

Opinion

A Kansas Viewpoint



Big break for small businesses

From The Lawrence Journal World

Repealing property taxes on new business machinery and equipment is a sensible and practical way to support business in Kansas.

After voicing her support for the repeal in December, Gov. Kathleen Sebelius completed the circle by signing legislation that will put the measure in force on July 1. The exemption applies to new machinery and equipment including office fixtures, such as desks and computers.

Officials of the Kansas Chamber of Commerce point out that the exemption will help large businesses in the state but is especially important to small businesses, which create 80 percent of the state's new jobs. In signing the bill, Sebelius hailed the measure as an incentive for Kansas businesses to invest in new technologies, which, in turn, allows those businesses to retain and create jobs in the state.

When the state faces so many important demands on its tax funds, it can be uncomfortable to voluntarily give up a whole class of tax revenue. But eliminating the property tax on new equipment and machinery is an important investment in Kansas business that should pay a significant return in terms of bolstering the state's economy.

Your turn

Remember to give; it can save a life

Jackie Stephens
Jo Cheney
Colby

When she resigned her position in 1904, American Red Cross founder Clara Barton challenged the American people to pick up where she had left off. The Red Cross still operates under Ms. Barton's philosophy of citizen service to our country and that giving blood is a community responsibility.

Red Cross Blood Services is committed to its mission of fulfilling the needs of the American people for safe and ample blood supply through voluntary donations. Blood is needed in emergencies for people who have cancer, blood disorders, sickle cell, anemia and other illnesses. Some people need regular blood transfusions to live. Nearly five million people received blood transfusions every year. Your donation could be the difference between life and death.

Giving blood is safe and easy. All blood types are needed; especially type O, which can be given to almost anyone in an emergency. Please donate at the Colby blood drive from noon to 6 p.m. Tuesday at the Colby Community Building. Call 1-800-GIVE LIFE for an appointment.

For more information on donating blood, how to volunteer or to schedule an appointment, call the above phone number or visit www.bloodgiveslife.org.

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

COLBY FREE PRESS

155 W. Fifth (USPS 120-920) (785) 462-3963
Colby, Kan. 67701

State award-winning newspaper, General Excellence, Design & Layout Excellence, Column Writing, Editorial Writing, Sports Columns, News, Photography.

Official newspaper of Thomas County, Colby, Brewster and Rexford.

John Van Nostrand - Publisher

jvannostrand@nwkans.com

NEWS

Patty Decker - Editor

pdecker@nwkans.com

Tisha Cox - General Assignment

tcx@nwkans.com

Jan Katz Ackerman, Area Reporter

ackermanjk@ruraltel.net

ADVERTISING

Crystal Rucker - Advertising Sales/Director

crystalr@nwkans.com

Jasmine Crotinger - Advertising Sales

jasmiec@nwkans.com

John Altman - Advertising Sales

jaltman@nwkans.com

BUSINESS OFFICE

Lea Bandy - Circulation Manager

lea@nwkans.com

Jeanette Applegate - Bookkeeping & Ad Building

japplegate@nwkans.com

Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator

support@nwkans.com

NOR'WEST PRESS

Jim Bowker - General Manager

Richard Westfahl, Lana Westfahl, Ron VanLoenen, Judy McKnight

THE COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920) is published every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, except the day observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, by Haynes Publishing Co., 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE is paid at Colby, Kan. 67701, and at additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to The Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701. THE BUSINESS OFFICE at 155 W. Fifth is open from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, closed Saturday and Sunday. MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, which is exclusively entitled to the use for publication of all news credited to it or not otherwise herein. Member Kansas Press Association, Inland Press Association and National Newspaper Association. **SUBSCRIPTION RATES:** In Colby by carrier: 4 months \$38, 8 months \$53, 12 months \$70. By mail with in Colby and the nine-county region of Thomas, Sheridan, Decatur, Rawlins, Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace, Logan and Gove counties: 4 months \$50, 8 months \$62, 12 months \$78. Other Kansas counties: 4 months \$57, 8 months \$67, 12 months \$81. All other states, \$81, 12 months.

Nor'West Newspapers

Haynes Publishing Company



Time to crack open a book

With summer's unofficial start Memorial Day, and the summer movie season getting attention, I have an admission to make.

I've spent more time reading in my free time than keeping up with what movies are coming out between now and September.

Shocking? Not really. Although I did see "The Da Vinci Code," mainly just to get it over with, and sat through "X-Men: The Last Stand" twice because I have a 20-year relationship with that movie series' print incarnation.

I knocked off the annotated "Dragonlance Legends" trilogy in less than two weeks before Memorial Day weekend (1,100 pages, mainly at lunch and before turning in for the night) and read "The Light of Other Days" by science fiction authors Stephen Baxter and Arthur C. Clarke.

I'm a voracious reader. This year alone I've tackled everything from "The Astonishing X-Men" graphic novel "Gifted" by "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" creator Joss Whedon to "Anna Karenina."

Of course, there is no accounting for taste and friends and family sometimes accuse mine of being dubious at best.

And over Memorial Day weekend, I chose to turn off the television in favor of doing something more interesting. Given the state of television these days, reading is more fun, and a better escape.

Just take a look at the advertising spots for the new summer programming.

