Bremby surprised by some responses

However, both critics and supporters say secretary has done a good job overall.

The Associated Press

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Continued from Page A1

many legislators, said the Sunflower project is vital to economic development. Some contend Bremby was caving to pressure from special interest groups and Gov. Kathleen Sebelius' office.

"I do think in the coal-fire decision, the decision he made was probably outside of his authority," said Senate President Steve Morris, R-Hugoton.

But John Nalbandian, former Lawrence mayor and chairman of the University of Kansas public administration department, said Bremby has a mind of his own.

"I think Rod is convinced this is the right thing to do," Nalbandian said. "And once he is convinced this is the right thing to do, he has a strong mind."

Although he disagrees with the Sunflower decision, Morris said he thinks Bremby has done a good job overall as secretary. Still, Morris said, he wants to look at how long it takes for the Department of Health and Environment to process permits.

Since the Sunflower decision, Bremby, who is an introvert, has shied away from the media and any discussion of coal-fired plants. He even videotaped the initial announcement and didn't hold a news conference.

Bremby, who was named secretary of health and environment after Sebelius took office in January 2003, previously had worked in city government and as a professor and researcher at the University of Kansas.

Former Lawrence City Manager Mike Wildgen, who considers Bremby one of his best hires during his 16-year tenure, said that when Bremby faced angry crowds, he wasn't flustered.

"I always felt I could send him out to just about any overwhelmed citizen or group that had concerns or issues and he could deal with them unemotionally, matter of fact, give them straight answers," Wildgen said.

Some people point to the 1993 Sunflower decision he made as a defining moment for Bremby.

He said it taught him the importance of communicating frequently, honestly and directly during a crisis.

Bremby eventually became a management analyst for the city. Lawrence City Manager Dave Corliss credits Bremby with setting up a public safety plan that is still being used. The plan spelled out staffing levels and facility upgrades.

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In his three years at the university, Bremby worked on initiatives to match children with caring adults and bring young people and health programs to neighborhoods in Kansas City.

Bremby, who went to high school in Leavenworth and graduated from the University of Kansas in 1982, was born in the small town of Eufaula, Ala. He became one of the first black students to integrate into the city's public school system and counts Willie Mays among his role models.

"Personally experiencing segregation in public accommodations and the process of integration helped me develop a resilience that has proven more valuable the older I get," Bremby wrote to the Journal-World.

"These experiences, taken together, helped shape my view of what is possible in a civil society."
Economy on edge

As U.S. slips toward recession, market ups-and-downs remain a mystery

BY JOHN GREEN
The Hutchinson News
jgreen@hutchnews.com

The Federal Reserve’s unexpected cut Tuesday to a key interest rate was like the scene in “It’s a Wonderful Life,” when Donna Reed waved a handful of cash to end a near run on the Bailey Savings and Loan, said associate professor Christopher Anderson.

The Fed’s move cut short a plunge in the U.S. stock market that began the moment markets opened Tuesday, the result of a Monday meltdown in world markets.

“The big question,” the University of Kansas professor said, “is why did everybody in Asia and Europe wake up yesterday and suddenly decide things were a lot riskier than when they went home Friday?”

There was some incremental bad economic news that continued to come out, he noted, including talk of additional subprime loan losses and a possible U.S. recession.

“But I tell you, it’s hard to find a smoking gun.”

That’s typical, Anderson said, of such market rolls.

“We had the ’87 crash, the ’89 mini-crash, the ’97 Asian financial crisis, the Russian default in ’98 and the right after 9-11,” Anderson said.

“Except for the Russian default and 9-11, it’s hard to put a finger on. We’re still trying to figure out what happened in 1987, even 20 years later. People don’t understand why one day people decide the market is so much riskier than the day before and sell off their riskier assets.”

One thing is clear, said Anderson and KU business professor Doug Houston: The bumpy ride isn’t over.

It appears the U.S. is either now in or headed for a recession, Houston said.

And that means there will be some economic pain.

“But I wouldn’t panic,” he said. “We’ve had recessions in the past.”

One reason the current situation may be so unsettling, Houston said, is because it’s been so long since there’s been a severe recession.

“There’ve been recessions, but the ones we’ve had have been mild,” he said.

“People are not tempered to the fact the economy can bounce a bit. Overall, the look of the U.S. economy is still positive. There are a lot of good things going on. On an individual level, we need to keep doing the good things we do.”

