

Opinion

Generational transition

By John Schlageck, Kansas Farm Bureau

As the end of the first decade of the 21st century moves closer, beginning farmers face stiffer challenges than 10, 20 or 30 years ago. Tomorrow's farmers will need capital, education, general farm experience passed on from one generation to another and a chance to one day farm on their own.

With almost every passing year some older and middle-aged farmers sell out or retire from the land. If you believe some of these eager, younger farmers aren't concerned about losing the companionship and experience of a father, mother, uncle, neighbor or some other relative, ask one of them the next time you visit a farm.

These young farmers value the advice and counsel of their elders who have weathered two or three hail storms in a row, or lost a crop to floods or devised a marketing plan to ensure a profit selling next year's crop. Still, generation transition may be one of the toughest challenges facing agriculture. Each situation is unique.

Younger generations start with energy and have new ideas that help the farm compete in this modern age. At the same time, the older generation is secure in ways they have established to maintain the farm and burdened by the thought of limiting part of their income potential.

About six years back Richard Sasse, Smith County farmer, stepped away from his farming operation at the tender age of 62. Darned early retirement for most Kansas farmers.

Sasse farmed all his life in Smith County and recently hosted Gov. Sebelius on the Governor's Farm and Ranch Tour sponsored by Kansas Farm Bureau.

As Sasse explained his situation, his son, David, was chomping at the bit. After considerable discussion with his wife, they made decided they were financially able to turn the farm over to their son. They believed they needed to support their young son and his desire to farm.

"That doesn't always happen in farm families because the father likes and wants to stay on the farm and be a part of it," Sasse said. "I think sometimes we stay at it too long. Then a son or daughter decides they don't want to farm because they're having to struggle with the management of the father."

Sasse came up with a plan for his son that would enable the young producer to "make a go of it" in the family farming operation without putting to much of a financial burden on him.

After careful planning and discussion, Sasse set up a lease-to-buy on the machinery and livestock facilities for his son. This was extended over several years. The arrangement has worked well.

Now that he's been on the farming sideline for six years, Sasse says he's moved from management to labor. He still helps during the busy seasonal times of harvest and planting.

The Smith County farmer would like to believe he's been a resource for his son during this transitional period. He says he believes they have a good working relationship as David has increased the size and scope of the family farming operation.

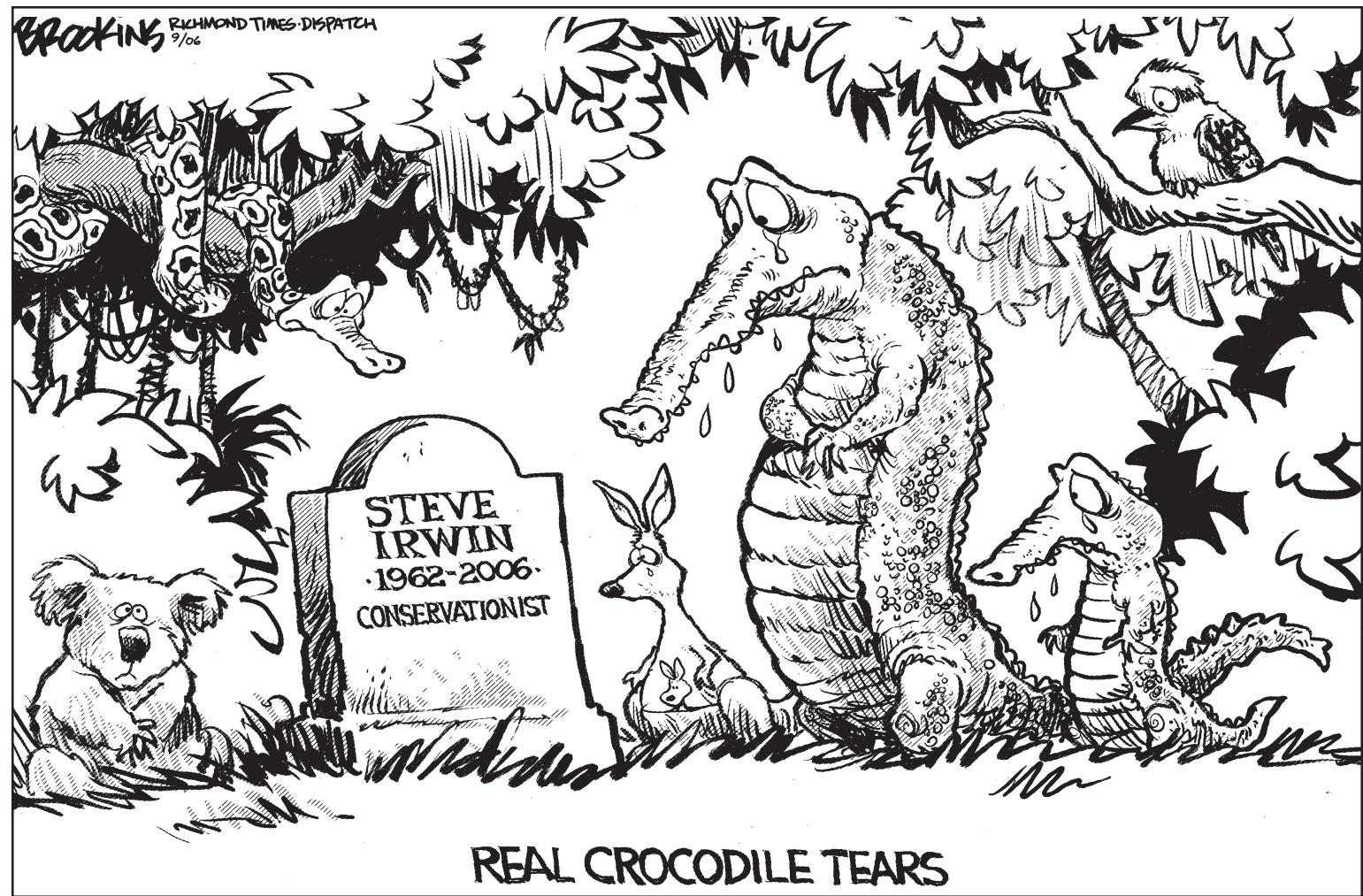
Without question, all children learn from their parents. They pass on information about living, farming or whatever their occupation. Some of this information cannot be found in textbooks.

