

Opinion



Other Viewpoints

Foundation director finally back in office

Well, I am finally back in the office. My new daughter is such a blessing and I have enjoyed my time out of the office to be with her as she grows. My new office hours are as follows: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Wednesday 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.; and Friday 8 a.m. to noon. Please feel free to stop by anytime.

We have a new grant available for the areas of the arts, education, literacy, and professional development for educators, the Betty G. and James Secrest Fund. This fund was made possible by a generous bequest by Betty Secrest. Betty was such a giving and caring person for Thomas County organizations and we are so pleased to be able to continue her philanthropy and her wishes after her death. The grant will be available twice a year, in October and again in April. The deadline for this granting period is Oct. 7, which is quickly approaching. Should your organization wish to apply, please contact my office and I will get an application to you.

We are so excited to announce the Foundation's first agency-designated endowed fund for Thomas County Hospice. This fund will provide a guaranteed annual disbursement for Thomas County Hospice, which provides such an important service to Thomas County citizens. As our population ages and passes on, this service will be in high demand, and people who have been touched by Hospice services can vouch for their importance and value. If anyone who would like to make a donation to this fund, please contact the Foundation office, or mail your donation to the office noting that it is to be applied to the Thomas County Hospice Endowed Fund.

We are now into the fourth quarter for tax year 2005. It is time to start thinking about your tax burden for this year and ways that you can reduce it. Making a general donation to the Foundation is a great way to help out. Another way is to establish a planned giving program through the Foundation. We can work with accountants, attorneys, or estate planners to make this happen. Planned giving will be the focus of my article for the end of October ñ be on the look-out for great tips on creating a plan to help yourself and your community.

Please call or stop by the office with any questions about the Foundation — after all, we are here for the community. Best wishes until later this month!

Danielle Freeman

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 pjschief@nwkansan.com or pdecker@nwkansan.com.

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COLBY FREE PRESS

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

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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.

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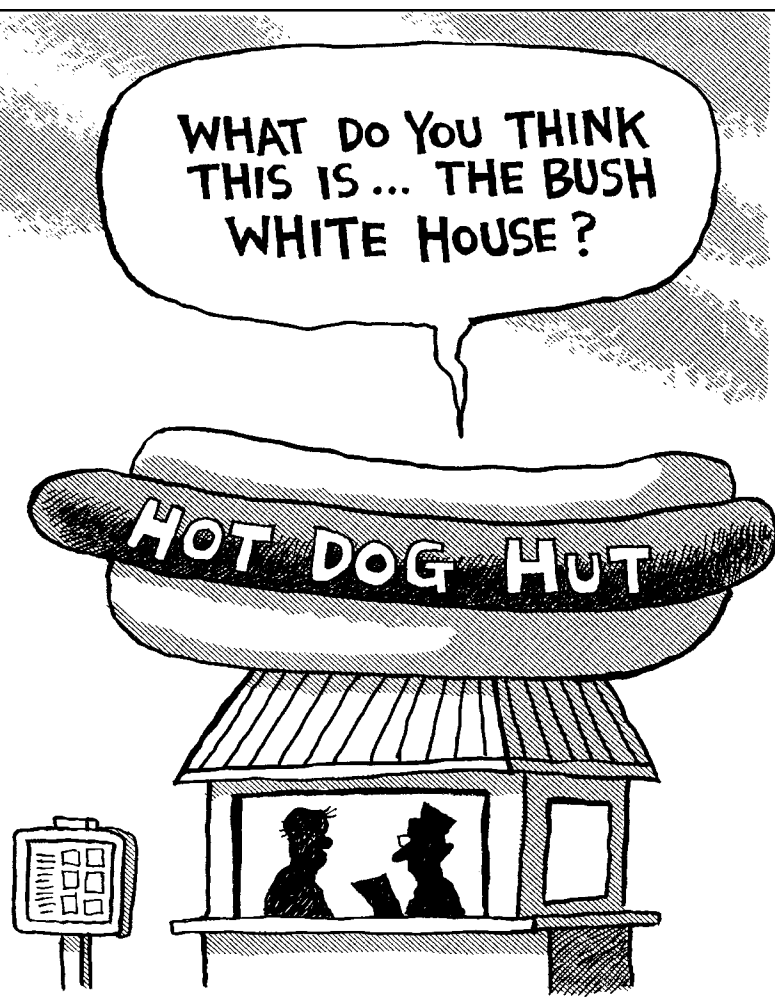
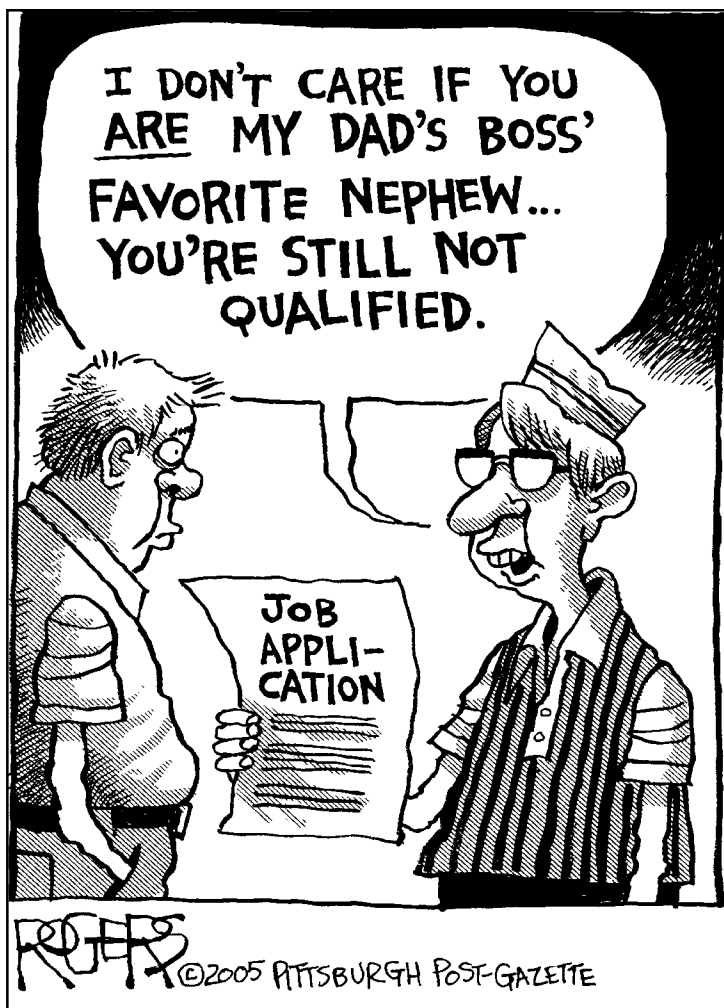
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THE COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920) is published every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, except the day observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, by Haynes Publishing Co., 155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

