

Government shutdown is over different ideals

As Congress moves toward a compromise on spending after nearly two weeks of the partial government shutdown, people need to realize that this is not some frivolous tiff or indolent inaction in Washington.

Rather, it is a high-stakes game where the chips involve the philosophical differences between the two parties. Democrats want to defend their favorite spending programs, especially the huge new health-care law. Republicans keep trying to cut spending and move toward a balanced budget, and big items are on the table for both.

For the Democrats, it's continued growth in social programs. They want the GOP to drop or ease the "sequestration" cuts which have barely made a dent in federal spending. For the Republicans, it's a burning desire to derail, or at least modify, the health-care law, curb its cost and keep spending down.

It's not like either side was just fighting for the sake of the fight. It's that they started poles apart, and while Congress might want to get things moving, President Obama on one side and the tea party group on the other both vow not to compromise.

Our bet is that a settlement will be reached to keep the government limping along, but with short deadlines that will mean another fight over the debt ceiling and a continuing resolution before the end of the year. Congress should be able to prevent any default on the federal debt, but that will only put the underlying issues off.

And while it's common to hear that "there's not a dime's worth of difference" between the two parties, in fact, the distinctions have seldom been more sharply defined. Democrats, led by Mr. Obama, are insisting that tax increases on "the rich" need to be part of any move to a balanced budget, though that goal is distant indeed.

Republicans say any tax increase in the face of a weak economy would be foolish. They want to curb burgeoning costs of "entitlement" programs such as Social Security and Medicaid, which they see as programmed to go up year after year.

It's OK for people to demonstrate against the shutdown. It's everyone's right to petition the government, after all, and a little heat should help push things along. Just remember that there are real differences at stake, and both sides in a divided government are trying to defend their own sacred turf.

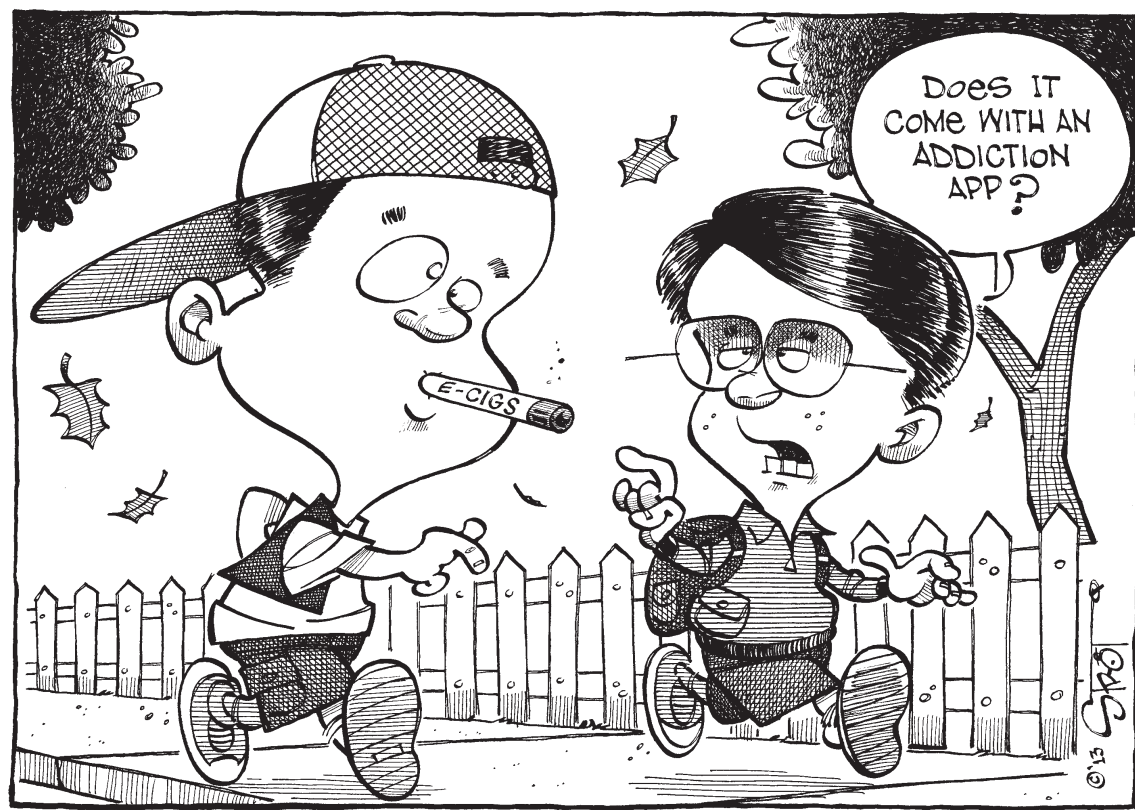
This basic division on spending is not likely to go away, as deeply as it is intertwined with the structure of the budget and the federal spending process. These are the basic tenants of the two parties.

