

# Opinion

## Free Press Viewpoint



### Go west you two, go west

Hello Gov. Sebelius and Sen. Jim Barnett. Can you hear us? Can you see us? Hello! Hello! Hello? Western Kansas will again be left out in something that has statewide importance. Last week, Sebelius and Barnett, both running for governor, held the first of four scheduled debates at the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson. Looking at the list of future debate locations, both candidates must think Hutchinson justifies western Kansas. That is sad. About half the state will be left out - unless people want to make the trip to the other debates, if they can even get in the front door. Sebelius and Barnett obviously want the votes from places west of Hays (where some people think Kansas starts or stops). So wouldn't you think both of them would need to have a debate in our part of the state and answer the questions in a way that related to western Kansas? The two will meet again Oct. 11 before the Kansas City Chamber Consortium at the Lake Quivira Clubhouse; Oct. 23 at the Wichita Rotary Forum and Oct. 28 in a live televised debate via a Topeka station. Maybe the people of western Kansas should get some of the blame for not putting enough pressure on Sebelius and Barnett for scheduling a debate west of Hays? But would they even listen to us? Earlier this year, Rep. Jim Morrison bent over backward to get the Colby Free Press an exclusive interview with Sebelius. The governor turned us down. Supposedly she thought it would show some favoritism toward one media outlet. Barnett was in Colby during the primary campaign season. You would think he would want to come back, since he won, to further build his western Kansas support. Sebelius, who was in Colby last year, could at least film another campaign commercial around here that has just a kernel of truth in it — pun intended. She could hold up a handful of wheat or corn and say what she has done to improve Kansas agriculture and made it what it is today — like she did in her laughable school bus commercial for education funding. Like with all statewide elections, Sebelius and Barnett are looking at the places with the most votes. In Kansas, that means Salina and points east. Sure, there are places like Hays, Dodge City, Liberal and Garden City, but for every one vote in those towns to pursue, there are 10 votes in the other places like Manhattan, Lawrence, Wyandotte County and Topeka. In western Kansas, party affiliation might be the only way to show support for either candidate since we probably won't see them. It's worse both candidates have shown little, if any, support for western Kansas voters and our issues during the campaign. The election is Nov. 7. — *John Van Nostrand is 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*.

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*.

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

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.  
**John Van Nostrand - Publisher**  
[jvannostrand@nwkansas.com](mailto:jvannostrand@nwkansas.com)  
**NEWS**  
**Patty Decker - Editor**  
[pdecker@nwkansas.com](mailto:pdecker@nwkansas.com)  
**Tisha Cox - General Assignment**  
[tcx@nwkansas.com](mailto:tcx@nwkansas.com)  
**Jan Katz Ackerman, Area Reporter**  
[ackermanjk@ruraltel.net](mailto:ackermanjk@ruraltel.net)

**ADVERTISING**  
**Crystal Rucker - Advertising Sales/Director**  
[crystalr@nwkansas.com](mailto:crystalr@nwkansas.com)  
**Jasmine Crotinger - Advertising Sales**  
[jasminec@nwkansas.com](mailto:jasminec@nwkansas.com)  
**Joe Hayes - Advertising Sales**  
[jhayes@nwkansas.com](mailto:jhayes@nwkansas.com)

