

## BRAVE STROKE, SIR GALLAHAD

Our congratulations to Dolph Simons, Jr., Chairman of the Board of the Lawrence Daily Journal-World, on his having served on the Pulitzer Prize selection committee for criticism. That's probably as close as the Journal-World is ever going to get to a Pulitzer.

Unless there's a Pulitzer Prize for pettiness. In which case, Junior himself would be one of the front-runners.

Apparently the Journal-World is being crowded in the marketplace by the University Daily Kansan. So Junior used his position as a regular member on the national board of the Associated Press to persuade that company to reclassify the school paper as a commercial publication, thereby tripling its rate.

The UDK couldn't fit the unexpected rate increase into its budget, and the Student Senate wouldn't grant emergency funds, so the Kansan had to drop the wire service.

A nice piece of work, Tarzan; but why stop there? If a special AP rate is unfair competition, then outright cash support from a tax-supported institution certainly must be unfair competition, too.

Why don't you really show your clout and persuade the University to cancel the Kansan's allotment? Then all the kids up on the hill could chip in and buy a mimeograph and put out a neat little paper that wouldn't need no advertising at all.

Oh, and thanks for the tipoff, Junior. From now on we send our copy to the printer by armoured car.

## PN DEMANDS MET

# New Commissioners Recall First Month In Center Ring

Before their election to the Lawrence City Commission on April 7, both Nancy Shontz and Tom Gleason were long-time observers of city government; so PUBLIC NOTICE asked them to recall their first month in office and give us their impressions from the other side of the footlights.

The biggest difference, Shontz said, was "learning not to tune-out certain items. When you're in the commissioner's chair, you have to maintain constant concentration because you know that you are going to be required to make a decision." Having to deal with all the others involved in the decision-making process—including the four other commissioners—was also a big difference, she said.

The biggest and most gratifying difference, according to Gleason, "is knowing that my opinion is going to be heard." Attorney Tom thought he probably felt more comfortable than most freshman commissioners might, because there are many similarities between a commission meeting and a courtroom trial.

Shontz said that the harmony among the commissioners has pleased her the most, because it has allowed the commission to handle complex issues smoothly. The thing that has pleased him the most, says Gleason, is "the coffee pot for the public at the meetings." And, he quickly added, that the commission has been able to make "reasonable decisions."

One of the biggest failings in the current system, according to Gleason, is the too short notice given the public on agenda items. He said he "plans to push for a revision of the agenda schedule. It isn't always necessary," he continued, "for every item to be pushed onto the agenda as soon as it's brought up."

Time and information are the two main concerns of Shontz. "We need more time on some issues," she declared, "so that we can gather more information and make better decisions." She cited a recent decision on a drainage problem where some very pertinent information came in two days too late.

Shontz also sees a need for greater involvement of the city staff and the public in decision-making process. "We need to get more information before the meeting starts," she said, "rather than have everything thrown at us after the gavel."

On a personal note, Shontz admitted her chores as a commissioner were taking up more of her time and privacy than she had expected. However, she thought much of this was due to "the number of complex issues left over from the previous commission."

The demands on Gleason's time, he said, "are about as I had expected, but it is cutting into my privacy a little." Both new commissioners expect things to go smoother and quicker, once they learn the ropes.

Being a commissioner has not changed either's basic opinion of city government; but Shontz said she was "learning more details of its operation."

Both freshman commissioners think things are going great, so far. Being a commissioner is not easy, says Gleason, "but I didn't expect it to be."

Shontz stated that being on the commission was exciting and she was enjoying it: "I think this is a good commission, and I'm looking forward to the next four years."

I sit on various boards, attend four or more meetings a week... and haven't enjoyed so many thrills and spills since I gave up hang gliding. Local politix is prime adrenal exercise.

