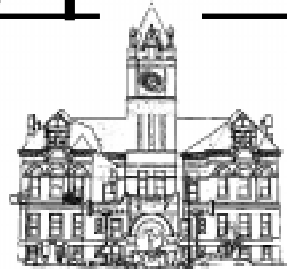


Opinion



Letter Drop

• Our Readers Sound Off

Paper needs volunteers, too

To The Free Press:

I, too would like to commend Pam Augustine and Kathy Arnberger for their coverage of Colby's K-18 and 12 and under baseball teams. I learned during my tenure as a reporter for the Free Press that local coverage depends greatly on dedicated fans such as these in order for the sportswriter, the one person who is responsible not only for sports, but for covering local political boards, accidents and myriad other events that occur in our area, to get the stories in the paper.

However, I would like to address some of the comments in the letter to the editor Tuesday. It is, in fact, silly to think that newspapers, plural, have sportswriters, plural, in a community our size. Our city and county rely on volunteers for much of the work that is done. Many of those who have done such an excellent job with the Thomas County Fair are volunteers, the fire department is staffed by dedicated volunteers as well as career firefighters and our political boards, for the most part, serve us well without pay. One can look into almost any project to find volunteers carrying the load to make our community what it has become.

In fact, the Colby Free Press, the only newspaper in Thomas County, has one sportswriter, singular. There are only three people working in the newsroom in totality. With the number of festivals, political boards and annual stories such as harvest that must be covered, those dedicated people must rely on equally dedicated people in the community for help.

The local newspaper in a small town offers a unique opportunity to use one's writing skills. Although my responsibilities do not permit me to attend events regularly enough to become one of the "stringers" upon which good coverage depends, I have offered my services as photographer or writer whenever I am available and needed. Perhaps if more people were willing to do so, there would be more local coverage.

I must also disagree with the amount of local coverage. The comment about the number of events was right on the money, although the conclusion was faulty. There are simply too many events for one person, or even three people, to cover, yet most of the events in our area receive some coverage. Again, perhaps those who are regular attendants of specific events should volunteer their time and skills toward coverage of those events.

It has been said that our community is what we make it. This is true of our newspaper as well.

A. Jay Kelley,
Colby
(Letter #108)

Addresses of elected officials:

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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: jmmorriso@ink.org web:http://www.idir.net/~jmmorriso/

State Sen. Stan Clark, State Capitol Building Rm. 449-N, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7399 e mail: sclark@ink.org

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Kids need to know who the boss is

John Rosemond, who is one of my favorite child psychologists, hit the nail on the head once again when he talked recently about parents making the same mistakes.

He said that while on a short vacation with his wife, the two of them went on a shopping adventure. As his wife was looking at some items, Rosemond said he struck up a conversation with a young woman who had a 15-month-old son.

According to Rosemond, the lady mentioned that she had "figured it out." Intrigued by her remark, he asked what she meant.

"Emphasize only the positive," she said. "I ignore anything negative that he does, pretend it's not happening. I only respond to good stuff and it's working very well — he's really a good kid."

Rosemond said he nodded and said something polite. In other words, he wasn't going to debate this issue.

"I wanted to tell her that she has fallen under the spell of the same psychobabble that entranced my wife and me when we first had children — the same blarney that caused the first 10 years of life in the Rosemond household to be a near-constant state of parenting perdition," he wrote in his syndicated column.

Yet, he kept his mouth shut because he knew that during his own nightmare, no one could have told him either that he was his own worst enemy.

I agree with Rosemond when he said that as a young parent, he and his wife had the best intentions and believed that it was this only that really mattered.

"I was not going to be the sort of parent my parents had been," he thought to himself while waiting for his wife to finish shopping. "I was a member of the Anointed Generation, put here to right all the wrongs that had gone before us, which included everything."

Like Rosemond, I can remember feeling like a



Patty Decker

• Deep Thoughts

parent that would be breaking new ground and nothing was going to stand in my way of raising my children correctly.

During those younger years, and with my first child, it was going to be more of a democratic relationship because then the child would grow up functioning appropriately in a democratic society from the lessons learned at home.

Rosemond also referenced books to substantiate his reasoning. Books like Dorothy Briggs, "Your Child's Self Esteem," and Thomas Gordon's, "Parenting Effectiveness Training," which told parents that all the world's ills, such as poverty, war and prejudice, stemmed from the archaic idea that adults should exercise authority over their children.

