

Opinion

Letter Drop

• Our Readers Sound Off



We finally agree on something

The following letter to the Citizens Medical Center board found its way to the Colby Free Press. We neither endorse nor take issue with the contents therein. We are a fair and balanced organ of dissemination. — Tom Dreiling, Publisher

To the Citizens Medical Center Board:

It looks as though you people have finally seen the light. You finally said what I have been saying all along that we should have the best medical facilities and doctors between Denver, Colorado and Hays, Kansas. We were headed that way until all of the lawsuits started and now there will be winners and losers. The attorneys are the winners and the people of north-west Kansas are the losers.

We have been wondering who owns the hospital and you finally told us. The people do. If the people own it, why don't they have any say about who is put on the board?

I do not know why you have a twenty-one member board, seven voting members and fourteen non-voting members. When you had two members resign from the seven voting board why didn't you replace them from the fourteen non-voting board? You went outside the board and picked two outsiders, why? I think you should have replaced from the fourteen board and placed the two outsiders on the fourteen board to familiarize them first. I also feel you should have a doctor and an R.N. on the board to cover the medical aspect of things.

We are never going to get any doctors to come to Colby, Kansas as long as this is going on; you need to put a stop to this. You started it, so you should stop it. The bylaws and the policy procedure should be re-done and the bylaws should be done by the board with the assistance of the Chief of Staff, and the policies should be set by the Chief of Staff and the doctors and R.N. with the assistance of the board.

We should all get along and stop all of this and then you can get rid of the floating doctors...that is costing \$50,000 a month, and get doctors to set up practices in Colby.

Thank you!

**Henry C. Vette
Colby
(Letter #9)**

Comments to any opinions expressed on this page are encouraged. Mail them to the Colby Free Press, 155 W. 5th St., Colby, Kan., 67701. Or e-mail td@nwkansas.com.

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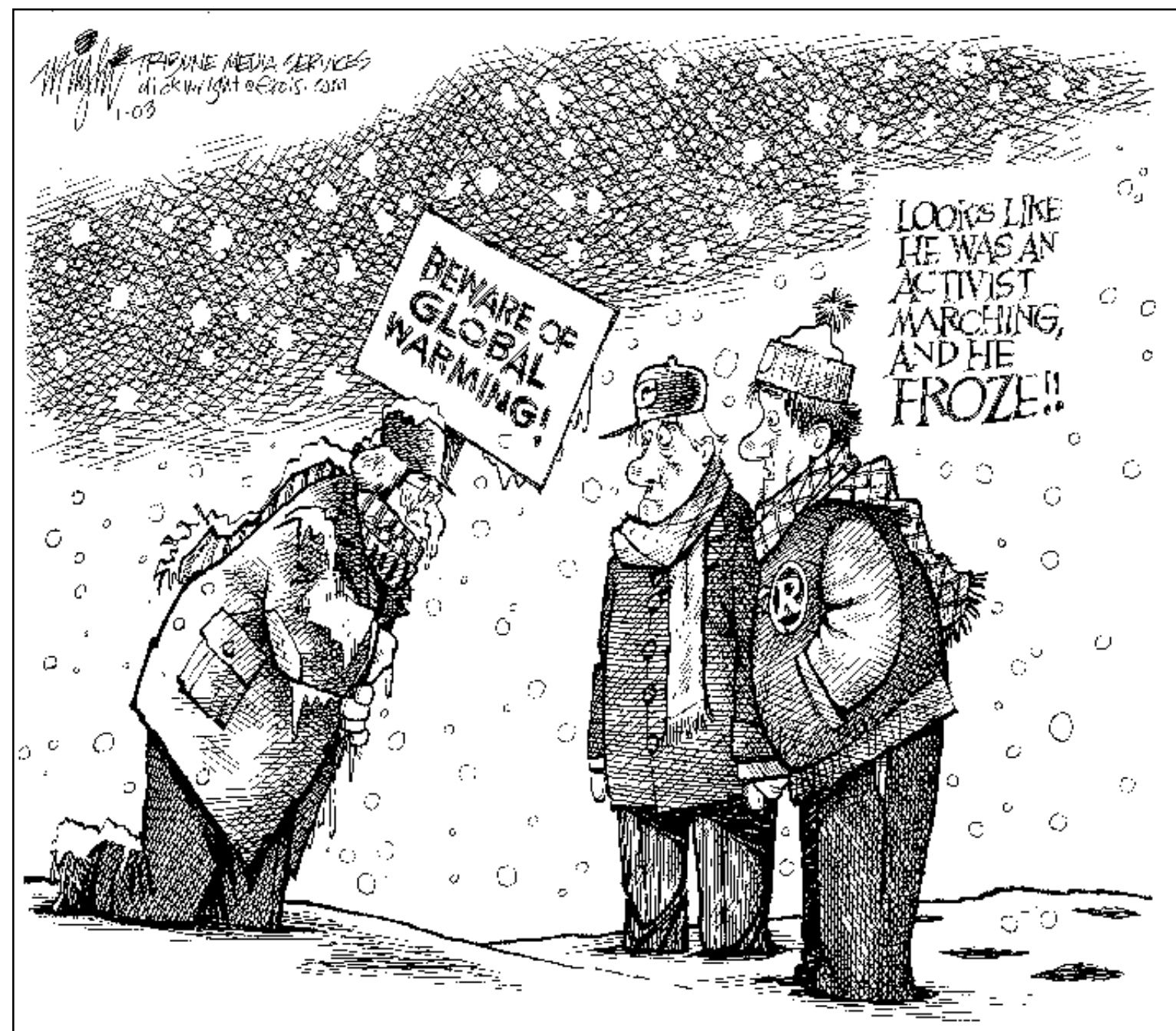
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Did someone say, 'the good old days?'

