

Opinion



Letters

Your input is needed

To the Colby Free Press:

When I told my brother, Phil Hatcher, that the House Bill H.R.1 — the Medicare Prescription Drug Bill — had passed but wouldn't go into effect until 2006, he replied that he didn't care because he'd be dead in two years anyway. (Both of my brothers, Donald and Philip, served in the Navy during World War II.)

Although I'm about six years older than he is, I like to think that I'll still be alive and able to take care of myself for longer than that.

My funeral bill had been paid several years ago but prices have gone up, so I think I'll need more even for this economical plan.

The Notch Fairness Act of 2003 S: 1418 could help pay our funeral expenses. This bill is for those persons born in the Social Security "Notch" years from 1917 through 1926.

Those of us in this age group have been declared "the World's Greatest Generation." I sometimes wonder if we got this title for recognition or was this meant to indicate that we were being given a polite dismissal to ride off into the sunset! And will the veterans of the next "World's Greatest Generation" be given the same sideswipe and run-around that we have gotten so far in trying to recuperate what was lost in benefit computation rules enacted in the Social Security Amendments of 1977 and for other purposes?

I say this because, for many years now, this World War II group has requested that their Social Security checks be lifted out of the "notch" payments and be given a fair cost-of-living-adjustment along with other Social Security recipients. (That COLA also is unfair for Seniors, but that is another issue!)

TREA (The Retired Enlisted Association) Senior Citizens League has sent me a Senate Directive for Senators Sam Brownback and Pat Roberts — the "Notch Fairness Act of 2003 — 108th Congress." I have signed the transmittal Senate Directive and am returning it to the chairman of that organization, Mr. George A. Smith.

You are a Social Security Notch Victim if you were born from 1917 through 1926.

Legislation that affects you is now gaining support in Congress.

This too, is of concern to the children of the "World's Greatest Generation" in the Colby Area (and elsewhere).

From the Office of The Chairman was this notation:

NOTCH FAIRNESS ACT OF 2003
108TH Congress S. 1418
IN THE SENATE
A BILL

To amend title II of the Social Security Act to allow workers who attain age 65 after 1981 and before 1992 to choose either a lump sum payments over four years totaling \$5,000 or an improved benefit formula under a new 10-year rule governing the transition to the changes in benefit computation rules enacted in the Social Security Amendments of 1977, and for other purposes.

Ms. Edna A. Hatcher
Colby
(Letter #1)

Comments to all opinions expressed on this page are encouraged. Mail them to the Colby Free Press, 155 W. 5th St., Colby, Kan., 67701. Or e-mail td@nwkansas.com.

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This is what love is all about

A GROUP of professional people posed this question to a group of 4 to 8 year-olds, "What does love mean?" The answers they got were broader and deeper than anyone could have imagined. See what you think:

"When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love." Rebecca - age 8

"When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You know that your name is safe in their mouth." Billy - age 4

"Love is when a girl puts on perfume and a boy puts on shaving cologne and they go out and smell each other." Karl - age 5

"Love is when you go out to eat and give somebody most of your French fries without making them give you any of theirs." Chrissy - age 6

"Love is what makes you smile when you're tired." Terri - age 4

"Love is when my mommy makes coffee for my daddy and she takes a sip before giving it to him, to make sure the taste is OK." Danny - age 7

"Love is when you kiss all the time. Then when you get tired of kissing, you still want to be together and you talk more. My Mommy and Daddy are like that. They look gross when they kiss" Emily - age

"Love is what's in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents and listen," Bobby - age 7

"If you want to learn to love better, you should start with a friend who you hate." Nikka - age 6

"There are two kinds of love. Our love. God's



Tom Dreiling

• My Turn

love. But God makes both kinds of them." Jenny - age 8

"Love is when you tell a guy you like his shirt, then he wears it everyday." Noelle - age 7

"Love is like a little old woman and a little old man who are still friends even after they know each other so well." Tommy - age 6

"During my piano recital, I was on a stage and I was scared. I looked at all the people watching me and saw my daddy waving and smiling. He was the only one doing that. I wasn't scared anymore." Cindy - age 8

"My mommy loves me more than anybody. You don't see anyone else kissing me to sleep at night." Clare - age 6

"Love is when Mommy gives Daddy the best piece of chicken." Elaine - age 5

"Love is when Mommy sees Daddy smelly and sweaty and still says he is handsomer than Robert Redford." Chris - age 7

