

# Opinion



## A Kansas Viewpoint

### Faith in the campaign

From The Wichita Eagle

As a general rule, voters should be wary of politicians speaking about their faith. They're running for public office, after all, not Sunday school teacher. ...

That said, religion is central to the lives of most Americans, and the candidate forum held recently at a Pennsylvania Christian college offered the two Democratic presidential contenders a chance to speak to issues of faith.

It also provided a welcome respite from the gutter-ball politics and nitpicking bitterness of recent months.

The forum was informative and it was thought-provoking to see the candidates grapple with vexing moral and spiritual questions that weigh on public policy, such as, "When does life begin?"

Hillary Clinton said she believed that "the potential for life begins at conception," although she went on to explain why she's pro-choice. She was appropriately humble on other questions, such as why God allows innocent people to suffer. ...

Barack Obama spoke to the need to welcome religious values and arguments in the public sphere, although he also argued that a president must use inclusive language that recognizes the diversity of faith traditions in America. ...

It was interesting that Obama said he would continue President Bush's White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, which has enlisted churches to help government tackle problems from hunger to teen pregnancy. But one of the lessons of that initiative, which achieved far less than hoped, is that faith-based initiatives aren't a priority for most politicians, except at election time.

It's easy for candidates to give lip service to faith. In the secular, highly partisan world of Washington, D.C., they have a harder time putting religious values into action.

If nothing else, the forum elevated the debate and encouraged a little more compassion, humility and tolerance in political life — values sorely lacking of late on the campaign trail.

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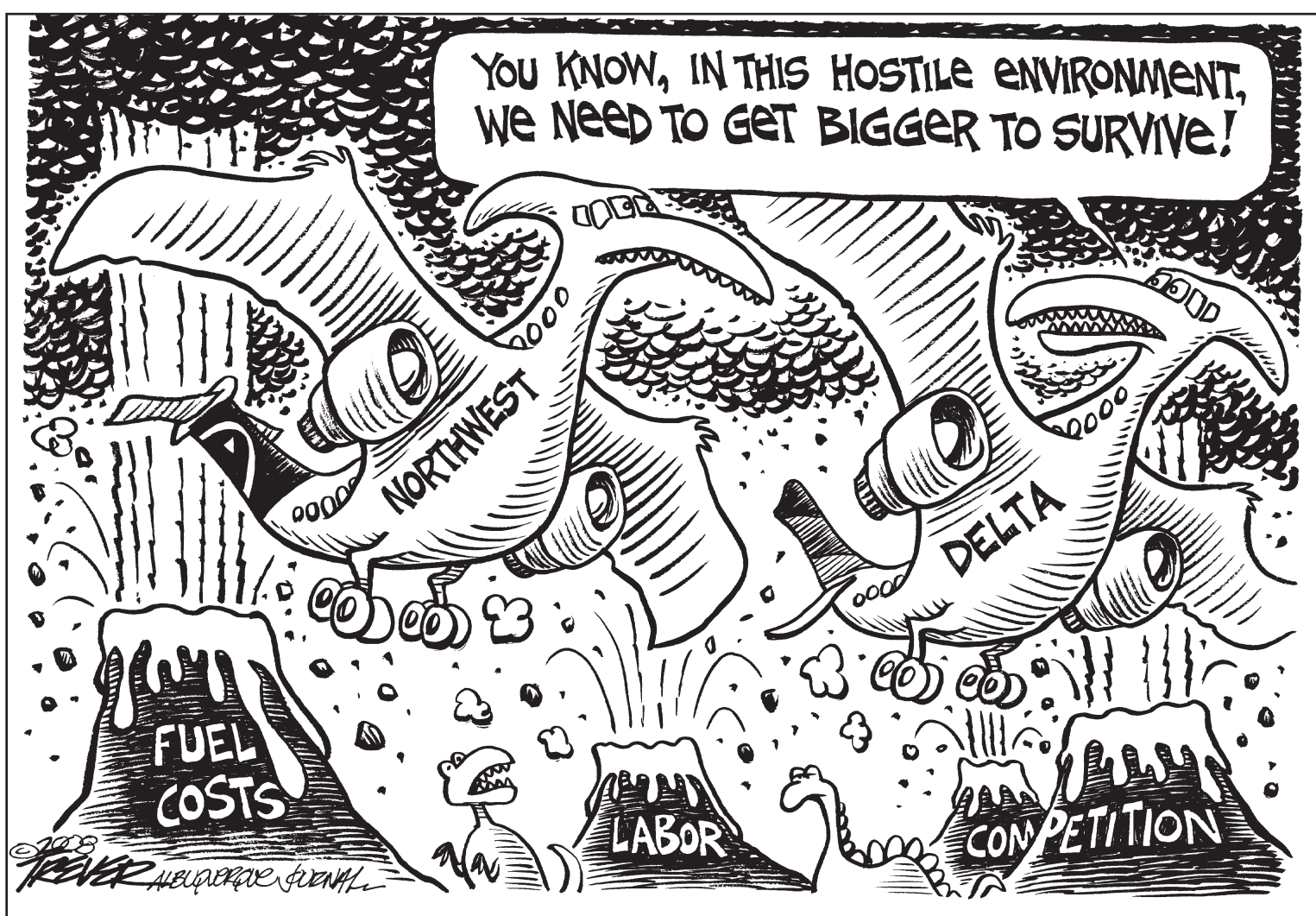
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### Dressed for success



**Jan Katz Ackerman**

• From Where I stand

Spring has sprung and so have a few other things.

As people shed their winter coats and sweaters, it's becoming more and more revealing that some individuals need to take a minute and look in the mirror before heading outside. While I'm all for self-expression, there tends to be a growing number of people who want to see how low they can go.

