

The power of commitment

A few weeks ago, I hit a milestone that seems silly but gave me a huge sense of accomplishment. I reached my goal of closing all three of my fitness rings on my watch for 365 days in a row.

Insight



Jackie Mundt

Pratt County
farmer and rancher

Closing the rings on my watch requires standing at least one minute per hour for 12 hours a day, moving enough to burn 350 calories and exercising for at least 30 minutes a day. None of those activities are very difficult. Even together they are not that impressive. This accomplishment was about consistency. Doing any activity every single day for a year takes determination and persistence.

My original goal didn't have a timeframe in mind. I wanted to change habits to be healthier, make sure I was moving and doing a little physical activity every day. I set the goal small enough it would be hard to talk myself out of it when life got busy or I was tired.

I started by incorporating walk during my workday, taking a lap around the block a few times each day helped avoid the trap of "not having time."

As spring grew lovelier, I walked at home. We have a view with Instagram worthy sunset almost every night. In the heat I would walk at first light and enjoy sunrises. Each day passing the same crops and cows up close gave me a view of how they grew and changed in real time.

Midsummer I almost broke my streak. I arrived home after 9 p.m. on a busy day with almost no exercise minutes logged. A thunderstorm had rolled in unexpectedly. Not wanting to lose momentum, I walked for 25 minutes around all the rooms in my house, up and down the stairs and anywhere I could get 10 to 15 strides at a time. Poor KitCat, who likes to follow me around, was very confused about my strange pattern and eventually got tired and laid down.

I realized if this goal was important to me, I needed to plan better and be prepared to walk in less than ideal conditions. I got rain boots, a headlamp and various other items to take on whatever Mother Nature threw my way.

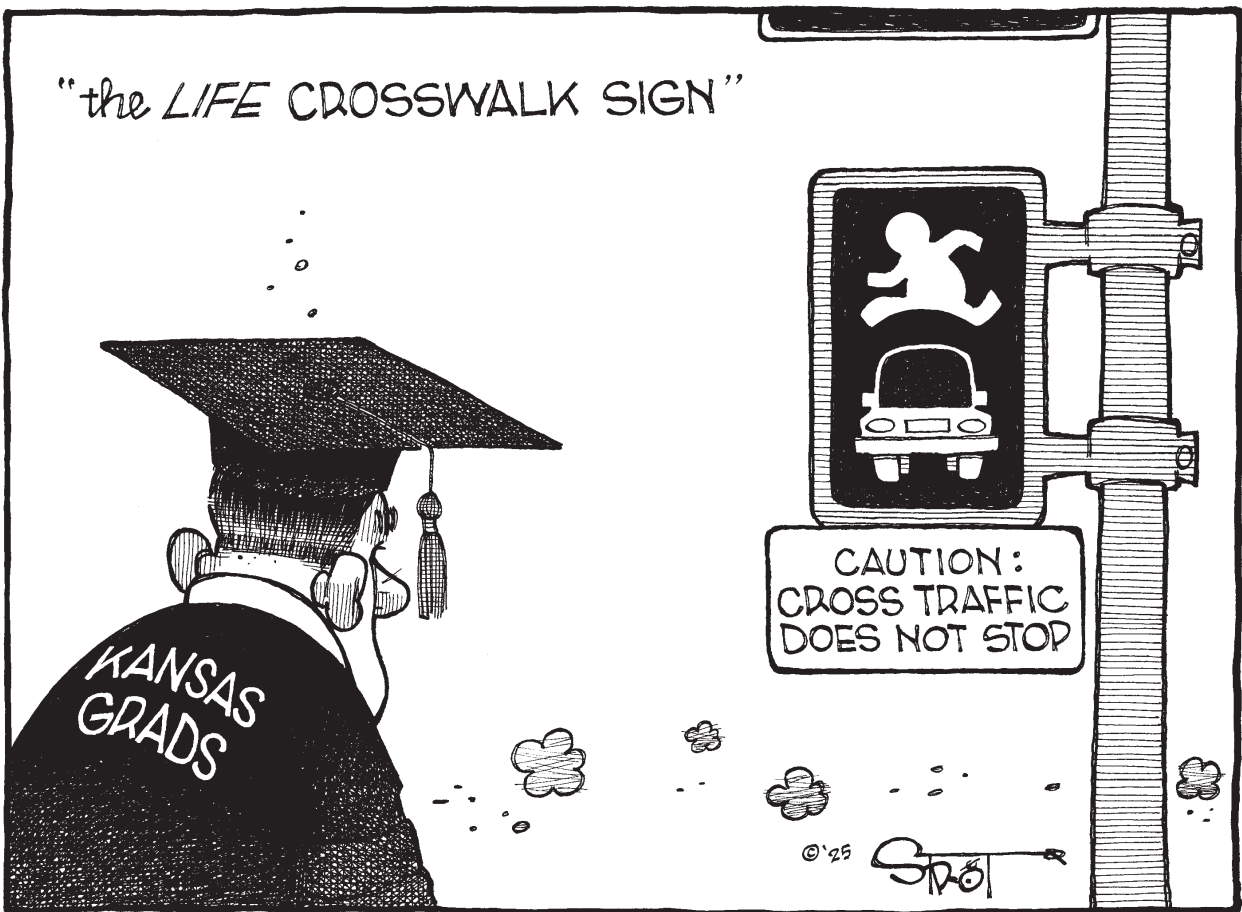
I walked in the rain, snow, heat, cold; on nights when it was pitch black and others that felt like hitting my head on the cosmos because the sky was so bright. I walked when I was tired, sick, in pain or just didn't feel like it. I walked on treadmills at hotels, interstate rest stops, the streets of New York, the Mall in Washington, D.C., and along the rugged coast of Ireland. It didn't matter where or how, I kept up the streak.

