

Opinion

A Kansas Viewpoint

Kansas needs to grow E85 pumps

From The Hutchinson News

Despite its No. 7 ranking last year in U.S. corn production, with a record 465.8 million bushels, Kansas lags behind other grain-producing states in converting some pumps at gasoline stations to handle E85 fuel.

Throughout the Midwest, the popularity of the renewable E85 — a blend of 85 percent grain alcohol distilled from corn and 15 percent gasoline — is increasing.

Farmers are buying new flex fuel vehicles, gas stations are converting some pumps to serve the new fuel and investors are building or expanding ethanol plants.

In Kansas, however, only 12 stations have converted, or indicated plans to convert, according to the National Ethanol Vehicle Coalition. Four of those stations — two in Great Bend, one in Hays and one in Sublette — are in south central and southwestern Kansas.

Compare that number to Minnesota, where the coalition reports 210 conversions. Or Illinois, with 122; Missouri, 57; South Dakota, 45; Iowa, 43; and North Dakota, 32.

Kansas has offered fuel retailers a state income tax credit equal to 40 percent of total conversion costs. That comes on top of a federal income tax credit equal to 30 percent of total conversion costs.

With a population of 2.7 million, Kansas should easily surpass the Dakotas, with a combined population of about 1.4 million, in the total number of E85 stations.

That would give the Sunflower State more than 77 stations with at least one pump capable of handling E85 fuel. Double that — reflecting the larger population base — and Kansas would have 144 stations offering E85, or 12 times as many as it has today.

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.

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 jvannostrand@nwkansan.com or pdecker@nwkansan.com. Opinions do not necessarily reflect the *Free Press*.

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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**, 2443 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. 202/225-2715 or Fax 202/225-5124
- State Rep. Jim Morrison**, State Capitol Building, 303 SW 10th St. Rm. 171-W, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7676 e mail: jmorrison@ink.org web: www.ink.org/public/legislators/jmorrison
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SOMEWHERE in FLORIDA...



The golden horse

OK, I've had it.

Earlier this year, agricultural advocate Trent Loos spoke at Colby Community College and informed the audience society is putting way too much attention on animals.

According to his research, people are calling themselves parents of their pets, not owners. Insurance companies have developed and sold pet health insurance policies. Movie producers are using animal characters to take a stand with animal rights.

Animals still need fed, exercised and examined by doctors. Loos' concern is we are putting animals on a level higher than what they should be on. I can't argue with him. We sometimes make animals greater than their purpose.

Our infatuation with animals continued Saturday during the Preakness horse race in Baltimore. If you happened to be in another galaxy and missed the attention, Barbaro, the hands down favorite to win the race, quit before the first turn because of a broken ankle. I credit the jockey for noticing the injury and stopping Barbaro to prevent a bad situation from getting worse.

The jockey's quick thinking should be the core of the stories and the national sports media should have moved on by now.

But it has not. The horse is still getting the attention.

The announcers for NBC, which broadcasts the race, were different once they realized Barbaro was out of the race. Their enthusiasm,



John Van Nostrand

• **Line in the Dust**

like what was in the biased pre-race coverage, was gone.

Bernardini, the winner, was shown, but post-race coverage was replay after replay of what happened to Barbaro and its owner sitting in the stands. Some of that footage was in slow motion.

NBC informed its viewers Sunday during another sporting event that Barbaro went into a lengthy surgery. Stories since have been about Barbaro's recovery. His racing days are done. If the horse had to be euthanized, that is worth a story, but Barbaro is still alive.

Get-well posters from fans have been placed all around where Barbaro is recovering. How many of those fans do the same thing for a friend or family member who has a medical emergency? These are not Hallmark cards plastered to the fence, but handwritten messages on poster-sized pieces of cardboard.

The pity for Barbaro is only sugarcoating the

horse racing industry because it feeds the gambling industry. Barbaro, which decisively won the prestigious Kentucky Derby May 6, was trained to win money for gamblers and the owner. That was the horse's only purpose.

Televised sports has begun catering more to sports gambling. Just look at the massive growth in fantasy football and how TV embraces that.