And I'm not talking about the limbo dance, rather I'm talking about the need to assess just how much skin is too much to show during spring and summer.

I attended a meeting the other day and I was only one of a few ladies who were taken back by another's effort to look pretty. Well, the effort failed with a blouse that was just too low in the front.

I'm all in favor of the scooped neckline, but not to the point that looking at such a neckline on someone I felt the need to wonder were my grannie's hanky was so I could lend it to the gal to cover up with.

While some people view modesty as a sign of weakness, many, like myself, view it as an expression of living a quiet, Christ-like life.

Despite many folks in today's society having the opinion that modesty should be thrown out with the baby's bath water, I believe it's time for both genders to formulate the need not to flaunt one's sexuality. Sometimes, like in the situation I'm speaking about, a person's effort to be pretty can have a negative result and actually offend members of not only the opposite sex, but the same sex.

Is it possible to dress modestly? Yes.

Consider the dress test outlined by authors Shannon Ethridge, Stephen Arterburn and Josh McDowell in their book "Every Young Woman's Battle." While these questions are addressed to ladies, in my opinion, they apply to men as well.

1. Is your top so thin others can see through it or is cleavage showing?
2. Do your shirts show your back or stomach?
3. Do you wear shirts with sexually suggestive slogans on them?
4. Are your jeans or skirts too tight you have to suck in your stomach to zip them?
5. Are your jeans so low your underwear shows?
6. When seated, is your skirt high above your knee?
7. Does any slit in your skirt come too far up your leg?

If you answered yes to any of the questions, your attire is probably not modest enough to be worn in public.

Showing too much skin is not allowing the opposite sex to guard his or her eyes from lust.

In a day when underwear is often layered and worn as outerwear, too many young ladies, and sometimes young men, are forgetting the need to be modest before, and after, marriage. Modesty shouldn't stop just because there's a wedding ring on your finger.

We are told in the book of Colossians, Chapter 3: 12 that God chose us to be "holy people" and we are to clothe ourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Clothing ourselves with these attributes carries over to clothing ourselves so that we do not make others sin (aka lust) when they look at us.

In Philippians 2: 3 we are told, "Don't be selfish; don't live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself." We are to have the mindset of Christ, which is again, not to make others lust by showing too much skin.

I know of one elected official who actually sent one of her employees home to change clothes after arriving at work with too much skin showing. The workplace is no arena for flaunting one's body — well built or not.

So as the temperatures change from cooler spring ones to hotter summer ones, please bear in mind that not all of us enjoying seeing you bare. Whether it's at work, the swimming pool, washing your car in your driveway, please be modest by taking the test outlined above and check the mirror before heading out.

After all, some of us really don't want to know how low you can go.

— Jan Katz Ackerman is a reporter for the Colby Free Press

### Reducing fuel use increases jobs

By Carl Pope

No wonder Americans are so hungry for change. We are being squeezed by record gas prices that are also driving up the costs of food and anything else that is transported to stores. Home energy bills are rising. Oil companies continue to reap record profits and get huge tax breaks from the U.S. government. We continue to rely on foreign countries for oil. The economy is tanking and people are losing their jobs.

Switching to clean energy represents the type of big change that America is looking for. People are ready to move beyond oil and coal, to use renewable wind and solar power and to become more energy efficient. Americans recognize and accept clean energy as a driver that will transform our economy, create and keep good jobs, and generate new investment and opportunities. At the same time, this economic transformation will allow us to free ourselves from the big oil companies and foreign countries and it will cut air, water and global warming pollution.

This win, win, win approach is not some pie-in-the-sky, next generation solution. We can do it now.

We can start saving money on energy right now. Energy efficiency technology already exists and many people are already realizing the savings and reaping the benefits. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, the cost of heating, cooling, and lighting our homes and

workplaces could be cut by up to 80 percent or more just by using the "off-the-shelf" technologies available today.

Turning down the thermostat one degree in the winter can save you 3 percent on your electricity bill. Drying clothes on a line or rack can save you \$80 in a year, increasing to more than \$500 over five years. Replacing 10 regular light bulbs in your home with compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) would net you savings of \$92 in one year.

Governments can save money with energy efficiency as well. The City of Denver now saves \$218,000 annually after it replaced all traffic lights with LEDs. Dane County, Wisconsin, now saves \$150,000 each year after installing more efficient lighting and heating systems in its government buildings.

American ingenuity and innovation can lead the way when it comes to improving clean, renewable energy technologies and fighting global warming. If we can have one industrial revolution — why can't there be another? We have the sun and the wind, we have the technology and the ingenuity, and we have the same can-do spirit that transformed our economy during WWII and won the war. We must focus our investment and initiative on the challenge of building a clean energy economy and dealing with the problem of global warming.

Investing in clean energy is already creating jobs around the United States. In Pennsylvania, Gov. Ed Rendell said investments in clean energy have created 3,000 new jobs in the renewable energy sector since 2003.

That's just one state — a study from the Blue-Green Alliance reports that requiring 20 percent of our country's electricity come from renewable sources by 2020 would create 820,000 jobs across the country. According to a report from the Union of Concerned Scientists, if the United States had that kind of renewable electricity standard it would create \$94.3 billion in new capital investment, income to farmers, ranchers, and rural landowners, and in new local tax revenues.

This Earth Week, learn how we can do it, how others are already changing their energy, cutting costs, making money, and saving the planet, and how to spread the word. Together we can build a clean, renewable economy with the help of our allies in the faith, union, and business worlds, and with the contributions of our friends and neighbors.

We can increase the use of affordable renewable energy, we can make our homes, cars and buildings more energy efficient, we can save money, boost the economy and create jobs — and we can reduce global warming, leaving a planet that's safe and clean for our children.

— Carl Pope is executive director of Sierra Club, America's oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. — www.greenpeace.org

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