

Kansas

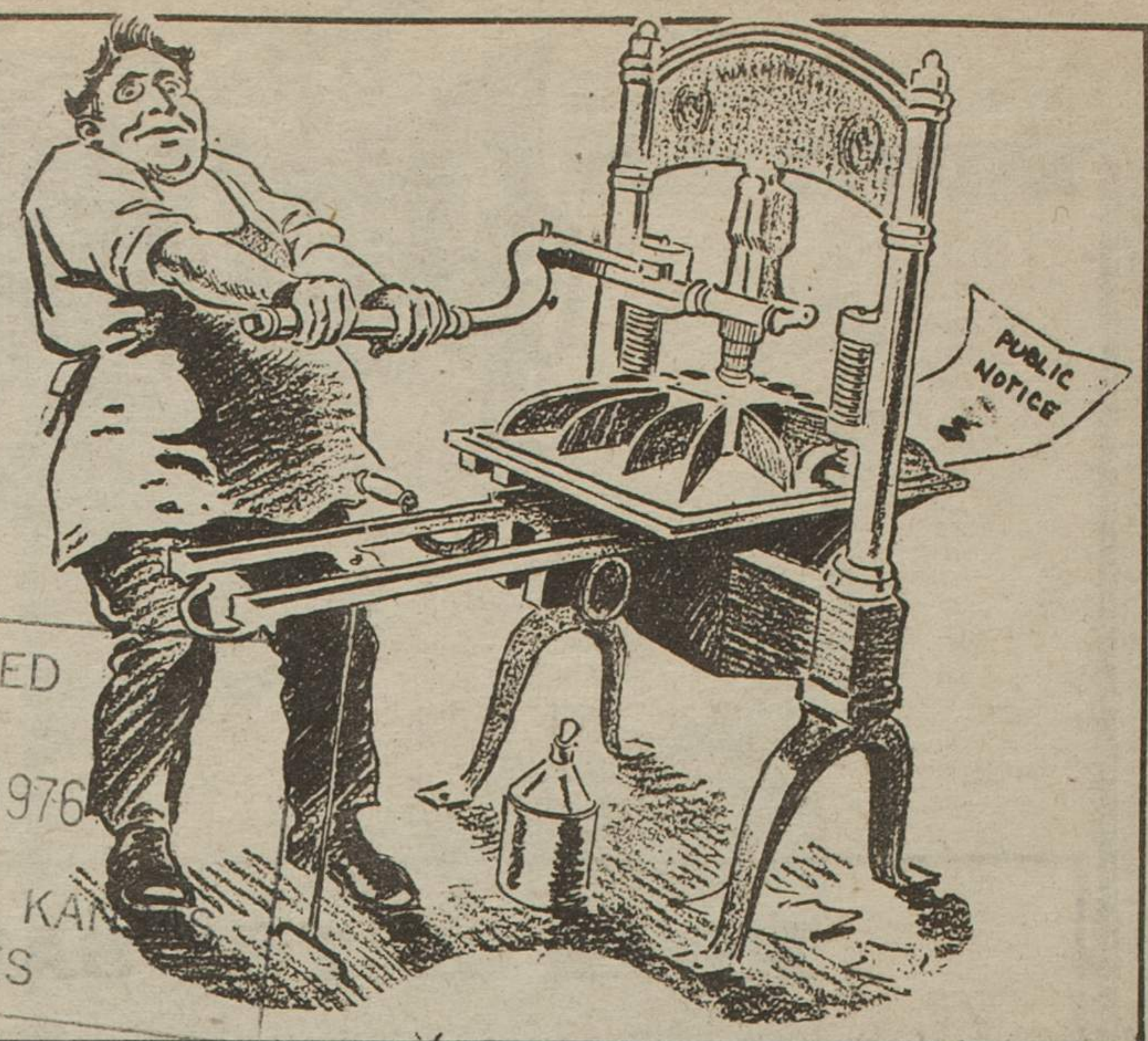
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WORKING IN LAWRENCE

By Duffystuds

People have many reasons for working. They work for money. But people work for other less obvious reasons and so we interviewed a few people to see why they work.

I. J. STONEPACK

Mr. Stoneback is the county commissioner for the 3rd district. He lives on a farm a couple miles west of Lawrence. Originally from a farm near Morganville in Clay County Kansas, he moved to the Lawrence area in 1934. He helped organize the National Farmers Organization in Douglas County in 1959 and was a prime force behind the formation of the First Rural Water District. In the early 70's he cochaired the Lawrence Committee for Peace in Vietnam and since then has been pretty busy farming and commissioning.



