

# Opinion



## Guest Viewpoint

## Natural resources new group's focus

During the 2002 Legislative session, I had the privilege of signing a bill that created the Kansas Natural Resource Legacy Alliance, which will bring together a diverse group of individuals to develop a vision for the future of our state's natural resources.

The Alliance will identify current and future natural resource issues confronting Kansas, identify potential impacts associated with these resource issues, and identify interest groups affected by these issues. The Alliance is made up of representatives from the legislative and executive branches of state government, private landowners, and the Kansas Farm Bureau and Kansas Livestock Association.

The Alliance will hold public meetings across the state to seek citizen input and to provide information to the public. These meetings, along with input from natural resource professionals, will form the basis of the Alliance's goals and priorities, including identifying future funding needs.

These outcomes will consider outdoor recreation opportunities, tourism, economic development, natural resource education, fish and wildlife resources, and all facets of soil and water conservation, and air quality.

The first Alliance meeting will be at the Statehouse here in Topeka on Thursday. Alliance members will elect a chairperson and vice-chair, review the specifics of the legislation, and each advising state agency will provide a brief overview of the natural resource issues that affect their department and constituents.

Future meetings will be announced in the near future and will be held at various sites across the state.

In May 2003, the Alliance will submit a preliminary report of its activities and recommendations to the new Kansas governor and the 2003 Legislature, with a final report to follow in December 2003.

I encourage all Kansans to take part in mapping out the future of our natural resources. Everyone of us has a stake in the way we manage and conserve our air, water and land, and the plants and animals that depend on these resources for their survival. — *By Gov. Bill Graves*

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For more information on the Kansas Natural Resource Alliance, contact the State Conservation Commission at (785) 296-3600.

Comments to any opinions expressed on this page are encouraged. Mail them to the Colby Free Press, 155 W. 5th St., Colby, Kan., 67701. Or e-mail [td@nwkansans.com](mailto:td@nwkansans.com) or [pdecker@nwkansans.com](mailto:pdecker@nwkansans.com).

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**U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback**, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202/224-6521

**U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran**, 1519 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. 202/225-2715

**State Rep. Jim Morrison**, State Capitol Building Rm. 174-W, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7676 e mail: [jmorriso@ink.org](mailto:jmorriso@ink.org) web: <http://www.idir.net/~jmorriso/>

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## Look who is now talking cloud seeding

**INTERESTING.** I see where the Denver Water Board has mentioned the words *cloud seeding*. If it doesn't appear that the snowfall is about what it should be by November, they are toying around with contracting with a company to initiate cloud seeding to hopefully enhance snowfall which in turn would enhance their reservoirs up in the mountains. Water is a big concern in the Mile High city, just as it is around here. Maybe the clouds they seed will link up with weather fronts that often end up in our territory and we could be the beneficiary. That'll be an interesting story to follow.

**I WAS** trying to figure out what was driving the Stock Market on Tuesday when it hit me: Congress is on vacation! They won't be spending anything. They won't be disturbing anything. And the hot air causing discomfort back in that part of the country disappeared about the same time the Capitol Hill gang exited. Isn't it something what Congress can do when it isn't doing anything?

**DID** you catch the controversy back in a community in New Jersey where a Little League coach asked his team to throw a game? Sick, absolutely sick! These are players around 11-12 years of age and coach thought the team they were to play, as I read it, would have a better chance at winning the big prize if they, instead of his team, advanced. Needless to say there are some upset moms and dads. Of course the coach contends he didn't say that. But players say he did. Don't know how it's all going to wash, but if in fact this did happen, that Little League coach should be sent up to the big house. This just underscores the continuing eroding of society.

**AND** I also read where cheating is becoming so commonplace in our schools anymore that it won't be too long and it will become an acceptable option. Can't you already see the lawsuits charging violation of poor Johnny's civil rights for being denied cheating privileges? Thank God I'm not a school



### Tom Dreiling

#### • My Turn

principal because those guys and gals are going to have to forgo every principal of decency just to stay out of the courtroom. Political correctness is a disease that's taking away the very things that's held our fabric together.

**THEN** there is a doctor in New York waging a battle to have Viagra signs removed from ball parks. He contends it is an embarrassment for parents who take their youngsters to ball games, pressed to explain what Viagra is when they should be explaining what the game is all about.

