

Opinion

A Kansas Viewpoint

E85 pays in so many ways

From The (Pittsburg) Morning Sun

In April, the state of Kansas took a step in the right direction when it lowered the tax on E85 ethanol fuel, making the tax equivalent to the state's gas tax, when measured on a miles per gallon basis.

It's time the state of Kansas go further with its initiative. As gas prices continue to rise, Kansas must look for ways to promote E85 and encourage drivers to purchase the fuel. The best way to do so would be to give tax breaks to E85 users at the pump.

The state has started down this road, already. Kansans who buy new flexible fuel vehicles and use E85 can now receive a tax credit. An individual who purchases a new FFV has from the date of purchase through that calendar year and the next calendar year to purchase 500 gallons of E85. The owner can then submit those receipts with their taxes and receive a \$750 tax credit.

It's another step in the right direction, but these drivers shouldn't have to purchase 500 gallons before they are rewarded. Something needs to be done at the pump.

According to Kansas Ethanol on ksgrains.com — the site for the Kansas corn, grain sorghum, corn growers and sorghum produces associations and commissions — currently, there are less than 20 retailers in the state that offer E85. The Producers' Coop in Girard is the only local retailer offering the mix.

According to the site, 20 more E85 stations are being constructed in Kansas right now. That's 20 new businesses adding to the Kansas economy. A tax break could drive the demand for E85 so quickly that the number of new retailers could double again in no time.

By making E85 even more economical than gasoline, the state would be promoting Kansas farms, making the environment a little cleaner, bringing some relief to our dependency on foreign oil, creating jobs and promoting the development of Kansas ethanol plants.

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.

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

Where to write, call

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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
- State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol, 300 SW 10th St., Rm. 128-S., Topeka, Kan. 66612, 785/296-7399 ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us



If price was no object

I know summer is technically over with the passing of Labor Day, and with it, the summer travel season. But with a little more than two weeks until the fall equinox, there is still time to think about places left to go. (Especially for those who haven't taken a vacation yet.)

Thoughts of trips dance through my head, especially after the long weekend, but fuel prices are still prohibitive to me, and probably others. But that hasn't kept me from thinking about where I would go if price were no object.

So, without further ado, here are my top 10 places that would be perfect to visit.

10. Cairo/Alexandria, Egypt. Self-explanatory. The Nile, the city itself and the main attraction of the Giza Plateau in Cairo. Home of the Pyramids, and the Sphinx, and the National Museum of Cairo, which houses the largest collection of Egyptian artifacts and mummies on the planet. And Alexandria is another ancient city, which was once home to the library of Alexandria, the greatest repository of knowledge for its time. It now has a new library that rivals the ancient. (A bit of trivia, the city of Alexandria was one of many founded by Macedonian conqueror Alexander the Great, that also bore his name.)
9. Stonehenge. One of the wonders of world. Plus a chance to check out crop circles. . .
8. Capadocia, Turkey. Cave formations where people still live today. A beautiful, mysterious place.
7. Ayers Rock, Australia. Giant red rock in the heart of the Australian Outback. Sacred to the Aborigines, known as Uluru. One of many places



Tisha Cox

• Off The Beaten Path

called the heart of the Earth.

6. Easter Island. Rapa Nui, navel of the world. Giant stone moai, and the mysterious bird man cult.
5. Japan. Anything and everything there. God trees, Shinto shrines, Shibuya Station. And the macaques. Wild monkeys running loose. What's not to love?
4. Great Wall of China/Flaming Cliffs, Mongolia. The Great Wall is an awesome feat of engineering worthy of any travel itinerary. And the Flaming Cliffs because of their importance to paleontology, and not to mention the fact it's a beautiful place. Even if it is in the middle of nowhere. (Plus it was the destination of American Museum of Natural History expeditions in the early 20th century.)
3. Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands), British Columbia, Canada. Kayaking the islands north of Vancouver to see the islands, sacred to the Haida Indians, who built many totem poles, which still stand today, and are only accessible with a guide. Definitely a must-do.
2. New York City/Los Angeles. To do the Baz

Luhmann "Sunscreen" thing — get too soft in one place, too hard in another. Just to see what life is like at both extremes after living life somewhere in the middle.

1. American Southwest. Slick rock, red rock. Slot canyons, the Grand Canyon. Ruins and rivers. All in our backyard, and Edward Abbey country.

Untimely death

By now I'm sure everyone has heard of the death of Steve Irwin, better known as the "Crocodile Hunter." The Australian conservationist/adventurer died Monday while snorkeling off the Great Barrier reef, filming a documentary on the planet's largest reef. He was killed by a manta barb through the heart.

I'm sure there are many who will say something was done to antagonize the ray, to elicit aggressive behavior, but Irwin's death was more than likely an accident. I think he was someone that would put himself in danger to keep an animal from being hurt, or endangered.

Instead, I hope people remember Irwin for his love of nature, compassion for wild creatures and his enthusiasm and drive to share that with others.

His zoo in Australia was started because of that, and in the wake of his death, it will continue to his mission, and will be his legacy.

He will be missed.

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

Are you a unifier or a divider?

We are a fractured society, both religiously and politically. We operate on a winner takes all mentality and there is no room for negotiation or middle ground. You either eat the whole enchilada or you throw the entire dish away. It is as if the recipe is patented or copyright protected and you cannot substitute any ingredient. You will accept the cook's menu without privilege of substitution of vegetable, desert or salad dressing.

