

Opinion



Free Press Viewpoint

A new tradition for Colby High

After the Colby Eagles defeated Hugoton Friday, its first win since Sept. 2004, and first win at home since 2003, first-year Eagles coach Bob Ray thanked the community for its support throughout the depressing streak of losses.

Thursday, several Eagle fans, with support from school administration and the city of Colby, organized a parade and pep rally. All members of Colby football and the band paraded to Dennen Field where a traditional pep rally was held. Lots of fun.

Maybe the parade and pep rally inspired the players enough to win? Even if it did not why can't such a parade and pep rally be a new Colby tradition?

Consider the timing.

The parade and pep rally were held the night before the team's last home game and start of district play. At the same time, Colby High sent three girls to state tennis. Still not enough? Saturday was the league tournament for Colby High volleyball and cross country. Every team needed the support. (Don't forget, one Colby girl golfer was just a few strokes away from the state tournament which is scheduled to begin today.)

Should those same people who organized this year's parade and pep rally want to do it again next year, they should encompass all of Colby High sports, not just football. Schedules will change from year to year, so the parade and pep rally may not fit just right like it did this year. But it's the thought that counts.

High school sports in small-town America, like Colby, is like a Norman Rockwell painting. It's one part of Americana, and the only level of organized sports that still has some amount of innocence left. That parade and pep rally was symbolic of that innocence.

A big thank you goes to the people who made the parade and pep rally happen. And a big thank you to all of Colby High's student-athletes for entertaining us throughout the seasons.

— John Van Nostrand is publisher of the Colby Free Press.

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 jvannostrand@nwkansas.com or pdecker@nwkansas.com. Opinions do not necessarily reflect the *Free Press*.

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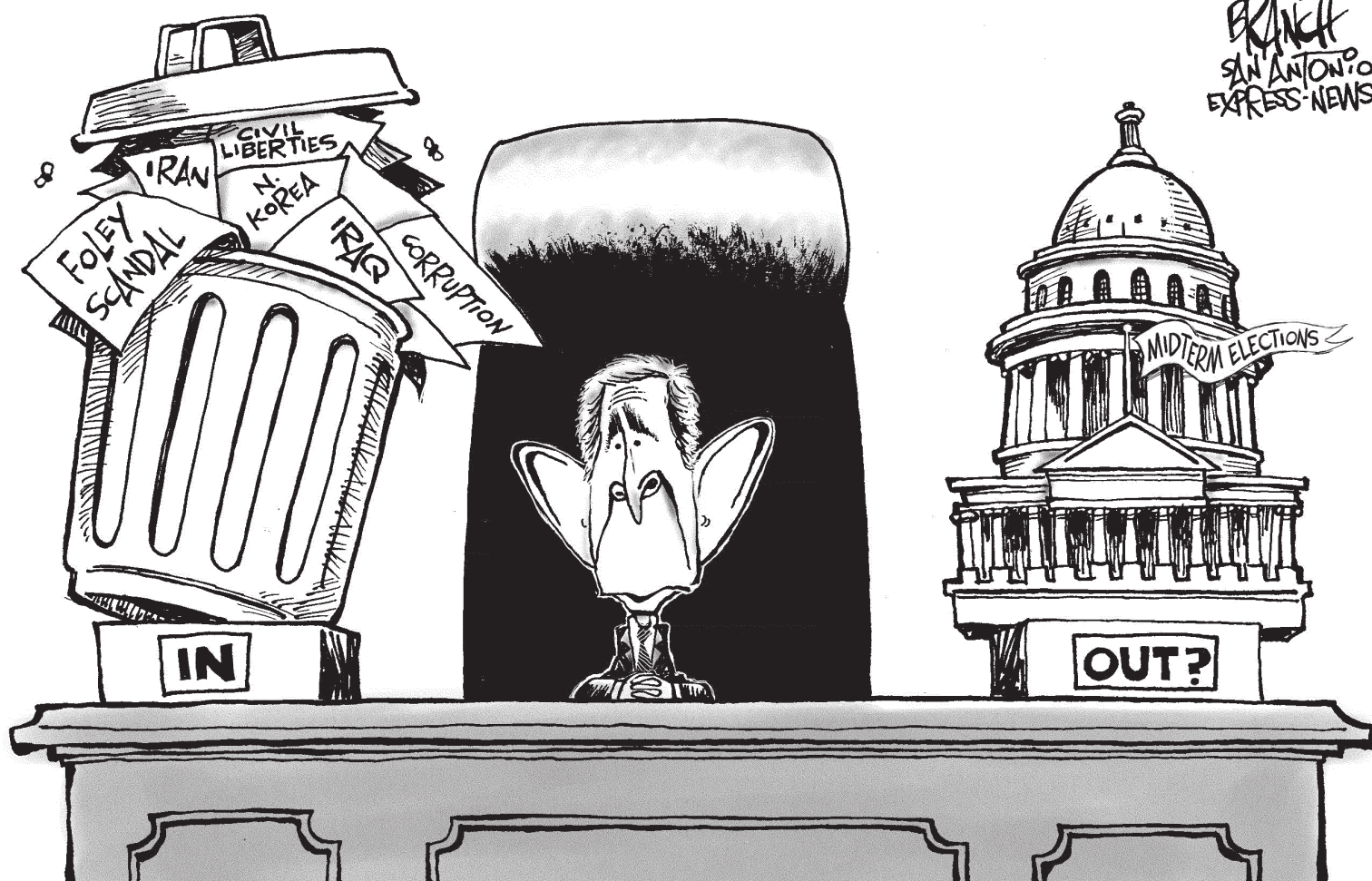
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Haunted history

Watching the movie adaptation of Anne Rice's "Interview with the Vampire" recently brought back memories of an afternoon a few years back spent in the French Quarter of New Orleans.

