

Opinion

Free Press Viewpoint



Help, not hurt

Have you made your decisions about who to vote for Tuesday? It can be hard if you want to base your decisions on the strategies of the candidates' campaigns.

Kansas Attorney General Phill Kline and his opponent Paul Morrison have taken the cake when it comes to negative advertising. Kline says Morrison is protecting suspected child abusers, Morrison says Kline is sticking his nose into places that government should not be. The list of accusations against each other goes on and on.

Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius and her opponent Jim Barnett have also had their moments in the ring, but it pales in comparison to what Kline and Morrison are doing to each other.

Negative advertising is becoming the fabric of American politics. Some people even get upset when critical ads don't run. (Remember moveon.org's politically flavored commercials not being aired during the 2004 Super Bowl?) Howard Dean's initial run for the White House was nothing but criticism.

Be prepared people, it is going to get worse for the 2008 presidential campaign.

We encourage the rest of the world to establish a democracy like we have. We want oppressed people in other countries to have a voice in who runs their country and how it is led. There is nothing wrong with that.

But do we also want candidates in other countries to be like many American political candidates where they have to attack their opponent before they can talk about what they think is right?

Maybe American voters are the ones being oppressed now? Candidates appear to be more concerned about the opponent than the issues while voters are asking for answers and solutions to our everyday problems.

We know we won't have oil and gasoline forever, so we need an alternative. The rising cost of health care and insurance is forcing people to drop coverage altogether which puts more pressure on health care providers and those who can afford health care coverage. (That is a much bigger issue than energy costs.)

In Kansas, like all the other states, we need job growth and security that our public schools are doing what they need to do. We just need more candidates willing to help the voter rather than hurt the competition.

— 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@nwkans.com or pdecker@nwkans.com. Opinions do not necessarily reflect the *Free Press*.

Where to write, call

- 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**, 2443 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. 202/225-2715 or Fax 202/225-5124
- State Rep. Jim Morrison**, State Capitol Building, 303 SW 10th St. Rm. 171-W, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7676 e-mail: jmorrison@ink.org web: www.ink.org/public/legislators/jmorrison
- State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer**, State Capitol, 300 SW 10th St., Rm. 128-S., Topeka, Kan. 66612, 785/296-7399 ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us