— Stewart Brand

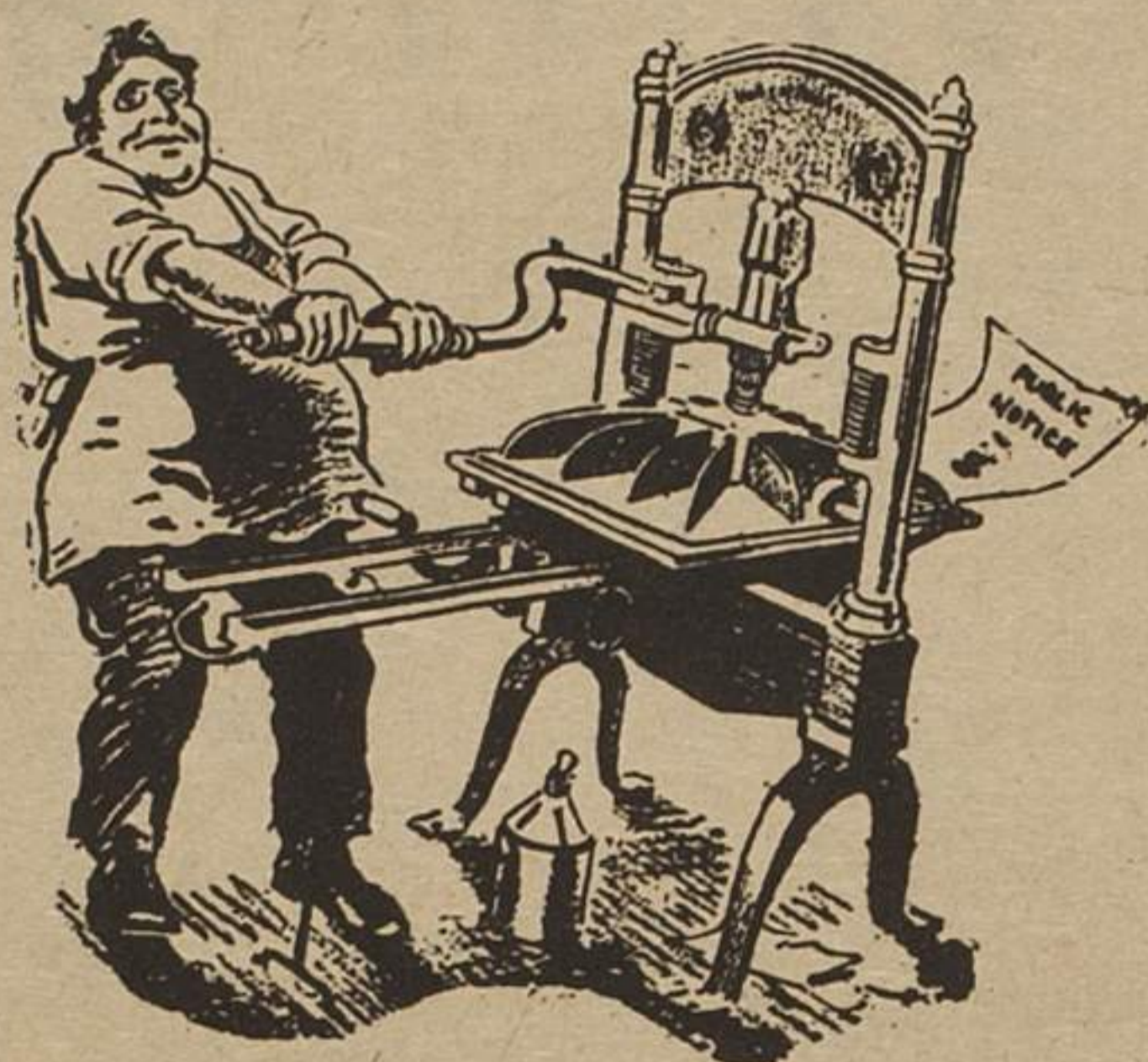
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## Judge Confused

There were a number of other collateral issues in the legal battle between the City and Kaplan, et al. The City claimed that the title was defective and that the proposed ordinance lacked an "ordaining clause." The judge's opinion made cursory note of the title, and did not address the ordaining clause issue. Judge King dealt with the legislative/administrative controversy by characterizing the proposed ordinance as "confusing." The proposed ordinance prohibited acquisitions of property by the City prior to adoption of a comprehensive plan. According to King's opinion, "Purchase of office supplies and a multitude of other items necessary for the day to day operation of the city government are encompassed by this language. They are so clearly administrative that one is tempted to dispose of this entire matter..." Klunknett responded to this part of King's decision, stating, "The petition was not intended to deal with demolishing, altering or renovating a typewriter. It's a shame he got confused by it."

The judge's opinion further states, "As a practical matter, I cannot help but notice that a literal reading would require a finding of 'blight' before the new city hall or any other public building could be remodeled or enlarged in line with changing circumstances as the years go by..." The petition actually requires a "finding and description of blight... according to the definition of K.S.A. 12-771 (a) (1) and (2)." That statute lists "predominance of defective or inadequate street layout, unsafe conditions, diversity of ownership, obsolete platting or land uses, and conditions which create economic obsolescence" as reasons the City can use in making a finding of blight.

Judge King's holding turns on another exception to the Kansas initiative statute which prohibits proposed ordinances "relating to a public improvement to be paid wholly or in part by the levy of special assessments." Judge King states, "Perhaps the most obvious defect in the proposed ordinance is that it is so broad in scope that it... would impose conditions, such as a finding of blight, before the state statute (authorizing special assessments and benefit districts) could be used. It therefore relates to this type of improvement, and any ordinance relating to such improvement falls into the second exception to the referendum statute. IT IS THEREFORE NOT a proper subject for referendum."



## THERE 'LL BE SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY THIS SUNDAY

The Seventh Annual Everybody Day celebration will be held this year on Sunday, May 10 in South Park. This annual event, free for the entire city of Lawrence, is sponsored by Headquarters, Lawrence's 24-hour crisis intervention center. Everybody Day celebrations will include games, contests, craft demonstrations, sports, music, dance, and much more.

