

Opinion



Free Press Viewpoint

by Tom (TD) Dreiling
Publisher

President left little doubt war is near

President George W. Bush saved the knockout punch, so to say, for the final round.

His better than hour-long State of the Union address before Congress and the American people Tuesday night—and people worldwide, for that matter—touched on many issues, most of them of concern to the people who embrace the stars and stripes of this great land: the economy, Medicare, curtailing abortion, limiting damage awards from medical malpractice lawsuits, social security, and you know the litany by heart.

But the issue that grabbed most attention was Saddam “insane” Hussein and his continuing defiance of United Nations resolutions and snubs at the United States of America and its military might.

The President was tough in his comments and, quite frankly, persuasive in his argument that war with Iraq is a must. All one had to do was listen to what he was saying. It doesn’t take a rocket scientist to understand that the Iraqi torturer continues to manufacture and hide weapons of mass destruction in varying forms. The picture Mr. Bush painted was ugly. Why cannot Hussein account for the thousands upon thousands of liters of anthrax, botulin toxin, tons of sarin, mustard gas and VX nerve agent? It’s a no-brainer.

Of course the likes of Sen. Tom Daschle, Sen. John Kerry, Sen. Ted Kennedy and Rep. Nancy Pelosi were, as expected, unimpressed. They would continue to give Hussein extra time to continue his dirty doings while U.N. weapons inspectors comb the Iraqi landscape. And as House Speaker Dennis Hastert said, “This is not the time for the timid leadership offered by the naysayers.” Well put.

Make no mistake about it: war with Iraq has the green light from the commander-in-chief. When? Just as soon as the necessary machinery and personnel are in place. Weeks? No more than a month or perhaps two? Maybe even sooner.

These somber times call for unity. Freedom is at stake. Letting the madman of Iraq operate unmolested is an invitation for disaster. We either step up to the plate or find out too late there is no plate to step up to.

War is ugly. So is Saddam Hussein. And unfortunately he is holding us captive as we sit idly by while he continues to manufacture weapons of mass destruction — intended for the free world.

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: 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:

COLBY FREE PRESS

155 W. Fifth (USPS 120-920) (785) 462-3963
Colby, Kan. 67701

freepress@nwkanssas.com

State award-winning newspaper, General Excellence, Design & Layout Excellence, Column Writing, Editorial Writing, Sports Columns, News, Photography.

Official newspaper of Thomas County, Colby, Brewster and Rexford.

Tom (TD) Dreiling - Publisher
td@nwkanssas.com

NEWS

Patty Decker - Editor
pdecker@nwkanssas.com

Darrel Pattillo, Sports Editor
colbysports@nwkanssas.com

Michelle L. Hawkins, family and religion
mhawkins@nwkanssas.com

ADVERTISING

Crystal Rucker - Advertising Representative
crystalr@nwkanssas.com

**Flo Rodriguez - Ad Composition, Legals
BUSINESS OFFICE**

Lea Bandy - Circulation Manager
Pattie Stevens - Office Manager, Want Ads
Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator
support@nwkanssas.com

NOR'WEST PRESS

Jim Bowker - General Manager

Richard Westfahl, Lana Westfahl, Ron VanLoenen, Judy McKnight

THE COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920) is published daily, every Monday through Friday, except the day observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, by Haynes Publishing Co., 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE is paid at Colby, Kan. 67701, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.

THE BUSINESS OFFICE at 155 W. Fifth is open from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, closed Saturday and Sunday.
MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, which is exclusively entitled to the use for publication of all news credited to it or not otherwise herein. Member Kansas Press Association, Inland Press Association and National Newspaper Association.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In Colby by carrier: 4 months \$32, 8 months \$47, 12 months \$64. By mail with in Colby and the nine-county region of Thomas, Sheridan, Decatur, Rawlins, Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace, Logan and Gove counties: 4 months \$44, 8 months \$56, 12 months \$72. Other Kansas counties and surrounding states: 4 months \$51, 8 months \$61, 12 months \$75. All other states, \$75, 12 months.

Nor'West Newspapers

Haynes Publishing Company



Take a big bow, Kansas!



Tom Dreiling

•My Turn

TODAY marks our state’s 142nd birthday, being admitted to the Union in 1861. She isn’t showing her age. She carries herself with pride. She’s an artistic masterpiece. Dignified. She covers 82,264 square miles. She’s home to around 2 1/2 million people in 105 counties. Topeka is her capital city, with Wichita the largest. She is home to the Dwight David Eisenhower Presidential Library; he served as the nation’s 34th President from 1953-1961. She is surrounded by good neighbors—Nebraska, Colorado, Oklahoma and Missouri. By location, she is the center of attention, the nation’s central park.

ON THE lighter side, you might be from Kansas if:

- 1) You no longer associate bridges or rivers with water.
- 2) Your closest neighbor is more than a mile away, and you can still see him from your front porch.
- 3) You can properly pronounce Salina, Basehor, Schoenchen, Kechi and Osawatimie.
- 4) Going on vacation means going to Huch to the fair, Abilene to Ike’s museum or Boot Hill to see Miss Kitty.
- 5) You know exactly what calf fries are, and eat them anyway.
- 6) A traffic jam involves two cars staring each other down at a four-way stop, each determined to be the most polite and let the other go first.
- 7) A Mercedes Benz is not a status symbol. A Ford F150 4x4 is. (Except in Johnson County)
- 8) You discover that in July, it takes only 2 fingers to drive your car.
- 9) You have owned at least one belt buckle bigger than your fist.
- 10) You think that people who complain about the wind in their states are sissies.
- 11) You are not surprised to find movie rentals, ammunition and bait all in the same store.
- 12) You know that the true value of a parking space is not determined by the distance to the door but by the availability of shade.

