

Opinion



Letters

‘Click It or Ticket’

To the Colby Free Press:
Between May 24 and June 6, thousands of law enforcement officers across the nation, including Kansas Highway Patrol troopers, will mobilize for the *Click It or Ticket* and *Buckle Up America! Week* campaigns. These mobilizations are designed to encourage drivers and passengers to buckle seatbelts and properly secure children while traveling by motor vehicle. Both events are observed during the days surrounding the busy Memorial Day weekend. Thanks to overtime funding from the Kansas Department of Transportation’s Special Traffic Enforcement Program, or STEP, the Patrol will place additional troopers on our highways to focus on enforcing Kansas’ occupant protection laws during these campaigns.

In Kansas, law enforcement officers may stop and cite drivers whenever they see unrestrained children in a vehicle. All children under the age of four must be secured in approved child safety seats, and all children age four to 14 must wear safety belts at all times. The Patrol encourages parents and caregivers to use belt positioning booster seats for children too big for safety seats and too small for seatbelts alone, i.e. 40-80 pounds and 35” to 4’9” tall. Children are safest when they are secured in the back seat.

In addition, state law requires all passengers, regardless of age, seated in the front seat of a vehicle to wear safety belts. Unbuckled adults may be cited and fined when they are stopped and cited for other traffic violations. Lap belts should sit low across the hips without riding up onto the stomach, and the shoulder belt should run across the collarbone and chest, not against the neck or face. Remember, air bags are designed to work with seatbelts, not to replace them.

Safety belts save lives and prevent injuries. Unfortunately, many people will not buckle up without the fear of a ticket. This is why law enforcement officers across the country will aggressively ticket unbelted drivers and passengers during these campaigns. In fact, Kansas’ troopers will show zero tolerance for anyone not wearing a safety belt.

Issuing tickets is not fun, but it is certainly better than working accidents involving preventable injuries and fatalities. Honestly, Kansas’ law enforcement officers have your safety and the safety of your children at heart. Please wear your safety belt on every trip, encourage teenagers and young adults to do the same, and properly secure your children.

Col. William Seck
Kansas Highway Patrol
Topeka
(Letter #39)

Comments to any 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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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>

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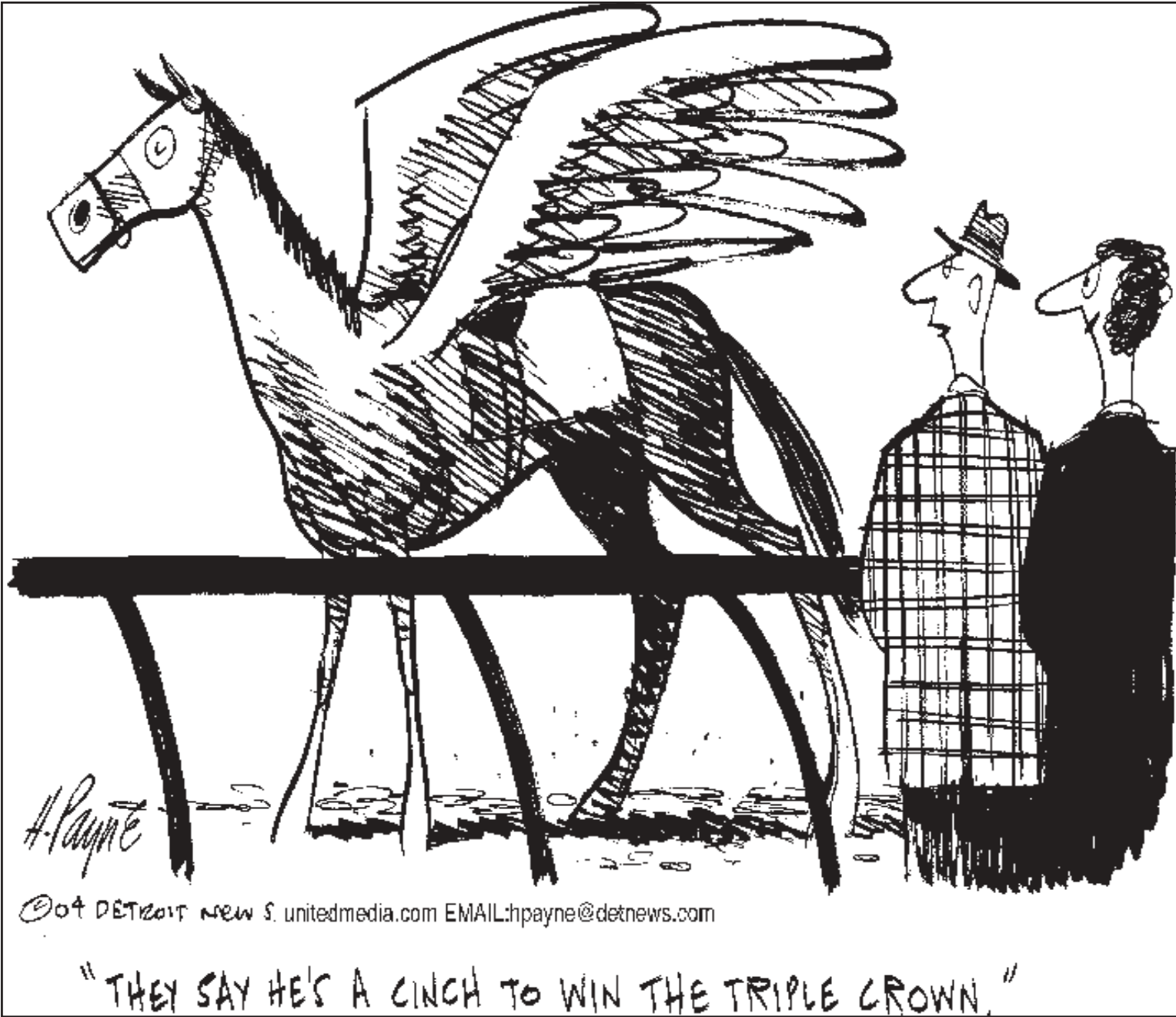
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Don’t fall for this scam

