

Opinion



A Kansas Viewpoint

Winds of change are positive

From The Ottawa Herald

While the residents of tornado-ravaged Greensburg decide whether to rebuild with an emphasis on “green,” the rest of the state definitely will be blowing that direction with a push from Gov. Kathleen Sebelius.

An agreement ... pushes the Sunflower State’s dependence modestly toward wind energy and away from fossil fuels. The change calls for wind energy to meet 10 percent of peak energy demand by 2010 and 20 percent by 2020.... The initiative will reduce the state’s dependence on coal and mitigate some of the impact on the environment.

Kansas has the third highest potential to generate wind energy, but only generates the 10th-highest amount of wind energy. That’s a gap that needs to be closed.

...A proposed coal-burning electrical generation plant at Holcomb, near Garden City, has been stymied by protesters concerned about the inevitable pollution the Sunflower Electric plant would cause. This is just one example of waning support for coal plants. Of course this multi-pronged attack at energy usage isn’t just based on the type of energy used.

Energy efficiency is expected to lower demand by 10 percent over current demand. All of these are small steps that clearly can’t provide the base demand for the state’s electricity needs, but can certainly diversify the portfolio of energy offerings and reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

Those winds of change are positive indeed.

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@nwkansas.com or pdecker@nwkansas.com. Opinions do not necessarily reflect the *Free Press*.

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Windy Kansas



Tisha Cox

- Off the beaten path

Spring and summer in Kansas aren’t “normal” if there isn’t a lot of wind, or hot days.

We were lucky to have a real spring this year, and with it, a lot of mild days. But of course, the onslaught of hot days has yet to begin.

Even the state’s name is derived from the name of the Kansa tribe. Kansa means “people of the south wind.”

Considering the name of the tribe was wind-related, it has me wondering lately if this whole wind thing isn’t something that has been a Kansas feature for years.

According to the Weather Doctor Web site, the U.S. National Climatic Data Center has Dodge City as the windiest in the country with an annual average wind speed of 14 mph.

Definitely food for thought, and a good argument for wind power in Kansas.

Depending on where I looked, Kansas was listed as high as third when it comes to being the windiest state in the country.

Plenty of wide open land with lots of wind makes this place ideal for wind power. However, when the subject comes up, I always hear about putting in wind farms and selling the power elsewhere, like Colorado.

Well, what about building wind farms in Kansas to meet the needs of the people here first, then selling off the extra power that is generated?

While looking up reasons on why Kansas is so windy, I didn’t find any conclusive evidence to explain it, but I did find a study done by the Sierra Club.

They studied the winds in Kearny, Logan and

Ellis counties, and found the duration and speed of the wind is good enough to sustain energy needs, and could cut down on the need to buy power.

The irony is anyone who lives west of Wichita could have saved them the time and money by just telling them that yes — the wind blows a lot — almost every day, from dusk ‘till dawn. Sometimes even all night.

Just depends on the day.

Back to the question of wind power.

We have it, why not use it? It’s clean and renewable, and chances are it is not going to run out today, tomorrow or 50 years from now. Unless of course, global warming hastens, and there are some that will argue that it isn’t even happening. Kansas is windy now, and will probably continue to be windy for centuries.

The state has the chance to be a leader and make others step up and take notice.

Isn’t it about time Kansas is noticed for something positive instead of being the butt of jokes about education and evolution?

Wouldn’t it be better to be a leader instead of

a follower?

Girl power

I watched the Belmont Stakes Saturday. The Belmont is the third and longest leg of the Triple Crown races at a mile and a half. I’m glad I did watch because horse racing history was made that day. A filly won the race for the first time in 102 years.

Only seven horses were entered, a very small field for such a race. Preakness winner Curlin was entered, along with fellow Derby runners Imawildandcrazyguy, Hard Spun and Tiago.

New horses were CP West, and Seattle Slew descendants Slew’s Tizzy and filly Rags to Riches.

Rags to Riches, a big chestnut filly sired by 1989 Belmont winner and Seattle Slew son A.P. Indy, was the first filly to run the race in eight years, and only the 22nd to ever do so.

She ran down Curlin, and it was a battle to the wire. Curlin dug in, but didn’t have enough left in the tank to beat the big filly.

I was also happy to note her jockey didn’t have to use his whip, only fanned her on the last few lengths to the wire. Not bad for a horse that stumbled at the start.

The last filly before Rags to Riches to win the Belmont was Tanya in 1905.

The race was a memorable one, and Rags to Riches is a testament to her line.

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State’s online visitors growing

Kansans have never been afraid to explore new frontiers. This has been true for every generation of pioneers; and continues today as technology creates new frontiers and new possibilities.

Our state’s official Web site, www.kansas.gov, was the nation’s first eGovernment Web portal, originally launched in 1992. Having gone under several revisions and improvements over the past decade and a half, it now hosts an average of over 3.3 million visitors each year. Continuing in this fashion, our state’s Web site has recently been revamped to better serve you and the people of Kansas.

This latest redesign reveals a sharp, clean style with easier navigation and superior tools to help

Kathleen Sebelius

- Governor of Kansas

you find the information and services you want. The “My Kansas” feature gives you the ability to customize and save your own front-page by adding, deleting, or moving info “tiles” based on your preferences.

But the importance and accessibility of this site isn’t just about the latest in Web technology or aesthetic layouts. It’s about having access to

those who serve you and remembering that state government works for you.

Your elected officials have never been closer. With the click of a button, e-mail can express your concerns in a way that used to take days. A simple electronic search can provide you with the information that once took hours — or even a trip to a state office. Perhaps most importantly, the easier things become, the more money we save.

As I continue to work with agencies to cut waste, reduce paperwork, and save taxpayer dollars, I urge you to take advantage of what we have to offer online. It’s efficiencies like this that allow us to better serve you, and better serve Kansas.

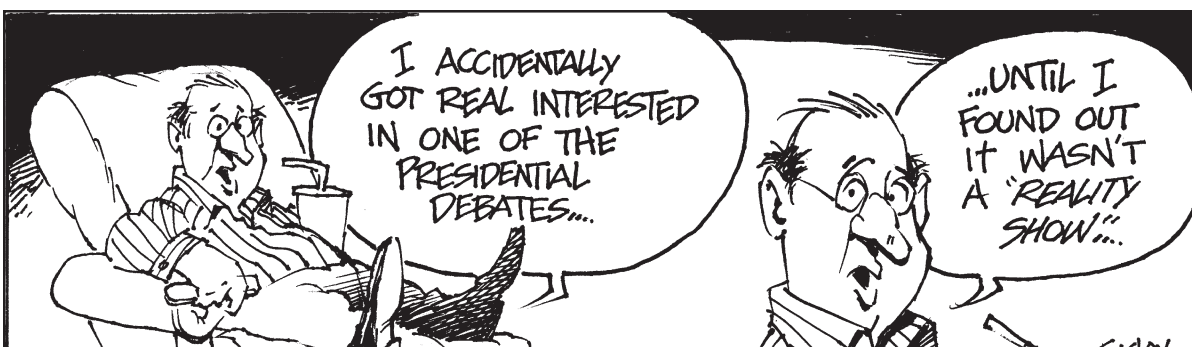
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Mallard Fillmore

- Bruce

Tinsley



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