

Opinion

Free Press Viewpoint



Is Mitch Beims needed in Colby?

Mitch Beims and the assistant principal and activities director position at Colby High School deserves more respect than it got Monday.

A motion was made by the Colby School Board to approve Beims as the new assistant principal and AD. But due to a lack of a second, Beims was never voted on. The motion died and the board casually moved on with its agenda.

That is the worst and most embarrassing thing that can happen to a candidate for any job. People need to know where they stand.

Knowing the importance of the position, the Colby School Board should have tabled the issue since every board member was not present. Members Kevan Taylor and Gerry Fulwider missed the meeting.

Taylor said if he would have been there, he would have seconded the motion to approve Beims. A vote would have then happened and this specific issue would have been resolved one way or another.

Stan Molstad made the motion to approve Beims because it was an agenda item. Board President Tracy Rogers and members Joel Powell, Dewey Augustine and Janice Frahm didn't say a word. The silence was loud and clear and implied their stance.

The board made a mistake by allowing the issue to even be acted on that night. But it was too late anyway.

Beims said he told the search committee April 10 he would accept the job, pending board approval. He met with school administration. Beims was even encouraged by the search committee to attend Monday's meeting, which he did. How could Beims think the job was not his?

If those other board members did not want Beims to have the job, they should have told the search committee and administration to wait until someone is approved before anything else happens. District administration was wrong acting like Beims already had the job. Beims was humiliated.

Beims does not know what's next. School administrators and board members don't know what's next. The uncertainty, and search, continues.

Tracy Rogers will have to play damage control. He and Molstad were the two board members on the search committee that recommended Beims.

Rogers did not support the rest of the committee by not seconding the motion. If he didn't want Beims, he should have said something during the selection process. Rogers continued his support for Jeff Quenzer who was voted out of the position late last year.

It's obvious, no two positions in Colby schools are treated the same.

Last month, Bob Ray was approved as new high school football coach and weight room teacher.

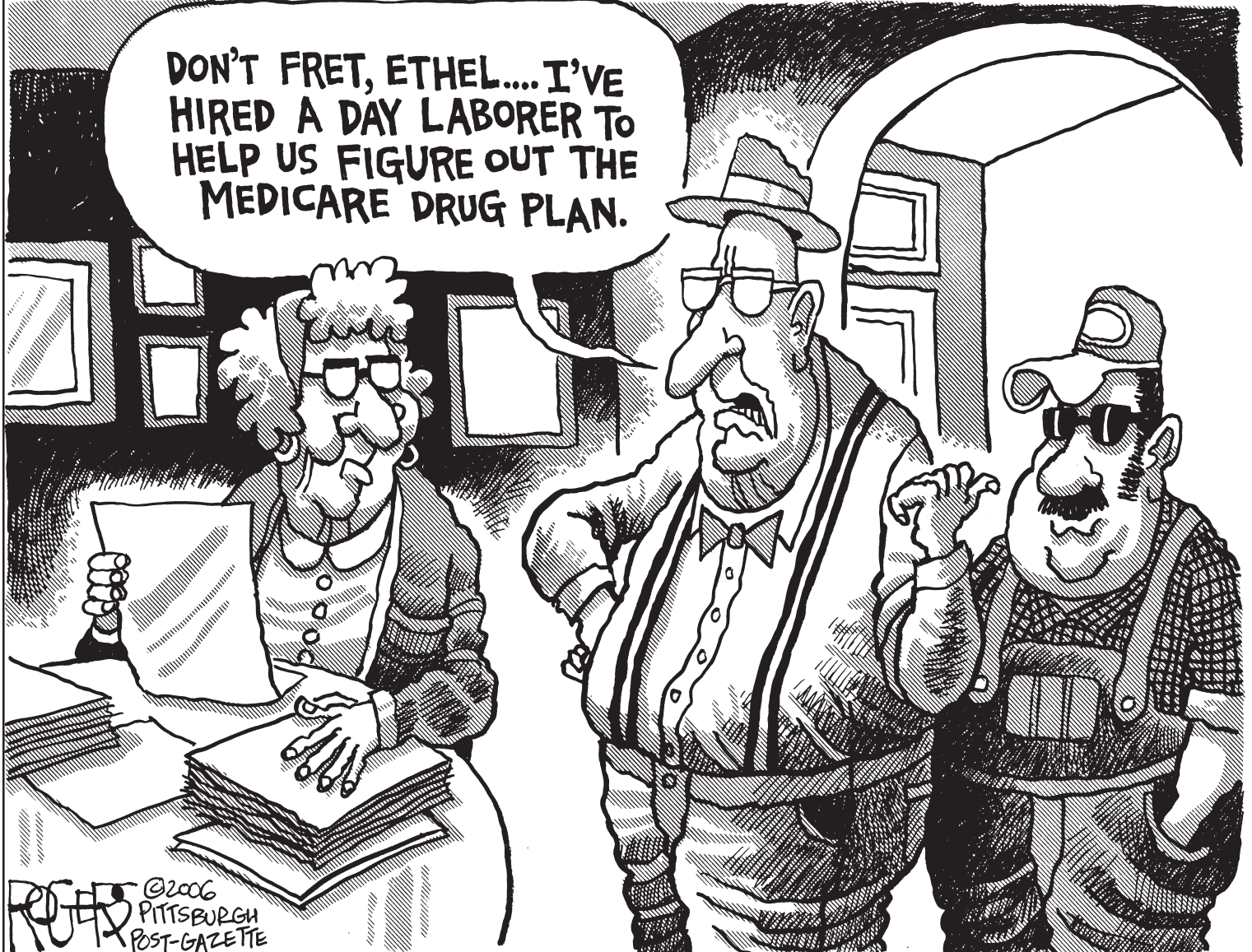
A welcoming reception for Ray was held the day before the board officially approved Ray. And not every board member was at that meeting either.

