

# Reader recalls his first job

To the Editor:  
 From the time I received a little savings bank for Christmas, I wanted a job so I could earn more pennies to put in it.  
 When I was a fourth grader, Dad offered me a job cleaning spittoons, two in the downstairs Savings, Loan and Abstract office and three upstairs in the Farmers National Bank, twice a week for 5 cents each. I took great pride in being an excellent spittoon cleaner.  
 When I was becoming a fifth grader, Earl Sproul, a neighbor and family friend, offered me a job making egg cases — using his egg case assembly fixture. Two ends and a center partition were clamped in place, then two sides and a bottom nailed on with some 50 shingle nails. I received 2 cents per case. I had to assemble over a dozen cases to earn 25 cents — it was called work for a reason.  
 When a sixth grader, I had saved enough to buy a bicycle, which I assembled and explored all parts the town on, and that led to the Sale Pavilion, a place of noisy activity each Friday sale day.  
 When exploring the pens in back I watched a man in a suit filling a water barrel — someone yelled he was wanted on the phone. Seeing him wondering what to do with the hose of running water, I stepped forward and took the hose, saying, "I can do that while you answer the phone." When a barrel was full, I moved to the next. The man came

back, then seeing me at work said, "Thanks kid, here's 50 cents to finish them." When he left, I asked who was that guy, and was told he's Fred Slake, half owner of the place.  
 The next week, I arrived early and soon had all the water barrels filled. Fred saw me, grinned and said, "Thanks kid, here's your 50 cents." I soon learned how the place operated and assigned myself to chase cows from the scales back to the pen they came from. Adult workmen recognized a good thing and let the energetic kid do the work. Fred saw what I was doing and indicated approval by waving "Hi kid," with a smile.  
 By the second week of chasing cows, I felt I knew Fred well enough to speak up. I said, "Fred, I don't mind the men sitting on the fence while I do the work, but they make 25 cents per hour and you're paying me 50 cents a day. Fred grinned and said, "OK Kid, I'll put you on the payroll."  
 The following week before the sale started, I saw Dad, who clerked the sales, talking with Fred while walking toward me. As we passed I waved, "Hi Dad," observing a surprised look on Fred's face as I went on. Later, Dad told me Fred had just told him to put "The Kid" on the payroll, and seeing you, said that's the kid. After he passed, Fred said he had no idea the kid he told him about was his boy.  
 Thus it was that many of the old timers knew me as The Kid. Later,

## Letters to the Editor

during World War II, Dad said Fred always asked about me.  
 Now jump ahead to 1939, when Doc Hughes and I had a Model T Ford. We had little money and improvised on how to keep our car running.  
 It cost \$5, sported a \$4 car tag and used gasoline at 13 cents per gallon. We made use of used oil and replaced short life fabric transmission bands with Model-A brake lining. We found a truck tire, good except for a blowout, then patched it with a piece from a smaller tire, bolted in place with carriage bolts. We put the rounded head on the inside with washer and square nut on the outside. It worked great, its being out of balance was not evident at our low speed.  
 Every few days, we'd pull into the curb in front of the post office, then on the west side of Main Street. The benches in front were where the "spit-n-whittle club" would hang out.  
 These fellows observed goings on and took note of how readily our Model T responded.  
 One of them called out, "How did you kids get that T model to respond like that?" I started to say, "Ya gotta hold your mouth right," but didn't — I said we use Model-A brake lining on the bands.

"Ah, so that's how ya did it."  
 After we installed our patched truck tire, we paused to watch a couple of them studying what was poking out of the tire, calling back to the those on the bench, why those are "stove bolts poking out!" We'd wave at the fellows, grinned and drove off relishing their interest — providing them a fresh topic to talk about.  
 Now jump to World War II. I was home on furlough in my new second lieutenant's uniform when I went to the post office.  
 I saw and waved hello to the guys on the bench, the same fellows, just a bit older. As I went in, I heard one say "Aint that the Kid?" (They spoke eloquently in fractured English.) When I came out, I heard one say to the others "I alus knowed The Kid ud make good."  
 As I drove away, I felt affection for those fellows I only knew by sight. They had just paid me a compliment I would never forget. They only knew me as the Kid who chased cows in the Sale Barn and resurrected junked Model T's.  
 I was honored to be known as The Kid that made good.  
 Darrell Landau  
 Decatur Community High  
 Class of 1941  
 Garden Grove, Calif.

# Kool Honda 2x21 OBH printed to GDN sep.

## Watch for school children at intersections

To the Editor:  
 On Sept. 28, at 7:55 a.m., my daughter and I stepped off the curb to cross the street from the west side of Cass Avenue to Oberlin Elementary School. We were five feet into the crosswalk when a tall, blue four-wheel drive pickup truck driven by a woman came southbound.  
 I could see she was not intending to stop. I grabbed my daughter as the driver went on through the cross-

walk and through the stop sign. She did look to make sure no vehicle traffic was coming. I don't think she ever saw us.  
 We teach our children to be safe and look both ways before crossing and to cross in the crosswalks. Most children do cross in the crosswalks and many children, thinking they are safe by being in the crosswalks, run out, carefree, never imagining that an adult might not see them or be

able to stop in time.  
 This particular intersection also has cars parked on the west side, so pedestrians must walk out halfway in the crosswalk to view traffic coming from the north. There is a stop sign.  
 No doubt my daughter was thinking about meeting her friends for breakfast and how school would be that day. She would have walked out in front of that large pickup. The

driver might have been thinking where she had to be, and in a hurry. I am so thankful I was there to hold my daughter back in that instant.  
 I am asking all drivers to please, please slow down, stop before the intersections, and even if children are just getting close to crossing, to please wait the few seconds for them to get across.  
 Jeanne Isbell  
 Oberlin