On a government level, See MARKET / A3
VIDEO OF INTERVIEWS AT HUTCHNEWS.COM

COMMUNITY VIEW

BONNIE MCCLELLAND

RICHARD GRABER

JIM NICKLES

HELEN HADLEY

"It will get worse until we choose a president."

"Overall, I think we've got good things happening."

"If we get the stimulus package passed, I think we can probably head off a recession."

"It will take time, but I think it will eventually get better. I’m an eternal optimist."

Hutchinson News
Hutchinson,KS
Circ. 31878
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31342
ECONOMY IN PIECES

HOUSING
Bad news related to the subprime mortgage crisis continued piling on, further impacting credit markets. Bank of America Corp. and Wachovia Corp., two of the nation’s largest banks, stated their quarterly profits were nearly wiped out by credit losses and write-downs. Worldwide investors could suffer losses if some banks and financial institutions collapse, creating a domino effect in the securities markets.

RETAIL MARKETS
Added to mortgage defaults and tumbling home prices has been recent growth in inflation for fuel and food prices and an overall slowing of the economy, including job losses. Many economic indicators are pointing to a recession in the U.S., and because American consumers remain among the world’s largest, reductions in spending would be deeply felt by world markets, leading to jitters abroad.

FINANCIAL MARKETS
Wall Street has suffered steep losses in the past few months as bad economic news continued. Monday, apparently on fears of a recession in the U.S., international stock markets took a sudden dive. In reaction, U.S. markets plunged Tuesday morning, though a 3/4-point interest rate cut by the Federal Reserve helped stem losses. Cutting interest rates may encourage banks to borrow money and therefore invest more freely.

ECONOMIC CYCLES
Recessions, economists say, are an inevitable part of the economy. The unknown, which creates fear among market traders, is how long and how deep those recessions may be. Cutting interest rates too much, however, could lead to higher inflation, which itself could stifle spending. There will be some pain, experts said, regardless of what the government does, so individual investors should not act in haste.
Market

Continued from Page A1

there are two things being done.

First, there was the fed-rate cut, which Houston said appeared to be an appropriate response in an effort to stimulate lending, with the idea it would help stabilize the economy.

The reduction was in the federal funds rate, which is the interest banks charge to lend to other banks, usually just for overnight, according to the Associated Press. The cut from 4.25 percent to 3.5 percent is the biggest reduction in the rate since 1990. The Fed also cut its discount rate, the interest it charges to make direct loans to banks, by a similar amount, to 4 percent. The effect of both is to increase the nation's money supply.

Commercial banks typically follow suit and make similar cuts to prime lending rates for business and consumer loans. His fear, Houston said, is that further cuts could ratchet up inflation, which has already affected food and fuel prices.

"Inflation numbers have already been up," he said. "That could be a worry and needs to be watched closely. It's a difficult balance."

The other response is talk of a federal cash rebate to taxpayers.

"That would be more likely to help immediately and directly for some people, to give them immediate spending capability," Houston said.

"The biggest problem the economy might face is if everyone backs off and retrenches in their spending" in anticipation of a slowing economy, with job losses and higher inflation, he explained. "That could lead to sharper declines."

There are a few other government options, he noted, such as increased government spending or tax reductions, which might help.

"Corrections like this are never easy," Houston said. "It's clear we are sailing into some kind of recession, and I don't see any painless way out of it. There are no magic bullets."

Hutchinson
News
Hutchinson,KS
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From Page: 3
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By Congressman  
Jerry Moran  

Welcome to this “This Week in Congress.” The House reconvened this week and passed mine safety legislation and a bill to continue a program that helps replace dilapidated public housing units. There are many important issues for Congress to address this year. Please let me know what you think the top priority should be in 2008 by voting on my online poll www.jerrymoran.house.gov.

Honoring the Life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

On Monday, I spoke at the Second Missionary Baptist Church in Hutchinson to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. King served others his entire life with the determination to correct many of the wrongs in this country: injustice, inequality and ignorance. Instead of being first in material possessions, Dr. King challenged us to “be first in love, be first in moral excellence, be first in generosity.” He said, “If you want to be important – wonderful. If you want to be recognized – wonderful. If you want to be great – wonderful. But recognize that he who is your servant. That’s a new definition of greatness. It means that everybody can be great, because everybody can serve.”

