

# Opinion



## Monday's Salute

### Thumbs to...

✓**Ruth Clark** — who will fill out the remainder of her husband's (the late Sen. Stan Clark) term.

✓**Chautauqua Committee** — and all others involved, for all your hard work, and particularly to **Leilani Thomas, Sue Taylor, Judy Kleinsorge, Warren Hixson, Carolyn Armstrong, Jada Johnson, Ruth Clark, Sharee Fromholtz** and **JoAnne Sunderman**.

✓**Gerry Bieker** — on your years of service to the City of Colby. Good luck at Paola!

✓**Jeff Friesen** — on your selection as the “#1 book” at Pioneer Memorial Library.

✓**All 166** — the number who visited the blood drive last Wednesday at the Colby Community Building. Your giving helps other to continue living.

✓**Michael Giebler, Jessica Torluemke, Melissa Zerr, Kasiah Nichols, Christopher Broeckelman** — on earning “Business Scholar” status at Fort Hays State University.

✓**Jean Lowe** — Winona correspondent, for sharing the kind words about the beauty of our landscape as expressed by some of those taking part in the recent Biking Across Kansas. It's a message we need to hear from visitors because, unfortunately, we seem to take it for granted.

*This column is prepared each Monday morning by the newspaper's publisher. Submissions, questions or comments can be directed to him by e-mail to [td@nwkansas.com](mailto:td@nwkansas.com), fax 785-462-7749, phone 462-3963 or mail to 155 W. 5th, Colby 67701.*

Comments to any opinions expressed on this page are encouraged. Mail them to the Colby Free Press, 155 W. 5th St., Colby, Kan., 67701. Or e-mail [td@nwkansas.com](mailto:td@nwkansas.com).

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- U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback**, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202/224-6521
- U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran**, 1519 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. 202/225-2715
- State Rep. Jim Morrison**, State Capitol Building Rm. 171-W, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7676 e mail: [jmorriso@ink.org](mailto:jmorriso@ink.org) web:<http://www.ink.org/public/legislators/jmorriso>

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## Real weather scarier than movies

Not many movies ever scare me. Many times I'm grossed out or sometimes offended, but not hiding in my seat wanting to leave the theater in fear.

Some of the scenes in "The Day After Tomorrow" did just that.

It's a big-budget special effects flick where the earth's weather patterns are shifted because of global warming, which triggers a new ice age.

Many people scoff at the thought of global warming causing the climate to get colder.

In reality, it is not impossible, just improbable.

In the movie, the change happens within a matter of days, but NASA scientists say it could take as little as a decade or as long as 20 to 30 years if such a climate shift ever occurred.

Others also suggest we're headed toward the beginning of another ice age at some point, but there's no accurate way to predict if or when it might happen.

If so, humanity would have to deal with the consequences.

The science behind the movie is solid — the explanation in the film is simple yet easily understandable and a very real threat.

The world around us isn't static. Anyone living in Kansas, Colorado, Oklahoma, Texas or any other part of the western U.S. knows the old joke about not liking the weather. Don't like it, wait a minute and it'll change.

Scenes of tornadoes destroying Hollywood, basketball-sized hail in Tokyo, snow in India and waves crashing over the statue of Liberty in New York City left me squirming in my seat. The threat of real storms during the past week made me think that nothing can top the weather here in Kansas.



### Tisha Cox

#### • Off The Beaten Path

I remember the seasons growing up in southwest Kansas but it wasn't until I got older and moved away that I really began to appreciate how different locations can have drastically dissimilar weather.

I've seen summer monsoons in the high desert of the Colorado Plateau in Arizona, snow when there shouldn't have been in Colorado and Kansas, grey, rainy days in the Oklahoma fall, sweet, humid summer days in the south and of course, the epic storms of my native state.

But a movie pales in comparison to the reality of a Kansas thunderstorm the likes of which has been plaguing the area recently.

Hollywood can't match the fury of a real storm, nor can they imagine the awe and anxiety such phenomena inspire.

Lightning, hail, flooding and the straightline winds that during an interview last week a meteorologist from Goodland said could be more dangerous than a tornado.

It's not a happy thought, but neither is six months of unpredictable weather with thunderstorms and tornadoes.

That, I think, is the most frightening of them all. A hurricane's severity and path can be predicted and tracked with a certain amount of ac-

curacy but tornadoes are the wild card.

And of course, anyone lucky enough to be living in northwest Kansas knows what it's like to keep an ear on the radio and an eye on the sky for signs of storm.

