

# commentary

from other pens...

## Home is symbolic of W.A. White's spirit

**Great Bend Tribune on the William Allen White home:**  
State officials are doing the right thing by making William Allen White's Emporia home a state historical site, not just because he was a great newspaperman, but because he embodied a spirit that is needed in Kansas today.

White won the Pulitzer Prize in 1922 for his editorial "Letter to an Anxious Friend." He was an intimate with Washington, D.C., insiders and he was a national figure.

But through it all, he was a Kansan.

He always had the interests of his state at heart and he came from here at a time when it was not considered unusual for a Kansan to be a national figure and still remain a Kansan. White kept running the Emporia Gazette until his death in 1944.

People need to know that we have a heritage of moving this nation and we need to incorporate that expectation into our own future, into a future William Allen White would have been proud of.

**The Hays Daily News on cockfighting:**

Kansans might think that cockfighting only goes on in the hillbilly backwoods of Oklahoma or the bayous of Louisiana. Not so. Reportedly, it goes on here in our fair state, too, and that should be abhorrent to every Kansan.

Kansas is one of only four states where cockfighting is not expressly unlawful. Cockfighting is the largely underground spectator sport of breeding chickens for fighting.

Cockfighting takes place in Kansas because law enforcement lacks the laws to do anything about it.

The House of Representatives last week passed legislation to change this, but the action is stalled in Senate committee. Senators need to come on board and put a stop to this inhumane activity in Kansas.

... The House-passed measure was attached to a bill that would make it criminal to kill or injure a search-and-rescue dog.

Why any legislator would vote against a law banning cockfighting or why senators might keep it bottled up in committee is puzzling. ...

... If a more specific law is needed, then pass a law legislators should. Just because we are talking about protecting animals and not humans is no reason not to legislate something that is fundamentally wrong.

Cockfighting should not be taking place legally in Kansas in the 21st century. It is not just inhumane but barbaric.

**The Kansas City Star on Legislative pay raises:**

Like many states, Kansas has a commission to help determine how much top officials and legislators should be paid. But some lawmakers are unhappy with the results, mainly because the panel only issues suggestions. Ultimately, the lawmakers themselves must make the decision and take any resulting political heat.

Some of the members want to shift that burden, which is why a bill creating a commission with the power to "fix" compensation for lawmakers is drawing support. It has already won passage in the House.

Normally, allowing such a panel to directly determine outlays in a given spending category would be an unconstitutional delegation of the Legislature's power to appropriate. A 1972 amendment, however, permits such a process.

It strikes us as an attempt to evade a fundamental responsibility. What's more, if the bill becomes law and the commission approves a pay increase, the raise would be effective July 1 — without an intervening election. No pay increase should be effective if it occurs before voters render a decision on whether their legislators are worth the money.

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## Madder than a rattlesnake in October

Should the statue of liberty (Alan Greenspan) inflate the money supply since the stock market melt down?

That's what some economists are saying. They say it is a national crisis he needs to cut the interest rates and increase the money supply.

What are they talking about starting the printing press? Nope, don't think so. They would rather have their taxes cut. But it takes a year to 18 months for changes in either the monetary or fiscal policy to find its way into the economy — and they want their money now.

Does anyone remember when good ole uncle Alan Greenspan made the gaff of saying something about there was an irrational exuberance in the U.S. stock market. Well, what did he expect. Beginning in 1995 he took part in a massive intervention in the world currency markets. It also made it necessary to bailout several prestigious New York City hedge funds when he did it.

So that's just the way things are in this integrationist world we live in. We all live in one global village, you know. But does anyone remember in 1980 when South America defaulted on its bank loans to New York City banks? Does anyone remember it nearly brought down our own Federal Reserve when it bailed them out. Where were those fancy guys then? They didn't say ease monetary policy — (increase the money supply, and cut interest rates), then! No the Paul Volcker Fed-



### wayne gattshall

• wayne's world

eral Reserve choked back the money supply and put interest rates on the moon. Yes, commodity prices was at historical highs but his assault on the market economy (commodity prices), stoked the very inflation it created.

If that was moral hazard monetary policy — (take the profits and leave the other guy the losses) then what is it when the Federal Reserve does it now? The U.S. dollar is as good as gold bullion and we have budget surpluses. Oh yes one other thing, commodity prices at historical lows are good, you know. So why would a central bank intervene in the world currency markets now? Well it is to save some money bags hedge fund that's why. It may not be insider trading. Quite! But it would be great to be one of those three thousand hedge funds in New York City. They have been pulling as much as 40 percent return on their investments since the 1980s, about the same time commodity prices tanked. It was better than growing corn with a processor subsidy that some call farm subsidies.

This \$35 trillion a year trade on the Chicago Board of trade began the same year Richard Nixon

took the U.S. dollar off the gold standard. And, was the beginning of all this mischief in currency interventions too.

So monetary policy does matter every time the Federal Reserve intervenes commodity prices go down. That's the only way it can respond to market forces.

If anyone wonders why farmers are madder than a rattlesnake in October, it's over the decommissioning of the pork checkoffs. It's over — it's easier to export satellites than it is U.S. grain. It's over derivative trading hedge funds nuking every central bank in the world. In 1997 U.S. farmers exported nearly \$60 billion. Farm exports to Asia were \$18 billion last year.

