

Opinion



A Kansas Viewpoint

Tale of the polls

By Tom Dreiling

So you're a John McCain backer. Or perhaps Obama is your choice. Regardless, don't lose heart over what all the multitude of polls are showing. Sometimes is a dead heat, at others a slim lead for one or the other, and then a poll or two will show an exaggerated wide lead for either, or.

Polls will reveal only what pollster want them to reveal. It all lies in the questions asked. We don't know of any simplistic poll that simply asks: Who do you favor? Sen. McCain or Sen. Obama." There might be one or two of those out there in 'Polland,' but if so they are rare.

Today's polls want to know too much, then in analyzing we think they confuse themselves. Watch the figures closely, then watch even closer the breakdown. Sometimes it's not unusual for a poll to contradict itself.

Prior to Sen. Obama's travel abroad, the race had the Illinois senator leading the Arizona senator 46-44, a statistical tie. Today Obama leads 49-41, the increase attributed to his trip. But after that buzz ceases and the media begin closing in on what really counts — the economy — the polls will be all over the place.

It is also interesting to note that the various cable news channels will display the polls that favor their candidate, and don't fool yourselves into thinking CNN, FOX and MSNBC don't have their favorite. They do.

The American voters are a lot smarter than the pollsters give them credit for. And we would assume that some people polled will deliberately give information contrary to how they actually feel about a candidate. We can be devilish about such contact, which pretty much explains why polls vary so significantly.

When polls tell us that many more Americans are undecided about their choice for president than are, place yourself in one of those categories. With less than 100 days remaining before the November election, chances are more Americans have, than have not, decided on who gets their vote Nov. 4.

The historic nature of this year's presidential election might explain why polls vary like they do. But down deep, minds are already made up and will be expressed in secret on voting day. And those returns will quickly tell us the tale of the pollster.

— Tom Dreiling, publisher Norton Telegram

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155 W. Fifth (USPS 120-920) (785) 462-3963
Colby, Kan. 67701 **COLBY FREE PRESS**

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.

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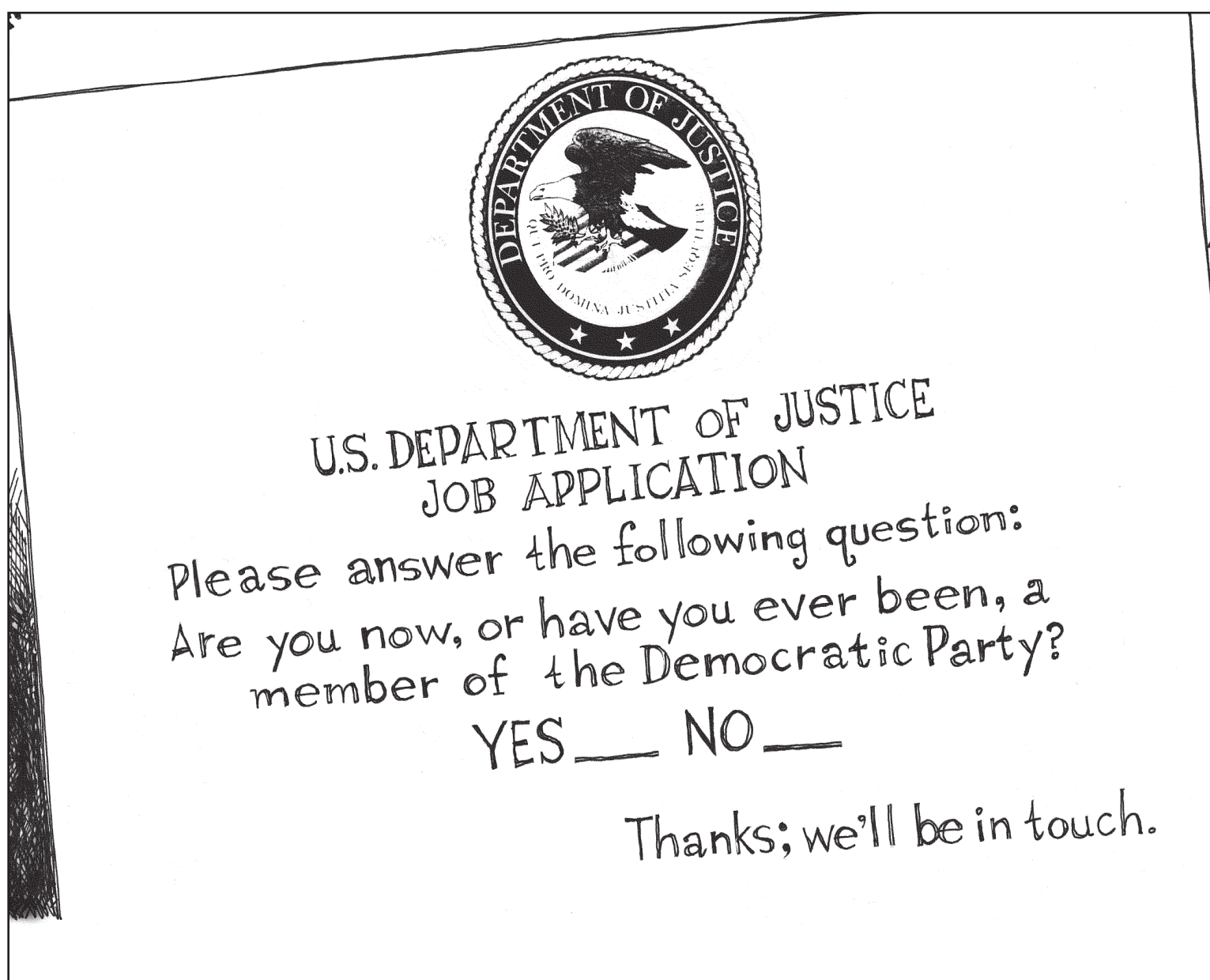
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THE COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920) is published every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, except the day observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, by Haynes Publishing Co., 155 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 within 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.



