

from our viewpoint...

Buy it at home is best policy for all

Every day as we go about our work, everyone in Goodland and Sherman County needs to remember that we are all heading in the same direction, and we need each other to reach our goals.

That was the point Friday when Economic Development Director Carolyn Applegate asked county commissioners to review out-of-area spending by county departments.

She was not saying everything has to be bought in Sherman County — that wouldn't work — but she did point to several areas in last year's spending where departments were spending a total of \$385,000 outside the county. Her question was, were there local businesses that could have handled the county's needs?

There are things that have to be purchased out of the area. Many things have to be imported to our county, including the products downtown merchants sell to the people who live here.

Applegate was getting at the problem of "habit buying." Is the company a county department orders supplies from the right one? Our could a local merchant do the job?

Each decision should be weighed by the costs involved and not made because the county has "always" dealt with a certain company.

All of us fall into buying habits, and will purchase the same thing over and over because it seems to suit our needs. There are ways for local businesses to address the needs of county departments, and as the downtown businesses change with the times and needs of their customers, so can they adapt to help supply the needs of the county.

The county should have a local preference, but how much of a preference? If the county pays 5 percent to buy something here, is that OK? Is 10 percent too high? Does it matter what the total cost of the item is or does it matter what the quantity is needed one time or in a year?

The commissioners said they have told the department heads buying local is their policy. Does it have to be put in writing? What happens if someone orders something from out of the county that's available here? Is that employee to be punished?

It's probably better to keep the idea of buying local as open as possible, without getting into formal preferences, but to let everyone know the policy endorsed by the commissioners.

This is not a one-sided process. Businesses that feel they have a way to help supply the needs of any county department should be willing to sit down with the department head and look for ways they can work together.

We cannot have economic development without looking around to see what we can do to preserve the jobs we have.

There are a number of projects that will be opening up soon, and with the help of the moisture from above, we believe there is a better economy ahead. With an eye to helping ourselves by buying at home, we can make it happen more quickly. — Tom Betz

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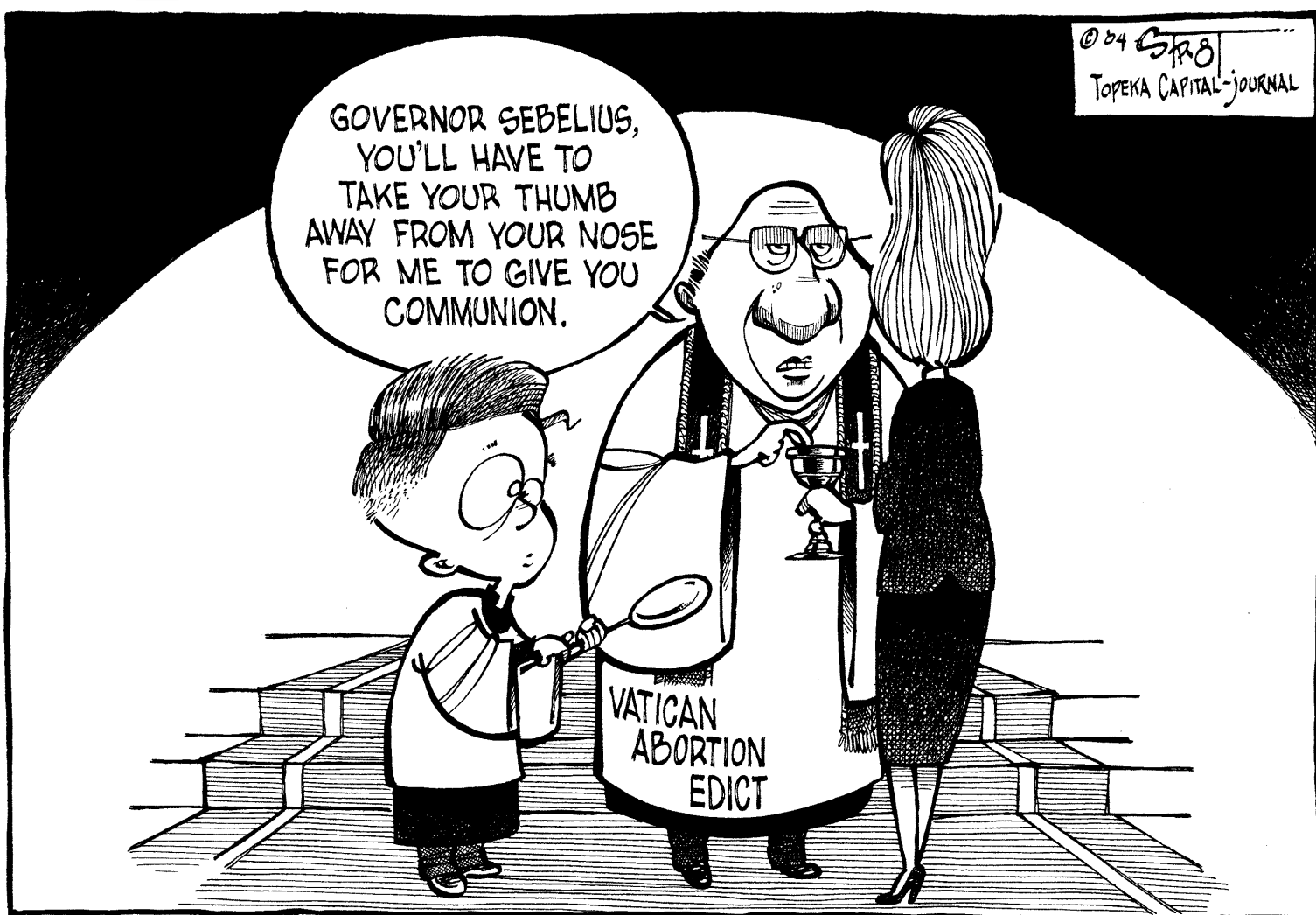
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'Do good to them that hate you'

