

# Opinion

## Ken's World

### Do you understand?

**By Ken Poland**  
How does our system of government work, or how was it designed to work?

The following is a quote from an article written by Porter Goss, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and published in the New York Times Feb. 10. The article was addressing the issues of surveillance.

"Such leaks also cause our intelligence partners around the globe to question our professionalism and credibility. Too many of my counterparts from other countries have told me, 'You Americans can't keep a secret.'"

Perhaps Mr. Goss' counterparts and maybe even Mr. Goss don't quite understand our system of checks and balances. Indeed, our system is set up to protect us from secrecy in our government. That is why we have three separate branches in our system. The purpose of the "checks and balances" is to prevent abuse of power.

There is no legitimate argument that says our administration should not or cannot operate a surveillance system on communications. What we do have is a system that says they cannot do it unilaterally without either of the other branches of our government having any oversight. Congress cannot act unilaterally and exclude the other branches of government. The Courts cannot prevent either of the other branches from governing by legal procedures. What they can do is declare those actions as being unconstitutional. Then the procedure must be to amend the constitution. Amending the constitution is a lot different than passing legislation or using administrative power by a simple majority or in the case of the administration, just declaring. In fact, all the amendments after the first 10 are the result of court challenges to legislation, administrative order or challenges to lower court decisions. Some amendments have later been repealed, because they were found to be ineffective or even unconstitutional.

The first 10 amendments (Bill of Rights) were promised as a means to get the constitution accepted and then allow a super majority of the constituents to force the new nation to guarantee those rights. It was to prevent a small representation of politically active and biased men from ignoring some very basic human rights of minorities within the jurisdiction of the Federal Government. It was to protect against local Judiciary from discriminating against small minorities within their domain. It was to allow "home rule" so long as that home rule did not violate constitutional protection of minorities.

Those representatives that were elected by their colonies or states, rather than being the "Saintly Christians" that some religious groups are declaring today, were wise enough to admit that they were not endowed with unerring wisdom nor the Divine Inspiration of God. They produced, after a considerable amount of debate and compromise, a document that has served well for over two hundred years. And it will continue to serve well into the future, if we, the people, don't become so complacent and trusting that we don't demand our leaders to either adhere to it, or properly amend it.

The system works. Not always to suit many of us, with our limited and biased interests, but it works. Why should congress be allowed to challenge the Administration's appointments? That is simple to understand. It is to prevent "stacking" the courts or the bureaucracy in favor of the Administration. Our founders and authors of the constitution were very much afraid of the Administration gaining the power of the Royalty that they had just overthrown. Why did they establish within the legislative branch two separate entities to represent the people? That was to protect the common folks from the power of the elite and wealthy. Why did they set the system up to allow congress to challenge the court's decisions by amending the constitution? It was because they were afraid of the irrevocable power of the court system they had just rebelled against.

Our court system is not set up to legislate. It is, in fact, set up to prevent legislation or administrative decree that violates the United States Constitution. When the legislature or administration cries, "Legislation from the Bench," they are simply trying to abdicate their responsibility to address the issues properly.

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 [jvannostrand@nwks.com](mailto:jvannostrand@nwks.com) or [pdecker@nwks.com](mailto:pdecker@nwks.com).

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## Proof positive love makes you crazy

Valentine's Day. Most people either love it or hate it, but either way, it elicits strong emotions, and after all, that's what it's about — emotion.

I'm not going to lampoon anyone or anything this year.

Last year, someone was kind enough to point out to me that Valentine's means a lot to people, and flowers have more of a message than I thought they did.

With that in mind, instead this year, I'm going to explore some of the more interesting aspects of the driving force in our universe.

Take for instance an article on love in the February issue of National Geographic that showcased an interesting finding.

Scientists showed people pictures of loved ones — siblings, their spouses or lovers, and other family members or friends. They then did brain scans on the individual and compared them to those of people with known mental illness.

The scans, they found, were remarkably similar, and almost impossible to tell apart.

So, it could be inferred that love is just a chemical reaction. But, I think, no matter how much research is done, there is no easy way to explain what attracts two people and bonds them together.

As the song says, and my favorite football player once sang in a credit card commercial, "Love is a many-splendored thing."

A few interesting facts on love:

"It is a matter of record that romantic Canadian porcupines kiss one another on the lips."

(Which begs the question — do any other porcupines kiss that way?)