That does not mean compromise is impossible, or that one won't be reached. Far from it. It simply means no one is going to roll over easily. That is why this debate seems to go on forever, and why nothing seems to get resolved as the sides kick this can down the road.

Whichever side you fall on, or lean toward, if you are tired of all this uncertainty, remember it's been five years since Congress actually passed a budget and longer since appropriations bills were routinely passed before expiration of spending authority in major areas. Everything has gone on temporary authority, "continuing resolutions," for years and the dispute has made permanent changes difficult.

Everyone agrees a "balanced budget" should be the goal, but how to get there? Which way will we go? Evenly divided as the country is, there's no way to tell. So far, neither side has the power to jam something down the other's throat.

But the show is far from over, and the long-term consequences are great. — Steve Haynes



Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick



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Many believe that having enough money can buy happiness. Not true. Tragedy can visit even the best player in the NFL. Last week Adrian Peterson, MVP running back for the Minnesota Vikings, lost his young son.

The two-year-old child, who does not live with his father, was in the care of his mother's 28-year-old boyfriend. When emergency per-

sonnel arrived at the residence in South Dakota, the boy was found unresponsive. He would later be taken off life support. The boyfriend is under arrest for various criminal acts related to this case.

I agree with Peterson's good friend and fellow pro-athlete LaBron James. A father of two boys himself, he asked the question, "What could a two-year-old do to a grown man to

deserve this?"

The child did not deserve this. The family did not deserve this. And Adrian Peterson, with his great wealth, did not deserve it, nor could he keep this from happening.

Disabilities Awareness is this month

Letter to the Editor

October is National Disabilities Awareness Month. It is a time to reflect on the great contributions people with disabilities can and have made to us as individuals and to society as a whole.

Helen Keller was such a person. At age two, she became ill and, as a result, was left deaf, blind, and mute. Because of the great patience and persistence of her teacher, Anne Sullivan, Miss Keller became an American author, political activist and lecturer, and an inspiration to many.

Ludwig Van Beethoven was another. He composed his renowned Symphony No. 9 in D minor after becoming totally deaf.

Elijah Paul Judice is yet another. I've only recently become aware of Eli through an article his father wrote about their family's struggles to deal with Eli's disabilities. The article, "A Whole String of Miracles - My son's disabilities are teaching me to walk by faith" by Chad Judice, appeared in the Sept. 2013 issue of "The World Among Us."

During a routine pre-natal visit, Eli's parents "received the crushing news that our unborn son had the most severe form of a birth defect called spina bifida. Even with major surgery after birth, serious life-long health issues are the result." As the father relates, "In an instant, my illusions of control over my life were shattered. Spent the rest of the day dazed and terrified. How would this affect our marriage? Our oldest son? Our finances?" The doctor offered

them the option to "terminate the pregnancy". Because of their belief in the value of every human life, they answered "no".

Their faith and decision were tested over the next few months. Through prayer support of their co-workers, friends, and faith community, they eventually experienced peace and even a "string of miracles".

As the father relates, when Eli was born, "he did have spina bifida, but the opening in his spine, which doctors had told us could have been as big as a softball, was just the size of a fifty-cent piece... Eli's surgeries went well, and despite the medical challenges, he was home in less than a month."

