

from our viewpoint...

Political effort wins adoption of baseball

The large crowd at Monday’s Goodland School Board meeting showed the interest and deep passion people have when there is a question of athletics and academics on the table.

At issue was the question of having boys baseball added to the competitive athletic teams at Goodland high school.

This was not the first time the question had been raised, and the 4-3 vote showed the mixed feelings on the board. It was not lost on everyone that the four votes for adding baseball were the four new board members who were elected last year while the three against have served more than one term.

Baseball’s supporters packed the room to show their passion for this sport, and following the winning vote that welled up in celebration.

Those who felt adding baseball was not the right thing for the board to do brought up good arguments, and it appeared they might have had some of the board wavering.

That meeting and the public discussion of both sides of an issue, with all the passion and effort that goes with trying to change the direction of any political force, is the essence of American democracy.

When most people think about politics, they think about the national scene and a race for the White House or Congress, but the most important part of the process is closer to home.

Politics is the interaction of people in a society who have banded together to make a difference. It does not matter whether the difference is adding baseball at the high school or the need for a stop sign or a new water park; these are all political efforts.

We don’t put names like Republican or Democrat on these efforts at the local level, but we do find people talking about the “baseball people” or that “Education 1st” group or even those “band parents” who want to make sure the band gets to make a special trip.

These are good things, reasons to be proud to be involved in the American political process. We need to show our kids standing up for what you believe and working with others to achieve change is something they should do, and to be proud of.

Politics is part of what we do every day when we go about our business and deal with other people. It only gets a bad name when someone tries to control or bypass the public debate and involvement in the decision-making process.

To its credit, the school board allowed both sides time to present their cases, listened and then rendered a decision.

Some projects, like bringing baseball to Goodland, are one-time efforts which should not have to be repeated for many years.

However, there are others, such as downtown revitalization, which have not achieved their goal, and will require more effort. It appears the first attempt to rebuild three blocks of Main at the same time the city tears out the intersections at 11th and 12th is not going to happen because there was not enough matching private money to reach the \$200,000 goal.

The project is not dead, but it will take more time and effort to bring the business community together to accomplish it. The Sherman County program to remodel the historic Southwest Bell building could not be used as part of the project this year, but it can be the cornerstone for another effort in the next year or two.

At the time this year’s program was being put together, the Chamber of Commerce found itself between directors. Suddenly there was no one to help call on the merchants and work with them to understand how they could help this project and how it would help them. When the Chamber board does decide on a new person, a new effort for downtown revitalization should be one of their top priorities. — Tom Betz

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Sometimes I feel behind the power curve

I don’t know about you, but sometimes I get behind the power curve.

That’s an air force term meaning that the plane is getting ahead of me.

No, I’m not piloting a plane, but my life is moving faster than I am. Here I’m ready to go on vacation and realize that I haven’t written enough columns to meet column deadlines while I’m gone.

So I’m “behind the power curve.”

It’s been quite awhile since I’ve devoted a column to other people’s insights, and I’ve collected some which give me pause to ponder.

Maybe they’ll do the same for you.

You may not agree with all of them; I don’t either. But they caused me to stop and think about them for awhile.

“It was my father’s opinion that God was something of a windbag, continually talking to mankind, but pitching His discourse beyond our abbreviated human capacities. His method was too optimistic, and God lost most of His audience.” Fred Chappell in Brighten the Corner Where You Are. (Sounds like a lot of sermons I’ve heard! LGT)

“The whole damn history of the world is the fight between the selfish and the unselfish.” Line from Born Yesterday movie. (Too true! Explains a lot of wars and arguments, doesn’t it? LGT)



**lorna
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• commentary

“Here’s a toast to all the “F” words. Friends, family, fate, forgiveness, forever.” Line from My First Mister movie. (I want to remember this one. You can imagine the shocked expressions when this toast is first presented. LGT)

“Don’t fear death. Fear the unlive life. You don’t have to live forever; you just have to live.” From Tuck Everlasting movie. (I think as I grow older, I become more afraid that my life has gone ‘unlive.’ That’s why I’m driven to write more and more. Just to prove I was here. LGT)

Here’s proof that political correctness has permeated our society and gone way too far. A knife stuck in a person was described by J.D. Robb in Purity in Death: The task of the EMTs was to pull out ‘the invasive object.’ (Gross understatement, as far as I’m concerned. LGT)

And I’ll close with an e-mail by an unknown author to brighten your day and put you in a better frame of mind. It’s called The 7 Ups!

“1. Wake Up! Decide to have a good day. ‘This is the day the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.’ Psalms 118:24.

Citizen support does make a difference

To the Editor:

I would like to thank the community for their support in adding baseball to our high school athletic programs It’s taken several years of effort, but the players were worth it.

I thank the players for not giving up hope, the parents for supporting their sons’ interest, the high school administrators for their support, and the four board members who voted it in.

Most of all, I thank the people who spent hours of their time to make this dream come true. Monday night was a very emotional night for all of us. It was also an educational and eye opening experience. Everyone there was concerned with one thing; providing what’s best for our youth.

I feel we have very caring and intelligent board members who vote with this community’s interest in mind. What I learned Monday night is that the board is not always informed.

If someone has a concern, unless you speak to a board member or they are directly involved, they may never hear about it. They receive a packet prior to a board meeting on topics to be discussed. The superintendent and sometimes the board president determine what the board needs to know.

So I’m asking the community to get involved. Don’t assume the board knows; make sure they know. They want to know. Don’t call just one; call them all!

Please get involved.

Liz West
Goodland



from our
readers

• to the editor

To the Editor:

We thought Kansas residents should be aware of some recent changes at the U.S. Senate affecting communications with our offices. As you may know, on Feb. 2, ricin, a potent poison, was found in the mail room of Majority Leader Bill Frist’s office. As part of the police investigation, our offices were closed for several days and all mail stopped. Police collected recent mail from our offices.

If you mailed a letter to our Washington offices after Jan. 10, please assume we have not received it, and may not in the near future until the ricin investigation is completed. The

where to write

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774; web address — roberts.senate.gov

U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521; web address — brownback.senate.gov

U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran, 1519 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 225-2715; e-mail address — jerry-moran@mail.house.gov

Senate is not distributing new mail, and we do not know when mail distribution in Washington will resume.

Despite the inconvenience, we hope to hear from you. The best options are to contact us by phone (in Washington or any of our state offices), by fax or by e-mail.

To contact Sen. Roberts’ Washington office, call (202) 224-4774, fax to (202) 224-3514 (corrected number), and e-mail at <http://roberts.senate.gov/e-mail_pat.html> To contact Sen. Brownback’s office, call (202) 224-6521, fax to (202) 228-1265, and e-mail at <<http://brownback.senate.gov/CMEmailMe.htm>> You can also contact any of our state offices, which can be located on our web-sites at <<http://roberts.senate.gov/>> and <<http://brownback.senate.gov/>>

We like to hear from you and encourage you to contact us.

U.S. Sens. Pat Roberts
and Sam Brownback

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