commentary

from our viewpoint...

Your newspaper is a mirror of the city

In ancient times, it was the custom - when a messenger came bearing bad news from an army in the field — to have the messenger beheaded.

It didn't change the outcome of the battle, of course, but it made the king feel better.

In many countries, the government decides what newspapers and broadcast stations call news. In those places, what you read is what the government wants you to read. Editors who don't go along wind up in jail, or worse.

That doesn't change the facts or solve any of a country's problems, but it makes the leaders feel better.

In this country, when a newspaper points out a problem, gives voice to an unpopular opinion or covers a controversial story, it's common to blame the paper for stirring things up.

Someone will demand that the paper stop printing that trash. Someone else will say "they" only do it to stir things up or to sell papers. What they really mean is that the paper should print things they agree with, but not things they don't.

Someone may suggest having the editor tarred and feathers and ridden out of town on a rail. But that wouldn't change the facts, would it? Or make the town any better?

Ah, but it might make the leaders feel a little better.

There was a time when newspapers were considered political tools. Editors had a point of view, an agenda, and the whole paper might be slanted their way. All Republican. All Democrat. All isolationist. All abolitionist or all pro-slavery.

In those days, there were three or four papers in every county seat, and any fool with a printing press and a few hundred dollars could start another.

Those days are gone. Most towns, even big cities, have only one newspaper. Most rural towns are lucky to have a single broadcast outlet. And those that have survived no longer exist to push an agenda. They can't afford to. They are the only game in town.

Today, newspapers understand they have an obligation to let everyone have his say, just as public officials have an obligation to listen to every opinion at a meeting. That means making a place for opinions of all sort, whether we agree with them or not. There isn't anywhere else the unpopular can turn.

Printing these ideas is something we consider a duty, a matter of honor, a civic responsibility perhaps. But it doesn't mean we agree with them. Far from it.

Most newspapers, The Goodland Daily News among them, are progressive as all get-out. We understand our business depends on a prosperous, growing community. We want new stores, new plants, new people, new schools, new business, new trade. We take every opportunity to push for progress.

What if we tried to silence the unpopular and cover up the unknown? Would that change anything?

Not likely. It might make a few people feel better, but those opinions would still be out there. The problems would still exist. And the town would be not one bit better off.

A newspaper is a mirror of the community, not the force controlling and shaping it. We are just one voice in the debate, and along with that, we have a responsibility to let every other voice be heard. If this really is a democracy, at least.

Some people have asked why we don't suppress "negative" letters and opinions. The short answer is, we can't control what people think. When we print a letter you don't agree with, chances are we don't agree

with it either. But we take seriously our role to provide a forum for all. We try to advance a positive agenda, but when it comes to others ideas





Not in the mood to see summer end

I don't know about you, but August makes me sad.

Summer is drawing to a close; it's often very hot (which I like more than very cold); the days are getting shorter and I know that winter will soon be here.

When I was a child, August was still considered a "vacation month."

School didn't begin until after Labor Day, and families often vacationed in August. We joked about, but enjoyed, the "dog days of summer." Now it seems like August is the month to "gear up" for school and sports.

Well, I'm just not in the mood to "gear up." I'm still wanting to sit back and enjoy the warm evenings without dreading the cold to come.

If I don't stay in the present and enjoy August, I'll just turn around and it will be Christmas. So I'm going to use someone else's words for the next couple of columns.

Just enjoy their thoughts and picture me in my porch swing.



Some unknown author (female, Ipresume) wrote "All I Need to Know about Life, I Learned from My Girlfriends":

'Good times are even better when they're shared. A good long talk can cure almost anything. Everyone needs someone with whom to share their secrets. Listening is just as important as talking. An understanding friend is better than a therapist; and cheaper, too! Laughter makes the world a happier place. Sometimes you just need a shoulder to cry on. Great minds think alike, especially when they are female! When it comes to 'bonding,' females do it better. It's important to make time to do 'girl things.' Calories don't count when you are having her at <lornagt@nwkansas.com>.

lunch with your girlfriends. You can never have too many shoes. Gems may be precious, but friendship is priceless!" I guess that's where my passion for shoes began.

Old nursery rhyme: "Needles and pins, needles and pins. When a man marries, his troubles begin." I know many men who would dispute this.

Alexander Woollcott: "The scenery in the play was beautiful, but the actors got in front of it." I sometimes think this describes God's world and me in it.

Albert Einstein: "There are no great discoveries or great progress so long as there is one unhappy child on earth." We should be ashamed at the number of unhappy children that we personally know.

Peter Champkin in The Sleeping Life of Aspen Williams: "I said this was fine utterance and sounded well though it could have been polished and made to mean less." How some of my columns turn out.

To contact Lorna with comments or ideas email

Life: Closing one chapter, opening another

Life changes. It doesn't wait until your ready, it just forges ahead, dragging you kicking and screaming all the way. It's always so much easier to go along, but that's a hard lesson to learn.

I'm a bit scared, that excited, frightened feeling. We're moving the first of September. I've started taking things off the walls. Slowly, I'm packing the boxes. The process of closing one chapter to begin another has begun.



anyone who will take it, and hope for the best. Yes, I think it's the reality of facing the unfamiliar I have a degree. It's in English. Nothing more worth life is beginning. I can't help but look back at all the I can't wait to check out the drive-in and the little vious pages.