Joining me at the celebration were Kansas Senator Terry Bruce, Kansas Representatives Jan Pauls and Mark Treaster and Hutchinson Mayor Ron Sellers. I appreciated the opportunity to speak at this service and thank Dr. Hence Parsons for the invitation.

Commission Discusses Nation’s Transportation and Infrastructure Needs

In 2005, Congress created a 12 member bipartisan commission to study the future of our nation’s transportation needs and how to pay for those needs. On Thursday, I attended a hearing of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to listen to the recommendations of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission. These recommendations were designed to help start the discussion for the next highway authorization bill scheduled to be debated in 2009.

The overwhelming consensus of the commission was that the nation’s highways and bridges have numerous needs that must be quickly addressed. The commission recommends total spending of at least $225 billion a year for improvements and repairs on highway, transit and rail systems across the country. Currently, the United States spends $100 billion on these types of projects. The commission also recommended consolidating 108 federal highway, transit and rail programs into 10 grant programs that will be based on performance and results.

Such an investment into our transportation infrastructure will mean finding ways to raise revenue to pay for these projects. Currently, the federal government receives 18.4 cents for every gallon of gas Americans purchase. Nine of the 12 Commissioners recommended increasing this gas tax by 25 to 40 cents a gallon over the next five years and to index it for inflation after that. This would be a 200 percent increase from what Kansans currently pay. As the Transportation Committee begins discussing the next highway bill, I work to meet our nation’s transportation needs while being mindful of any increase in costs to Kansans. I encourage your input in the course of these discussions.

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does not appear to be any strong movement toward resolving the differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill and the requests made by the White House. I am disappointed that this is the case. I was hopeful the farm bill would receive immediate attention in January. I will continue to push for the bill to be concluded in a timely manner, but at this point, there is no evidence of House and Senate leadership pushing for this to happen.

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On Thursday, I participated in a hearing of the House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Health to consider several bills intended to ensure veterans receive the highest quality medical care. The hearing featured a measure I sponsored with Representative Phil Hare of Illinois to establish a full time Director of Physician Assistant Services within the Department of Veterans Affairs. Physician Assistants are crucial to providing medical care in rural and other underserved areas, often serving as the only health care professional available. I want to ensure that Physician Assistants are fully integrated and well utilized to provide veterans living in rural communities timely access to quality care. I am hopeful that Congress will act this year to approve this legislation.

Addressing the Pharmacist Shortage, Visiting KU Pharmacy School

Pharmacists play a critical role in our Kansas communities. Unfortunately, we have seen pharmacy doors closing in different counties throughout the state over the past year. En route back to Washington, D.C., I visited the Kansas University School of Pharmacy to tour the facility and meet with Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Richard Lariviére and Pharmacy School Dean Ken Audus. We discussed the shortage of pharmacists and KU’ plans to expand its pharmacy degree program.

The degree program currently accepts 105 students per year. Under KU’s proposal, nearly 200 more students would be able to enter the program through the University’s location in Wichita and a proposed new building in Lawrence. The proposal will come before the state legislature this year for consideration. I appreciate the efforts of KU to expand its program and thank Vice Chancellor Lariviére and Dean Audus for their time with me. I offered to help do what I can to signify the importance of this expansion to our state legislators, as well as to explore federal funding opportunities.

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Basketball has long been a tradition among Kansans. This week, I attended a pair of Big 12 basketball games. On Monday, I was in Lawrence to watch Kansas play Oklahoma. The Jayhawks recorded an impressive victory and remain unbeaten on the season. I enjoyed sitting and visiting with Chancellor Robert Hemenway and his wife, Leah. On Saturday, I was in Manhattan to watch Kansas State take on Texas A&M. It was an exciting game with K-State defeating the Top 10 Texas A&M team 75 to 54. I wish all of our Kansas basketball teams the best this season.

Visiting with Fellow Rotarians in Overland Park

I attended a meeting of the Rotary Club of Overland Park this week at the invitation of Dr. Mary Cohen. As a Rotarian, I understand the important role civic clubs play in our communities. From Kansas City to Liberal, civic clubs across the state have the same goal of making their community a better place. I appreciated the opportunity to visit with Rotarians in Johnson County.

Discussing Transportation Issues with Leading Trucking Company

After attending Rotary in Overland Park, I met with YRC Worldwide CEO Bill Zollaf and Mike Kelley to discuss the release of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission Report and the upcoming 2009 transportation bill. YRC Worldwide is a Fortune 500 company and one of the largest transportation service providers in the world. Headquartered in Overland Park, the company employs about 66,000 people and has terminals located in communities like Goodland and Liberal. As a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I visited with Bill and Mike about the conditions of our national highways, environmental regulations and highway congestion problems. I appreciated the opportunity to learn more about their operation and the challenges they face.