"The German language contains 30 words that refer to the act of kissing. There is even a word, Nachkuss, for all the kisses that haven't yet been



**Tisha Cox**

### Off The Beaten Path

named." (Both from <http://www.gagirl.com/trivia/trivia2.html>)

Valentine's Day, interestingly enough, also comes with its own set of superstitions. Most of them involve the divination of a future spouse, or lover.

These traditions are old, and probably forgotten in this day and age.

Three of these superstitions are:

"By tradition, a young girl was supposed to eventually marry the first eligible male she met on Valentine's Day."

"In Britain and Italy, some unmarried women would rise before sunrise on Valentine's Day and stand by the window watching for a man to pass. It was believed that the first man seen...or someone who looked very much like him, would be their husband within a year."

"Traditionally, if a young female is curious enough...and brave enough...she can conjure-up the appearance of her future spouse by visiting a graveyard at midnight on the Eve of Saint Valentine's Day and singing a prescribed chant while running around the church twelve times."

<http://www.novareinna.com/festive/valrites.html>

And some quotes on love:

"Faith makes all things possible. Love makes

them easy." "Three things of life that are most valuable - Love, self-confidence & friends."

"It is wrong to think that love comes from long companionship and persevering courtship. Love is the offspring of spiritual affinity and unless that affinity is created in a moment, it will not be created for years or even generations."

(<http://www.latestngreatest.net/>)

"You are what I never knew I always wanted." From the movie "Fools Rush In"

"I wonder how many people never get the one they want, but end up with the one they're supposed to have." "Fried Green Tomatoes"

"Don't you hate that? Uncomfortable silence. Why do we feel it's necessary to talk about bull in order to feel comfortable? That's when you know you've found somebody really special. When you can just shut the hell up for a minute and comfortably share a silence."

"I believe there's a place where the restless souls wander, burdened by the weight of their own sadness. They wait for a chance to set the wrong things right. Only then can they be reunited with the ones they love. Sometimes, a crow shows them the way; because sometimes, love is stronger than death." — "The Crow: City of Angels"

(<http://www.latestngreatest.net/movielovequotes.htm>)

And I can't forget my personal favorite — All's fair in love and war.

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## Your turn

### Remember child safety week

**Lt. Kevin Winston  
Kansas Highway Patrol  
Goodland**

The week of Feb. 12-18 is National Child Passenger Safety Awareness Week. During this time frame, the Kansas Highway patrol will be conducting numerous activities.

These activities include, but are not limited to:

enforcement activities, child seat check-ups, safety programs in the local schools and public service announcements through the media.

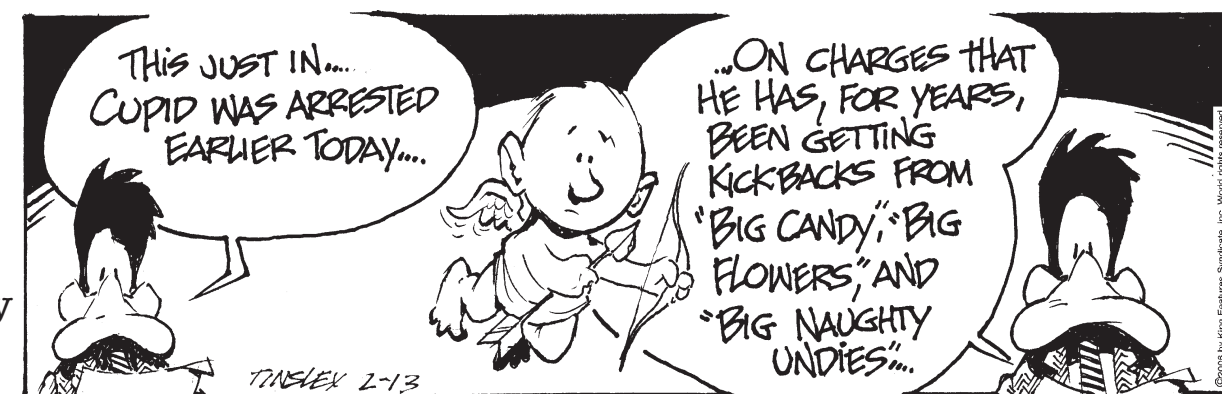
Currently, Kansas has increased their seat belt usage 11 percent from 1998 through 2005. While this figure represents a significant improvement, we as citizens must continue to promote and em-

phasize the use of seat belts and child restraints in an effort to insure maximum safety for our fellow Kansas and our most important commodity — our children.

In conclusion, we invite everyone to take responsibility and become leaders — please buckle up.

### Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley



### Doonesbury

• Gary Trudeau

