

# Opinion



## A Kansas Viewpoint

### Primary reactions

**From The Manhattan Mercury**  
In less than a year, Kansans could hold its first presidential primary election in 16 years.

If, as Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh and a good many others hope, such an event generates interest and excitement in the election, it will prove to be a pretty good idea. And if the candidates generating interest now are still contenders next February, the primary could get interesting indeed both for Republicans and Democrats.

Of particular interest on a Republican ballot, of course, would be U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback. He's sure to do well as a favorite son; in fact, his presence is one of the factors driving the present push for a primary election.

Kansas held its first presidential primary in 1980, the year Ronald Reagan won the White House. Our most recent primary isn't too recent — 1992. That year Bill Clinton ended President George H.W. Bush's bid for a second term.

Presidential primaries have been scheduled and canceled every four years since, including 1996, when another favorite son, Bob Dole, won the GOP nomination in his unsuccessful campaign to unseat President Clinton. The 2000 and 2004 presidential primaries were canceled in part to save money and in part because they didn't generate interest either in Kansas and or nationwide.

What would be different this year is the timing. Rather than be held late in the primary season, the Kansas primary could be held as early as Feb. 5. That's just one week after the South Carolina primary, the first state event whose results the parties have agreed to recognize other than the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary.

Thus, a Kansas primary would matter — at least mathematically. Whether candidates spend time campaigning in Kansas, which has but six electoral votes and won't be the only state holding a primary on whatever day is chosen, is another question.

The value of such an election, which is expected to cost about \$2 million, is hard to quantify. But Sen. Brownback's presence in the Republican race and the primary's tentative timing seem to justify the expense.

State Sen. Tim Huelskamp's assertion that, "Kansas has a real chance to have some impact," is exaggerated, but not by much. A presidential primary for Kansas has obvious appeal; holding it early, well before the two nominees are chosen, only adds to it.

#### 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, 300 SW 10th St. Rm. 143-N, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7676 e mail: jmorriso@ink.org web: www.morrisonfamily.com  
**State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer**, State Capitol, 300 SW 10th St., Rm. 128-S., Topeka, Kan. 66612, 785/296-7399 ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us

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*.

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

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.

**John Van Nostrand - Publisher**  
jvannostrand@nwkansas.com

**NEWS**

**Patty Decker - Editor**  
pdecker@nwkansas.com

**Tisha Cox - General Assignment**  
tcox@nwkansas.com

**Jan Katz Ackerman, Area Reporter**  
ackermanjk@ruraltel.net

**ADVERTISING**

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

**Kristi Powell - Advertising Sales**  
kpowell@nwkansas.com

**Emily Wederski - Advertising Sales**  
ewederski@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

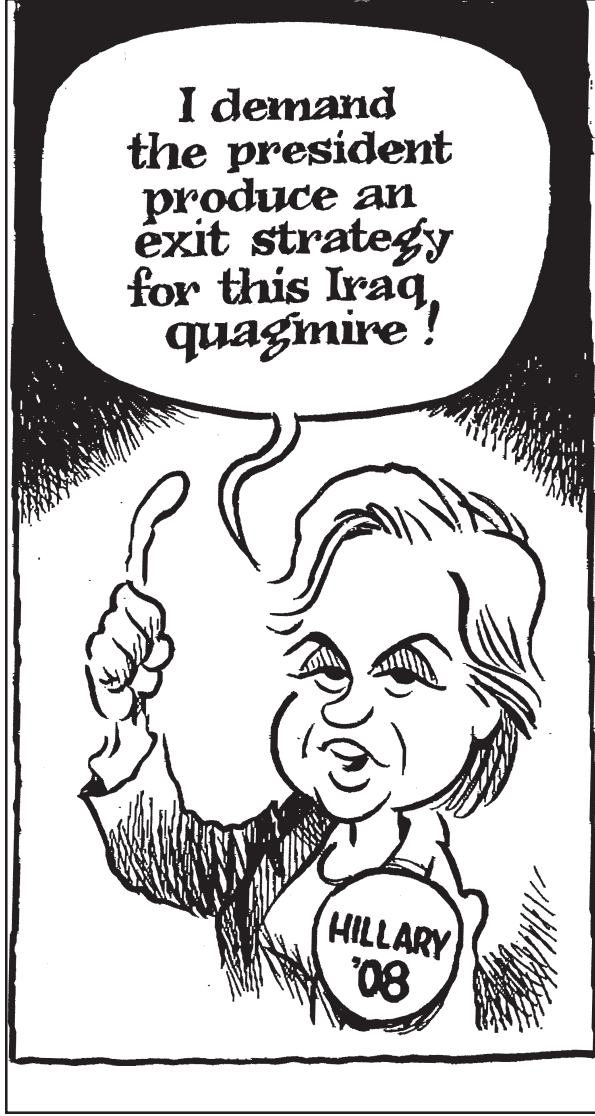
**NOR'WEST PRESS**

**Jim Bowker - General Manager**  
Richard Westfahl, Lana Westfahl, Jim Jackson, Delisa Allen, David Erickson, Betty Morris and Dana Huthansel

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 \$40, 8 months \$56, 12 months \$74. By mail with in Colby and the nine-county region of Thomas, Sheridan, Decatur, Rawlins, Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace, Logan and Gove counties: 4 months \$53, 8 months \$65, 12 months \$82. Other Kansas counties: 4 months \$60, 8 months \$70, 12 months \$85. All other states, \$85, 12 months.

