

# Opinion



## Free Press Viewpoint

### Building for Colby's future

By John Van Nostrand

Welcome to a new year and the beginnings of a new look for Colby.

Construction is becoming the buzz word of town. And that is a good thing.

Colby Community College is beginning work on its new dorm — expected to be open for the 2008-2009 school year.

Bosselman is building its new travel center near Colby's east Interstate 70 exit.

City of Colby and the Colby Fire Department are expected to review bids this month for the new fire station planned along South Country Club Drive.

Attorney Todd Stramel acquired a vacant building in downtown Colby and just moved his office there after remodeling.

Taco John's is working on its new restaurant, just a stone throw away from its current site, also along the coveted Interstate 70 corridor.

And the organization behind the proposed Multipurpose Activity Center is also working on its plans for its facility to be built near Colby High School.

Motivation behind each of the projects varies. The college needs to update its dorms. The city of Colby and the fire department need to replace the existing fire station. Bosselman likes the potential Colby has. Taco John's wants its customers to be more comfortable. The people behind the MAC envision something for everybody.

No matter what the reason, it's exciting and encouraging to see it all happen.

It's this kind of activity that attracts attention from others. Bosselman and Taco John's will show off their new places to the thousands of people who drive by on Interstate 70. One of those people may realize how important the auto-travel industry is to Colby and bring yet another related business to town.

A new fire department building is a must. Chief Bob McLemore said the proposed new facility will be able to hold all of the equipment under one roof and Colby is becoming a "go-to" place in Northwest Kansas for training with other fire departments. Colby is a regional site for the state's hazardous material response crew. The new station will make us feel even more safe and secure.

The college hopes the new dorm building will attract more students. Tough to lure students from other parts of Kansas, and probably closer to other schools, when the dorms were probably at their prime when the Sweatshops graduated. Who doesn't like a new house? Colby college students will have the same mentality with dorm rooms.

We here in western Kansas get forgotten because of major four-year universities, airplane factories and the traffic jams in eastern Kansas. We all take risks to some degree with the rising cost of gasoline, dwindling populations and limited job opportunities.

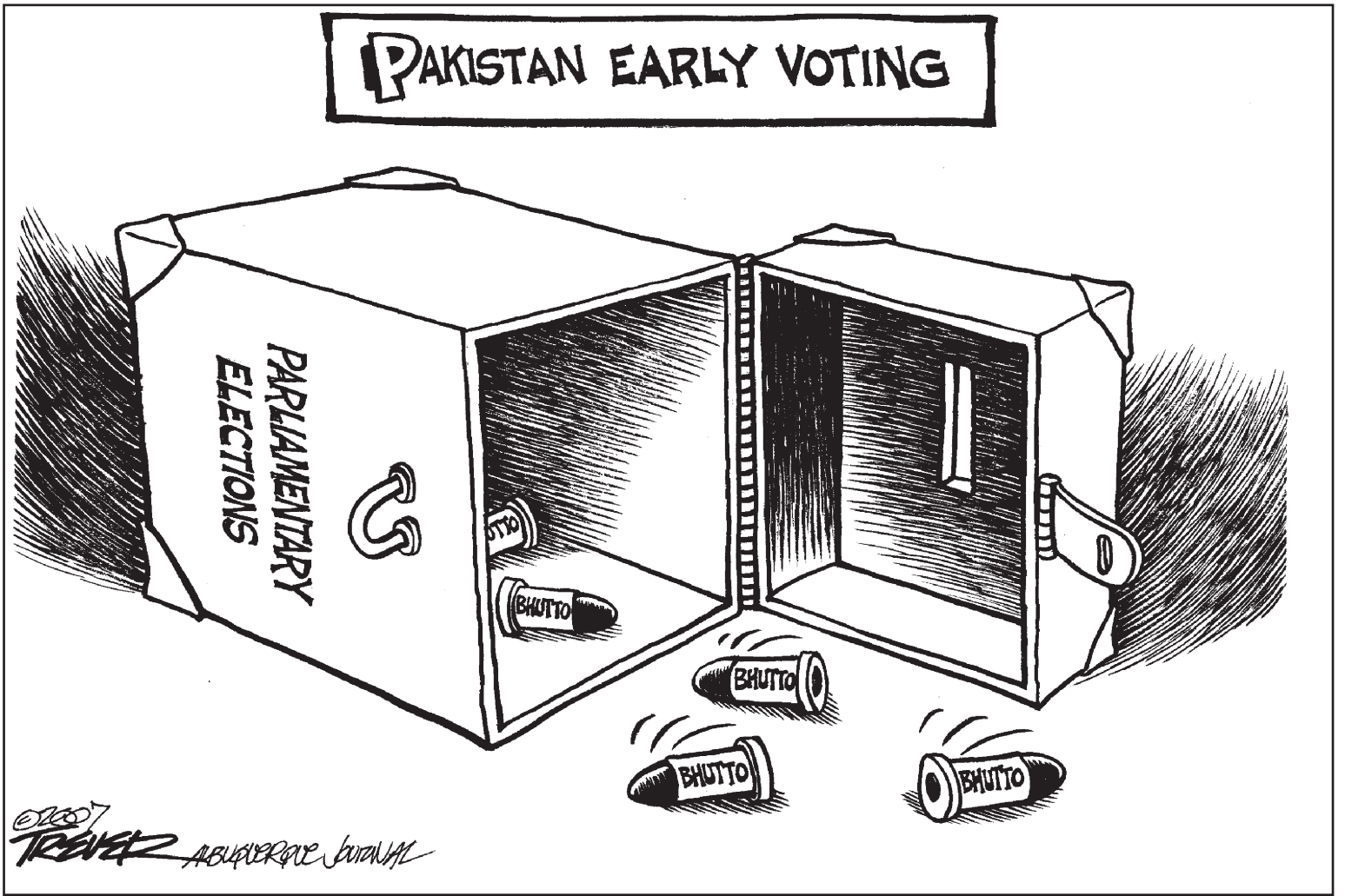
It's just good to see a diversity of people in Colby and Thomas County having a vision of bigger and better things for our future.

