

from our viewpoint...

Penney's closing shakes up people

"What is going to happen?" That question has been on the lips of a lot of people in the past couple of weeks, and it got kicked up a notch with the announcement last week that Goodland's J.C. Penney's store will close in about 90 days.

So, another decision by corporate researchers and the bean counters has threatened a store in Goodland. For many, the easy answer is to blame it all on Wal-Mart, which came to town nearly 11 years ago, but that would not be fair. Total sales in Goodland and Sherman County have shown a steady growth over the past 10 years.

More importantly, the Penney's store here reportedly shows a profit, and employees have said for years it'd do even better if they had a larger building.

Driving down Main Ave., you see empty store fronts, and that does fit some of the corporate research showing that people continue to abandon the old downtown shopping areas and go to the larger stores developing near I-70 out on K-27.

Some stores continue to be successful downtown, though, and attempt to draw more shoppers into the "Main Avenue Mile" with promotions.

Penney's has been an anchor to the downtown, and that was the basic philosophy of the company when it started many years ago. With the development in the 1970s and '80s of shopping malls, the Penney's people have steadily moved to fringe locations rather than following the philosophy that made them America's hometown store more than 100 years ago.

What the corporate people are ignoring is that Goodland is a regional shopping area, and that closing this store will drive more customers to other areas and not necessarily to a nearby Penney's. With the closest stores being in McCook (135 miles) and Hays (140 miles) and gas at nearly \$4 a gallon, those are not close, not at all.

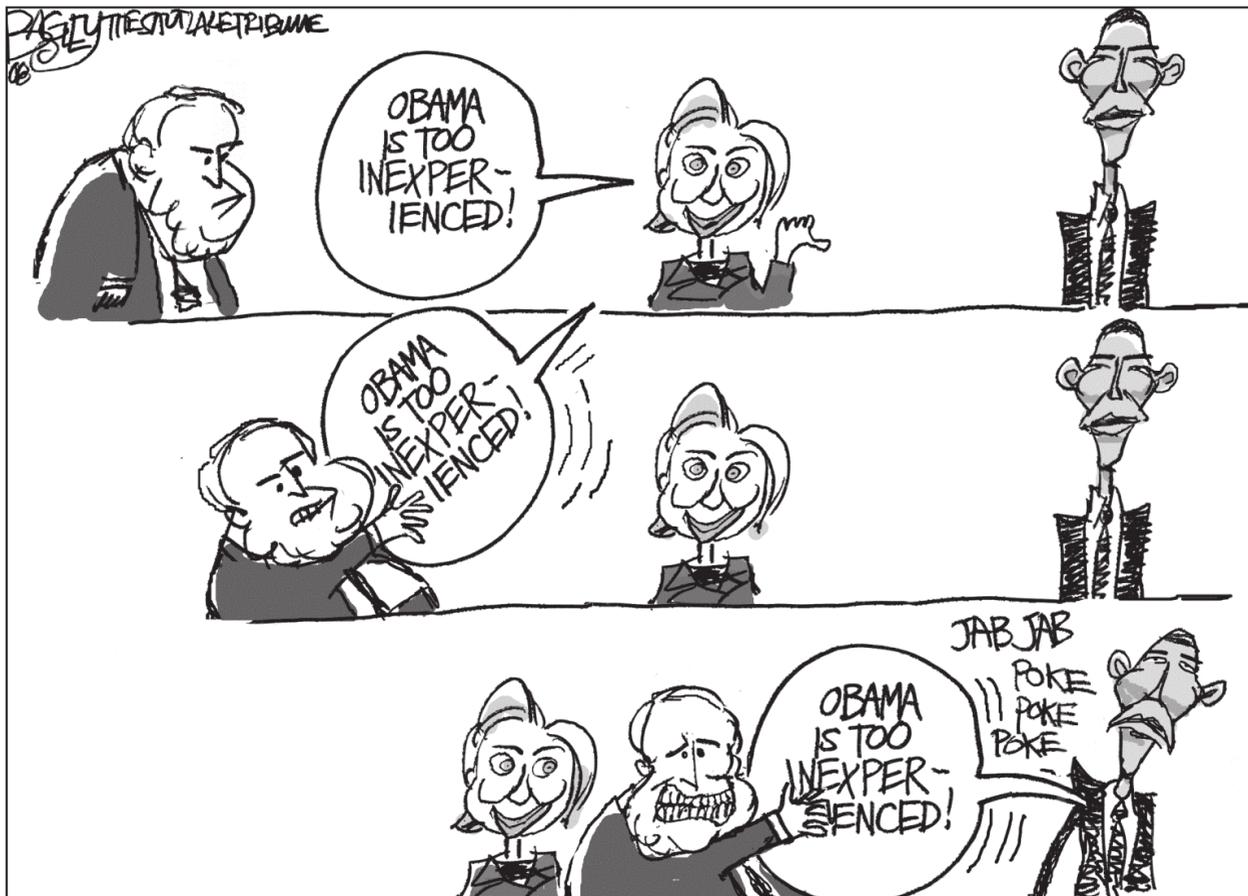
Everyone in Goodland should write to the top Penney's officials, and find other ways to get the message to the top brass that we are not going down without a fight. Mail letters to Myron (Mike) Ullman III, chairman and chief executive officer; Kenneth Hicks, president, chief merchandising officer and director; and Mike Taxter, director of J.C. Penney stores, at the J.C. Penney Co, 6501 Legacy Drive, Plano TX 75024.

