

# Opinion

## Free Press Viewpoint

### Simple way to keep meth makers at bay

An idea which seems to have worked in Oklahoma is coming to Kansas, and unlike most of the war on drugs, it might just work. Oklahoma forced drug stores to move the cold remedy pseudoephedrine behind the pharmacy counter. Police officials say it's reduced the number of meth labs found in the state by more than 80 percent in a year.

That's remarkable for such a simple change. Sudafed, as the brand-name version is known, is still available over the counter, but purchasers have to sign for it. Pharmacists get a chance to size up the buyer. Meth freaks with a lack of sniffles might wind up talking to the cops.

Pseudoephedrine is a key component of meth manufacturing. The tiny red (or white) tablets provide the main feedstock for the chemical process of "cooking" meth. Take away the supply, and you make the task immeasurably more difficult.

We suspect that meth use hasn't declined by 80 percent in Oklahoma. That would be too much to ask for. But the state is nearly free of dangerous, smelly labs and the residue which litters roadsides, pollutes houses and endangers children.

That's a clear victory that's all too rare in the battle against drugs, even if it means the labs just move to the next state. Kansas would do well to follow suit. Drive the labs to Missouri or Arkansas, for all we care.

Drug enforcement is a difficult game. Most measures simply hamper the drug trade without really reducing it. Making drugs illegal guarantees nothing but jobs for drug agents and drug smugglers.

The real answer, of course, is teaching kids the dangers of drugs and hoping they have sense enough to listen. There's evidence that is working in America, too, at least, working better than border interdiction or profiling smugglers on the highway.

But if a law can put any kind of a dent in the meth trade, we're all for it. Of all the illegal drugs, meth comes closest to alcohol in its destructive power. Meth ruins lives, wrecks bodies, rends families, leaves relatives crying and victims destitute.

It's a wicked substance. We probably cannot drive it from the face of the earth — since you can make it in the kitchen — but if we push the labs out of Kansas, we'll have succeeded in cleaning up the place.

It's worth a try.

Steve Haynes  
Nor'West Newspapers

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](mailto:td@nwkansas.com).

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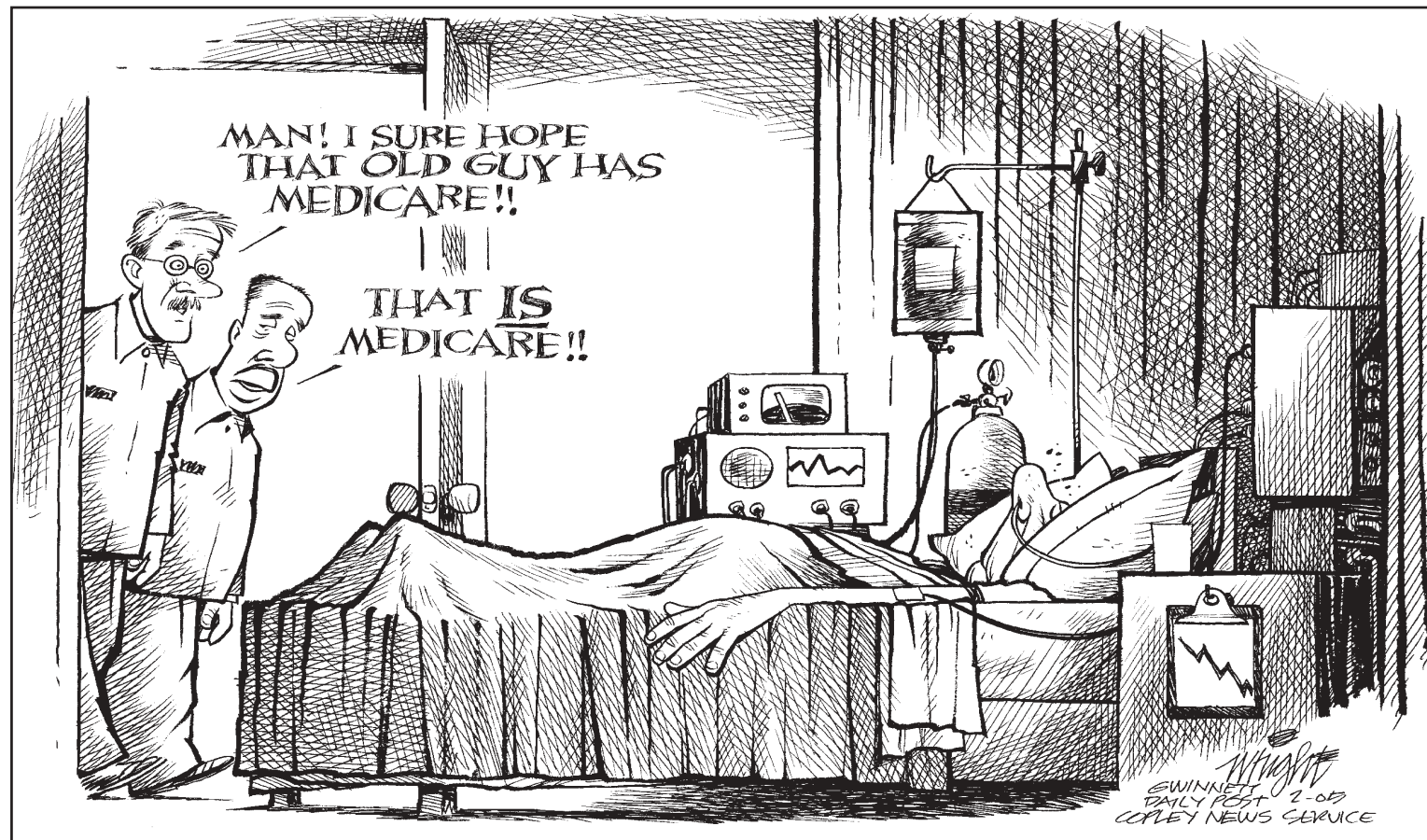
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## Nor'West Newspapers

