



Free Press Viewpoint

‘Nanny’ lunches one-size solution

Parents and students are astir about cutbacks in school lunches intended by our nanny government to fight teenage obesity: no more seconds on meat, no oil in the salad dressing, more fruits and vegetables, less of the carbs and meat kids sometimes crave.

Especially put out are the parents of kids in sports, who might need two to three times the calories each day that the average child could get by on. The new rules strike at the heart of this bunch: the football and volleyball players, runners and others who practice every day.

The no-seconds rule is the biggest visible change, but ever-tighter limits on salt and carbs, and increased servings of fruits and vegetables, may have more impact.

So, if the football players are still hungry?

“They can always go back for another helping at the salad bar,” one school official sniffed.

Or, they might, probably will, go load up on candy, chips and other unhealthy snacks between school and practice, then down a huge supper when a big lunch would have been better for them.

The reaction of administrators is something like, “Well, it’s a federal decision, and we have to go along.”

Which is both disingenuous and not exactly true. What’s true is this is a decision by the Obama administration, and while they don’t have to go along with it, they will – because they don’t want to lose their federal lunch money.

Always the strings with that federal money.

Our schools are addicted to federal money, which can make up a big chunk of a district’s budget, depending on what programs it’s heavy into.

Obesity is an epidemic, no doubt. The only debate should be about whether it’s something the federal government should try to fix, or whether it’s best left to states, school districts and families.

Administrators should be much more concerned about the damage done by No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top and all these redundant and sometimes harmful tests our kids are taking.

But the lunch issue strikes to the heart of the matter when kids come home and say that they’re hungry because of Obama’s rules, or that they won’t eat the salads because the oil-free dressing “tastes icky.”

As John Schlageck of the Kansas Farm Bureau points out, kids don’t come in one size, and one size of meal doesn’t necessarily fit everyone. It’s also true that in small, rural schools, where most kids take part in some sports activity, obesity may not be the problem it is in the city.

However, the lunch ladies don’t want to have to look at the kids and decide who’s fat and who can have a second helping, either. One size is a lot easier to deal with.

As long as there’s federal money involved, the do-gooders are going to win. Nanny knows best, and if we know what’s good for our federal money, we’ll go along.

There’s an alternative, but no one wants to hear about it.

— Steve Haynes

We encourage comments on opinions expressed on this page. Mail them to the *Colby Free Press*, 155 W. Fifth St., Colby, Kan., 67701, or e-mail colby.editor@nwkansas.com. Opinions do not necessarily reflect those of the *Free Press*, its staff or the owners.

COLBY FREE PRESS

155 W. Fifth St. (USPS 120-920) (785) 462-3963
Colby, Kan. 67701 fax (785) 462-7749

Send news to: colby.editor@nwkansas.com

State award-winning newspaper, General Excellence, Design & Layout, Columns, Editorial Writing, Sports Columns, News, Photography.
Official newspaper of Thomas County, Colby, Brewster and Rexford.

Sharon Friedlander - Publisher
sfriedlander@nwkansas.com

NEWS

Kayla Cornett - Sports Reporter
colby.sports@nwkansas.com

Marian Ballard - Copy Editor
mballard@nwkansas.com

Sam Dieter - News Reporter
colby.editor@nwkansas.com

Christina Beringer - Society Reporter
colby.society@nwkansas.com

ADVERTISING
colby.ads@nwkansas.com

Kathryn Ballard

Advertising Representative
kballard@nwkansas.com

Kylee Hunter - Graphic Design
khunter@nwkansas.com

BUSINESS OFFICE

Office Manager

Melissa Edmondson - Office Manager
medmondson@nwkansas.com

Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator
support@nwkansas.com

NOR'WEST PRESS

Richard Westfahl - General Manager

Jim Jackson, Jim Bowker, Gary Meyer, Pressmen

Lana Westfahl, Judy McKnight, Kris McCool, Sheri Arroyo,
Tracy Traxel, Mailing

THE COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920) is published every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, except the days observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, by Nor'West Newspaper, 155 W. Fifth St., Colby, Kan., 67701.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE paid at Colby, Kan. 67701, and at additional mailing offices.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth St., Colby, Kan., 67701.

THE BUSINESS OFFICE at 155 W. Fifth is open from 8 a.m. to 6 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 herein. Member Kansas Press Association and National Newspaper Association.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In Colby, Thomas County and Oakley: three months \$35, one year \$85. By mail to ZIP Codes beginning with 676 and 677: three months \$39, one year \$95. Elsewhere in the U.S., mailed once per week: three months \$39, one year \$95.



New Jersey friends miss adventures

Friends from New Jersey showed up on Labor Day. They were driving from their vacation in Jackson Hole, Wyo., back home.

Yeah, they’re crazy, but we love ‘em.

Two years ago when they came our way, Steve took them out storm spotting, and we had a good one for them. They also enjoyed watching the buzzards on the Oberlin water tower up the street.

They were a little disappointed this year. The buzzards have moved on to a grain elevator south of town, and you can’t chase what isn’t there. The storms have definitely been avoiding us this year.

On the other hand, no large branches hit the house in front of their bedroom window like the one two years ago.