LET’S be smarter than the scammers. I’ve gotten to the point that regardless of the phone call if they ask for money I cut them off at the knees with a blunt and loud “NO!!!” More times than not you are literally giving money away to someone you don’t know a thing about. Some calls may be legit, but unfortunately, they’re brushed aside for fear of being taken by the bunch of crooks that stay awake nights figuring out ways to put it to you. Well, let’s put it to them!

The Colby Police Department sent over an e-mail they received from Linda Durand, of the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, that deals with another scam making the rounds, and they asked if we could print it. Darn right we can. And will. This is what it has to say:

Officials warn residents about A.M.B.E.R. scam

(The story was written by Joe Noga of the Morning Sun)

Law enforcement officials are asking Kansans to beware of a scam soliciting money for the Kansas A.M.B.E.R. Plan.

Crawford County Sheriff Sandy Horton said he was briefed on the situation in a joint law enforcement conference in Wichita Friday.

“There is some individual, or group of individuals calling around the state and somehow identifying or associating themselves with the Kansas Sheriff’s Association,” Horton said. “They are asking for donations for the Kansas A.M.B.E.R. Plan. None of it is true.”

According to a press release from Kansas Attorney General Phill Kline, the Kansas A.M.B.E.R. Plans does not solicit donations from individuals through the Kansas Sheriff’s Association or any other organization. These scam artists are in no way affiliated with the Kansas Sheriff’s Association or the Kansas A.M.B.E.R. Plan.

Horton said it is a bogus fund raiser and the Kansas A.M.B.E.R. Plan hasn’t solicited funds from the public and they don’t intend to at all.

Although Horton did say that the Kansas A.M.B.E.R. Plan began through contributions from the Kansas Sheriff’s Association, the Kansas Peace Officer’s Association, and the Kansas Association of Chief’s of Police.

“I think each group donated \$1,000 and they



Tom Dreiling

● My Turn

are applying for some additional funding through a federal Byrne Grant,” he said. “A computer equipment company donated the computer hardware necessary for the A.M.B.E.R. Plan to get it started.”

The Kansas A.M.B.E.R. Plan is a voluntary, cooperative effort between law enforcement agencies, radio and television stations, and citizens to help protect our children. It was created in September 2002 to promptly distribute information when a child is abducted, deter potential abductors, and quickly mobilize citizens to contact authorities with helpful information in the event of an abduction.

“We’ve been very fortunate here in Kansas that there have only been four alerts,” he said. “One ended up being a false alert and three of them were child custody things with parents that were resolved. But thank God, we haven’t had to activate it on a stranger abduction in Kansas.” Horton said that at this point he is unaware of anyone in Crawford County receiving a call soliciting money.

“I don’t know of anything in the area, but people need to be aware that they could be called,” he said. “If somebody receives a call, they should contact their local law enforcement agency and if they have caller ID to please save that number and we will immediately turn that into the state to do further investigation on it. We certainly want that to come to and end.”

I haven’t the slightest idea if anyone in any of our communities or county received such a call. But if you have let our law enforcement people know. Many of these calls are directed at our aging population. They are the most vulnerable. The best advice I can give you, regardless of age, is recalling the words of former First Lady

Nancy Reagan, “Just say no!”

