

Opinion



Free Press Viewpoint

Foundation is done, the building begins

The stage is all theirs. Seniors, high school variety, will be acknowledged in a variety of ways this commencement season. But despite the awards, the honors, the well wishes...and all, the most important aspect of the ceremony will be the awarding of diplomas signaling completion, in a manner acceptable according to the standards imposed, the honorees' high school career. A big day, a big event — that's for sure. Behind the smiles radiating from the faces of the graduates, is a degree of uncertainty. This is step one in removing themselves from the comforts, the security, they have enjoyed these first 18 years of their lives. As they step down from the stage, they move into phase two. They are no longer the high schooler, but instead they are adults — young men and women — readying for the path that will unfold before them. The successes reaped from this point on will greatly hinge on what they learned, what they comprehend these past four years in particular. We will be proud as we watch from the sidelines as each senior receives that certificate that entitles him or her to proceed onward, to proceed into the unknown challenges that await, that most certainly will confront them at every turn. You did well under the guidance and supervision provided by your teachers, your mentors. And most importantly by the love and care tenderly administered by your parents, your siblings, your relatives and your friends. The foundation has been completed. Now the building begins. Good luck!

*Tom (TD) Dreiling
Free Press Publisher*

Comments to any opinions expressed on this page are encouraged. E-mail td@nwkansas.com or pdecker@nwkansas.com.

Where to write, call

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, 2443 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. 202/225-2715 or Fax 202/225-5124
State Rep. Jim Morrison, State Capitol Building, 303 SW 10th St. Rm. 171-W, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7676 e mail: jmorriso@ink.org web: www.ink.org/public/legislators/jmorriso
State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol, 300 SW 10th St., Rm. 128-S., Topeka, Kan. 66612, 785/296-7399 ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us

