

Government bail outs have worked before

What does it mean to the American economy when the government has to bail out our largest banks, insurance companies, brokerages and manufacturers?

We're in deep trouble this time, of course. That much is obvious. The taxpayers' bill is past \$1 trillion already, and the meter just keeps on running.

Before this ends, the government may well own a big chunk of Citicorp and other big banks, of General Motors, Ford and Chrysler, of insurance giant AIG and of a host of other firms "too big to let go down."

First of all, can this work? Actually, the government's track record in rescuing big firms is not all that bad, nor has it cost us much money in the end.

When the government bailed out Chrysler Corp. in the 1979 with \$1.2 billion in loan guarantees, the effort was at least a qualified success. Chrysler went on to become a relatively stable firm, though not one fated to make its way in the world. It was bought up by the big German automaker Benz, but even the Germans could not make a winner out of the No. 3 U.S. manufacturer.

After being cut loose to fend for itself, Chrysler quickly faltered. The economic nose-dive the U.S. has suffered this year is not something it, or possibly any of the Big Three, could survive.

Call that one at least a temporary success. We got our money back.

When the eastern railroads were broke in the 1970s, the government formed Conrail

in 1976 to "rationalize" the system. Armed with authority to cut away unneeded lines and unprofitable passenger trains, the new railroad began to rise. A crack management team made it a winner. Eventually, the two big eastern carriers bought Conrail and divided the spoils.

Had it remained independent, Conrail would have been a real success. As it was, though, the government's goals were met. The rail system was pared back and began to make a profit. Today, the eastern railroads — once a drag on the economy — are a profit-making business.

So call that one a success. Can the government save GM or Citicorp? Who knows. Today, the need for cash is so huge, the number of firms in trouble so large, that even Uncle Sugar may run out of cash.

Should we care? Economist and experts differ. Some say we simply cannot afford to let so many key players fail. If GM goes down, for instance, thousands of suppliers, dealers and other related firms may follow. The entire domestic auto industry may disappear, and with it the country's best remaining industrial jobs.

Others say bankruptcy is the only way to wash years of poor management, union power and bad decisions away. Purists say only the market can decide who lives and who dies.

Yet so far, the record for government bail-outs is fairly positive. So pick your medicine. Chances are you'll be paying for it, one way or the other. — *Steve Haynes*

Thankfully we gather around

Our family has a Thanksgiving tradition. Before our very traditional turkey dinner — no lasagna or steak for us — we hold hands in circle and everyone shares what they are thankful for.

Without exception, we are all thankful for family, warts and all. It is family that holds it all together. It's what makes us drive 650 miles to be together. It's what draws us to wherever the others are. It's being with the people we love most. It's having more fun with them than we have anywhere else.

Ani, our little 2-year old granddaughter, might not be able to articulate her thoughts, but we're sure thankful for her. There's nothing like a toddler to liven up a household. Granddaughters Taylor and Alexandria definitely know their own minds, and it's great to see them growing into lovely, independent young ladies.

We'll make our annual trek to Dallas on Tuesday. This year, I've decided to bring most of the groceries with me instead of wasting Wednesday shopping. I'm even taking some things partly made.

I'll have the cranberries ground and sugared, the dry ingredients combined for my crescent rolls and the pie crusts ready to be rolled out. I've already been to the store and boxes of food are packed and ready to go.

That's the plan. We'll see how it works.

—ob—



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
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I took a little grief about the recent "soap box" column. One reader took me to task over my "no children in the parents' bed" stance. She said that with both her and her husband holding full-time jobs, taking the baby to bed with them was the only way for anyone in the family to get any sleep.

I can appreciate her position. I was fortunate enough to be a stay-at-home mom when I had newborns. I didn't have to be anywhere but the kitchen at 8 a.m.

—ob—

Jim's dad is still in a long-term care facility following the accident several months ago which caused the loss of his left leg. His overall health is good and he is working hard to be ready for his artificial leg. Measurements have been taken and he's already had one fitting. It's exciting for him to consider the possibility of being upright again.

He doesn't expect to run any foot races with it; just to be mobile and able to help with his own care will be enough.

—ob—

My sister-in-law Mary sent me a

list of advantages to growing older. I like this one:

"There's nothing left to learn the hard way." That's not to say there's no mistakes left to be made, but by the time you've reached my age, the list has certainly been whittled down a lot.

—ob—

If I'm going to be ready to head south at 6 in the morning, I had better get busy. We pray that you and your family have a safe and blessed Thanksgiving. Amen.

From the Bible

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
Philippians, 4:6,7



Veteran offers message

To the Editor:

In just a few short days, hopefully, you with your family and friends, will gather to celebrate the traditional Thanksgiving Day festivities. In anticipation of this very important and special day in our lives, may I offer my annual Thanksgiving Day message.

This past year has been a period of many profound changes for the citizens of the United States of America. The major conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq continued to plague us, along with the constant threat of introduction of nuclear, biological and chemical materials by our adversaries. The world was further burdened by a series of natural disasters such as tornadoes,

Letters to the Editor

hurricanes, drought and fires.

Coping with the multitude of threats has brought reality to the heretofore unthinkable and unimaginable. The multitude of these major factors all seemed to take a back seat to the national elections and the major downturn in the U.S. economy. These adverse conditions and potential threats only strengthen our resolve.

In the face of these many problem areas, now is the time to pause and reflect upon our many blessings. We are fortunate to be living in a time

and a place where we can make a difference and help make this world a better place to live. Please join me in THANKING our brave men and women who are serving our country in troubled spots all over the world. Let us be thankful for our family and friends and pause to give thanks for our many blessings. God bless the United States of America.

