



Parties must lay politics aside to prevent disaster

Congress simply has to act this fall. Otherwise, the nation could plunge off the "fiscal cliff" created by failure of the two parties to compromise on important tax and spending issues — straight into a new recession.

Each party blames the other for the chasm, but in truth, both are to blame. The Senate is so tied up in party infighting that it has not been able to pass a budget in more than three years. Neither party has the votes to push through its bill, and neither has been willing to back down.

The Republican-controlled House has plenty of solutions, but the Democrats aren't buying any of them.

The betting is that the two can get together in the "Lame Duck" session after the election, when political posturing will no longer mean much, and pass some compromise bills. It's either that, or the Bush and Obama tax cuts will expire, along with a lot of other legislation, and billions in automatic, across-the-board spending cuts will go into effect. The impact on the economy could be more than \$600 billion

Combined, experts say, that could shrink the U.S. economy by 3 percent next year, plunging the world into a new recession. U.S. unemployment could jump to 9.1 percent. That's just what a shaky economy needs, with Europe already in crisis and the economy just plodding along.

The approaching "cliff" already is making investors nervous, holding back the stock market and probably the housing industry as well, the

Associated Press reports. Beyond that, investors are worried about a possible round of tax increases if the president is re-elected, which appears more and more likely.

Without a deal, which could take some bloody infighting to achieve, the consequences are too great to ignore. But Wall Street observers predict that twists and turns in negotiations themselves could send the market into fits and starts, plunging and climbing on the daily news from inside the Beltway.

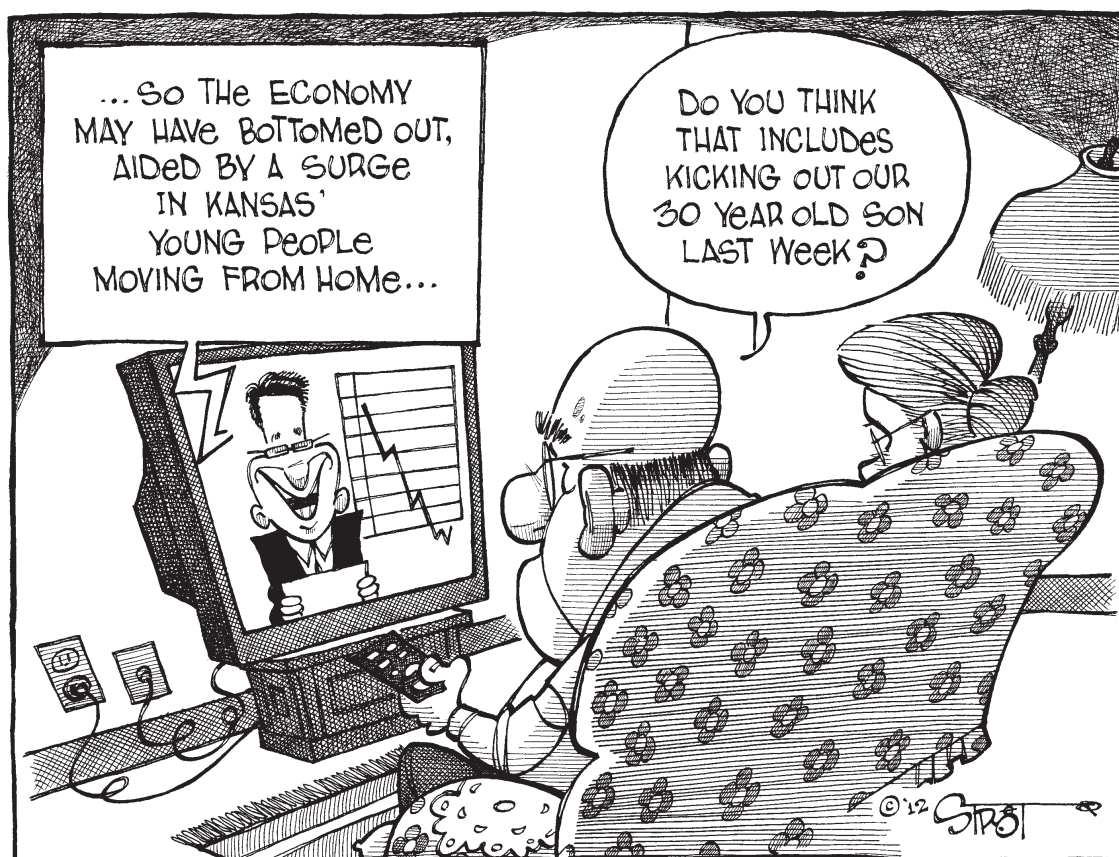
Be that as it may, the parties know they have to come together this time. It'll be mostly up to the Senate to come up with a compromise, then to sell it to the more conservative House. That means a lot of wrangling before the end of the year.

If the markets falter, it'll put even more pressure on the parties to get together. And that eventually should produce a recession-saving bill.

Then, if Europe can keep its economy afloat, maybe we'll see continued recovery next year — and a return of prosperity. If not, well, we don't want to go there. Neither, we suspect, do the incumbents, who stand to lose their seats to a voter reaction that'll make the Tea Party look like an ice cream social.

We think voters are tired of posturing and delay, and they won't be happy if it wrecks the entire economy.

— Steve Haynes



The Gardener

By Kay Melia



No other food is so simply comforting as a potato. Boiled, baked, with a pat of butter, a grind of pepper and a shake of salt, the only thing better than a freshly dug potato is another one!