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@nwkans.com

NEWS

Patty Decker - Editor
pdecker@nwkans.com

Tisha Cox - General Assignment
tcx@nwkans.com

Jan Katz Ackerman, Area Reporter
ackermanjk@ruraltel.net

ADVERTISING

Crystal Rucker - Advertising Sales/Director
crystalr@nwkans.com

Jasmine Crottinger - Advertising Sales
jasminec@nwkans.com

Joe Hayes - Advertising Sales
jhayes@nwkans.com

BUSINESS OFFICE

Lea Bandy - Circulation Manager
lea@nwkans.com

Jeanette Applegate - Bookkeeping & Ad Building
japplegate@nwkans.com

Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator
support@nwkans.com

NOR'WEST PRESS

Jim Bowker - General Manager

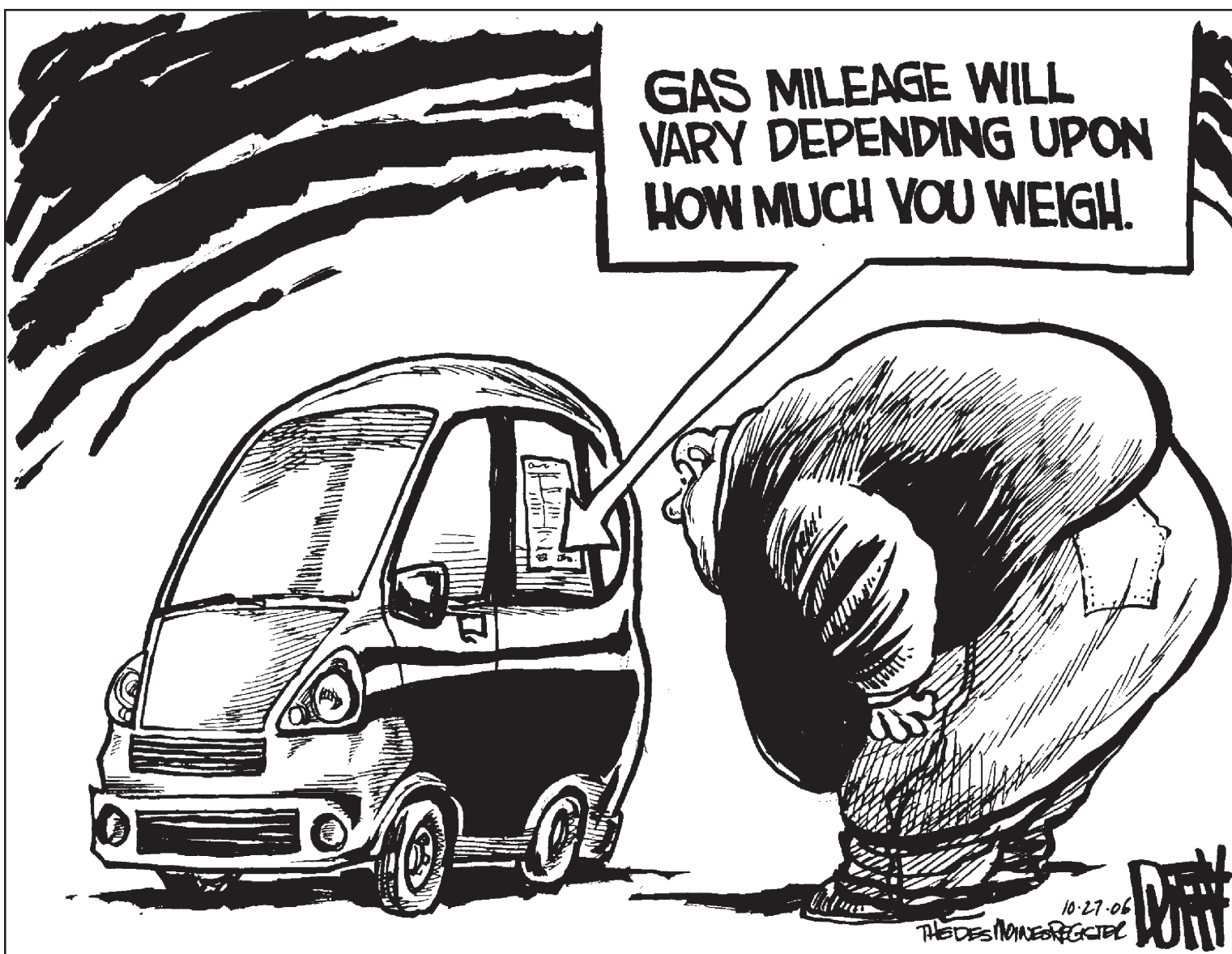
Richard Westfahl, Lana Westfahl, Judy McKnight

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



Parenting the old-fashioned way

The lack of fresh and original ideas was the topic of a recent article by John Rosemond, a syndicated columnist on child issues.

Apparently, a woman wrote a letter to the editor in another newspaper inquiring about so-called "parenting experts" lacking any new thoughts on the subject of raising children.

Rosemond had a good response and quite appropriate.

He said he is an upholder of traditional values and a tried-and-true approach to what we now call "parenting."

In his remarks, he said America started going down the road of original parenting ideas in the 1960s and what a slippery road that turned out to be.

Having raised three children myself and trying hard to adapt some of those "original" ideas, I can see many of the shortfalls in veering too far away from those old-fashioned ways of dealing with children. I think in the beginning, I tried to be friends with my children, until I realized that wasn't working well at all. However, now that all three of our children are emancipated and my parenting days are over, we can be friends.

According to some statistics, it's been confirmed those who were raised under the more traditional-type parenting rules are better behaved and more well-adjusted than children whose parents tried new ideas.

When speaking of traditional parenting, the emphasis is big on love, high expectations and strict "no excuses" discipline — and I still stand by that.

From my own personal experiences that were reaffirmed in reading Rosemond's article, the effectiveness of the permissive "let's be friends" parenting resulted from well-meaning mothers and fathers listening to those new ideas.

One example he cited involved baby boomers testifying to what great parents they were blessed



Patty Decker

• Deep Thoughts

with. I can attest to the description being always the same of parents, like my own, who loved a lot, expected a lot and disciplined little.

However, when parents did discipline it became a permanent memory that, I for one, still cherish today. In my childhood, I remember my parents having a lot of patience and tolerance, but when we misbehaved, it was nipped in the bud immediately.

One of my favorite Rosemond stories, was about four years ago when he wrote about an experience he had on an airplane.

