

commentary

from our viewpoint...

Internet publication losing idea for legals

Trying to turn nearly a century and a half of practice and tradition, Kansas cities want the Legislature to allow them to stop publishing ordinances, reports and the like in newspapers.

The Kansas League of Municipalities is pushing bills in the House and Senate to allow legal notices to be made on the Internet instead. The league claims the idea is to save money, but as usual, the public will be the losers.

It's not a good idea to abandon newspaper publication, for several reasons.

For one thing, in small-town Kansas, everyone reads the newspaper. And studies show that up to half the readers of a typical community newspaper regularly read the legal notices.

That's what the law intends when it requires publication of notices — a lot a people will see them.

That won't be so easy to accomplish on the Internet, where the city or county would be in control of it's own web site. The legals might or might not be easy to find. There'd be no way to know how many people actually took the trouble to read them. And cities might or might not create easy links to legals they didn't want people to see.

With newspaper publication, the notices are "pushed" out to people. They go into homes and offices where people read the paper. Someone affected by a zoning change or a new ordinance has a chance to read about it and do something to change it.

That's democracy in action.

On the Internet, people first would have to know what to look for. They likely won't be browsing the city's homepage. So unless they know a sardine cannery is going in next door, they won't see the zoning change proposal.

Internet sites require users to dig into them to find items. Newspapers put them out for everyone to see.

And that's the best reason to keep things they way they are.

There's another, though. A typical western Kansas county might pay the local newspaper \$5,000-\$10,000 a year for legal notices. That may sound like a lot, but it's not much in the city or county budget. To the state's smallest newspapers, though, it might be the difference between survival and disaster.

Do our cities and counties need to save money so badly that they'll no longer support their newspaper? Will people be happy if the city saves a few bucks, but the local newspaper dies?

The money may not be important to big papers, but it sure is to the little ones. Like small, rural school districts, many are barely getting by.

Another thing, many Kansas newspapers already post legal notices on the Internet, so there's no need for cities to pay someone to do it also.

All in all, this is just not a good idea. It should not make it past hearings this week, not when the state has a fiscal crisis to worry about. — *Steve Haynes*

Letter Policy

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I don't have a special Valentine

I don't know about you, but I don't have a Valentine.

Oh, I know there are people who love me; there's just not one special Valentine. However, I have many happy memories of when I did.

Do you remember Valentine's Day when you were in school? My mother insisted that I give a Valentine to every student in my class; I could leave no one out - even if he/she was the farthest thing from my best friend. I didn't think much about it at the time; I assumed that all the kids were doing the same thing. When I got a little more clever, I would count my Valentine's to see if I got one from every other classmate. I don't remember ever being crushed when I didn't get one from someone, but I do remember being thrilled when I received an especially big card from a boy I particularly liked.

I doubt if young people have changed much



**lorna
g. t.**

• commentary

in that way.

I have noticed that dinners and parties in February are not often called "Sweetheart" occasions any more.

That's a great idea! We single people feel left out often enough.

I went into a restaurant the other day that offered one dinner free with the purchase of a dinner. I asked if I could have the special and take the second dinner home. "Oh no," the waitress informed me, "the dinners have to be eaten here." Somehow that seemed unfair to me.

I recently joined a club at another fine res-

taurant — mainly because they would take 50 percent off my meal - even if I dined alone.

I'll close with some Valentine thoughts I like. I hope you spend a little time really thinking about them.

1) "Find the one who makes your heart smile." — Unknown.

2) "No man/woman is worth your tears and the only one who is, will never make you cry." — Unknown.

3) "Love begins with a smile, grows with a kiss and ends with a tear." — Unknown.

4) "Let us hope that we are all preceded in this world by a love story." — Don Snyder Of Time and Memory (Isn't that one great?).

5) "Giving someone all your love is never an assurance that they'll love you back! Don't expect love in return; just wait for it to grow in their heart, but if it doesn't, be content it grew in yours." — Unknown.

Should we expect delivery on Bush promises?

After hearing the president's state of the union address, many people may wonder what the future holds. People are used to political rhetoric and likely don't expect the president to follow through on everything he said, but should we expect the president to make major reforms in health care? to improve the economy? to bring about world peace through war in the Middle East?

While the president's actions will affect all of us in some way or another, and some of what he does will be good and other things will be bad, the Bible cautions us against expecting too much of men, even world leaders.

Psalms 146:3, 4 says, "Do not put your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no help. When his breath departs he returns to his earth; on that day his plans perish."

Even the best of rulers will only be in office for a limited period of time. In the United States the length of terms are limited for many offices, including that of the president. If the end of a term or being voted out in an election doesn't remove a leader from office, his death eventually will.

The next leader may have other plans, his own agenda or other ideas of what is best for the country. Even the best of leaders are limited by their time in office or their life-spans.

Jeremiah 10:23 brings up another problem facing those in leadership: "I know, O LORD, that the way of man is not in himself, that it is not in man who walks to direct his steps."

Isaiah 48:17, 18 says, "Thus says the LORD, your redeemer, the holy one of Israel: I am the LORD your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you in the way you should go. O that you had hearkened to my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea."

We are not even able to properly direct our own lives without God's help, so how could any man direct a whole nation or make decisions that affect the whole world?

The Bible tells us no one is actually equipped to do the president's job. That's a staggering thought! No wonder people have so many complaints about the president, no matter who is in office.



**sharon
corcoran**

• use it or lose it

Genesis 8:21 brings up another common problem in politics: "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."

Humans have selfish and greedy desires and often lie and give in to corruption. Finding a ruler who does not have selfish reasons for seeking office, always tells the truth and would never take a bribe or commit any act that could be used for blackmail would be extremely difficult, if not impossible.

This does not mean we are without hope. Whether or not President Bush will accomplish any of the good things he has promised remains to be seen. But God has promised even better things, and his word is reliable.

Hebrews 6:17, 18 says, "So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he interposed with an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us."

God's purposes do not change, it is impossible for him to prove false and he has made an oath. What oath?

Hebrews 7:28 says, "Indeed, the law ap-

where to write

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