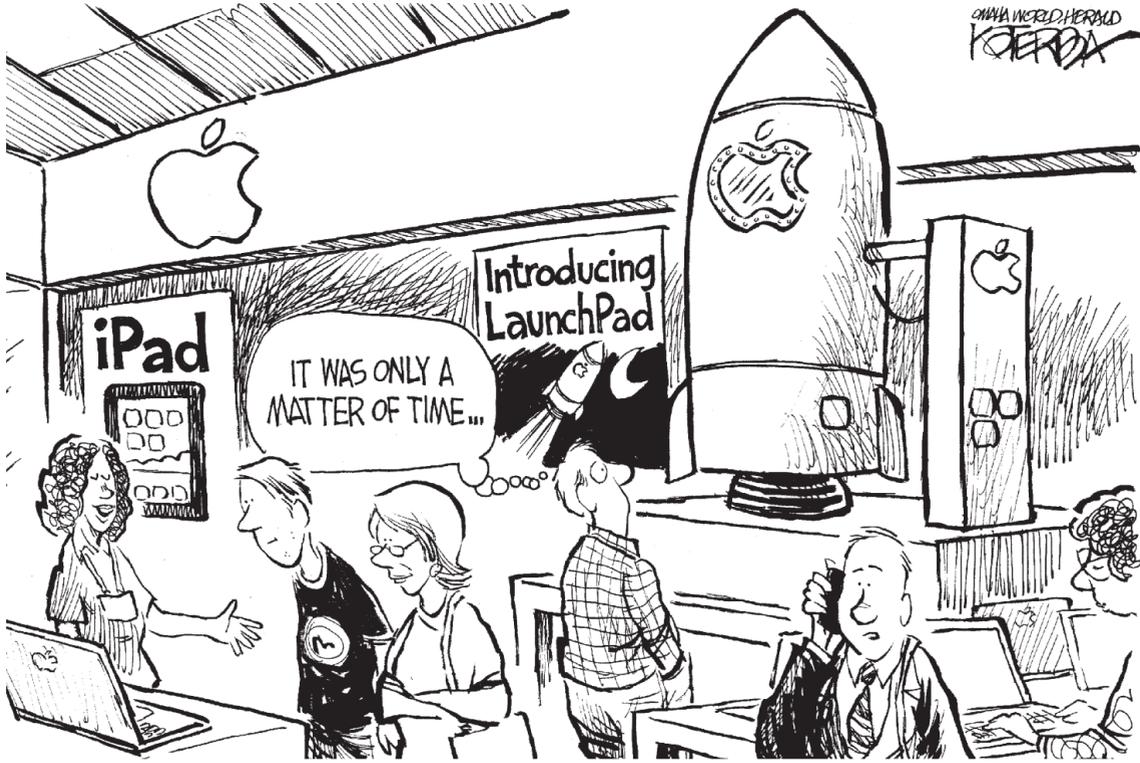


Sunday's

Editorials, Columns & Letters

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Paper 'n Ink:

have the time?

By Lynn Brisendine

Time is a fleeting thing. And in today's rushed atmosphere, how we use our allotted number of hours a day becomes ever more complicated.

No matter where you go, Brownfield, Seminole, Lubbock, New York City, Paris, Rome, no matter the city, they all are working on a 24 hour, seven day a week schedule.

Growing up in a simpler time we, of course, had those same 24/7 timeframes, but they were centered around some absolutes. At least in my life, the schedules most people kept were about the same.

You slept at night, ate breakfast early in the morning, had lunch at noon and dinner around 6:00 p.m.

Store hours were usually 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and not many stores were open on Sundays. Blue laws were passed in my teen years and some businesses who opted to open on Sunday had to close on Saturday. Alcohol sales, well, I grew up in a dry county and those tricky time schedules weren't applicable.

My Dad was a news hound even in those days, now more than a half century ago. He took both the big city morning and the afternoon daily newspapers and of course the local semi-weekly which offered the special news of hometown as no other medium could or did.

Radio consisted of a full AM dial. We, high schoolers, could hardly wait until the sun went down so we could tune into KOMA, an Oklahoma City radio station that powered up in the evening and played all the hits of the day. Rock and roll was the in thing in the 1960s. (An aside here, the last time I listened to KOMA they were playing the same music in these times as they did in the old days). We had a well worn and determined "main drag" where we circled around town, hours on end, listening to that special rock and roll. We did this usually using a dollar's worth of gasoline, at the time between four and five gallons.

Most people began their day, long before sunrise, listening to Cotton John who talked for hours every weekday morning, giving market information and relating weather conditions all across the great Golden Spread, his name for the Panhandle of Texas.

Television was all over the air, picked up by a tall antennae, and consisted of two stations; NBC and CBS. Sometime in the early '60s, ABC joined the dial and this gave an enormous amount of new programming.

All of this was pretty much centered on a 6:00 a.m. to midnight schedule. At midnight, the television stations would sign off the air, playing the National Anthem and then the picture reverted to a confusing "test pattern."

