

## Colby College feels the crunch at this time of year

Can you imagine Colby or northwest Kansas without a state-sponsored community college?

Neither can we, which makes it hard to sit back and watch some of the dithering and bickering that's retarded progress in putting Colby Community College on a sound financial footing.

College officials have battled cash-flow problems for years. The college operates "in the black," as required by Kansas law. It spends less than it takes in and always has enough to pay its bills. It's just that any college gets its money in big chunks that don't necessarily come when cash is needed.

A big crunch always shows up this time of the year, when expenses continue to pile up while the school waits for three big payments - from the state, county taxes and student tuition - in January.

The county usually helps out with an advance on taxes, which it collects in December but distributes in January. This year, the college's Endowment Foundation has offered to help, too.

That makes sense, because the college, with its payroll and students, is an economic engine which drives a lot of prosperity.

But the college has had a worse time with cash flow than usual. Having a lot of turnover in staff and administration has not helped, but sending out student tuition bills late in the semester (at least partly because of an error by a federal agency, which sent out corrupted data on student loans) really added to the cash bind.

Through the fall, too, ill-concealed bickering among some members of the governing Board of Trustees and the foundation did nothing to advance the college's cause. If we, meaning everyone in the college's northwest Kansas territory, are to "save" the college and put it on a sound financial foundation, then it will take all of us working together to get the job done.

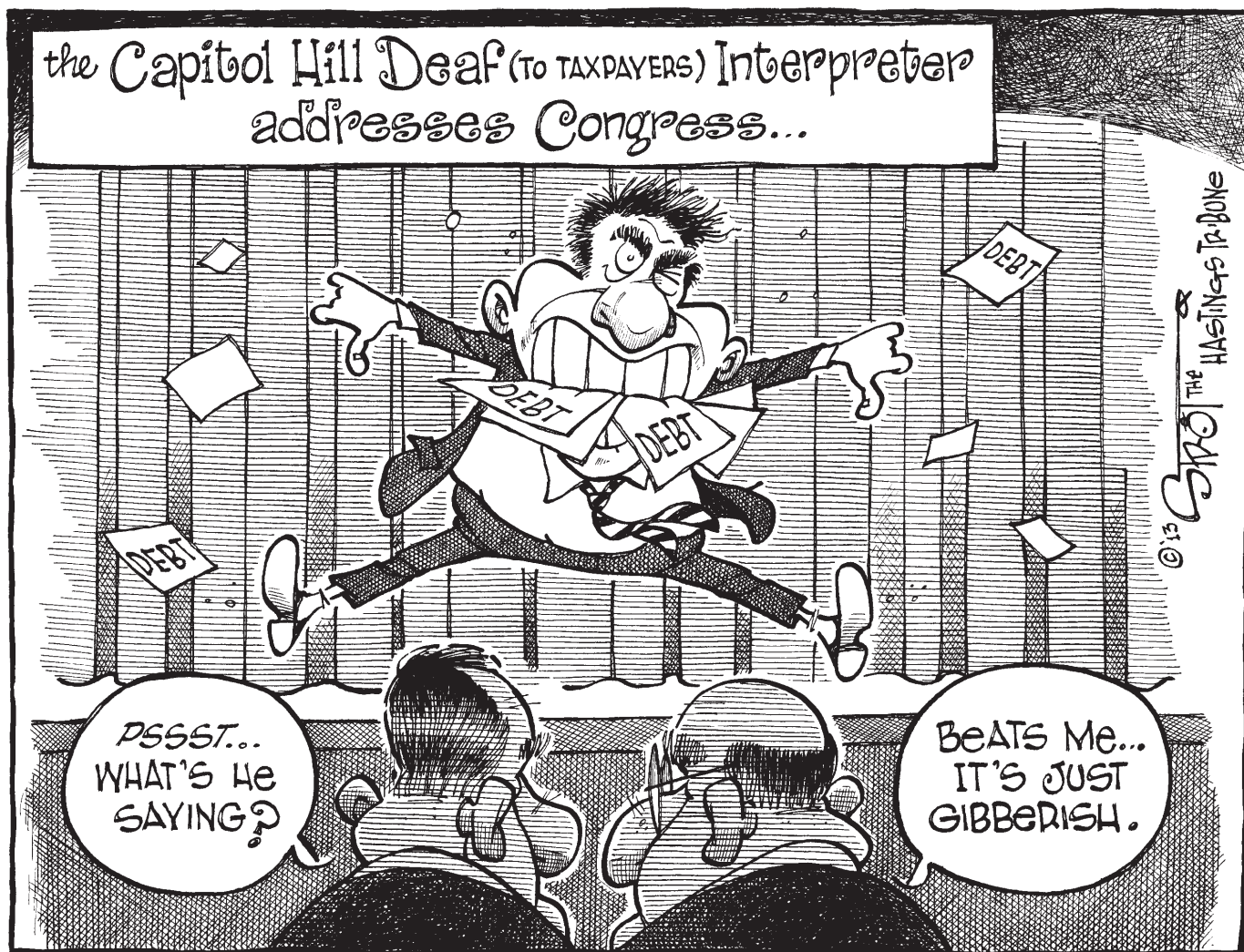
Neither the college nor the region has much room for error. We are losing population here, and with fewer people, there's less money to go around, but also fewer students for the college to recruit from.

The future will require clear thinking, a sound plan and above all, a unified effort. We believe the administration of President Steve Vacik has done much to correct problems it inherited, and that includes bringing in some fresh leadership.

This is not the time to fight over how to get things done. It is the time to get together and work for the common cause. Now, not tomorrow, because tomorrow might be too late.