He found himself seated next to a fellow who told him he owned a small business that employed about 30 people ranging in age from 25 to 60.

The business owner told Rosemond he has noticed the work ethic of employees above 40 is dramatically different from the ethic of those below 30, which is the intervening decade being transitional.

Those above 40, he told him, know it's all about how you perform, your actions, your behavior, while those below 30 seem to think it's all about how one explains his behavior.

I can remember my very first full-time job at an insurance company in Springfield, Ill. I thought I worked very hard on that job and many times felt like my efforts were unappreciated by my immediate supervisor. In talking with my father about it, his response was simple and to

the point. He said, "Did you get a paycheck this week?" Perplexed that I thought my father didn't hear my concerns, I replied, "Yes."

And, in turn, his response was, "Well, there's your thank you."

Even today, that simple and short conversation has stuck with me all and every time I think I am unappreciated, I remember that I am getting a paycheck. There are times I do get a "thank you," but when I don't, it's OK too.

When I was growing up my parents and teachers didn't try to persuade me to obey, but rather we were compelled to do so. The same was true when I misbehaved and they didn't allow me to explain myself.

As Rosemond put it, "we were told there were no excuses — no ifs, ands or buts. They didn't just tell us we were responsible for the choices we made, they enforced that responsibility."

With that parenting technique, we all learned — the hard way — that choices resulted in consequences.

Probably what impacted me most about Rosemond's recent article was when he said an 18-year-old came up to him after a speaking engagement.

The young person said, "You know, I wish I had parents of the sort you described tonight. You made me realize my parents have been trying for 18 years to be my friend. I guess I am just gonna have to do for myself what they should have done for me."

Suffice to say, so much for those original ideas. If experience is the best teacher, maybe some young parents out there will consider it's time to dust off the old-fashioned approach and give it a whirl.

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

You have to know where to look

By Steve Haynes

Driving through Oklahoma. It's a nice enough place, but I'd like it better on a sunny day.

Like Kansas, it's a pretty state, but you have to know where to look.

On the Mother Road, old U.S. 66 west of El Reno, you start out with the federal prison. Once known as the United States Reformatory, and now just FCI El Reno, for "federal correctional institution," it's a stark and foreboding old pen with high fences and lots of wire. It makes the Big House at Leavenworth look warm and welcoming.

Farther west, the business route curves back to the freeway and the Mother Road angles straight for Amarillo.

The old slab has weathered 30-some years of light traffic without a crack or bump

. It's busy today; must be lots of people going to town.

The road cuts across farm country, straight as an arrow, then curves and dips through a pretty valley. The dirt is red.

How'd they do that, anyway?

The dirt isn't red in southern Kansas. Cross the

Red River and climb the next hill into Texas; the dirt is brown. East to west across Oklahoma, the dirt is red.

My brother says, only half in jest, that they just drew a line around wherever the dirt was red, and said: "That's not worth anything. Give it to the Indians."

Of course, if we'd have known about the oil, we'd have kept the mineral rights.

We think of Oklahoma as plains and rolling hills; at least I do, but the place is lousy with mountains, from the Ouachitas and Ozarks in the east to the Wichita and Quartz mountains of the southwest. It's not flat.

There's plenty of hill country in between. In the south are the Arbuckles, almost mini-mountains that exhibit perfectly the folded rock layers from your high school geology text.

The only way to really see them is from the train to Fort Worth, along the river, which cuts deepest through the range. The freeway just goes over the top.

Out west, toward the Panhandle, the country is empty, grand and desolate.

Trains fly through, carrying boxes from the Orient to Chicago and trailers full of packages

for Los Angeles. They no longer stop to take water or pick up a load of cattle, not if the railroad can help it.

What passes for mountains out there are barren mesas that stretch for miles, rugged and impressive, but not the Rockies. Not even the Ozarks.

The drive goes on forever — really forever if you want to traipse through the Panhandle, that largely empty strip of land that Texas had to forego because it was north of the Mason-Dixon line. It's all vast spaces and distant hills and big valleys with little sandy rivers.

And then you are in Kansas, in hill country that's good for raising cattle and little more, but beautiful all the same.

There's history out here in the red-dirt country, from trail drives to Indian reservations to one of Custer's first stands, where his troops massacred the Cheyenne and Comanche along the Washita.

Lots of beauty. Lots of space. I'd go back some day, but it was good to be past the red dirt and headed home.

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

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

