

# Opinion



## Free Press Viewpoint

by Tom (TD) Dreiling  
Publisher

### Democrats have reason for getting early start

Well, the Democrats now have a luxury car full of candidates who want to unseat President George W. Bush in 2004. Rest assured there will be more as the weeks and months roll on.

The Rev. Al Sharpton of New York tossed his hat in the ring on Tuesday, bringing to 6 the number of donkeys beating the bushes. Yes, it seems early to be declaring for something that isn't going to happen until November of 2004, but the Democrats suffered embarrassing losses in the November 2002 election and feel an early start to capture the White House is in order.

At this point in time, the #1 donkey is Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts. He looks more presidential than do the others in the lineup, and his personal wealth will do him favor. Sen. Joe Lieberman of Connecticut, who ran for vice-president in Al Gore's unsuccessful bid for the White House, could be a big factor before all is said and done. Sen. John Edwards of North Carolina, who seems to be the media favorite, needs more exposure and polish. Then there's Rep. Dick Gephardt of Missouri, yesterday's news and Howard Dean, former governor of Vermont, too little known to be any significant threat. Sharpton? A really long shot.

Remember former Colorado Senator Gary Hart, the wannabe president back in the 1980s who blew his chance when it was discovered he was tinkering around with someone other than Mrs. Hart? Well, he's reportedly casting an eye toward the race and just might jump in to test the waters. He's certainly smart enough to know his candidacy won't fly.

President Bush will be hard to beat. But weren't we saying that same thing a dozen years ago when his father, President Bush, was riding about as high as one can get on the popularity chart? A stunning Gulf War victory in his pocket wasn't enough to offset the declining economy which resulted in the Bill Clinton 8-year presidential era.

The current President Bush, on the threshold of another war in that region — against Iraq's Saddam Hussein — could end up matching his dad's popularity, but if the economy continues to tank he could also end up as did his dad.

If we get into a war with Iraq, the campaign for the presidency continues and if the economy doesn't shape up, that's the issue that'll handcuff Mr. Bush.

Maybe these early declarations by Democratic candidates have merit.

We'll see what we shall see.

#### Addresses of elected officials:

**U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts**, 302 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202/224-4774

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

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

## COLBY FREE PRESS

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Haynes Publishing Company



**INLIGHT** of the news of the so-called human cloning going on, I have to ask the hypothetical question: If you pushed your naked clone off the top of a tall building, would it be:

- A) murder,
- B) suicide, or...
- C) merely making an obscene clone fall?

**"WHAT** A difference a day makes..." You remember those words to a song of ages past, well, it also fits our environment. Monday our temperature hit 70 degrees — yep 70. Tuesday's high was 27. That's a 43-degree swing. But this is January in northwest Kansas (and I guess it's January elsewhere, too), a month that provides weather's best roller coaster ride. That 70-degree day was the warmest reading so far this month. The other extreme was the +2 degrees recorded the morning of the 17th. That represents a differential of 68 degrees. Derek Bell, one of our advertising reps, wasn't feeling up to par and couldn't figure it out. Because he hails from the San Francisco area, I concluded his system wasn't accustomed to the spread in temperatures — from cold to warm and back to cold — and that was wearing him down. He sort of agreed that might be it. Derek joined us in late August and is splitting his time selling for us and performing duties as an assistant coach for the Colby Community College baseball program. I think Derek will find that springtime sports in this neck of the woods can sometimes call for winter wear. He'll adjust — if the weather maker makes adjustable weather.

**THE SUPER** Bowl is just days away. I am looking forward to this one. I like both the Raiders and the Bucs. But Jon Gruden is my favorite coach so I'll ride on Tampa Bay's float. It'll be interesting considering the fact Gruden coached the Raiders until this season when he was lured away by the ownership of Tampa Bay, who came calling with a fistful of bucks — to coach the Bucs.

**THE** daughter's letter arrives at the mailbox planted near the road in hill country.

Dear Ma and Pa:

Am well. Hope you are. Tell brother Walt and



Tom Dreiling

#### ● My Turn

brother Elmer the Army beats working for old man Minch by a mile. Tell them to join up quick before maybe all the places are filled. I was restless at first because you got to stay in bed till nearly 5 a.m., but am getting so I like to sleep late.

Tell Walt and Elmer all you do before breakfast is smooth your cot and shine some things — no hogs to slop, feed to pitch, mash to mix, wood to split, or fire to lay — practically nothin'. Men got to shave, but it ain't bad. They git warm water. Breakfast is strong on trimmings like fruit juice, cereal, eggs, bacon, etc., but kinda weak on chops, potatoes, beef, ham, steak, fried eggplant, pie, and regular food. But tell Walt and Elmer you can always sit between two city boys that live on coffee. Their food plus yours holds you till noon, when you get fed again. It ain't no wonder these city boys can't walk much.