What's more, a homegrown potato doesn't just come in a plain brown wrapper, or even a red one anymore. Most of us have sampled the buttery yellows, and maybe even blushing shades of pink, unabashed blues, or unshrinking violets. They all have great potato flavor. Like the common bur-lap-skinned standbys, colorful home-grown potatoes are an ideal food, standing alone, or as a starchy flavor companion to onion, garlic, chilies, herbs, spices, or different kinds of cheeses.

So, you might ask, why is the old guy discussing potatoes when he's usually sitting around criticizing fill-in NFL referees, like everybody else? Of course, he doesn't have to do that anymore. There are several reasons for talking about home-grown potatoes this fall, and most of those reasons serve as reminders for planting time next spring.

Reason No. 1...This reminder

for right now...get out there and dig THIS year's crop so that they won't have to lie around in that dry soil any longer. If not dug now, they will soon be showing serious signs of shrink, and other bad things. Dig 'em now, unless you are having some kind of mis-giving about the over-paid regular referees. In that case, wait until tomorrow. As soon as they are safely stored in a cool, dark place, preferably where temperatures are between 50 and 65 degrees, you can expect delightful eating all winter.

Reason No. 2...More gardeners need to seriously consider a few of their own potatoes. And please don't give me the excuse that you don't have enough room in your small garden for potatoes. I'm just asking you to plant one row... maybe a double row, next spring. While you won't feed the family very long with just a row or two, you are sure to experience a taste sensation that you really never expected from a common everyday potato.

Reason No. 3...I am fearful there are actually people out there who

have never tasted a NEW potato. For the uninitiated, new potatoes are immature specimens of the tuber that begin to form in the plant's root system about the time the plant is blooming. At that time, you dig in under the vine with your hand and steal 2 or 3 walnut size potatoes. Take them to the kitchen, boil them in their thin skins until just barely tender, perhaps make a tasty white sauce for them, or just add butter, salt and pepper, and you have one of your garden's ultimate treats!

Reason No. 4...Now is the time to think about which potato variety you might chose for next spring. Kennebec, Red Pontiac, Yukon Gold, Norcotah Russet, Swedish Fingerling, Purple Majesty, Dakota Crisp...doesn't matter much. Potatoes of any variety grow exceptionally well in the High Plains area, and will provide you with an exceptional garden treat next spring. By then, you can begin to worry about the possibility that Major League Baseball umpires might go on strike!

Hangin' With Marge

Going Blind

By Margaret Bucholtz



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I love seeing things like the sunsets, colors and people's faces, and I know that is important to everyone.

In the past I have had several eye problems but they have been able to be corrected and I can go on with my life as usual.

The other day I was getting ready to go to town and get my hair cut and believe me I am in that stage in life that I need a check list just to walk out of the house. So you can image my dilemma when I had to decide if I should wash my hair before I go

or should I just let my hair dresser do it. Finally I make the decision to wash it before I left as I had been working outside and I really didn't want her to see the mud roll down her sink

I had already taken a bath so I thought I would just lean over the sink and wash it like we did when I was a kid. I got the first suds going and leaned back over to rinse them out but when I started to open my eyes to see if the water was running clear I panicked. I couldn't see anything but something was covering my eyes.

I grabbed a towel and rose up as I was drying things off and I could see just fine. Umm, what went on?

When I got over the scare I leaned back over again and started the water. This time the same thing happened.

Image the shock when I figured out that when I bent over the loose skin on my face fell upward and covered my eyes.

No wonder it felt so weird.

Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick



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Do you remember tasting this season's first home-grown tomato from your garden? The flavorful explosion brought back memories of other year's initial bites, but it still was such a strong sensation that it almost seemed like experiencing it for the first time.

However, if you're like me at this point of the year, it doesn't matter if they hang a bit over-ripe on the vine or pruning up in a bowl on the counter. The novelty has worn off.

We forget about the miracle of creation that happens before us each day. Luckily a couple weekends ago proved to be a good reminder for me.

Lezlie and I ended up with two airline tickets that needed to be used. After seeing where Frontier flew out of Denver we felt drawn to Provo, Utah.

Our timing could not have been better as the trip took us to the base of the Wasatch Mountains during the height of the fall changing of the leaves. In our rental car we headed up winding and steep

roads to see some amazing colors. The white skinned aspen were transitioning from green to gold. But what we didn't anticipate was the multitude of maple trees that provided a range from soft pinks to vibrant reds. Mixed in with all were the majestic evergreen pines that intermingled with the other trees.

Whether we came upon an open valley filled with brilliant flora or turned to see the gray rocky crags shooting skyward, the beauty of the Rocky Mountain western slope was a display of nature's wonder.

Maybe it's the Colorado boy in me that will always feel the pull of the mountains, but even back home where the cottonwoods and milo make their autumn alterations, the miracle of life abounds and is forever changing.

Oh, and Lezlie picked all our tomatoes and is preserving them in the freezer. No waste with my "mother nature."

GOD SAYS
Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.
Matthew 11:28

If the insured is not protected from the unisured — what good is it?

Letter to the Editor:

Insurance is a gamble — The client beteth on his misfortune — The company, his good fortune — The compulsory insurance violates premise innocent till proven guilty — What is the cost of using tax paid officials to force-sell insurance???

In 1984, Kansas had 13 refineries — now 3! build refineries, Alaska, Canada, North Dakota, etc. — Why pipe oil to Texas for

Letters to the Editor

export? Haul fuel back — Abolish retirement dollar\$ for every elected official. If the budget doesn't balance — dock their pay the same % — Government debt is taxation without representation — The unborn can't vote — "As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is

with child, even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all." Eccl.11:5.

P.S. Where doth the constitution permit taxing everybody to benefit anyone???

Frank Sowers Benkelman

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Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

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