The most trying times were when the goal slipped my mind. I had one or two nights where I crawled into bed only to see my watch and remember the rings. Each time I mustered the motivation to change back into workout clothes and head out to get the minutes.

At Christmas time, I was gifted a mini-treadmill that helped me make it through the worst of the winter days that would otherwise have broken my spirit. That was the point I knew I would reach my goal. I had overcome all obstacles and excuses. Nothing would stand in the way because I was committed.

Thirty minutes of exercise sounded simple, but over 12 months I walked 3.5 million steps and more than 1,600 miles. It gave me a new perspective on what it means to be committed. When you truly commit to something there will be obstacles and trials; make it your priority. Push past the hard and keep showing up — that is how you achieve your goals.

—*"Insight" is a weekly column published by Kansas Farm Bureau, the state's largest farm organization whose mission is to strengthen agriculture and the lives of Kansans through advocacy, education and service.*



Can you live without China's junk?

What does China export to the United States? Items include electronics, machinery, furniture, bedding, clothing, footwear, toys, cars, motorcycles, medical equipment, needles and catheters. There is of course more.

These and other products are a big part of the over \$48.83 billion in exports China sent to the U.S. in December, 2024 alone. For the entire year it was over \$600 billion.

To break it down, we imported \$34.2 b (billion) in computers. \$23.2 b in phones \$4.3 b in televisions. Semiconductors \$3.4 b. Industrial machines \$8.5 b. Printing machinery \$1.3 b. Textile machines \$1.2 b. Vaccines \$1.1 b. Insulin \$134 million. Furniture \$15.5 billion. Footwear \$5.6 billion. These numbers are based on 2022 trade deals, so the dollar amount is always changing but it gives us an idea of how dependent we have become on China. This of course is not comprehensive as there are various other medicines and items that China exports to us. For example, Tylenol, Advil, Motrin, Amoxicillin, Keflex, blood pressure meds, Hydrochlorothiazide, Metformin, Vitamin C, Aspirin, insulin tablets and more come from China.

Does this scare you? It may because we import so much from China. However, it should make us all mad. How did we get ourselves into this mess? American companies

took our jobs to cheap labor places like China where these products are made by people working for slave wages. These products were made cheaply and then sold back to us. The American people were robbed of jobs and opportunities to provide for our children because a lot of our jobs were outsourced somewhere else.

These companies have gotten by with it for over 30 years while our people in America had to go to work for McDonalds, Walmart, Starbucks and pray to God every day that they might make \$12 or \$13 an hour. We allowed our automobile industry to suffer; we buried our energy industry and became dependent on China, Vietnam, Japan and other countries.

Thus, Walmart became American's store because we can go to Walmart and buy for cheap. Walmart and Dollar General are about the only stores most Americans can afford. They are no longer the choice just because they are cheaper. They are all most Americans can afford. Hold on, because of the tariffs Walmart will become more expensive.

Can anybody answer the question why we allowed this slow growing but almost fatal economic cancer to invade our mindset and our country? We did not protect ourselves. We looked out for the world and let our own country suffer. Now we are having to undergo a serious time of economic surgery and treatment.

It's way, way, past time to bring the manufacturing back to America. It will not happen overnight. In

the meantime, keep in mind that numerous other countries make medicine. India exports over \$9 b a year. Ireland over \$8 b. Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Canada, the UK, Israel and Singapore export billions of dollars of medicine every year. There are other places besides China to buy our medicine.