We - all of us - need the college, the economic activity it generates and the cultural benefits it gives us, and especially the opportunity it provides for our kids.

Let's put our differences aside and get something done. - Steve Haynes



## The truth about Jesus Christ

For a long time, I have wanted to do a touch up job on the pictures, particularly along the highway, depicting Jesus as blue eyed and fair skinned. How long do you think it would take for the passers-by to notice Jesus skin had gradually become darker and more Middle Eastern? Not that I really think it is very important what features Jesus possessed. I do think, however it is indicative of a certain amount of arrogance to believe he was light colored. Being of Middle Eastern descent, would he not reflect what we consider Middle Eastern appearance?

People of darker skin generally are native to or descendants of individuals who have lived in a sun drenched area. The heavy pigmentation protects their skin. Those born in the Middle East, for example, are darker for a reason, protection.

All too often Jesus birth is trivialized by the so called facts. Supposed facts which bare little relationship to

### Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



reality. For instance, we celebrate his birthday on December 25th, but in actuality he probably was born during a milder time of year, as in spring or perhaps autumn. The thinking behind this is the recalling of the shepherds in the hills. Had the weather been middle of the winter, they would probably have brought the sheep to lower ground to keep them warmer.

There are people who do not believe Jesus was a Jew. I know, it defies logic that anyone would question this, but for those who want Biblical accounts, there is no shortage of references to Je-

sus' religion and ethnicity.

"What about the star," some may ask. Here again there is debate over the "facts". I find God's evolutionary approach more exciting than possible magic. The prediction of the Messiah had been handed down for centuries. The God of before, now and forevermore had billions of years to set things in place. One idea is the star may have been a conjunction of two planets thus appearing as one. Another idea is a nova or supernova or perhaps a comet. There are many other possible explanations.

Years ago the church magazine, The Episcopalian, printed a full page newspaper ad of Christ's face. The black and white depiction had a caption which read, "Remember Jesus died to take away your sins, not your mind." May His presence fill your heart and mind this Christmas season. Merry Christmas. mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net

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## Wouldn't have any luck if it weren't for bad luck

It's Christmas Crunch Time or as we call it at our house: What else can go wrong time!

I mentioned previously I do not need to make cookies; except there are a couple of kinds no one else makes like Spritz and orange slice cookies! The last time I made Spritz it was a disaster but a cousin sent a tried and true recipe.

I mixed it up and filled the cookie press. They came out perfect, time to refill the press. The stop on the plunger is missing so when I opened the cylinder; the plunger fell out.

And it would not go back in---  
No matter what I did. Finally I turned off the oven, put the cookie dough in the fridge and went to bed.

The next morning I worked on it some more then sent a desperate plea via the internet. Friends in New Mexico and Washington offered to lend me cookie presses! As did one local person.

Stubbornly, I waited until after lunch; then messed with the press again. Finally I took the dough out of the fridge (has to be at the perfect temp to work) and went to town to borrow a press.

The dough was still like a rock when I returned home. I cut it in smaller pieces and started the oven. Finally it seemed workable. But it wasn't. I kneaded the dough and set it by the oven vent. I worried about the raw eggs. I tried again to no avail. Finally I rolled the dough into little balls, flattened them with a glass dipped in colored sugar and baked them.

### This Too Shall Pass Nancy Hagman



The hubby wasn't home for any of this, upon returning he proclaimed: "I can fix this!" Don't bother, I grumbled, I'm never making Spritz again!

He loves Spritz and he loves me so he fixed it anyway. We'll find out next year how it works!

Then there are the orange slice cookies. I bought the orange slices a couple of weeks ago. During the Spritz making trauma it seemed like a good idea to have an orange slice or two.

By the time the cookie press was fixed the orange slices were gone.  
Hello, my name is Nancy and I am an emotional eater!

Meanwhile I'm machine quilting a Christmas present. Things went great until they didn't. Only on turning the quilt over did I realize a whole morning's work would have to be ripped out. You'd think it would be easy when the top thread is wildly looped on the wrong side, somehow it wasn't.

Then there are the vests. "Using just one ball of silk mohair yarn...." the catalog proclaimed. Yarn is expensive but if it takes only one ball it should be easy, quick and cheap. I ordered three colors: one for each daughter. The yarn

was Swedish, the directions originated in Canada. I had to look on line as the abbreviations were unlike any I had ever seen. Then I had to convert all the measurements from metric.

Finally I began; quickly realizing there was no way one ball of yarn was ever going to do it.

I could not find the catalog I ordered from. I looked at the instructions. 100 grams of yarn it said. So if you had 100 gram balls you would only need one. The balls I had were 50 grams.

I went online. There the advertising said: Takes only 2 balls!

So I ordered more yarn; one color was backordered until February. Oh well, I was never going to get those done for Christmas anyway.

As I resumed knitting I realized the vests were neither quick nor easy. And I didn't have any orange slices to ease my anxiety.

When the extra yarn arrived a fall catalog was enclosed. Interesting: On page 9 the pattern, yarn and description "Using just one ball of Silk Mohair...." Vindication!

I called the company. The Customer Service Rep knew what the problem was as soon as I mentioned the pattern and the Silk Mohair.

You can return it, she said. We will refund the postage.

I'll finish the vest I started for myself as soon as I find more orange slices.

You can write your own jokes about how many balls it will take and how big they should be!



Thumbs up and our thanks go to Moffet Drug for their delivery of medication to the elderly. Mailed in.

Thumbs up to the volunteers who deliver lunches in this weather. Mailed in.

Remember there is no charge for rendering a Thumbs Up. Thumbs Up are meant to give recognition for a positive person or event in the community. Also remember all Letters to the Editor must be signed.