Fast forward to the way we live in today's hectic world, filled with so much that the available options can actually overwhelm people who try and maintain some kind of schedule.

People move around at all hours. Meal times have morphed into whenever the urge to eat or drink occurs. A multitude of dining options are open and serving menus of a variety of items.

We continue to have a big city morning paper and, of course, we provide the local news for our much appreciated readership who, if they so choose, may peruse our products using the traditional paper and ink or on a high tech website, updated daily.

Today's radio and television options are remarkable, offering hundreds of listening and viewing options.

Other options, no one could have imagined in my teen years, are available and their usage can take hours at a time. We are interlinked and able to communicate with relatives, friends and strangers as never before.

Still, we mere mortals have only 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We use our time in so many more ways than our parents and grandparents never dreamed of, or probably in most cases would not even appreciate. What will come years from now? Well, that too has lost its significance, things change in days rather than months and hours instead of days.

And no matter what's the 'in thing' today, it will probably be different tomorrow...time remains a fleeting thing.

Letter to the Editor

P.O. Box 1272 Brownfield, Texas 79316

Sign and include your address and phone number...

You may also send your letter via the Internet.

E-mail it to

publisher@brownfieldonline.com

The News requests that letters be concise and reserves the right to edit for libelous content or inappropriate language and space. We will edit a letter to conform with the standards we use in publishing a responsible community newspaper.

Thanks for reading...

the Brownfield News
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Making a Difference

By Gina Kelly Ellis

"Let not your hearts be troubled. . . These words begin a often quoted passage from John 14. We talk often about following God and believing His word and being obedient to it. But, sometimes for me these are the hardest words to be obedient to. There are so many things in our world that cause our hearts to want to be troubled. We live in difficult times it seems. And then there are so many things that life throws at us. I have so many aches in my heart right now. Things in my immediate world are pretty good. But I have so many friends and family members that fall within my "heart boundaries" that have pain and suffering in their lives. How on earth can I or they let not our hearts be troubled?"

God knows our pain. The truth is that all our pain is God's pain. There are those pains of loss of loved ones. For those whose hearts are troubled as you are suffering through tremendous loss, God is holding

you close right now.

God knows our illness and suffering. When Jesus heard that His friend had gotten sick and died, the Bible states that "Jesus wept." There are so many around me suffering from horrible diseases and treatment that can be just about as devastating. For those of you whose hearts are troubled because of illness of yourself or family, God is holding you close right now.

God knows we have financial burdens. He knows the concern and worry that drought and poor crops and poor prices can bring on us. He tells us in the Bible that He himself clothes the fields in their beauty. So if your heart is troubled with concern over what to tell your banker, God is holding you close right now.

If you are struggling with a decision about a move or change of jobs, God is holding you close right now. It doesn't matter what you are going through and what is

causing your heart to be troubled, my God is holding you!

How do I know this? I know this for a variety of reasons. I know it because the Bible says it and I know the Bible is true. But I also know it because time and time again in my own life when my heart has been troubled, my God has been right by my side scooping me up in His loving arms. He has not always changed the situation in which I found myself, but He gave me and gives me His peace as He carries me through each difficulty or trial that comes my way. I need no other proof than to look back at the history of my own life. But if you need more than that, look to His Word at what He did for people in the Bible.

God is still the same as He was the day that He spoke those words, "Let not your heart be troubled." Give it all to God today. He will make the total difference.

Beans and Chili or Covoisier and a Cigar Texas Journalist...by Willis Webb

Being a country boy and a journalist (in that order), I'm often amazed when I think about everything I've been exposed to -- from beans and chili to brandy and cigars -- in my 75 years of living.

Growing up "country," then becoming a journalist, meant eating what Texas farm-and-ranch folks put on their tables, then sampling "the finer things" newspaper people get to experience in a career that provides exposure to all levels of society.

Most people, I suspect, stick pretty close to the kinds of foods they were fed at home as children and young adults.

Of course, economic and social factors come into play as well. As someone raised in a small town farming-ranching family, I grew up to a pretty stable fare of a meat dish or two at a meal plus two or three vegetables, bread and a choice of a couple of desserts (cake or pie).

We could have iced tea, milk, water or something my mother called "Polly-Pop," which is an old-fashioned version of Kool-Aid. In our family, kids weren't "allowed" to drink coffee until late teens, if then. Or unless we had a rare treat of going somewhere

with my dad, in which case we might drink fox hunt, campfire coffee, grounds and all.

My bill of fare today has expanded from childhood menus but not as dramatically as one employment period threw me into. During a two-year span in my thirties, I was exposed to what I considered pretty lavish culinary and beverage "adventures" via a brilliant publisher-entrepreneur.

Immersion into multiple-newspaper publishing and printing catapulted me from a meal beverage of iced tea into a group obsessed with cocktails before meals, wine with a meal and brandy or some "fashionable" after-meal drink. And, naturally, the meals were multi-course.

So, I marveled that this was a perk of "big-time" publishing.

