, but beautiful, outdoor wedding.

It's the things that go wrong that make a moment memorable. And, boy-oh-boy, do Dwight and Teresa have something to remember.

They were standing before an altar, and the ceremony had gone perfectly. The rings were exchanged, the vows repeated, they were pronounced husband and wife and sealed their promises with a kiss. After blessing their union, Jim turned the couple to their guests, and said very loudly and profoundly, "Ladies and gentlemen: May I present to you, Mr. and Mrs. Dwight WENTZ."



## Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts  
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Now, Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Wentz are a perfectly wonderful married couple. However, Dwight and Teresa are Mr. and Mrs. DWIGHT WOOD. Big difference. Huge. From somewhere deep in Jim's subconscious memory bank, "Wentz" had come popping out.

Of course, I started prompting him, "Wood, Wood, Wood."

Dwight and Teresa snapped their heads around with a "what-did-he-just-say" look on their faces, and the guests cracked up.

It was certainly a moment they will remember. Jim felt terrible, but in the end, all we could do was just laugh about it. And, the bottom line

is, they're married, although, the question might remain, "to whom?"

## From the Bible

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Colossians 3:16, 17

## 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.

Mail letters to 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan., 67749, or by E-mail to oberald@nwkansas.com.

We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise.

We do not publish form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous from this area should be submitted to the Want Ad desk.

Letters will not be censored, but will be read and edited for form and style, clarity, length and legality. We will not publish attacks on private individuals or businesses which do not pertain to a public issue.

## Garden chore reaps iris bulbs

We spent the afternoon Saturday cleaning out the iris beds behind the house, and now I remember why we have been putting this chore off.

It's not that it's that tough a job, but now I have to listen to Cynthia complain about her sore muscles and stiff back all week.

Oh, yeah, and my muscles are sore, too.

There must be an easier way to do this, but I can't think of it.

The irises had been in the bed 10 years. We planted them the year we moved into the house.

They were overgrown and so crowded that they hardly bloomed this year. I didn't realize how over-crowded they were until I tried to drive a stake into the bed and found out they had covered more than a foot of sidewalk. (The plants over the concrete didn't bloom much, either.)

We had been talking about this job for more than a month, but there always was some reason not to start it. Saturday, I set the afternoon aside. Cynthia said it was too hot, so she went to take a nap. She does that a lot.

Three hours later, she was up, but in no mood to pull bulbs. It was about 5 p.m., and the game was over, by the time we started. You take a



## Along the Sappa

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shovel or a potato fork, and pry up the bulbs. When they're overgrown like these, you have to pry them apart, to separate the individual plants.

We started throwing them on the patio, and wound up with a huge pile. It was getting dark, but we still had bulbs to pull, dirt to shake. We had to finish.

This project, I might point out, had to be completed without the help of the cats, who showed no interest in the bulbs, the dirt or any of the creepy-crawlies that ran out from under the pile.

Some of the spiders down there looked downright wicked, by the way, but no one got bit. At least, not that I know of.

Did I mention that it was getting dark by now?

I started planting the bulbs we wanted to keep, including one special variety I had marked. The oth-

ers are potluck for color and size, mostly heritage types that we had collected from friends and relatives.

I put them back, leaving plenty of room for growth. I reserved a corner for the garlic that apparently was left over from the last owners' herb garden. It gets one corner of the bed, while the spearmint takes over the other, along with any bare ground it can get into.

We cook with the garlic. I haven't figured out what to do with the mint, but it sure does smell good.

All that was left now was to trim and bag the excess iris. We counted seven paper grocery bags full — after we had replanted, plus a small sack of garlic plants.

So, if you know anyone who needs a few iris bulbs, do call.

We'll give some to anyone who can bear to listen to the complaints about stiff legs and sore backs.

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## Reader says trade treaty is a threat

To the Editor:

Our country is in peril! If Congress can't be turned around, we have lost our country, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights! Is there any way that you can get the bigger newspapers to inform their readers?

Someone MUST tell the people they are headed for a Hemisphere Government of 34 nations. The enclosed magazine simplifies the objections to the Treaty. The Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) is not free trade — it is the taking over of the United States and our lives.

This treaty will be submitted to Congress after the election. Congress is primed to pass it. It will be approved by Bush and we will be in a new government by December 2005. It is an unconstitutional treaty, but what difference does that make?

Sen. Sam Brownback has heard about the opposition. The article and letter, which I have faxed to him, might change his mind. He has voted yes all the time to free trade

## Letter to the Editor

bills. If you can get someone to circulate the petition and mail it, Brownback will have to declare himself.

We have until election to solicit the vote of senators and representatives. Then it is all over, and no one I can see on the horizon will question it. It would take a revolution to get out of this treaty. The new government will pick up all firearms. (That is why the liberals didn't try to re-enact the "assault gun ban!")

The reason Bush has not cut off the illegal Mexicans is that he knew that the Free Trade Area of the

Americas Treaty would open the borders of the U.S. anyway. Won't that be a mess when millions from all of the Americas can legally migrate to the U.S.?

I hope that you will do all you can to get the word out to the people. They must send thousands of letters to Congress.

Tell people to forget the storms and football for a few minutes and attend to the nation's predicament. Refer them to [www.stopthefreearea.org](http://www.stopthefreearea.org).

Kenneth Clark  
attorney at law, retired  
Hill City

