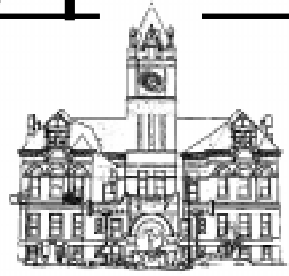


Opinion



Letter Drop

- Our Readers Sound Off

Great result from great people

To The Free Press:

We want to let everyone in Thomas County know how proud we are of everyone who participated in our recent American Red Cross Blood Drive. One-hundred forty-one (141) donors shared their gift of life on July 24. Because each pint of blood can be broken down into three components, we may have helped as many as 423 people in need!

Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time and talents, it couldn't have been done without you. Special thanks to Comfort Inn, Pepsi, Farm & Ranch Realty, Colby Free Press, KLBY-TV, KSNK-TV, KGCR, KFNF, KLOE/KCCI, KXXX/KQLS, Farmers & Merchants Bank, First National Bank, Jaycees and to our wonderful volunteers.

You made the difference!

Because of you, we were able to meet our goal and help the Red Cross maintain an adequate supply of blood.

Because of you, lifesaving blood will be on the shelves of hospitals when it is needed.

Our next blood drive is scheduled for Jan. 29, 2003. If you would like to volunteer, please call us at 462-2082 or 462-8122.

Congratulations to all of the donors and everyone else who participated in this worthwhile, lifesaving cause.

Together, we save lives!

Jo Frahm and Jackie Stephens
Blood Drive Co-Chairs
Colby
(Letter #106)

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. You can expect your letter to appear in print within 24-48 hours of receipt. 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.

Addresses of elected officials:

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 302 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, 1519 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. 202/225-2715

State Rep. Jim Morrison, State Capitol Building Rm. 174-W, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7676 e mail: jmmorriso@ink.org web:http://www.idir.net/~jmmorriso/

State Sen. Stan Clark, State Capitol Building Rm. 449-N, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7399 e mail: sclark@ink.org

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Bindweed problem prompts call

I HAD a nice visit this morning with a Colby lady who voiced concern about the city's bindweed problem. She described it as "awful" and said it "doesn't say much about our city." The caller, I believe she said she was around 80 years of age, told me how careful they try to be with curtailing the spread of bindweed. But she indicated it seems like a losing battle. She wondered aloud why Colby cannot do anything about the problem, citing Oberlin as one area town that has a plan in place to fight the weed's assault. She thought perhaps our officials should look into how they do it at Oberlin. She also said Rawlins County doesn't permit the weed to take control up there. She thought anybody looking at Colby as a potential place to settle into or open a business in, has to be concerned with the overgrowth of bindweed. "Where would you rather live?" she asked. "In a clean, well kept town or one where bindweed goes unchallenged?" I do not have the slightest idea what the city's bindweed assault is, or if there is anything they are doing. Perhaps someone in official capacity can address that situation and I'd gladly turn this space over to them if they would care to use it — as a public service. Something to think about.

THE CONTEST is over. Fifteen entries were received. And there was no clear cut winner. We had a tie. If you remember, I asked people in the July 15 column to finish the sentence, "It is so dry that" Well, Jim McDonald, postmaster and Edna Hatcher, frequent letter writer, were judged best. My pick (mailed from Oakley) wasn't signed, so it was discounted, while two entries carried "anonymous" as



Tom Dreiling

- It's Monday!

signatures. Here is how Jim completed the sentence, "It is so dry that I can't even find enough moisture to apply a self adhesive stamp!" And Edna's went like this: "It is so dry that the ground looks as if there had been an earthquake!" My pick of the litter (unsigned from Oakley), was, "It is so dry that the word dry dried up!" Jim and Edna will be receiving their prizes in the mail. Thanks for entering. We'll do this again, only using another topic.

SOMEONE once said, "We all need a good laugh each day." I get mine by looking in the mirror!

THEY TELL me that a poll is now being taken to see how many people have never been polled. Early reports supposedly are that more than 90 percent of the people polled have never been polled. Which raises the question: do we really depend on less than 10 percent of the population to learn what more than 90 percent are thinking? If so, it stands to reason why most folks are leery of poll numbers.