In that newspaper group, the chief executive officer (hereinafter known as Joe) and his hand-picked executives cut their professional teeth on some national publications, some metropolitan daily newspapers and a couple of large suburban publishing companies.

Much of their business was conducted during three-hour, three-martini lunches and, after

a busy afternoon at the office, continued at cocktail hour(s) and dinner, at either a public restaurant-bar or at Joe's home. All of these business cocktail hours/meals, were paid for on the CEO's expense account. We did talk business almost incessantly during these gatherings. The get-together was an effective tool for solidifying the group as a business team. On rare occasions, we actually entertained a customer or two.

Joe was a gregarious fellow who loved a drink or two or three, plus a good cigar. He was actually, I thought, brilliant. He knew more about publishing, printing and sales than most professionals I'd met. He was a retired military officer and could be mesmerizing (a key to his salesmanship).

However, Joe's charismatic leadership didn't immediately translate to big profits. Quite the opposite as the red ink stained everyone on his management team.

Heads rolled and the newspaper and printing operations were reduced to a size deemed more apt to generate profitability. As it turned out, the core newspaper, the mother ship, had the real profit potential, ultimately achieved it and, thus, the desired

stability.

I loved talking to Joe, although it was rare that I could corner him and spend uninterrupted time picking his brain. He was a well-source of knowledge about publishing in general, but there were two areas in which he was, and remains, a rarely matched source of how-to in photography and in color printing. Joe could write, he could sell and he could design with the best.

Joe moved on to other publishing ventures and, several years later, retired.

Over a six-decade career in editing and publishing, there are many people from whom I gleaned business knowledge and how to apply in ways to ensure success. Joe was no small contributor to my knowledge, most of it "how-to" but, unfortunately, some I had to label "don't do."

In addition to the professional knowledge I gained, I'm also grateful to Joe for teaching me about some of the finer things in life and how to enjoy them.

Willis Webb is a retired community newspaper editor-publisher of more than 50 years experience. He can be reached by email at wwbb1937@att.net.

Helpful Tips to Cut Your Holiday Expenses

By Jason Alderman

The closer the holidays loom, the less time harried families have to buy gifts, plan seasonal events and make travel arrangements. Unfortunately, when time is at a premium and you're forced to make last-minute decisions, it's usually your budget that suffers.

As an occasional procrastinator myself, let me share a few tips I've picked up over the years that can help take the expense -- and stress -- out of holiday planning:

Before you start shopping, calculate how much you can afford to spend on the holidays as a portion of your overall budget. If your finances are in good shape, spend no more than 1.5 percent of your annual income. But if

you're deeply in debt, can't meet your regular monthly expenses or don't have an emergency fund, this isn't the time to rack up additional debt.

Once you determine an overall amount, tally up expected holiday-related expenses including gifts, decorations, new clothes and accessories, giftwrap, cards, postage, special meals and year-end gratuities. Don't forget travel-related expenses if you plan to leave town, and try to recall unanticipated expenses from last year.

If you're looking for ways to cut back, consider:

- Arrange gift lotteries with family members and friends so everyone concentrates their time, effort and money on buying fewer,

nicer gifts.

- Speak candidly with friends, coworkers and extended family about placing a moratorium on exchanging gifts. They're probably feeling the pinch too.

- If the gift-giving gesture is important to you, suggest pooling resources with others to make a sizeable contribution to a charity you all believe in.

Once you've determined your overall holiday spending budget -- and before you start shopping -- make a detailed list that includes:

- Everyone on your shopping list.
- Spending limits and several gift alternatives for each person.
- How much you actually

spend on each gift. If you overspend on one present you'll need to make up for it elsewhere.

- What you gave each person -- to avoid giving them the same thing next year.

- What each person gave you to avoid "re-gifting" disasters later on.

- Other expenses (decorations, etc.)

Some people relish hunting for bargains; others loathe it. Either way, here are a few money-saving tips:

- Clip newspaper and online coupons. Stores often match competitors' prices even if their own items aren't on sale. Plus, many consolidation websites post downloadable coupons and sale

codes for online retailers.

- Mobile shopping apps let in-store smartphone and tablet users scan product barcodes and make on-the-spot price comparisons, read reviews, download coupons, buy products and more.

- If you're traveling for the holidays, note that many airlines charge \$25 or more for each checked bag. Many stores and websites ship gifts for free, saving you hassle at the airport.

- Carefully read purchase-return policies for deadlines, exclusions (e.g., for sale or clearance items) and restocking charges.

- Keep receipts. Many retailers will refund the price difference if an item goes on sale within a few weeks after purchase.

- Check whether your credit card agreement provides free product warranty extensions and/or price protection.

And finally, consider the gift of time. Older relatives don't need more chocolates, but they probably could use help with chores, running errands or rides to doctor's appointments. Plus, they would probably appreciate your company. Offer to babysit for harried parents so they can run a few errands or simply recharge their batteries.

Jason Alderman directs Visa's financial education programs. To Follow Jason Alderman on Twitter: www.twitter.com/PracticalMoney.