Being able to walk across the street and find supportive, friendly faces is such a comforting feeling and a solace that one comes to depend on.

Our families will be missed the most. The security of knowing you have family minutes away is irreplaceable.

We won't be that far away, but we won't be popping in for lunch, either.

I'm always a little sad when a new chapter of my wonderful characters and landscapes from the pre-But I have to admit though that I can't wait to find out what the next chapter holds. Editor's note: We will miss Debra Turner as she leaves our newspaper family to journey on in her life. We knew this day would come, but it was always in the future — now it is here. She has been a wonderful person to work with, and has been an important part of our process of producing a newspaper daily. We hope she finds success in whatever she does and wherever life takes her we hope she will have kind memories of her time at The Goodland Daily News.

and opinions, we're just the messenger.

Shooting us won't make the problems go away. — Steve Haynes

The Goodland Daily News

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562) Member: Kansas Press Association The Associated Press Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association e-mail: daily@nwkansas.com



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Published daily except Saturday and Sunday and the day observed for New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day, at 1205 Main St., Goodland, Kan. 67735

Periodicals postage paid at Goodland, Kan. 67735; entered at the Goodland, Kan., Post Office under the Act of Congress of March 8, 1878.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Goodland Daily News, 1205 Main St., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: daily@nwkansas.com. Advertising questions can be sent to: gdnadv@nwkansas.com

The Goodland Daily News assumes no liability for mistakes or omissions in advertising or failure to publish beyond the actual cost of the ad.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: In Sherman County and adjacent counties: three months, \$22; six months, \$38; 12 months, \$72. By mail in Kansas, Colorado: three months, \$ 28; six months, \$50; 12 months, \$95. (All tax included.) Out of area, weekly mailing of five issues: three months, \$25; six months, \$40; 12 months, \$75.

Incorporating:

The Sherman County Herald

Founded by Thomas McCants 1935-1989



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that's the hardest. When I went to college, I had saying really. family in Hays. They made the transition for me so much easier.

There was always someone I could call for help. What doctors were the best? Which grocery was cheaper? What restaurants were safe to eat at? They helped me with everything.

Moving back to Goodland wasn't that hard. Not much had changed and we both have family in the area

We must now go into uncharted territory in Colorado, a little scary and also very exciting.

Once again I will be looking for a job. I'm sure I'll check out the paper there, give my resume to depression.

shops down town. We moved to Goodland knowing we would only be here for a short time, but a person can't help getting a little attached to certain things.

I can't imagine what life will be like when we can't take Baxter to Rosewood Park to play frisbee every day. We haven't told him yet. Neither of us can bare his pouty look.

China Gardens has the best sesame chicken. I've tried it other places, but it's just not the same. I guess I'll have to find a new favorite dish to save me from

Good to see people expressing their opinion

To the Editor:

I'm glad to see more people here in Goodland are starting to voice their opinions about how these city officials are spending money, then expecting us to pay for their boo-boos.

So far there has been no mention of our Senior citizens. How are they going to afford these higher taxes — that you shoved down our throats — on a fixed income.

Every time I pickup one of our daily newspapers there's always mention of more money, more money. Why as tax paying citizens don't we have a chance to vote on these big money spending deals?

I don't think you did your homework very well, before putting in a new ball park — which we had plenty of — and also a new tennis court. What was wrong with the one we had?

Someone should have looked into what it would cost for a big water world park such as ours, to keep, maintain and insure it.

I'm sure there are more people here in town who feel the way we do, but are afraid to speak up and rock the boat!

Let the people of Goodland have a say and a vote

Letter Policy

The Goodland Daily News encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten if possible, and should include a telephone number and, most importantly, a signature. Unsigned letters will not be published. Form letters will be rejected, as will letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and good taste. We encourage letters, with phone numbers, by e-mail to: <daily@nwkansas.com>.



to the editor

on how you spend our tax dollars.

By the way thanks to Chuck and Rick for trying to help us citizens. We do need to know what's going on, contrary to others beliefs.

Diana Nichols Goodland

To the Editor:

If you think families and churches can't afford their welfare and charity; is it smart or stupid to compare the political parasites nefarious parvenu mirage of utopia, (pawning the unborn to peonage)?

Social Security is the biggest financial farce and fraudulent chain letter in the country! The Replicrats (socialist Republicans and communist Democrats or visa versa) claim those smart enough to earn are to stupid to save! Therefore, by tyranny of withholding taxes and slavery of those forced to seize them, garnish everybody's wages, then buy votes promising to care for those eligible (government Ponzi, lottery, a la karta inflation).

Name anyone they have saved for, and returned to, their own money (plus interest)! What bank, credit union, savings and loan, etc. not doing that can survive?

It is smart or stupid to compare what the savings stealing Replicrats take in taxes, to give in subsidies (about \$4 taxes per \$1 subsidy).

If everybody had their own retirement account, most could have more to spend themselves, char-

ity for the needy and keep principle for their heirs. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise." Proverbs 6:6

Frank Sowers

Benkelman

berry's world



SHERMAN, COUNTY

from our readers