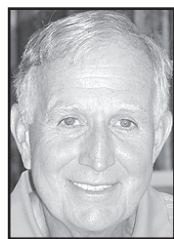


Rural Opportunity Zone project results favorable

Last year, Governor Brownback began the Rural Opportunity Zone (ROZ) project for fifty eligible counties in Kansas. Forty-four of the fifty counties chose to invest and participate. All five counties in my district—Cheyenne, Rawlins, Decatur, Norton, and Phillips—are in the program.

News from your legislator
Ward Cassidy



The ROZ program provides an income tax exemption for up to five years for individuals who relocate to those counties from out-of-state. The law also authorizes the counties to participate in a state-matching program to repay student loans up to \$3,000 per year (\$15,000 maximum) for students who graduated from an accredited post-secondary institution and moved to a ROZ county.

We received a success report this week showing the program has received 190 applications. Most of the applicants are young, recent college graduates with family connections to rural Kansas. Seventy of the applicants are moving to Kansas from out-of-state. Forty-nine ROZ applicants are working in education, forty are working in health care (nurses, doctors, chiropractors, and pharmacists), three are engineers, three are veterinarians, and several other needed careers.

The key point is that communities that work hard to bring people in are going to have a better style of life and a more vibrant community.

We have now begun the voting process on the House floor. The process for moving a bill to the Governor's desk starts in a committee where bills are worked after they are introduced. The committee chair, after being assigned a bill by the Speaker of the House, will hold hearings to receive public testimony. In our lawmaking process, any individual may explain as to what they do or do not agree with and suggest changes to proposed legislation. After the hearings, the committee may make amendments and modify the existing bill. If you ever wish to testify or send written testimony, just let me know. You can find the calendar of bills at www.kslegislature.org and click the "calendar" button in the top right.

I might be asking for help from NW Kansas in the near future. Senate Bill 356, which would effectively stop our home-owned carnivals was introduced to the Commerce Committee. A hearing date is not yet set. We are hoping that we can stop the process before a hearing is held. I contacted Steve Anderson, an Oberlin native, who is also the state budget director. He is a strong proponent of our home-owned carnivals and is working hard to help us. If the bill is heard, I will testify against it in the committee hearing and will ask for more support from home.

There was a House bill introduced that was a concern to the Norton prison. It potentially could have affected the very successful cabin-building program at the prison. The modular home industry has assured me that their bill will not affect the prison and they do not oppose the cabin-building program in any way.

I voted yesterday to pass the "use it or lose it" water rights bill. This bill will stop the ineffective methods currently being used and help conserve the important resource. I believe the Senate will do the same, and it will probably be the first bill signed by the Governor this year.

Friday, February 17, at 8:30 pm, I will be a guest on Smoky Hills Public Television to discuss current issues in the legislature. The following morning Senator Ostmeier and I will start our NW Kansas coffee shop tour at 8:00 am in Phillipsburg. The entire schedule will be in the local papers.



A bit of trivia from a special day in the past

Where were you 30 years ago on February 11? I know where I was! It was the day of daughter Elizabeth's birth.

Elizabeth likes trivia so I've been working on a trivia game.

First step: the baby book. Elizabeth was born around 1:00 p.m. I noted Cricket Montgomery also had a baby that day. Do you know who she was?

They announced the nominations for the Academy Awards on February 11 that year. "Reds" got 12, "On Golden Pond" 10. Do you know which movie won best picture that year? Hint: neither of those!

As those nominations were for 1981 movies, I checked 1982 movies. The best picture that year was "Gandhi". I just caught that one on reruns, terrific movie. "E.T." was the top grossing movie. "Porky's" was a gross movie; um I mean also a top grossing movie. As were "Tootsie" and "An Officer and a Gentleman".

How perfect is it that the number one song February 11 was "Waiting for a Girl Like You" by Foreigner?

The best selling album of all time was released in November of 1982. Come on, you know that one!

The Grammy award winning album of the year in 1982 was Toto VI. A cut from the album "Rosanna" was the record of the year! Truly! I remember "Rosanna" but I don't remember much else about Toto.

Speaking of "Truly" that record won for Best Male Pop performance, who sang it? The best song was "Always on My Mind". Best Male Rock

This Too Shall Pass Nancy Hagman



performance, a classic: "Hurts So Good! ROCK ON!"

The winner of the Tony for best Musical: "Nine". Ever heard of it? Me either. Also nominated were "Dreamgirls" and "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat". Proving once again critical acclaim and popularity mean very little when it comes to endurance.

