

# Opinion



## Free Press Viewpoint

### Colby sounds great this weekend

Go down South and more than likely you will come across an annual bluegrass festival with bands made up of several generations of the same family.

The "O Brother Where Art Thou" soundtrack, with a strong bluegrass flavor, is one of best selling movie soundtracks of all time. The soundtrack defied the rules that only rock and pop music sell. "O Brother" became a best seller, with more than five million copies sold. The soundtrack is credited in reviving interest in American bluegrass music. Producer T-Bone Burnett created a masterpiece.

Colby's own bluegrass festival, Pickin' on the Plains, is something to be proud of too. Pickin' lineup this year includes Abrams Brothers, Bonham Revue, Ozark Alliance, Spontaneous Combustion, Hot Strings, The New Old-Timers, The McLemore Family, Sappa Strings, Larry Booth, Sons and Brothers, The Pearce Family.

Also returning is Marshal Allen Bailey, the host of "Western Swing and Other Things" on High Plains Public Radio. He will serve as the emcee for the festival.

The Appalachian Hills may be more fitting for bluegrass than our corner of the Great Plains, but it just goes to show wherever bluegrass is played, people will go. This will be the 11th year people have come to Colby to hear the harmonies and blending of mandolin, banjos and anything else with strings attached.

Some music critics claim "O Brother" came out at the right time. After Sept. 11, the country was looking for something safe and comforting to hold on to. Bluegrass music was the prescription. Songs reflect love, family, hope and faith in the Lord. Young kids can listen to bluegrass and mom and dad should not be offended.

"O Brother's" bluegrass richness is a lot like Haley's Comet. Something that spectacular and fascinating does not come around every year.

But Northwest Kansas bluegrass fans should be grateful and thankful to the committee that organizes Pickin' on the Plains every year. The festival starts Friday.

— John Van Nostrand, publisher of the 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@nwkansas.com](mailto:jvannostrand@nwkansas.com) or [pdecker@nwkansas.com](mailto:pdecker@nwkansas.com). Opinions do not necessarily reflect the Free Press.

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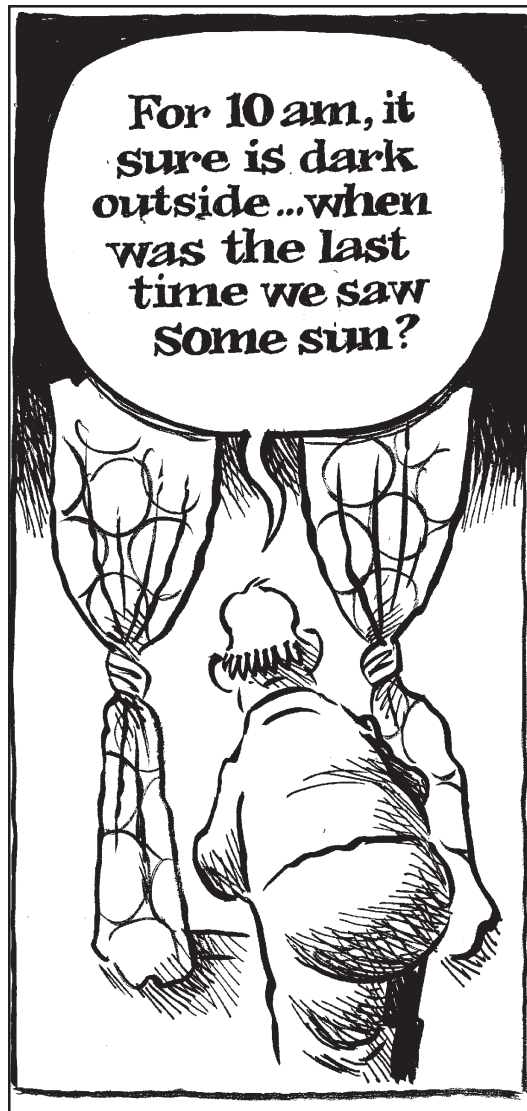
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## Corporate cooperation

When I heard Pepsi helped safeguard Coca-Cola's trade secrets late last month I felt like standing in front of my television and applauding.

No, I didn't actually stand up and applaud, but my faith in big business is being restored.

The arrest of three people, Joya Williams, 41 of Norcross, Ga., and Ibrahim Duhaney, 43 of New York, along with Edmund Duhaney, 30 of Decatur, Ga., proves a company can never feel too safe when it comes to confidential documents and product development.

The three suspects, of which Williams is, or was, a Coke executive administrative assistant, were arrested on suspicion they tried to unlawfully steal and sell Coke trade secrets to Pepsi. Surveillance cameras allegedly caught Williams at her desk going through files and stuffing documents and a sample of product being developed into bags.

