



Other Viewpoints

Students gain asset of financial literacy

Pardon the pun, but teaching Kansas kids how to manage money and make good consumer choices is a capital idea. For several years, Topeka School District has required students to take a consumer education course to get a diploma. Now, the Wichita district has come on board, taking action last week to make a financial literacy course a requirement for high school graduation beginning with this year's sophomores.

The course in Wichita would include financial planning, banking and making sound consumer choices.

Board member Kevass Harding said he believed the requirement was overdue.

"A lot of adults don't understand what a budget is or how to balance their checkbook, so I am excited ... that our young people will get this," he said in a story published by *The Wichita Eagle*.

Giving students a foundation in money management and consumer affairs certainly makes sense — so much so that Kansas legislators passed a law in 2002 calling for teachers at every grade level to provide financial literacy instruction.

However, not all students are getting the lesson. A 2008 survey by the state Department of Education revealed that most teachers were ignoring the law.

Considering the dismal results of the survey, school systems that have adopted financial literacy curriculum deserve praise.

The requirement adopted by Topeka schools allows students a choice of courses in consumer skills, entrepreneurship and economics. The consumer-skills class provides information about credit, banking, investments, income taxes and purchasing. The two other courses also provide offer fundamentals about money and spending.

With school districts from border to border facing budget cuts, those that are finding a way to teach money management and consumer skills deserve even more credit.

True to the nature of the coursework, a hard fact about providing financial instruction to students is that it doesn't come without a price. Wichita won a \$25,000 grant that officials say will cover the expense. Another issue is ensuring that teachers are using sound practices.

Considering that schools risk losing money if their test scores drop, it's a bold investment these days to funnel resources into instruction on a "nonessential" subject.

In districts where that investment is being made, though, graduates will be better off.

— *The Topeka Capital-Journal, via the Associated Press*

Write us

The *Colby Free Press* encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of general interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise. Nor do we run form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous from this area should be submitted to the Want Ad desk.

Letters will not be censored, but will be read and edited for form and style, clarity, length and legality. We will not publish attacks on private individuals or businesses not pertaining to a public issue.

Before an election, letters (other than responses by a candidate) will not be published after the Thursday before the polls open.

COLBY FREE PRESS

155 W. Fifth St. (USPS 120-920) (785) 462-3963
Colby, Kan. 67701 fax (785) 462-7749

Send news to: colby.editor@nwkansas.com

State award-winning newspaper. General Excellence, Design & Layout, Columns, Editorial Writing, Sports Columns, News, Photography. Official newspaper of Thomas County, Colby, Brewster and Rexford.

Steve Haynes - Publisher
s.haynes@nwkansas.com

NEWS

Kevin Bottrell - News Editor
kbottrell@nwkansas.com

Andy Heintz - Sports Reporter
aheintz@nwkansas.com

Marian Ballard - Copy Editor
mballard@nwkansas.com

Vera Sloan - Society Editor

Shelby Pulkrabek - Society Reporter
colby.society@nwkansas.com

ADVERTISING

Andrea Bowers, Kathryn Ballard
Advertising Representatives
abowers@nwkansas.com kb Ballard@nwkansas.com

