

An Encounter With A Yellowjacket

BY TED KOOSER
U.S. Poet Laureate

With this column American Life in Poetry celebrates its tenth anniversary. Thanks to all of you for supporting us, week in and week out! When I was a boy, I was advised that if a wasp landed on me I wasn't to move until it flew away. I did as I was told and got stung. Here Karen J. Weyant, who lives in Pennsylvania, takes a similar risk.

YELLOWJACKETS

When my father held his Bic lighter to the nests in back of the garage, the gray paper pulp sparked then blackened. Ashes fell, coating crawling ivy and clover. A few yellowjackets fled, one or two swirled, flying into the sweaty face of my father, but most too stunned, their usual side-to-side swag of a dance, flailing in the smoke. When one landed on my arm, I stiffened. His wings settled into a still gauze, body coiled in yellow bands, the same shade as buttercups we held to our skin, cupping sunlight near our chins. Every step, careful, quivering, as if neither of us knew who was supposed to sting.

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Highway

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moving various amendments were Mickelson, Democrat Julie Bartling of Gregory, Republican Kris Langer of Dell Rapids and Republican Don Haggard of Sioux Falls.

Seconding many of their motions were House Republican leader Brian Gosch of Rapid City and House Republican assistant leader Steve Westra of Sioux Falls. Altogether 12 amendments were attempted and nine succeeded.

Today (Tuesday) is the final day for the House to consider the highway and bridge funding legislation for the first time. The House committee previously killed what remained of the governor's version, HB 1131.

Sen. Mike Vehle, R-Mitchell, said Monday he expects that whatever the House sends back to the Senate will require a conference committee to negotiate on the differences.

Vehle led the highway needs and financing study committee last year that produced the original SB 1 that disappeared many miles ago. "I am hopeful," Vehle said. He testified before the House committee Monday, presenting representatives with excerpts showing highway and bridge needs.

Four thick reports remain atop his Senate desk for any legislator to view. He took those reports to the House committee and left them at the witness table when he was finished.

The debate shifted substantially again Monday over the fuel taxes.

SCHOLASTICS

RORY TUCKER

PARKVILLE, Mo. — The Office of Student Life at Park University has announced those students who have been appointed to serve as resident assistants and first-year experience mentors during the 2015-16 academic year.

Resident assistants serve as the primary contact and resource for an assigned residential community.

In addition, they facilitate campus involvement and serve as role models academically and socially to the entire student body.

First-year experience mentors make up the primary staff for the First-Year Experience Program. The mentors are assigned to first-year course sections, where they implement lateral learning opportunities. Their duty is to connect in-classroom lessons with outside-the-classroom experiences on the University's Parkville Campus.

Additionally, the mentors serve as role models, demonstrating appropriate academic and personal behavior, and promote retention by advising new students through first-year development issues.

The 2015-16 resident assistant staff includes:

- Rory Tucker, sophomore psychology major, Vermillion

Originally Gov. Dennis Daugaard proposed a never-ending series of annual 2-cent per gallon increases. The House Transportation Committee initially changed Daugaard's proposal to 15 years of 2-cent increases.

Meanwhile the Senate approved eight years of 2-cent increases. Now the House committee proposes three years of 2-cent increases.

"I think there are a number of discrepancies. That's not the only one," Sen. Corey Brown, R-Gettysburg, said.

The House version of SB 1 — whatever it might be after today — would return to the Senate for a concurrence vote on Wednesday.

Presuming the Senate doesn't agree with the House amendments, the conference committee of three Senate members and three House members would be appointed and begin work.

After today (Tuesday), there are three working days left in the main run of the 2015 session the concludes Friday, March 13, followed by a two-week break, with the final day March 30.

"It's early in the process," Senate Republican leader Tim Rave of Baltic said Monday afternoon.

Car Talk

Renting A Car For A Trip Makes Better Financial Sense

BY RAY MAGLIOZZI
King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Dear Car Talk:

My husband always talks about how taking a long vacation by car puts too much wear and tear on a car. He thinks renting a car (at least \$25 per day in our area) makes better financial sense. I think that is crazy. What are cars for if not to drive and enjoy? The type of trip I am talking about is from Dallas all the way up the coast of California and back, over about three weeks. Who is right here? — Jan

I know this is hard to believe, but your husband may be right, Jan.

Take a look at the math. The first thing you need to do is figure out the "cost" of taking your own car. The best estimate comes from our pals at the Internal Revenue Service, who have determined that the use of a personal car for a business purpose is worth 57.5 cents per mile. That factors in things like gas, oil, tires, wear and tear, the money it costs you to "own" the car for that mile, insurance and depreciation.

So if we map out a trip from Dallas to San Francisco, that's about 1,700 miles each way, or 3,400 miles round trip. At the IRS rate, the cost to use your own car for that trip would be \$1,955.