The other day a friend stopped by with some fascinating statistics on how different things were 100 years ago. It was unbelievable and in some instances staggering when looking at costs from a century ago to what those same products are priced at today.

Yet not all the costs went up when you read on about the communications industry.

There were also interesting statistics on what were considered "luxuries" in 1902 that people now just take for granted.

Here's the list of various items from 1902 and I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

- The average life expectancy in the U.S. was 47 years old.
- Only 14 percent of the homes in the U.S. had a bathtub.
- Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone and a three-minute call from Denver to New York City cost \$11.
- There were only 8,000 cars in the U.S. and only 144 miles of paved roads.
- The maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 mph.
- Alabama, Mississippi, Iowa and Tennessee were each more heavily populated than California. With only 1.4 million residents, California was only the 21st most populated state.
- The tallest structure in the world was the Eiffel Tower.
- The average wage in this country was 22¢ an hour.



Patty Decker

• Deep Thoughts

- The average worker in this country made between \$200 and \$400 a year.
- A competent accountant could expect to earn \$2,000 per year; a dentist \$2,500 per year; a veterinarian between \$1,500 and \$4,000 per year and a mechanical engineer about \$5,000 per year.
- More than 95 percent of all births in this country took place at home.
- Ninety percent of all U.S. physicians had no college education. Instead, they attended medical schools, many of which were condemned in the press and by the government as substandard.
- Sugar cost 4¢ a pound, eggs were 14¢ a dozen and coffee cost 15¢ a pound.
- Most women only washed their hair once a month and they used borax or egg yolks for shampoo.
- Canada passed a law prohibiting poor people from entering the country for any reason.
- The five leading causes of death in this coun-

try were pneumonia and influenza, Tuberculosis, diarrhea, heart disease and stroke.

- The American flag had 45 stars in 1902 because Arizona, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Hawaii and Alaska hadn't been admitted to the Union yet.
- The population of Las Vegas was 60.
- Crossword puzzles, canned beer and iced tea hadn't been invented yet.
- There were no Mother's Day or Father's Day.
- One in 10 American adults couldn't read or write. Only 6 percent of all Americans had graduated from high school.
- Eighteen percent of households in the U.S. had at least one full-time servant or domestic.
- There were only about 230 reported murders in the entire United States.

