

from our viewpoint...

Assault continues on business faxes

American businesses face yet another assault on their ability to communicate, one that could eliminate most uses of the fax machine.

The deadline is less than a month away, July 1. Many have not heard of the pending regulation, though a quiet struggle has been going on in Washington for nearly three years.

The Federal Communication Commission is set to require signed permission forms for any business faxes which could be considered advertising, and the definition of advertising is broad.

That means that if a customer asks your business for a price quote, you won't be able to reply unless you have a form on file. You can't fax the form to the customer. It has to be mailed or hand carried.

Forms have to list the specific fax number, though customers may have several, must be signed and are valid for only three years.

For a typical business with 200-300 customers, that means checking a computer database to see if you have permission to fax the rates. If you don't, a sales person (maybe the owner) will have to run one out. If the customer is a long way off, surface mail could take days.

It also means the typical small business will have to hire someone to build and run the database. The cost, including a computer program and labor, is estimated at \$8,000 per year. Fines start at \$500 per fax.

For most businesses, that means a third to half the time of one productive employee will be lost to this bureaucratic nightmare.

A coalition of business groups, including the National Newspaper Association, has been fighting this rule since it was handed down a couple of years ago under Chairman Michael Powell, better known for his decency campaign after the Janet Jackson incident.

Mr. Powell is gone now, and the commission has new members. It so far has not backed off its stand on this rule, however, because the "privacy" lobby is powerful in Washington.

Unsolicited "junk" faxes are illegal now. They have been illegal for years, but fly-by-night operators keep cranking them out because they work. This rule won't stop them.

It won't produce any benefit to business or society, but it will punish thousands of legitimate businesses across the country. "We're from the government; we're here to help you."

Our Rep. Jerry Moran has supported efforts to repeal this rule, as have Kansas senators. The bill passed both the House and Senate last year, but in different forms. It had to start over this year, and it's stalled behind judicial appointments in the Senate.

The commission has a request to stay the regulation, as it has the last two years, until Congress can act. It's holding off, waiting on the Senate.

The truth is, it's too late for the Senate to move. Too late for businesses to build a database.

What can we do?

Call, fax (yes, that's still OK) or e-mail your senators. Call, fax or e-mail the commission. Explain that businesses can't afford this kind of protection for a non-existent problem.

But do it now. Time is short. — *Steve Haynes*

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June makes women think of weddings

I don't know about you, but as spring turns a young man's fancies, so does June make women think of love and weddings.

I don't know why exactly — probably societal conditioning.

But, love is what Christians are supposed to be about all the time.

I have collected some quotes on love and marriage that I'd like to share with you. Some are ways to encourage love, and I guess some are painful.

You be the judge.

"My husband says I never listen to him. At least I think that's what he said." From an e-mail.

"The pain you feel now will help you care for others. It will help you love them through the hardest times. Always remember that Love wins. Regardless of the pain or sorrow you go through in the valley, there will always be love at the end. It may be hard to walk through, but God will use your time there for good." Donna VanLiere, The Christmas Blessing.

"I know that although we may never understand it, there is a plan, and though it may be traced in pain, in the end there will be joy, and it will be beautiful." Donna VanLiere, The Christmas Blessing.

"I have learned there is little difference in



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• commentary

husbands; you might as well keep the first one." Unknown.

"Marriage changes passion: suddenly you're in bed with a relative." Unknown.

"New loves seek perfection. Old loves sew shreds together and see beauty in the multiplicity of patches." Movie, How to Make an American Quilt

"He sat in the wing chair in their bedroom, missing his wife — her countenance, her whiffling snore on the neighboring pillow, her softness of spirit, her unaffected eagerness, her warm flesh. He missed the way she took over when he needed her to take over and the way she stepped back when he needed to make decisions, or even mistakes, on his own." In This Mountain, Jan Karon.

"But he mustn't try to second-guess God. He had no ideas at all what was yet to come — no one ever knew, of course. St Francis de Sales had spoken ... to that: 'Do not look forward

Beer garden questions need answers

To the Editor:

I would like to respond to the comment made by Donna Swager, president of the Goodland Chamber of Commerce, in *The Goodland Star-News* on Friday, May 20.

During her discussion with the Sherman County commissioners regarding approval of a beer garden on Saturday, July 2, during the Tracy Lawrence concert, Swager said "they have plans, and would be cutting the drinking (beer) off before the end of the concert to give people time to clear their heads."

Here are some alcohol facts so your readers will not have the mistaken impression that "cutting the drinking off before the end of the concert to give people time to clear their heads" is a safe or healthy way to deal with beer drinking.

Fact 1: In 12 ounces of beer there is one-half ounce of pure alcohol. Alcohol is eliminated from the body primarily through the process of metabolism. While the average rate of metabolism is one-half ounce of alcohol per hour, the rate varies from person to person.

Many people metabolize as little as one-quarter ounce of alcohol per hour. There are some things that will slow metabolism of alcohol, however nothing much speeds it up. Alcohol will continue to metabolize at a constant rate for several hours.

Fact 2: Alcohol is a drug. Initially, it has a sedative effect, which lasts about an hour for one drink. After the sedative effect, there is a period when our nervous system "rebounds" and is agitated (psychomotor). Several drinks keep the sedative effect going longer.

Fact 3: The rate at which a person drinks is important in preventing impairment.



**from our
readers**

• to the editor

Many researchers consider a 5 percent reduction in reaction time to be "impaired." That is not a big reduction, but it can make the difference between life and death when driving.

Fact 4: Research shows beer drinkers tend to drink more alcohol in a shorter time and reach higher blood alcohol levels than do wine or cocktail drinkers. Beer drinkers are more likely to drive while "slightly intoxicated, and have a higher DUI rate and more DUI crashes. Beer is the alcoholic beverage most frequently consumed before drinking/driving crashes.

With these facts in mind, here is a question that may need to be asked by Sherman County people: Do you really know anyone who goes to a "concert with a beer garden" and drinks

where to write

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to what may happen tomorrow; the same everlasting Father who cares for you today will take care of you tomorrow and every day. Either he will shield you from suffering, or he will give you unfailing strength to bear it.'" In This Mountain, Jan Karon.

"It wasn't like looking at someone else, but at a part of my own body. It was the same way I felt about Michael, that he could never be gone because he was living inside of me, forever and ever, as long as I walked the earth, as long as there was breath in me. That's what love does, that's the sweetest part. I didn't have to make sense of it or justify it or even have it returned. Love just arrives and fills you up and that's enough." No Place Like Home by Barbara Samuel.

"He had never seen the boy's face so radiant. The power of love was transforming; God had known that all along." In This Mountain, Jan Karon.

Love can transform. We don't need to dwell on yesterday's mistakes and losses. We don't need to know the future.

All we're asked is to love today and show that love to everyone we meet along life's journey. When all is said and done, at the end we will joyfully celebrate God's love.

only one beer per hour?

It was not clear in the article whether the beer garden will be opening with the gates at 5 p.m. If this is the plan, by concert time (three hours later) many will already be impaired.

So, "cutting the drinking off before the end of the concert to give people "time to clear their heads" won't be enough time to metabolize the alcohol. Even if the beer garden opens shortly before 8 p.m., it is possible that cut off time will be too late for many.

Prevention requires new ways of thinking about reducing risk. Being careful and having good intentions are not enough.

Maybe this beer garden idea is a way for Sherman County to practice prevention and not just good intentions.

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