The statue in front of the Sherman County courthouse shows the pioneers who settled this area, and like them, we "came to stay."

I heard someone give an answer to the question of what is going to happen.

"We are going to roll over, get up and go on, because that is what people of the High Plains have been doing for more than 150 years."

Have you said something good about Goodland today?
— Tom Betz



Cheating on that 'homemade' cherry pie

"Can she make a cherry pie, Billy Boy, Bill Boy."

Yep, but she cheats just a little.

When the woman from the church called, I surprised her by answering the phone. She was so used to leaving messages, she couldn't believe it was me, not the answering machine.

"Can you provide two pies for the church supper on Saturday," she stammered.

"Sure," I said.

It was a rare week. I was going to be in town all seven days. And besides that, I like to cook.

Really. I enjoy cooking. I take two cooking magazines and have about a thousand cookbooks. Still, I had been gone a lot, and there were lots of things to catch up on. There were just more projects than time.

Now there was a time, back when my children were young, that I made apple pies all the time. Well, not all the time, but more often than just Thanksgiving and Christmas.

We'd go out and buy a bushel of apples in the fall and I would sit around at night, peeling and dicing them. When I had six cups ready, I would mix the apples with the sugar and spices,



cynthia haynes

• open season

put the pie filling in a plastic bag, which I put in a loaf pan, and freeze the whole mess. By winter, I'd have a stack of apple pie bricks just waiting for crusts.

Then when I got the urge or we had company, I'd get out "The Joy of Cooking" and make a double crust recipe. One crust was for the bottom and I'd slice the second into a lattice for the top. The excess dough got sprinkled with sugar and cinnamon for the kids to eat as pie-crust cookies. The shapes were funny, but they didn't seem to mind.

You'd think I would have more time now that the kids are grown but, it just doesn't seem to work that way.

That's why I sneaked into the grocery Friday and picked up some pre-made pie dough and four cans of cherry-pie filling.

The best way to make a pie look homemade

is to make sure there are imperfections. It can't be a perfect balance of fruit and crust. It can't be perfectly browned on all sides. The rim of the crust can't have evenly spaced little indentations.

And my two pies looked homemade. The lattices were crooked and I had to piece parts of the rims together. As they baked, the edges started getting done too soon, so I had to haul them out of the oven and wrap them in foil. (That was a fun trick at 425 degrees.)

Still, my almost homemade pies came out pretty well and they were a hit at the church supper. I noticed that the pieces didn't exit the pie pans well, so they looked even more homemade than ever after they were placed on little paper plates in heaps of crust and cherries. Maybe I should have made them a little sooner and let them cool instead of moving them from oven to car to church basement in the span of 15 minutes.

Oh well, the neighbors have a cherry tree. Maybe next time...

Nah. It's not gonna happen.

Woman dares to reveal Dems racist past

Did you know... Martin Luther King, Jr. was a Republican? Every civil rights law, beginning in the 1860s through the 1950s and 1960s, was fought against by Democrats? Or the KKK had links to the Democratic Party? Not only are these questions addressed by the National Black Republicans Association, but also more surprising facts.

A few months ago, we had the privilege to meet the chairwoman of the Black Republicans, a brave and gutsy woman named Frances Rice. "The double standard looms large when Democrats practice racism," says Rice. "Those who search in the Republican Party haystack for the racist needles, ignore the mountain of evidence about racism in the Democrat Party."

Rice does not initially appear to be the type of person who would strike out and dare to challenge a giant, but that's just what this modern day "David" has done. Rice said her organization is working to set the record straight and "wake up" black voters and "shed the light of truth on the racist past and failed socialism of the Democratic Party."

