

Pick-A-Little/Talk-A-Little

By Jenny Diveley - Prairie Star

Parents of seniors get my best May Day wishes

The month of May has arrived, throwing everyone into crazy schedules, wrapping up the school year, prepping our yards for summer, and planning for the fun activities of the season. But one group of people are on my mind this week: parents of high school seniors.

I had that month of May two years ago when our oldest graduated from high school, and what I remember is, well, not much. That's because we were in a fog of button-popping pride and overwhelming disbelief that our baby had somehow made it to this milestone in what seemed like just a few short days.

Recalling my own senior year of high school, I thought I had the weight of the world on my shoulders. Of course with a few steps into adulthood, I found that I was only being prepped for the weights that were yet to come. And during those final days of high school, my parents put on a brave face, smiled, supported, and cheered, all the while, their hearts were

stretched beyond capacity with bittersweet emotion.

These weeks ahead will be filled with ceremonies, celebrations, cook-outs, receptions, church services and events that celebrate the graduating seniors, as there should be. Moms and dads across the area will put every penny of their paychecks into food, gifts, and all of the things that are needed to celebrate the accomplishments of their offspring.

But pay attention to their faces and the distant look in their eyes, because those 18 years have somehow come and gone without much notice, and this month of May is that grand wakeup call.

Now, the encouraging thing is, most parents will say that after the ceremonies are wrapped up and the cakes are finally gone to the last bite, the emotions seem to calm and the confidence in that baby you have raised begins to overpower and guide the changes in life that are ahead.

The excitement of what



comes next and watching them flourish into adulthood carries us on, even in those moments when we want to squeeze their toddler cheeks one more time.

But for those of us who have walked this road and lived this monumental month of May, we're paying attention to you . . . senior parents. We might give you one extra side hug or offer to help throw away the trash at a graduation party so you can sit and soak up all of the experiences with your honored student. And if you need to shed a tear or two, we'll understand, because those 18 years have gone by too fast, leaving wonderful memories in their wake, an element of fear of the changes at hand, and the beautiful promise of what is to come.

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Life's Little Lifesavers

By Kathy Taylor

. . . sitting in quietness, meditating, and listening to the falling rain . . . the fun students have enjoying field trips, picnics and end-of-school activities . . . the opening of local farmers' markets . . . consulting a dictionary frequently to learn new words and definitions . . . taking advantage of keeping your mouth shut . . . watching a scary movie with your fingers partially covering your eyes . . . the old fashioned tradition of delivering homemade baskets filled with flowers and treats to friends on May 1 (May Basket Day) . . . people who wear their smiles all over their face . . . acts of kindness, no matter how small, are never wasted . . . a Bible scripture to adhere to for today's societal ills: "When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom." (Proverbs 11:2)

Word(s) of the Week

Take time to contemplate this word, use in your conversations, discuss the word with your children or grandchildren and exercise its meaning either internally or externally. The word this week is:

DISGRACE

Loss of reputation or respect as the result of a dishonorable action; a person or thing regarded as shameful and unacceptable.

HUMILITY

The quality of having a modest view of one's value or importance.



May baskets will strum those favorite memories

Today is May Day, and it brings back pleasant memories to me.

As a kid in Altamont, delivering May flowers to friends was a routine we took seriously. Mostly, we liked what we got in return — usually two or three homemade cookies that a neighbor lady kept for such occasions on her kitchen counter.

Three teachers, Mrs. Porter, Mrs. Nevins and Mrs. Silcott, helped put together the May baskets which were made of flowers picked in the city park or the Methodist Church yard. We took sheets of construction paper and old newspapers, each one fashioned with a place for a handful of daisies, petunias, tulips, lilies, bluebells or peonies.

We didn't need to write a card or label the flowers — every mother and grandmother knew the routine. They would hear a rustle outside their door and open it only to see a pair of grade school kids scurrying away, looking back over their shoulders and running to the next house.

It was a small town and it seemed like every house

got one of the baskets, but probably not. We just knew that smiles abounded when the lady of a house held up her batch of blooming cheer, and started looking for a vase and water.

Flowers have always been an integral part of May Day, which is celebrated in such simple but cheerful ways. It spreads love and gratitude for others, especially for older folks who seldom receive gifts of any kind.

Grade school teachers still get a few May baskets, and lots of them help their students make baskets and find flowers and share with someone else. More than anything, it gives them a chance to tell the history of this tradition which dates back to ancient days in Europe.

Nursing homes are popular places to take May baskets and distribute them to appreciative residents.

So, if you have little ones in your house, or even next door, we hope you found a way to celebrate May Day in grand but childlike fashion — by picking flowers of springtime



Rudy Taylor
'Off the Cuff'

and making a homemade basket from paper and hanging it on a door. A special touch is to include a bag of jelly beans, cookies or other home baked treats.

Small towns are perfect places for such old-fashioned

traditions to stay alive, even in the simplest of ways.

May baskets are throwbacks to simpler times when kids, their teachers, parents and friends celebrated the kind moments that dot the lives of hometown folks.