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
tcov@nwkansas.com

Jan Katz Ackerman, Area Reporter
ackermanjk@ruraltel.net

ADVERTISING

Crystal Rucker - Advertising Sales/Director
crystalr@nwkansas.com

Jasmine Crotinger - Advertising Sales
jasminec@nwkansas.com

BUSINESS OFFICE

Lea Bandy - Circulation Manager
lea@nwkansas.com

Jeanette Applegate - Bookkeeping & Ad Building
japplegate@nwkansas.com

Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator
support@nwkansas.com

NOR'WEST PRESS

Jim Bowker - General Manager

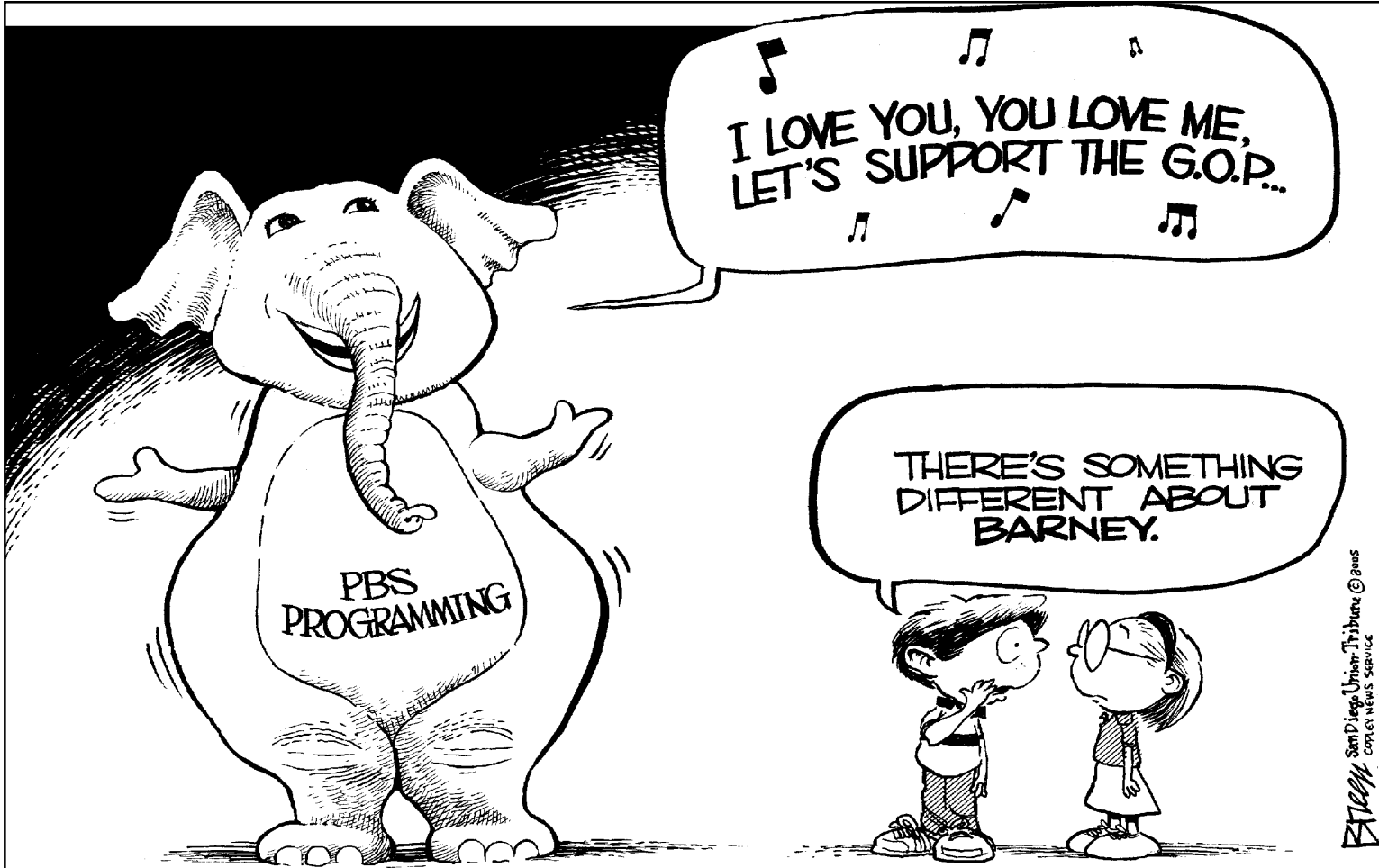
Richard Westfahl, Lana Westfahl, Ron VanLoenen, Judy McKnight

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 \$38, 8 months \$53, 12 months \$70. By mail with in Colby and the nine-county region of Thomas, Sheridan, Decatur, Rawlins, Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace, Logan and Gove counties: 4 months \$50, 8 months \$62, 12 months \$78. Other Kansas counties and surrounding states: 4 months \$57, 8 months \$67, 12 months \$81. All other states, \$81, 12 months.

Nor'West Newspapers

Haynes Publishing Company



Why didn't I think of that?

Wouldn't you know it, only after I completed my first muddy paw season with Katie, my little four-legged friend, did I come across what I needed this past winter.

A doggie shower. Now stop laughing and read on and you'll see what I mean. You'll ask yourself the same thing I did when I checked it out at doggieshower.com. "Why didn't I think of that?" was my first response.

Seriously, it's a real item which I learned about while checking emails.

You know those silly pop-up ads we all hate. Well, one of them popped up on my screen and it caught my attention so I had to check it out.

Sure enough, there it was and a second time I was asking myself, "Why didn't I think of that."

Whoever thought of taking a simple one-gallon sprayer and converting it into a doggie shower is going to make a million.

Why didn't I think of that? You open the sprayer, put in a gallon of warm water, shut the sprayer and pump it to capacity and there you go — a door side sprayer.

Let the little critters outside in all kinds of weather and when he or she returns to your door you'll have the doggie shower at hand to gently spray off those muddy paws.

—jka— There are a jillion things I've wondered why I didn't invent over the years, but you know how it is, some us just never get around to it.

Like sticky notes. How much money did I lose by not having created those little buggers?

And, Velcro. That's another sticky thing I should have thought of. Oh yes, let's don't forget the "clap on, clap off." I should have had one of those while raising teens; maybe they could have shut off a few more lights by themselves.

But the best invention, one yet to be seen, is one my friends wants to invent.

The "Where Is It?"



Jan Katz Ackerman

• From Where I stand

It's a computer chip she's going to invent that's washer and dryer proof that she can sew into her kids' mittens, sweatshirt, or whatever item they might lose. That way, once the chip is programmed, the child can whistle, clap, or make the assigned noise as programmed into the chip and the lost item will reply.