It includes everything from a fictional show on NBC about people winning the lottery to a "reality" program on another channel on some former model opening her own agency.

Entertainment? It must be considered that on some remote corner of the planet.



Tisha Cox

• Off The Beaten Path

But back to books.

A few columns back I went off on "The Da Vinci Code," and with good reason. Now the movie is out, and it has spawned even more infotainment on the subject.

That's reason enough for me to turn off the television, ignore the computer and pick a book that has absolutely nothing to do with Dan Brown's fictional revisionist history.

Except in a summer or two, it's going to be hard to ignore that author again when another of his novels is adapted as a movie. A book of his that came out before the "Code" is being made as a sequel to the movie.

If I was going to recommend something fictional, that deals at least partially with the Holy Grail, I would tell someone to give Stephen Lawhead's "Pendragon Cycle" a try.

Six books, "Talesin," "Merlin," "Arthur," "Pendragon," "Grail" and "Avalon" follow the rise of the Summer Kingdom of King Arthur's reign, and the classic Arthurian Grail quest and a battle for the future of the Island of the Mighty.

It might seem like a lot of books, but it really isn't a lot of hard reading when compared to say, the now 12-book "Wheel of Time" series by Robert Jordan. I gave up on that a long time ago, but will probably head back to it sometime.

Books on my summer must-read list this year

include "Neuromancer" by William Gibson.

He was the first person to coin the word "cyberspace" and pretty much ushered in the birth of the cyberpunk generation.

I've only read one other of his books — "Pattern Recognition," and enjoyed it.

I'll probably try to hunt down some of Neil Gaiman's "Sandman" series. I have never read any of it, but have several of his novels under my belt.

Another favorite is Laurell K. Hamilton's faerie series. Not for the faint of heart, but it's an awesome read.

I know it's all science fiction or fantasy, but I do read "real" books every now and then.

My taste in non-fiction is all over the place, but I tend to prefer biographies, travel or the outdoors. My latest choice in that department is the autobiography of Jim Whittaker, the first American to climb Mount Everest.

"A Life on the Edge: Memoirs of Everest and Beyond" chronicles his time as a guide, the first American ascent of Everest and other mountains climbed, both literal and metaphorical.

In that vein, another good read is Edward Abbey's "Desert Solitaire." It describes his experiences in the American Southwest, and the value of wide open spaces.

Definitely a must-read.

That is what I love about reading — a new adventure with every chapter, and the chance to go places and learn something without ever having to leave home. And with gas prices what they are, a trip to the library is free.

Tisha Cox is a general assignment reporter/photographer for the Free Press. Her column appears on Mondays. tcx@nwkans.com.

An administration in review

What have we accomplished in the last five years? Will George W. Bush go down in history as being the greatest President manqué in history?

He seems to aspire to being known as a warrior on a quest to establish democracy around the world. So far he has been suspended just a little short of his goal of establishing even one new democracy — Iraq. There is still some hope, but a nation that has never experienced individual choice and freedom is in a civil war of three distinct religious and political factions. President Bush accomplished his first and foremost goal of deposing Saddam Hussein. But, his failure to plan for the collapse of law and order has left that nation in chaos — a ship without a rudder.

He is the standard bearer of the political party that has championed the hope of less government interference in our private lives. So far, we have seen more, not less, governmental meddling and intrusion.

Following the sweeping victory of his party in the legislative branch, he managed to squeak past to garner the majority of electoral votes without having a majority of the popular vote. He and his political partners in congress gallantly rode in on their "white horses" with promises of a moral and ethical revolution. It seems

Ken Poland

• Ken's World

to me, we have about as much corruption in government as ever. Political party affiliation is a poor yardstick to measure the morals and ethics of any individual.

We were in good shape with a balanced budget and the economy was strong. The economy may have been static to weakening, but it was still stronger than it had been for years. Our president pushed for tax reform. Tax reform? Under his plan, a greater burden of taxation was shifted to the middle and lower income tax brackets. This plan has accelerated the ever widening gap between the super wealthy and the other 97 percent of the populace. It hasn't been a positive shift for most of us.

Paralleling the tax reduction, we came in with increased military spending that rivaled any time in our history. We spent more and collected less. Not a good business plan, whether for government or private enterprise. Borrowing from future generations is not apt to inspire them to

look back with honor and praise for the Bush era.

His inane tendency to appoint persons to fill bureaucratic positions on the basis of their loyalty and devotion to himself has resulted in some very inept and ineffective leadership in many departments.

He has managed to alienate many world leaders and nations (both large and small) with his inept appointees and intransigent policies. Under his policies and practices we have managed to lose integrity in the sight of the world by dishonoring and disregarding commitments, treaties and agreements.

Both political parties have their share of "duds", but our present administrations appears to me to be competing for the record.

Incidentally, as some will accuse, I do not hate Mr. Bush. I haven't had any personal contact or direct dealings with the president. But my indirect exposure to his policies and programs have certainly not endeared me to the man.

He must surely be frustrated in the realization that he is falling far short of his ambitions and perhaps even his capabilities. He has only a little over two years to recover his lost popularity and fulfill his campaign promises.

Ken Poland is a Gem farmer who occasionally contributes to the Colby Free Press.

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

