

# Opinion

## Reader Viewpoint

### Completion of term reason for leaving

I would like to make a correction and clarification to an article that ran in the Wednesday September 14 edition of the Colby Free Press. The headline of the article read "Colby man resigns from radio board". I am the man in question, but I did not resign from the board of directors of High Plains Public Radio. After completing my second term on the board (just short of eight years) I did not stand for re-election. I first served as a volunteer show host on the station shortly after its creation in the early 1980s and have maintained some connection to HPPR ever since. I do not want there to be any question about my support for public radio in general and HPPR in particular. The station serves dozens of communities in five states, including Colby. It deserves my support and yours. I am still a proud member of HPPR and encourage everyone else to do the same.

Rod Thomasson  
Colby, Kansas  
Letter #76

### Law enforcement news appreciated

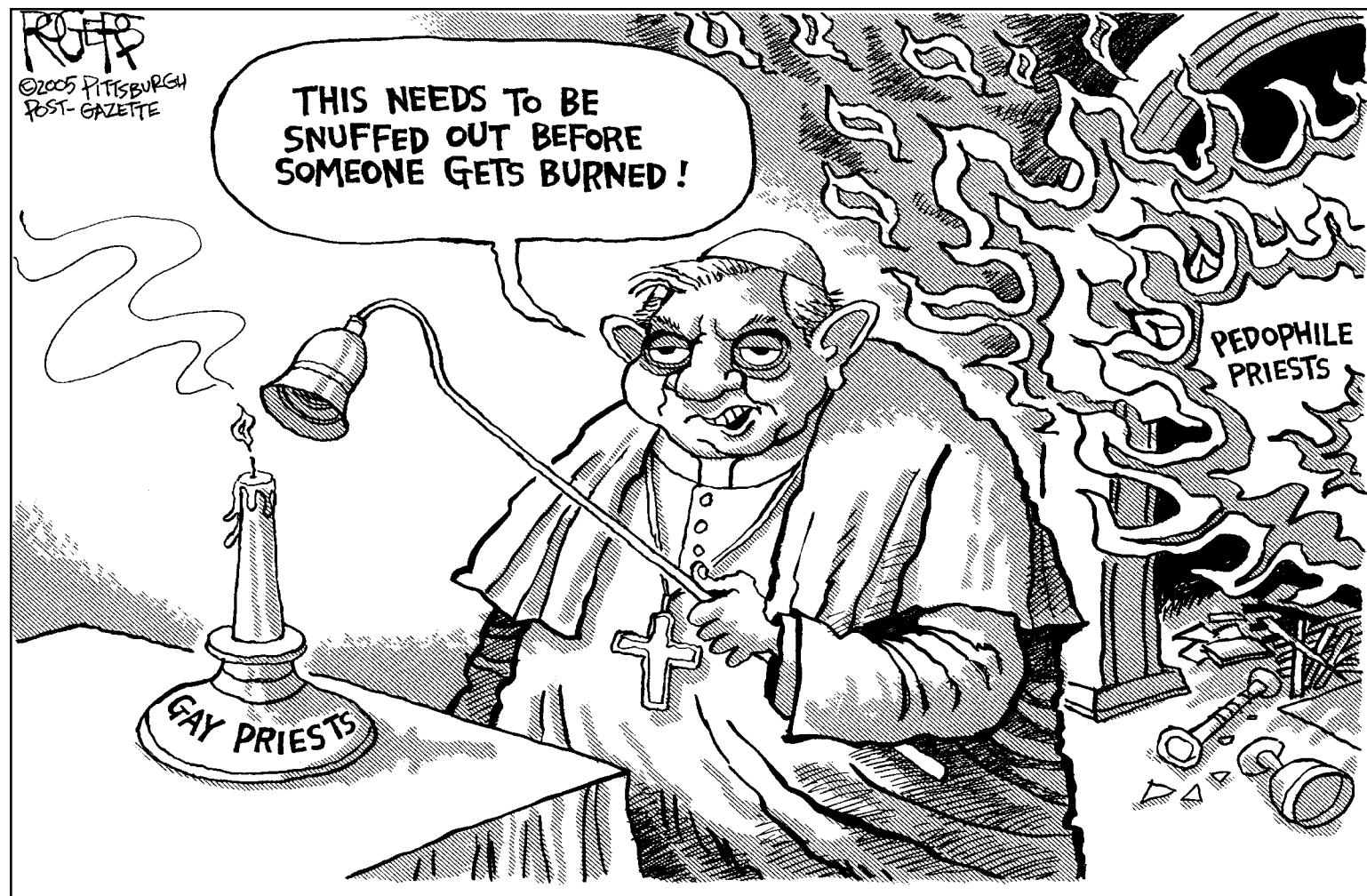
Congratulations to your new publisher for the return of law enforcement news in the Colby Free Press. It is local news. Now if you could put in the real estate transfers you would be getting back closer to the paper you had before TD and it could be used for something besides bottom of bird cage fodder.