I HAVE come to the conclusion that the little fat guy who loses every sale to Ditech, doesn’t work for anyone, he’s his own boss. How else can you explain his employment ...And now comes word that another sex scandal has some people in high places in Washington, D.C. shaking in their boots. It’s supposedly not near the scope of the Bill-Monica thing, but it’ll attract headlines as it unfolds. Sounds like sexolitics as usual...The White House says it doesn’t pay any attention to the polls. Sure, then explain why, since President Bush has been falling in every poll that comes out, he’s now on television with major speeches — reportedly he’ll give one a week for the next couple of weeks. Who doesn’t watch what?...And Sen. Kerry’s big news of the day yesterday was unveiling his new, large, expensive campaign jet including the word “President” boldly proclaimed below his name...We complain about gas prices, but we go to the store and buy something that runs freely in our homes — water! Explain that to me.

I WAS scanning an e-mail from our amusement association and they are looking for help to get the scrambler set up and ready for this year’s fair. This is a project that will begin before too many more suns set. If you can volunteer a few hours, please let them know. They’ll appreciate it.

They also made a pitch for promoting picnic tables and benches for the carnival grounds. Prices will be the same as last year and word is the association can use quite a few more than are in their current inventory. Forms are available at the office of Tina Harris.

Yep, fair time is not too far away.

ON a personal note, my home telephone number is changing to 460-7882 — S & T Communications. We are always telling people to buy local when you can. So, I continue that practice.

HAVE a good evening!

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

Spiders don’t stand a chance

It’s all my mother’s fault that I am afraid of spiders. Many years ago, when I was just a little girl about 8 years old, she saw me pulling my covers up onto the bed. I explained to her, that since there were a lot of granddaddy longlegs in the room where I was sleeping, I was pulling the covers up so they wouldn’t climb up the covers and get on me. She was not sympathetic.

“If they really wanted to get on you, they would climb up on the ceiling and drop down on you,” she said. What an awful thing to tell a child. Every night of my life since, I’ve scanned the ceiling to be sure there wasn’t a spider lurking, waiting to drop down on me. As I got older, I didn’t really believe they were waiting for me, but I still kept looking.

The other morning I was typing away, and looked up and out the window, and saw, above the window, a big hairy spider, crawling along. He must have been a whole half inch across. I knew I couldn’t reach him up there, so I went and did something else, on the theory he would disappear behind some furniture or books, and I wouldn’t see him again. Sure enough, when I came back, I couldn’t see him. So I started typing again. Pretty soon, I saw a motion out of the corner of my eye, and there was that spider on the table on the other side of me from the window. He had obviously crawled up on the ceiling



Maxine Nelson

● Random Thoughts

ing and dropped down onto the table, just like my mother said.

In a rare burst of courage, I grabbed a pile of wastepaper and beat him to a pulp, whopping him with the cat’s hair brush in the process. When I was sure he was dead, I scooted him into the wastebasket. You’d think that would be the end of that, but a day or two later, I was eating my breakfast when I felt something brush my arm. Looking down, I saw the brother (sister?) of that spider on the floor. He must have dropped down from the ceiling. Thank goodness I had my slippers on. Conquering my fear, I stomped down on him with my heel, and after being sure he was dead, I vacuumed him up.

I married my husband so he could kill spiders for me, and he was very faithful in doing so for many years. However, since he has gone, I have to do it myself — or else just not go into certain

rooms of the house because I saw a spider in there. I don’t have that many rooms. Soon I wouldn’t be able to go into the house.

I’ve got a vacuum cleaner with a hose in my bedroom which I use to vacuum up stray insects and cat hairs, and a “dustbuster on a stick” in the kitchen which will reach the ceiling. They work pretty well on spiders. I have no problem with spiders outside in the yard. That’s where they belong, although I did find out that Outdoor Windex will kill/discourage spiders around outside windows, and like to use it in the spring and fall for dual purposes.

Did you know spiders can scream? When I was in high school, I worked for my aunt during harvest, and she cooked on a cob-burning stove. One day, as I was putting cobs into the stove, a spider ran up to the top of a cob which was going in. As the flames hit him, he screamed. I did, too. I didn’t believe I really heard him, so later I touched a match to another spider. He screamed, too. So much for the theory that insects don’t feel pain.

But I still agree with Garfield that the only good spider is a dead spider. I’ll try to make their death as quick and painless as possible.

Maxine Nelson is a retired Free Press editor/reporter and a frequent contributor to this page.