



Other Viewpoints

Special honor goes to fallen warriors

Many of the holidays we celebrate in this country have been given through the centuries and decades additional meanings and trappings far removed from the sentiment that sparked their creation.

That's not to say we forget the event, the person or the people we honor, but sometimes a holiday in and of itself appears to be a sufficient reason for celebrating and enjoying the accompanying festivities.

Memorial Day, is among those that many of us recognize primarily as a signal the calendar and seasons march on and summer with all it entails will soon be upon us.

Memorial Day is a time for family gathering, picnics, swimming pools, boating and many other manners of relaxation as most people enjoy a three-day weekend.

Of course, it is much more than that and should be remembered and celebrated as such, although we begrudge no one a break from work and a few days of fun.

However, we all should find the time to remember those we honor and pause to reflect on the liberty and freedom we enjoy because they laid down their lives for this country and the principles upon which it was founded.

What we celebrate as Memorial Day began in 1868 by order of Gen. John A. Logan, commander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, the organization for Union veterans of the Civil War. Logan ordered that May 30 of that year would be recognized as Decoration Day in honor of the Union soldiers who died in the war. The holiday has since become a celebration in honor of all the country's war dead and the name was officially changed to Memorial Day by federal law in 1967.

Today, many people consider the holiday as a time to honor all their family's predecessors. That's fine. We should remember and honor our ancestors, and what better time to do it.

But we cannot forget that this holiday is in honor of those who have died on battlefields in this country and across the world while fighting under the stars and stripes of the United States flag, beginning with the banner that carried only 13 stars.

From the Revolution to the Civil War through two world wars and wars in the jungles of southeast Asia and the sands of the Middle East – and we're not forgetting the other wars on this continent or in Korea – this country has been blessed with men and women who had the courage to fight and die for it.

Some of the wars listed above were supposed to be the ultimate, and last war, for our country or our planet. It didn't work out that way, and there's no reason to believe the battles our military personnel are fighting now will be the last in which some of our bravest citizens sacrifice their lives for the rest of us.

We will celebrate a holiday in the fall to honor all the people who have served in our armed forces since the United States won its freedom so long ago.

It's fitting that we do that, but this day is to honor those who fell and didn't get up, whether they now lie in a cemetery in this country or Europe or were never found and lie somewhere on a jungle floor and buried alone in the sand somewhere.

This day is dedicated to those warriors, and we salute them.

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

We encourage comments on opinions expressed on this page. Mail them to the *Colby Free Press*, 155 W. Fifth St., Colby, Kan., 67701, or e-mail colby.editor@nwkansas.com.

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.

Sharon Friedlander - Publisher
sfriedlander@nwkansas.com

NEWS

News Editor

colby.editor@nwkansas.com

Kayla Cornett - Sports Reporter
colby.sports@nwkansas.com

Marian Ballard - Copy Editor
mballard@nwkansas.com

Christina Beringer - Society Reporter
colby.society@nwkansas.com

ADVERTISING

colby.ads@nwkansas.com

Kathryn Ballard

Advertising Representative
kballard@nwkansas.com

Kylee Hunter - Graphic Design
khunter@nwkansas.com

BUSINESS OFFICE

Ray Schindler - Office Manager
rschindler@nwkansas.com

Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator
support@nwkansas.com

NOR'WEST PRESS

Richard Westfahl - General Manager

Jim Jackson, Jim Bowker, Gary Meyer, Pressmen
Lana Westfahl, Judy McKnight, Kris McCool, Stacy Brashear, Tracy Traxel, Mailing

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.



MAROULIES
© 2012 THE RECORD
www.northjersey.com/maroules

Legislature's priorities misplaced

Headlines reveal our Kansas Legislature had time and expertise to write a law that takes away religious freedom, but they couldn't get together to redraw our Senate and House districts.

We are depending upon "activist judges" to draw the lines, but we will leave no room for judicial discretion concerning religion. No doctrines or canons not referenced to "Christian theology" will be allowed. The next big test will be whose theology will prevail.

Some will say, "How is Kansas taking away religious freedom?" When we single out a specific religious group, such as Islam, and make it illegal or unconstitutional to even mention their canons for reference concerning private contracts or guidelines concerning property, moral or ethical actions, we are walking ever closer to the edge of the wall of separation between state and church.

Our courts, quite often, are called on to adjudicate differences within religious groups in how to dispose of properties. Sometimes it is hard to separate community property without someone thinking their rights are being trampled on.

Sometimes our courts are called on to determine who has authority to draw up contracts and sign agreements concerning real property for religious groups. Generally, all parties are allowed to present their side of the issues and why they think they should prevail.

The court then has to weigh all the arguments, look at case history, constitutional limits and requirements and, finally, pass judgment. It is a messy and embarrassing way for reli-



Ken Poland

• Ken's World

gious groups to act. In fact, our Christian Bible indicates we should be careful about relying on civil government authority to settle our differences. But Christians, being human, in spite of some claiming an inside track on how to determine God's absolute will, sometimes have to rely on disinterested outside sources to settle their differences. Interpretation of ownership and authority is not the same for all denominations within the Christian communities.

Freedom of religion also means freedom from religion. As long as my religious practices do not infringe on your safety or welfare, you have no right to declare, by law, that my practices are invalid. Neither do I have the right to force your subjection to my religious tenets. Our system attempts to defend minorities from tyrannical majorities and prevent minorities from controlling society.

We are, also justifiably, committed to the protection of minors from neglect or abuse of their elders. We will not allow any religious group, Christian or otherwise, to practice rituals that endanger the lives or property of others. Why do we need to single out any single group by specific laws?

There is no mention of Christianity in the

Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to our Constitution or the Constitution itself. The Declaration makes reference to "Nature's God" and to man's "Creator." Neither of those references is a clear acknowledgment of Christianity; they can be attributed to many religious dogmas.

