

from our viewpoint...

# What we write can upset people

Sometimes when you publish things, it upsets someone. Sometimes several someones.

In the May 1 edition of *The Goodland Star-News*, my article, "Partnership feels public forum on drinking worked," contained statements by members of the Sherman County Partnership for Prevention and Education that have caused a stir.

I want to apologize to members of the partnership, to Jake Kling and his family and to Goodland High School Principal Harvey Swager for any upset this may have caused. This was not my intent.

I intended for my article to show that the partnership had put a lot of effort into planning the event. Others put a lot of effort into helping pull it off, and Jake had the courage to stand up before his parents, teachers, classmates, law officers and the principal and admit that he had drunk alcohol at times and that some of his friends still do. And he reached out to his peers to help.

Not everything went the way the partnership intended in planning the event, but it seems to have had more impact than some programs. A member of the partnership said people have called and asked her about the headline over the story: "What worked?"

She didn't know how to answer that, so I will. Whether or not the forum worked depends on what you expected it to do. The partnership has spent time, effort and money in the past planning events where hardly anyone came. People showed up this time. And they listened. The day after the event, people e-mailed offering help with the group's efforts.

The objective in holding the meeting was to get people to take teen drinking seriously and to make them want to do something about it, to get teens to take the dangers seriously and make better choices. That was accomplished.

Teen drinking is a messy subject. Parents don't want to believe their teens do it. Some people want to believe a student who doesn't drink can convince those who do to stop. Life doesn't usually work that way.

People don't always pay attention to the example of someone who didn't make a mistake. Hearing it from someone who's been there makes more of an impact. Jake Kling had the courage to stand up and do something to help.

Nice, neat, expected packages aren't always the best. Someone who has courage, stands up for what he believes in and tells the truth is a positive. Achieving a goal is a positive, even if it doesn't happen in the way you hoped.

One presentation, one forum isn't going to make every teenager who drinks stop, but if the Town Hall meeting convinced even one to find more positive things to do with his time, it was worth the time and effort. One life improved is worth it, and that is a positive. — *Sharon Corcoran*

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# Greensburg leveled, but not destroyed

To the Editor:

I write this letter one week and two days after an more than mile-wide tornado turned the lives of my 3-year-old son, myself and so many other people I know upside down.

We are residents of Greensburg, the town leveled by a tornado on Friday, May 4, at 9:45 p.m.

This is a community leveled, but not destroyed. We are the survivors and the evacuees, not the victims. We are Greensburg!

The days following the tornado have been humbling and overwhelming, not because of the losses, but because of the gain we have all received in our lives. People not only in Kansas, but across the United States and even all over the world have pulled together alongside the residents of Greensburg as we regroup and work toward rebuilding our lives.

Organizations such as the Red Cross and Salvation Army, businesses, and families and people acting on their own have made a differ-



## from our readers

to the editor

ence to us with each and every donation, whether it was \$10, clothes from your closets, a case of bottled water, a box of food or other household goods, or even cards and phone calls. We appreciate the support more than mere words could ever express.

The weeks and months ahead will be just as difficult as the past nine days have been as we get to the bottom of the rubble and begin to rebuild our lives from the dust up.

Your continued support, thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated. At this time, organizers in the heart of the disaster area are asking that clothing and food donations be put on hold. Household items will be gathered later

as the residents of Greensburg begin to rebuild their homes and businesses. Most people are living in shelters or with friends and family and do not have a place to store much.

Three things are needed most at this time: sanitizing hand gel and sanitizing wipes for the volunteers and residents working in Greensburg, and monetary donations to the Greensburg Disaster Relief Fund or private groups and organizations such as churches and schools in Greensburg, as well as the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Lions Clubs and others.

For information on ways you can help, including the Greensburg Disaster Relief Fund, contact me at (785) 460-6653. I am staying in Colby with family members.

Thank you very much for everything you have done for my son and I, and the other residents of Greensburg. We appreciate it more than you could ever know!

Kathy Arendt, Greensburg  
1998 Graduate of Colby High School

# None dare call it sabotage

Under the guise of responding to the will of those voters who gave them control of the House of Representatives, Democrats are busy trying to undermine the war effort and bash the president to improve their chances of winning the 2008 elections.

One of them, Rep. Dennis Kucinich — the perennial presidential candidate from Ohio — is wandering into cloud cuckoo-land by introducing articles of impeachment against Vice President Dick Cheney and calling for the impeachment of President Bush ... a couple of dandy ideas when the nation is involved in a war.

If that isn't sufficiently bizarre, we have Rep. Henry Waxman, chairman of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, spewing out subpoenas all over the place in what is the beginning of an obvious drive towards impeaching the president after hordes of administration officials have been dragged up to Capitol Hill and put on the rack.

Like his colleague Dennis Kucinich, little Henry Waxman — his ridiculous mustache all aquiver as he rants and rages against the high crimes and misdemeanors of which he is convinced the Bush administration is guilty — has begun to mimic the inmates of an asylum for the mentally deranged, who imagine dark and deadly deeds are afoot all around them.

The other day in Ramadi, we lost nine of the best Americans - cavalry scouts from the 82nd Airborne who were truck-bombed by Al Qaeda.

So how do the politicians here at home react to all of this? Simply by targeting the United States military.

Mr. Waxman held hearings designed to portray the Pentagon as a haven for propagandists who heartlessly exploit the deaths or combat ordeals of American soldiers to bolster the image of the administration's war effort.

He was allegedly looking into the death of Pat Tillman and the capture and rescue of Private Jessica Lynch. Shamefully, he is using these two Americans to advance his agenda of retreat and defeat.

Just what was he hoping to find? That Pat Tillman was killed by friendly fire? We've known that for a long time. That the military may have made a mistake — that somebody might have not



## michael reagan

making sense

told the truth? We already knew that too.

What Waxman is doing is hoping to discredit not just the Army, but the service of Pat Tillman and all the unsung heroes out there in Iraq and Afghanistan. When one of our soldiers is killed while serving in harm's way, as Tillman was, it is a hero's death whether from friendly or unfriendly fire. He died because he was there willingly, in harm's way.

When you're in a war zone and you're killed, in my mind you're a hero. And all of the despicable political rhetoric of Henry Waxman can't change that.

Waxman is out to discredit the military and the wartime service of our men and women and he is willing to dance on Pat Tillman's grave to do it.

Moreover, just what is Waxman hoping to find out about Jessica Lynch? That she wasn't raped? That she wasn't harmed? Just how does that help America?

So as nine dead Americans lie in the sands of Iraq, are the Democrats trying to defeat our enemy by attacking our troops? They are trying to prove that the military lied about these things, ignoring the fact that every war needs heroes, and it's hard to blame the military for stretching the facts and making a hero out of a famous American who died while in harm's way.

In the case of Jessica Lynch, who willingly admits she did nothing heroic when she was captured — that she did not go down fighting with her guns ablaze, and who vehemently denies she was a hero — Waxman gleefully jumped on the military for their deception and celebrated her admission that she was not a hero.

The lie was not that Jessica Lynch was a hero, which she was just by virtue of the fact that she was serving in a war zone in danger of being taken prisoner by the enemy. The lie was the fact that she didn't fire her gun, something that does not make her any less of a hero even if she refuses to admit she was.

Mike Reagan, the eldest son of the late President Ronald Reagan, is heard on more than 200 talk radio stations nationally. E-mail comments to Reagan@caglecartoons.com.