Jim Smith, Colby  
Letter #77

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 pjschief@nwks.com or pdecker@nwks.com.

#### Where to write, call

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### Larger horrors may loom ahead

America has sustained two horrific hurricanes in the past month. While they are a concern to me, I see two bigger horrors looming on the horizon.

First, there are too many people in our nation are relying on the government to fix their problems. For example, the subject of how fast government officials arrived on the scene of Hurricane Katrina's destruction has been, and will be, debated to death. But ask yourself this, why are we relying on the government anyway?

What makes Americans think government officials need to be totally responsible for us? I just don't get it.

It's way past the time when each and every one of us, adults particularly, need to be able to fend for themselves when it comes to food, water and clothing and getting the heck out of Dodge when it comes to a forecasted natural disaster.

Come on people, don't wait on the government to come and move you. If you are alerted about a pending natural disaster, don't wait for the cops to drive by your house and blow their sirens before you move.

Get off the sofa and head for shelter.

No, I'm not advocating we live like we did in the 1950s and be looking for the nearest bomb shelter, but at least know where a shelter is located.

I don't know if you recall a column I wrote a while back, but when I was a military dependent I was trained how to evacuate someplace in a hurry.

From where I stand, it only makes sense to have an emergency evacuation package ready at all times. Inside the package should be copies of birth certificates, social security cards, marriage/divorce papers, health insurance cards, credit



**Jan Katz Ackerman**

#### • From Where I stand

cards, etc. for each person in the household. It should also have copies of mortgage papers if you are buying a home, and copies of loan papers for vehicles or other items you are buying.

Don't count on the court house or bank having copies and backups of these records, because what if they are blown away?

Pack a couple cans of tuna, a can opener, wet wipes, over-the-counter pain reliever, band-aids, topical antibacterial cream, and any other health items required for a two or three day period. If you are responsible for a child who is still on formula and in diapers pack those too.

And, memorize the ones phone numbers of loved one and don't rely on your cell phone battery to stay charged long enough to look them up. Commit the addresses of loved ones to memory and write them down and put them in the emergency pack.

Make the pack the size of which my college English instructor used to say was the proper length for a term paper—"Long enough to cover the subject, but short enough to be interesting." Make it small enough to be considered a carry-on in an airplane, but large enough to hold the items described above.

While a survival package is for the protection and nourishment of the body, the second loom-

ing topic I see our nation needs to address is the survival of American souls.

Anyone who has read the confines of this column on even a somewhat regular basis has picked up on the fact I'm a Christian. My heart is heavily burdened for our nation which seems to be going down the tubes when it comes to putting God at its helm.

Rather than commentaries on the rate of government officials' arrival at a disaster, a more important topic for comments is the rapidly approaching second coming of God's son, Jesus Christ. The argument that America is a refuge ground for all religions just doesn't cut it with me. Look back a couple hundred years and you'll find American was founded as a place to worship a Triune God.

I've watched television and heard victims of the Gulf Coast hurricanes and I'm saddened by individuals' comments that they've "lost everything."

Excuse me, they have not lost everything, they just haven't found everything. In my books, everything is a relationship with God's son, Jesus.

