



Other Viewpoints

County fairs’ draw remains constant with fresh events

Kansans’ annual trek to county fairs is well under way. The events taking place throughout the state draw a steady stream of people of all ages and interests. At a time when there’s much competition for everyone’s time, fair operators do their best to make changes and additions to their lineups with the goal of helping the events evolve and stay relevant.

In Finney County and beyond, when fair organizers work on strategies to keep their events fresh and attractive, there’s always an eye on youngsters’ involvement. It’s an important priority as a growing number of children in the city don’t have access to farm life and the ability to raise an animal or put together another farm-related project for the fair.

But in the end, a focus on all that’s good about rural life has remained the highlight of the county fair and for good reason. Whether it’s the best in livestock, baked goods, crafts or other endeavors, the work displayed by 4-H members and other fair participants who may or may not have farm ties are worthy of recognition and should matter to all in a part of the country driven by agriculture.

The county fair tradition also has been a source of community pride for generations. When the earliest county fairs set up shop throughout Kansas in the 1800s, they were considered by many to be the social event of the year.

County fairs still draw good crowds, and it’s no wonder. Regardless of the year or even decade, it’s difficult to pass on the fair’s cornucopia of interesting exhibits and tasty treats.

Plus, many activities are free, making a county fair one of the best entertainment bargains around.

At a time the pressures of society pull us in so many directions, the annual fair serves as an escape in offering a refreshing slice of Americana.

Whether it’s participating in some way, or simply spending time with family and friends taking it all in, such quality time never goes out of style. Be sure this summer to take in all the county fair has to offer.

– The 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 roberts.senate.gov/public/
- 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/
- U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp, 126 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715 or Fax (202) 225-5124. Web site: huelskamp.house.gov
- 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

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

Send news to: colby.editor@nwkansas.com

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Sharon Friedlander - Publisher
sfriedlander@nwkansas.com

NEWS

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

Marian Ballard - Copy Editor
mballard@nwkansas.com

Sam Dieter - News Reporter
colby.editor@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

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

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Grace and dignity score above money

I subscribe to a site called “Positive Quote of the Day.” This quote really says something to us all.

“Money is a way of keeping score in life, says T. Boone Pickens. But that is just for those who like playing the game. The real goal is to live with grace and dignity. You can do that with a small amount of money ... or not do it with a fortune.” – Bill Bonner, financial journalist

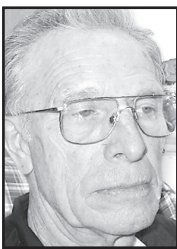
First, however, we must define “grace” and “dignity.”

Grace for many of us is a religious condition of God’s mercy and benevolence, regardless of our deserving it. But grace is also how we as humans tolerate the behavior of others.

We can be as full of grace toward others as we want to be. Our wealth, health and social status need not be limiting factors. How someone else treats us shouldn’t limit our graceful acceptance of them, even if they don’t deserve it. Responding gracefully toward other’s ungraceful behavior will put them in their place much better than confrontation or judgement.

Dignity is a little harder to maintain. How we accept ourselves is the secret.

It may be difficult to feel dignified if we don’t have access to soap and water or clean,



Ken Poland

• Ken’s World

untattered clothes. But if we have done the best we can with the resources we have, then we can display dignity in our own eyes. What others think is their problem!

Being wealthy doesn’t justify us being arrogant and acting foolishly or unseemly. Haughty demand for special privilege and attention doesn’t display dignity. It only displays your own sense of entitlement based on your own perception of your superiority to those with lesser pedigrees. Once again, what others think is their problem.

But, in the long run, a lasting sense of dignity does depend upon others accepting us as their equals. It’s pretty hard for the beggar to accept someone as their equal if that someone flaunts their wealth and ignores the beggar’s needs. It is equally hard for someone who has truly lifted themselves to independent living

standards to understand and respect the need for dignity of the beggar who shows no sign of putting forth any effort to supply his own needs. But they are human beings and deserve our respect and concern.

Inherited wealth makes us neither better nor worse than the derelict beggar or the self-made millionaire. We are not born with grace or dignity. Those two qualities are earned and acquired as we grow in wisdom and stature.

Calling one another ignorant or stupid and accusing others of lying when they don’t report what we think is absolute truth is a little like the pot calling the kettle black. None of us know everything and we all, sometimes, prevaricate the truth just a little.

Do you think, if all religious and political folks could show a little tolerance and offer grace, respect and dignity to all people, that we would have a little more peace and tranquility in this world? Why not try it and see what a difference it makes?

Ken Poland describes himself as a semiretired 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.

‘Political silly season’ has high stakes

Other Opinions

• Steve Morris
Kansas Senate

It was once called the “political silly season,” a term used to describe the time when candidates or their supporters would resort to extreme – sometimes laughable – tactics to get attention for their election. The Kansas political silly season has arrived.

The problem? This year, nobody is laughing.

Every election is important, but the stakes for Kansas could not be higher. Right now, well-funded outside special interest groups are busy spending millions of dollars – a record in Kansas politics – to defeat incumbent senators who put their local communities above the agendas of these special interest groups.

It’s these outside special interest groups with their Washington-style politics and deficit spending that are driving our state over a financial cliff, creating a \$2.7 billion deficit and hoping that Kansans like us don’t notice.

An independent, nonpartisan analysis confirms what we already know about their plan: Our property taxes will rise. Our sales taxes will increase. Our schools will be consolidated or closed because 40 percent of their current budgets could get wiped out.

This is not responsible state government. This is not the legacy of Eisenhower Republican values that our parents and grandparents taught us to believe in.

Some have promised their initiatives will pump adrenaline into the Kansas economy,

yet their own projections indicate job gains of a mere 20,000 over the next few years. The Kansas Economic Policy Council has done the math. It will take 550,000 jobs, earning \$50,000 each per year, to replace the revenue loss from their newest tax plan. That would take a growth rate in Kansas five times that of Texas’ recent rate – a state often cited as a success story, but a state that has little in common with Kansas and the values we cherish here.

One of these special interest groups, Virginia-headquartered Americans for Prosperity, even resorted to sending out postcards attacking Republican legislators for supporting “Obamacare.” However, a look at the voting record will show that every Republican in the Kansas Senate voted against Obamacare by passing the Kansas Health Care Freedom Act and is standing in direct opposition to the President’s health care plan.

Kansas is a long way from Texas and it’s a long way from Virginia. So why are groups

from these other states spending record amounts of money this cycle to confuse voters in an attempt to buy our elections?

Right now, the very senators who are under attack are the ones who are working hardest to ensure a bright future for our state, our children and our grandchildren. We have pushed for responsible tax reform, including property tax relief. We developed the Kansas Works plan to bring thousands of manufacturing jobs back to Kansas from places like China and Mexico. We fought to restore dollars to our local schools after \$18,000 had been cut from every Kansas classroom.

Politics can be a rough business, but don’t be fooled by these desperate, deceitful tactics. Kansas elections and our elected officials are not for sale. When Kansans go to the polls on Aug. 7, they can either vote for rubber-stamp majorities, or they can join me in taking a stand for our local communities and protecting their voice – the Kansas voice – in the legislative process.

No matter how much money these outside groups pour into our state, we will always have something more powerful – our vote. On Tuesday, Aug. 7, I hope you will join me in exercising your right to vote – because Kansas values are just too important.

Steve Morris, R-Hugoton, is president of the Kansas Senate.

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