Beims would have been a good choice. He coaches Colby High's best program and has been in town long enough to know the ins and outs of the district and the school. If Beims is supposed to only coach wrestling and teach at the high school, he needs to be told that.

Beims now might be a good choice for another school district.

— John Van Nostrand, publisher

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 jvannostrand@nwkans.com or pdecker@nwkans.com.



Wind blows in signs of spring

I'm sure everyone is as tired of the wind as I am so I'll bypass the subject other than to say, "Lord, got any other options for spring weather?"

OK, I know we aren't supposed to complain, especially to God, but when my cup of tea shakes while I'm typing I know it's windy.

Besides the weather there is something else which has proven it is spring. The number of wedding invitations which have crossed my desk is growing. Next will be graduation announcements, eventually followed by birth announcements from some of those same people now graduating or getting married. Whew, better get my budget in order.

Speaking of budget, how about the price of gas?

That's another subject I'll stay away from except to remember one of my late mom's more notable lines, "Buy a mule and shoot the mule."

Mom was famous for this line when it came to anything dealing with a car. You have to know that she was born in 1919 and had the thrill of riding in some of the earliest made vehicles, several of which have stories attached.

One story took place when mom was a young bride. Having married in July 1940, dad, at the time, worked at an elevator and during the first wheat harvest mom endured with his long hours she almost killed him.

Knowing how hot it can get in late July and early August, mom was upset that dad didn't come home at the time she'd expected him.

Having a new bride's supper prepared and on the table, mom went out and got in the car, started it, put her hand to the stick shift preparing to back



Jan Katz Ackerman

• From Where I stand

up and changed her mind.

Good thing she did or you might not be reading this column.

You see, mom changed her mind and went back in the house to fume about dad's tardiness not knowing he'd had a few too many beers with the guys at the elevator and was passed out behind the car.

Oops!

Another notable car incident was the time I was riding in mom and dad's car when they passed mom's parents' house and she asked dad to make a U-turn and stop for a visit.

Making a quick turn to the left and not knowing the door next to where I sat was slightly ajar, I landed in the middle of the street only inches from the rear tire.

My scream caused dad to stop as quickly as mom jumped from the car to retrieve their then 5-year-old and scoop me up and brush off the dirt. Unharmed, my grandparents ushered me into their house and smothered me with hugs and kisses.

My parents, having had trouble getting their family started in the first place, I was their "oops" baby - dad at age 38 and mom at 36.

I'm living proof that God meant for parents to have their children when they are young because my mom earned every single gray hair that was on her head!

