pinion



Other **Viewpoints**

Wichita airport ready for terminal

The public remains skeptical about the need for a new terminal and parking garage at Wichita Mid-Continent Airport, something the Wichita City Council must acknowledge as it prepares to advance the project at its June 21 meeting. But after nearly 10 years of debate and delays, the council should get on with it.

Some still argue that Wichita should sit back and wait before committing to a new terminal. But wait for what, exactly? Airports don't improve with age and use. Costs for such a \$200 million upgrade will only rise. Unlike some regional airports, Mid-Continent has had its three biggest annual passenger counts since 2007, with ridership rising 2.91 percent last year (better than the 2.1 percent increase nationally).

In terms of sparing local taxpayers, the financing plan looks about as good as it could get: a mix of user fees, federal grants and bond proceeds.

And though the health of the Wichita economy is far from robust, some of the uncertainties that led the City Council last fall to hit the pause button have been resolved.

Hawker Beechcraft has committed to keep its headquarters in its hometown. Boeing won the Pentagon's contract to build aerial-refueling tankers.

The Kansas Legislature and Gov. Sam Brownback committed \$5 million to the Kansas Affordable Airfares Program for another year.

And the merger of Southwest Airlines and AirTran Airways was finalized last month, furthering hopes that Wichita will have the benefit not only of AirTran's low-cost existing service but also Southwest's routes and perks.

As outlined to the council at last week's workshop, the shortcomings of the 57-year-old terminal are real and significant, if unseen by many of its more than 1.5 million passengers a

It doesn't adhere to building codes or federal requirements for security or accessibility. The electrical, heating and cooling systems are obsolete. It's full of asbestos. The single narrow corridor where departing passengers get screened and arriving passengers get hugged is completely at odds with post-Sept. 11 air travel.

And those who'd prefer a renovation to a new building should consider the comparable costs – and imagine the hassle and security challenges of a working terminal doubling as a construction site.

Besides, if Wichita scrapped the project in favor of making do with the current terminal, it would have to repay \$22 million in federal money already spent. That's not going to hap-

Plans also call for a new terminal that is energy-efficient and more functional for airlines, with displays about Wichita's rich aviation history.

It's probably a credit to the airport's maintenance and management that few Wichitans view the place as a dump. But it's time to get on with the new terminal, to ensure Wichita has the transportation infrastructure to support a 21st-century economy and population.

- The Wichita Eagle, via The Associated Press

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Moving is a struggle, but survivable

Moving is an unfortunate fact of life.

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We move out of our parents' houses to go to college and think we're done. Of course, then we move the next year to find cheaper rent, and we move again when we realize we can't stand our roommates and so on until we graduate, when we move once again either back to our parents' houses when we can't find a job or to a different city for a new job.

Luckily, I moved due to the last reason. I graduated from the University of Colorado Boulder in May and was offered the sports editor position here at the Colby Free Press. I had always figured I would need to start my career in a small town and Colby seemed like a lovely place to do that. So I arranged everything to move three and a half hours east of Boulder, but soon found that moving was going to be very unfortunate for me this time around.

I decided I would pay a moving company to load my belongings, drive them to my new residence and unload them for me. This was a fantastic idea – in theory. While moving furniture out of my room, a mirror cracked in half and a piece to my bed frame was broken.

Sadly, I didn't even know the piece for my bed was broken until almost two weeks later, when a different pair of men were putting my bed together in my new apartment. The man in charge said – in his heavy Russian accent – the piece was unimportant, even though he had to ask me several times about how to put the bed for my new job when I was packing. Hoping it together. By this point, I was too stressed to was more casual than professional, I kept out



Kayla Cornett

• The Eternal Pessimist

care if my mattress was going to fall through the frame and just said "Fine."

Everything else seemed to be intact, but it had been 13 days since I had last seen it, so who knows. This company's policy allows them seven to 14 days to deliver my things, but the man loading my stuff assured me it shouldn't be more than five days since I wasn't moving very far.

Boy was he wrong. I had packed enough clothes to last a week just in case it took a little longer, and then I had to wash the clothes in my laundry hamper that I smartly packed in my car. I slept on an air mattress, had nothing to sit on or eat off of and didn't have any dishes or kitchen appliances.

The first week I began work, I would make a sandwich for lunch and grab fast food for dinner, both of which I ate on the floor with a pillow to cushion my back against the wall. Sounds lovely, doesn't it?

Also, I wasn't quite sure of the dress code

one pair of sneakers and a few pairs of flipflops. My boss prefers business professional, but she and my co-workers were understanding and let me dress casually while I waited for my belongings to arrive.

After eight days, I was so angry that I still didn't have my things and sick of being underdressed, that I broke down and bought a pair of dress shoes to go with my one pair of dress pants.