After four years we are no closer to bringing American agriculture into this new world where there are no Berlin walls. It didn't take a rocket scientist to know when the world's central banks intervene in the world's currency markets U.S. manufacturing and agriculture would suffer.

Before the grain embargoes wheat was \$5 a bushel. Just to show who is making all the money now, since 1980 derivatives trading has exploded to \$35 trillion an explosive growth of 483% but the only way farmers can get \$2.45 a bushel for this wheat is with a loan deficiency payment from the Department of Agriculture. So today it's not the evil empire the world fears — it's the United States stock market.

## Legislature wraps up 2001 session

We wrapped up the issues of the 2001 Legislative Session.

Conferences Committees met throughout last week to negotiate differences between House and Senate versions of legislation. We will break until April 25th. However I will have to return prior to the 18th for more meetings to solve issues in the Health Committee and also negotiate some other issues I'm not willing to talk about yet.

The results of these conversations and meetings with the Appropriations committees starting April 19th will be discussed that final "wrap up" omnibus or so called "veto" session

### Bill Increases Local Control

The House debated a bill that would allow local school districts the ability to control education funding in their district. The bill increases the maximum local option budget that a school district may adopt from 25 to 30 percent of the district's state financial aid in the 2001-02 school year. Currently, the maximum local option budget a school district can adopt is capped at 25 percent.

The increase in the cap allows local districts that are currently at the 25 percent level to increase local funding for education. The measure provides that the school district must put the proposed local option budget increase from 25-30 percent on a ballot for voters to approve. There is also a provision within the legislation which states no supplemental general state aid may be paid to a school district beyond the district's entitlement level of 25 percent. I voted "For" the bill and it passed on final action 65 to 58.

This should create a situation that will require the legislature to redo the entire school-funding proposition. There will now be enough of a disparity in funding various districts that the courts will again force the legislature to revisit and correct education funding. Had I voted "No" and it failed we would likely not address the issue. I am told this bill has no effect on any school in my district. Dale Dennis assured me that pass or fail, my schools would be held harmless. My vote for the legislation also keeps leadership support that we need for other issues (leadership was strongly lobbying for the bill passage).

### Education Plans Debated By House

The House debated two proposed education-funding plans on the floor last week.

House Bill 2064 represented an education plan proposed by the Senate. The measure would have increased Base State Aid Per Pupil by \$110 in fiscal year (FY) 2002 and by an additional \$130 in FY 2003. HB 2064 proposes increasing at-risk weighting from 9-11 percent. The measure also decreases the correlation weighting in the school finance formula from 1,725 to 1,690 full time equivalent. In order to fund HB 2064, the bill pro-



### jim morrison

• capitol review

poses a two-tenths of a cent increase in the state sales tax over a two-year period.

It also provides for a 18¢ per gallon increase in beer tax, a 50¢ per gallon increase in wine tax and a 10 cents per pack increase in cigarette tax. The measure recommends a 2 percent increase in liquor-by-the-drink tax and a 2 percent increase in the liquor enforcement tax. A new carbonated beverage tax would be set at 20¢ per gallon.

The second proposal was based on enhanced education budget recommendations by Governor Bill Graves. House Bill 2578 included an increase in education funding of \$110 in base aid per pupil for FY 2002. The bill also proposed funding 90 percent of excess cost of Special Education. HB 2578 included expenditures for rewarding outstanding schools, rewarding outstanding teachers, extended learning programs and all-day kindergarten. The measure increases education funding by \$100 million over the Governor's original budget recommendations. HB 2578 proposes an increase of two-tenths of a cent in the state sales tax and an increase of 2¢ a gallon in the state gasoline tax in order to fund the legislation. both issues failed in the House. I voted against both of them. We still have not properly addressed school finance. I am trying to get a real discussion on the issue.

### Governor Approves Requirements for Driver's Licenses

A bill that would require applicants to be both seizure free for six months and have a physician's written recommendation that the applicant's condition is controlled was signed by the Governor last week. Senate Bill 55 provides that in cases where a seizure disorder is not controlled, the Director of Vehicles or the Medical Advisory Board may rec-

### Letter Policy

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commend the person be issued a restricted driver's license. The enrolled legislation allows the Director of Vehicles to submit any case to the Medical Advisory Board, not just drivers who have had their license suspended or revoked. It also limits the corrective lens requirement to standard lenses only. The legislation more adequately defines medical and vision standards, which are required to hold a Kansas driver's license.

### Election Crime Bill Approved By House

The House concurred on a conference committee report for SB 128 last Thursday. The legislation creates the crime of voter registration suppression and makes it a level 10, non-person felony. The bill expands the crime of intimidation of voters to include mailing, publishing, broadcasting, telephoning, or transmitting by any means false information intended to keep one or more voters from casting a ballot or applying for or returning an advance voting ballot. The measure changes the crime of electioneering at polling places to simply "electioneering" and expands it to include attempting to persuade or influence eligible voters to vote for or against a particular candidate, party, or question submitted.

I will be in the Colby area prior to April 17th. If you need me please call my home number (785) 462-3264 or (best option) email me at [jmorrison@ink.org](mailto:jmorrison@ink.org).

Thanks for all your help, prayers and support during this session.

### berry's world



**Jim Berry**  
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"I TOLD YOU THIS MIGHT NOT BE THE BEST TIME FOR AMERICANS TO VISIT CHINA."