

Opinion



A Kansas Viewpoint

Summer skin care

By John Schlageck, Kansas Farm Bureau

While at an appointment with my dermatologist last week, I heard a familiar refrain. “Kids who grew up on a farm have an increased risk for skin cancer.”

Certainly the active, outdoor lifestyle associated with youngsters on the farm does afford many benefits, however it could lead to an increase in the possibility of skin cancer. That certainly applied to me having spent many days, weeks and years as a youth driving tractors, moving irrigation pipe, bucking bales – you name it, youngsters growing up on the farm spend an abundance of time outdoors. Like so many kids, we took off our shirts and often wore no hat. We loved being outdoors in the sun.

We weren’t any different back in the ‘60s than kids today. Most youngsters and their parents spend increased amounts of time outdoors with limited use of canopies and cabs. It’s often impractical to wear long-sleeved shirts and how many youngster, or adults, take the time or bother to put on sunscreen. Few of us could be bothered with wearing wide-brimmed hats – they always blew off anyway.

The consequences like my dermatologist said were a greater risk of skin cancer. Every year one million new cases of skin cancer are detected, according to the American Academy of Dermatology. One out of five people in this country develops skin cancer during his/her lifetime.

Not only are youngsters working outdoors on the farm and ranch but all across America, folks are gearing up for vacations with their families – many of these trips include trips to the beach or outdoor amusement parks. Many others work for long hours in the sun during the summer months – farmers, ranchers, construction workers, amusement park attendants, etc.

If you spend several hours in the sun, protect yourself. Avoid the mid-day sun if at all possible. Cover up. Always wear a hat. Work in the shade whenever possible. And don’t forget to wear sunscreen.

Melanoma is the deadliest form of skin cancer. One person dies every hour from this disease in the United States, according to the American Academy of Dermatology.

Fortunately, melanoma can be completely cured if it’s caught early enough. Dermatologists advise us to examine our skin regularly.

If you find a blemish larger than a pencil eraser, multi-colored, asymmetrical or irregular at the edges, you may have melanoma and should see your dermatologist.

While we should protect ourselves from potential skin cancer, we should be every bit as aware of this danger for our children. Overexposure to sunlight during childhood will affect children for the rest of their lives.

Studies show that damage from the sun to a child’s skin can actually increase the odds that he/she will develop skin cancer as an adult.

Protect your children. Cover them up. Teach them to wear long-sleeved cotton shirts that breathe. Make sure they wear head protection at all times. Make wearing sunscreen part of the ritual for gearing up for the sun. The earlier we start practicing sun safety, the longer we will keep our skin healthy.

While skin cancer can kill you, it’s much more likely to disfigure you. Each year, thousands of Americans lose chunks of their skin to this disease, according to the American Academy of Dermatology. Some people lose their nose; others may lose their ears, while others may get off with only the loss of an eyebrow. Look for warning signs. If you find anything bleeding, crusting or not healing, see your dermatologist immediately.

John Schlageck has been writing about farming and ranching in Kansas for more than 25 years. He is the managing editor of “Kansas Living,” a quarterly magazine dedicated to rural life in Kansas.

Comments to any opinions expressed on this page are encouraged. Mail them to the Colby Free Press, 155 W. 5th St., Colby, Kan., 67701. Or e-mail jvannostrand@nwkansas.com or pdecker@nwkansas.com. Opinions do not necessarily reflect the *Free Press*.

COLBY FREE PRESS

155 W. Fifth (USPS 120-920) (785) 462-3963
Colby, Kan. 67701

State award-winning newspaper, General Excellence, Design & Layout Excellence, Column Writing, Editorial Writing, Sports Columns, News, Photography.

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THE COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920) is published every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, except the day observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year’s Day, by Haynes Publishing Co., 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE is paid at Colby, Kan. 67701, and at additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to The Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701. THE BUSINESS OFFICE at 155 W. Fifth is open from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, closed Saturday and Sunday. MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, which is exclusively entitled to the use for publication of all news credited to it or not otherwise herein. Member Kansas Press Association, Inland Press Association and National Newspaper Association. **SUBSCRIPTION RATES:** In Colby by carrier: 4 months \$38, 8 months \$53, 12 months \$70. By mail with in Colby and the nine-county region of Thomas, Sheridan, Decatur, Rawlins, Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace, Logan and Gove counties: 4 months \$50, 8 months \$62, 12 months \$78. Other Kansas counties: 4 months \$57, 8 months \$67, 12 months \$81. All other states, \$81, 12 months.