Thanks to C.W. II for those. He has many more to pass along, and you’ll find them in this column in the weeks to come.

A NEEDLING friend from another state once told me that he wouldn’t be caught dead in Kansas. I thought that over for a second or two and told him that if that was the case he’d never know.

AN elderly Florida lady did her shopping, and upon returning to her car, found four males in the act of leaving with her vehicle. She dropped her shopping bags and drew her handgun, proceeding to scream at the top of her voice, “I have a gun and I know how to use it! Get out of the car!” The four men didn’t wait for a second invitation. They got out and ran as though they were possessed. The elderly lady, somewhat shaken, then proceeded to load her shopping bags into the back of the car and get into the driver’s seat. She was so shaken that she couldn’t get her key into the ignition. She tried and tried, and then it dawned on her why. A few minutes later she found her own car parked four or five spaces down. She loaded her bags into her car and then drove to the police station. The sergeant to whom she told the story nearly tore himself in two with laughter. He pointed to the other end of the counter, where four pale males were reporting a car jacking by a mad, elderly woman described as white, less than five feet tall, glasses, curly white hair, and carrying a large handgun. No charges were filed.
Thanks to reader Grace for that one.

WHILE thumbing through the Orange and Black Basketball Classic program, I came across something that allows me to perhaps boast just a little. On page 46, listing outstanding accomplishments by various teams and individuals

over the years, the name of my son Todd is listed as the boys’ 1988 Super Shot Champion. He played for Goodland (his place of birth). I noticed that on the girls’ side in 1988, the Super Shot Champion was Janda Ibbetson of Colby.

BILLBOARD messages from God:

Let’s meet at my house Sunday before the game. -God
C’mon over and bring the kids. -God
We need to talk. -God
That “Love Thy Neighbor” thing...I meant it. -God
Will the road you’re on get you to my place? -God
Big bang theory, you’ve got to be kidding. -God
Need directions? -God
You think it’s hot here? -God
Have you read my #1 best seller? There will be a test. -God
Do you have any idea where you’re going? -God
Don’t make me come down there. -God
Thanks to reader Liz for sharing.

HAPPY Birthday to...

Jan. 29 — Kansas!, Marge Ausmus, Martha Ann Hullett, Connie Peterson, Danny Wicke (Ludell), Kayla Ryan (Brewster)
Jan. 30 — Gerald Hutfles, Brad Kersenbrock, Dean Bastin
Congratulations!
Call us at 462-3963 or email td@nwkanssas.com to have your special day mentioned. And please keep us advised of any changes. Thanks!

A STUDY released this week states, “Sleep deprived kids are more prone to accidents.” Duh! Wonder how much that cost us?

HAVE a good evening!

Dreiling is publisher of the Free Press. His column appears Wednesdays and Fridays. td@nwkanssas.com.

Real heroes finally recognized

Let’s hear it for heroes. Not the fantasy “super-heroes” depicted in action movies, but real-life workaday Americans who risk their careers and reputations to take a principled stand for what’s right.

Time magazine just honored three of these folks as its “People of the Year” for 2002.

One was Sharon Watkins, the midlevel Enron executive who dared to confront her top boss about the gross corruption running rampant in this avaricious corporation; second was Coleen Rowley, the FBI field agent who blew the whistle on the agency’s top brass for preventing her and other field staff from pursuing the September 11th terrorists before they struck; and third was Cynthia Cooper, WorldCom’s internal auditor who went to the board of directors with the startling discovery that top executives had engineered \$4 billion in financial “irregularities.”

The extraordinary thing about these three women is that their heroism is not all that extraordinary.

Jim
Hightower

• Beyond the Beltway

It rarely gets much media play, and it sure doesn’t always topple the mighty, but every day in our country there are principled people standing up to their unprincipled higher-ups... and often paying the price.

David Mihalic, for example, is a 33-year Park Service veteran who recently was forced out of the job he cherished, because he would not go along with his political bosses, who wanted to let developers ram a highway through the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

“What we do here,” Mihalic said of the Park

Service, “we have to do for the common good.”

Eduardo Delacruz, a New York City police officer, is another example. Just before Christmas, he was suspended without pay because he refused to arrest a homeless man found sleeping in a garage.

When ordered to make the arrest, Delacruz still refused, saying the man had nowhere to go and it was simply wrong to put him in jail for that.

Heroism is not glamorous... it’s gutsy. Here’s to all the heroes who help keep America a little more ethical.

Radio talk-show host and author, Jim Hightower is a former agricultural commissioner of Texas. His latest book “If The Gods Had Meant Us To Vote, They Would Have Given Us Candidates” (Harper-Collins), has now been released in a fully revised and updated paperback edition. For more information, call: 866-271-4900. The views expressed are those of the writer.

Doonesbury

• Gary Trudeau