The only thing I can liken consecutive days with storm watches and warnings is to being under siege from a powerful, unseen enemy that can strike at will and then disappear, leaving destruction in its wake.

Despite the dangerous weather, I guess the only thing anyone can do is learn to live with it. But to some people, such a price is worth paying to have the quality of life that exists on the plains.

At least it makes life interesting. Without the weather, people in Kansas would have nothing to talk about and we would all live boring, mundane lives that would go on uninterrupted.

But with the weather Kansas has, life is anything but mundane. It can make or break harvest, shut down major transportation arteries and cause more damage than people can imagine. The flipside is that it can also be one of the prettiest sights the state has to offer.

Watching a storm roll across the prairie, the clouds building into a massive tower of grey and white is one of the most powerful images I can think of. There's also nothing like waking up to a clear, blue Kansas sky.

That's what makes it all worth it.

I think.

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## 'Moral majority' not a majority

We do have readers of this page in our local paper! I hear from several. Some express agreement and encourage me to continue writing and some are quite emphatic in declaring their disagreement. We need more readers who are willing to put their opinions and observations on paper and submit for publication. We also need more readers who will read without preconceived notions of the writer's intent and positions.

I am well aware of the fact that I represent, in general for this community, a minority opinion on political issues. Unfortunately, I am being convinced more and more that I also represent a minority on moral and ethical issues as well. The so called "moral majority" (I am not a member of that select group) should wake up to the fact that they are not a majority and if they continue to try forcing their religious views through legislative law, they will lose! Christianity is not a majority world wide and quite frankly Christianity is fragmented by major divisions of theology and doctrine. What kind of posturing, compromise, etc. will it take to put together a coalition capable of enforcing the theology, morals, and ethics declared by the appointed authorities?

I did not say that I did not agree with many of the doctrines and theological beliefs of the "moral majority." I have some very narrow and definite opinions on what I believe God does and does not approve of. I simply do not agree with their political positions and methods of coercion to force everyone to come into line with their organization or theology. If and when they gain control of civil government their fragmentations will begin to create major problems. We will find ourselves in the same predicament the Middle East is. The absolute religious authority of man is corrupted by the very nature of man.

Freedom of religion is not freedom if the ar-

### Ken Poland

#### • Ken's World

gument and defense of civil law is claimed on the basis of a particular religious group's creed or document of authority. Our founding fathers were very careful to not declare any authority of the constitution based on specific religious doctrine or theology. Why? They had experienced first hand the results of Theocratic Government. Many of the original colonists had fled England to get away from religious authority enforced by government. They tended to settle in colonies where the majority held the same religious views with themselves. It didn't take very long for them to decide everyone would adhere to the majority on religious matters and were soon just as coercive as the Mother Church from which they had fled. The witch hunts, stocks and blocks on town square, etc. were very effective means of controlling the subjects of the local religious authorities. That system and environment gave rise to dictatorial rule of religious leaders and usually led to complete surrender of individual freedom.

Most all recognized Christian organizations teach that God created everything, both physical and spiritual. How, when, why, etc. is debatable. Quite frankly, I'm not sure the how, when, why, etc. is all important. Our relationship to the Creator is what counts. We, at least most of us, believe that God created us with a free spirit and that means we can accept or reject a personal

relationship with Him. The Church's responsibility is to encourage and nourish that relationship. Our programs and worship services should be confined to purely religious matters affecting personal responsibilities to maintain relationship with God firstly and man secondly. When our relationship with God is right, we will have proper relationship with our fellow man and our social and civil relationships with society will be proper.

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Did anyone ever stop to figure the exponential of forwarded email petitions? If only two recipients forward each time, there will be over one billion emails after only 30 forward cycles of the original message. (You don't believe it? Try the math.) Can you visualize the number when the goal of 1,000 signatures is met? Not apt to be very effective when dumped as spam.

If you want your message heard by the final recipient, email them with a short message of your own and send it directly to them. The intended recipient may never see your actual email or message. Their aids will advise them as to the number of contacts and the side of the issue they come down on. If the recipient is honestly trying to represent their clients, they will take into consideration those statistics.

If they are being influenced or controlled by special interests, it won't matter how many individuals express their opinions or preferences. They will vote their own self serving interest.

Unfortunately, we have too many politicians who are self serving. The special interest lobbyist carries far more clout with them than the general public.

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*Feedback to Ken Poland, Gem farmer and frequent contributor to this page. Email [rcwinc@cheerful.com](mailto:rcwinc@cheerful.com).*

### Doonesbury

#### • Gary Trudeau