"Love is when your puppy licks your face even after you left him alone all day." Mary Ann - age 4

"I know my older sister loves me because she gives me all her old clothes and has to go out and

buy new ones." Lauren - age 4

"When you love somebody, your eyelashes go up and down and little stars come out of you." Karen - age 7

"Love! is when Mommy sees Daddy on the toilet and she doesn't think it's gross." Mark - age 6

"You really shouldn't say 'I love you' unless you mean it. But if you mean it, you should say it a lot. People forget." Jessica - age 8

And the final one — Author and lecturer Leo Buscaglia once talked about a contest he was asked to judge. The purpose of the contest was to find the most caring child. The winner was a four-year-old child whose next door neighbor was an elderly gentleman who had recently lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentleman's yard, climbed onto his lap, and just sat there. When his Mother asked him what he had said to the neighbor, the little boy said, "Nothing, I just helped him cry" Yep, it's all above LOVE!

I TRUST you all had a nice New Year's Day. The weatherman certainly was on our side.

I WOULD assume the countdown is underway — the countdown for schools to open on Monday. And I further assume that counting down most fiercely are the parents.

HAVE a good evening and a good weekend! *****

Dreiling is publisher of the Free Press. His column appears Wednesdays and Fridays.

Survival of the fittest

Rosie Stockton

• Rosie's Route

driven by fear, even those of us who think of ourselves as individualistic, independent rural folks. We look to those in charge or the government to take care of us, to think for us, to provide for us. We have lost the art of thought, to learn for the sake and joy of learning. We need to retain the ability to have an understanding of the natural world around us. We must question those in authority over us. To uphold honesty, integrity, and accountability whether it is in our home, workplace, our school, church or community.

We must learn once again to take care of ourselves, to learn some of the skills that came so naturally to our parents and grandparents. These were skills of self-sufficiency. They were skills

that now are almost a lost or dying art, of making things from scratch, of how to make do without modern conveniences. For many of us, the parent or grandparent isn't there to ask for guidance or instruction but we do have a public library, we do have the Internet and all we have to do is quit having the victim mindset and be proactive instead of passive.

If knowing things like this means being able to know what to do in the event of a local or regional or national crisis, then we are better for it. I wouldn't want to be looked at like I did the people on the east coast during the last hurricane that whined and complained about how long it was taking to get services restored to them. They knew the hurricane was coming, why didn't they prepare themselves for it? God gave us brains to use and if you look back through out history it was the people that knew how to take care of themselves in a crisis that were the ones to survive. It is called survival of the fittest. Are we survivors or dumb sheep? *****

Rosie Stockton of rural Colby is an occasional contributor to this page. Comments to her at rosiestockton@hotmail.com.

What kind of couch potato are you?

Colby High student Brett Bandy, while being a couch potato a few days ago, gave some thought to being a couch potato. So he took pen in hand and came up with several kinds of couch potatoes, and perhaps you readers can find the one that best fits your description. Of course if you are not a couch potato you may want to give it a try.

What kind of couch potato are you? Just simply select which one of these below best describes you in your natural laziness state.

A. You try to always be kind to those that step across you in your lazy sprawled out state. Nothing, not even a lack of anything to do, can keep you from wearing a smile.

If so, you are a sweet potato for your cheerful complexion even in times of great laziness.

B. Your lazy times go very fast, and while you have your times to relax it almost becomes addict-

ing, and you can't seem to stop craving that vegging state.

If so, you are a potato chip for your uncanny addiction to laziness and relaxation.

C. You may not have anything to do, and all you want is to lie down and resemble a rock for a while, but it doesn't stop you from being a little spunky, perhaps even dare to say "zesty." You like to feel like you're in the middle of a party even if you're half asleep in front of the television. If so, you are a potato olé for you always

TD

• At Week's End

have a zest even when you can't help but be a lazy bum.

D. You have your remote control, your television cranked all the way up, and potato chips all over the front of your shirt. But still you play it cool.

No matter how lazy you are at the moment, you always put on the stud face and act like everything is great.

If so, you are a spud, for you can't help but try to be the stud while you're half asleep with cookie crumbs all over your face.

So what kinda couch potato are you? *****

Got something to share with our readers "At Week's End"? If so, simply e-mail td@nwkansas.com, fax (785) 462-7749, regular mail to 155 W. 5th, Colby, Kan. 67701 or drop it by the office. Thanks!