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Texas dodged a bullet



Jay Kelley • Speaking MyMind

It looks like Texas — and America — dodged a bullet when Hurricane Rita started falling apart before she hit the coast. While the damage is still significant, it is nowhere near what could have happened had she hit the Texas and Louisiana shore at full force.

There seemed to be a lot more common sense going on in Texas last week than in Louisiana before Katrina. People packed up and got out of town before the big one hit. There also seemed to be less complacency than before.

It also means the price of gas isn't going up as far as we thought. If the refineries and wells off Texas had been destroyed, or even damaged to the point of being shut down for months, futures buyers "who have a great deal to say about the price" would have panicked and we would have ended up with \$6 gas before it was over.

One thing we don't often want to talk about, however, is God's hand in all this. There are those that say God had no hand in it for one of two reasons. Either He doesn't exist or He has removed Himself from the physical sciences. They are wrong and usually militantly ignorant to boot.

Others try to separate God from nature, thereby removing Him from complicity in the matter of natural disasters. They are wrong as well, though probably more gentle in their ignorance.

God has made it clear that He causes everything that happens; either through His express will (direct operation) or his permissive will (allowing "nature" to take its course.) In either case,

His foreknowledge remains intact.

There are also those who say it is a sign of the second coming. They are wrong, too. Jesus said these things would happen throughout time, but that there would be no sign of that day.

How then do we explain such disasters? Sometimes they are simply the result of a fallen world. When man fell, the earth was cursed with him so that he would no longer live in a utopian paradise called Eden.

Sometimes, however, they are warnings to an unrepentant people. One cannot help but look at our unbridled thirst for oil and the fact that most of our oil production is centered where Katrina and Rita hit.

One cannot help but marvel at the power of God and the insignificance of man as all our modern technology can do in the face of such power is warn us to get out of the way. We should be moved to take into account His great patience as well.

Without oil, we are helpless and an oil crisis

of that magnitude would leave us in a financial hole from which we could never recover.

Perhaps we should take the hint, but we are arrogant, so we will continue to kill our unborn children at an appalling rate, because it is more convenient than practicing self-control.

