

# Opinion

## Free Press Viewpoint



### Remember who made July 3 a holiday

Is Gov. Sebelius trying to buy votes? What a coincidence Sebelius used her power to make Monday, July 3, an official state holiday in addition to Tuesday, July 4. That means state employees, and Thomas County employees too, will have a four-day weekend.

Remember, this year is an election year and Sebelius will do whatever she can to get an advantage.

But if that is Sebelius' motive, she could lose the votes she thinks she will gain by creating the day off. Voters and taxpayers must realize what Sebelius did. Can the July 3 day off be implied taxpayers are paying for a Sebelius campaign action?

The day off on July 3 will be paid, so Kansas taxpayers are paying for an additional day off for those who qualify. When has government given taxpayers an unscheduled, paid day off?

Taxpayers understand government offices traditionally close on the major, federal holidays like July 4, Thanksgiving and Memorial Day. So What would be the reason for state of Kansas employees having the day before the holiday off?

Some of those employees probably deserve the day off, but that does not mean they should get it. A lot of hardworking Americans need time off, but our country has an addiction to making the next buck and that is hard to do when businesses give employees an extra day off.

Federal holidays not on a Monday or Friday can be a bother, but knowing how long holidays have been around businesses and government employees should know what to do when holidays are in the middle of the week.

Employees do as much as possible before the holiday, so they can enjoy the day off and won't be too far behind when coming back to work July 5.

Some Kansas businesses may have things to do at government offices, but will now have June 30 or July 5 to get those things done. Sebelius just put a dent in government offices' customer service.

Sebelius is in a position to improve government office customer service, not take away from it — unless she somehow sees a benefit for herself.

— John Van Nostrand, publisher Colby Free Press

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 [jvannostrand@nwkansan.com](mailto:jvannostrand@nwkansan.com) or [pdecker@nwkansan.com](mailto:pdecker@nwkansan.com). Opinions do not necessarily reflect the Free Press.

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### COLBY FREE PRESS

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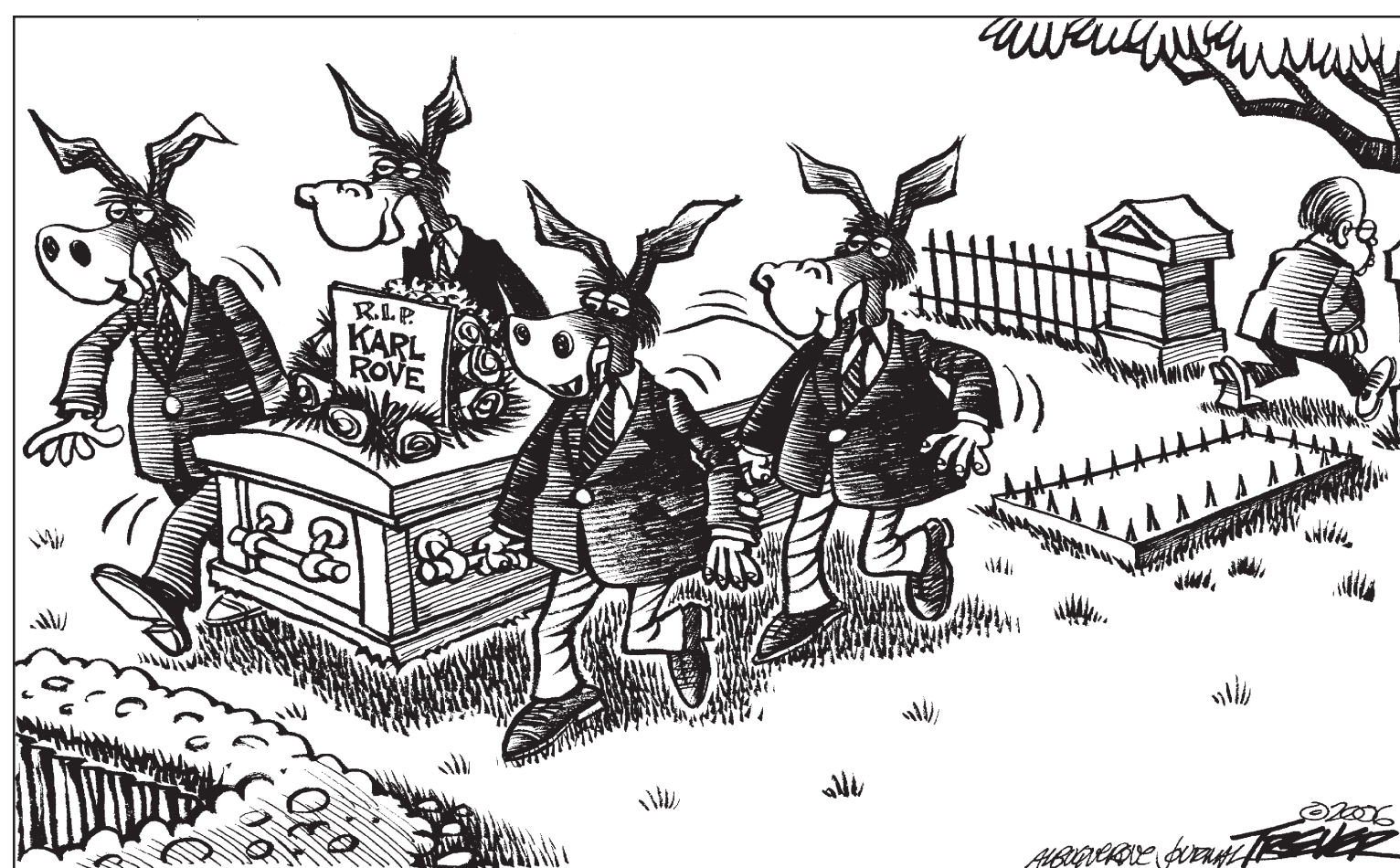
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## E-mail scam artists are patient