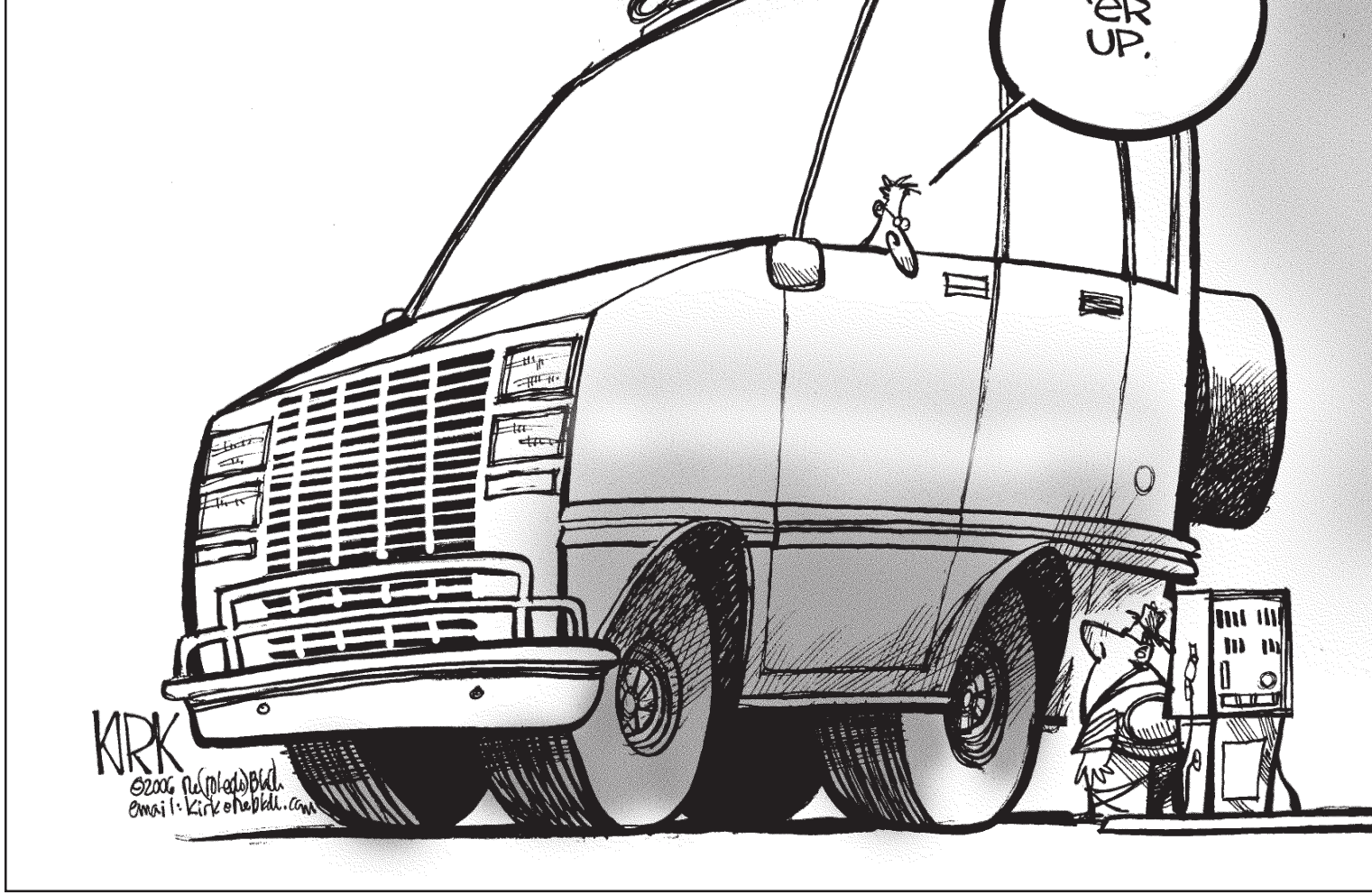
**BUSINESS OFFICE**  
**Lea Bandy - Circulation Manager**  
[lea@nwkansas.com](mailto:lea@nwkansas.com)  
**Jeanette Applegate - Bookkeeping & Ad Building**  
[japplegate@nwkansas.com](mailto:japplegate@nwkansas.com)  
**Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator**  
[support@nwkansas.com](mailto:support@nwkansas.com)

**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 \$40, 8 months \$56, 12 months \$74. By mail with in Colby and the nine-county region of Thomas, Sheridan, Decatur, Rawlins, Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace, Logan and Gove counties: 4 months \$53, 8 months \$65, 12 months \$82. Other Kansas counties: 4 months \$60, 8 months \$70, 12 months \$85. All other states, \$85, 12 months.

**Nor'West Newspapers**  
Haynes Publishing Company

AMERICA CELEBRATES THE BIGGEST DOMESTIC OIL FIND IN 38 YEARS...



### Kitchen or a kid?

I'm certainly no Hilary Swank who portrayed a boxer in the 2004 movie "Million Dollar Baby," but I did cost \$79.65. Although being a reporter sometimes requires the skill of a boxer (dodging verbal punches that is) I am an avid scrapbooker. I was rummaging through a box and came across my baby book. Now 51 years old, it was an absolute hoot to leaf through the pages of the book and many cards saved for me.



