

Opinion

Your turn

If he done wrong he'd been gone

Steve Lampe
Colby
Ken Poland's comments in the Dec. 11, 2006, article concerning how badly Dr. Vic Hildyard has been railroaded is the best information and set of questions that I have read to date. I am also wondering when and how the healing arts board's power became above the law?

I have been a longtime patient and acquaintance of Dr. Hildyard, 34 years to be exact. This man is a true professional that I would wager is the best ever in the history of Northwest Kansas. I'm no rocket scientist but I'm not stupid either.

Yes, Mr. Poland, you are exactly right, this whole thing is about dirty politics and special interests. That's what this has been about from the very beginning — greed, jealousy and money.

The only potential threat that we now have folks is that over 8,000 of us now do not have the best medical care available to us when needed. We have been deprived of a much deserved right.

All I ask is that all Dr. Hildyard's loyal supporters not give up. Don't jump ship. Keep using Colby Medical and Surgical Center because this is what the Hildyard haters are really after — the Colby Medical and Surgical Center's cash flow.

If Dr. Hildyard is tough enough to endure four years of this garbage we can stand with him. Truly, if he'd done anything wrong, he'd of left Colby long ago. He's here and staying because he knows that he has done no wrong. Believe me when I say Vic Hildyard will win this fight.

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. 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.

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If it's sounds too good to be true ...

'Tis the season for e-mail, mail and telephone scams purporting free money for the holidays.

A mere year ago a young Colby woman almost fell prey to a telephone scam telling her she had won \$1,000 for a holiday shopping spree. All she had to do was give the caller her bank routing number and bank account and she would receive the money.

Ha!
So goes it for scams which make people act before they think. Fortunately, the young woman's roommate was home and after inadvertently overhearing her friend's conversation about the big win, a crisis was averted at the urging to hang up on the caller.

Sadly, many people do become victims of holiday scammers and it is a constant battle to avoid being victimized.

Please, as Christmas quickly approaches (only 11 days), keep your guard up for similar phone calls, e-mails or untruths which arrive in your mail box about money that's just too good to be true.

Trust me, your loved ones would rather receive no gift than have you become the victim of a scam.

However, if you do get tangled up in a not-so-good-situation, be sure and contact your bank and one of its representatives can tell you exactly what to do to protect your money. And don't buy in to unsolicited calls.

If you receive one of them, please contact your



Jan Katz Ackerman

• From Where I stand

local law enforcement department and local sheriff's office so they can track reports of such calls and determine whether they are isolated incidents or from a broader calling area such as a certain prefix or multiple prefixes.

And if you haven't yet, please consider having your home, business and cell phones put on the state's no-call list. You can do that by calling the Kansas Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division at 1-800-432-2310 or visiting the following web site: www.ksag.org

If your in box is like mine, it's more full of holiday greetings than my downtown mail box. While I do not keep a tally, I'd guess my holiday e-mails are coming in about 5 to 1 of those coming through my mail box.

What's that saying about us as a society? We let our fingers do the walking instead of our feet? Sure, it's easier, but it's just not the same. And yes, it's less costly, but again, an e-mail greeting just isn't the same as the one you can tape to

the door and look at for a few weeks.

But, all that aside, if I don't hurry up and get my Christmas letter written, it doesn't matter whether it goes out by e-mail or traditional mail. Which was the case last year, so I sent out letters in July and told recipients as far as the holidays, they could guess which one the letter applied to because I tried to include them all so I didn't miss any by writing the holidays around the outside of the paper starting with New Years and ending with Merry Christmas.

Speaking of those last two words, aren't you glad some of the major retailers have come to their senses and figured out it is Merry Christmas, not Happy Holiday?

Sure, it's nice to have someone tell you, "Have a Happy Holiday," but come on, it's Christmas. And if you notice, there's nothing before the letters C-H-R-I-S-T, and only mas after the word Christ. Maybe he intended it that way. That's right, the mass of Christ. The celebration of his birth.

But, if I've said it once I've said it umpteen times, my favorite holiday is Easter. Without Christ's resurrection, there would not have been any reason for his birth. And since it's the time of year to honor his birth, I'll join with those celebrating the event and say Merry Christmas to each and every one of you, our readers.

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

On the lookout

By Steve Haynes
My wife was impatient. She was getting downright antsy. I could see the signs: looking around, toe tapping, quizzical expression.

"Where is that man?" she was thinking. I wasn't far, 20 yards or less.

I was just down the hall, talking to a guy from Oklahoma.

We were frozen. Couldn't move a muscle.

Not a game, though.

We'd been caught in a lockdown after a security breach at the Charlotte, N.C., airport.

I'd wandered off innocently enough. We had a three-hour layover between planes at Charlotte. We were talking about how to kill the time.

Cynthia said she wanted to go into a bookstore we came to. She always wants to go into a bookstore. Every bookstore she sees.

I wanted to go to the restroom. I said I'd meet her outside.

When I came back out, she was still in with the books, so I started looking around for a restaurant guide.

We were trying to decide where to eat as we walked around, trying to clock some miles during the layover.

As I wandered down the corridor toward the "B" concourse, a woman in a Transportation Security Administration uniform jumped out from the end of the screening area to the right.

"Nobody move," she said. "Some guy ran off

with his bag. We've declared a breach."

I've heard of that. When there's a breach, they have to assume the bag or the person has introduced bad things into the secured area. They close off the whole concourse until it's searched, the offender found and dragged off to meet the FBI.

Other security agents and airport cops started streaming in. The first two cops ran off to help the agent who had chased the offender. Others started forming up the lines.

On one side were people trying to get to "B" to catch planes. Cynthia was somewhere behind them.

On the other side was a growing multitude of people getting off planes that had arrived at "B," people who needed to catch a plane or a bite to eat or just go home.

They were just inches from the exit, and they wanted out. They were unhappy, and growing unhappier by the minute.

One airport cop took charge there.

"We could be here awhile, folks," he said, "so you might as well relax and sit down and take it easy."

Every couple of minutes, someone in a hurry to make a connection would push to the front of the line, only to be told to settle down. The cop was polite, but oh so firm.

The guy from Oklahoma and I were caught in the middle, directly off the end of the security checkpoint, where we'd been frozen. In the checkpoint, people were frozen at the metal

detector, putting on their shoes, waiting on the X-ray machine. Nobody moved.

I kept calling Cynthia, but she'd turned her phone off on the last flight. The guy from Oklahoma and I started making book on when she'd notice.

You could tell she was getting irritated, but no amount of waving would draw her eye.

Finally, after about 25 minutes, my phone rang.

"Did you fall in?" she asked.

"No," I said. "I'm frozen."

"See the mob of people down the hall. It's a lockdown. I'm there."

"Well, what were you doing down there?"

"Looking for food," I said. "I saw monitors and thought there'd be a restaurant guide."

About that time — saved by the bell — some higher up at Transportation Security decided that anyone who wanted out could leave, as long as they weren't carrying the missing yellow-and-black bag. Those who had flights to catch could be rescreened and come back on the concourse.

By the time I'd gone down to U.S. Airways and begged another boarding pass and gone back through security, killing three hours was no problem. In fact, after grabbing a bite to eat, we had to run to catch the flight to Kansas City.

So, I figured, the government really was looking out for me.

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

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce

Tinsley