I can't think of New Orleans without recalling all of the lore about the city, and it is a place that long ago accepted, even embraced its dark side.

Bourbon Street after dark, I've heard, isn't a place for the faint of heart.

Even in daylight, it isn't without its phantoms and reminders of its past like voodoo shops, a voodoo museum and other mementos of history.

This time of year, near Halloween, always gets me to thinking about it, and we've even talked about going back one year for Halloween there.

That's a long time off, but it's fun to think about.

Already I've seen Saint Louis Cemetery Number 1, which contains the tomb of Marie Laveau, one of the most famous figures in New Orleans history. The tomb is covered in Xs, in honor of favors that have been granted.

Saint Louis Number 1 is one of many cities of the dead in what is called "the most haunted city in the United States."

I learned last year the French Quarter is the oldest part of New Orleans, and was built on the highest ground.

Also, depending on who one believes, the legend of the vampire first came to American shores with the French who settled the Crescent City.

All a far cry from the ordinary, everyday in



Tisha Cox

• Off The Beaten Path

Kansas.

New Orleans isn't the only destination with an interesting reputation we've visited.

On a trip to Denver last year, we ended up at Fairmount Cemetery. The second oldest cemetery in the city, it was founded in 1890. It also has crypts reminiscent of those found in New Orleans cemeteries, but they didn't bury people in crypts in Denver for the same reason as they do in Louisiana.

In Denver, it was a matter of status to have a crypt. In New Orleans, a necessity because the city is below sea level and burial by crypt is much more practical.

Weird to tour a cemetery?

Not really. We did it in New Orleans because the cemeteries are a popular tourist spot because they're unusual.

By myself, I've done a couple of historical cemetery tours in Colorado.

It's a great way to spend a little time before Halloween, but also an opportunity to learn

more about the local history.

The first tour I did by myself was in Golden, of its cemetery. It's a big cemetery, and encompasses a lot of history, from the beginnings of the Coors Brewery to the Columbine High School tragedy.

My sister and I have talked about why people would be interested in visiting a cemetery.

They're peaceful and a reflection of the past. Some people are drawn by the history, others the artistry and creativity put into the crypts or stone markers.

For example, an oft-visited place in Denver is the grave of William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody.

We've been there many times to pay our respects, along with with countless other thousands.

His final resting place isn't just a grave, but also one of the most breathtaking places in the foothills. Gaze east from Cody's grave and one can see for miles.

On a few of these occasions, I've just been along for the ride. I guess it all started with Chris and the first time we went to Lookout Mountain.

I guess that doesn't really matter, but what does is taking a chance and stepping away from the comfortable and familiar.

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

Who determines?

By Ken Poland

In a recent article on this page the writer quoted statistics showing that the average cost to raise a child was \$190,000.

Wow! That figures out to over \$10,000 per year.

Minimum wage at \$6.25 figures out to \$13,000. With both parents working and two children that leaves \$6,000 for the parents to exist on.

Statistics have no value by and of themselves. How many of those costs are fixed costs, whether there is a child living in the home or not? How many of those costs are not basic needs? This statistic was taken from information gleaned from "average middle income families". Do the basic needs of children raised in different levels of family income differ? What happens to the child in a family that does not have the resources to provide that kind of money? Maybe those kids just don't need or deserve as much?

What determines fair and equitable distribution of wealth to maintain a healthy society?

In a conversation with a friend, he commented we didn't really want the government out of agriculture. We were talking about crop insur-

Ken Poland

• Ken's World

ance. The discussion pointed out the government is controlling too many of the other segments of our lives and economy to leave agriculture to fend for itself. He suggested the possibility then we needed to remove government from all segments.

What then would be the function or purpose of government?

For some, it appears that government should be enforcing the doctrines and theology of Christians. Who determines which Christian philosophy that will be? For others, the purpose of government is to protect us from Christian theology. For some, the only time we need government is when we are threatened by outside forces. Who determines that threat or what needs protecting? Do I want the government to

protect my status and material possessions, or do I want the government to protect my privilege of gaining status and material possessions, even if it is at the expense of someone else?

We are going to the voting booth Nov. 7. How do you determine who will best represent you in government? Have you realistically determined just what the function of government is? Have you listened to the pleas from society that reveal the inequity of opportunity to enjoy the fruits of the War of Independence, as expressed in the Preamble to our Constitution.

"We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

That is a mouthful and no single issue nor strictly partisan candidate can order all those promises. Do the candidates you support give equal weight to all the ideals expressed by this preamble?

Ken Poland occasionally contributes to the Colby Free Press

About those letters . . .

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Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

