

## Legislature, court, toil over state budget woes

So far, the special session of the Legislature in Topeka is a mess. We expected that.

A week before the session began, our representative, John Faber of Brewster, said he thought the mood in the House was "not to do anything."

And so far, things are stalled in the House, where conservatives who don't want to take orders from the state Supreme Court refuse to pass a spending bill, but don't have the two-thirds majority required to pass a constitutional amendment slapping down the high court.

Just as well. An amendment is unlikely to pass the Senate, either, but the conservatives are going to have a big say in whatever passes.

The governor, noting a big jump in state revenues, proposed a \$162 million package for schools with no tax increase, a real sticking point for the conservatives.

It hasn't moved in the first five days of the session. There are problems.

For one thing, while it's more than the amount the court demanded — \$142 million — there's no guarantee the state can raise that much again next year.

Legislators who cut taxes in the early '90s are standing firm against an increase today, and with good reason. That's what voters say they want.

The tax-and-spend crowd, after losing on the floor of the Legislature, is happy to back the school lawsuit. The unelected Supreme Court seems to believe the mantra that schools need

ever-increasing money supplies, and hang the budget.

But it's the Legislature's job to divvy up the state's money, not the courts', and something is going to have to give.

We suspect there will be a compromise.

Expect a move to limit the court now or later.

Next year, perhaps, there'll be a constitutional amendment to require justices to run for office again, rather than being appointed for life.

Also, it's quite possible there will be a campaign to have voters mark "no" when current justices come up for approval.

No justice has ever been voted off, but unhappy taxpayers might just send them a message.

Whatever happens, the Legislature has to deal with the fact that the state has other needs besides schools. Overall, Kansas schools perform well, and they are not the state's only priority.

Higher education has been cut sharply, and colleges are short of money. Tuition has shot up, though Kansas universities are still a bargain.

Other state agencies have seen nothing but cuts. State employees will want a raise.

Schools are the most important thing in the state budget, but they can't and shouldn't have it all.

And it's the Legislature's job to sort all that out and make some decisions, not the court's. They need to get to it.

— Steve Haynes



## Husband heads for harvest

You can take the boy off the farm, but you can't take the farm out of his heart.

My usually fired-up, can't-wait-to-get-to-work husband is waiting around the house for "the" call.

A friend of ours who has a very full-time job in town also farms. Visiting with him after church Sunday, Jim learned he and his wife are harvesting by themselves and he offered his help. A phone call this morning confirmed they wanted him. They'll call back when they're ready to go to the field.

I just heard Jim's end of the conversation, but it involved the merits of one brand of combine over another, moisture and repairs. Now, if that phone would only ring. He's like a little boy waiting to go play.

—ob—  
"Backstage mothers" aren't limited to the theater. In fact, it's not limited to mothers. You know the parents I mean. The ones who push, push, push their kids into activities THEY want. Not, necessarily, activities the kid wants. They are the ones who question the umpire's heritage and belittle their child in front of his friends.

I thought, perhaps, the "horsey crowd" might be immune to this malady. Notsso. Recently, I attended a horse show where competitors



### Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts  
cplots@nwkansas.com

ranged in age from 3 to adults.

I watched one teenage girl put her horse through its paces during a reining class. Perhaps not a stellar performance, but adequate. When she left the ring, guess who was waiting? Mom.

Like a hawk, she pounced on her daughter using expletives formerly relegated only to sailors. (No offense intended toward sailors.) She reminded the girl how much they had paid for that blankety-blank horse and that she would blankety-blank sell him if she ever messed up like that again.

You could see the spirit drain out of that young woman as her shoulders slumped in dejection. Most children want only to please their parents. Parents — try to remember that. And, try not to live vicariously through them.

My analysis: When a parent yells at his or her child, they are really

mad at themselves — probably for not being a very good athlete when it was their turn.

Remember, it's supposed to be fun.

—ob—

Sometimes I learn just enough to be dangerous, and a book about natural cures has my interest right now.

My mother always said vinegar and honey were good for you. I'm ashamed of myself for making fun of her for drinking, daily, a concoction of hot water, a teaspoon of vinegar and two teaspoons of honey. Now, I find myself doing it and feeling better for it. It doesn't taste bad, either.

However, my book recommends using only organic, raw, unfiltered apple cider vinegar. It's a little pricey, but at a teaspoon a day, I guess it won't break the bank.

## Missed special movie once again

Sometimes you get the feeling that there is something, some force out there that is making sure something happens or doesn't happen.

Whatever it is, it is making sure that Steve and I don't get to see the latest "Star Wars" film.

We both saw all three of the original films about a hundred years ago, but for some reason we've had trouble with the latest trio.

We missed the first one, but everyone said it wasn't a big loss. Still I'd like to see it sometime.

When the second film came out, we all went to the Sherman Theater next door to The Goodland Star-News office for a special matinee. It was great fun, with popcorn and Milk Duds and everything.

Now the latest, last film is out, and our kids say best of the recent Star Wars trio. All the 20-somethings and middle-aged geeks lined up for the first midnight showings at the city theaters.

I don't even like to line up for the bathroom at Rockies baseball games, so when Star Wars III was advertised for the Sunflower Cinema in Oberlin, I was overjoyed. I was going to be home both nights.

Steve said we should go on Friday since we had a lot of yard work to do on Saturday and might not be done in time for that showing.

Sounded good to me until I got a call at 5:30 p.m. from him saying his truck wouldn't start. Since he was in Goodland, an hour and a half away, I saw the Friday show slipping away.

But there was still Saturday. Surely, the fence repairs we were



### Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes  
chaynes@nwkansas.com

planning wouldn't take all day.