Please enjoy this special occasion with your family and friends.

Del Townsend
Fort Washington, Md.

A Proud and Grateful Veteran

Hospital honored with award

To the Editor:

The employees, administrative team and board of the Decatur County Hospital received well-deserved recognition from their peers when Decatur Health Systems was co-recipient of the Thomas R. Sipe award at the recent meeting of the Kansas Hospital Association. The other co-recipient was the University of Kansas Hospital in Kansas City.

Decatur Health Systems was recognized for the specialty clinic addition and the enhanced services that additional space enables us to

receive here, rather than having to travel out of town to see specialists.

We are fortunate to have forward-looking people operating and overseeing our health care facilities, who take the initiative to determine community needs and then find ways to meet them. When a need and a solution are found, they don't hesitate to present it to the county commissioners, who have always done what was needed to work with the hospital board and administration to ensure that we have the best possible services and facilities available here.

Through the years, too, we have been very fortunate to have persons like Fred and Henrietta Bremer who go "above and beyond" to support our community with gifts and bequests.

We think it is important to call the public's attention to the good work our health care system is doing, for those who didn't see the small article in the *Salina Journal* on Nov. 7 or who missed the hospital's "Health Focus" newsletter for November.

Charles and Diane Frickey
Oberlin

November is Diabetes month

To the Editor:

Since my doctor advised how much he enjoyed reading what I wrote along with others, I decided to write.

Most of you are aware that diabetes is a hormone problem, and you can have too much sugar in the blood. This is called hyperglycemia. When it accumulates in the veins, then you may have some major problems.

This is what diabetics are trying to avoid, because this can lead to complications. Diabetics are more likely to have heart problems and urinary infections.

If you are not in control, you may get low blood sugar. Here are some symptoms you may or may not get: shakiness, nervousness, dizziness, hunger, light headedness, sweating, nausea, confusion, headache, feel-

ing chilled, concentration problems and blurred vision.

If you have any of these, check your blood sugar.

My main symptoms are sweating profusely, especially in my hair, and weakness and shakiness.

Sometimes I feel like I am chilling. I usually check my blood sugar and then I eat something with sugar. I was diagnosed with low blood sugar many years before I became a true diabetic.

If you are hypoglycemic or have low blood sugar, try to eat more often and better, and check your blood sugar often, as this may help you prevent it from getting worse and save you many complications.

First, talk to your doctor. Treat your hypoglycemia with some form

of sugar, usually 10 to 15 grams. This could be three glucose tablets, a half cup of fruit juice or five to six pieces of hard candy.

It is serious when a diabetic is not aware that their blood sugar is too low, especially if they are driving.

Those more apt to develop this problem are the ones who have diabetic nerve damage.

Check your blood sugar. Tell your family and friends about this condition. Avoid being alone, for example swimming or hiking. Always carry some kind of sugar.

Avoid taking too much insulin, eating too little or too late. Avoid excessive exercise and drinking alcohol.

Elsie Wolters
Oberlin

Dog gone antenna returns

It was just one of those things you do, I guess.

We were at the park, getting ready to walk. It was dusk. It's always about dusk when we finally get to the park, it seems.

And I remember talking about the way the transmitter for the dog's collar goes together. I was screwing it together — the antenna screws into the base, like a pool cue — and saying I felt like a pool shark getting ready for his games. Or something like that.

And then we were off around the old lake bed. It was one of those nights where there was lots of game to see, plenty to talk about and good walking, if a little cool. As I remember, we were racing the gloom as we headed into the final quarter mile to the car.

There was still enough light to see the trail and pick our way around the island, but barely.

There was never an occasion to grab the control for the dog's collar. She's nearly 8 now, and about as well trained as she's going to get.

In town once in a while, something gets too interesting and I have to buzz her a little, but not often. And never at the lake. She obeys pretty well out there. She's having fun, and I don't think she wants to get into any trouble.

We jumped up a young whitetail



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
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buck with a couple of does. There's quite a herd of whitetails out there this year, and the sight of one, or three or four, bounding away, tails waiving, is nothing unusual.

Wasn't until I got back to the car that I realized that the antenna had worked its way off the controller.

I figured I'd been talking too much and paying not nearly enough attention to what I was doing. Instead of checking to see that the antenna was tight, I must have put it on my belt a little loose.

No big deal, I figured. We'd either find it or get another one.

Next day, Cynthia got to go on the Business-to-Business Tour, and I got to take the dog to the lake to look for the antenna. We retraced our steps without spotting it, but I realized there were places on that trail — while it's mostly bare dirt or short grass — where the leaves were deep enough to hide the whole collar, let alone thin, black antenna.

I chalked it up to experience. That night, I went on the web and ordered a new antenna: \$12, plus \$12.95 shipping and handling.

I tested the controller without one. It worked, but I figured it wouldn't have much range. The new one came Thursday — pretty quick service, I thought — and we put it on for the walk that night.

And that was it until Saturday. We were back on the trail at dusk, and I was telling Cynthia how the dog and I had covered our tracks without finding the antenna. I pointed out that there were places under the cottonwoods where the weeds could hide a couple of antennas. Maybe the dog, too.

"And other places," I said, "with the bare ground, you'd spot it right away ... just ... like ... that."

And there it was. My \$25 antenna.

Which is why we now have two of them. And probably will until well after the dog is dead and buried.

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