"But, I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." — Matthew 6:44.

In church, we pray for those we love, those who are sick, our leaders, our families and ourselves.

Why don't we ever pray for people who hate us, or people we dislike?

There's nothing wrong with praying for your aunt who has cancer or for our parents and grandparents who have died.

It's not a bad thing to pray for the president, governor and mayor. They need all the help they can get. The same goes for ministers, priests and other clergy.

Petitions for health and prosperity for ourselves may be a little self-seeking, but we were told to ask.

And there's certainly nothing wrong with asking for help when we have a big test, when our marriage is in trouble, when we have a problem we don't know how to solve or when we're sick or lonely or desperate.



cynthia haynes

• open season

These are all good things.

But why don't we pray for Osama bin Laden? Now there's a guy who needs more help than you, me or the entire U.S. Army can provide.

The same goes for Kim Chong-il, the leader of North Korea. He has an inferiority complex that would scare anyone. He needs lots of help, and a little divine guidance wouldn't hurt.

These are the "bad guys." We don't like them because they have hurt and killed people. They hate us just because we exist. They're not "nice folks" and no one would want them to live in the neighborhood.

But that's not the point. We don't have to like them or what they do. Maybe we need to pray that they will change. We need to pray that they

will stop hating and hurting both themselves and others.

The same thing goes for the little hurts, discomforts, annoyances and pains in life, too.

Next time you step on a piece of gum on the sidewalk, pray for the kid who spit it out.

Think nice thoughts, even if it kills you, about the people who mow their lawn at 6 a.m., allow their dog to do its job on your grass or steal your lawn ornaments.

Anger, hurt, resentment and hate don't seem to hurt anyone but the one who is angry, hurt, resentful or hateful.

The person who mows his lawn early just wants his grass to look nice, and he's an early bird. The kid with the gum and the dog owner are thoughtless, not malicious. And maybe the person who stole those lawn ornaments has a really ugly place they need to brighten up.

Just let go. Say, "I wish they hadn't done that, but that's OK..." and get on with your life.

As for bin Laden and Kim Chong-il, give them a good, long prayer. Boy, do they need it!

Domestic violence should not be ignored

The complaint was no doubt sincere.

The victim of a domestic violence case did not like the fact it had been written up in a story.

"Family things don't belong in the paper," she said, or words to that effect.

The gentleman in this case was booked on a felony, however, and that pretty much always gets into the paper.