The same goes for electronics, toys, furniture and shoes. For example, toys. Yes, China exports 85% of our toys, but other countries make toys such as good old Vietnam. They exported \$3.4 b last year while Indonesia and Thailand both exported over \$4 b in toys. There are other places for us to buy toys.

We can find a way to live without China. It's way past time.

Letters to the Editor

Post 119 still in business

Dear Editor:

American Legion Post 119, Waverly, is still alive and kicking. Every Memorial Day we perform honors at four cemeteries and, as needed, at graveside services.

The ceremonial team starts at Emerald Cemetery, then north to Williamsburg Cemetery and on to Agricola and lastly to Waverly.

The post consists of about 26 members.

Just wanted you to know.

May God Bless America,

**Jim Trager
Burlington**

County

Continued from Page 1

attorney and sheriff plan to contribute to each national qualifying team by using non-taxpayer funds acquired from diversion agreements and asset forfeitures.

Board Appointments

Several local residents expressed interest in serving on county boards. Roger Cole asked to be appointed to the Coffey County Library Board, Wayne Hess requested appointment to the Airport Board, and Damon Birk (via phone) asked to continue his service on the Planning Board. Commissioners did not take action at the meeting concerning appointments.

Special Use Permit

Zoning Administrator Heidi Harris led a brief public hearing concerning a previously approved special use permit for an animal clinic in an agricultural district, located at 1395 Old Highway 50. With no objections raised, the board adopted Resolution No. 2025-945a to formally reaffirm the approval due to a prior administrative issue.

Department Updates

Emergency Management Director Amber Presley reported that storm sirens in Lebo were repaired after worn-out collector rings were replaced. She also confirmed FAA licensing paperwork had been submitted for the LeRoy communication tower. A recent Wolf Creek pre-exercise drill was successful.

Sheriff Tom Johnson discussed the need for new AEDs in the Law Enforcement Center at a cost of approximately \$18,000. He also project-

ed the future need for new dispatch consoles and radios, totaling over \$2.3 million by 2028, which is near the current equipment's useful life. Johnson also clarified that while a new state law allows year-round sale of fireworks, city ordinances still regulate when fireworks may be discharged.

The board declared several vehicles from the Sheriff's Office as surplus and approved their sale, including two 2020 Dodge Durangos, a 2020 Chevrolet Silverado, and two 2008 Kawasaki ATVs. Most will be sold via Gavel Roads online auction. One ATV will go to the county's highway department.

Change Orders

Wade Bowie reviewed five change orders for the Law Enforcement Center, including deductions related to camera adjustments, HVAC changes, and wall modifications, total a \$16,790 deduction from the project contingency fund and no change to the \$25.7 million project's guaranteed maximum price.

Road and Landfill

Road and Bridge Superintendent Ryan Durst discussed additional dust control near Aliceville due to a detour impacting about 11 homes. Commissioners also approved entering into a KDOT agreement for a federal Off-System Bridge Program project 5.5 miles east and 0.8 mile north of Lebo. Durst said KDOT plans to bid this project in 2026.

Commissioners unanimously adopted Resolution No. 498i, revising out-of-county landfill fees.

Personnel

The commission approved the following updated job descriptions for Road and Bridge personnel: account specialist, crew leader, crew super-

visor, heavy equipment operator, landfill lead operator, light equipment operator, mechanic, office coordinator, purchasing and fuel specialist, sign/safety coordinator, specialized heavy equipment operator, survey party chief, and survey technician.

Commissioners authorized summer hires Tyler Debuke (intern step 2, \$15.82) and Decovin Plummer (intern step 1, \$15.54) as technology interns, effective May 19.

They approved a step change for Lt. Detective Aaron Cathcard, from 60-8 to 60-9, wage from \$32.50 to \$32.96, effective April 16.

They approved hiring Amanda Maloney as corrections officer I, classification 30-9, \$22.54, effective April 30, and Kelly Baker as dispatcher I, classification 35-5, \$22.48, effective March 24.

Other Business

Commissioners held two 10-minute executive sessions to discuss nonelected personnel and a 5-minute executive session to discuss an attorney-client matter concerning a consultant agreement.

Gallagher representatives Jeremy Gilson and Mike Minton and Edison representatives Joe Pfannes-teil and Mia Stout met via TEAMS to discuss the current position of the county's health insurance and challenges since taking over administration of the insurance. They are working to resolve issues resulting from the transition.

Commissioner Barker mentioned potential local restrictions on fireworks use.

Commissioner Abendroth raised questions about hospital-controlled property in LeRoy.

Commissioners signed May warrants and vouchers.



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Letters should be clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

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