We will continue to condone homosexuality and in time will come to accept polygamy, polyamory, pedophilia and even bestiality, because they are "civil rights."

We will continue to condone a culture that puts sports and entertainment above ethics, integrity, intelligence and education even at the high school level and lower.

We will keep exporting American jobs and money to support a corporate attitude in which patriotism and loyalty are nothing more than advertising soundbites.

It will go on until God's patience runs out and it will end, at least for us. Not in fire and brimstone but worse. We will be reduced to third-world status, begging scraps from our richer neighbors.

It happened in Israel, but it also happened in Babylon, Greece, Rome, Britain and Russia. It happens to anyone who does not heed the warnings.

Jay Kelley is a minister and writer who speaks his mind from time to time. His e-mail is jkelley@st-tel.net.

America's love affair with cars



Tisha Cox • Off The Beaten Path

We love our cars. I think no other society on the planet has the same love affair with four wheels and the open road like Americans.

Take the Speed Channel for example. An entire network dedicated to cars, mainly fast ones, and other vehicles used for racing, even motorcycles.

I watch sometimes, usually the Barrett Jackson auction highlights from Prescott, Ariz.

They sell classic cars, rare cars, European cars and American muscle cars.

I'm usually fairly interested, but if they show something I've lusted after since I was a teenager, like a 1960s Chevy Camaro or Ford Mustang from the same era, I tend to drop everything and park in front of the television to see how much the object of my affection sells for.

The going price is in the tens of thousands and the top-selling car ever at the auction was a one-of-a-kind Oldsmobile that ended up getting sold for \$3 million and is now in a Colorado car museum.

Also, classic cars are becoming an investment. People are dropping their savings into the best Detroit ever made instead of real estate or the stock market because the demand for classics will never go away and as time goes on, they will probably become more scarce.

I know we Americans love our cars, much to the chagrin of places like Europe where many people don't own cars. They just don't get it, I think.

Here in the States there are almost too many options when it comes to picking a vehicle. Choices run from compact and fuel efficient to luxurious.

I'm not knocking anyone's choice of vehicles. To each their own.

And heaven knows if anyone spends enough time on the road, a little luxury goes a long, long way.

My own life as a road warrior has been spent mainly in the compact Fords owned by my parents to my own current not-as-compact Ford Contour.

I can attest to the fact the fuel efficiency is nice but when it comes to space and comfort, really long roadtrips are not what it was made for.

In a perfect world, I would have a 1968 hard-top Camaro. My little sister has 1996 Mustang, so at least I can spend time with it until I can one day get my own pony or muscle car.

I understand the 1970s energy crisis caused auto companies to start looking at making more fuel efficient cars and also opened up the American market for Japanese auto makers.

That was the end of the muscle car era, and production on some of the most classic cars ever produced.

Now, we have wildly popular sport utility vehicles which are the perfect example of form to function. Plenty of room, comfortable and you can haul the family and everything you need without crowding everyone.

However, increasing gas prices have people whispering that end of the SUV era might be upon us soon.

I don't know. I can't foresee the future, but with plenty of imagination and ingenuity, I'm sure car designers will come up with something

that will surprise and astonish people and possibly revolutionize the industry at the same time.

Ford revamped the Mustang, making it a perfect fusion of the classics of the past and what could be imagined in the future. Cadillacs look like they've never looked before. Cars in general look more organic — flowing lines instead of boxy angles.

I also don't think people 50 years ago could imagine what there is now. Gas/electric hybrids with built-in navigation systems, DVD players and more. It's almost like you have the comforts of home in the car without having to put the house on wheels or buy an RV.

Cars also get equated with freedom and are almost part of the American culture identity. As cars have changed, so have people, but the idea still has remained the same.

Much like the Mustang was redesigned for a new generation, Americans change with it and become identified with the cars of the time.

I can't think of my childhood in the 70s without remembering the Pontiac Firebirds of the time. My younger sister, the Mustang.

And I can hardly wait to see what will come in the near future, what people will remember when they think about the times we're living now.

I know one thing I am looking forward to — the rebirth of the Camaro.

I hear it's going to get a makeover and become a concept car by next year and possibly be back in production by 2009. As I said, I can't wait.

I hope it, and the years to come, are as good as they can be.

Tisha Cox is a general assignment reporter/photographer for the Free Press. Her column appears on Mondays. tcox@nwkansan.com.

Doonesbury

• Gary Trudeau

