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KS lawmakers' civility crisis deepens



Matt Resnick

Special to The Capital-Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

House Republican leader Blake Carpenter's recent threat to have Democratic Rep. Stephanie Sawyer Clayton forcibly removed from the chamber floor for "an outburst" underscored the hostilities frequently displayed by Kansas lawmakers.

"It's small gavel energy," Sawyer Clayton, D-Overland Park, told The Capital-Journal. "The way that people handle power tells you everything that you need to know about them and whether they should or should not hold that power."

A lack of civility has cast a dark cloud over the past few legislative sessions, an existential concern highlighted by Gov. Laura Kelly during her State of the State address in January.

Kelly pointed to national leaders who often "treat one another in the most uncivilized ways imaginable," and that the alarming behavior has become commonplace in a fraught political landscape. She cautioned Kansas lawmakers that engaging in those petty antics would be a disservice to constituents.

"Instead of representing their communities, elected officials turned into foot soldiers for their political parties, firing off insults and vitriol to score likes

or follows or wins for their team instead of doing what's right for their constituents," Kelly said.

Carpenter was accused by Democrats of taking the vitriol to another level after he posted an AI-generated image of Kelly on Facebook on April 10, depicting the two-term governor as a foreign dictator. The post was published while Carpenter was presiding over the House chamber, a role that requires much attention to detail.

Carpenter had earlier railed against Kelly at the lectern over proposed pay hikes related to the legislative and execu-

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World's great fish migrations collapsing



Across the Northern Hemisphere, migratory fish like salmon have suffered major losses because rivers have been dammed and polluted, while many populations were heavily overfished. JEFF J. MITCHELL/GETTY IMAGES

Declines affect human lives worldwide

Zeb Hogan

University of Nevada, Reno | THE CONVERSATION

Hidden beneath the surface of the world's rivers, some of Earth's great animal movements unfold – migrations that rival, in sheer biomass, the famous mass movements of zebra and wildebeest across the Serengeti. • For centuries, fish migrations were as predictable as the seasons. Salmon, sturgeon, giant catfish and many other species moved through rivers in vast numbers, guided by rising water, flood pulses and evolved biological cues.

These species are extraordinarily diverse, ranging from beluga sturgeon – massive fish that can live for more than a century and produce the world's most prized caviar – to giant river carp, tropical eels, gold-flecked shad and goliath catfish, all of which travel to survive, in some cases over hundreds or even thousands of miles.

Their journeys can span continents. But the fish and their migrations are disappearing.

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The Mekong giant catfish once migrated hundreds of miles along the Mekong River, supporting fisheries and cultural traditions across the region. Today it is critically endangered due to overfishing and dams blocking its route to spawning grounds. TANG CHHIN SOTHY/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Migrations of these fish, like migrations of buffalo on the American plains once did, shape ecosystems, livelihoods and culture.

Children admit to false report of kidnapping

Charles Rankin

Salina Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Authorities in Russell County are reminding the public of the importance of reporting illegal activity after two children lied about being kidnapped over the weekend.

According to a news release from Russell County Sheriff Andrew L. Van Der Wege, just after 4 p.m. April 18 deputies were dispatched to the 100 block of Kansas Avenue in Lucas for a report of two missing children.

Lucas is about 65 miles northwest of Salina.

Van Der Wege said shortly after the original call, a 911 call was received from one of the missing children around the 198th Street and Fairview Road area.

Deputies, Russell County EMS and the Lucas Fire Department responded to the area and found both children, who were evaluated by EMS and returned to their family.

The children were interviewed by deputies and said they were kidnapped from Lucas from someone in a black hoodie and black pants and driving a white panel van with no windows or writing on the sides. The children said when the van stopped, they were able to open the door and escape.

After an "extensive investigation and search for the vehicle," the sheriff said there were inconsistent circumstances in the investigation.

"Upon further interviews, the juveniles, aged 9 and 11, admitted the report was fabricated," the release said.

All reports taken seriously by authorities

The sheriff's office said it emphasized that false reporting of any crime has serious consequences and that it takes it seriously.

"The facts of this case will be collected and submitted to the Russell County Attorney for further review for recommended charges," the office said.

Additionally, the sheriff's office said that it takes every report seriously and will use resources available with the goal of "gathering facts, keeping

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