The show goes on

This is part two of three in this column series about my tour with the Continental Singers in 2007.

My friends and family often refer to me as the "world traveler." While I haven't exactly been to too many countries overseas, I do enjoy traveling, especially when it includes flying. This time, however, was...interesting.

Four members were split up into two groups. Omar Alexis (director) took half of us with sound and stage equipment to American Airlines, while our assistant director took the other half to British Airlines with everyone's luggage.

We arrived at the London Heathrow Airport at 6 a.m. Out flight left at 6 p.m. the evening before, the flight was about six hours long and there is a six hour difference between London and New York City.

Needless to say, our biological clocks were slightly off. But before jet lag had a chance to settle in, the international portion of our tour had rapidly taken off.

We were welcomed at our first church with piping hot, British tea along with plenty of shortcake and chocolate candy. Without any rest from the flight, we performed that evening and experienced our first encore. It was exhilarating. In fact, while overseas, it soon became unusual if we did not do an encore performance of one of our more upbeat songs.

Throughout our international tour, we made appearances not only in England, but in Wales, Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Also, performances weren't exclusive to churches, but to school, as well. This gave us the opportunity to entertain and interact with the students. We would do a short concert, then



Michelle Myers

• A Moment with Michelle

teach them a couple choreography numbers. A supermarket even allowed us to perform for an hour, where we did 15 minute "stints" for customers as they came in and out.

Between concerts, we visited Windsor Castle, Isle of Skye, Eilean Duan Castle, Buckingham Palace and the Giant Causeway in Ireland, among many country villages.

Since our tour was a ministry, we always searched for an opportunity to share our message with those around us. This included the time our journey was delayed due to technical difficulties with our "coach" (English terminology for "bus"). We were in a small Welsh town with a name that none of us could pronounce, and despite chances of being sued for performing public without a license, people begged us to continue singing. So we did. We then thought maybe if we circled around the bus—I mean, coach—held hands and sang "Amazing Grace," the bus would miraculously start.

And it did! Okay, maybe it was not our amazing singing abilities that started the engine, but it was definitely entertaining for that Welsh community.

As we traveled Great Britain's countryside, outlined with autumn-colored trees, stone bridges, castles, cathedrals and too many riv-

ers to count, we drank in British culture and cuisine of tea, biscuits and fish and chips.

However, we could not forget about the purpose of our ministry by keeping our hearts focused on the spiritual needs of Great Britain.

"This country really needs Christ," said our concert host in Maltby, England. "In the states, even if someone isn't a Christian, they have heard about Jesus. But in Great Britain, if they aren't a Christian, they know nothing about Christ or understand any Christian lingo. It's a very stark difference."

His words ruminated in my mind for the rest of our time overseas. A lot of us thought that Great Britain would be very similar to the United States, and in many ways it is. And in many ways it's not. I realized that we were doing more than giving an entertaining performance; we were preaching the gospel to people who knew nothing about Jesus Christ.

The concert was no longer trying to prove that we can sing, dance, smile and breathe at the same time, but why we choose to exert so much energy night after night. As a group, we started thinking more about the words we were singing. We started praying that our lives would be an overflow of who Christ is, and that our audience would be open to receiving our message of the gospel. My heart would stir every time we sang powerful songs like "No Greater Love," and "You Raise Me Up," which expressed God's amazing love and strength.

From that point on, I was no longer a performer; I was an ambassador for Christ.

To be continued...

Michelle Myers is a summer intern in the news department.

Your turn

Get informed before voting

Tanya Christensen Colby

This year we have an opportunity to choose someone we feel will do a good job for Thomas County and Northwest Kansas.

Unfortunately, the Republican Party leaders have failed to provide a platform for our Republican candidates to answer questions from the public. There are three elected posi-

tions that are being highly sought after, district judge, county attorney and sheriff.

These are very highly important positions and affect the safety of our community. As a citizen of our community I would like the opportunity to listen to all of the candidates answer the communities concern. I have heard the candidates answer questions on the radio. I do like the idea of candidates answering questions on the radio. It provides a large audience

for the candidates. But did the public choose these questions?

I think a public forum where the citizens ask questions would have been more informative. I've lived in Colby for nine years and this is the first time I've seen such a contested race.

I would invite everyone to be informed about each candidate before voting. And hope that our Republican Party leaders would be more involved in our next election.

Colby helps Plainville family

Laura Reif Plainville

I would like to express a special thank you to the community of Colby.

My husband and I, again with our two daughters, traveled to Pickin' on the Plain Bluegrass

Festival. It reaffirmed for us as always what a super place Colby is.

After arriving and setting up camp, we sat to enjoy an evening of great music from local and nationally known musicians. Late that evening as we returned to our camper we found our water heater had sprung a leak. We were not

worried at all; we knew that early Saturday morning we could visit your locally owned businesses. They helped us out in no time. We did some other shopping while in town and were treated so graciously.

Thank you for making it fun for us.

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