Mr. Bush claimed a public mandate with less than a 1 percent majority of the public vote. Four years earlier he was very happy to claim the same kind of interpretation, with less than a majority of public vote, on the basis of electoral college majority. In other words, he divided society and claimed almost dictatorial rule.

Either you accepted his, or his puppeteers authority, or you were a villainous liberal to be cast out into the outer darkness of political realms.

You are either a member of the religious right with their puritanical moral rigor or you are a member of the atheistic left with no rudder, drifting in a turbulent sea of depravity. There is no gray area between the absolutes of black and white. Neither the right nor the left will reach out in an effort to close the chasm separating society. Either we will have no rules or limits on society or we will be ruled with an iron fist by those who claim absolute authority as God's appointed rulers of this earth. Some of us, who cannot agree wholly with either extreme, find ourselves up a creek without a paddle. Neither extreme wants to offer a port in time of storm.

Ken Poland

• Ken's World

The moderates will perish. Don't be surprised if the two extremes in our United States perish and another world power takes control of our society.

It might be proper to recommend, at this point, that we have a little lesson in civics and history. Our forefathers attempted to thwart this battle by restricting either of those extreme's ability to force their beliefs on the other. The system of checks and balances was to prevent the power of a few or even the power of a majority to deny freedom of conscience for the individual. Although severely tested at times, that system has worked. Will the intractable attitude of society let it continue to work?

The moderates or in-betweeners are not acceptable in either political camp.

The moderates of the majority's camp are embraced, temporarily, by the minority camp, only until, with the help of the moderates, they can regain majority rule. Then the moderate is considered traitorous and no longer to be entrusted with any position of influence in either camp. You must be either hot or cold and the luke warm will be spewed out. (That's even scriptural, but it is God, or his angels, that will do the final spewing and not man!) But, let's forget about Scriptural claims and admit that it is hu-

man nature to not reach compromise without a valiant struggle to get what we want without giving anything in return. Hang on to the bitter end and then divide the opposition if necessary to win.

No one considers themselves to be truly middle income when it comes to economic policy. The divide between the rich and the poor reveals the worst in man. You either have to embrace the policies that protect wealth and further accumulation of wealth or you declare yourself as poor and entitled to redistribution of the wealth. The danger the truly middle class face is aligning themselves with either of the extremes. Sometimes pride causes us to reach for the top end or greed causes us to reach for the bottom end. You may find yourself not having been rich enough to benefit from the tax policies and benefits accruing to the wealthy. Or, you may lose what you have when you join the extreme socialistic policies that declares equality without responsibility. Is there no middle ground?

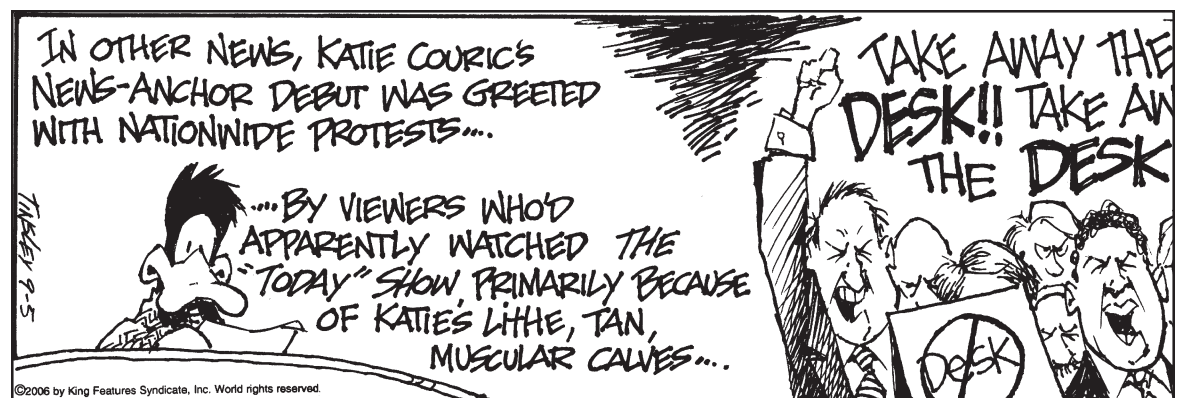
Partisan politics is a divider, when protection of the party takes precedence over protection of individual freedom. Religion becomes a divider when purist theology with self proclaimed divine authority denies the God given choice of acceptance or rejection by the individual.

Are you a unifier or a divider? Are you willing to seek the good of mankind in society and let God divide the goats from the sheep or the tares from the wheat?

Ken Poland lives in Gem and occasionally contributes to the Free Press.

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley



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John Van Nostrand - Publisher
jvannostrand@nwkansas.com

NEWS

Patty Decker - Editor
pdecker@nwkansas.com

Tisha Cox - General Assignment
tcx@nwkansas.com

Jan Katz Ackerman, Area Reporter
ackermanjk@ruraltel.net

ADVERTISING

Crystal Rucker - Advertising Sales/Director
crystalr@nwkansas.com

Jasmine Crotinger - Advertising Sales
jasminec@nwkansas.com

BUSINESS OFFICE

Lea Bandy - Circulation Manager
lea@nwkansas.com

Jeanette Applegate - Bookkeeping & Ad Building
japplegate@nwkansas.com

Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator
support@nwkansas.com

NOR'WEST PRESS

Jim Bowker - General Manager

Richard Westfahl, Lana Westfahl, Ron VanLoenen, Judy McKnight

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