Kylee Hunter - Graphic Design
khunter@nwkansas.com

BUSINESS OFFICE

Robin Tubbs - Office Manager
rtubbs@nwkansas.com

Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator
support@nwkansas.com

NOR'WEST PRESS

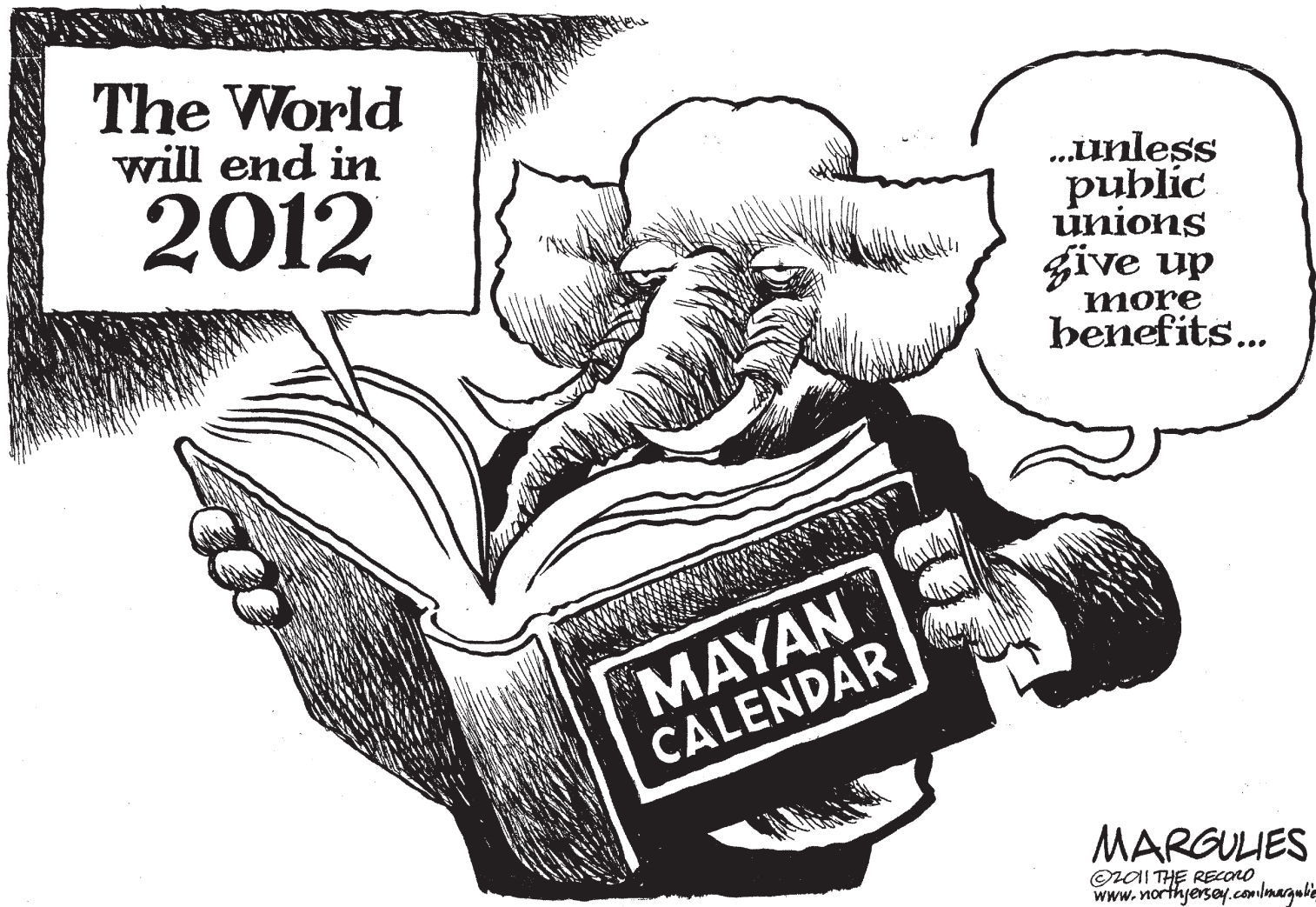
Richard Westfahl - General Manager
Lana Westfahl, Jim Jackson, Betty Morris, Jim Bowler, Judy McKnight, Kris McCoole

THE COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920) is published every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, except the days observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, by Nor'West Newspaper, 155 W. Fifth St., Colby, Kan., 67701.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE paid at Colby, Kan. 67701, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth St., Colby, Kan., 67701.

THE BUSINESS OFFICE at 155 W. Fifth is open from 8 a.m. to 6 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 herein. Member Kansas Press Association and National Newspaper Association.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In Colby, Thomas County and Oakley: three months \$35, one year \$85. By mail to ZIP Codes beginning with 676 and 677: three months \$39, one year \$95. Elsewhere in the U.S., mailed once per week: three months \$39, one year \$95. Student rate, nine months, in Colby, Thomas County and Oakley, \$64; mailed once per week elsewhere in the U.S. \$72



MARGULIES
©2011 THE RECORD
www.northjersey.com/margulies

Japan tour a real eye-opener

While stationed at Misawa Air Base in Japan, we got to experience town life when we were given passes to go in and stay the weekend.

Our transportation involved those military 400-ton trucks again. OK, an exaggeration, but the ride felt like that's what we were in, not driving on a road but in the ditch next to it. It was, however, a good way to sober up on the trip back to the base. And the drivers, Japanese guys, didn't help the ride any either.

My favorite place — and a favorite of some of my buddies — was the Kansas Bar. Yep, that's right. Some of the bars were named after states, and they contained accommodations for wholesome activities designed to keep the military crowd from crying for their mommies.

It didn't take the ladies in the bars very long to learn all of our names. I'll never forget this one gal asked me, "Where you from, GI?" And I told her I was from Hays, Kan. "College town, huh?" she replied. Stunned, I said, "Yes, but how did you know that?" She smiled as broadly as a yen (that's the name of their money) and said, "You just told me."

She and the other girls had a good laugh over that. I always called them the clever little mistresses of midnight.

After my buddies and I had downed a few bottles of Japanese beer, we headed for a restaurant. The little waitress, not all that familiar with the English language, asked what we wanted. We were in agreement that we all wanted chicken-fried steaks with french fries.

It was a long exchange for the poor waitress, but eventually she said she thought she



Tom Dreiling

• A View From the West

knew exactly what we wanted. Well, she was close; we each had a plate on which there was a steak and some fried chicken. I guess that other mess was the french fries. I really didn't want to eat it because it looked like it could get up and walk away.

Because the hour was late and the last truck had departed for the barracks, we decided to bed down at a hotel. Fancy it was not! We rented a room with two beds to accommodate four GIs. The lady at the desk took us up to the third floor to our room.