The purpose of Everybody Day, as explained by Headquarters director Marcia Epstein, is to give folks an official day on which to feel good about themselves. "As a short-term, crisis counseling center, most of the people we see aren't in much of a position to be celebrating life. This is our chance to do something more on the fun side for the city of Lawrence."

Any person or group with a skill, talent or non-political information to share with the Lawrence community should contact Headquarters at 841-2348. Everybody Day will last from approximately 11 a.m. until dark.



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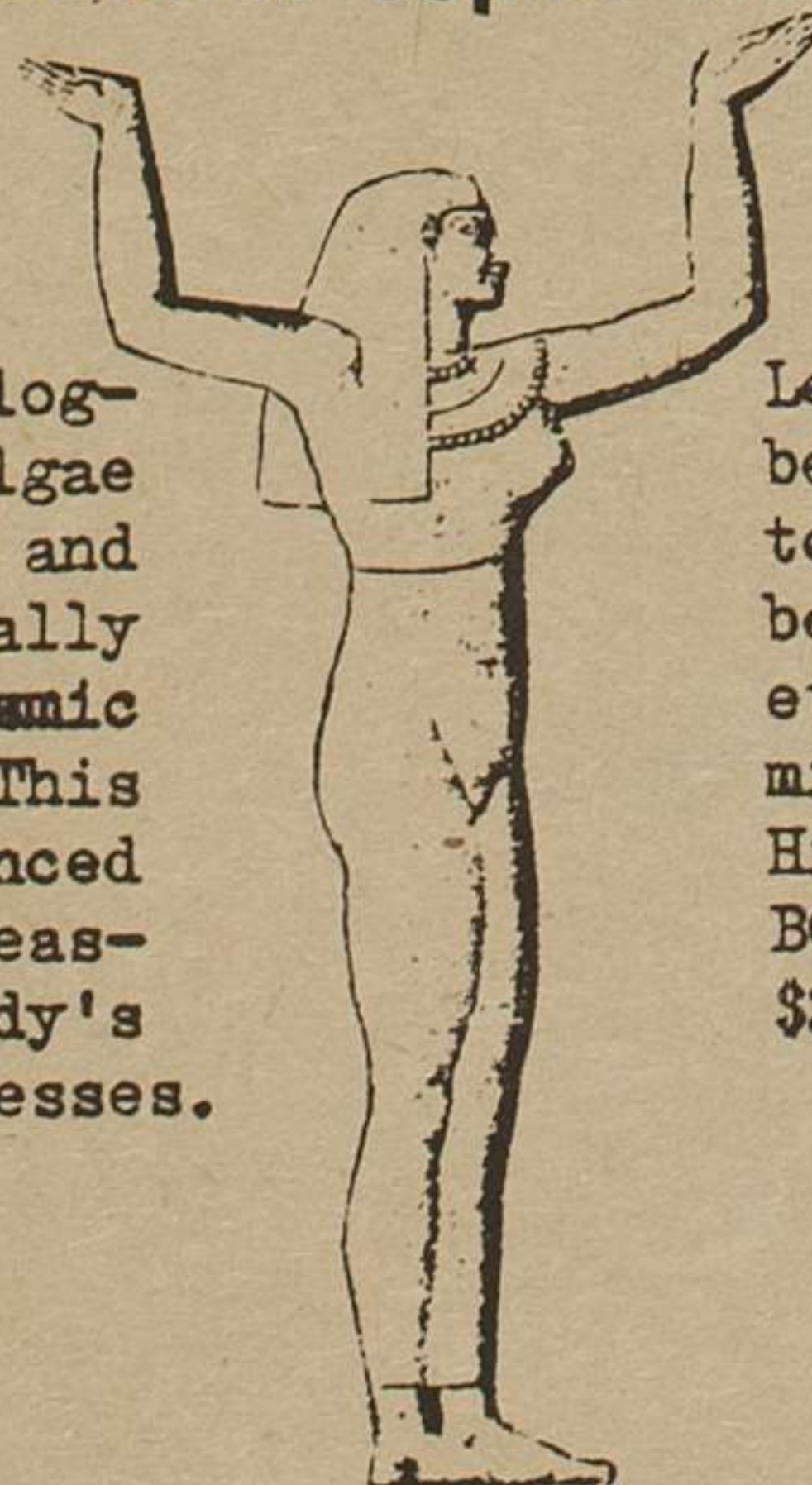


Woodcrafters  
Guild

Mark Kaplan noted that "at a pre-trial hearing two Thursdays before the election, the judge repeatedly expressed negative political opinions about the ordinance itself and of the whole petition process. The major point of contention was something neither side wrote briefs on. This shows the court's ability to tamper with the intent of the initiative/referendum statute."

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