

## Other Viewpoints

# Bookkeeping slips long-term pattern

It might be acceptable to give Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach a pass on his campaign and election fund mishaps if his most recent slip-up was his first.

It might be something to overlook if his job as secretary of state didn't make him the top election official in the state, charged with making sure political candidates file timely, accurate and complete campaign reports to the state of Kansas.

But this isn't Kobach's first brush with campaign finance reporting violations, and he is the official charged with overseeing campaign reporting.

In 2004, Kobach unsuccessfully ran for U.S. Congress but failed to update his campaign paperwork with the Federal Elections Commission, showing he had terminated his campaign account, which retained a \$77,000 balance. Since then, Kobach eight times failed to reconcile his congressional campaign account. Furthermore, he didn't update an expired post office box, and he failed to tell the Elections Commission that he had served as his own campaign treasurer since 2006.

Then, Kobach had trouble as the head of the Kansas Republican Party. A two-year examination by the Elections Commission brought three violations of federal campaign laws from 2007 and 2008, when Kobach served as chairman.

Kobach's most recent record-keeping troubles show that he omitted about \$35,000 in contributions and \$43,000 in spending from multiple reports filed from his successful campaign for Kansas secretary of state. The state Governmental Ethics Commission will meet in October to determine whether Kobach's treasurer should be fined for the accounting errors.

To his credit, Kobach isn't shifting blame to his treasurer, Rep. Tom Arpke, R-Salina, but instead argued that the reporting was complicated by a large number of small donations. In fact, he credits Arpke with playing a key role in uncovering the errors.

Nevertheless, there are legitimate questions about how someone with a history of sloppy record-keeping can effectively manage the role of enforcing the record-keeping requirements of other political candidates.

— *The Hutchinson News, via the Associated Press*

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roberts.senate.gov/public/

**U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran**, 354 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 228-6966. Fax (202) 225-5124 moran.senate.gov/public/

**U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp**, 126 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715 or Fax (202) 225-5124. Web site: huelskamp.house.gov

**State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer**, State Capitol Building, 300 SW10th St., Room 225-E., Topeka, Kan. 66612, (785) 296-7399 ralph.ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us

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STEVE JOBS 1955 - 2011

# Home team (in Colorado) looking good

Those who know me or who have read this column know that I have never been a sports fan. My brother and my dad are big into sports and even my mom gets into watching golf or the Broncos, but somehow I was never interested.

I do enjoy going to games, however, so when I found out I had two free tickets to the Colorado State University homecoming game last weekend, I was interested, though not necessarily excited.

Last year the editor/reporter of the *Norton Telegram* moved away and for seemingly months on end I would give up valuable hours of my afternoons to help them out. Well they finally found someone not too long ago and I was off the hook. As a thank you, my boss gave me a bag of Colorado State memorabilia he and his wife bid on at an auction. In it was a hoodie, a hat, a front license plate, numerous other little things and a voucher for two tickets to this year's homecoming game.

At the time I figured, sure, I'll go if I can get away that weekend. It is my alma mater, and I hadn't been to a game since my sophomore

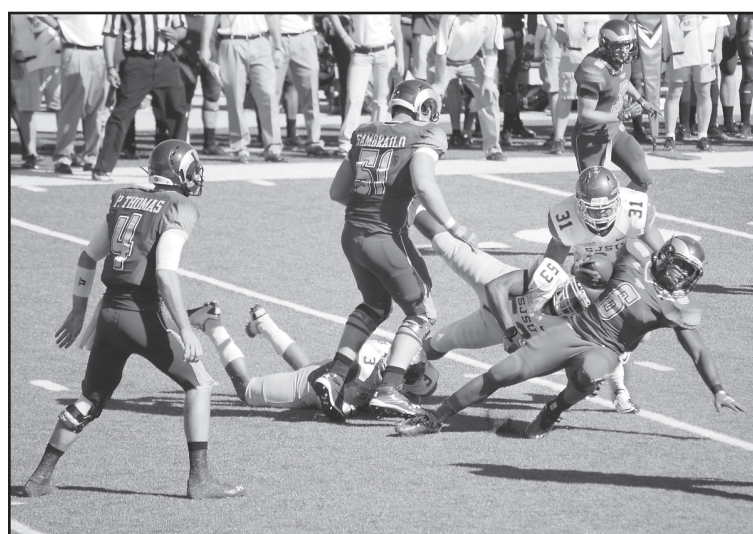


**Kevin Bottrell**

## • Simple tricks and nonsense

year, about seven years ago, and after all what better time for an alumni to return than the homecoming game? I wasn't terribly excited though, because as far as I remembered, the Rams weren't any good, and it's always more fun to go to a game when your team stands a chance, right?