The best sellers the week of February 11 included notable authors: Stephen King, Danielle Steel, John Jakes and John Irving. Of their books which was number one: "Cujo", "Remembrance", "North and South" or "Hotel New Hampshire"?

Here's a hard one: Which of those books have I read? Never mind I'll tell you. "Hotel New Hampshire". It's a weird book. John Irving is more horrifying than Stephen King when you get right down to it! Because you know that stuff Stephen King writes about could never really happen. But Irving is just on the edge---it's possible! It intrigues me.

In Elizabeth's baby book under news headlines: "Locally, ice and snow the night of February 11 caused several fender-benders."

I vividly remember how cold it was that day. Kate and Aunt Sue took advantage of the snow and built a

snowman to greet us on our return from the hospital.

Over the years February 11 has been a bad weather day. It always seemed if there was one day the kids would have a snow day it would be the 11th! However, on Elizabeth's fifth birthday we bar-b-que because "the weather was so nice!"

As to world news there was a massacre in Syria in 1982. In 2012 a ceremony to honor those who died was marred by another massacre!

Good things endure also. 1982 saw the premiere of "Cheers" on NBC and "Cats" on Broadway. EPCOT Center opened in Florida. Ground broke for the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial.

Elizabeth was an easy baby with a ready smile. She is a confident person. I came across a saying that pretty much sums her up: "I am fairly certain that given a cape and a nice tiara, I could save the world!"

She's getting the tiara for her birthday! Not that she needs it. None of us do. We all have the potential to do great good, with or without the trappings.

Answers to trivia: Cricket Montgomery was a character in the soap "As the World Turns". The best picture in 1982 was "Chariots of Fire". The best selling album of all time is "Thriller" by Michael Jackson. Lionel Ritchie sang "Truly". "North and South" by John Jakes was the best selling fiction book the week of February 11, 1982.

Winners contact me, I'll see if I can arrange for a stale piece of cake to come your way!

Constitutionality versus voter's personal beliefs

Probably the greatest victory in California this week, is the paving of the way to the U.S. Supreme Court on the issue of gay marriage. At the center of this is Proposition 8 banning gay marriage which passed in November of 2008. A lower court in 2010 ruled it unconstitutional stating it violates the rights of gays and lesbians. This is one of those double edged issues. I am in favor of gay marriage however, of the people who voted, 52% voted against it. Perhaps the greatest lesson in this is getting the people out to vote because your vote does count. This case may not be the strongest when taken to the high court, but let's hope the mighty 9 vote on constitutionality and not on personal beliefs.

Karl Rove is calling "foul" on the Clint Eastwood Chrysler ad during the Super Bowl. Why? Because it made us feel good or because Ford didn't think of it first? That ad, instead of being a putdown of the American people said we are good, we will prevail and when faced with adversity will overcome. Clint Eastwood opposed the bailout of Chrysler and General Motors. Both

Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



companies are now thriving, both companies are now competitors of Ford and depending on who you believe at least some of the money has been paid back...with interest. So what's wrong with making us feel good? Mmmm maybe we would realize what a 'shlutz' Rove is.

This first week in February found the Susan G. Komen for the Cure Foundation in the midst of a witches' brew. Deciding to withdraw funding support of Planned Parenthood created a charity fiasco. Do I think Karen Handel, the charity's senior vice president for public policy, had a political agenda and was able to convince the Komen board of its validity? Definitely. However the Komen Foundation owes nothing to Planned Parenthood, but, having said

that, the latter group was well within their rights when they unveiled the loss of funds. Those who contribute to the Komen Foundation need to know where their money is going.

Rick Santorum took the ball and ran with it this week gathering up wins in three states. He may prove to be a bigger threat to President Obama than Romney or Gingrich. He has one thing in his pocket the other two are seemingly oblivious to and that is sincerity. The older, staid contenders are too political, too predictable or in some cases unpredictable, but Rick Santorum comes across as sincere, albeit way too conservative for me, but with honest beliefs in his values, something drastically missing in his GOP opponents. He and Obama might be a good race; clear cut differences, young, enthusiastic agendas and both with strong beliefs and with little desire to engage in personal attacks (unless attacked first). It could revitalize our country, if the old cronies allow it.

And so, as the saying goes, this was the week that was. mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net



Thumbs Up to our city guys for making the streets passable as soon as they did. It made it possible to be out on Saturday. Emailed in.

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