



Free Press Viewpoint

Raffle by any name is still illegal lottery

While we're sympathetic with the goal of a bill that attempted to legalize charity raffles in Kansas, we agree with Gov. Sam Brownback, who vetoed the bill as unconstitutional. The Kansas Constitution is quite specific on this issue, at Article 15, Section 3, which says: "Lotteries and the sale of lottery tickets are forever prohibited."

A lottery is defined in law as any game or scheme which includes three elements: chance, a reward and a consideration, or price. That certainly includes selling tickets at \$1 each or six for \$5 to raise money for a little girl with cancer or a church that needs money for a new air conditioner.

Section 3 does include three exceptions approved by voters in recent decades, for licensed horse and dog tracks, and now casinos; for charitable Bingo games as regulated by law; and for the state lottery, a big-time moneymaker for the state.

We all know that churches, civic and fraternal groups, lodges and clubs, and just plain people, have been holding drawings and other lotteries for years to raise money for good causes. It's been going on a long time, probably longer than it's been prohibited by the Kansas Constitution.

At the newspaper, we know this, because we have to turn down dozens of ads each year from well-meaning charitable organizations trying to raise money for — you guessed it — a good cause.

However, it's against the law to promote an illegal lottery. It's also against federal postal regulations. We just can't take those ads, though we maintain under the First Amendment we can and do write news stories about these drawings. (Our one rule is that in return, we required the group holding the drawing to report its income from an event.)

We see no harm in making charitable lotteries legal in Kansas, but agree that the Legislature needs to do this right by passing a constitutional amendment for voters to decide. We think they'd go along.

While we know of no Kansas county where authorities have prosecuted a church or veterans' post for holding an illegal lottery, we question the wisdom of having a law that makes criminals out of well-intentioned people.

So it'll be up to the 2014 Legislature to do this over, do it well and get the issue on the ballot for the next election. Clubs and fraternal groups that have been breaking the law for decades can wait another year or two to come out into the sunshine.

With all the legal gambling going on in this state, in fact, it's a wonder that no one ever thought of covering this gap before now. — Steve Haynes



Floral gifts give back to the giver

Steve and I both love flowers. We have crocuses, daffodils, tulips, a huge snowball bush, grape hyacinths, phlox, lilacs, irises, spiraea, blue flax, roses, lilies, mums, columbines, purple coneflowers, daisies, some purple ground cover, odd feral bunches of bachelor buttons that are basically pretty weeds and some purple thing that came up in the yard.

I added a couple of real hyacinths this spring with hopes of having them come up next year.

What we don't have are orchids or hydrangeas. Orchids would not make it in my house, and I've never seen a hydrangea bush in Kansas.

So, of course, that's what my daughters gave me for Mothers Day.

They were trying. They really were.

The eldest loves orchids and has several on the desk in her home office. They are beautiful, but she babies and nurtures them. My flowers are lucky if they get weeded. Forget about babying or nurturing. They live outside. I live inside, and we all get along great that way.

The youngest got me a beautiful blue hydrangea, secretly hoping, I think, that I would decide that it would look better in her new — in great need of flowers — yard in Augusta, Ga.,



Cynthia Haynes

• Open Season

than in my Kansas ground.

She was right. I love hydrangeas as much because of a story my mother told me as for their huge, colorful flowers, but I don't think that it would do well up north, so I asked her to find a spot for it.

My mother told us the story of her wedding. It was 1945. The war was over, and like so many young women, she was getting married, but there was not a lot of money for a fancy wedding.

She wore a beautiful white satin sheath, which later became the base for my wedding dress. The church was dressed in hydrangeas, she said. It had been a great year for hydrangeas. They were beautiful, huge and plentiful. And, with permission, every bush on her block was denuded to dress up the church.

I've seen the old black-and-white photos. The bride and groom look so young, and the

flowers were fantastic. I look at those photos and smile.

Back in Georgia, eldest daughter says my orchid is doing fine on her desk and youngest daughter said that she planted the hydrangea out under a pine tree, where it is slowly turning pink. Right now, it's a lovely light purple, she said.

Hydrangeas are a strange flower. Their color depends on the soil. If the soil is acidic, the flowers will be blue. If the soil is alkaline, the flowers will be pink. If you plant a blue one in alkaline soil, like where a pine tree has been dropping its needles for several years, it will slowly change color.

I'm looking forward to going south to visit my flowers this fall.