Visiting with Kansans during Smoky Hills Public Television Program
Yesterday, I appeared on a live call-in show on Smoky Hills Public Television. It was a good opportunity to hear directly from Kansans about what is on their minds. I was happy to take several calls and share my opinions on a number of topics, including the farm bill, health care and energy. Thanks to Fort Hays State University Assistant Professor Chapman Rackaway and Hays Daily News Editor and Publisher Patrick Lowry for leading the program. The program will be rebroadcast on Sunday, January 27 at 6:00 p.m.

Big First Listening Tour Continues

I continued my listening tour with a stop in Buhler in Reno County yesterday. My tour will continue this week with several stops.

It is an honor to serve you in Washington, D.C. Please let me know how I can be of assistance.

House Leadership Commends Moran For Voting Excellence

WASHINGTON, D.C. - House Republican Leader John Boehner this week recognized Congressman Jerry Moran for his voting record during the 110th Congress. With the conclusion of the 2007 congressional session, Moran continues his near perfect voting attendance compiling a 97 percent record since his arrival in Washington, D.C.

"Jerry has continued working hard this year by traveling back and forth from Kansas to Washington, D.C., each week for votes in Congress," Boehner said. "I commend him for his near perfect attendance and efforts for the people of Kansas."

"It is my pleasure and privilege to serve in Congress on behalf of Kansans," Moran said. "It was a difficult year for people across the state from what seemed like one disaster to the next. I did my best to be on the ground in Kansas during these difficult times while maintaining the most important part of my job by casting votes in Washington, D.C., that will benefit the people of Kansas."
KU grads named

LAWRENCE — The names of more than 1,600 candidates for degrees for the fall 2007 semester at the University of Kansas have been announced by the Office of Registrar.

Graduate and undergraduate degrees are conferred in December based on work completed during the fall semester. Because KU conducts only one formal commencement ceremony each year, many students graduating in the fall or summer terms will return for the traditional walk down the hill and into Memorial Stadium on Sunday, May 18, 2008.

Five of KU's 13 colleges and schools conducted recognition programs or hooding ceremonies earlier this month to honor those planning to graduate at the end of the semester: the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the School of Business, the School of Engineering, the School of Law and the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

Those named from Sumner County are:

**Wellington**
- Nathan Matthew Markley, son of Matthew and Sandra
- Garrett Micheal Shaddix, son of Carl and Virginia Shaddix
- Lawrence Matthew Aaron Hall

**Mulvane**
- Luke R. Gunter, son of David and Nancy Gunter
- Jacob Patrick McCune, son of Jeff McCune

**South Haven**
- Matthew Brett Metcalf
State Democrats see Six running in 2010

TOPEKA (AP) — Democrats have put their hopes of keeping the attorney general’s office in Stephen Six, even though they acknowledge he hasn’t developed the political skills he needs.

Six, a Douglas County district judge, has never run for elected office, but Gov. Kathleen Sebelius appointed him attorney general last week. He’ll take over Jan. 31 for Paul Morrison, who’s stepping down because of a sex scandal.

Six will serve the remaining three years of Morrison’s four-year term, and some Republicans expect the 2010 attorney general’s race to be competitive because of Morrison’s downfall. Morrison spent $2.65 million on his successful 2006 campaign.

A top Republican Party official and a former adviser to Sebelius questioned Monday whether Six is ready to run a statewide campaign.

Democrats assume Sebelius would appoint a candidate only if he promised to run, but Six hasn’t publicly committed.

“Judge Six is focused on getting up to speed on the cases and issues important to the attorney general’s office,” spokeswoman Ashley Anstaett said Monday. “It’s too early to talk about politics or campaigns.”

Still, Sebelius and other prominent Democrats believe Six has enough time to build a solid record as attorney general and pick up the campaigning, public speaking and fundraising skills he’ll need.

“She had no concerns about that at all,” said Sebelius spokeswoman Nicole Corcoran. “First and foremost, she wanted to get the right person in the job.”

Burgett Loomis, a University of Kansas political scientist who once served as a Sebelius adviser, said the governor appears comfortable with someone who’s “pretty raw material” as a potential candidate because he appears “squeaky clean” and is willing to run in 2010.

