

# Opinion

## Free Press Viewpoint

by Tom (TD) Dreiling  
Publisher

### Field of Democrats will shrink to three

Howard Dean will probably win the Iowa caucuses next Monday and win in New Hampshire the week following. And if those two things happen, I think the field of nine Democrats wanting to battle President Bush for the keys to the Oval Office will dwindle to perhaps three, at most.

Dean is the hottest commodity the Democrats have, and although he wouldn't be our pick at this particular time, the fact remains more Democrats like him than don't where it counts most — in the presidential primary states.

Hanging on after Iowa and New Hampshire will be Sen. John Edwards, North Carolina and (retired) Gen. Wesley Clark. The others will simply fade away.

Of course former Vermont Governor Dean will be forced to change his clothes and don more moderate threads once he moves into other states where he is being looked at cautiously.

Dean is using the Internet unlike its ever been used before to enhance his coffers and support base. Other politicians, who would only wink before at the benefits of the Internet, are slowly becoming believers in this avenue of opportunity.

Of course there's that big question looming for the Democrats: can Howard Dean, if given the nomination, beat President Bush?

The White House bunch isn't taking Dean lightly. They wish Wesley Clark would get the nomination. They feel he would be the easiest to beat. They point to Clark's inconsistency on issues. He's a novice in the game and it shows, they say. Nice guy, they say, but... But they shouldn't take him lightly, either.

So, we sit back and watch and listen to the fiery exchanges among the Democrat hopefuls. And we will watch closely how the people of Iowa and New Hampshire react to the roster when they caucus and vote. And then how the circus plays in other states.

With many of the presidential primaries moved up to take advantage of the national stage, the issue of who the Democrats will eventually nominate could be all but over by the end of March. —Tom A. Dreiling, publisher

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 td@nwkansan.com or pdecker@nwkansan.com.

#### 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. 171-W, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7676 e mail: jmorrison@ink.org web:http://www.ink.org/public/legislators/jmorrison
- State Sen. Stan Clark**, State Capitol Building Rm. 449-N, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7399 e mail: sclark@ink.org

### COLBY FREE PRESS

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

freepress@nwkansan.com

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.

**Tom (TD) Dreiling - Publisher**  
td@nwkansan.com

#### NEWS

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

**Tisha Cox - General Assignment**

#### ADVERTISING

**Crystal Rucker - Advertising Representative**  
crystalr@nwkansan.com

**Shelby Moses - Advertising Representative**  
smoses@nwkansan.com

#### BUSINESS OFFICE

**Lea Bandy - Circulation Manager**  
**Danielle Silsbee - Bookkeeping & Ad Building**  
**Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator**  
support@nwkansan.com

#### NOR'WEST PRESS

**Jim Bowker - General Manager**

**Richard Westfahl, Lana Westfahl, Ron VanLoenen, Judy McKnight**

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.

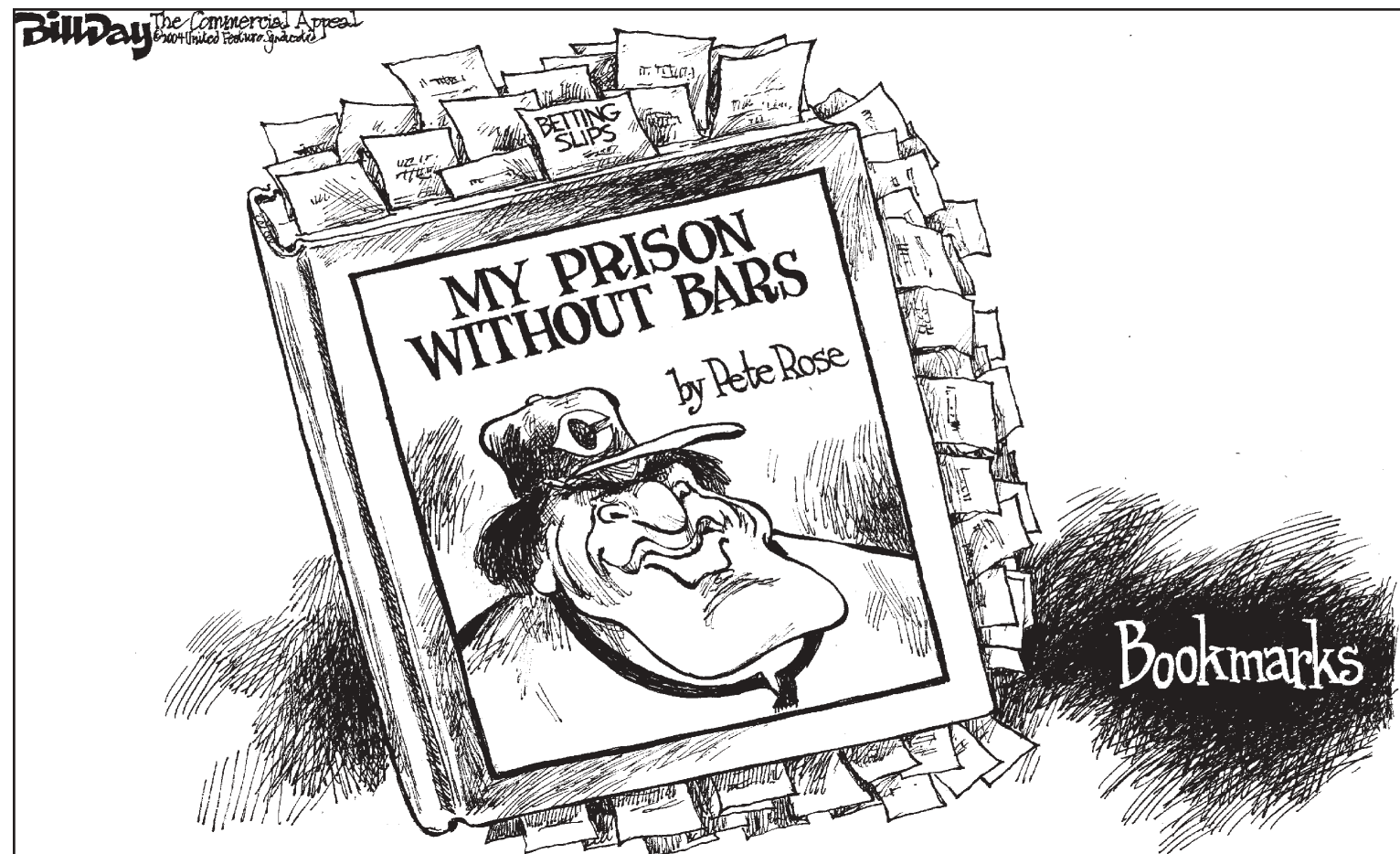
THE BUSINESS OFFICE at 155 W. Fifth is open from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, closed Saturday and Sunday.