I STAYED up to watch the rescue of the 9 miners,

which meant I didn't go to bed until 1:45 Sunday morning. It ended up unlike I thought it would. I expected the worst, but prayerfully hoped I would be wrong. And I was. I can't even begin to imagine what those 9 guys went through. Wow! We, as a country, needed something like that to adjust our mood, from the falling stocks, the corporate crooks, the kidnappings — all things terrible. Thank God (I guess I can say that.)

ONE week from Tuesday will be election day — primary election day in Kansas. We have one local race, for County Commissioner District 1, on the Republican ticket, between incumbent Ron Evans and challenger Lonnie D. Wilson. The winner will face nobody in the Nov. 5 general election as the Democrats didn't field a candidate in the primary. I will be watching the Republican gubernatorial race with interest, lots of interest, to see if the voters pick one of the two guys somewhat responsible for our state's miserable financial mess, or turn to a new face. Whatever face wins the primary, will face a strong Democratic face in Kathleen Sebelius in November. For most part it's been a quiet campaign season.

BE sure to vote.

BE sure to attend the Thomas County Fair.

YEP, It's Monday!

Dreiling is publisher of the Free Press. td@nwkansan.com

Don't forget the animals



Maxine Nelson

- Random Thoughts

I saw a squirrel run across my deck the first day watering restricting went into effect. He didn't say so, but I suppose he was stopping for a drink in the pan of fresh water I keep there. I would expect the restrictions on watering from 10 a.m.-7 p.m. and the elimination of water in the gutters will have a large impact on the birds and other wildlife in the city. We need to be sure to fill the bird baths regularly, and maybe put down a bucket of water for animals which cannot reach the bird bath. Be sure to put in a slanted stick or some other way for creatures to climb out rather than drown.

People need to remember their other animals also. Dogs which are confined outdoors need shade and fresh water, as well as affection and exercise.

And everyone should check their pet at noontime. I think a lot of people feed and water their pets in the morning and evening, when there is shade from nearby trees. But at noon, when the sun is high overhead, the animal may be subjected to the direct rays of the sun, without the owner even being aware of it. At least, that is the most charitable way I can account for the things I see and hear when I am about town.

We did have at least one report of a dog having seizures because of being out in the heat in past years. And heat can kill. But then, again, maybe the owners feel like my cat, "What's another dead dog."

-mm-

That was certainly a lovely rain last week. It had been so long since we had rain that I had forgotten

what a blessing it can be. When I was a child, in the 'dirty thirties,' my mother said she hated to pull even the weeds out of the garden because she was so happy to see something that would grow.

We grew much of our own food — tomatoes, green beans, carrots, corn — and the water to irrigate came from the cattle tank. The water in the tank came from the windmill. (Water used in the house was carried half a block uphill to the house.) My mother used a garden hose and whenever she wanted to water, she would kneel down and siphon the water from the tank by sucking on the garden hose until the water started to run. That was the only running water we had. Seemed like the water was always needing to be started, and she spent a lot of time digging channels for it to run.

The fine, powdery dust on the country roads was one or two inches thick, and there were many, many large grasshoppers, two or three inches long. My parents told me they were cannibals, and eating each

other, because you would usually see two of them locked together. It took me many years before I figured out they were mating. (No wonder there were so many of them.) Sure hope those days don't come back.

.....

Those of you who remember our youngest son, Eric, who now lives in Seattle, will appreciate his humor. When he was here recently, we noticed he had a new scar on his temple just about an inch from his eye. "How did you get that?" we asked.

He said he had been trimming trees with a long distance trimmer involving a rope which would reach about 20 feet into the tree, and had sawed off a limb up in the tree. He stepped way back, and the limb came down, one end hit the ground, and the other end bounced up and hit him. Fortunately not in the eye. They went to the emergency room, and he had one stitch inside, and two outside.

The next weekend he went on a campout with one of his daughters, (sort of like scouts, but they camp out in cabins on the lake). He had a black eye and still had some stitches. People asked him what happened, and he told them, then added, "You should have seen the other guy. He lost a limb."

Maxine Nelson is former Family and Religion Page editor of the Free Press, now in retirement. But she keeps in contact with her large following with these periodic columns.

Doonesbury

- Gary Trudeau

