

from other pens...

Biden's experience not the sole factor

Critics were quick to theorize that Sen. Barack Obama's decision to choose veteran U.S. Sen. Joe Biden as a running mate centered solely on the experience factor.

Those critics should step back and review history. Obama follows a long list of so-called inexperienced presidential candidates who chose seasoned running mates. Take the present occupant of the White House, for example.

The only experience George W. Bush brought to the table when he decided to seek the presidency was his stint as governor of Texas. He had no foreign-policy experience and no U.S. House or Senate experience, unlike Obama, who at least has four years of national political service under his belt.

Pundits and critics alike ought to deep-six the inexperience label they've attached to Obama. Clearly, voters in the past have elected equally or less-experienced candidates for president who chose experienced vice presidents.

And if sound decision-making is the mark of a good leader, then Obama's first big decision ought to assure voters. Biden is a congenial, thoughtful and experienced senator. His depth of knowledge on world leaders and issues broadened as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and his recent trip to help cool tempers between leaders of Russia and Georgia made his stock rise as vice presidential material.

Yes, American voters want a presidential ticket stacked with two individuals ready to meet head-on the myriad of problems — a war, high energy and food prices, global warming and a flawed health care system — left by the departing Bush administration. But Americans also need to see a slice of themselves and a dose of humor in their president and vice president.

Biden brings those qualities to the Democratic ticket, and he brings out those traits in Obama.

And if he happens also to bring experience to the Democratic ticket, well, he's not the first vice presidential candidate to do that in the 20th and 21st centuries. — *The Hutchinson News*

where to write

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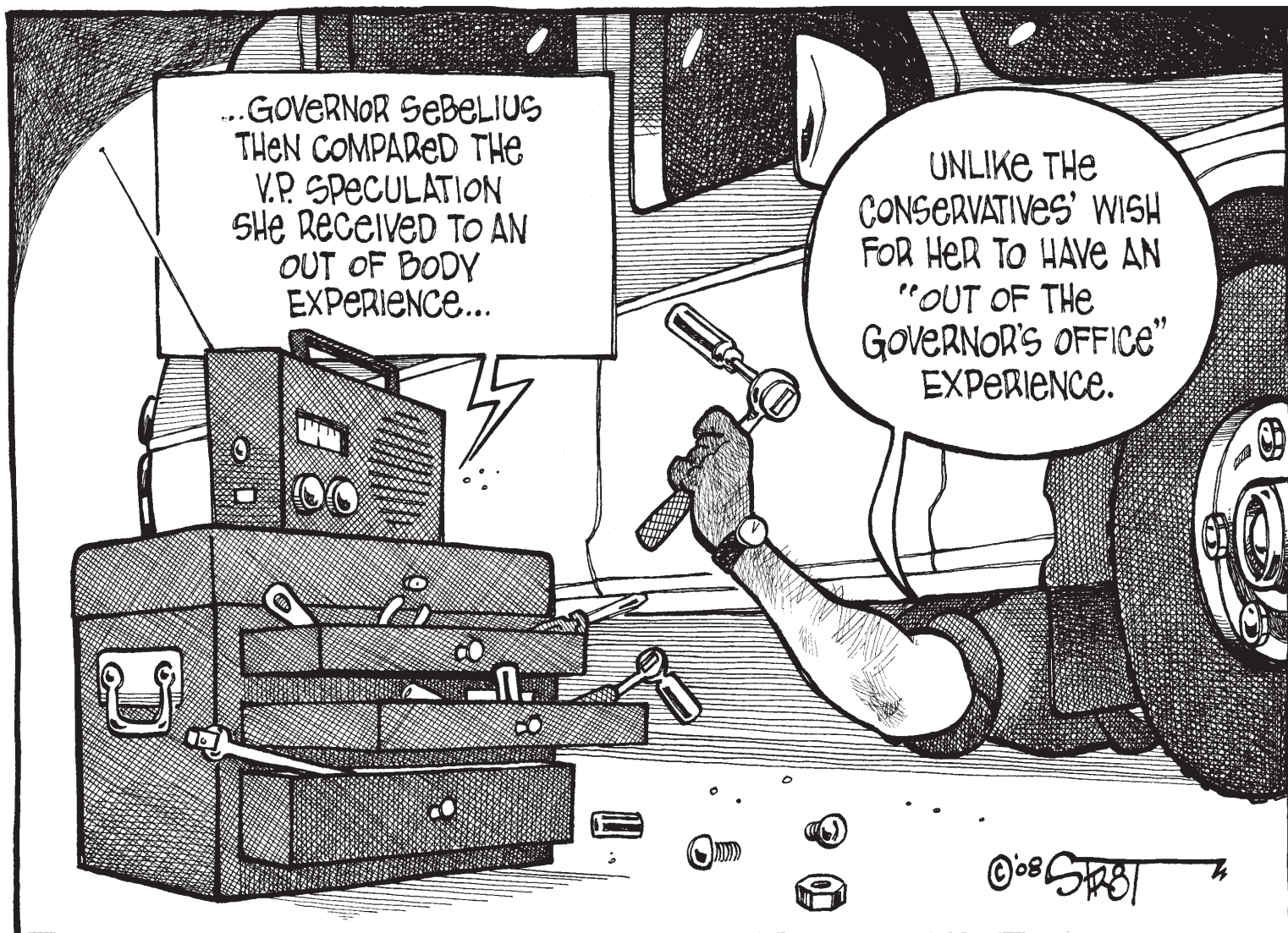
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We should follow basic business principles

To the Editor:
As a business owner I've always valued the opinions of my customers. I especially pay close attention the opinions of customers who feel that their experience with my company is less than they expected.

