

# Opinion



**Free Press  
Viewpoint**

## Daydreams can come true

By John Van Nostrand

Did you ever wonder what \$300,000 will get these days? We just may find out what it can do around here.

Thursday, a meeting of economic development, state officials and other influential people in the area met to discuss the process and potential the Network Kansas e-community program may have on Colby, Thomas County and all of Northwest Kansas.

The funds are intended to be used to create business and entrepreneurship, which are desperately needed in the area. People with a business idea can apply for use of some of the funds to help them turn their idea into reality. The program started in 2006 and has turned into a network of people and places across the state. Someone will be found that knows something about the business idea to help further development.

One person used some of the funds to help purchase the business he had been working at for years. Another example is how a couple purchased an established business that they were customers of and was for sale.

This program might be what it takes to bring whatever to Northwest Kansas rather than always having to go to Denver, Salina or elsewhere for it. Or better yet, what about having something in your house or business that is stamped "Made in (name of Northwest Kansas town)" rather than "Made in China."

Wow, what a concept.

Someone who knows Colby prides itself on the impact of Interstate 70 and Colby Community College, may have an idea to get even more out of both entities. If you think the area is missing something, and have daydreamed of providing that service, here's your chance.

For more information go to [www.networkkansas.com](http://www.networkkansas.com) or call 1-877-521-8600.

Stay tuned.

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

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## The bully wins?

Whenever I see an athlete in trouble with the law or under the gun for some negative situation, I generally have a hard time jumping on the bandwagon and rooting against them.

Guys like Michael Vick, Adam 'Pacman' Jones, Barry Bonds, Kobe Bryant and Bob Knight all get my sympathy vote. I just can't stir up enough emotion to hate these guys, even though they are all supposedly bad people.

Maybe I'm just too sympathetic or something, but I don't think any of these supposed 'low lifes' are as deserving of as much scrutiny as they get for one reason or another.

Roger Clemens is a different story. I want to seem him fall and fall hard.

I can't really describe why I dislike Clemens so much now, other than the fact that he reminds me so much of George W. Bush.

They both have these macho, high-and-mighty Texas attitudes.

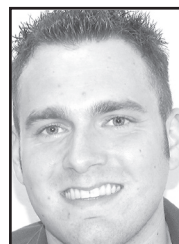
Bush thinks he can just march our country into any war he pleases, and Clemens is somehow too good to admit steroid use, even though the other Yankees accused by McNamee have already confessed, not to mention nearly every other player named in the Mitchell Report.

Then I look at Clemens' lawyer, Rusty Hardin, and he's the exact same way — brash, arrogant and feeling entitled to do or say whatever he wants.

You just can't help but root against guys like Clemens, Bush and Hardin.

I don't think it's just a Texas thing. At least I hope not, because I was born in Houston and lived there for 10 years.

It's more like rooting against a bully.



**Joe Falkoff**

• A Sideline View

Bush, it could be argued, is acting in a bully-like fashion to Afghanistan and Iraq. Clemens has that same type of brash persona. Intimidation is his game and he is one of the few pitchers left that isn't afraid to throw inside. In fact, he isn't afraid to throw a bat at someone. Just ask Mike Piazza.

I have no problem with Clemens being an intimidator on the field. What I do dislike is him carrying that same attitude off the field.

He has always had this mentality that he is somehow bigger than the game of baseball. What other player would sit out until June or July and join a team when it was convenient to him, instead of battling through spring training like everyone else?

Granted, he's still been a great pitcher these three years, but not even Michael Jordan had that kind of attitude.

That's Clemens for you.

This guy just has a lot of nerve, and so does our soon-to-be ex-president. No wonder why they are such good friends.

People like that deserve what's coming to them.

While I was watching highlights of Clemens'

Congressional hearing Wednesday, I couldn't help but feel good inside when Congressmen would attack Clemens and felt bad for Brian McNamee when they would pick on him.

I was hoping Clemens would break down and finally tell the truth, but why would he? All he has to do is keeping lying and lying and eventually it will all go away. It's very unlikely anything will ever be proven against him, especially with a person as sketchy as McNamee going against him.

I just hope the Justice Department shows some initiative and goes after Clemens for perjury charges. The evidence against him is so overwhelming it's ridiculous.

In fact, Clemens has absolutely zero proof that he didn't use steroids.

I'm just glad the public opinion polls show close to 70 percent of the people don't believe a word Clemens says.

My question to Clemens supporters would be, if McNamee were lying wouldn't he have backed down by now? This guy has absolutely nothing at all to gain by making these accusations, and we know he's not making it up about other players because Andy Pettitte and Chuck Knoblauch have already admitted to using Human Growth Hormone.

It's so frustrating, because you know deep down inside Clemens is a bold face liar. At the same time, you know nothing is going to happen to him.

Just like Bush and his presidency.

The bully always wins, I suppose.

— Joe Falkoff is a reporter for the Colby Free Press.

## Give Kansas counties a choice

### Lawrence Journal-World

Although a statewide ban on smoking in public places has a certain appeal, letting each Kansas county vote on whether to institute such a ban may be a more practical and realistic approach.

The Kansas Senate Judiciary Committee is hearing testimony on a bill that would place a smoking ban measure on the ballot in all Kansas counties on Nov. 8.

Residents in each county would be asked whether they wanted to opt out of a statewide ban on smoking in most public places, includ-

ing workplaces, restaurants, bars and casinos.

Communities that already have smoking bans could keep their existing ordinances or accept the statewide standards. ...

Proponents of a mandatory statewide ban may be disappointed by the county option plan, but sponsors of the bill have said they believe including a county-by-county vote is necessary to gain passage in the Legislature.

A statewide smoking ban would have the advantage of providing consistent regulations across the state, but forcing every county to put this measure on the ballot still is a power-

ful step. ...

Those testifying in favor of this bill point out that approximately 4,000 Kansans die each year from tobacco-related illnesses, and treatment of smoking-related illnesses costs Kansans about \$1 billion a year. ...

If the county-by-county vote is approved, it will be interesting to see how many Kansas counties accept a smoking ban.

The county option plan gives Kansas residents the opportunity to participate in the decision and may turn out to have almost as great an effect as a statewide ban.

### 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. 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