It's unbelievable the lengths people will go to take advantage of some poor unsuspecting Internet user.

While scanning through my e-mails, I continue to discover one con right after the other.

For example, one company claims to be the security office for a credit union association. In the subject line the words "Second Warning" are supposed to intimidate the recipient to open the e-mail immediately.

Normally, I don't even bother to open the contents, but for purposes of this column, I did.

The letter's salutation reads "Dear Credit Union Member." First of all, I am not a credit union member anywhere. Then, the letter goes on to read that my account has been temporarily suspended.

That's supposed to really get the recipient worried. As if to say, any money I have in a credit union is locked up until I answer this silly message.

But, wait! There is a way I can unlock my money. All I need to do is "click here," and it will take me through the verification process.

How do I know this is a scam? First of all, the author cannot spell. I would think any reputable association worth their salt could spell correctly. Simple words were misspelled and the sentence structure lead me to believe the information was not written by someone taking English classes in the United States.

One example was a sentence that read: For this operation, you will be required to pass *trough* a series of *authentifications*.

Adding to the bad grammar, misspelled words and the fact I don't belong to a credit union, the icing on the cake was when I was told I only have 72 hours or else.

Or else what? Cancel my credit union mem-



### Patty Decker

#### ● Deep Thoughts

bership — the one I don't have; lock up my money; suspend my accounts?

I can spot hundreds of e-mails that are fakes and, I hope others in the Colby area can do that too.

Here's some other subject lines in e-mails that should be dead giveaways:

#### Urgent Notification

Again, the letter starts out: Dear Ohio Savings Bank Customer. The way I knew this was a scam was because my name wasn't used. How many letters do you get from your bank that start out without your name? Another clue was that I am not a Ohio Savings Bank Customer.

#### Stocks in Play

When opened, the e-mail talks about a company ready to explode! The company, of course, is in China and for a price, we can all get in on gold while it's cheap. These bozos say to "watch this one like a hawk" and "the alert is on." How naive do they think people are? And those who think they are getting some sort of a great deal, need to remember the old saying: A fool and his money are soon parted. I think I am better off waiting for the lottery than this gold boom in China.

#### Action Required

Your Account Has Been Limited. Of all the e-mails I have seen that are questionable, this one concerns me a lot because it's using a "PayPal" name. I don't have a PayPal account,

but I know many people do. The e-mail says that my PayPal account has a security breach — that a third party is accessing my account. Sorry, I am not buying this and I don't think anyone else should either. Send me a letter about it — use my name — give me my account number. To provide such vague information only makes me suspicious. I hope it makes other suspicious too.

That's a great subject line. Maybe the e-mail was misdirected. What's funny is that all the characters are in some sort of Chinese or Japanese lettering — except — for the address they supposedly want someone to visit. Why would anyone want to click on the address without knowing what anything else said? Sure hope people don't do that here.