Instead, we new-age parents said we were going to talk things out, like civilized people should and little did we realize that children are not civilized.

In fact, I liked Rosemond's opinion that it takes at least 13 years to properly civilize a child and the civilizing must be conducted by a group of powerful authority figures acting in concert.

The irony of all this, he said, is a human is far smarter than a dog, but much harder to civilize. Why? Because a dog is born to please and a human is born determined to be pleased.

As children ourselves once upon a time, all of us can remember our parents saying things like, "Because, I said so!" as a response to "why" we weren't

able to do something.

We remembered how such a saying tasted badly and so out it went! In it's place, we started saying things like, "Let's talk about it"or"Can we figure out a way we can both get our needs met? ...or..."Let's be friends." Any of those aforementioned things tasted much better, so as parents, in they came.

Also like Rosemond, I was determined to emphasize only the positive, so that our children would glow with "self-esteem." If we emphasized only the positive, only the positive would happen.

"We would never have to punish our children," Rosemond said. "Oh joy, oh downfall."

He continued by saying, "Flat on our faces we fell, taking our children with us. In other words, our parents raised a generation of children at odds with their beliefs and, we in turn, have raised a "no fear" generation, which is starting to raise who knows what.

Rosemond said that although his wife was still in one of the dressing rooms, he could no longer continue talking with the "lovely, well-intentioned, silly goose of a woman" who was about to begin repeating all the mistakes that many of us are willing to admit we made as well.

I know I have said this before, and I know I didn't make it up because it's been written and spoken many, many times.

Children need discipline and authority figures in their lives and unless groups of powerful authority figures act together in harmony, I hold out very little hope that some children will grow up to take their rightful place as responsible and caring people in their homes, community and the world.

Simply put, I believe this would be the consequence and it scares me to think about it.

Decker is editor of the Free Press. Her column appears on Thursdays.

Community resource at work

At the Thomas County Community Foundation, we are pleased to be hosting Vaughn Henry, an estate planning consultant for three informational workshops on Tuesday, Aug. 20 at the Ramada Inn in Colby.

You may think that name is familiar; and for many of you, it is. Vaughn taught at Colby Community College in the agriculture department. Since then, he has become an expert in the area of estate planning and planned giving. He will not be here to sell annuities, insurance or any other product. He will not be competing for clients, as his business is as a consultant to professional advisors.

Rather, he will be talking about the estate planning options and how your estate plan should reflect your family values, meet your expectations for control of your assets and preserve family wealth.

One of the important aspects of any type of plan is the philosophy that will guide it. Your personal and family financial philosophy will guide you and your professional advisors in developing, not only an estate plan, but also any needed business or retirement plans, as well. A good plan and a consistent philosophy probably led to the financial success you have achieved. Vaughn presents tools to widen the possibilities for using an estate plan to meet your family



Becky Donelan

• Community Betterment

goals. The examples he presents may spark an idea that you can take to your own financial or legal advisor. We all need to think outside of our usual realm once in awhile. I believe you will find some very helpful ideas among the examples he presents.

One of the goals of a community foundation is to be a resource for the community. That was our purpose in asking Vaughn Henry to present these workshops. By providing an educational opportunity for professional advisors, we hope to bring to western Kansas a service they usually have to travel to obtain. The technical information available will enhance the services they already provide to their clients.

As a grant making foundation, we can best serve the nonprofit organizations in our area by coming to know them and their missions. Gathering for this

workshop will not only give them valuable knowledge about giving issues, but will encourage the type of communication that will promote collaboration and betterment throughout our community. The public session is designed as an opportunity for anyone in the community to find out more about estate planning.

It can seem overwhelming and complex — until you seek out information and resources. Whatever your planning goals, the public session will give you basic information and the conviction that making an appropriate plan is in the best interests of you and your family.

The sessions are as follows: Morning (8:30-11:30), Professional Advisors; afternoon (1:30-4:00), Non-profit Organizations; evening (7), General Public.

We invite you to attend and bring a friend or other family members.

To ensure adequate resource materials, we ask for registration for the morning and afternoon sessions by Aug. 9.

Please contact me with questions or for registration information at 785-465-9152.

Becky Donelan is executive director of the Thomas County Community Foundation.

Doonesbury

• Gary Trudeau