It's a stroke of genius. Why didn't I think of that?

—jka—

I just love talking to people from outside of our area and I had the chance the other day in Dillons in Colby. There was a guy in the check-out behind me whose cart was filled with items for what I thought was going to be a party. It was obvious by the way the gent was dressed he wasn't from our area, just shy of a three-piece suit and had a company identification tag hanging from a strap around his neck.

"Throwing a party," I asked, looking at the large meat and cheese party tray, bottles of pop and flavored water, chips and dips.

"No, I'm hosting a luncheon in St. Francis and after booking it I learned there's nobody in St. Francis to cater such an event.

"Oh. Where are you from?" I asked.

"Well, I'm from Denver. I work for a pharmaceutical company and I'm headed to St. Francis, and there's nothing out this way," he said.

I told the man I have relatives who live in the city and they too think northwestern Kansas has "nothing out this way."

"Well, that's why we live here," I joked. Looking at me in a somewhat puzzled way, I don't think the man got my joke, so I explained.

"We live in northwest Kansas because, as you said, there's nothing out here.

"There's no smog, no rush hour traffic, and where I live, the closest neighbor is half a block away. But what we do have are a lot of blue sky and fantastic sunrises and sunsets," I added.

—jka—

Speaking of sunsets, many young adults in our area are eagerly awaiting that final sunset in their rear view mirror as they leave for college in just a few months.

I'm not so old that I can't remember those days, being one of 73 students in the class of 1973; we thought we were hot stuff as we crossed off the days until we could 'get out of this town.'

That town, being my hometown, is much like many small towns across the state — the place we hung our hat for now less than 18 years. But, as our young adults make their way across the stages of our area high schools this past or current week, I hope they'll always remember one thing — home IS where you hang your hat.

Too often we adults don't set a good example of being content with what we have been given in life — and I do mean given, but I won't touch that subject right now — and we always long for something else. That longing is often what breaks one's heart, so here's another saying we need to be teaching our youth, and you can quote me from experience on this one:

"The grass always looks greener on the other side, but it still needs to be mowed!"

Happy graduation teens and best wishes!

Jan Katz Ackerman is a reporter for the Colby Free Press. Her column appears Thursdays. E-mail ackermanjk@ruraltel.net.

But 'yes' to this piece of junk

Jim Hightower

• Guest Commentary

Also, it doesn't perform in cold weather.

Nor does it have the range to reach global hot spots where it would be needed. And its engines tend to stall out on take-off.

Plus — one more little thing — paratroopers can't jump out of it because the plane's design causes them to be pulled back and crash into the fuselage.

The Pentagon has already bought 50 of these things for \$2.6 billion.

None are in combat — instead, they're mostly sitting idle on various U.S. military bases.

It's such a boondoggle that even Pentagon chief Donald Rumsfeld wants to stop production. Yet Lockheed lobbyists and the Air Force brass have been swarming Congress, which is about to give them another \$5 billion to buy more C-130Js, which now cost more than \$66 million apiece.

That's your money. That's your health care. Job training.

Education. And other real needs being squandered on pieces of worthless military junk.

It's bad enough that Congress throws so much of our money at the war machine, but shouldn't we at least get back planes that work?

Jim Hightower is the best-selling author of "Thieves In High Places: They've Stolen Our Country And It's Time To Take It Back," on sale now from Viking Press. Or check www.jimhightower.com This column is distributed by MinutemanMedia.org."

About those letters . . .

The *Free Press* encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten, if at all possible, and should include a telephone number and an address. These are used for verification of the writer only. If, however, you want your address and telephone number to appear with your letter, please ask us to do so when you submit your letter, or include a note with your letter. Most importantly, all letters must include a signature. Unsigned letters cannot be published. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and length, and, likewise, reserve the right to reject letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive or libelous. You can expect your letter to appear in print within 24-48 hours of receipt. Letters to the *Free Press* allow readers to become engaged in public debate on topics they deem important. Please consider sharing your thoughts with the family of *Colby Free Press* readers. Thank you.

Doonesbury

• Gary Trudeau