#### Your Opinion Matters

The company, Virtual Focus Groups, wants me to participate in this group without ever leaving my office. It only takes 90 minutes and the subject is gratifying and interesting, but nobody will tell me why I am one of the Guinea pigs or anything about the commitment. Once again, I don't like e-mails asking me to do something, without revealing what that something is?

It breaks my heart when someone has been victimized by an unscrupulous person, but if the offer seems to good to be true, it probably is.

Hold on to your money, your information and your dignity by not giving any of it away unless there is no doubt. Even then, check with the local authorities or your Internet Service Provider for the facts.

Decker is editor of the Free Press. Her column appears on Fridays.

## Feeding the masses

**By Steve Haynes**  
We've all had unexpected company, but what do you do when a tour bus loaded with professors pops in for a bite to eat?

If you smile, and everyone pitches in, it can be a lot of fun, though I'm not sure Dan and Shirley Bourquin will volunteer to do it again any time real soon.

Cynthia and I got to be part of this little adventure quite by accident. We were planning to take Tom Eblen to dinner in Colby that night. Tom, who taught journalism and guided the student-run Daily Kansas at the University of Kansas for many years, is retired now and does consulting for the Kansas Press Association. He was in town to work with the staff of the Colby Free Press.

Tom's wife Jeanne still works at KU, and she knew that Margey Fredricks, who runs the annual Wheat State Whirlwind tour, was bringing her crew into Colby for the night. Why not join them? Tom asked.

To two old KU alums, that seemed like a pretty good idea. The tour serves as an introduction to the state for new faculty and staff, many of whom come from states (even countries) far away from our plains.

We'd had dinner with the group a couple of years ago, and found that you get to meet some interesting people that way, plus Don Steeples. Steeples, professor of geophysics, vice provost and old pal of Jim Reeves of Oberlin, is, I swear, at every KU tour and dinner. At least all the ones I go to.

Anyway, Tom looked at the schedule and said we should be at Bourquins' Old Depot Restau-

rant down by I-70 a little before 6:30 to meet the bus. We walked in about 6:15 and told Shirley Bourquin we were there to meet the KU group.

A look that may have been horror crossed her face.

"No," she said, "I think that's supposed to be Thursday."

Tom looked puzzled. I'm sure we did, too, but we didn't know anything, so we just went along with the gag.

"I'm pretty sure it's today," he said. Shirley went for her file, pulling out a contract that said Thursday. Tom tried to call Jeanne. Shirley kept checking her file.

About that time, Todd and Melissa Stramel of Colby walked in and asked innocently enough where the KU group was. Melissa, a pharmacy graduate, now works part-time for KU. She'd heard about the tour and invited them to dinner at her place, but Margey instead invited the couple to join the big feast at Bourquins.

I looked out the window and spotted something large and red coming up the drive, past the RV park and campground the Bourquins run. "You may be right about that contract," I said, "but there's a tour bus coming up the road."

That sort of galvanized the place. As 53 professors, instructors and administrators unloaded and wandered in, Margey found Shirley and got the news: The crew, the food, the hospitality, all set for Thursday.

Of course, it was Tuesday. We all knew that. Not to worry, Margey said: "We can go to Pizza Hut."

No, said Dan Bourquin. "We want to take care of you, and we need the

business."

He and Tom and Shirley huddled. They started a plan in motion. Margey quickly explained what was happening and everyone moved to the kitchen or the dining room.

I'm not sure exactly what happened next. The important thing was that they broke out the bar, and started selling wine and beer to the thirsty crew, who'd been on the bus touring Kansas for two days straight. That settled things down while Shirley, who's pert picture appears on Bourquins' posters and brochures, got a few volunteers working in the kitchen.

Everyone pitched in. We had professors hawking beer and Shakespeare scholars tending bar. Deans waited tables and controllers mixed salad.

I don't know where Shirley found it all — I think they must have a deep, deep freezer — but ribs and chicken and pie plate after pie plate of scalloped potatoes appeared, got cooked, plated and delivered to the tables.

Todd Stramel, though not a KU grad — he went to some other university, then to Washburn law — got into the spirit, running beer and wine to the dining room. Melissa was in the kitchen. I finally grabbed Margey Fredrickson, sat her down and said, "Eat your salad. It's good for you."

And the multitude was fed. Well, in fact, and that's nothing against Pizza Hut, mind you.

So if you go to Bourquins for supper this month, you'll get a good meal. But be nice and don't say the word BUS around Shirley.

— Steve Haynes is owner of Nor'West Newspapers including the Colby Free Press

### Mallard Fillmore

● Bruce Tinsley

