

Opinion

Letters

Whoa, there, Mr. Sharp!

To the Colby Free Press:
Okay, Mr. Sharp (re: Letter #51, June 28), here is a letter from an average Jane.

First, let me admit that I don't know much about Mr. (Sen. John) Kerry (sadly). I do not allow cable television or anything of that nature in my home due to our five small children and their impressionable nature.

I do listen with great interest to KGCR when I can, but most of the time I miss the news due to any number of domestic emergencies (bloody scraped knees, splinter extractions, etc.). What I take issue with in your letter is your statement, "Pro-Life people often say that if you are Pro-Choice, then you are pro-abortion. That is not true." Mr. Sharp, how is 'that not true'? The two go hand-in-hand. If a woman finds she is pregnant under whatever circumstances and you give her a 'choice,' what are her choices? She may carry the child and give birth, or, what's that other 'choice' again? To terminate her pregnancy. If I remember right, that is called abortion. If pro-choice isn't pro-abortion, then why isn't pro-choice associated with pro-adoption?

Or maybe your pro-choice is way before a pregnancy occurs, the woman's choice to not go to bed with a man in the first place (lest pregnancy should occur). Then I would say "excellent choice."

In this all-too real world, that is not the way it is. Pro choice is pro abortion, for what right do we as women have to choose to destroy what God has created? The mother who 'chose,' several years ago, to drown her children in a bathtub was not held up high as a heroine for championing the pro-choice movement. No, she was put in prison for killing her babies. Abortion after the fact. She made a sad and devastating 'choice.'

That is all I have to say to you, Mr. Sharp — oh, not quite — one more thing: I am praying that you will come to know the Lord and discover how truly precious each person is — born or not-yet born.

Now, to women, life is a gift. If you need help, you only have to call 785-443-0033.

Respectfully yours,

Melinda Enfield Colby
(Letter #53)

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.

Where to write

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, 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>