The fence had blown over two weeks earlier in a heavy wind and was propped up by a brace in the neighbor's yard. She was nice about it, but really hoping to get to mow her yard on Sunday.

So Saturday, we sawed off the top of the fence, dug out a rotted post and the two feet of concrete it was buried in, and reset the post in new cement. By the time we were done, we figured the movie was half over and we were more than half done for.

Later we found out that the film hadn't come in and would be showing the next weekend, while we were on vacation in Colorado.

So, I told Steve, we would catch the movie in Colorado. There is a six-plex in Alamosa and a drive-in and three-plex in Monte Vista, both easy driving from our house.

As we drove through Alamosa on Thursday, we noted that Star Wars was playing and it was also on at the drive-in in Monte Vista.

We figured the drive-in was the way to go. Star Wars under the stars sounded great. We figured Saturday for Mexican food and a movie in Monte.

When we arrived, we noted that

the drive-in had changed movies. The choices were now "The Longest Yard" and "Mr. and Mrs. Smith." The three-plex downtown didn't have Star Wars and a quick call to the Alamosa theater confirmed that the movie wasn't there anymore either.

The force just wasn't with us. We ended up at the drive-in watching "Mr. and Mrs. Smith." It was fun, but not Star Wars.

Maybe our children will give us a three-CD set for Christmas so we can watch both the first and last of the series. Of course, watching an epic drama on a screen that's measured in inches isn't quite the same as one that's measured in feet, and several notches under one that's under the stars.

I guess I'll keep remembering Anakin as a nice, if slightly weird, guy for a while longer.

### From the Bible

Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproach shall be honoured.

Proverbs 13:18

## Daughter works to save frogs

Our daughters are always on Instant Messenger during the work-day, so it's easy to say hi or ask a question.

Like Cynthia and I, they spend a good part of the day at the computer. We chat a little most mornings, then go back to work.

The other day, I noticed the younger daughter, Lindsay, had one of those "I'm away" messages up. I sent her a message to see what the reply was.

"I'm out saving the frogs," it said. OK, I asked for it. I'll bite.

"Saving frogs?"

Half hour later, the answer came, and, as usual with Lindsay, it was a story.

After three years teaching junior high science and biology, she enrolled at the University of South Carolina to get a master's degree in library science. She moved to Columbia, S.C., last fall and got a student job at the library. Later, she moved up to a full-time position in interlibrary lending.

It seems that the university maintenance crew drained a fountain in front of the library for cleaning. They left a little water in the bottom of the half-block-long pool, and campus frogs jumped in and did



### Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes  
schaynes@nwkansas.com

what frogs do.

When they filled the pool, she said, it was chock full of tadpoles. As they grew into frogs, though, they had a problem. Adult frogs have to breathe air, and there was no ledge for them to rest on.

So as their gills disappeared, the poor little frogs were drowning by the hundreds.

And Lindsay, ever the biologist, was out there on her breaks, saving the frogs.

Not on her lunch hour, though: "Daddy, I might get salmonella."

This is the girl who used to play with baby snakes while watching television. She drew the line at insects in those days, especially spiders.

If she saw a spider, she'd scream and leave the room.

When she was teaching, though, her classroom was full of creepy-

crawlies, everything from hamsters to spiders to tarantulas to scorpions.

Now she has a boyfriend who hates anything that crawls or squirms, though, and we're not sure how she'll square that with her penchant for collecting creatures.

For now, at least, she's dedicated herself to saving the campus frogs, hundreds of them.

She said she caught and freed dozens from the pool the first day. She put them at a spot beside the library where leaking sprinklers create a little wetland.

"They did OK except for the ones that hopped out onto the brick walk," she said. "At 85 degrees, they don't last too long there."

Her mother asked today if she was still saving frogs.

"Of course," she replied. "If I don't, who else will?"

Good question.

## Reader appreciates lodge coverage

**Editor's Note:** This letter was mailed to *The Oberlin Herald* on May 10, but was mislaid in the office. Our apologies to the writer.

To the Editor:

Thank you for the excellent coverage you gave ZCBJ Cesti Vlastenci Lodge No. 153 on their 100th anniversary celebration.

Sifting through the documents and personal accounts regarding the history of the lodge was almost like going through an unorganized box of unlabeled family photos. At the time an important lodge event happened, those involved knew what had happened, so marking and names must have seemed unimportant. Some hand-written accounts jumped back and forth in time without making a note of it in the narrative.

All current lodge members who are registered with the national office were notified of this 100th anniversary event with enough lead time to contribute any information

they possessed before information for the articles was submitted to *The Oberlin Herald*.

While the lodge located at Jennings was a Bohemian lodge, another ZCBJ Lodge in Kansas is a Moravian Lodge. Using the name "Czech" to describe the people who formed the lodge organization was not meant to be a historical political commentary, but rather a description of the part of the world from where these people came.

A common person on the street is much more likely to have an idea of the location of the Czech Republic rather than where Bohemia, Silesia or Moravia were 100 years ago, when map makers could hardly keep up with border changes.

In fact, a Jennings community sign even welcomes passersby to "'Czech' Us Out!" My apologies if

I was politically incorrect in using the word "Czech" in any accounts I furnished.

My dad died when I was young, and I quickly learned one important life lesson: Stand up and be counted when there is work to be done. Thanks to all those who stood up and with us in making this event happen.

Thank you, Mary Lou Olson, for all the work you did in preparing the articles for *The Herald*. They were read and enjoyed by all who attended the state meeting.

We appreciate the museum sponsoring the porkburger feed in the evening and are grateful for the contributions made to the museum for restoration of the Bohemian Hall.

Thank you, one and all.

Othelia Vacura, secretary  
Cesti Vlastenci Lodge No. 153  
Oberlin

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E-mail: obherald@nwkansas.com

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