Opinion

America awaits a move by leaders to correct our course

It is no surprise that a majority of Americans believe President Donald Trump has damaged the U.S. economy.

The tariffs he touts in boisterous terms are proving to be what they are — taxes on consumers, retail and industrial buyers.

While most followers of the Washington scene believe Trump is using tariffs as pawns toward negotiations, the damage he has already incurred is now starting to gather white caps.

Farmers are worried. So are corporate leaders. And small business owners, for sure.

Nothing is more dangerous than inconsistency in leadership. Trump's roller coaster comments, actions and bullying have turned the nation into one of head scratching, frowning and worrying. And, that last one never accomplishes anything.

With warfare against the Houthis, off-and-on spats with Russia's leader, and making verbal slaps at friends like Canada, Panama and Greenland, our president finds an abundance of worms on his plate. And, they're starting to eat him from the toes up.

He follows that old saying: He majors in the minors, and minors in the majors.

As a result, our country has suffered during

his first 100 days of serving as president.

Polls are showing him as slipping in favor among Americans. Of course, there remains his loyal followers who apparently think Donald Trump sits at the right hand of God.

He doesn't.

As with all leaders who are running their final lap of power, he is starting to run out of steam. He has passed out cheap campaign caps to anyone craving a huffish look, and his Trumpy trinkets have lost their luster.

The American people seek values in their leaders that display compassion, love for others, might from our fighting troops, and outreached hands to our neighbors.

What we've got at the top of government in Washington is the opposite of what we want, and who we are.

We fear that our failing economy is only the first domino to fall in Donald Trump's house of folly.

We all need to stand against chaos and urge Washington to start moving us back toward the integrity that has always defined us.

Little by little, it is slipping away from us.

— Rudy Taylor, publisher

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

FOCCAS asks for continued countywide support

I am writing this letter to address misconceptions and rumors being spread throughout our community regarding FOCCAS, the old pound vs the new animal shelter, FOCCAS Board meetings and policies and FOCCAS Cash Flow Statements.

FOCCAS, a 501 c 3 no-kill animal shelter, located at 921 Hwy 99, Sedan, opened in the fall of 2022. The new shelter was built with donations by people who care deeply about animals. When the new shelter was built, FOCCAS had the support of people who love animals in both Elk and Chautauqua County.

The old city dog pound was going to be shut down by the Kansas Animal Facilities Inspection Program, which licenses and inspects such facilities and ensures they operate in accordance with the Kansas Pet Animal Act. The old City dog pound, which was located at 421 S.

Montgomery, was in horrible condition, with a leaking roof, black mold, an outdated HVAC system and a rough non-sealed concrete floor. Additionally, it is located in a flood zone and has in the past, had dogs drown that were being held in the facility due to flood waters. However, since the new facility was being constructed, the state allowed the old facility to operate until FOCCA's building was complete in the fall of 2022.

FOCCAS was organized in the fall of 2012, and we have encouraged interested parties to get involved. During our meeting, topics vary according to need. But topics discussed during the most recent meeting included fundraising ideas, a dog-fostering program, and adoption event, social media/website content, a dog wash, the dog groomer, veterinary services by Flyin' 3 Vet Clinic and the most current

cash-flow statement.

Unfortunately, accusations have resulted in rumors being passed around town. We want to set the record straight: individuals who attend our meetings are always given a meeting agenda, financial information and they can ask questions. Furthermore, if an individual wants information, the treasurer is happy to provide answers to their questions.

At the last City council meeting, when a council member was asked if FOCCAS provided an income statement or a balance sheet, the council member stated, "It's a Balance Sheet, which is not...the big purpose with KORA is to see what money is spent on..." (FB Live: 4/15/25, 20.17 minutes)

As stated in paragraph 4 of this letter, FOCCAS provides a cash-flow statement to everyone who attends our Board meetings. To clarify, a

cash-flow statement and a balance sheet are not the same thing, since a cash-flow statement not only reveals beginning and ending bank balances, but it also shows all income and expenses for the time period being discussed. Furthermore, it must balance the ending bank balances showing on the books to actual cash on all bank statements. Our cash-flow statement tracks the movement of FOCCAS' cash into and out of FOCCAS' checking account, money market account and CD's. A cash-flow statement provided more useful, detailed information than a balance sheet, which only states assets, liabilities and capital. A cash-flow statement also reveals income and expenses that are not part of a balance sheet.

Finally, the City believes by resurrecting the old City dog pound that the City can save money. They are basing that assumption on

spending about \$3,000/year, claiming that amount of money will pay for utilities, insurance and repairs. However, that estimate does not include the cost of a 7-day-a-week kennel worker who will care for the dogs, dog food, veterinary care for the animals being held until they are euthanized by the City and the cost of euthanasia.

I sincerely hope this letter and the information that is contained therein will suppress unfounded and damaging rumors that are circulating and people will continue their support of FOCCAS and the work that we do. Please contact Sedan's mayor and council members, along with your Chautauqua County commissioners and let them know you want FOCCAS to continue being supported by them. Thank you.

Respectfully,
Donna Reed, FOCCAS Board Member