

Opinion



Letters

Keeping our military presence

To the Colby Free Press:

In my State of the State address in mid-January, I talked about the importance of continuing to have a military presence in Kansas and the need for a committee to work to prevent the closure or downsizing of Kansas' military bases. This past week I announced the membership and duties of the Governor's Strategic Military Planning Commission.

Our military bases contribute over \$2 billion a year to the Kansas economy and result in tens of thousands of jobs in Kansas. Our military presence — dating back more than 170 years — is part of the heritage of this great state.

This commission will be responsible for coordinating the efforts to prevent the closure or downsizing of Kansas' military facilities, maximizing our input into the BRAC process, working to protect the interests of the communities adjacent to the bases, encouraging the relocation of military missions to Kansas and mitigating the effects of any reduction in military civilian personnel.

The commission is a shared, collaborative effort between the administration, key legislators, the Kansas Congressional delegation and key business and military leaders representing the Kansas base communities of Leavenworth, Junction City, Wichita and Topeka. Lt. Governor and Secretary of Commerce John Moore will serve as chair and John Armbrust of Manhattan will serve as executive director of the effort. Armbrust currently serves as vice president of the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce and retired from the Air Force as a full colonel in 1993.

The Governor's Commission will include military and community leaders both on a federal and state level. It includes Adjutant General (appointed) Col. Tod Bunting, and the Kansas Congressional delegation. Also serving on the committee is Speaker of the House Doug Mays, Representative Jim Ward, Senator Mark Gilstrap and Senator Lana Oleen.

Kansas' military installations must be protected and, if possible, expanded. I will work with this commission to build upon the heritage of this great state and keep our military presence.

Kathleen Sebelius
Governor
(Letter #12)

Addresses of elected officials:

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 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. 171-W, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7676 e mail: jmorriso@ink.org web: <http://www.ink.org/public/legislators/jmorriso>
State Sen. Stan Clark, State Capitol Building Rm. 449-N, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7399 e mail: sclark@ink.org

COLBY FREE PRESS

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

freepress@nwkansas.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@nwkansas.com

NEWS

Patty Decker - Editor
pdecker@nwkansas.com

Tisha Cox - General Assignment

ADVERTISING

Crystal Rucker - Advertising Representative

crystalr@nwkansas.com

Shelby Bain - Advertising Representative

smoses@nwkansas.com

BUSINESS OFFICE

Lea Bandy - Circulation Manager

Jeanette Applegate - Bookkeeping & Ad Building

Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator

support@nwkansas.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 every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and 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



'Friends' are very important

THE key word is "**Friends.**" Friends we socialize with, friends we travel with, friends we neighbor with, friends we help in times of need, etc. No one can live without "friends." Even organizations.

With that said, I will devote a little bit of time this evening sharing with you information I received in the mail — and I'm sure others of you have also received it — dealing with an organization called, "The Friends of Pioneer Memorial Library." This is a group of individuals who support their public library in a number of tangible ways. In the past year, contributions from their membership and fund raising efforts saw library services enhanced.

"The Friends" provided the backing so the library might offer programs for adults and children alike — programs to encourage reading, to stimulate intellectual curiosity and to spotlight library collections. Thanks to "The Friends," the library has more new books, videos, computer equipment and furniture. Most of this generosity is made possible by what has become a major community effort, the "Friends Annual Arts and Crafts Auction," which is set for the first Saturday in March — March 6 at 10 a.m. Silent Auction on selected items begins Monday, March 1. This organization is celebrating more than 20 years of library support. You would fit in nicely as a "Friend." If you didn't receive a mailing and are even remotely interested, please contact the library at (785) 462-4470.

A statement contained in the mailing caught my eye. It reads: "For a community to be a good place to live, it has to have a good library. Otherwise there's a gap nothing else can fill." Give that some thought — serious thought.

The mailing continues: "As a Friend of the Library you are part of an energetic, committed group of library supporters who believe an excellent library makes a big difference in the community. From our founding in 1978, the Friends have put enormous effort into making Pioneer Memorial Library the finest library in northwest Kansas. Not just because we love libraries (we



Tom Dreiling

• My Turn

do), but because today's information, education, business, and public policy challenges call for community resources that are available through a fine public library. Everybody needs friends — even libraries! Join us today and be a Friend of Pioneer Memorial Library."

So, friends, there you have it. You might call your membership an ongoing investment. I'll wrap this up with a question, "What's not to like about your library?"

I WAS all pumped up about the pending snowfall, widely predicted by the experts, but resulted in ... nothing! I guess I should feel somewhat optimistic about the whole thing by simply looking at the calendar and seeing **March** just days away. And March, over the years — yes, there have been exceptions — is usually a pretty good moisture month. Let's hope that holds true. We need it.