— John Van Nostrand is publisher of the Colby Free Press.

#### 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. All letters must include a signature.

Comments to any opinions expressed on this page are encouraged. Mail them to the Colby Free Press, 155 W. 5th St., Colby, Kan., 67701. Ore-mail jvannostrand@nwkansas.com or pdecker@nwkansas.com. Opinions do not necessarily reflect the Free Press.



### Jayhawks are that good

Will everyone please give the Kansas Jayhawks their due now?

You could criticize them for playing a soft, non-conference schedule or for not playing Texas or Oklahoma in the Big 12 this year, but there's only one adjective you can use to describe the Jayhawks following their 24-21 victory over #3 ranked Virginia Tech Thursday in the Orange Bowl.

I'll give you a hint, it rhymes with eight. That's right, the Kansas Jayhawks were a great football team this year, and you'd have to be in total denial to believe otherwise after last night.

Virginia Tech was supposed to be too athletic, too physical and simply too talented for the un-sung Jayhawks.

My dad, who, by the way, is a Mizzou graduate, told me he couldn't wait to sit back and watch KU get destroyed by the second real team they played all year, Missouri of course being the first. In his mind, KU was 0-1 on the season.

I'm sure there were even Jayhawk fans who felt that way after watching their team get picked apart for the majority of their 36-28 loss to Mizzou.

But anyone who watched that Missouri game knows that had KU not missed two field goals and had two turnovers inside the red zone, it would have been a different ballgame. Missouri and Chase Daniel may have had their way with the Jayhawks at times, but they were by no means outclassed.

Even so, the loss gave Jayhawk haters some backing to call them overrated and give up on them as one of the top teams in the country.

Anyone who came to that conclusion after one loss, clearly didn't watch the Jayhawks all



Joe Falkoff

#### • A Sideline View

I've said this numerous times about KU, when you outscore your first four opponents 214-23, regardless of who they are, you are an outstanding football team. Then to go on the road and beat Kansas State, Texas A&M, Colorado and Oklahoma State and put up 76 points on Nebraska — that's just special.

I know I also said KU shouldn't have made it to a BCS bowl over Missouri, but that doesn't take away from how good I thought they were. It was just a matter of fairness.

But when they got in and were given Virginia Tech as their opponent, I had no doubt in my mind Kansas was at least going to play them to the wire.

There were several times to doubt the Jayhawks last night, especially when Virginia Tech was driving with the ball after they had just cut the lead to 17-14.

KU got a blocked field goal from Joe Mortensen that saved them, but then they turned it back over after driving to the Hokie 1-yard line.

They never panicked.

Their defense kept getting stops and eventually set up Reesing's game-winning score with an interception by Justin Thornton.

Virginia Tech tried to rally, but again no panic and you never felt like KU was going to lose when they went up 10.

The Jayhawks reminded me of a boxer that just wouldn't go down for the count and gained strength when they knew they weren't going to get knocked out.

That's a testament to the confidence those kids have.

I saw it myself in Manhattan earlier this year when Kansas State jumped out to a 7-0 lead on them and had all the momentum early in that game. Kansas just played steady and eventually their precision on both sides of the ball wore the Wildcats down.

Reesing, Aqib Talib, Brandon McAnderson and Marcus Henry are big reasons why the Jayhawks are Orange Bowl champions, but it was the team's ability all year long to never get rattled that was the biggest reason for their success.

How else do you win four Big 12 games on the road in hostile environments?

I don't know what happened between this year and last, maybe it all started with Reesing being named the quarterback, but the Jayhawks had a killer instinct about them I've rarely seen before in college football.

Even with all the expectations and everyone waiting for them to slip up, KU just kept executing and executing and there wasn't a lot anyone could do about it.

No more criticizing their schedule or anything else. We all just need to face the fact that this KU team was as good as anyone in the country.

Strange to say, but oh so true. — Joe Falkoff is a reporter for the Colby Free Press.