It's these divergent opinions that, while often uncomfortable to hear, spur me to make changes that will help my business.

I work on the rule that for every customer who takes the time to communicate their problem to me, there are likely 10 more that are just as unhappy who simply will never use



from our readers

• to the editor

us again. If I ignore these problem customers, I do so at peril to my business.

It is a review of these basic business principles that makes me wonder why some in our community would be pushing for the removal of a school board member who has chosen to

send his own children to a competing school.

One must respect the courage it takes for this individual to do what he feels is right for his children but yet not shirk his duty to his community.

The Goodland school district will lose a valuable voice if the efforts to ostracize and force him out are successful. Perhaps a more productive approach would be to view this individual as the valuable resource he is.

Ken Klemm
Goodland

The view from Invesco Field

From the air-conditioned comfort of the press box at Invesco Field at Mile High we watched the final day of the Democratic National Convention.

A bird's eye view from the glass wall of the fourth floor shows loaves of city buses flowing through the orange entry gates. One at a time in mid-parking lot they open all doors and, ant-like, passengers flow onto the pavement, briefly spread out, then gather at the blunt end of a line which oozes like a shallow molasses river around the perimeter of the parking lot A.

A white line of tents blocks entry to the stadium. Slices of line break off, move into the tent and through a cordon of police and dogs, which breaks the slices apart into individuals again.

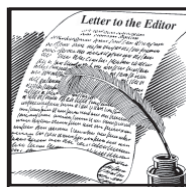
As people move through the screening, good humor prevails. "Did you find anything?" a husky African American, his press credentials flapping in the slight breeze, calls out to the security guard leading a K-9 around his stack of electronic luggage. "Only dirty socks," the officer jokes back, "We don't do laundry."

The news man gathers his belongings and moves off toward the dark maw of the arena as the K-9 and the officer move on to their next victim, a woman in an electric wheelchair. "Any rocket launchers here?" he jokes, while checking the base of the chair. She laughs, "I hope not!" And so it goes, a massive movement of humanity, moving, being processed, moving on- massively, steadily, efficiently.

The DNC is a slice of the United Nations. Spanish, German, French, Japanese, Russian languages salt the growing noise inside the stadium like exotic spices. BBC has a glass room along the press corridors of the upper levels. A room nearby is labeled "visiting British media." CNN, Fox, ABC, CBS, and NBC have rooms along the glass wall as well as tented pavilions along the south end of Invesco Field "at Mile High."

By 3 p.m. delegates are thickening on the floor of the field, while "witnesses to history" form clots of humanity in the bleachers. a guitarist and fellow band members entertain from the stage, generally ignored by the still milling crowd.

Roving cameras zoom in on the occasional dancing or clapping spectator. Then speakers take over and the crowd starts to focus. Clapping and cheering interrupts the speakers at



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appropriate moments and their remarks interrupt the flow of conversation as crowds settle into their seats. In the press boxes the sound on ceiling-mounted television screens gets turned up.

The last and most exciting day of the 2008 National Democratic Convention has begun. Nancy Pelosi opens it officially at 4 p.m., but the excitement has already started to grow. "When does he speak?" A journalist from Politico asks. No one needs her to define who "he" is.

Jennifer Hudson, Academy Award Winner, sings the national anthem. Shawn Johnson says the pledge of allegiance first. The crowd and delegates stand, many with their hands over their hearts. Most journalists do not. Nor do they wear caps, buttons, badges or other campaign memorabilia. They are here to work, not to join in.

Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter, Jr., "pirating, pioneering spirit of the American West." mis-speaking in a hoarse, breaking voice in his welcome to the DNC. A democrat, Ritter spoke enthusiastically about the Obama-Biden ticket.

John Lewis: "We still have a dream." Was at Martin Luther King's first speech. "We must march like we've never marched before." 45th anniversary of the march on Washington.

Daughter of Martin Luther King, Rev. Bernice King, Red jacket, black skirt, simply dressed, dignified appearance. Ringing voice said she decided not by the color of his skin, but by the content of his character to support Obama's nomination for President of the United States. She introduced her brother, Martin Luther King III.

He work a blue silk figured tie, blue shirt, dark gray pin striped suit. Not the orator his father was, but a strong speaking voice.

"Where it stands in time of challenge and controversy is the measure of the nation." "We must do democracy" "Let us look forward to the next 50 years because our ability as a people is potentially limitless." Look back at what we've done, then go forward. "We still need Barack Obama"

The crowd gets a little restive, some drifting to a fast food dinner, others making a break for a restroom before another string of speakers commences. One group of journalists stirs envy by having three large pizzas delivered.

Some journalists in our area wondered why our laptops can't connect to the Internet. A Quest technologist drops by to explain that we are not connected to the Internet because prior arrangements costing \$1,700 per connection needed to be made in order for us to get on the 'net. Chastened, we realize our humble position in the grand scheme of things.

The stadium explodes with flashes, glittering like diamonds as he walks onto the stage. Intermittent thunder of stamping feet.

"With profound gratitude and great humility I accept your nomination of President to this great United States."

He thanked Hillary Clinton and President Bill Clinton, Ted Kennedy, and Joe Biden for their company on the journey of the campaign. Also thanked his wife, Michelle, Malia and Sasha, their daughters.

During the speech there was occasional reactions from the press corps — humor when called for, once applause. Then the moment was over and everyone began the journey in reverse, but with a sense they had witnessed history that night. — *Ava Betz*

Ava Betz is the wife of The Goodland Star-News Editor Tom Betz, and a former city editor for The Lamar Daily News and Garden City Telegram.

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