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## Landscape eye-catchers

**THE** name Lloyd Harden might not cause a lightbulb to suddenly brighten life's path for you. But in a way reflection seems to do that for me. Lloyd is a farmer who lives adjacent to Highway K-25 north of Goodland.

While traveling to a meeting of the publishers of Nor'West Newspapers in St. Francis on Wednesday afternoon late, we — Evan Barnum, Sheila Smith, Tom Betz, Jim Bowker and myself — came upon Mr. Harden's creations fronting the highway. Those creations are scrap metal figures of all shapes and sizes and kinds.

I haven't driven in that area for a number of years, so I was impressed with what I saw — the designs, yes, but in particular the number. I even noticed a creation that closely resembled a palm tree one would see if entering the "Oasis on the Plains" from I-70. There were others, too, but traveling at our speed didn't allow much closer scrutiny.

Lloyd puts those crafty little — and some are not so little — charmers out there for the enjoyment of the traveling public.

He's got talent for creating just about anything anyone might want. I even have a little metal character of a guy leaning against a pole reading a paper on my desk that he gave me. I assume it's the *Colby Free Press* but, then again, it might be his home paper *The Goodland Star-News*.

Next time you are in the office take a look. I always envy the people who are so talented in this area of artistic development.

**I** ALWAYS study the landscape as I travel. I always look for the unusual — even when driving in town. And each day going to and coming from work I see something just west of the Colby United Methodist Church that sparks questions. It's a windmill, stately looking, proudly claim-

ing its tug on the landscape.

Who does it belong to?

How long has it been there?

Other than serving as a reminder of times long gone by, does it serve any other purpose?

Anyone who might know the history of that windmill would certainly be welcomed to talk about it.

I'll bet any number of motorists travel past this landmark daily without ever a thought given as to its past.

**WE** have a winner to Question #10: "In what northwest Kansas town will you find things that remind you of at least six different states?" The answer is Selden! That's right, Selden has seven streets named after states. They are Kansas, Kentucky, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, Illinois and Missouri. John Kaus is the winner and he wins movie tickets. All he needs to do is drop by the office and pick them up. Few people had street names in their answers. One person named Goodland and another said Brewster. While they are technically correct, neither of those two towns was the community we had determined would provide the correct answer.

Now we go Question #11. "In the area of music, what town in our area can lay claim to MSSR." Give it some thought. The answer will



### Tom Dreiling

#### • My Turn

be revealed in this column next Friday. It's very simple.

**I** GOOFED this morning. My remote control stopped on FOX News (ch. 71). I try not to watch that channel of beautiful people. They may look good but from that point on it's all down hill. This morning they were taking Bill Mahr apart. Bill is the guy who used to host a television show called "Politically Incorrect." He is now on HBO (I think) with another show that they tell me is really catching fire. I don't have HBO so I don't know. Anyway, FOX was quick to point out some of Bill Mahr's thinking on religion. They did remind viewers that Mahr's comments were made on MSNBC "so probably very few people heard them" If that were the case why did they bother to bring it up at all? And their report was all hearsay. I watched Mahr's appearance on MSNBC and what he said was questionable but he most definitely professed belief in God, something FOX sort of overlooked. I'm not defending Mahr at all, for most part I can't stand the guy, but in this case it was a matter of who I couldn't stand most — FOX or Mahr. Fair and balanced? What a hoot!