Hurricanes are part of God's plan for the universe, and his plan won't be accomplished until the United States lines up under his authority. The "lost everything mentality" shows me those of us who profess to be Christian better step up to the plate and do our job.

While all this seems like doom and gloom to some, to me it's the most exciting time in my life because I'm more boldly sharing my faith. No, I haven't gone to the Gulf Coast, but thanks to the telephone and E-mail I've been able to share the hope I have in a risen and living Lord.

### Capacity to care gives life meaning

Pablo Casals, the world renowned cellist, once said, "The capacity to care is the thing that gives life its deepest significance and meaning."

Are you a caregiver? Most people who provide care for a friend or family member don't think of themselves as a caregiver. Caregivers provide support to someone who needs help. It doesn't matter how many hours per week are spent providing support. You may not consider yourself a caregiver, but do you regularly: drive a family member, friend or neighbor to doctor's appointments, make meals for someone, help someone with household chores such as cleaning, grocery shopping, lawn care, etc., make regular phone calls to someone to "check in" on them, provide hands-on care, including bathing, help eating, toileting or other help, help someone make decisions about medical care, or assist someone with personal business affairs, such as bill paying? If you answered yes to one or more of these questions, you may be a caregiver.

Being a caregiver involves an investment in time, energy and support. Caring for others can be difficult and exhausting work, and it is not something most of us have been prepared to do. You are tending to their physical and safety needs as well as their need for dignity and self-esteem. No type of care is exempt from duties.

Caring for others can be difficult and exhausting work. Your responsibilities may range from doing the wash and cleaning the house to buying groceries and filling out paperwork. You learn to eat and sleep when your care receiver eats and sleeps, and you hurry to accomplish everything else in the time between. You may deal with someone who doesn't understand or

#### Diane Paris Frickey

#### • Hospice Services, Inc.

appreciate what you do for them. Like most people, you may have questions about your family members or friends illness or condition. If you have a job and are juggling several responsibilities or if your family member or friend requires a lot of assistance, you may need help providing care for them.

Many caregivers feel alone, helpless, confused, unprepared and unable to provide for the needs of their family member or friend. Learning about being a caregiver may help you feel supported and more comfortable with your role.

Caregivers of chronically ill older persons or those with disabilities are generous, compassionate individuals. They care for family members or friends in the familiar surroundings of their own home or community. These caregivers are "on call" 24-hours a day, seven days a week because they want to see their family member or friend remain in the comfort and security of their own environment. But as some point, even the caregiver needs a break, a rest, or a breather. As caregivers, we sometimes become so involved in the day-to-day efforts to keep things going we may forget to let others know we need additional assistance with providing care, or just need a break from the routine of caring for someone.

If you are a working caregiver, it is important

to discuss your situation with your employer. Older children living at home may be able to assist you and/or your older family member. You can and should ask other family members to share in caregiving. Create a list of things that need to be done, such as grocery shopping, laundry, errands, lawn care, housecleaning, or spending time with the care recipient, and put the list on the refrigerator or near the front door. If someone says, "let me know if there is anything I can do to help" you can point to the list.

Take a break from caregiving even if it is only 15 or 20 minutes a day and make sure you do something just for you. Exercise is a great way to take a break and can decrease stress and enhance your energy. To help give you more energy, eat healthy. Your health and nutrition is just as important as the person you are caring for. It can be helpful to have a support group.

Caregivers typically have good relationships with others, bringing warmth, dedication, and compassion to their family member or friend for whom they are caring.

As you are able, be sure to tell others about your experience of caregiving, both the "good" and the "bad." You may be surprised how much you have to teach as other family members, friends and acquaintances find themselves in the position of providing care for another. The value of these lessons is immeasurable and will be appreciated by all who hear them.

The preceding column was written by Diane Paris Frickey, social worker with Hospice Services, Inc., and Sandy Kuhlman, executive director of Hospice based in Phillipsburg. For questions, call the main office at (785) 543-2900.

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• Gary Trudeau

