

commentary

from other pens...

Does Sebelius believe in open meetings?

The Ottawa Herald on BEST teams:
Does she or doesn't she?
Does Gov. Kathleen Sebelius believe her government review team meetings should have been open, or doesn't she? Only Sebelius knows for sure.

Not long after she won a court battle stemming from her decision to close her review team meetings, Sebelius offered a real head-scratcher by saying she would support legislation to make such meetings open in the future.

Her pledge came after a judge reluctantly ruled that Sebelius' closed meetings were within the law, which differentiates between task forces formed by governors-elect and governors.

While the judge felt that he had no legal option but to rule in Sebelius' favor, he did note that the openness of the decision-making process should apply whether it involves a governor-elect or governor.

He's right. ...
Fourteen news organizations ... had challenged Sebelius' closed meetings, arguing that the Kansas Open Meetings Act applied to a governor-elect's task forces. The group appealed and will urge the Legislature to broaden the law to include governors-elect.

Asked if she would sign a bill, Sebelius said: "Sure."
"I'll share my views with them, but if they decide it's good policy to open everything up, it won't ever affect me again," Sebelius said.

How convenient.
If Sebelius truly believed the closed meetings were in the state's best interest, why would she make such a pledge now? If she supports opening future review team meetings, she should have admitted her mistake and opened her meetings.

After all, actions speak louder than words.
The Newton Kansan on GOP-controlled offices:
... While we elected a Democrat as governor, the Republicans still have a firm hold on many of the other elective offices in Kansas.

What can we expect from the others? ...
— Phill Kline, attorney general — ... look for Kline to push the conservative envelope in a number of ways.

Abortion may be one area that gets far more attention than it got from Attorney General Carla Stovall. A number of organizations active in the pro-life movement are already chomping at the bit as they see a friendly face taking over the AG office. ...

... Kline will be forced to face the music on prison overcrowding. Recent state budget cuts have increased — not decreased — the likelihood that we'll need more prison cells in the future. ...

— Sandy Praeger, insurance commissioner — Expect some changes in the way the office is run, but nothing drastic. Sebelius did a good job and the worst thing Praeger could do is tinker with what isn't broken.

But this office will continue to be extremely important to the people of Kansas. Health insurance rates are going through the roof and consumers need a watchdog in Topeka to make sure they're getting a fair shake.

— Lynn Jenkins, state treasurer — While much of the activity in this office usually flies under the radar, Jenkins promised to work on some loan programs for farmers during the 2002 campaign.

She also will continue to effort to get unclaimed money back to the rightful owners in Kansas. It's good politics.

— Ron Thornburgh, secretary of state — Just re-elected to his third term, Thornburgh will continue to promote good citizenship and voting. We might see Thornburgh try to establish himself — like his predecessor Bill Graves — as a viable moderate alternative for the Republicans in 2006.



Who goes to heaven? Why?

I read a joke in a magazine in which Mother Teresa arrived in heaven, and God asked her if she was hungry. When she nodded, God served her and himself a humble sandwich of tuna on rye bread. Meanwhile, she looked down to see gluttons in hell devouring steaks, lobsters and wine.

The next day, God invited her to join him again for a meal. Again, it's tuna on rye, and again, she saw the residents of hell feasting.

The following day, as another can of tuna is opened, Mother Teresa says, "I am grateful to be here with you as a reward for the pious life I led. But I don't get it: All we eat is tuna and bread, while in the other place they eat like kings."

"Let's be honest," God says with a sigh, "for just two people, does it pay to cook?"

I'm sure the joke writer was making a comment about the corruption and hedonism among people today, but does the Bible suggest that there are only two people in heaven? What are the criteria for someone to go to heaven? And what happens to people who do not go to heaven?

To start with, the Bible does say how many people from earth will go to heaven and also talks about spirit persons already in heaven. 1 Corinthians 4:9 says, "For it seems to me that God has put us the apostles last on exhibition as men appointed to death, because we have become a theatrical spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men."

There are angels in heaven, and they are interested in what people on earth are doing. The prophet Daniel had a vision of God in heaven and of angels ministering to him which is described in the book of Daniel chapter 7. Verse 10 says, "A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened."
There are a lot of angels in heaven; of course, God is in heaven; and the resurrected Jesus



sharon corcoran

• use it or lose it

Christ is in heaven. Hebrews 10:12 and 13 says, "But this man offered one sacrifice for sins perpetually and sat down at the right hand of God, from then on awaiting until his enemies should be placed as a stool for his feet."

Revelation 14:1 and 3 tells us how many people from earth will go to heaven: "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth."

Only 144,000 people will go to heaven. What do they have to do to qualify for that privilege? John 17:3 says, "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ."

Taking in accurate knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ is the first requirement, but more is required. 1 John 5:3 says, "For this is what the love of God means, that we observe his commandments; and yet his commandments are not burdensome."

While taking in that accurate knowledge of God, people also learn what his commandments are. Righteous people show their love for God by obeying those commandments and not viewing them as a burden.

But more is required for someone to go to heaven. 2 Timothy 1:9 says, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

Those who go to heaven are called by God for that privilege. Surely there must be more than 144,000 righteous people on earth today and even more throughout mankind's history. Where will they go?

