

## Bigger school money plan could break state's bank

It looks like there will be a lot more money for Kansas schools next year, though not as much as some people wanted.

It also looks like the state will be pretty much broke by the time \$466 million-a-year increase phases it three years from now — assuming the Legislature keeps its promises and sticks to the schedule.

That's not something the Kansas Legislature is known for in these things, sometimes with good reason.

No one has a crystal ball good enough to see what the state's income will be three years from now. The country could be in the midst of a wild boom inspired by Bush tax cuts — or another recession inspired by his wild spending — by that time.

It's really anyone's guess.

What will be no surprise is that many state programs shoved aside in the hysteria over the school finance "crisis" will be starving for cash. That includes highway, higher education and general services of all kinds.

In a state where spending in real dollars has more than quadrupled in 40 years, that may not be all bad, but there should be some balance.

Maybe the constitutional process will kick back in and the Legislature will have to do its job of allocating the resources as it believes voters want.

That has not happened the last couple of years. Under the gun of a Supreme Court order, the legislators have been trying to hit an artificial target for school spending while rob-

bing every other fund.

If you do not believe this, send a child to college or drive some of our increasingly bumpy roads.

The facts are these:

Schools in this state do an admirable job with the money they have. There is no crisis in school funding, except the one created by a lawsuit filed by certain schools which felt they lost out in the legislative process.

Other programs are important to the people of this state, especially roads and universities.

The Legislature is supposed to decide how much we are taxed and where the money goes. The courts are not.

Yet increasingly in the last decade, across the country, aggrieved school districts have turned to the courts to get more money. And, as in Kansas, courts have been only too happy to seize power and move the money around.

Fifty years ago, it would not have happened. Lack of backbone in our legislatures may be one reason our taxes are so high today. It certainly is one reason tuition is so high.

No one wants our schools to suffer, but they are not the only state program.

It's time to get back to reality. Sadly, that's not likely to happen.

Some school districts will be unhappy with the results of this year's battle, and guess what?

They'll sue.

— Steve Haynes

## Mid July arrival will be a girl

Jennifer called with a definitive answer. The sonogram revealed it is a girl and she is slated to arrive sometime around July 22.

Her name will be Aniston, Annie for short. Eleven-year-old Alexandria came up with the name and after trying it out for a while, everyone seemed to like it. The middle name may still be up for grabs. I'm not sure; how does Aniston Sue sound?

I have come to believe that every set of expectant parents should have to work in a newspaper office before being allowed to name their child. Everyone (me included) wants a unique name for their child. Then they (the parents) get upset when everyone misspells or mispronounces the kid's name.

When my oldest daughter was born, her father came up with the name Halley, pronounced "Hay-lee." Some thought it was a combination of his grandmother Hazel's name and my maiden name, Kelley. That was a little too deep. And, no. He had never heard of the child-actress Hayley Mills. He just came up with it. And, she did look like a "Halley" when she was born.

That was almost 39 years ago and the name was unusual then. Now, I know of Halee, Haleigh, Haylee and Halie.

What's in a name? It's your identity. It's who you are. Some names come and go like fads. Some are timeless like James, Mary and William.

I never cared much for my name as a little girl. I was envious of the kids with a nickname. Not much you can do with "Carolyn." So, when my



### Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts  
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freshman history teacher referred to each student as Miss So-and-so or Mr. Who's-it, I thought it was cool to be Miss Kelley. And, really cool when my classmates just shortened it to Kelley. That's what I became, Kelley — much cooler than Carolyn.

Parents shouldn't fret too much about the name they choose for their child. By the time little Johnny gets to school, his playmates might well be calling him "Butch" or "Pinky" anyway.

—ob—

I've been holding off buying baby things because I wanted to be gender-specific. I didn't want to buy yellow or green to go either way. I needed to know if I should buy pink or blue. Now that we know it's a girl,

I might be dangerous. It's been seven years since there's been a baby in the family and that's a long time between embroidered burp cloths and little bunny baby booties.

### From the Bible

Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.  
Proverbs 8: 33-35

### 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 obherald@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.



## Savannah shows off real beauty

"Cities are like people. Some are brash young fellows, lusty and loud, with rawbones jutting and sleeves too short.

Some are callow, shallow hussies, all giggles and flirts and furbelows. Savannah is a Lady."

Introductory sentences to *Sojourn in Savannah* by Anita Raskin

We found these words to be true last week as we enjoyed this jewel of southern hospitality.

Savannah is gracious and beautiful without being snooty. She's a lovely lady who has endured and flourished through good times and bad.

In 1733, James Oglethorpe and 114 colonists sailed up the Savannah River and settled on some bluffs. The English settlers were met by friendly Yamacraw Indians, led by Chief Tomochichi.

Oglethorpe had a plan for a city that would be built around squares of public land. Each square would be surrounded on two sides (north and south) by private dwellings and on two sides (east and west) by public buildings and churches.

This made Savannah one of the first planned cities in the U.S. Today, there are 24 squares in a grid stretching from the river up the gentle Georgia bluffs to Forsyth Park, about 1 1/2 to two miles south. Today, the squares are shaded by



### Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes  
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ancient live oaks that spread their branches over the park and streets, flowers, grass and benches.