WE'RE GETTING SHAFTED

I'm certainly not being paid enough in agriculture. That's why I helped organize NFO in this county and helped in others in Northeast Kansas because I didn't think the farmer was getting compensated for the amount of work he does and paid enough for the crops he produces. And with my job as commissioner, I think that's underpaid too. We get a little over \$7,000 now and we commissioners don't get as much as the city manager gets.

IT DON'T MATTER...

I get along very well with the people in the 3rd district. At one time, Buford Watson said to me,

"I. J., how come you stick up for those farmers out there, those rural people didn't vote for you." And I says, "I know, but maybe they will next time..." And it doesn't matter whether they voted for me or not. I'm elected to represent the people. It don't matter whether they voted for me or whether they're long hairs or they're old or Republican or Democrat. It does not matter. I just try and represent the people in my district.

HE'S BORED

Oh, I get kind of bored sometimes sitting down there all day Monday at the county commissioners' because I'm an active person and I just get tired of sittin' and sometimes these conversations get awful boring and I think sometimes we take too long to make up our minds what to do down there. Government works slow and I always worked kind of fast whatever I done. But on the whole, its been rewarding, it's certainly been an educational experience and I've met a lot of people and I think I'm respected more than I used to be, just being a farmer. I know, I had a person ask me that if I didn't think people didn't respect me more now than they used to. And I said, "Yes, I've noticed that. People say hello to me." I've had town people, you know, that would just ignore me--of course, maybe they just didn't know me before. See when you get in the public eye like I have been, why people recognize me and speak to me that didn't used to ever speak to me. I don't know whether they didn't know me or what but...

FARMING IS IN HIS BLOOD

I farm because I like to farm and there's a lot of other farmers, you know, they stay on the farms because well see, it gets in their blood see, and I like livestock and I like to be close to it. Farmers work in town so they can farm. The only way

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RESPONSIBILITY

I'm a farmer and a county commissioner. In farming I'm self-employed and responsible to myself and my family. As a county commissioner, I feel like I'm responsible to and represent the people in the 3rd commissioner district. At the present time, I just take care of my cattle and put up hay for them to eat. I don't do any field work anymore. I've rented some of my land on a crop share basis.

LOOKING TO RETIREMENT

No, I don't have any goals in politics in the future. In fact, I didn't even want to run the 2nd term. And I announced once I wouldn't run but the people wanted me to run and I told them I would reconsider and finally I decided to run. With farming, I don't have any big goal for the future. In fact, I'm thinking about the days of retirement.

An interview with JOHN TAYLOR

By MARK KAPLAN

I didn't know John Taylor for very long. I think that the first time I met him was at a speaking engagement for City Commission candidates in late winter of 1975. Many candidates stepped to the podium, making the prospect for the coming elections very confusing. By and by, an aging Black man rose to explain his reasons for running for City office. "My name is John Taylor, and I was born and raised in North Lawrence, and that is my home today." He went on with the usual litany of reasons for running mainly based on a desire to see poorer people get their due.



John was a rare man; filled with integrity and one of the most sincere people I've ever known. When he spoke, he looked you right in the eye. He was a proud man. He respected others, himself and his family. With a shotgun, he once chased off a thoughtless bulldozer operator who was attempting to demolish his sidewalk. His neighbors had just watched helplessly as their easements were broken apart by the street department project.

Last month, John Taylor passed away. For some years, he had been afflicted with cancer and he knew he wouldn't out-live it. I never suspected. He worked steadily into his 77th year, showing few outward signs of slowing down.

Today, I'm very happy that in March of 1975, Don Zavelo and I sat down to talk to John for a few hours to help Don with an oral history project. Don knew so much about early 20th century town folks, that I remember feeling like I was sitting in on a conversation between two old friends... John was 75 and Don was 21.

Beginning on page nine of PUBLIC NOTICE, is most of our conversation from that afternoon. Though it began as an academic exercise, by the end of the afternoon new friendships were made which I came to value greatly. I will miss John Taylor very much. I'm glad that a part of his life can be shared here through photos and essay.



Lawrence soon will boast two McDonald's restaurants. Despite residents' protests, a new McDonald's was approved by the City. It will be a unique McD's... called McDonald's North Lawrence. The only problem is it's not in North Lawrence... page 14.

Roaches and reorientation top the Coop News. While the fiendish roach won't go away, many Coop members vanish in a flash when it's time to work at the store. Find out more on pages 5-8.

Want to let others know how upset you are about rising electric bills? People's Energy Project launches a sticker campaign to Pull the Plug on KP&L... See supplement to the NOTICE.