## FFA Chapter requests local grain donations

To the Editor:  
 The Decatur Community High FFA chapter is growing, with many new members interested in agriculture as a field of study. We are excited with the leadership opportunities we have for our upcoming year. We would like to set up a fund to send kids to leader labs and state and national conventions, as well as establishing contests in hopes of building up our agricultural programs.

In order to build our program up, we need the community's support. We are an agricultural-based community and helping students start out with quality programs will help assure their future in agricultural professions.  
 We are asking for farmers and ranchers in our area to donate 30 bushels or more of any fall grain crop to the Oberlin FFA. Decatur Co-op, Hansen Mueller, and D&S

Grain have provided storage for corn so the Agricultural Business class can market it.  
 Other grains donated will be sold on the cash market as it comes in and the money will directly go to the FFA. Members will then learn how to market the stored grain in the classroom. This is a great opportunity for the students in agricultural education.  
 If there are any questions or com-

ments about this project, contact Jason Ketterl, FFA advisor, (785) 475-2586  
 Thank you, farmers and ranchers, for your time and consideration on this project. We hope to get the chance to work with you in the future.  
 Oberlin FFA Chapter  
 Kayla Zodrow, vice president  
 Jebb Tally, board of directors

## Candy drive begins

To the Editor:  
 Every year, Knights of Columbus organizations from across the state conduct their annual Tootsie Roll drives for the benefit of people with disabilities.  
 The people served by Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas have been many of the fortunate recipients from this fundraiser. For many years, the generosity of the Knights has allowed us to offer additional support to those we serve through a variety of ways.  
 One of those ways is our Consumer Medical Fund. This fund was established due to the contributions made through the Knights of Columbus Tootsie Roll Drive. Thanks

to the Knights, we have been able to assist individuals with disabilities with the cost of medical items and care that are not covered by Medicaid, such as dental expenses and adaptive equipment.  
 So as the area Knights of Columbus gear up for this annual fundraiser, we would like to take the time and wish all of them the best of luck and encourage everyone to stop and support their efforts. We truly appreciate their kindness and support.  
 Steve Keil  
 Director of Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas  
 Hays

## Where do you stand?

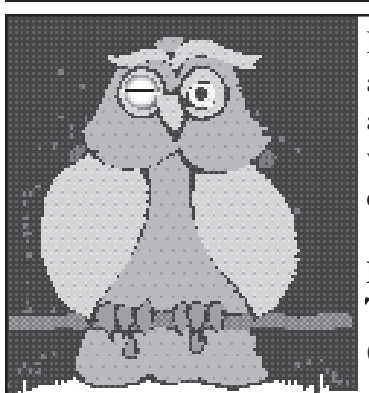
To the Editor:  
 I would like to know the position or stance of the politicians on the following:  
 • Illegal immigrants and illegal aliens.  
 • The Iraq War.  
 • The 47 million uninsured Americans.  
 • Outsourcing of millions of American jobs.  
 • The North American Union.  
 • Outlawing the bloodsucking lobbyists from Washington.  
 • A military draft.  
 • Sexual predators.  
 • Limited terms for all politicians.  
 • Strict accountability for all politicians.  
 • Limited wages and benefits for

all politicians.  
 • Social Security to be paid in by all workers/employees.  
 • Campaign reform.  
 • Minimum wage.  
 • Why you feel you even come close to earning your salary or wages?  
 I would like to hear directly from you, not from an office worker. Keep in mind that you owe your allegiance to the American people, not the big corporations and the lobbyists.  
 Jack D. Roberts  
 Longmont, Colo.

## Online paper needed

To the Editor:  
 As one of many Oberlinites who have been flung to faraway lands (I happen to have been flung to Alaska), I would like to make a humble request.  
 While the mail comes through the rain and snow, it seems to take my weekly *Herald* a little longer to get up here to the frozen north, two to three weeks to be exact. I know my mom in Florida has the same problem.  
 I am always checking the online version as soon as it is posted, but am always left with only the first half of most stories since you only put up a few pages. Then I have to wait 2-3 weeks to read the rest.  
 It'd be great if the whole paper was available online, like it was back in the old days. I'd still be willing to pay the same subscription and everything, if only I could

get all the news on time! Just a suggestion.  
 I love getting my taste of home every week and this is the only change I'd like to see in how your paper is run.  
 Jake Robinson  
 Fort Wainwright, Alaska  
**Editor's Note:** Mr. Robinson is a private first class in the Army intelligence service. A 2002 graduate of Decatur Community High, he worked at *The Oberlin Herald* for two years while in school, and later attended the University of Kansas for 2 1/2 years.  
 We have been looking for a way to sell online subscriptions to the complete paper, but haven't found one yet, Jake. Maybe this year.



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