Not too bright a gal, in my opinion. To Coke's good fortune, Pepsi stepped forward after being contacted by Dimson offering the goods. Reportedly an undercover FBI agent offered to buy the trade secrets for \$1.5 million from Dimson on June 27, the day Duhaney and he opened a bank account using Duhaney's residence. Those two guys were not the sharpest either the way it looks. But hey, all three are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

I see the makings of a TV movie and book deal. It's sad to think that people are so caught up in worldly ways that they would stoop to selling out their own employer to gain for themselves.

Speaking of good business, I think some businesses need to review the term customer service.



**Jan Katz Ackerman**

#### • From Where I stand

How many times have you tried to explain your position about a product or service you believe is not the highest quality only to be shot down with company policy?

When company policy replaces satisfied customers for a bigger bottom line something is out of whack.

I grew up with self-employed parents whose bottom line was that the customer was so satisfied that he or she returned to do business versus how much money went into the bank.

I remember my dad having laid floor covering in a house some 90 miles one way from his store and not once, but several times, made trips to clip here or tuck there to satisfy the homeowner. Now, that was service.

Katz Floor and Wall Covering was built on customer service and the 40 plus years my folks were in business their customer service was second to none.

Don't misunderstand me, there are oodles and oodles of businesses in northwest Kansas that provide quality customer service, but some certainly lack in that area.

One which isn't is Hoxie Implement. Like the faith building incident of Pepsi helping out

Coke, Hoxie Implement sidestepped a bigger bottom line to help out customers after last month's storm which ripped a wide path through Sheridan County.

That storm damaged or destroyed some 50 pivot irrigation systems and rather than have its four crews go it alone, Hoxie Implement opted to bring in outside crews to help out.

Ed Heim is in charge of the irrigation system portion of Hoxie Implement and he told me his number one priority was to get farmers back up and watering as fast as possible.

In order to do that, Ed's crews repaired systems which could be salvaged and removed others which could not be.

He contracted four crews from Nebraska and one from Grainfield for two weeks following the storm to get new systems up and running.

In addition, employees from the parts and sales department pitched in and went to the fields and worked along side the irrigation crews. Ed said the two-week sun-up to sun-down restoration process could not have been done without "dedicated employees."

He's right, it takes dedicated employees to make the wheels of industry work. And blessed are the business owners who can leave town for one reason or another and know business will continue without them.

It all stems from owners rolling up their sleeves, getting their hands dirty and teaching their employees how to provide quality customer service.

After all, without the customers there would not be a business.

Jan Katz Ackerman is a reporter for the Colby Free Press.

## Your turn

### Patients fed up with the garbage

**Betty Jo Baird, Donna Farley, Don Farley, Marjorie Westover, Judy Dunlap, Larry Dunlap, Erma Palmgren, LaVelle Palmgren, Bruce Baird, Joyce Crabtree, Frances Jones Brewster area**

We, as a group in the Brewster area, that are patients of Dr. Hildyard's are tired of all the abuse that has been dished out since April 2002

and want to say amen to the two letters that appeared in the Monday, July 3, paper.

It is time to shut the disgraceful, personal vendetta down and let Dr. Hildyard have the peace of mind of knowing that he will be in the business of taking care of his patients come September.

Does the Citizens Medical Center think they

can hire enough new doctors that will want to stay in Colby, to take over Dr. Hildyard's practice?

We think not.

We are just a few of many that are fed up with the garbage that has been thrown around far too long on this very good doctor. We support you and thank you, Dr. Hildyard.

## Thanks for the support

**Roger Hale Secretary, High Plains Lion Club**

A letter to our community  
The High Plains Lions Club wishes to thank all of the participants of our recent 4th of July celebration.

It was our club's 30th anniversary and we wanted to share our appreciation of community support by a community party. Our actual anniversary date is Sept. 25, but why not celebrate a little early and join with the Kiwanis fireworks.

Very quickly the community came together in supporting our club. The Thomas County Fair Board, the area Chamber of Commerce, area business and other organizations were there for

us. The club wants to say THANK YOU to all of the volunteers, businesses, and organizations for your support.

Many of you are not Lions members, but you were there helping us, what great community support.

Thank you community for coming out and celebrating with us.

The weather was a typical Kansas "rain on your party" which prevented many of the games and contests, but as western Kansans we were appreciative of the moisture. It was suggested that maybe we should celebrate the Fourth of July in April next year so we could get some early rain.

The club is looking forward to the Fourth of July in 2007. Although it is not our clubs special anniversary to celebrate, we hope we could get together for the community to celebrate our nations anniversary.

We would encourage clubs and organizations to join in and make next year even better. If you are interested in becoming a Lions member, or join in the celebration next year, stop by our Lions Club booth at the Thomas County Fair. Our club is proud and thankful for our community.

Thank you in joining our community appreciation. Thank you all for coming out and joining us on the fourth.

### Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