Fathers and mothers provide nurturing which allows sons and daughters to grow, learn and acquire confidence in their abilities. Such confidence comes with experience and is accompanied by graying around the temples.

Agriculture needs these young farmers like David Sasse. Agriculture also needs fathers like Richard Sasse who have confidence, vision and the willingness to give the next generation the opportunity to farm.

And who knows, maybe one day the sixth generation will farm the Sasse land. This might well be Sasse's grandson, Kyle, who's 5 years old.

"He's real interested in livestock," Sasse says. "He's got farm written all over him right now. What happens down the road, we'll have to wait and see."



Never to forget

As everyone knows, today marks the fifth anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon.

Growing up, I always heard my parents and others talk about how they remembered where they were during significant days in their lives, such as the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, or the day President Ronald Reagan was shot.

In my life, those days have been the destruction of two space shuttles, and of course, Sept. 11.

I remember vividly. That September morning, I was living in Golden, Colo., working at a weekly paper there. My sister, Chris, was visiting. She was asleep, and I was getting ready to go to work when our father called. He asked if I had the television on. I told him no, and he said to turn it on.

It was just in time to see the first tower fall. The rest of that day was a blur, but the other memory of that day that stands out, besides seeing the towers fall, was that first night after it happened.

My apartment building had a clear view looking east toward the city of Denver. With the exception of the lights of Golden, even Denver itself wasn't lit as brightly as usual.

There was no traffic, and the only planes in the sky were military flying circles over the metro



Tisha Cox

• Off The Beaten Path

area.

We stood out on the balcony, wondering what was next.

Five years on, Chris won't let me forget how eerie and surreal was the whole experience.

"A calming eerie creeping fear that things would never be the same," she calls it.

How could we? How could anyone?

Has much changed for the better in the half-decade since it happened?

Bin Laden is still alive, spewing his anti-American, anti-Democracy philosophy. Iraq stands on the brink of anarchy.

And here at home, not much has changed.

People will pause to remember the dead today, and honor the sacrifice of those who tried to stop the hijackers, and to also honor the efforts of all the unsung heroes who helped out that day.

That is important to remember.

I hope the dead are at peace now, and understand the need for the living to move on.

Every American needs to remember the ideals this country was founded on — including self-sacrifice. I've always been proud that as a nation Americans have never, ever been afraid to give of themselves in times of need, at home and abroad.