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freepress@nwkansan.com

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

NEWS

Patty Decker - Editor
pdecker@nwkansan.com

Tisha Cox - General Assignment
tcx@nwkansan.com

ADVERTISING

Crystal Rucker - Advertising Sales/Director
crystal@nwkansan.com

Jeremy Blackwill - Advertising Sales
jblackwill@nwkansan.com

BUSINESS OFFICE

Lea Bandy - Circulation Manager
jappegate@nwkansan.com

Jeanette Applegate - Bookkeeping & Ad Building
jappegate@nwkansan.com

Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator
support@nwkansan.com

NOR'WEST PRESS

Jim Bowker - General Manager

Richard Westfahl, Lana Westfahl, Ron VanLoenen, Judy McKnight

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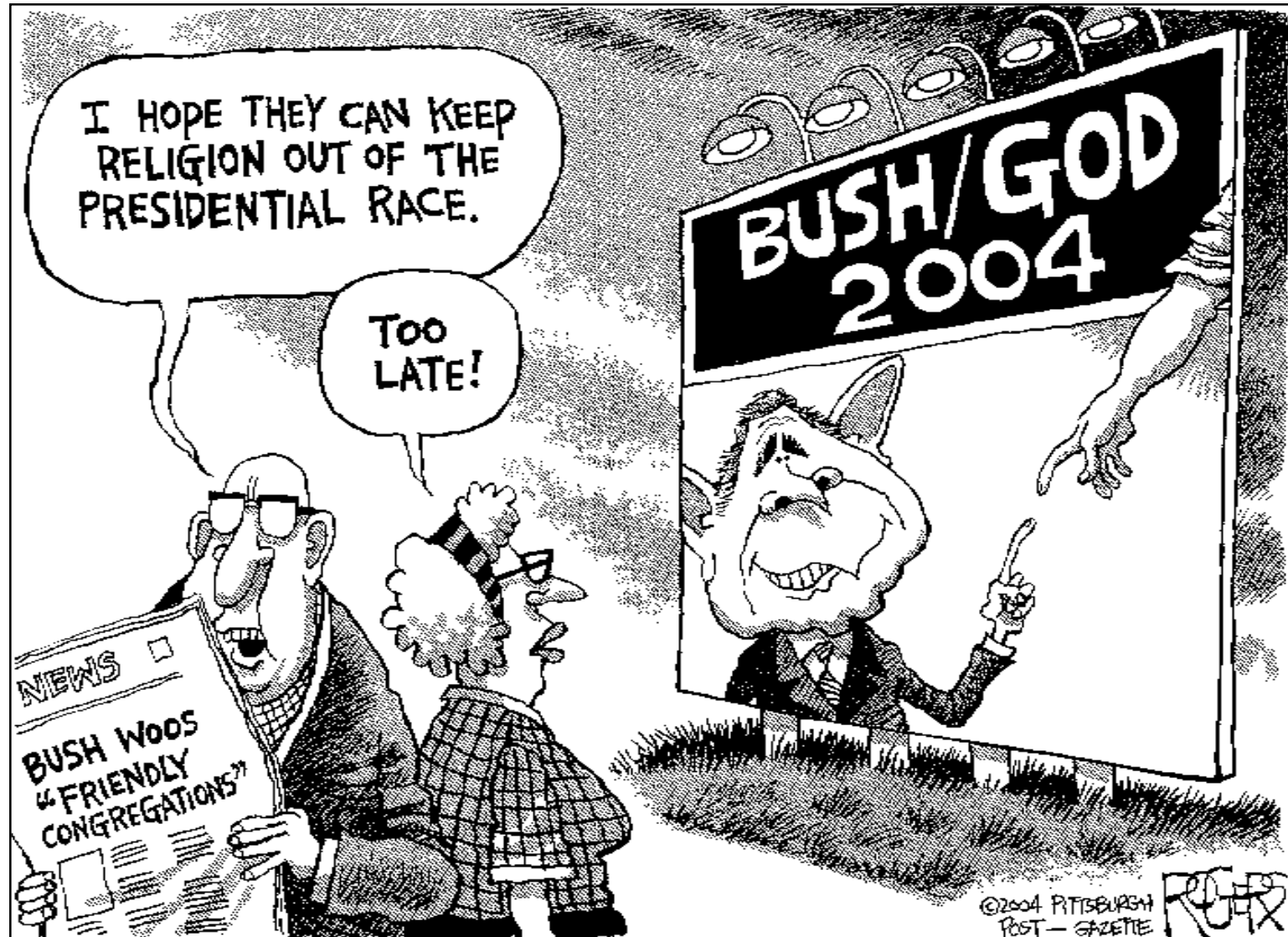
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Recalling the past

My youngest daughter, Jo, and her husband, Mike Vandenberg, of West Jordan, Utah, are celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary and their oldest daughter asked me to write something about the couple for a memory book.

I told my granddaughter I would do my best although I haven't seen them as a couple as often as I would have liked. As soon as Jo graduated from high school, she rushed off to Ricks College in Rexburg, Idaho, to find the man of her dreams. She did.

I think she would have married him at Christmas if her dad and I had allowed. We insisted she wait until the following summer when the couple were married in the Salt Lake Temple of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They attended Ricks College for another semester and then graduated with their associate degrees from BYU-Hawaii.

I didn't get to see them during their Hawaiian stay, but heard a lot about it. Jo said they had a resident gecko in their kitchen. She complained about it, but was told, "Be glad, they eat the cockroaches." (Now you know why I didn't go to visit!) She said it wasn't so bad, except for the little tracks (like mouse tracks) she had to clean up each morning on the kitchen counters.

They lived in student housing and were the only non-natives in the area. They were the 'hoolies.' (Hope I spelled that right.)

Meanwhile, my other daughter was living in a non-white area in Denver and the only white folks on the block. We were the only Mormons in Colby. Talk about minorities!

In those days most women could still expect



Maxine Nelson

• Random Thoughts

to stay at home with their young children, but that soon changed. (Blame it on women's lib.) After some other endeavors, Jo and Mike established a jewelry and gift store near Fort Bridger, Wyo., and Jo worked in the store while Mike worked at the mines for extra money.

When my husband retired from being manager of the Social Security office in Colby, I thought he would probably want something else to do, so I circled interesting-looking ads in the newspaper. For some reason, he resented this, and took off for Fort Bridger shortly before Christmas to help at the store for the Christmas rush.

They asked him to play Santa Claus, and he said it was a miserable experience. The costume was dirty, with a filthy beard, and he had to wear it for several days to be Santa. He said he had to ride in a sled in a parade. The sled was pulled by deer or elk or some other horned wild animals, and they were harnessed behind an automobile because they were so wild they would run away if they weren't tied down.