### John Quincy Adams - if only he were running

By Daniel M. Smith

Surfing television and the Internet can be an exercise in serendipity.

Bored with the incessant rerun of "A Christmas Story" on Christmas day, I discovered C-Span's presentation of an October 2007 State Department Forum on "U.S.-Soviet Relations in the Era of Détente 1969-1976." The commentators were two men who were central figures in that period, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and former Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger.

What caught my attention was not the discussion of U.S.-Soviet relations but a comment by Kissinger about another key figure of the time: President Gerald Ford, the only occupant of the Oval Office who was never elected to the presidency or vice-presidency. President Nixon "nominated" and the Senate approved Ford as vice-president after Spiro Agnew resigned in disgrace in 1973, a scenario repeated in 1974 when Nixon resigned and Ford became president. In the context of the Nixon-Ford "transition's" effect on détente, Kissinger said: "Ford had never run for the presidency. He was as close to a normal human being as we'll ever get in that office."

Surfing the Internet Dec. 26, I found the web page of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. The first item noted that the embassy had accepted a statue of John Quincy Adams to mark the anniversary of the start of formal diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Russia in December 1807. Adams was the first U.S. diplomatic representative (1809-1814) to the court of Tsar Alexander I in

St. Petersburg.

Adam's public service stretched 51 years beginning in 1797 as U.S. envoy to Berlin and ending with his death in 1848 while in the U.S. House of Representatives — 100 years before Gerald Ford's first election to the House in between, Adams:

- served six years (1803-1809) in the U.S. Senate;

- was Secretary of State under James Monroe (1817-1825), where he crafted the Monroe Doctrine;

- ran for president in 1824 against Andrew Jackson, Henry Clay, Monroe's Treasury Secretary William Crawford, and Secretary of War John Calhoun. Jackson won both the popular and the Electoral College polls, but failed to gain a majority in either count. The decision moved to the House of Representatives, where Clay threw his support to Adams, who was selected as the sixth U.S. president on the first ballot over Jackson. Jackson supporters cried foul when the new president then appointed Clay as Secretary of State;

- was elected to the House of Representatives in 1831, serving until his death 17 years later.

Again, like Gerald Ford, Adams owns a distinction no other occupant of the Oval Office can claim: he is the only president to serve in Congress both before and after his election as president.

Despite his Federalist pedigree, Adams was not a prisoner of partisan politics but a man of principle — what I take to be the meaning of Kissinger's description of Ford as a "normal

human being." Throughout his 17 years in the House, Adams stood as a genuine "people's representative," opposing slavery and the 1846-1848 Mexican-American War — the first war of America's "Manifest Destiny." And although Adams is remembered most of all by diplomatic historians for crafting, as Secretary of State, what came to be known as the Monroe Doctrine, it seems most appropriate that his post-presidential service was in the "people's chamber," both because of his stand on war and on slavery and because his election in 1830 was, according to historians, unexpected.

The 1911 *Encyclopedia Britannica* said of Adams: "Few men in American public life have possessed more intrinsic worth, more independence, more public spirit and more ability than Adams." History judges John Quincy Adams' presidency as a failure, but not the man. It may well be too soon to judge objectively the efficacy of Ford's presidency, but there is no doubt that Ford, like Adams, was a success as a human being.

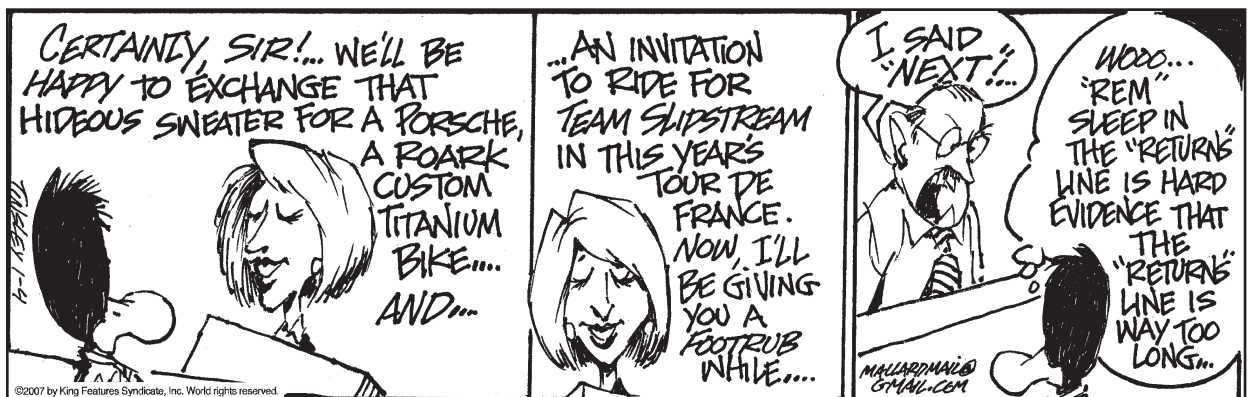
Would that the same can be said of the person elected our next president.

More to the point, may the same be said of each of us in 2008 and beyond.

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### Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley



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