The preamble makes no reference to religion, period. Article VI of the Constitution plainly states that no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States. That doesn't make exceptions as to whether they be tests verifying Christianity nor does it allow tests that reveal any particular religious affiliation. Neither the Christian Bible nor any other religious book is mentioned as a source of guidance.

Many of those in politics or public service in that time were agnostics, deists or, at best, nominal Christians. The majority of the general population in the late 1700s and 1800s were not active church members nor did they even make claims of being religious. That doesn't mean they had no moral or ethical standards. They simply were not self-righteous individuals who claimed superior religious motivations for their behavior.

Ken Poland describes himself as a semi-retired farmer living north of Gem, a Christian, affiliated with American Baptist Churches, and a radical believer in separation of church and state. Contact him at rcwinc@cheerful.com.

Family farm a lifestyle more than a living

People outside of agriculture routinely try to define the family farm. These same folks have a tendency to question corporate farming, whether family owned or not. Farm organizations often fall under the same scrutiny.

Let's take a look at the family farm. In Kansas, farm and ranch families grow up with the feel of the prairie earth beneath their feet, the wide-open sky overhead and the rhythm of the seasons in their blood.

Throughout their lifetimes, these farms and ranches remain their pride and joy. They love, care and respect the land entrusted to them. Farmers and ranchers adhere to an ethic that enlarges the boundaries of our community to include soil, water, plants and animals – collectively – the land.

This entity known as the family farm is based on owner operation. This means the rights and responsibilities of ownership are vested in an entrepreneur who works the farm for a living.

Another key ingredient of the family farm system is independence. Independence means financing from within its own resources using family labor, management and intellect to build equity and cash flow that will retire the mortgage, preferably in the lifetime of the owner or owners.

Economic dispersion is another integral part of the family farm. Economic dispersion includes large numbers of efficient-sized farms operating with equal access to competitive markets worldwide.

No family farm would be complete without the family core. This family-centered operation must have a family that lives its life in harmony within the workplace. All family



John Schlageck

• Insights
Kansas Farm Bureau

members share responsibilities and the children learn the vocation of their parents.

At an early age, these young men and women learn to work with their dads and moms on the family farm. Here, they develop self-reliance and initiative. They often rise with the sun and finish work when it sets. Yet, they rarely take this place called home for granted.

The ideal family farm is commercially diversified. Production of diversified commodities help reduce price risks and maximize the use of farm resources to produce crops and livestock that in turn provide greater self-sufficiency.

One final attribute necessary in defining today's family farm would be the acceptance and use of innovative technology. This would not only enhance farm labor, but also help boost production.

Family farming carries with it a commitment to specific, independent values. These values become part of the community and include conservation, frugality, responsibility, honesty, dignity in work, neighborly, self-reliance and concern and care for future generations.

While it's rare indeed that one particular family farm may possess all of these attributes, together they have created a system of agricul-

ture that has been a part of our rural culture since this nation's beginning.

Today, detractors of this profession are making it increasingly difficult for this vital industry to progress and prosper. Maybe they should tend to their own business and let American farmers and ranchers continue doing what they do best – producing the healthiest, safest food in the 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.

Where to write, call

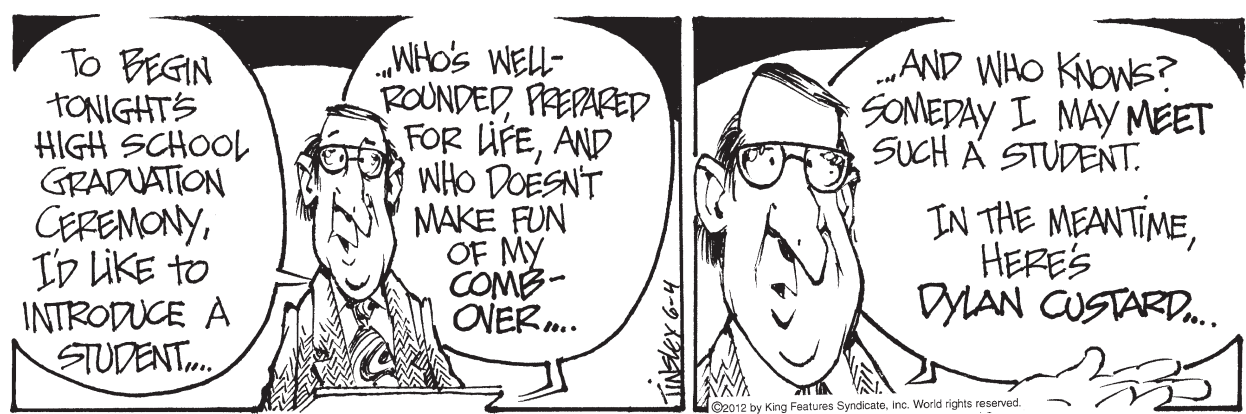
U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran, 354 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 228-6966. Fax (202) 225-5124 moran.senate.gov/public/

State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol Building, 300 SW10th St., Room 225-E., Topeka, Kan. 66612, (785) 296-7399 ralph.ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us

State Rep. Rick Billinger, Docking Building, Room 754, Topeka Kan., 66612, (785) 296-7659 rick.billinger@house.ks.gov

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley



TO BEGIN TONIGHT'S HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONY, I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE A STUDENT...

...WHO'S WELL-ROUNDED, PREPARED FOR LIFE, AND WHO DOESN'T MAKE FUN OF MY COMBOVER...

...AND WHO KNOWS? SOMEDAY I MAY MEET SUCH A STUDENT. IN THE MEANTIME, HERE'S DYLAN COSTARD...

©2012 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.