I flew out for Christmas and to ride back with my husband. Jo's youngest daughter was born

on Christmas Eve. The baby stayed in the hospital, but Jo came home in time for the Christmas party at the home of one of Mike's sisters. The baby came home the next day.

This tale would be incomplete without mention of the Vandenberg Geyser. When my now-25-year-old granddaughter, Carla, was about 4, she was staying with us, and we needed to go to the Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico, but didn't want to take her. Jo only had two children at the time, and said she "would love to have Carla" for a visit. Jo's daughter, Angel, and Carla hit it off just great. So great, in fact, we probably didn't keep a good enough eye on them. Jo heard them laughing and whooping it up in her bedroom. When she went to investigate, she found them jumping from the headboard onto the waterbed mattress, from which the lid had somehow come unscrewed. Each time they leaped onto the bed, a great gout of water spurted up into the air.

Jo rarely gets mad, but she was mad that day. It was all Carla's fault! Never mind that Angel had done the same thing the week before, she had been corrected and wouldn't do that again! My husband and I went and hid. We couldn't quit laughing, and knew that would just make her madder.

The next day we left for home and came back to get Carla after our trip to Philmont. I don't think she ever invited Carla again, and I'm surprised she invited us.

Maxine Nelson is a retired editor/reporter for the Colby Free Press.

It's called 'biotechnology'

As is often the case, being on the leading edge of technology is reason enough to expect that not everyone will embrace your views and vision. Such is the case with American agriculture and its adoption of biotechnology.

Last year the United States accounted for 63 percent of the world's total planting of biotech crops. That being the case, it is vital that domestic and international acceptance of biotechnology continues and expands if U.S. agriculture is to remain competitive in the world market.

The main detractor of this country's biotech industry is the European Union. The EU's current approach to biotechnology relies on exhaustive scientific risk assessments of biotech products.

The United States and European Union must arrive at some sort of mutual understanding on this issue — one with regulatory acceptance for products enhanced through biotechnology.

Continued market development for biotech agriculture products depends on public policy that ensures an unbiased, science-based regulatory system. Such a system will inspire consumer confidence and avoid unnecessary traceability and labeling requirements for biotech commodities.

This country's policy must champion such innovative cropping practices and expand access where current restrictions exist while also creating an environment conducive to the development of new crop varieties enhanced through biotechnology.

Biotechnology has helped this country provide an abundant, safe, reliable and inexpensive food supply. Most of us are dependent on mod-

John Schlageck

• Weekly Insight

ern agricultural practices and food techniques. Some would argue we do not need GMOs (genetically modified organisms), fresh produce like tomatoes because there is already too much food and we don't need some of these items because they are luxuries anyway.

This is a shortsighted, naive attitude. This country, and hungry people around the world, will always need more food. We must always find ways to produce more efficiently in this country. Continued change and advances in technology will be the only thing that provides answers to an every-growing population with additional food demands.

If the technology and producers are available, why shouldn't people in this country and those around the globe have access to wholesome, delicious grains, meat, vegetables and other produce all year round? This is especially true when the increased intake of such food items has been scientifically proven to be healthy and reduce the risk of health problems.

Critics of technology have been around since the first caveman rounded off the square edges of a stone block and chiseled out the first wheel. Most people fought the coming of steam loco-

motives and buggy makers cried out against the coming of the Model T.

In agriculture, new plant varieties created with these techniques will offer foods with better taste, more nutrition and longer shelf life. Farmers will be able to grow these new varieties more efficiently, leading to lower consumer costs and greater environmental protection.

Soybeans that produce high oleic oil containing less saturated fat and require less processing, cotton plants that fight pests or produce naturally-colored cotton, reducing the need for chemical dyes and bananas that deliver vaccines to fight enteric diseases are just a few examples of what's in store.

Sound far-fetched? Probably the same reaction my father would have had, if someone told him his son would go to a supermarket and buy things like navel oranges and seedless watermelons. Steam pasteurization, food irradiation, genetically modified grains can best be summed up in one word — **progress**.

American agriculture will flourish only in a world that encourages and embraces innovation and the adoption of new technology. This holds true for private sector and government research and development centers as well. This nation must continue to ensure that there will be domestic and international markets for approved biotechnology products.

John Schlageck has been writing about farming and ranching in Kansas for 25 years. He is the managing editor of "Kansas Living," a quarterly magazine dedicated to agriculture and rural life in Kansas.

Doonesbury

• Gary Trudeau