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 \$32, 8 months \$47, 12 months \$64. By mail with in Colby and the nine-county region of Thomas, Sheridan, Decatur, Rawlins, Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace, Logan and Gove counties: 4 months \$44, 8 months \$56, 12 months \$72. Other Kansas counties and surrounding states: 4 months \$51, 8 months \$61, 12 months \$75. All other states, \$75, 12 months.

**Nor'West Newspapers**  
Haynes Publishing Company

BillDay The Commercial Appeal



## Trapping cat no easy matter



**Tom Dreiling**

• My Turn

IT WAS elusive. To say the least. Black. Wild. Quick as lightning. When we saw it, that is. Which was seldom. It in this case is a cat. I don't know if it was Dick or Darlene. Never got close enough to make that determination. Besides, none of us was eager to climb into the ceiling to see how it managed. When it housed itself in the ceiling. We think it stayed part of the time in some furniture stored in the back part of the building.

I spotted the cat a week ago, I think. Might have been longer than that, but the fact it wouldn't come out of hiding to look for food or water, I figured it hadn't been with us as long as it may seem.

We got a break Sunday around noon. It was in the office looking for the thing — I sort of thought of myself as the guy on Animal Planet — except I wasn't dressed the part. I just about came feet-to-paw with the animal. It was in the front office behind a desk and about the time I saw it it saw me and wham! — off it went. Boy, that would have made a running coach drool. And that was the last time I saw it.

So, when Monday rolled around and everyone in the building was alerted to be on the lookout for our embedded animal, we all assumed the capture would be quick. It wasn't. It wasn't until shortly after noon on Tuesday that the cat, which apparently decided to make a run for it — we had all the doors open — apparently did just that. We sort of figured that it didn't think being on the outside was as comfy as being on the inside where it was warm and where there was food and drink, so it came back in, unannounced.

Someone in the building, however, heard a noise coming from the old press room and went to see what it was. It was the cat caught — in a trap, something we've been trying to get it to do for a couple of days but without success. Evan (Barnum) put the trap originally in the ceiling as the cat, we figured, was up there roaming around. Out of our sight. And we knew that, too, because one of the ceiling tiles was laying on the newsroom floor and we reasoned that the cat, making

its way in the dark in the ceiling, didn't know there was an elevation problem — one part of the ceiling was higher than the other and when Lea (Bandy) found the hole the cat found to access the ceiling, it was on the higher side and when the cat went prancing around it tumbled a foot down and its weight caused the tile to give and the cat ended up on a counter below. It made a mess out of the newsroom.

Patty (Decker) thought we needed to bring in some food to lure the cat out of hiding. So she went home and brought cat food and I went and got milk and with the help of Tish (Cox), Crystal (Rucker) and Shelby (Bain) the wheels were put in motion to catch the cat. It never happened, however. The cat ate but we weren't invited.