**Jan Katz Ackerman**  
• From Where I stand

I'd seen the book many times, but having moved to northwestern Kansas almost 10 years ago, I had it tucked away and made no thought of it. That little gold book with baby blue lettering on the front holds a host of information including the statement from the hospital where I was born. My mom was in the hospital five days and the room rate was \$8 per day, so that cost \$40. Add to that a nursery charge at \$2 per day for my five days stay and the bill was \$50. A laboratory fee of \$5, medicine and personal items mom needed cost \$6.15, her anesthetics cost \$5, a baby bracelet for me was \$1. There was a delivery room charge of \$12.50, and it cost dad and mom \$79.65 to bring me into the world. A self-employed cabinet maker and floor covering installer, dad carried health insurance which paid \$58.65 of the bill leaving him a tab of \$21. Paid in full, my folks took me home March 19, 1955, and the receipt for the payment is the second item in my book. Besides coming across the book, looking at the stack of cards inside it was a treat as well. Ad-

ressed to Mrs. Katz and baby, the envelope of one card totted a 3 cent stamp. Mom had written dad a list on the back of its envelope, I'm guessing his shopping list before I could go home. "Bottle brush and formula pitcher," she wrote. Looking at my mom's handwriting brought back another gaggle of memories, but the thought of scrubbing bottles made me shiver. But the best part of looking at my baby book was the phone call I made to my aunt Irene upon its finding. Family folklore holds the story that I was named after my favorite aunt, now 87 years old. Irene isn't her first name, it's Dorcas. No wonder she goes by Irene. Anyway, Irene and I chatted for about 30 minutes about card senders who have now passed on, but you should have heard her giggles as she talked about waiting for me to arrive. "We walked in the park and walked in the park some more," she said of her husband and three boys as they waited for my birth. She said they finally got tired of waiting in

town and had chores to do on the farm so they drove the 16 miles home only to be called back to town. "We just got home and had to turn around and go back because you finally decided to arrive," she laughed. Not that I had much to do with the entry, but she remembered it like it was yesterday. Having had three boys, Irene spoiled me rotten and sewed up a storm of frilly dresses for me. I'll bet I didn't wear a store bought dress until way after kindergarten! And some of those dresses are tucked away in my cedar chest for another generation to laugh at. Laughing about the book and old cards was just the beginning of Irene's and my conversation. We talked about "the deal." Mom wanted two things that spring of 1955, me and a new kitchen. I did not know until I was a teenager that I was the bargaining chip for the new kitchen. Mom decided she'd name me after her younger sister Dorcas Irene. Dad's now famous line to mom's idea was, "Then leave her at the hospital." I'm sure glad they compromised. I became Janis Irene and mom got a new set of kitchen cupboard, cabinets and countertop before I left the hospital. Having picked up my mom's love for remodeling, I'm not sure who got the best end of that deal. *Jan Katz Ackerman is a reporter for the Colby Free Press.*

### Your turn

### There is something a miss

**Gene Jones Colby**  
I want to add my two cents worth about Dr. Hildyard. I can't say it in fancy words, but I can write from my heart. I don't understand why a doctor who has been practicing for 30 years in Colby and, who can go to any hospital in the states of Kansas and Colorado, why he can't go to his own hometown hospital in Colby. Folks, there is something amiss somewhere. I'm a veterans of World War II and Korea. I use the VA hospital and have Hildyard for my local doctor. For 30 years he has taken care of me and my wife and my mom and dad when they

were in the nursing home. When I am with the VA doctors, they ask me who my hometown doctor is. When I tell them Hildyard, I'm surprised they have heard of him. They said to me Hildyard is one of the best for diagnosing a problem. I'm living proof of that. One day, several years ago, I met Hildyard on the street and we visited awhile. I asked him about my jaws aching. He looked at me and grinned. He asked me when I was going back to the VA. I told him in a week. He took a pad out of his pocket, wrote something on it that I couldn't read. Then he handed it to me. He looked real serious at me and said to be sure to

give this note to the VA doctor. He said be sure and do this Gene. The next week I took the note to the VA. Next thing I knew I was on a treadmill. Then I was put into a hospital bed. Then I was on my way to Denver for quadruple heart bypass surgery. Hildyard saved my life. While in Denver I noticed that even the doctors in Denver knew of him. I've been thinking that a doctor who can diagnose my heart problem on the streets of Colby can't even go into the Colby community hospital. Folks, there is something amiss somewhere and it sure isn't with Hildyard.

**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.

### Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