And, as I said, Steve loves flowers, too, and Father's Day is just around the corner.

I wonder what kind of flowers the girls will get for him — and where will they wind up being planted.

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@nwkansan.com

Write us

The Colby Free Press encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of general interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise. Nor do we run form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous from this area should be submitted to the Want Ad desk.

Letters will not be censored, but will be read and edited.

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@nwkansan.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
friedlander@nwkansan.com

NEWS

R.B. Headley - Sports Editor
colby.sports@nwkansan.com

Marian Ballard - Copy Editor
mballard@nwkansan.com

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

Heather Alwin - Society Editor
colby.society@nwkansan.com

ADVERTISING

colby.ads@nwkansan.com

Kathryn Ballard - Advertising Representative
kballard@nwkansan.com

Kylee Hunter - Graphic Design
khunter@nwkansan.com

BUSINESS OFFICE

Office Manager

Melissa Edmondson - Office Manager
medmondson@nwkansan.com

Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator
support@nwkansan.com

NOR'WEST PRESS

Richard Westfahl - General Manager
Gary Stewart, Foreman

Jim Jackson, Jim Bowker, Pressmen

Kris McCool, Judy McKnight, Tracy Traxel,
Sheri Arroyo, 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. Student rate, nine months, in Colby, Thomas County and Oakley, \$64; mailed once per week elsewhere in the U.S. \$72.

Attack on journalism hurts everyone

The nation learned in May that the Justice Department secretly obtained the phone records of more than 100 Associated Press reporters and monitored Fox News reporter James Rosen's personal e-mail and cell phone records, branding him a "possible co-conspirator" in a classified leak case for asking questions to a government source.

These revelations sent shockwaves throughout newsrooms nationwide. Reporters can no longer assure their sources that interviews will remain confidential because there is no way to tell whether the government is listening. This attack on journalism reaches far beyond hard-working journalists and their sources. Make no mistake: The ultimate victims are the millions of Americans who rely on investigative journalism to inform them about their communities. When the government creates a chilling effect in newsrooms, it keeps important news away from the American public.

In Washington, real change often occurs in response to a crisis. That is precisely what is happening here. For centuries, the American public has assumed that journalists are the public's watchdog, overseeing and revealing government abuses. But the AP and Fox News stories have exposed a sad truth: The government is overseeing journalists. The only way to limit this government overreach is through passage of a law that lays out clear rules for when the government can obtain information from the press.

Members of Congress from across the po-

Other Opinions

• Carolyn Little
Newspaper Assoc.

litical spectrum recognized that need when in May they proposed the Free Flow of Information Act of 2013, which would prohibit federal prosecutors, criminal defendants or civil litigants from subpoenaing information from journalists unless they convince a federal judge that the need for the information outweighs the public interest in the free flow of information. The shield law would be a huge improvement from the current federal system, which enables prosecutors to decide whether to notify the media of a subpoena and how broad the request should be, without any oversight or any effective ability of the press to challenge these government actions.

Rep. Ted Poe, a Texas Republican and a former judge, said that he sponsored the shield law because maintaining confidentiality "is critical to ensuring the free flow of information without government interference." His co-sponsor, Rep. John Conyers, a Michigan Democrat, noted that 49 states and the District of Columbia protect journalists' sources, and "it is long past time that our federal gov-

ernment provides similar protections." Sens. Charles Schumer, R-N.Y., and Lindsey Graham, R-Fla., co-sponsored a similar measure in the Senate. Schumer aptly observed that a law is needed, as "there's no supervision." President Obama recently reaffirmed the administration's support for a shield law and said that journalists "should not be at legal risk for doing their jobs."

The response can be summed up in one word, which is rare these days in Washington: bipartisanship. The swift reaction of legislators of both parties demonstrates that press freedom is not a Democratic or a Republican talking point. It is a quintessentially American value that transcends politics and shaped our nation's founding. As Thomas Jefferson famously wrote, the "only security of all is in a free press."

As the organization representing the nation's newspapers, the Newspaper Association of America is a proud member of a coalition of more than 50 media organizations that supports a federal shield law. Over the next few weeks, we will urge senators and representatives nationwide to sign on to the shield law (H.R. 1962 and S. 987) and codify this fundamental American principle. We encourage you to contact your members of Congress to tell them why a free press matters to you.

Carolyn Little is president and chief executive officer of the Newspaper Association of America in Arlington, Va.

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

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