Time was when a "domestic" case might not have gotten much attention. Police were reluctant to haul a man in when they knew the victim might forgive him the next day and decide not to press charges. In those days, the system might have let this case slide.

No more.

Today, society realizes the problem of domestic violence just won't go away. Groups demand tougher penalties and tougher law enforcement. Most police agencies will make an arrest when called to a domestic dispute, even if the victim asks them not to.

Some, in fact, routinely arrest both warring parties.



steve haynes

• along the sappa

But isn't it just family stuff?

Well, yes. Assault, battery, abuse, even murder, but all in the family.

And the victim often regrets calling police, wants to smooth things over and forget about it.

Until the next time.

But like drunken driving, domestic abuse now has society's attention. We know it won't go away. The system is focused to do something about it.

So are newspapers. Whatever happened in the past, we know now it's wrong to ignore domestic violence. If a call is made, the paper will record it in the police items. If an arrest is made, someone jailed for a felony, there will

be a story.

Like society as a whole, we know something has to be done. We know we have a part.

We also know we will get complaints. That's too bad. We don't like upsetting anyone.

But we'll tell people what we always tell those who complain about showing up in a police item: The way to keep your name out of that part of the paper is to stay out of trouble.

And that really shouldn't be too hard for anyone of us.

Those who can't will wind up in print. To be fair to everyone, we will have to run all cases and treat them the same, and we promise to do that.

When "family business" turns to family abuse and the cops are called, then it becomes society's business.

If we can save one victim from being hit, or worse, then it will be worth whatever price we pay.

where to write

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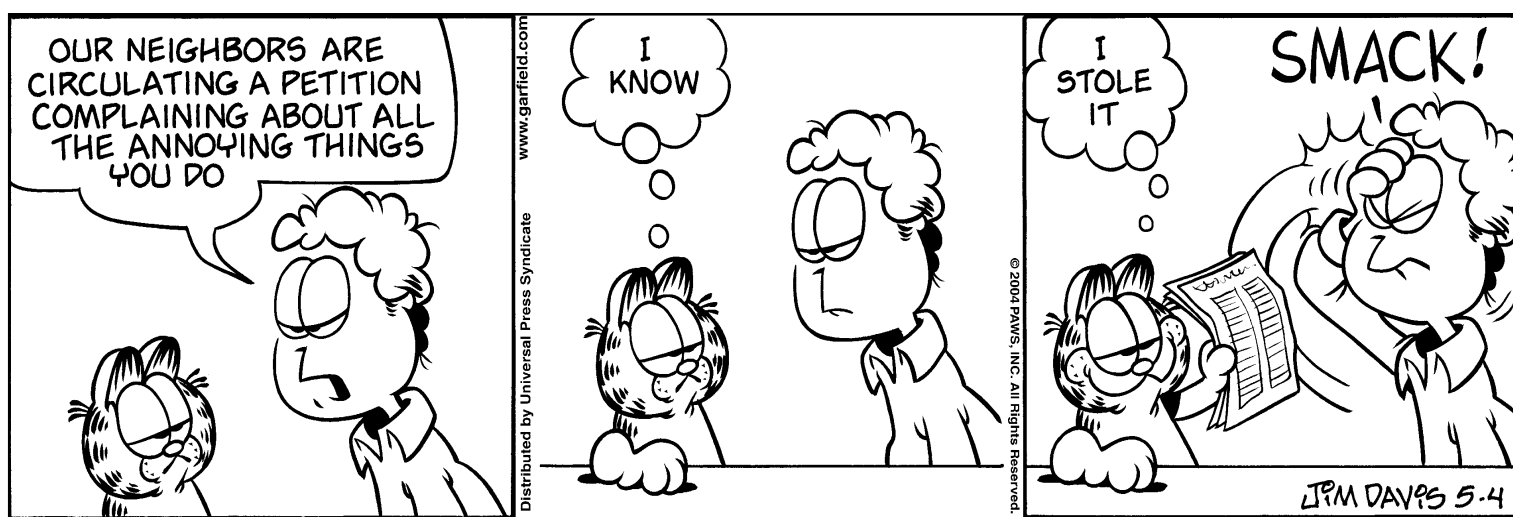
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