But Loomis and Christian Morgan, the state GOP’s executive director, said Six seemed unprepared for a question about abortion during the Friday news conference in which Sebelius announced his appointment.

Abortion was a key issue during Morrison’s 2006 campaign. An abortion-rights Democrat, he unseated incumbent Phill Kline, an anti-abortion Republican. Abortion opponents repeatedly criticized Morrison afterward over how he handled investigations of abortion providers.

“His father probably taught him some things about being in the public eye,” Beatty said.

People who have parents like that who are in the public eye have a natural advantage even if they’ve never run for office.”

Gates argued that Six, as a former civil trial lawyer, already has speaking skills that will help him in politics.

And Bob Beatty, a Washburn University political scientist, said it’s a mistake to view Six as a complete newcomer to politics. Beatty noted that Six’s father, Fred, served as a Kansas Supreme Court justice.

“I’m sure his father taught him some things about being in the public eye,” Beatty said. “People who have parents like that who are in the public eye have a natural advantage even if they’ve never run for office.”

The elder Six may help in another way: He was appointed to the Supreme Court by Republican Gov. Mike Hayden in 1988.

“I think he’ll do fine,” said Lee Kinch, a Derby attorney who serves on the Democratic National Committee, said of the younger Six.
LAWRENCE (AP) — The state official who blocked two coal-fired power plants in southwest Kansas last year says he was taken aback by at least some of the responses to his decision.

"I was not surprised by the reaction, due to the importance of the issue, but I have been surprised by the negative responses directed toward me personally by people I respect," the state’s top environmental regulator, Rod Bremby, wrote in an e-mail to the Lawrence Journal-World.

Bremby, who was the assistant city manager of Lawrence during the flood of 1993, answered a series of questions by e-mail but declined to speak to the newspaper for its story Sunday.

In October, Bremby denied a $3.6 billion plan from Sunflower Electric Power Corp. to build two coal-fired plants outside Holcomb. Bremby, Kansas’ secretary of health and environment, cited the plants’ potential emissions of carbon dioxide, seen by many scientists as a major contributor to global warming.

While environmentalists hailed the decision, supporters of the plan, including many legislators, said the Sunflower project is vital to economic development. Some contend Bremby was caving to pressure from special interest groups and Gov. Kathleen Sebelius’ office.

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By Jerry Moran

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Jaron Lee, a graduate of Leavenworth High School, received his commission recently as a second lieutenant and will be assigned as an air battle manager.
More than 90 members of the Air Force, Army, Navy and Marine ROTC at the University of Kansas took part in activities in honor of Veteran's Day. Leavenworth County participants included seniors Kristofer Johnson and John Irvine; juniors John Kuehn and Stephanie Langley; sophomores Kieran Jamaal Chapman and Nicole Stims; freshmen Elizabeth Whitford and John Sebes. Shane Thomas also participated.
Bremby: Some responses to Sunflower decision were surprising

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"I think Rod is convinced this is the right thing to do," Nalbandian said. "And once he is convinced this is the right thing to do, he has a strong mind."

Although he disagrees with the Sunflower decision, Morris said he thinks that Bremby has done a good job overall as secretary. Still, Morris said, he wants to look at how long it takes for the Department of Health and Environment to process permits.

Since the Sunflower decision, Bremby, who is an introvert, has shied away from the media and any discussion of coal-fired plants. He even videotaped the initial announcement and didn't hold a news conference.

Bremby, who was named secretary of health and environment after Sebelius took office in January 2003, previously had worked in city government and as a professor and researcher at the University of Kansas.

Former Lawrence City Manager Mike Wildgen, who considers Bremby one of his best hires during his 16-year tenure, said that when Bremby faced angry crowds, he wasn't flustered.

"I always felt I could send him out to just about any overwhelmed citizen or group that had concerns or issues and he could deal with them unemotionally, matter of fact, give them straight answers," Wildgen said.

Some people point to the 1993 flood as a defining moment for Bremby.

He said it taught him the importance of communicating frequently, honestly and directly during a crisis.

Bremby eventually became a management analyst for the city. Lawrence City Manager Dave Corliss credits Bremby with setting up a public safety plan that is still being used. The plan spelled out staffing levels and facility upgrades.

After working at City Hall Bremby went to the University of Kansas, where he was assistant director of the Work Group for Community Health and Development.