



Other Viewpoints

Schools can help bring grads home

New University of Kansas chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little now knows a bit more about southwest Kansas. Gray-Little, just one month into her new post, visited Garden City ... as part of a mission to learn how KU might better recruit and retain students from the region. It was an opportunity to visit with school officials and others who gave Gray-Little more insight into the local challenge of encouraging youngsters to stay in school and go to college. The chancellor acknowledged the importance of making sure all students, including those from lower-income families, know college is an option, especially with a number of financial aid options available....

In a part of the country that offers a nice lifestyle, but may not have all the cultural amenities many young professionals want, it's important to craft aggressive strategies to lure and keep good workers. Partnerships that help communities with "grow-your-own" programs encouraging students to return home to work are proven ways to accomplish that goal. KU and other schools have made nice strides in the development of these programs and incentives that benefit college students and communities alike. The hope is that new efforts and initiatives garner support from policy makers, who have to acknowledge the need, even in a time of tight budgets, to do more to slow the exodus of bright, promising young professionals from Kansas. As the chancellor pointed out, getting more rural students to college campuses is a good start, but encouraging them to return to the hometowns that need them must be a priority as well. — Garden City Telegram, via The Associated Press

Where to write, call

- U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774
- U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521
- U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran, 2202 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715 or Fax (202) 225-5124
- State Rep. Jim Morrison, State Capitol Building, 300 SW 10th St. Room 143-N, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7676 e-mail: jmorriso@ink.org web: www.morrisonfamily.com
- State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol Building, 300 SW10th St., Room 128-S., Topeka, Kan. 66612, (785) 296-7399 ralph.ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us

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Steve Haynes - Publisher s.haynes @ nwkansas.com

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Kevin Bottrell - News Editor kbottrell @ nwkansas.com

Andy Heintz - Sports Reporter aheintz @ nwkansas.com

Marian Ballard - Copy Editor mballard @ nwkansas.com

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Strange sound a blast from the past?

A strange sound drifted through the newsroom at the Colby Free Press on Friday. We had about three conversations going on at once in the newsroom, at least one person on the phone, and someone waiting for a computer printout. The usual buzz around deadline. Suddenly, that odd noise intruded. Everybody got quiet. Then we started asking each other "What is that?"

Our immediate thought was that it was a typewriter, but there's a problem with that idea. The only typewriters left in the building are tucked away in dark and inaccessible corners of dark and inaccessible closets. The last one that worked, I'm told, we gave to Sen. Pat Roberts, who started his career as a reporter.

Note that we're talking a business in which the quintessential scene in classic movies has always seemed to be an open room with about 20 reporters sitting at desks and pounding away on typewriters, some using only two fingers.

Yet we have no typewriters. Oops, I take that back. I think I saw an old Royal in the press room – so called because that was the room where we had presses, when we had presses, back in the 1990s and before. Now we have a network, and while we put the paper together here in Colby, it's printed in Goodland.

We have a few other antiques sitting around as well. There are some of the earliest Mac computers, or at least boxes that say that. There are a few old monitors from early days. And I suspect there's another typewriter or two sitting around, though I'm not sure where. There have been a lot of changes in informa-



Marian Ballard

- Collection Connections

tion processing, and the newspaper business – along with any business primarily focused on moving information – is at the forefront.

No one here types with two fingers. Not everyone types well, but we all muddle through. After all, it's been a required course in schools for a lot of years, though it isn't called typing anymore. After all, there are few typewriters, only computer keyboards.

We still use pencil and paper, but we use them in different ways. Reporters still carry note pads, but when they come back to the office, there's a computer waiting instead of a typewriter. Editors mark printouts by hand, though that's usually the second or third time a story's been read, since mistakes are easy to miss the first time through.

What's new and what's old around the office has changed a lot over the years. I'm sure there was a day when the Free Press had a linotype machine. I have vague memories of seeing one in use at my hometown paper. As I recall, it was kind of big and scary, though I was pretty small at the time. When we were sorting through an old desk a few months ago, we found a roll of tape used

to make lines and boxes; I remembered that from my days on the college newspaper. I also remember fixing errors by cutting out single letters and words with a razor knife and pasting them on the page. Now, it's all computer. If I want a line or a box, I tell the computer to draw one. If I want to correct my spelling, I type over it. It's all different. I started to say it's so much simpler, but that's not quite true.

Most people today can figure out how to use a computer, or at least find someone to help them do what they need to do. Back in the days of newsrooms filled with typewriters, most people could figure out how to use one.

I'm not confident, however, that most people who can use a computer can use a typewriter, and vice versa.

People who understand how to put a dozen pieces of paper in a tray and push a button may not find it so simple to thread a sheet of paper around a typewriter platen. People who understand what "spell-check" is may have no idea how to go about correcting an error once it's on a real page. Typewriter erasers, and even correction fluid, have been all but forgotten.

By the way, that strange sound we heard in the newsroom? It was only a 10-key adding machine – or should I say calculator. It's hard to keep up.

Marian Ballard has collected careers as counselor, librarian, pastor, and now copy editor for the Colby Free Press. She collects ideas, which are more portable than other stuff.

Remember harvester; enjoy the harvest

Indian summer is without a doubt the best season to live in the Sunflower State. Temperatures are milder – gone are the sweltering dog days of summer, although for many Kansans this has been the coolest summer we'll ever see.

Trees are flashing brilliant golds, reds and silvers. Stormy skies have been replaced by a deep blue backdrop overhead.

Autumn is magical for another reason. While the growing season has come to an end, harvest is moving ahead full throttle.

Like the trees, fields of grain have donned their fall colors. Red, green and silver combines chew their way through the abundant corn, milo and soybeans. Farmers are working long hours, often late into the night, to bring the bounty of harvest into storage.

For farmers, harvest is everything. Bringing the crops out of the field is the only thing that matters. A half year of time, money and labor has gone into producing this grain. Farmers cannot risk leaving the crop standing.

Yes, autumn signals the end of a cycle. Soon the weather will turn cold. Arctic winds will



John Schlageck

- Insights Kansas Farm Bureau

whip down from the north, accompanied by sleet, freezing rain and snow. During this period, farmers will dream about spring, when they can plant fall crops again.

Kansas farmers are special people. They meet our food, fuel and fiber needs. Thanks to them, we never have to worry about having enough food.

The next time you walk into your local supermarket, remember the wheat in your bread comes from someone's Kansas farm. Milk comes from carefully cared for dairy cows.

Remember, while the butcher performs a service in cutting and packaging the steak or hamburger your family eats, the Kansas rancher cares for and produces the beef. Styrofoam

cartons only hold eggs that are laid by hens on farms.

Kansans and others across our land remain the most fortunate people in the world. No other country can claim that so few people feed so many.

Today, less than 2 percent of our nation's population are farmers. They are capable of supplying the other 98 percent with food and feeding people around the world.

Indian summer won't be around forever. Try to take a trip into the country soon. As you drive through farm country, notice the fields of corn, milo and soybeans. Take a look at the cattle, hogs and sheep grazing the pastures.

Don't forget the Kansas farmer who helps feed you, your family and our hungry world.

John Schlageck of the Kansas Farm Bureau is a leading commentator on agriculture and rural Kansas. He grew up on a diversified farm near Seguin, and his writing reflects a lifetime of experience, knowledge and passion.

Mallard Fillmore

- Bruce Tinsley