2 Peter 3:13 says, "But there are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell."

There will be righteous people in heaven and righteous people living on a "new earth," that is, an earth cleansed of corrupt mankind and environmental problems. Righteous people who have already died are in God's memory and will be resurrected to earth at that time in the same way Jesus resurrected his friend Lazarus. Of this time, John 5:28 says, "Do not marvel at this, because the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out."

What will happen to those who do not take in accurate knowledge of God and Christ or who refuse to obey God's commandments? 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9 says, "This takes into account that it is righteous on God's part to repay tribulation to those who make tribulation for you, but, to you who suffer tribulation, relief along with us at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his powerful angels in a flaming fire, as he brings vengeance upon those who do not know God and those who do not obey the good news about our Lord Jesus. These very ones will undergo the judicial punishment of everlasting destruction from before the Lord and from the glory of his strength."

Those who refuse to learn about God or refuse to obey his commandments will be destroyed, forever. They simply will no longer exist. This is necessary in order for God to cleanse the earth for righteous mankind to live forever in the conditions described at Micah 4:4: "Under his shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it."

Troubleshooting those confusing computers

It takes a special breed to troubleshoot computers, people who enjoy banging their heads against the wall and staring at a monitor until their eyeballs turn to mush.

I know; I've done it. This time, though, I want to brag a little about the work our computer guys put in over the weekend. I had other fish to fry, so I didn't stay with them. That gives me space to brag.

There's Tom, who is in charge of all things Internet. He is the expert on Windows, connections, viruses, software problems and Internet activity.

Then there is Evan, the Macintosh guru, keeper of the keys (and ip addresses), wizard of problems and trouble-shooter of networks.

I thought they had about met their match on Friday. The e-mail server for nwkansas.com was bogged down, stashing mail rather than delivering it, running two or more days behind. For no apparent reason.

Friday, they tried new programs and patches with no success. More recent versions of the server, new installations of the same version and various other fixes all ran the same way: Slowly Very slowly.

At one point, we decided the domain name setup must be wrong, though that made no sense. It had been working fine the week before. Evan tried to change the "ip" numbers, and the server immediately began rejecting all the stored e-mail, hundreds of messages. They went out so quickly they were gone before we realized what was happening.

But the server was no longer backlogged. Or so we thought.

Then we tried checking the drives. The main server drive didn't exactly show bad. The drive checker just sort of blew up when it got to it. It wouldn't check at all.

Evan thought that was suspicious. He moved everything to the secondary drive and started the server up again. It seemed to be running.



steve haynes

• along the sappa

He and Tom went home, about 10 p.m. Friday.

I left about 8, driving from Goodland to McCook to pick up an ad that was lost in the e-mail. By the time I got to Oberlin, the message had come through. I didn't have to drive the ad back to Goodland.

Saturday morning about 9, I called the office. Tom answered, a bad sign.

Seemed the server was bogged down again. Evan drove over from Colby.

They found that though they had moved the mail program to the No. 2 drive, it had found the old e-mail stash on the bad drive and was trying to deal it.

At the same time, they tried a newer version of the e-mail program, which was Apple Internet Mail Server when we bought it, later was Eudora Internet Mail Server when Qualcomm had it, and now is maintained by some guy working in his basement in New Zealand.

That worked, slowly, but caused problems for people who depend on mail relays. They complained. Evan changed the program back to the old one. That set off another round of bounced messages, hundred of them, before it could be stopped. He sent an e-mail to the guy in New Zealand.

By late Saturday night, they had isolated the bad drive and removed it from the system. Things seemed to be working, but still slow. All the boys knew how to do was watch and wait.

It would be 24 hours, in fact, before the server caught up. It faced backlogs in all 18 mail databases (Why 18? Who knows?). One had grown from 4 kilobytes in size to 1.79

gigabytes.

But about 10 p.m. Sunday, the dam seemed to burst. Messages flowed, those that hadn't bounced. The 1.79 gigabyte file shrunk to 4k. And by midnight, the backlog was down from a peak of 85 hours to about 40 minutes.

Monday, it was gone.

The guys think maybe it was the bad drive — if it really is bad — that caused the whole thing. But they can't be too sure.

For now, the server is running. They're planning on going home at quitting time. And they have a very wary eye on the backlog.

berry's world

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jim Berry is on vacation. Please use this classic cartoon, which was originally printed in 1995.



The Goodland Daily News

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562)

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Published daily except Saturday and Sunday and the day observed for New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day, at 1205 Main St., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

Periodicals postage paid at Goodland, Kan. 67735; entered at the Goodland, Kan., Post Office under the Act of Congress of March 8, 1878.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Goodland Daily News, 1205 Main St., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: daily@nwkansas.com. Advertising questions can be sent to: gdnavd@nwkansas.com

The Goodland Daily News assumes no liability for mistakes or omissions in advertising or failure to publish beyond the actual cost of the ad.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: In Sherman County and adjacent counties: three months, \$25; six months, \$42; 12 months, \$79. Out of area, weekly mailing of five issues: three months, \$30; six months, \$45; 12 months, \$80. By mail daily in Kansas, Colorado: 12 months, \$115. (All tax included.)

The Sherman County Herald
THE STAR
Founded by Eric and Roxie Yonkey
1935-1989 1994-2001

Nor'West Newspapers

Haynes Publishing Company