The father admits, "Living with Eli has been an adventure. He's had seizures and surgeries, and as we continue our journey, Ashley (his wife) and I have been through experiences that have scared the daylights out of us. But we keep seeing miracles as well."

As the article winds down, we find that Eli is doing better than doctors ever expected. He is learning to walk with the help of braces and a special device. In school, his intelligence is at or above average. "best of all, he is a happy child with a beautiful smile that speaks of God's presence in his life."

Sometimes God gives us challenges so that, placing our faith in

Him we might ultimately experience greater strength and joy. And perhaps it is to teach us that the contribution a person makes to society is not so much what he or she accomplishes in life, but how we are enriched by their presence. As Eli's father says it, "People used to ask me who my heroes were. I never really could give a good answer. Today I realized my hero is Eli... His story gives people hope, inspiration, and evidence that there is a God and that he cares about us..."

If you are facing the diagnosis that your unborn child has a disability, step back and take a deep breath before making a "life or death" decision for your child. Learn all you can about the disability. The internet has many websites. Seek out a support group - don't try to "go it alone". A crisis pregnancy center may be able to refer you to one, or, again, check the internet. Seek out "life affirming" friends. If you just can't bear the thought of raising a child with disabilities, check with an adoption agency - faith-based as well as state administered ones. There are often couples who would lovingly welcome your child.

Society as a whole is often anxious to help you "end the problem". Just remember, people with disabilities are often blessings in disguise.

Joan Gienger, President
Cheyenne County
Kansans for Life

The Gardener

By Kay Melia



Let me see now...it's the third week of October, and time for me to sit down for a couple of hours and review what happened out in my garden last summer. I mean, really concentrate on the good things and the bad things that took place out there before the holidays and snow and other distractions cause me to forget about what I need to remember.

I make notes about what I should have done as well as the good things that happened, and it helps me to get on the right road come next spring.

So, let me share with you some of my successes and failures of the past summer.

For the second straight year, my green beans quit on me. Can you imagine anybody having problems with green beans, normally one of the most prolific crops in the garden? For now, I will blame it on my choice of variety. I planted a European favorite of filet bean, when I should have stayed with the tried and true varieties such as Derby or Blue Lake 274. No more filet beans for me.

The peas weren't much better. I planted my usual favorite variety called Maestro, but failed to get a decent stand. Peas are like that sometimes, and convincing them to germinate can be difficult depending on soil temperature, and early growing conditions. I probably won't plant any next year and use their space for something else.

The cantaloupes failed to live up to expectations this summer. We had many to enjoy, but they never

attained the size expected from an Ambrosia melon.

There were a number of "Gardener pleasers" out there this year, so please allow me to talk about five of the most pleasant successes.

1) My star performer this year was cabbage, the Megaton variety. I set out 16 home grown plants on April 18, and harvested enough cabbage for son Marty and I to make eight gallons of that wonderful crunchy homemade goodness! (I actually find a few folks who do not care for sauerkraut, homemade or otherwise. Can you imagine?) A couple of heads weighed over 12 pounds, and there were several heads utilized for slaw and cooked cabbage.

2) I plant both slicing and pickling varieties of cucumbers, but it was the picklers that performed so well this summer. I plant the Burpee Pickler variety and production every year has been sensational. There are 62 pints of three or four different kinds of pickles on the shelf to prove it.

3) While not the best crop of

tomatoes I've ever had, my tomatoes performed exceptionally well, particularly early in the season. The Super Tasty variety stole the show, with Northern Exposure and Shady Lady not far behind. I credit any tomato success I have to starting my own plants from seed, which gives me the choice of some of the superior varieties. Early planting in the garden also greatly improves overall yield.

4 and 5) I was blessed with another outstanding onion crop this year with good size and early maturity. The Candy variety (yellow) and the Sierra Blanca variety (white) stole the show. And finally, my early season spinach crop was excellent. I plant the Melody variety each year, and it has never failed me yet.

And now I must work hard to prepare next year's seed bed by adding gobs of leaves and other organic materials and plowing them deeply into the soil before winter comes calling!

GOD SAYS
Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.
Matthew 7:12

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