Little did we know Rice would soon be feeling the intense, sizzling heat of the national spotlight for reminding people and speaking the truth that the Democratic Party wishes we would all forget.

Last week, when Democrats became aware of the Black Republican's Fall 2007 magazine being distributed at a black-voter event in Tallahassee, the liberal media and Democratic Party giants alike began firing their attacks. One headline in a newspaper read, "Magazine stirs race politics" and wrote that the magazine "pushes racial buttons by highlighting low points in the history of the Democratic Party." A reporter from the The Miami Herald decried The Black Republican magazine, calling its comments "strident" and saying Democrats were "outraged."

Sometimes the truth hurts.

Rice cites renowned liberal historian and author Dr. Eric Foner in her well-documented expose, "The Ku Klux Klan was the Terrorist Arm of the Democratic Party." In "A Short History of Reconstruction," Professor Foner wrote: "Founded in 1866 as a Tennessee social club, the Ku Klux Klan spread into nearly every Southern state, launching a 'reign of terror' against Republican leaders black and white." Again, it was Foner who said, "In effect, the Klan was a military force serving the interests of the Democratic party... and all who desired



floyd, mary brown

• commentary

the restoration of white supremacy."

Several other articles, including one titled "Why Martin Luther King, Jr. Was a Republican," also raised the ire of "giants." Frances Rice says she knew the King family and "there's no way they were Democrats" in the 1960s. Not only did King vote for Eisenhower in 1956, but this was a time when racist southern Democrats such as Bull Connor used vicious dogs and fire hoses to break up protests; after all, segregation and discrimination were the law of the land in the South.

One who saw firsthand Connor's atrocities was our nation's first female black secretary of state, Condi Rice. Not only did she witness the brutality inflicted on the peaceful protestors at the 1963 Children's March in Birmingham, but Condi's neighborhood experienced threats of violence. One of her childhood friends was killed in a church bombing by the Ku Klux Klan along with three other girls. Secretary Rice's family repeatedly faced discrimination. A prime example of this was when John, her father, tried to register to vote with the Democratic Party. They told him that to register as Democrat he must first guess the number of beans in their jar. Not one to accept such insulting treatment, John Rice headed over to the Republican register and promptly became

a Republican.

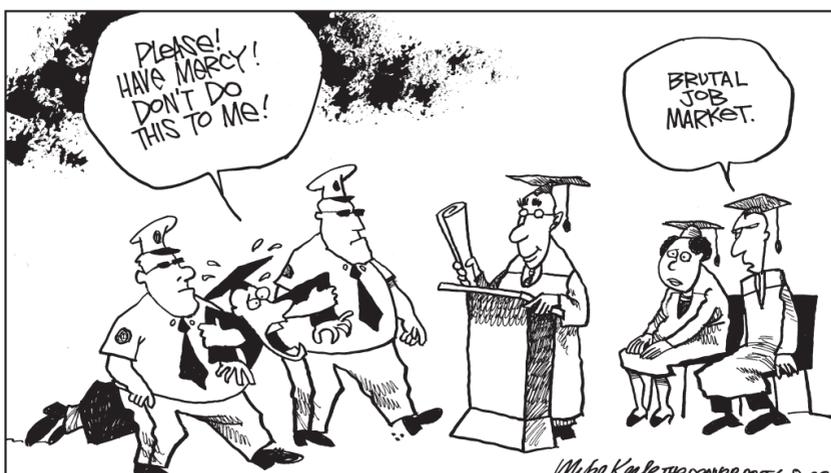
"Racism" is the trump card in the indictment of Republicans," points out Dr. Thomas Sowell of the Hoover Institute. "But the cold fact is that the whole Jim Crow era in the South was dominated by Democrats."

The mission of the National Black Republican Association is "to be a resource for the black community on Republican ideals and promote the traditional values of the black community which are the core values of the Republican Party: strong families, faith in God, personal responsibility, quality education, and equal opportunities for all."

We saw evidence of one of their bold campaigns in Florida. Prominently displayed on a gigantic billboard was the proclamation that "Martin Luther King, Jr. was a Republican" along with a photo of the civil rights leader, the organization's name and Web site. It was hard to miss. Currently the association has identical signs in several other states and hopes to go nationwide. To help and donate go to: www.NBRA.info

The Republican Party, the party of Abraham Lincoln, fought to free blacks from slavery. Now the daunting goal of Black Republicans is to "return black Americans to their Republican Party roots by enlightening them about how Republicans fought for their freedom and civil rights and are now fighting for their educational and economic advancement."

Floyd and Mary Beth Brown are bestselling authors and speakers. Together they write a national weekly column.



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