I went to two games in 2004, and they lost both times. After that I wasn't too interested. And of course my senior year was when the Rams went 3-9 and the school fired legendary coach Sonny Lubick (not long after naming the football field after him). Since then I hadn't followed the team, so I was surprised to learn that Colorado State was having a winning season. At 3-1, their only loss had come against



rival University of Colorado. So I was a little more interested in going. Recently I reconnected with a friend of mine I hadn't spoken to in years, and I got the idea to ask her to come with me, thinking she probably wouldn't want to. Turned out she's a big football fan and she could hardly contain her enthusiasm! So it was set, we were going.

Saturday was the



big day. It wasn't what I would call football weather. It was at least 80 degrees and hardly a cloud in the sky. When I think of football I think of falling leaves, cool days — or even snow. But it was a beautiful day, and the sun wasn't in our eyes. Once it went behind the stadium after halftime, it was quite pleasant.

The Rams didn't start off the game too well. San Jose State scored on the first drive, and the Rams just seemed over-matched. But they battled back after the half and tied the game at 31 with about 11 minutes left in the fourth quarter.

The Rams made a number of attempts to pull ahead, but they just couldn't do it. Everyone had been pointing to the last-minute interception that ended the Rams' last drive, but I'd say it was the missed field goal a few minutes earlier that took the wind out of their sails. Up until then it had really looked like Colorado State was headed for a come-from-behind victory.

But even with the loss it was still a fun game. When the Rams pulled off their rally the crowd really started getting into the game.

The other main attraction for me was the marching band. I was in marching band in high school and I always like watching a performance. They didn't disappoint.

One of Colorado State's claims to fame are the trombone "suicides." Done during a drum cadence, the trombone section takes center stage and launches into a routine that's always an audience favorite. Every other player starts by swinging his trombone to the right, and guy next to him ducks under it. Then they stand up and swing their trombone to the right and the first guy ducks under that. They do it at a speed that makes you cringe and cheer at the same time.

Whenever I tell non-Coloradoans about that, they never believe me. Just check YouTube.

Being a journalist and photographer I took along my camera and got some incredible shots of the game and band. We had great seats, near the 20 yard line just nine rows up from the field.

So despite the loss, the great company, great game and great weather combined for a great weekend, even for a non-sports fan like me.

[Editor's note: Bottrell says there were a lot of orange shirts in the crowd. Sadly, they all said "Aggies," a former name of the school.]

Kevin Bottrell, news editor of the Colby Free Press, is a Colorado State University graduate who believes that the middle road is often the high one. Contact him at kbottrell@nwkansas.com

# Thanks, Colby, for taking charge

To the Editor,

The Colby Take Charge Challenge to conserve energy is officially over, and I want to thank the Take Charge Leadership Team for all the time, talent and energy they devoted to this task. Members of the team were Paul Bailey, Kevin Bottrell, Rich Dickman, Beverly and Curtis Eicher, Al Gerstner, Terrel Harrison, Wayne and Millie Horlacher, Barry Kaaz, Skyler Mengel, Rocque Russell, Paul and Sharon Steele, Leilani Thomas, Pat Tubbs, Holly Whitaker and Melany and Sandy Wilks.



## Free Press Letter Drop

• Our readers sound off

I also want to thank Jo Strange at City Hall and Lottie McLemore at the Chamber Office

for all the secretarial support they provided. A big "thanks" to the Kiwanis Club, the Colby Volunteer Fire Department, Farmers & Merchants Bank and Midwest Energy for their help with our big events.

It goes without saying that Colby is the best place in the world and if we win the challenge on Oct. 24, it's because the community made it happen. Thanks to everyone and we hope you will continue to conserve energy.

Carolyn Armstrong  
City Manager

## Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