Shelby's husband, Matt, who is with the Department of Wildlife and Parks loaned us a trap. The cat wasn't playing that game — with Matt's trap, anyway. So, our troops go hold of a larger one from the police department and that's the trap that trapped the cat and brought an end to the cat's free run of our bed and breakfast.

Once trapped, Lea and Crystal took the trapped cat to the vet. Whatever happened there was between the cat and the vet. We don't ask questions, we just deliver. Kind of like Gambino's and Pizza Hut, except a telephone isn't involved.

The cat sure made life interesting. It also left an odor that we wish we could pack up and ship out. In due time everything will be back to normal and it's a sure bet we won't be leaving the back door open from now on, which, as we look

back, is why we had a cat living rent free some where in our building.

We will post a "No Vacancy" sign outside our bed and breakfast.

PRESIDENT Bush wants to go to the Moon and then to Mars (not himself, but that's his goal). Ambitious, to say the least. Lot of cost there, too. An awful lot. I hope one of the things discovered when we eventually put people on those outer fringes is cheaper prescription drugs. But then if the cost is in the billions upon billions of dollars for such space travel, why not call it off and use those billions upon billions of dollars to give the seniors a break right here on Earth. And use the rest to help the homeless, the jobless, the poverty-stricken, the sick, the disabled, and the list goes on. And I think before we expand space exploration we need to expand our search for Osama bin Laden. Wasn't he one of the bad guys?

THINGS to ponder as you go about your routine:

√In winter, why do we try to keep the house as warm as it was in summer when we complained about the heat?

√Considering all the lint you get in your dryer, if you kept drying your clothes would they eventually just disappear?

√Does a clean house indicate that there is a broken computer in it?

√If at first you don't succeed, shouldn't you try doing it like your wife told you to?

√Observation tells me that in some cases the only difference between a yard sale and a trash pickup is how close to the road the stuff is placed?

HAVE a good evening!  
\*\*\*\*\*

Dreiling is publisher of the Free Press. His column appears Wednesdays and Fridays. E-mail him at td@nwkansan.com, or dreiling@nwkansan.com

## More of the same



**Jay Kelley**

• Speaking MyMind

Rep. Jerry Moran is doing his annual listening tour and was in Colby Monday at the Senior Progress Center. Although many congressmen do this and all should, Moran's job is especially tough given the size of the First District, now at 69 counties.

The geographic area also makes his job as a representative more difficult because of the differences between the needs of cities ranging from the far west to the eastern part of the state.

I thought Moran had a good handle both on the needs and wants of his district and the realities of politics in Washington. In other words, he knows he can't give us everything we want or even some things we need, but he is doing his best to represent us in a difficult political climate.

It is that political climate I want to talk about today. Moran identified the politics of power in Washington (not his exact words) as one of the difficulties in getting legislation passed and controlling spending on legislative pork and I think he's right.

As the Republicans and Democrats become more and more alike in many ways, the political climate in Washington and even at the state and local level to a lesser degree has become more about power than ideas.

In 1994 I found myself disillusioned and angry with my Republican party to the point I switched parties.

It didn't take long to realize it was more of a statement than anything else, because I had little

in common with most Democrats.

Stubbornness kept me from switching back until a couple of years ago, but I find myself in the same dilemma with the Republicans. Current Republican legislation leaves me wondering what has happened to the party of smaller government and fiscal responsibility.

At the same time, Bill Clinton's economic policy was more in line with the traditional Republican doctrine of keeping government out of business than many want to admit. Much of Clifton's policy was done by opinion poll, for which he was rightfully called to task. What, pray tell, is so different about the way things are being done today?

Free trade is killing our middle class, yet both parties see it as the panacea for all that ails us. The poor are a political football to be alternately castigated as lazy and indifferent or mollified with handouts for crass motives.

The politics of power have even found their way into the religion of our country. It has become fashionable to wear one's religion on the

sleeve until someone gets offended, then back-track. Even those who attempt to decry the moral decay of our society choose their words so as not to offend any portion of the electorate. One is tempted to dismiss all of this as politics as usual, but that doesn't make it right.

While it is true the art of compromise is part and parcel to politics and that one cannot accomplish anything without the power to do so one must also ask the important question.

"What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?"

What good is the power our leaders are so desperately craving if they are unable to use it for the betterment of our society because they have sacrificed their core beliefs to attain it?

What kind of country will we become if we exchange concern for right and wrong and the free exchange of ideas for political correctness and the soft comforts of a pandering government?

Ultimately, the power still rests in the hands of the people and will remain there as long as we have a vote. Once upon a time a new party elected a gangly lawyer from Illinois whose moral and ethical leadership carried us through one of the darkest hours in our history.

Maybe it's time for a new party.  
\*\*\*\*\*

Jay Kelley is a local minister and writer who speaks his mind from time to time. His e-mail is jkelley@nwkansan.com.

## Doonesbury

• Gary Trudeau