But he didn't seemed concerned about all the beer signs. My take on this would simply be: I've never heard of anyone being arrested for DUIV — Driving Under the Influence of Viagra.

**LADY** over at Gem sent me this: "It's so dry that my sprinkler doesn't put out water, it just sits there and hisses." She also had some other comments, pretty much in line with what I had to say about prescription drug prices.

Thanks!

**MY LEAST** favorite news personalities — Diane Sawyer and Connie Chung. Too wishy-washy. Can't you imagine them interviewing each other?

**JUST** think, future historians will be able to study at the Jimmy Carter Library, the Gerald Ford Library, the Ronald Reagan Library and the William Jefferson Clinton Adult Bookstore.

## Let's appreciate what we've got

### Tama Unger

#### • Guest Columnist

character and spirit of caring.

About a month ago a carload of young people was involved in a tragic accident. We received the following letter:

*Last month I was brought to Citizens Medical Center after a terrible automobile accident near Brewster. I want to thank you from the depths of my heart for the selflessness, professionalism, and compassion that you displayed during my three-day stay. In particular, the nursing staff at your facility was second to none. I will never be able to fully express my feelings of gratitude. Please accept the enclosed check as a donation from my family to CMC. I would only ask that you use the money to continue to serve others in the same angelic fashion that you treated my friends and me. Thanks again for your assistance in helping me to heal both physically and emotionally after this tragic incident.*

—North Carolina

A young woman lost her husband in another accident on I-70 recently. She was from a large city in Il-

### HAPPY Birthday to...

**Aug. 7** — Lauren Cox, Faye Goeken, Ryan Stevens

**Aug. 8** — Barbara Touslee, Rebecca Theimer, Amy Wilson

Congratulations!

Call us at 462-3963 or e-mail [td@nwkansans.com](mailto:td@nwkansans.com) to have your special day mentioned as our gift to you. And *please* keep us advised of any changes (including deaths). Your help is needed to keep this record accurate. Many thanks!

**YOU** know you are in Kansas during the summer-time when:

✓The best parking place is determined by shade instead of distance.

✓You can make sun tea instantly.

✓You learn that a seat belt buckle makes a pretty good branding iron.

✓The temperature drops below 95 and you feel a little chilly.

✓You discover that in July it only takes 2 fingers to steer your car!

✓You discover that you can get sunburned through your car window.

✓You actually burn your hand opening the car door.

✓Your biggest bicycle wreck fear is, "What if I get knocked out and end up lying on the pavement and cook to death?"

✓You realize that asphalt has a liquid state.

✓The birds have to use pot holders to pull worms out of the ground.

✓The potatoes cook underground, so all you have to do is pull one out and add butter, salt, and pepper.

✓Farmers are feeding their chickens crushed ice to keep them from laying hard-boiled eggs.

**HAVE** a good evening!

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*Dreiling is publisher of the Free Press. His column appears Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays. [td@nwkansans.com](mailto:td@nwkansans.com)*

linois. She said, "God had a plan that we have our accident where we did. He intended for me to be in this hospital in Colby. I don't think I could have handled this anywhere else." This woman returned to her home with an everlasting memory of Colby and the "family" she met here. Our healthcare community healed her with extraordinary compassion not because it is required, but because that is how we do things here.

I believe that to a certain extent we all know how lucky we are for our lives in northwest Kansas, our neighbors, our friends, and our health. We just need to stop and appreciate it a little more often. Sometimes it takes someone who doesn't know or has never seen daily compassion, every other person saying hello on the streets, clear starry skies, and air that is — with every breath — fresh, to be amazed. In their amazement we see how absolutely rich our lives are and we are reminded that it takes us all to make what we have work.

It takes all of us to pull together and work for a common goal with a spirit of, dare I say it, love, to have what we call "community". Any other way and we would have a very egocentric case of tunnel vision that would leave this community cold and motionless.

"I stand so proudly in the sun and say I am home." (Eden)

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*Tama Unger is director of fund development at Citizens Medical Center, Inc. and Citizens Foundation, Colby..*

### Doonesbury

#### • Gary Trudeau

