

If It Is To Be, It Is Up To Me

AGRI-VIEWS

by Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent

(Over the years I've written about 1,600 weekly columns. I rarely "recycle" an old column. I may use the same topic or theme (I don't even want to think about how many times I've talked about bagworms!) but I write fresh material to go with it. The number of times I have used a past column totally intact can probably be counted on one hand. But recently I received an email from someone that I have a great deal of respect for. They had run across a column of mine from several years ago that they felt was very fitting for today. So by request, here is that column.)

I was having a discussion recently with an acquaintance who belongs to the same organization as I. He was describing something that he had seen in another state that he really liked and was wishing that we had something like it in Kansas. I quickly started to run the idea through my head outlining what it would take to make it happen. This went on for about thirty seconds when I stopped and realized that it wasn't even anything that I cared about. I turned to him and said, "So what are you going to do to make it happen?" He sputtered, he stammered, he looked at me, and eventually said nothing.

I'm not in the least bit upset that he brought the idea forward. In fact, it's probably a pretty good idea. But why did I immediately start figuring out how I could bring it to fruition, when I didn't even really care about it? Why, when I asked what he was going to do to make it happen, did he say nothing and probably doomed the idea to never go forward?

It seems we live in a society that increasingly finds it very easy to complain about anything and everything, but are unwilling, as a society, to work to fix the problem. When you are at a meeting of whatever organization you are a member of, do people readily come forward to take on projects? Or do good ideas go nowhere because there's no help or not enough help? Do you find yourself spending more time complaining about what isn't working, or working to make it happen?

I'm not sure if it was one of my parents, a teacher, or one of my county agents when I was growing up, but, I do remember complaining about something that I wanted. I suspect that it was probably one of my parents who then said, "Instead of sitting around on your rear end complaining, why don't you get up and start making it a reality?" That lesson has been with me a long time.

The most valuable commodity that we, as individuals, have to offer is our time. There are many ideas that can become realities if people simply make the time for it. Yet that might mean giving up something that "I" want to do in order to make a better organization, community, or world for all of "US". There are people in every organization and in every community that do give freely of their time. They are easy to pick out, because they are the same people that you see everywhere volunteering with events, activities, and organizations. The same people over and over and over again.

I've seen a sentence used many times, so many times in fact that I have no idea of its origin. It's ten words long with a total of twenty letters. Yet it has incredible power. "If it is to be, it is up to me." Nobody else can form my future. Nobody else can fulfill my destiny. Nobody else can make me happy. Nobody else can make me successful. If it is to be, it is up to me.

If I choose to spend some of my time building a better future and a better country for myself and the generations to follow then that is what I choose to do. But I, and the others who

have chosen this path would be pleased to have some company and some assistance. But it is your choice and your future. If you want to help make it happen, join in. If you don't want to make it happen, get out of the way and be quiet. Because, in my experience, I have found that those who say it can't happen, are usually in the way of those who are making it happen! If it is to be, it is up to me.