Let's compare the rental option. Assuming you can rent a car with unlimited mileage for \$25 a day, your three-week rental will cost you \$525. Of course, the advertised price of a rental car doesn't in-



Ray
MAGLIOZZI

your personal vehicle, it almost always covers a rental car), you do have to pay for your own gas.

So if we assume that you get a combined 20 miles per gallon in your rental car, you'll need 170 gallons of gas for that trip, and at 3 bucks a gallon, that's another \$510.

So you can see that, based on our simple calculation, the total cost of your rental car is \$1,245, and the cost of driving your own car is \$1,955.

Now, I say "simple" because, while you're out running Hertz's newest Mustang into the ground, you'll still be paying your car loan while your car rests comfortably in your garage. So you may want to add three weeks of your monthly payment — since you'll have to pay it, even if your car is at home. But I think the rental still will come out ahead.

And here's the real advantage of a

clude a bunch of fees they always charge, so let's say it's \$35 a day. Then your cost for 21 days is \$735. Maybe you can do better, but let's use that number.

Now, that's not your only cost in renting the car. While you don't have to pay for maintenance, repairs or insurance (if you have comprehensive insurance on

rental car: It'll be a newer car, so it'll be unlikely to break down. But if for some reason it does sputter off the road on a highway near Fresno, you just call the rental car company, and they'll give you another car. No triptus interruptus. No trying to figure out if Rocko from Roadside Rocko's Repair Refuge is right that you really do need a new \$4,000 transmission while you're wasting your vacation at the Bates Motel next door.

Even more important, when you're on a road trip for three weeks, you're often eating and drinking in the car. And if you're going to spill something with steamed milk onto an absorbent car seat, you'll want it to be someone else's. It'll be a great feeling to be pulling into that "rental car return" lane before it really starts to stink. Good luck, Jan. Have a great trip.

Which is cheaper, buying or leasing? Should you keep a car forever, or dump it after three years, before trouble starts? Find out in Click and Clack's pamphlet "Should I Buy, Lease, or Steal My Next Car?" Send \$4.75 (check or money order) to Next Car, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475.

Got a question about cars? Write to Car Talk in care of this newspaper, or email by visiting the Car Talk website at www.cartalk.com.

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Budget

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State Economist Jim Terwilliger noted the softer estimates mean the state will have to revise down spending increases. That will give the Legislature less money to devote to the roughly \$1.4 billion general budget.

Terwilliger said the state is "a little bit below average in terms of our revenue growth, what we would like to see."

Republican Sen. Deb Peters, Joint Appropriations Committee vice chairwoman, said the committee is looking at curbing some of the spending increases that Daugaard proposed in the upcoming budget. But Peters said she wants to keep Daugaard's proposed roughly 2 percent increases going to education, health programs and Medicaid provider payments and spending on state employees.

"We're going to try to not touch that," she said. "I'm hoping. Keep your fingers crossed."

House and Senate Majority Leaders Brian Gosch and

Tim Rave agreed that funding those increases is a priority. But Rave said lawmakers need to keep their options open.

Terwilliger said the forecast is down primarily because sales tax collections took a hit from lower spending in the farm sector. The administration's Bureau of Finance and Management anticipated the state will collect \$869.2 million in sales taxes next budget year, which make up more than 60 percent of state revenues. That's down roughly \$10.4 million compared to December estimates.

"It surprises me that the numbers were coming in lower like that," Gosch said. "It's disappointing because you want to do more."

The committee is expected to formally decide Wednesday how much can be spent in next year's budget. The Legislature plans to pass that budget by Friday, which is the end of the legislative session's main run.

Republican Sen. Larry Tidemann, a member of the

committee, said he didn't want to take risks by adopting a rosier view of the state's potential budget scenario than what the econo-

mists predicted. "I'm not pessimistic," Tidemann said. "I'm just not super optimistic."

66th Anniversary Celebration



Mr. and Mrs. Peterson

Palmer & Marj Peterson will be celebrating 66 years on March 17th, 2015. Anniversary greetings can be sent to PO Box 414, Viborg, SD, 57070

~Love, Your family

Thank You

The family of Anna Kuehn would like to thank and express our deepest appreciation to our family and friends for all the support and comfort that we received at the time of her death.

Thank you to Fr. Jim Keiter and Deacon Clarence Jansen for all you did at the visitation and funeral. Thanks to Peggy Mummel for providing the beautiful music and to all the ladies who organized and served the luncheon. All of you made things so much easier.

Thanks to Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home for your support and guidance. What you do is a blessing to those you work with. Thanks to Avera Sister James Care Center for taking such good care of her while she was there.

All of your prayers, visits and hugs, food, memorials, flowers and cards were deeply appreciated during this difficult time.

Jerry and Donna Kuehn and family
Norma and Dean Sime and family
Cheryl and Art Bottolfson and family

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Yankton Archery Complex
800 Archery Lane • East Hwy 50
Admission: \$3.00/person
Children 12 & Under Free
\$1.00 OFF Admission with a non-perishable food item. Donations will be given to the Food Pantry.

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