

# Opinion



## A Kansas Viewpoint

# Kansas nursing jobs need nursing

From The Topeka Capital-Journal

Another health care crisis is looming on the horizon, but state officials are working on a plan to deal with it. The latest threatened crisis is a shortage of nurses.

Labor studies indicate that the need for registered nurses in Kansas could grow 30 percent or more by 2010. ...Nursing school enrollments at Kansas colleges and universities are limited because all the classes are full. Some nurses are leaving Kansas for higher salaries in other states.

The problem is especially worrisome in the rural areas of Kansas, especially in western Kansas. But the Legislature and the Kansas Board of Regents have a plan that hopefully will help meet the demand. Of course — no surprise here — it will mean money.

The goal is to increase nursing school enrollment by 250 students a year. The program will increase the number of people qualified to teach in nursing schools. But teaching nurses is expensive. The program is expected to cost \$10.6 million over five years.

...Students would obtain loans to pay for their schooling, but any receiving a master's degree who agree to teach nursing in Kansas would have \$5,000 a year in loans forgiven. Yes, it's another request for taxpayer money.

But will your money in the bank take care of you when you're sick or injured? Something needs to be done.

### About those letters . . .

The *Free Press* encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten, if at all possible, and should include a telephone number and an address. Most importantly, all letters must include a signature. Unsigned letters cannot be published. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and length, and, likewise, reserve the right to reject letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive or libelous.

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# 2005: A personal odyssey



## Tisha Cox

### • Off The Beaten Path

I found the below questionnaire and decided to give my own answers. 2005 had its ups and downs for me and my family, but it had its fun, interesting and harrowing moments, too.

**1. What did you do in 2005 that you'd never done before?** Crowd-surfed at a concert. Petted manta rays and saw sharks. Stood up for something and actually meant it.

**2. Did you keep your New Year's resolutions, and will you make more for next year?** Technically. Does that count? Possibly, but I haven't decided yet.

**3. Did anyone close to you give birth?** No.

**4. Did anyone close to you die?** Yes.

**5. What countries did you visit?** None. Thought about it though. (Colorado counts. Parts of it are foreign to the United States.)

**6. What would you like to have in 2006 that you lacked in 2005?** Tickets to a Colorado Avalanche game.

**7. What dates from 2005 will remain etched upon your memory, and why?** April 20 and 21 — Saw U2 for the first time in concert in Denver, and met Bono.

**8. What was your biggest achievement of the year?** Growing up.

**9. What was your biggest failure?** Not getting the Southwestern Expedition off the ground. Again.

**10. Did you suffer illness or injury?** Carpal tunnel and a torqued back.

**11. What was the best thing you bought?** My camouflage messenger bag and my James Blundell CD.

**12. Whose behavior merited celebration?** My sister, Chris.

**13. Whose behavior made you appalled and depressed?** President George. W. Bush.

**14. Where did most of your money go?** I exercise my Constitutional rights on this one.

**15. What did you get really, really, really excited about?** Seeing U2, the hockey lockout ending, "Star Wars, Episode III" and archaeol-

ogy.

**16. What song will always remind you of 2005?** "In Gods Country," by U2.

**17. Compared to this time last year, are you:**

a) happier or sadder?: Happier.

b) thinner or fatter?: Push.

c) richer or poorer?: Push.

**18. What do you wish you'd done more of?** Been more spontaneous.

**19. What do you wish you'd done less of?** Been less uptight.

**20. How did you spend Christmas?** In Lakin, with family and friends.

**21. Did you fall in love in 2005?** No.

**22. How many one-night stands?** None.

**23. What were your favorite TV programs?** "E-Ring," "Lost," "Digging for the Truth."

**24. Do you hate anyone now that you didn't hate this time last year?** No.

**25. What was the best book you read?** "Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King."

**26. What was your greatest musical discovery?** Adema and The Killers.

**27. What did you want and get?** U2 tickets and Bono.

**28. What did you want and not get?** Hockey.

**29. What was your favorite film of this year?** "Constantine."

**30. What did you do on your birthday, and how old were you?** 32, Risked life and limb at a NIN concert.

**31. What one thing would have made your year immeasurably more satisfying?** Getting

"Indiana Jones" syndrome out of system.

**32. How would you describe your personal fashion concept in 2005?** More grown up.

**33. What kept you sane?** Pepsi, Starbucks, my sister, seeing Josh Bernstein each Monday night.

**34. Which celebrity/public figure did you fancy the most?** Hugh Jackman, Ben Browder and Sean Bean.

**35. What political issue stirred you the most?** ANWR, Iraq war.

**36. Who did you miss?** Seeing my friends each day.

**37. Who was the best new person you met?** Bono.

**38. Tell us a valuable life lesson you learned in 2005:** Truth is the most beautiful thing in the world.

Now that I've reflected upon 2005, it's time to look ahead to 2006, and my predictions for the coming year.

Sports: Mid-February, the Colorado Avalanche will rebound from a stinky start to the 2005 season by finally unloading captain Joe Sakic. It will be one of the most liberating moments in franchise history. This of course, after his abysmal performance at the winter Olympics, giving Russia the gold medal.

Entertainment: Reality television and 'infotainment' will quickly start to fall out of favor when people start to realize Jerry Bruckheimer really does own the airwaves and watches all his shows instead.

Politics: An announcement in late 2006 will get media attention, yet won't be all that surprising when Hilary Clinton formally announces her intention to run for president in the 2008 election — and her running mate will be Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius.

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# Halliburton's latest travesty

By Jim Hightower

This giant government contractor with tentacles running straight into the White House has previously been caught overcharging U.S. taxpayers and shortchanging U.S. troops for its work in Iraq. But now we learn that Halliburton has been profiting in Iraq by mistreating foreign workers.

By "foreign," I don't mean Iraqis, even though thousands of folks there are desperate for jobs. Instead, I mean impoverished Asian laborers brought by the thousands into Iraq from southern India, Thailand, and the Philippines to work for Halliburton on U.S. bases as cooks, electricians, launderers, custodians, etc. They are mostly

20-somethings, powerless... and exploited.

When recruited, most had no idea they were headed for a war zone. Once there, they are branded as TCNs - Third Country Nationals - which is both a derogatory term and an assurance of third class treatment, at best. Their pay is a fraction of what other Halliburton workers get, and their meager paychecks are often several months behind, keeping them in debt and in place. They work 12-hour days and get only one day a month off - without pay.

The TCNs live in cramped trailers jammed end-to-end with bunk beds. They're forbidden to eat with the Americans, nor do they even get to eat the same food - theirs is shipped in from elsewhere and often is cold and tasteless. They

cannot use the Internet, the phone center, or the recreation facility. Even though their bases regularly come under attack, TCNs are issued no body armor or helmets.

It's bad enough that Halliburton is doing this at all, but it's far worse that it's doing it under our flag, in our name. What must Iraqis and Asians think as they watch how one of our country's most favored corporations treats workers who are non-white and poor?

To learn more, go to the globalization watchdog group, [corpwatch](http://www.corpwatch.org): [www.corpwatch.org](http://www.corpwatch.org).

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*Jim Hightower is the best-selling author of "Thieves In High Places: They've Stolen Our Country And It's Time To Take It Back."*

## Doonesbury

• Gary Trudeau



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