While we were preparing to jump in, one of the guys looked for the thermostat to get a little bit of heat into the freezing room. The clerk said, "Heat? No have!" She said we should climb in bed and she would bring heat up to the room.

Heat, part of room service? It consisted of a towel wrapped around a heated brick. She placed one by each of our feet. She said she would check back during the night to see if we needed more. We did, again and again.

There was no shower, no bath, no nothing to prepare for a new day. When we got back to the barracks, those fortunate airmen who opted to stay on base instead of in town said

we looked like something the rats chased out of a sewer line.

In town, incidentally, sewer lines were a popular sight. They were open lines along the side of streets and when the need to use them beckoned ... well, you did your thing in the company of many others. Sanitation wasn't a big deal. You can imagine the odor! That's just the way it was and had been for a long time.

There were times we would venture into the little towns near the base to see what they were like. English was not their thing. Funny how we and they were able to put together what we were asking and they were answering. I liked those little villages. We saw real Japanese people who worked in the fields and some in the towns that only had a handful of little stores.

The two years went by relatively fast. I was misty eyed when we climbed into one of the Flying Tiger aircraft for the trip back to the States. During my time in that country, I learned a lot books couldn't tell me. And what I thought at the outset was a land of nothing, I learned was a land of plenty — plenty of proud people going about the business of survival.

Unfortunately, I missed a reunion of the veterans who served in the Security Service at Misawa, held in Philadelphia on June 24 to 27. It would have been nice, but sometimes aging gets in the way.

Tom Dreiling of Aurora, Colo., is a former publisher of the Colby Free Press and The Norton Telegram, and a former long-time editor of the old Goodland Daily News. He is a life-long Democrat, a curmudgeon come lately and a newly minted Coloradan.

Senator pledges to cut through red tape

Sen. Jerry Moran has begun a twice-monthly column called "Moran's Memo" to give readers insight into his work in Washington and highlight issues affecting their daily lives.

When establishing this great nation, our Founding Fathers envisioned a limited government charged with serving the people. Unfortunately, today our government has grown into a vast bureaucracy, entangled in red tape and slow to respond.

Too often Kansans simply don't know where to turn for help. That's where I'm glad to extend a helping hand.

As one of your U.S. senators, I am privileged to have the opportunity to be of immediate and direct assistance to the citizens of Kansas. Helping Kansans who have difficulty navigating the vast network of federal resources is a long-standing tradition I will continue. Just last year, my Congressional office handled over 1,200 requests for help with the federal government and since January, we have already received more than 200 at the Senate office.

Should you need assistance when working with any federal agency, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can submit a request for help by visiting my website at moran.senate.gov or by calling my office at (785) 628-6401.

I have also established several regional offices throughout our state so you can easily contact me.

My Hays office is still at 1200 Main St., Suite 402, and can be reached by calling (785) 628-6401. I've opened offices in Olathe at



U.S. Senator Jerry Moran

• Moran's Memo

23600 College Blvd., Suite 201, (913) 393-0711; Topeka at 800 S.W. Jackson, Suite 1108, (785) 232-2605; and Wichita at 3450 N. Rock Rd. Building 200, Suite 209, (316) 631-1410. There will also be an office soon in Pittsburg to serve southeast Kansans.

You can also visit my website to learn more about the services I offer, such as:

- Service Academies: It is my honor to nominate bright young Kansans to our service academies: the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, the U.S. Naval Academy, the U.S. Air Force Academy, the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. I am now accepting applications for the class entering in summer 2012.

- Capitol Tours: Most of Washington's institutions are open to the public, however, a few require an entrance pass or reservations. By contacting my office well in advance, individuals, families and groups — both large and small — can arrange for free, guided tours of sites like the Capitol Building, the Senate Gallery, the White House, the Pentagon and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

- Meetings and Photos: One of the things I enjoy most is meeting Kansans who have traveled to Washington to see their capital city. If

your school, civic or religious group would like to meet with me or have a picture taken on the steps of the Capitol, please contact my office as far in advance as possible to avoid scheduling conflicts.

- Flag Requests: My office would be glad to request an American flag that has been flown over the United States Capitol building for Kansans. If you are able to provide sufficient advance notice, we can arrange for the flag to be flown on a requested date. With your flag, you will also receive a certificate to commemorate the event. There is a fee for each flag.

- Internships: Senate internships are available in my Washington and state offices in the fall, spring and summer terms.

Whether it's something as small as helping you enjoy your trip to Washington, or as important as expediting passports, working out a problem with veterans' benefits and medals, or working through an issue with Social Security or Medicare, I am proud to assist Kansans in helping their government work for them.

Working together, we can realize the government our Founding Fathers intended.

To receive Sen. Moran's e-newsletter, *Kansas Common Sense*, sign up at moran.senate.gov.

Jerry Moran, of Hays, is the junior U.S. Senator from Kansas. His committee appointments include Appropriations; Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; Veterans' Affairs; Small Business and Entrepreneurship; and the Special Committee on Aging.

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