Five years later, we can't, and shouldn't be afraid. Because to give in to fear would be to hand a victory to every person who reviles the United States and everything it stands for.

And we can't be complacent, giving up civil liberties for the illusion of safety.

Five years ago, this country faced one of its darkest hours and instead of collapsing in on itself, people found a way to put aside their differences for the greater good.

I can't think of a time when that has happened, before or since. That is an amazing thing, that so many different people were willing to do that.

That is what makes the nation we are and a lesson that parts of the world could stand to learn.

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

The messages we send

If you have access to the internet go to this URL. If not, think about the Salem witch trials, the stocks in the middle of town square, even the violent capture, trial, and crucifixion of Christ. Or in modern time, the fanatical terrorism and demonstrations around the world (Iraq, abortion clinics, political protests turned violent at trade centers, even the civil rights protests that erupt into violence). Both the pros and cons have been guilty of violence.

http://atheisme.free.fr/Religion/In_the_name_of_God

When we look back in history, we find the Jews, the Roman Catholic church, the Muslim organization, many of the denominations born out of the reformation, the New Age groups, and nearly all the other religions have attempted to establish their superiority in the world. The violence depicted in these scenes reveals the nature of man, not the nature of God!

Look at these pictures and then tell me — Would Jesus take the podium, with microphones broadcasting around the world, to declare His sovereign power to coerce all of humanity to accept His theology and political system? (This URL depicts President Bush, but, rest assured, we have spokesman representing all political and religious organizations declaring their way is the only way.) Would Jesus organize militias and terrorist volunteers to reign destruction against any who didn't recognize Him as the supreme ruler? Would Jesus exercise his Commander in Chief, Imam, or Ayatollah authority to roll out the awesome power of military might,

Ken Poland

• Ken's World

activate the militia, cheer on the terrorist, or nationalize the Reserves and National Guard units?

Or, would he ignore the civil politics and reject the hierarchy of established religion (regardless of its flavor)? There really isn't much reference in the New Testament to explain just where he stood politically. If he had been proactive in the civil and political issues of the day, don't you think we would have some reference to it? We do have record of his direct confrontation with the hypocrisy of the established religious leaders.

I'm not advocating ignoring civic duty and political involvement of anyone, Christian or otherwise. What I'm saying is, "Do not use the superiority of your religion to force society to accept your opinion as the only valid way for man to live."

The acts of terrorism and the war in Iraq are perpetuated by a triangulation of political power and control, economics, and religion. Advancing religion with acts of violence cannot project the love of God, whether that religion be Christian, with its splintered factions, or Jewish, or Muslim, or whatever.

We have only one account in the New Testa-

ment showing Jesus using physical force, when he cleaned the money changers out of the temple. (Nuffs a nuff of anything, right?) We have no account of him confronting or resisting civil authority. But, we have many many accounts of him, on the scene (wedding, rock throwing festival for the adulteress, lepers along the road, compassion on the hungry multitude, etc.), meeting the physical and spiritual needs of mankind. Did Jesus demonstrate a "social gospel" as well as a "salvation gospel"?

Did Jesus rail against his executioners as he hung on the cross? No! He prayed, "Father forgive them."

Why must the representatives of Christianity bemoan the rejection of their voice and inequitable treatment in society? Why must we plead for government protection from our critics? Why must we turn to civil authority to enforce our theology? Why must we refuse to acknowledge our misdeeds, both present and past? Is it because we are insecure in our faith? Are we the first of God's followers to be persecuted and rejected by the world? Will we be the last?

Our Biblical hero, David moaned and cried about his situation in the Psalms, but his cry was directed toward God, not his fellowman. And he always came to the conclusion that God had not deserted him and that his relationship with God was far more satisfying than any accommodations afforded by his relationship with his fellowman, friend or foe.

Ken Poland occasionally contributes to the Colby Free Press.

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.

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to think "profiling" is worse than the slaughter of innocent people....

In memoriam, 9-11-2001

2006 by Ken Tinsley. All rights reserved.

TINSLEY 9-11

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
jasminec@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 \$40, 8 months \$56, 12 months \$74. By mail with in Colby and the nine-county region of Thomas, Sheridan, Decatur, Rawlins, Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace, Logan and Gove counties: 4 months \$53, 8 months \$65, 12 months \$82. Other Kansas counties: 4 months \$60, 8 months \$70, 12 months \$85. All other states, \$85, 12 months.

Nor'West Newspapers
Haynes Publishing Company