Many also contain statues or memorials to such notables as John Wesley, founder of Methodism, whose teachings grew in Georgia, but who left for England after clashing with officials; railroad magnate William Washington Gordon, the father of Juliette Gordon Lowe, who started the Girl Scouts in America; and, of course, Oglethorpe himself.

The squares are still bounded by churches and public buildings on two sides and homes — both fancy and simple — in various states of restoration, on the other two.

While Savannah suffered from devastating fires in 1796 and 1820, yellow fever epidemics and numerous hurricanes, it escaped the fate of Atlanta and many other cities in the path of Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman and the Union Army.

Sherman was said to have been so taken by the beauty of Savannah that he spared the city and sent this tele-

gram:

Savannah, Ga. Dec. 22, 1864

To His Excellency, President Lincoln:

Dear Sir:

I beg to present you as a Christmas Gift, the city of Savannah with 150 heavy guns and plenty of ammunition and also about 25,000 bales of cotton.

W.T. Sherman  
Maj. Genl.

While cotton and slaves made Savannah rich before the Civil War, the city was founded on the precepts of freedom. While Jews were welcome in those early years, several types of undesirables were not — slaves (until 1750), rum (until 1742), lawyers (until 1755) and Pa-pists.

My guidebook didn't say when they let the Catholics in, but the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, organized in 1799, was one of the few historic churches open for tourists and visitors while we were there.

## 4 a.m. blast sets husband off

It all began innocently enough. We had just settled into a new hotel room. We needed to get up in the morning — a rare thing on vacation — because it was Felicia's birthday and we'd promised to buy her breakfast.

I was in the living room. "Honey," came the call. "Have you seen the instructions for this alarm clock?"

"No," I said. "Can't say that I have."

"Well, I can't figure out how to set it."

"Oh," I advised, and wisely, I thought, "why don't you just leave a call at the desk. That'd be easier."

"Sure," she replied.

I thought she'd given in a little too easily, though.

"Hey, the phone in the bedroom doesn't work. Someone cut the line."

That conjured up visions of all those old movies where the murderer cuts the phone lines before terrorizing the victim in a dark, creepy house — or hotel room.

I was about to get ready for heroic action, but the phone in the living room worked just fine. And besides, statistically, you are much more likely to be murdered by your spouse than a stranger. I know I am.

And just then, she appeared at the doorway, holding a bundle of bare wires at the end of a phone cable.



### Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes  
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"Call from the living room," I advised. "Tell them to let it ring."

With that I went back to watching container ships and tankers glide up and down the Savannah River. We went to dinner. The alarm was forgotten.

Until about 4 a.m., when something started buzzing softly in my ear.

Cynthia struggled to get up. She responds slowly at 4 a.m., but a lot faster than I do. She did something to the alarm and it went quiet.

I glared at her, best I could in the dark.

"This is your fault," I said. "No, it's partly your fault, too. I asked for help."

"No, you did not. You asked for the instructions. You didn't tell me you'd pushed all the buttons."

Any man knows you don't look at the instructions if you want to set an electronic device. You either push some buttons and set it, or call a 12-year-old.

"It's a good thing we don't keep

nuclear weapons around. I can just see it now:

"Honey, have you seen the book for the nuclear weapon?"

"No. Why?"

"Well, I pushed some buttons and it's ticking."

"That's nice, dear. Whatever."

I pulled a pillow over my head and tried to get back to sleep.

The nuclear weapon went off again at 6. I whapped it, but I think I only got the snooze button, because it went off again at 6:10.

I was beginning to understand why someone had ripped the phone cord out of the wall. I was ready to look for the power cord for the clock.

We made it to breakfast, though. Later, I went back to disable the alarm. It was one of those new multi-time models. You can set it to go off up to three times in one day.

"These babies are tricky," I muttered, holding it up to the light. "The wires seem simple enough, but if you cut the green one first..."

## Slow Postal Service delays Herald

To the Editor:

Thank you for your letter explaining the routing of *The Oberlin Herald*. The day after I received your letter, I received issues of *The Herald* for April 19 and 26 together.

Yesterday, I received *The Herald* of April 12. Above the printed address label was a hand-written note that said the following: "Jack, I received your copy in addition to mine. We live in Glendora. Dick Barrett."

My copy must have been neatly folded inside his copy in the same manner that I recently received the copy addressed to Katherian Fiala.

Obviously I don't expect *The Herald* to arrive the same week it is printed. Arriving within 10 days or two weeks of publication is acceptable for newspapers. Under normal

### Letter to the Editor

conditions they should arrive more or less a week apart. For most of the years that I have subscribed, they have arrived about the same day every week. During the last three months arrival has been very erratic.

I appreciate your reply and I look forward to receiving my paper. I enjoy reading *The Herald* and truly miss it when it doesn't arrive. (I call Duane Witt to make sure I have all the recent news when that happens.)

Jack Love  
La Verne, Calif.

**Editor's Note:** We find postal service close to home to be reliable,

nearly perfect. Papers going through a city post office, however, will be delayed and delivery may be erratic. This seems to be getting worse rather than better.

Readers can and should report poor or erratic service to their local postmaster. We assure you mail leaves our plant bagged correctly.

Readers also should know that the Postal Service has moved to consolidate sorting of papers at fewer, larger offices. And they have filed for a 25 percent rate increase for next year, so expect subscription prices to go up for slower service. Go figure. — Steve Haynes

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