JOAN Albers of our town dropped the following in my e-mail box to share. It'll bring a chuckle, maybe even an outright laugh. It's called...

Ramblings of a Retired Mind

I was thinking about how a status symbol of today is those cell phones that everyone has clipped on. I can't afford one so I'm wearing my garage door opener.

I You know, I spent a fortune on deodorant before I realized that people didn't like me anyway.

I I was thinking that women should put pictures of missing husbands on beer cans!

Get ready...you could be next

T D

• At Week's End

A faithful reader of this column writes: "Recently, I was diagnosed with A. A. A. D. D. — Age Activated Attention Deficit Disorder." She assures us that we all will eventually experience the problem. She walks us through a typical day.

This is how it manifests:

I decide to wash my car. As I start toward the garage, I notice that there is mail on the hall table. I decide to go through the mail before I wash the car.

I lay my car keys down on the table, put the junk mail in the trash can under the table, and notice that the trash can is full.

So, I decide to put the bills back on the table and take out the trash first. But then I think, since I'm going to be near the mailbox when I take out the trash anyway, I may as well pay the bills first.

I take my checkbook off the table, and see that there is only one check left. My extra checks are in my desk in the study, so I go to my desk where I find the can of Coke that I had been drinking.

I'm going to look for my checks, but first I need to push the Coke aside so that I don't accidentally knock it over.

I see that the Coke is getting warm, and I decide I should put it in the refrigerator to keep it cold.

As I head toward the kitchen with the Coke a vase of flowers on the counter catches my eye — they need to be watered.

I set the Coke down on the counter, and I discover my reading glasses that I've been searching for all morning.

I decide I better put them back on my desk, but first I'm going to water the flowers.

I set the glasses back down on the counter, fill a container with water and suddenly I spot the TV remote. Someone left it on the kitchen table.

I realize that tonight when we go to watch TV, I will be looking for the remote, but I won't remember that it's on the kitchen table, so I decide to put it back in the den where it belongs, but first I'll water the flowers.

I splash some water on the flowers, but most of it spills on the floor. So, I set the remote back

I I was thinking about old age, and decided that's when you still have something on the ball but you are just too tired to bounce it.

I I thought about making a fitness movie for folks my age and calling it "Pumping Rust."

I I have gotten that dreaded furniture disease ... that's when your chest is falling into your drawers!

I I know when people see a cat's litter box, they always say, "Oh, have you got a cat?" Just once I wanted to say, "No, it's for company!"

I Employment application blanks always ask who is to be notified in case of an emergency. Duh?! Just write, "A good doctor!"

I Why do they put pictures of criminals up in the post office? What are we supposed to do ... write to these men? Why don't they just put their pictures on the postage stamps so the mailmen could look for them while they make their rounds?

I I was thinking about how people seem to read the Bible a whole lot more as they get older, then it dawned on me ... they were cramming for their finals. As for me, I'm just hoping God grades on the curve.

SOMEONE called this morning asking about the Democratic Party's caucus to be held in Colby and throughout the state in March. For those who have already forgotten the information we passed along on Feb. 12, here are the particulars: the caucuses will be held statewide on March 13. In our case, the caucus will be held at the City Limits Convention Center for the 18 counties in the 40th Senatorial District. Registration at noon and the caucus starts at 2 p.m.

HAVE a good evening and a good weekend. Ash Wednesday, ushering in the observance of Lent, begins next Wednesday.

Dreiling is publisher of the Free Press. His column appears Wednesdays and Fridays. td@nwkansas.com, fax (785) 462-7749 or call (785) 462-3963.

down on the table, get some towels and wipe up the spill.

Then I head down the hall trying to remember what I was planning to do.

At the end of the day, the car isn't washed, the bills aren't paid, there is a warm can of Coke sitting on the counter, the flowers aren't watered, there is still only one check in my checkbook, I can't find the remote, I can't find my glasses, and I don't remember what I did with the car keys.

Then when I try to figure out why nothing got done today, I'm really baffled because I know I was busy all day long, and I'm really tired.

I realize this is a serious problem, and I'll try to get some help for it, but first I'll check my e-mail.

Do me a favor, will you? Forward this message to everyone you know, because I don't remember to whom it has been sent.

Don't laugh — if this isn't you yet, your day is coming!

Growing older is mandatory..

Growing up is optional.

Laughing at yourself is therapeutic.

If you have something for "At Week's End," please e-mail td@nwkansas.com, fax (785) 462-7749 or call (785) 462-3963.

Doonesbury

• Gary Trudeau