The next day I decided to find out where my stuff was and when it was estimated to arrive. I called a number labeled "booked moves and moves progress," and waited for the operator to find the English words to tell me exactly what I already knew. "The movers will call you with a window of when they will be arriving," she said. Useless.

Finally, I got the call and everything was downhill from there. Still, the stress, the time and especially the money was not worth the wait. I guess it's just one of those experiences in life I needed to learn from. So now I know, asking a few friends or family members to waste a few days helping me move will keep me sane as well as provide a good workout.

Kayla Cornett is the sports reporter for the Colby Free Press. An aspiring novelist in her youth, she has been writing features and news since high school. She is native Coloradoan.

Clam farm tour offers change of pace

As a consumer who enjoys eating a wide variety of fine food, I always relish the opportunity to learn more about where it comes from, how it's grown and the men and women who provide such feasts for our dinner plates.

I enjoyed just such an experience last week when I traveled to the Virginia coast and spent four days eating every clam, oyster, blue crab, shrimp and some of the finest seafood in the land.

Heck, I didn't eat anything but bivalves and fish until the last night I was in Virginia. That's when I was forced to eat a juicy filet mignon to prep my land legs for back home and the wonderful pork, lamb and beef our Kansas farmers and ranchers raise.

Incidentally, bivalves (clams) have a shell consisting of two asymmetrically rounded halves called valves that are mirror images of each other, joined at one edge by a flexible ligament called the hinge.

I devour at least a dozen raw oysters a day whenever I'm on the coast. This tradition started for me 40 years ago when I went to Florida for the first time while serving in the U.S. Army. I enjoyed my share of oysters during this trip as well. I also ate large quantities of littlenecks and middlenecks - the stuff great clambakes are made of.

The difference from previous visits to Virginia's Eastern Shores, the clams we ate this time were raised in a controlled environment from conception to cultivation. That's right, clam farmers are providing these tasty treats to much of this country's restaurants and groceries.

On this visit I had the opportunity to visit Cherrystone Aqua Farms. This farm provides 85 million clams each year. There are times when 1 million clams are shipped out of the Northampton County facility in a single day.



John Schlageck

 Insights Kansas Farm Bureau

"Our farm enables us to harvest clams yearround," Ron Crumb, vice-president of Cherrystone Aqua Farms told us on the tour.

That makes the company happy as a clam to know its customers are eating fresh, consistent quality bivalves. Cherrystone is one of the largest producers of aquaculture clams in the United States. Today it's part of Ballard Fish and Oyster Co., Inc. a seafood company that's been around since 1895.

The clams are grown in the high salinity waters of their namesake, Cherrystone Creek. Cherrystone clams are grown in the oceanflushed waters around the Eastern Shore.

Bivalves begin life onsite in a hatchery. Workers at the plant bring adult clams into a building and place them in 66-degree water that is ideal for spawning.

After the eggs are fertilized, they are placed in containers of algae-rich water. Some of these six-foot tall tanks are brown, forest green, lime green - they look like a modern-day Frankenstein laboratory.

The larvae are microscopic and look like granules of sand. After they grow bigger, about the size of a pencil eraser, they are moved into trays of sand in shallow-water beds for approximately three months.

It takes a clam 2 1/2 to 3 years to grow from egg to market size. Once harvested, clams and oysters are immediately cleaned, packed, refrigerated and shipped fresh all

across our country. Littlenecks at Cherrystone are shipped out within 24 hours of being harvested. They're sold to wholesalers fresh, live and in the shell.

Like an increasing number of food producers today, littleneck clams from Cherrystone Aqua Farms are grown without the use of antibiotics, steroids or other feed additives.

Believe me, after eating several dozen of these tasty morsels last week, littleneck clams could certainly be considered one of the perfect foods. High-protein, low-calorie, lip smackin' delicious these little babies weigh in at only 100 calories per serving (12 clams).

Littlenecks have special oils rich in omega-3 and fatty acids - all good for us. Now that I realize I can buy these locally, fresh and alive, I'll definitely eat more of them. After all, it's easy to substitute clams for other protein foods in stir-fry dishes, salads, soups and pasta reci-Clams with garlic, olive oil and a squirt of

lemon anyone?

John Schlageck of the Kansas Farm Bureau is a leading commentator on agriculture and rural Kansas. He grew up on a diversified farm near Seguin, and his writing reflects a lifetime of experience, knowledge and passion.

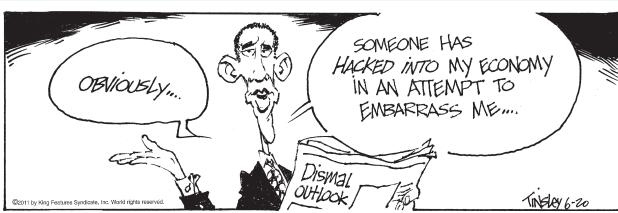
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