We go on "route marches," which, the Sgt. says, are long walks to harden us. If he thinks so, it is not my place to tell him different. A "route march" is about as far as to our mailbox at home. Then the city guys all get sore feet and we ride back in trucks. The country is nice, but awful flat.

The Sgt. is like a schoolteacher. He nags some. The Capt. is like the school board. Colonels and Generals just ride around and frown. They don't bother none.

This next will kill Walt and Elmer with laughing. I keep gettin medals for shootin'. I don't know why. The bull's-eye is near as big as a chipmunk and don't move. And it ain't shooting back, like the Higgitt boys do back home. All you got to do is lay there all comfortable and hit it. You don't even load your own cartridges. They come in boxes.

Be sure to tell Walt and Elmer to hurry and join

up before other fellows get onto this setup and come stampeding in.

Yore lovin' daughter,

Gail

PS 'Speakin' of shootin, enclosed is \$200 for the barn roof and ma's teeth. The city boys shoot craps, but not very good.

**IT'S** that time again — for the big Orange & Black Basketball Classic at the Colby Community Building. Take time from your schedule to treat the family to a night of some of the best basketball action you'll see this season. Be sure to check pages 4 & 5 in today's *Free Press* for all the particulars. See you there.

#### HAPPY Birthday to...

✓**Jan. 22** — Carla Sloan, Robyn Rogers

✓**Jan. 23** — Shirley Burroughs

Congratulations!

Call us at 462-3963 or e-mail [td@nwkansas.com](mailto:td@nwkansas.com) to have your special day mentioned, and if you had a birthday or anniversary on the above dates that had appeared in the past but didn't today, please give us a call so we can get you back in the fold. We'll gladly congratulate you belatedly in the next column (or Friday). And do keep us updated on any changes in any listing. Many thanks for your help!

**FRED** submitted this one, called, "How Many Do You Remember?"

- ✓Head lights dimmer switches on the floor.
- ✓Ignition switches on the dashboard.
- ✓Heaters mounted on the inside of the fire wall.
- ✓Real ice boxes [ask your Mom about that].
- ✓Pant leg clips for bicycles without chain guards.
- ✓Soldering irons you heat on a gas burner.
- ✓Using hand signals for cars without turn signals.

**HAVE** a good evening!

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## The importance of the Internet

Rosie Stockton

#### ● Rosie's Route

after having experienced life in both small and large towns there are some things we give up living in a small town. One of those things is easy access to all types of shopping. Shopping is such a big and valuable part of the Internet, especially in rural America. When malls or specialty stores are hours away, and you don't have the time or energy to travel, the world's largest mall is at your fingertips.

Even though we have many nice stores available locally, we may not always be able to find the exact item we are looking for. So just go online and take a look around. Sometimes you may decide to buy online, sometimes you may not, and sometimes it is nice to just window shop online. I do this before we go shopping, whether locally or in a bigger town, to know whether what I am being charged is fair. This is just being a discriminating consumer.

I can remember the anticipation of waiting on the Sears, JC Penny or Montgomery Ward catalog that was delivered to our farm home when I was a child. There was an allure, almost a sense of exotic fantasy about those catalogs. When you opened them, you were opening the door on a whole other world that you had never seen. Those catalogs offered things that you had only read about, heard about or maybe seen on TV but had never seen yourself. Now from those catalogs, if you wanted to and had the money, you could order those wonderful things. Well, years have

past and times have changed and the Internet has become our catalog.

Education on the Internet is extremely important to rural America. Online access to classes has opened up opportunities to people who would otherwise have had to move to the college to get an education, or not go at all. We have our local college and we should take full advantage of it, but there are various things that might prevent us from attending class such as time, scheduling, young children, jobs and need of advanced degrees. However, with online classes every subject and opportunity is open and available.

Another very important part of being connected to the Internet is having access to e-mail. E-mail and instant messaging is to letter writing and mail what cell phones are to the traditional telephone. It allows families and friends to stay in close quick contact. I know there are many people that say, "Oh, but a letter is so much better." But that little sound that says "you have mail" is pretty nice also. It is a wonderful tool for people who live and travel internationally; for example missionaries and military personnel. When you have children away at college it is a wonderful way to keep in touch. You can send quick messages back and forth any time of day or night and if you have instant messaging available, you can carry on a conversation in real time. And no, using instant messaging isn't just for the teenage crowd.

Then there are things like ebay, online chat rooms, online game playing, genealogy research, online dating and music, but those are subjects for another day. So, no matter what your age, take that step and see what is out there in that great big cyber world of the world wide web.

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*Rosie Stockton is a Colby resident who likes to write. She will continue to favor us with her perspectives.*