And finally, "The Pledge of Allegiance" was still constitutional.

I found it interesting how some things have changed so drastically and in other statistics such as in the leading causes of death, that heart disease and stroke are still considered among the top killers.

When thinking about 100 years ago, it also was boggling to think that crossword puzzles, canned beer and iced tea weren't part of the American scene and how little the average American actually made annually.

Patty Decker is the editor of the Colby Free Press. Her column appears on Thursdays.

Time to thin your possessions

There comes a time in the lives of most seniors when they need to own fewer things. Maybe a move to an apartment or condo, out of the big family house.

Maybe the family house has simply become too full. Years of acquisitions, cant-pass-up sales, gifts from the kids — you know the items that fill attics or basements.

If you're really downsizing and have furniture and accessories of value, an estate sale might work for you. If you have a lot of energy and love to visit with people tracking through your yard, you might consider a garage sale.

But what if you just want to give things away rather than throwing them away? There are numerous places other than the landfill where items you no longer need or treasure can be taken.

- Suggestions:
- 1) The Salvation Army or the Good Will organization may have a thrift store. Often they are

Glenna Wilson

• Senior Focus

looking for clothing, appliances, tools and furniture.

2) A local emergency shelter may welcome such items as blankets, towels, clothing, toasters, dishes, or vacuum cleaners.

3) The library might take books — but probably not textbooks, encyclopedias or magazines.

4) The local recycling center may want those old magazines, newspapers, telephone book, cardboard, plastic jugs — but probably not plas-

tic bags.

5) Churches may have an "Encore Shop" or something similar, where they feature used clothing, bedding, pots and pans, dishes and toys for families in need.

6) Secondhand stores may take clothing, tools, furniture, appliances. Ask if they can pay for any of your really nice things.

7) Veterans groups may have an economy store and will take appliances, clothing, dishes, books and tools.

According to that old saying, "one man's trash is another man's treasure." You may find that you are helping others who need the very thing you need to discard.

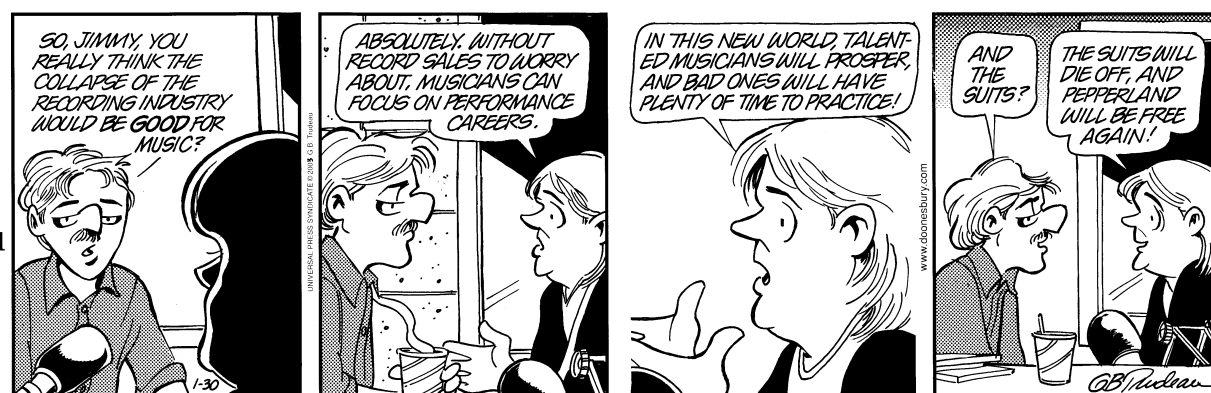
Glenna Wilson is a writer for the Kansas Senior Press Service. You can go to www.agingkansans.org/kdoa/senior_info_srpress.htm.

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Doonesbury

• Gary Trudeau



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