It is a shame Barbaro couldn't finish the race. Barbaro did not do what Lassie did. Barbaro didn't bark for help after little Jimmy fell into the river. Barbaro ran around a track.

Sports and injuries go hand-in-hand. Injuries are one of the risks of playing games no matter if the participants are on two legs or four. Race horses, like the ones who compete for the Triple Crown, can be valued in the millions. When they go down, like Barbaro, there is a concern.

Injuries happen in other sports. Football players get knocked out of games and they are valued in the millions too. Football players' injuries are mixed in the game story in the next day's news.

Dr. Dean Richardson, who treated Barbaro, said the owners main concern was for the health of Barbaro, not for the millions of dollars the colt could make as a stallion if he recovers completely.

But will those fans and gamblers recover? John Van Nostrand is publisher of the Colby Free Press

Quit whining

Jay Kelley

• **Guest Commentary**

Prompt, early action might have negated the need for each of these events, or at least minimized their impact.

It is the other extreme, trying to fix everything, I am addressing. The result, by the way, is usually as bad as apathy. While the apathetic simply ignore the problem until they are either goaded into action or swallowed up, the cynical simply whine, but do nothing, until they are destroyed as well.

What do we do? The first thing is to quit whining, but the second, equally important thing, is to go to work.

Go to work by ordering your life according to the highest moral standards. It doesn't matter what others do in this regard; you only have to face God for your actions.

Ordering your life doesn't mean you will always be perfect. In fact, I can guarantee you will not. It does mean you will not accept less than perfection as the goal. Along that line, forgive yourself, but don't forget that you make mistakes. Too often we apply forgive and forget to

the point we forget we aren't perfect.

By the way, you will find forgiving others much easier when you have looked at your own life objectively and admitted your own mistakes.

Second, take advantage of opportunities. You can't change the world, but you can change your little corner. The people you affect will affect others and so on until the world does finally change.

You can't take advantage of opportunities until you have something to say and you can't have something to say until you have done something about your own life, another little plug for accepting a high moral standard.

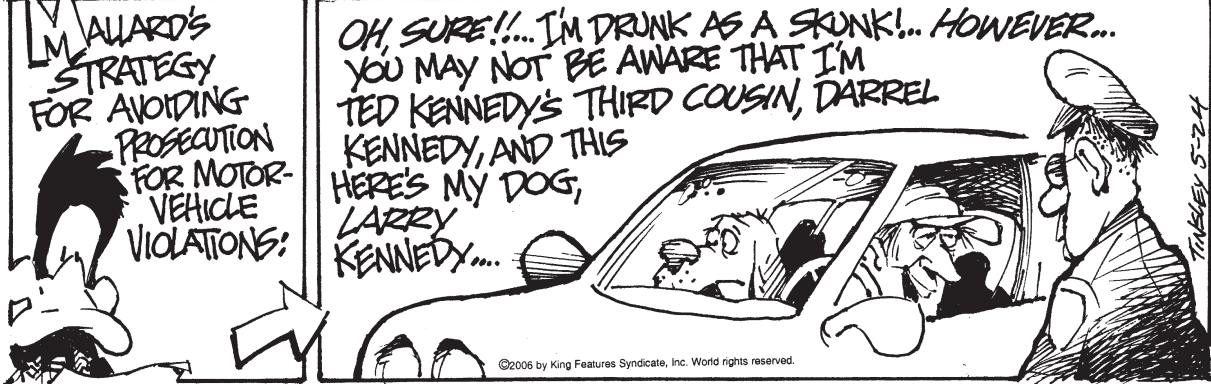
Third, don't dwell on what you can't change. That is not to say we should not address those things, but it is counterproductive to allow things we cannot change to control our lives. It is often the best course when faced with wrong to just do right and allow the wrong to implode of its own weight.

Finally, look for the positive. An elderly lady was known for her positive outlook, much to the distraction of an equally elderly gentleman who found fault with everything. One day, much in disgust, the old man told her, "You'd say something nice about the Devil himself!"

She replied sweetly, "At least he's consistent." Jay Kelley is a local minister and writer who speaks his mind from time to time. His e-mail is jkelly@st-tel.net.

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley



Doonesbury

• Gary Trudeau