**Nor'West Newspapers**  
Haynes Publishing Company



### Saving grace



**John Van Nostrand**

- Line in the Dust

What helps make an uneasy situation better are people who want to make it an easy situation.

Last Wednesday was Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent that concludes with Easter Sunday. At the other papers I've been at the past few years, I've tried to get some sort of picture of an Ash Wednesday church service. Fortunately, in the past, I've known some preachers personally and they told me prior to Lent season that I can take those kind of pictures.

Last week, I knew Colby's Trinity Lutheran Church was having an Ash Wednesday service but not sure of the Lutheran's stance on such publicity. I have known of other churches, demoniations and preachers who are careful about having such pictures of such things and services in the paper.

Earlier in the day, I asked a Lutheran congregation member I knew what the church's stance was on such events. He didn't know, but said he would find out for me. That member beat me to my next idea. Before the service, Rev. John Schmidt called me at home and invited me to the service.

With camera in hand, I went to the service and sat in a pew waiting for the right moment. During communion, Schmidt whispered to me "take all the pictures you want."

That made me feel easy about it.

Congregation members had ashes applied to their foreheads before taking communion. When I was finished with communion, there were still people in line waiting for ashes and communion, hence, the picture we ran in Thursday's paper.

Afteward, Schmidt told me he was pleased we chose to somehow document Ash Wednesday. Schmidt said it was a great opportunity for the church, through the newspaper, to show that church and Ash Wednesday services are just as a part of Colby's culture as anything else.

Thank you to all involved.

-----

In other church news related to the Free Press, a few weeks ago, Dr. W.G. Romine of Colby's Redeeming Love Ministries asked Advertising Director Crystal Rucker if he could write a weekly column for our church page.

Crystal passed the message on to me and before she could finish asking, I interrupted and said, "yes — absolutely."

That has been one of my goals for the Free Press was to have more local content on Friday's church page. It is usually on page five and has the area church service listing. We have a variety of other local church items on that page, usually information about a Vacation Bible School, new preacher, Bible study or guest speaker.

I hope what Romine is doing is contagious. He told Crystal he has received some response about his first columns from readers. I would love to have more area preachers be willing to submit a few of their thoughts. If we had enough, we could start a revolving column on Fridays.

These columns don't have to be like a Sunday sermon. If preachers are like newspaper reporters, there is always a pile of information that does not quite fit a story, but would make a good column. The column's don't have to be lengthy.

Any preacher who is interested in writing a column for us, contact Editor Patty Decker or myself at 462-3963.

John Van Nostrand is publisher of the Colby Free Press

### Your turn

## Story was accurate, accusations were not

**Kevan Trenkle Colby**  
Over the past several years I have read articles relating to the physician issues in our community as well as the numerous letters to the editor. These articles and letters have prompted me to write numerous letters in rebuttal. My professional ethics have prevailed and those letters shall forever remain in my personal file.

However, at this time I am finally compelled to respond. I would like to commend Patty Decker on her true and factual article that appeared in the Feb. 12, 2007, issue of the Colby Free Press regarding the meeting that occurred between the Kansas State Board of Healing Arts and V. H. Hildyard, II on Feb. 10, 2007. Patty's Feb. 12 article totally refuted all celebrations and statements made by the physician's support

group throughout the weekend, all of which proved to be false. The question I have is, how could so many people be so badly misinformed about the true facts? Did someone lie to them?

In addition to commending Patty Decker on her most recent factual article, I would also like to respond to the accusatory letter that was published in the Feb. 22, 2007, issue of the Colby Free Press from Larry Booth.

Mr. Booth's letter not only accuses me of wrongdoing, but further accuses my staff of conspiring to commit the same wrongdoing. I personally take offense to any assertions that any of my staff acted in appropriately in this matter, and I believe that Mr. Booth should make a public apology to my staff for such accusations.

I can assure Mr. Booth and the public that

hospital management and staff merely responded to numerous subpoenas from the Kansas State Board of Healing Arts for medical records. Many of these records had to be retrieved from microfilmed images in archival storage. Hospital management did not scour years of records as was purported in Mr. Booth's letter.

I have extended a personal invitation to Mr. Booth to visit with me regarding this issue. Lastly, I would like to offer a piece of advice to our citizens.

Please verify the facts from a truly reliable source before further reporting rumors. Without doing so, such actions only tend to embarrass and discredit the people who have repeated these untruths.

#### 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. 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.

**Mallard Fillmore**

- Bruce Tinsley