At 88, dad decided to become "semi-retired."

Owner of a small saw sharpening service, last month dad said he's going to cut back to part time and only work when he wants to. I told him he could have done that 20 plus years ago, but that thought never entered his mind.

Dad and I used to be next-door neighbors and I'll never forget the day he went fishing and his life was forever changed. Upon his return I asked him how the fishing was and he replied, "I caught such a big one I couldn't bring her home."

The her turned out to be his now 82-year-old lady friend named Wanda whom I've grown to love as a stepmom. Dad and Wanda have been together for almost 10 years and they enjoy each others ups and downs, sometimes literally, like when Wanda fell and broke a hip. Recovered now, Wanda keeps dad on the straight and narrow and I giggle at some of their antics.

Dad's new toy is a cell phone which takes pictures and he's always snapping shots of Wanda. You'd think he was a teen again, but it proves we are never too old to fall in love.

Coming from a family which has longevity on both sides, I'm thinking I'll probably have to follow suit and not use the words retirement for a long time.

Now only 51, I guess I better invest in a calendar company and keep those pages turning.

Community leaders have a responsibility

The Garden City Telegram

With medical evidence to prove secondhand tobacco smoke can be lethal, it's no wonder communities are taking up smoking bans.

Garden City should join the list.

Even though such bans have been enacted in communities nationwide, the move always is controversial. Protests come from business operators who believe a smoke-free policy would cost them customers — even though establishments in other cities with bans found that such fears weren't realized. In fact, some were pleasantly surprised to draw more patrons who had stayed away because of the smoke.

Proposed smoking bans also irk smokers who

believe they violate their rights — an argument that fails to consider rights of those who'd rather not inhale secondhand smoke loaded with known cancer-causing substances.

We've long been aware of the dangers of tobacco to smokers and nonsmokers. The startling truth is that at least half of all cancer deaths in the United States could be prevented if Americans took advantage of information available to them, according to the American Cancer Society.

That information includes the dangers of tobacco, responsible for more than 400,000 deaths in smokers each year. The ACS also notes that secondhand smoke is responsible for an esti-

mated 35,000 to 40,000 deaths a year from heart disease in people who aren't current smokers, and other 3,000 lung cancer deaths in nonsmoking adults.

Considering those grim statistics, community leaders have a responsibility to pursue policies that address public health and improve local quality of life. Some communities have utilized surveys gauging residents' interest in smoke-free workplaces, restaurants and other public places.

A number of Kansas communities already have taken the healthy step of banning smoking in public places. Garden City should follow suit.

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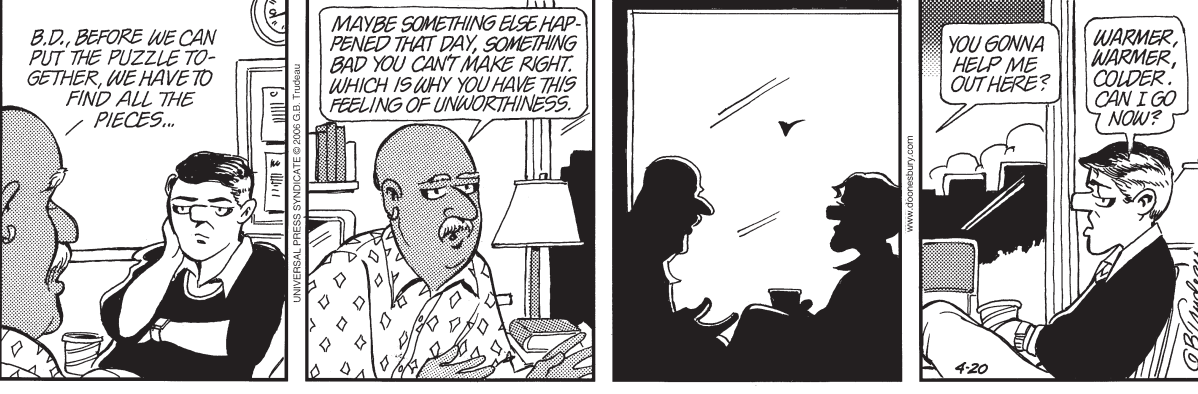
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