**DON'T** forget the big regional wrestling tourney here this week in the Community Building. The winners move onto state at Wichita next weekend.

**HAVE** a good evening and a good weekend. And of course you will also want to visit the house of worship of your choice.

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## Who is that under the bed?

*I have decided to use just a single entry this week. I thank the contributor and I know you will thoroughly enjoy it, as I did. - td*

### God Lives Under the Bed

My brother, Kevin, thinks God lives under his bed. At least that's what I heard him say one night. He was praying out loud in his dark bedroom, and I stopped outside his closed door to listen. "Are you there, God?" he said. "Where are you? Oh, I see ... Under the bed."

I giggled softly and tiptoed off to my own room.

Kevin's unique perspectives are often a source of amusement. But that night something else lingered long after the humor. I realized for the first time the very different world Kevin lives in. He was born 30 years ago, mentally disabled as a result of difficulties during labor. Apart from his size (he's 6-foot-2) there are few ways in which he is an adult. He reasons and communicates with the capabilities of a 7-year-old, and he always will. He will probably always believe that God lives under his bed; that Santa Claus is the one who fills the space under our tree every Christmas; and that airplanes stay up in the sky because angels carry them.

I remember wondering if Kevin realizes he is different. Is he ever dissatisfied with his monotonous life? He is up before dawn each day, off to work at a workshop for the disabled, home to walk our cocker spaniel, returns to eat his favorite macaroni-and-cheese for dinner, and later to bed. The only variation in the entire scheme is laundry, when he hovers excitedly over the washing machine like a mother with her newborn child. He does not seem dissatisfied. He lopes out to the bus every morning at 7:05, eager for a day of simple work. He wrings his hands

### T D

#### • At Week's End

excitedly while the water boils on the stove before dinner, and he stays up late twice a week to gather our dirty laundry for his next day's laundry chores.

And Saturdays — Oh, the bliss of Saturdays! That's the day my Dad takes Kevin to the airport to have a soft drink, watch the planes land, and speculate loudly on the destination of each passenger inside. "That one's goin' to Chi-cargo!" Kevin shouts as he claps his hands. His anticipation is so great he can hardly sleep on Friday nights. And so goes his world of daily rituals and weekend field trips.

He doesn't know what it means to be discontent. His life is simple. He will never know the entanglements of wealth of power, and he does not care what brand of clothing he wears or what kind of food he eats. His needs have always been met, and he never worries that one day they may not be. His hands are diligent. Kevin is never so happy as when he is working.

When he unloads the dishwasher or vacuums the carpet, his heart is completely in it. He does not shrink from a job when it is begun, and he does not leave a job until it is finished. But when his tasks are done, Kevin knows how to relax. He is not obsessed with his work or the work of others. His heart is pure. He still believes everyone tells the truth, promises must be kept, and

when you are wrong, you apologize instead of arguing. Free from pride and unconcerned with appearances, Kevin is not afraid to cry when he is hurt, angry or sorry. He is always transparent, always sincere. And he trusts God.

Not confined by intellectual reasoning, when he comes to Christ, he comes as a child. Kevin seems to know God; to really be friends with Him in a way that is difficult for an "educated" person to grasp. God seems like his closest companion. In my moments of doubt and frustrations with my Christianity, I envy the security Kevin has in his simple faith. It is then that I am most willing to admit that he has some divine knowledge that rises above my mortal questions. It is then I realize that perhaps he is not the one with the handicap; I am.

My obligations, my fear, my pride, my circumstances — they all become disabilities when I do not trust them to God's care. Who knows if Kevin comprehends things I can never learn? After all, he has spent his whole life in that kind of innocence, praying after dark and soaking up the goodness and love of God. And one day, when the mysteries of heaven are opened, and we are all amazed at how close God really is to our hearts, I'll realize that God heard the simple prayers of a boy who believed that God lived under his bed.

Kevin won't be surprised at all!

*If you have something to share in this column, please do. Simply email it to me at [td@nwkansas.com](mailto:td@nwkansas.com), or fax it to 462-7749 or drop it in the mail to 155 W. 5th, Colby 67701, or drop by the office. I won't mention your name unless you ask that I do. If you are a regular reader of this column you know pretty much what I am looking for. Have a nice weekend. - td*

## Doonesbury

### • Gary Trudeau