They didn’t make it last year because just as they were ready to leave home, they looked around. There were their children – all teenagers, all drivers, all at home. They decided that a two-week road trip to the other side of the country was probably not a good idea with four almost, but not quite, adults in the house. It just seemed like a recipe for disaster.

But this year, the kids were scattered. Some had headed off to college, some to jobs and



Cynthia Haynes

• Open Season

one to overseas.

Now this is the same family to whom we delivered a kachina doll in March in Washington.

One of their sons bought the artifact in Albuquerque and found out it didn’t fit in his suitcase. So, the kachina went to Colorado for a few months, Kansas for a few more and finally went into one of our old suitcases on a trip to Washington, where we met up with its owner and made the transfer.

The kachina then went home to New Jersey by train, still in the oversized suitcase, and on to New York, where the young man goes to college, wearing its seat belt.

We asked after the much-traveled doll and were told that he was safely in New York for the fall semester.

The suitcase, however, was another story.

I really had hoped I’d never see it again. It was old, some of the zippers were broken and we never used it anymore, which is why I designated it as a packing case.

However, our New Jersey friends were bound and determined to return it and had put it safely away with their “stuff to go west.” There it had sat since March.

Then when they started loading up the car for their outward trip, it was gone.

They eventually determined that their daughter, who left the week previous for Jordan (as in the Middle East) had used it to pack her stuff.

Well, I’m jealous. That suitcase is having a better time than I am, but it’ll probably have some really good stories when it returns from overseas.

Or, if I’m really lucky, maybe it’ll stay in Jordan!

Cynthia Haynes, co-owner and chief financial officer of Nor’West Newspapers, writes this column weekly. Her pets include cats, toads and a praying mantis. Contact her at c.haynes@nwkansas.com

Animal rights face off against ag history

Animal rightists’ hissy fit over State Fair regulations is only their latest attempt to invade Kansas.

Like our Great Plains neighbors to the north, Kansas is a state where many citizens are only a relative or two away from someone who works on a ranch, transports cattle or processes beef.

This is a state where rodeo is an important sport.

Where a significant number of farm kids learn to take care of their animals.

And where 4-H kids sign an intent-to-sell form when they show their sheep at the county fairs in August.

Animal rightists occasionally come to Kansas to picket the entrances of our big meat-processing plants. The truckers carefully maneuver around them and give a friendly wave or nod. After a few days of polite Kansas hospitality and absolutely nothing to make newspaper headlines, they usually pack up and go back home.

Unfortunately, times are changing. That sign about one Kansas farmer feeds a hundred and some people will have to be changed upward. Fewer kids are living on farms as our western counties are depopulating. That means that over the long term, fewer future citizens of Kansas will have their views of animal care grounded in the realities of a rural experience.

Our grandparents knew what butcher knives were used for. This first stage of food preparation was a visible and natural process. The children of China (outside of their urban areas)



John Richard Schrock

• Education Frontlines

still witness meat processing in the street markets on their way home from school every day. You can be sure that animal rights organizations would get little traction in your grandparent’s day, or in countries like China today.

But in America, meat processing has moved to local lockers and large assembly-line plants where the process is no longer visible. Generations are growing up with little connection between the farm animal, the processing plant and the meat on the table.

Children are particularly isolated on the coasts, where new city ordinances outlaw the sale of furs and egg farmers must uncage their chickens. Well, Kansas is not California, and we are proud of that.

Kansas benefits from a citizenry that understands the role of animals. After agriculture and aircraft and military, animals are another major industry.

Stretching from Manhattan to Kansas City is a major animal bioresearch corridor. Medical and pharmaceutical companies from around the world conduct required animal tests on their products right here in Kansas. The new ultrasecure animal bioterrorism test facility

was a natural for K-State, since a similar small facility was already here. And one Kansas town probably is the dog food capital of the world.

Why Kansas? We know where our hamburger comes from.

Every Kansas child of the 1800s knew animals. Today, far fewer have the opportunity. If education was designed so that every child spent a summer on a farm or ranch where they could work with animals up close, there would be very few animal rightists.

One day, I ended the nutrition section of my biology class by mentioning that some city folks do not know that milk comes from cows. After class, a student from a wealthy suburb came up to object: “I know milk comes from cows!”

“And where have you seen cows?” I asked.

“While I was driving down the superhighway,” he replied. “Cows are all over the grasslands.”

“And how tall is a cow?” I asked.

“About this high, I guess,” and he held his hand out at about three feet, the size of a big dog!

He may have known – in an abstract way – that milk came from cows.

But he didn’t really “know” a cow.

John Richard Schrock, a professor of biology and department chair at a leading teacher’s college, lives in Emporia. He emphasizes that his opinions are strictly his own.

Where to write, call

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774
roberts.senate.gov/public/

U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran, 354 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 228-6966. Fax (202) 225-5124 moran.senate.gov/public/

U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp, 126 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715 or Fax (202) 225-5124. Web site: huelskamp.house.gov

State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol Building, 300 SW10th St., Room 225-E., Topeka, Kan. 66612, (785) 296-7399 ralph.ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce
Tinsley