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A MOTHER AND SON WERE HAVING A PLEASANT PICNIC IN THE PARK, WHEN ALL OF A SUDDEN...



Have the times changed?

I don’t think America has made as much progress as some people think it has.

My comment is prompted by my recent reading of the Declaration of Independence. As we quickly approach the Fourth of July, I thought it might be a good time to read the document, so I did. Much to my surprise, the colonists were complaining 230 years ago about many of the things we complain about today.

For instance, when you get past the “When in the course of human events,” part, one finds the colonists saying we should all have the “unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” as are entitled us by the “laws of nature and of nature’s God.”

But wait, in America today, we aren’t supposed to talk about government and God in the same breath.

If they were keeping score, don’t you think the colonists would see that as Government - 1, The People - 0?

The colonists declared that when a form of government becomes “destructive” it’s the “right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.”

This didn’t mean that our government should make sure each of us has two cars in the driveway, a computer in every room and a boat in the back yard.

Our forefathers also believed government should not be “changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly, all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they accustomed.”

To me, that means if we don’t want a new law just for the sake of making your life easier, it means either file for office or make sure you run to the voting booth each time it’s open. In other words, if you don’t like your form of government, don’t complain about it, help change it.

The colonists left their homeland and devel-



Jan Katz Ackerman

• From Where I stand

oped ours because they believed the King of Great Britain had a history of “repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states.”

They declared:

“(The king) has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.”

Doesn’t that sound like the king may have listened to a few too many lobbyists?

How about this one?

“He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature; a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.”

Sounds to me like if when you don’t play my way I’ll take away your funding. Ring a bell for anyone?

How’s this one fit?

“He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.”

Goes back to if it looks like a duck and sounds like a duck it’s probably a duck.

Or better yet, if it looks like regionalization, and sounds like regionalization, it’s probably regionalization.

“He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws of naturalization of foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.”

Did they have the evening news 230 years ago?

I really liked these lines of the Declaration of Independence. Sounds like same-ol-same-ol:

“For imposing taxes on us without our consent; for depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury; and for transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offenses; for taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments; for suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.”

Wow. What those guys were having to deal with, sure glad none of that’s going on today.

And they concluded their declaration saying:

“We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in general congress assembled, appealing to the supreme judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right, ought to be free and Independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that, as free and Independent States, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.

To listen to the Declaration of Independence in its entirety, visit the following Web site www.easylink.playstream.com/historyplace/thp-dec-indep.

Happy Fourth of July.

Jan Katz Ackerman is a reporter for the Colby Free Press

Your turn

Western Kansas needs right representation

Sondra Meyer Raile

Overland Park

I grew up not too far from Colby on a farm in Rooks County. My husband was born and raised in St. Francis, home of whom is arguably the most outrageous member of the state board of education. With comments such as, “I want to put a Sputnik on Mars” it is difficult to believe the Fifth District’s Connie Morris is capable of making rational decisions that affect Kansas school children.

My husband and I both received excellent elementary and secondary education in Fifth District schools and subsequently went on to earn college degrees. We think our grandsons, who will be attending Kansas schools in the Blue Valley District, deserve the same quality education that we received. That includes what is recognized as appropriate instruction on the theory

of evolution. With the standards that are now in place, schools of higher education, including those in our own state, are wondering if students graduating from Kansas schools will not need remedial science instruction before they are admitted to colleges and universities. How sad.

I realize that the vote of the representative in the Fifth District is just as important as the vote of my own Representative to the board regarding decisions that affect Kansas schoolchildren. The Fifth District needs someone who can make common sense decisions, and folks here are watching these races closely. I am personally supporting Sally Cauble for the Fifth District with my time and my money, because I believe she will bring a much needed common sense perspective to the table.

I hope the good people of Colby and the rest of western Kansas will make the decision in Au-

gust to elect a rational representative to represent them on the state board.

About those letters . . .

The *Free Press* encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten, if at all possible, and should include a telephone number and an address. Most importantly, all letters must include a signature. Unsigned letters cannot be published. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and length, and, likewise, reserve the right to reject letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive or libelous.

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

