

from our viewpoint...

Chamber on mend, good news for town

The Goodland Chamber of Commerce is on the mend, which is good news for the town.

Every town needs a Chamber. Every town has one.

The Chamber is the where people go to find out about a town — newcomers, visitors, travelers, people who want to build a plant or start a business.

There may be other agencies to help some of them, but almost all of them will make their first call to the Chamber.

And after more than two years of valiant struggle, Goodland's Chamber is doing all that and more.

There were tough times. The Chamber went through presidents and board members like crazy for a while as the volunteers tired of constant turmoil.

The Chamber lost its longtime manager, and its contracts to manage economic development and tourist promotion. Interim managers came and went. Bills piled up. At one point, the Chamber could hardly afford to keep its doors open.

We mention these days for one reason only: Tough as they were, someone always stepped up to see that the mail got opened, questions answered, office opened. Chamber volunteers, way too numerous to name here, saw that things got done. Burnout was high.

A new board last year took things in hand. Volunteers got membership notices out. Money began to come in. A new manager, Courtney Warden, was hired. Things got better.

Today, the Chamber is a leaner and more focused organization. The bad days appear to be behind it, and with membership back over 100, people seem to be accepting the group as it is today.

That's good. We need the Chamber, as every town needs its Chamber. With the Freedom Fest just done and the Flatlander Fall Festival coming up, the group is in the heart of its year.

There are some scars, but if anyone is still nursing a grudge, this would be a good time to get over it. The Chamber today is a new and vital organization, out there working for Goodland.

We need to work together. There are not enough of us to fight.

The Chamber's work is vital. It deserves the support of each of us. — *Steve Haynes*

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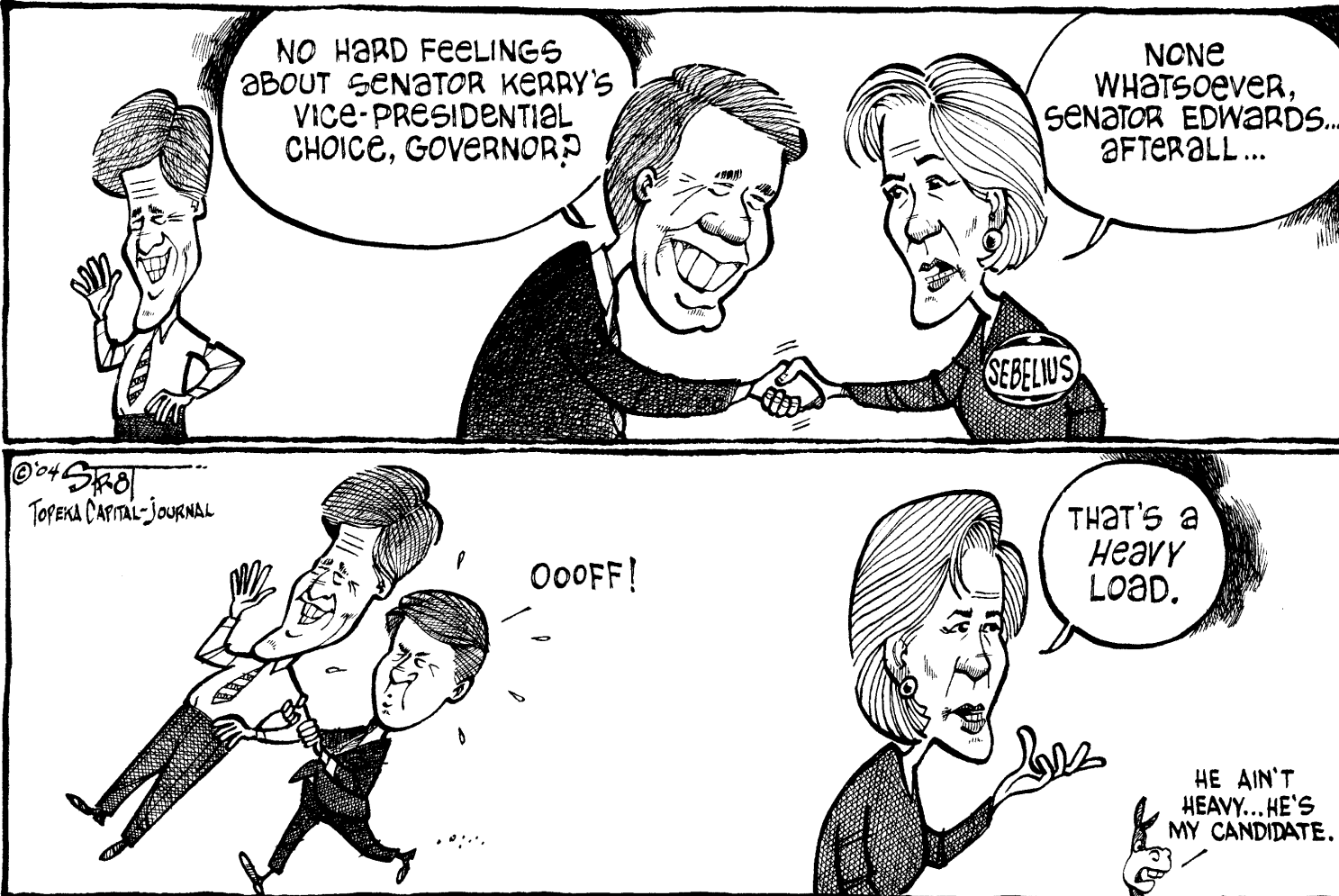
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I think going to the gym is a waste of time

I've got to admit, I'm not big on exercise.

I think going to the gym is a waste of time and money. If a person needs exercise, they should just walk to the gym and back. They'd have gotten plenty of exercise and saved the cost of membership.

My daughters have not bought into this idea.

They say they will never walk to the gym and it's only because they pay their membership dues that they go at all and exercise. They're both pretty cheap, and they hate to waste the money once they've paid.

Actually, I understand that concept. I use it myself. I buy tickets in advance to things I want to see or do so that when I get busy, I know I'll take the time to go to whatever it is. I'm too cheap to let the prepaid tickets go to waste.

But, back to exercise. I hate to exercise. I don't like sore muscles. I don't like to be sweaty and smelly. I don't like to be hot and tired.

However, I exercise most days — sometimes I go kicking and screaming — because Steve does.

We started walking a few minutes a day about 20 years ago. Gradually, Steve increased these walks from 10 to 15 minutes two times a week, then three times a week. Soon it was 20 min-



cynthia haynes

- open season

utes uphill three times a week, then 30 minutes.

Schedules change, workloads change and our bodies change.

Steve's doctor said that he should start exercising every day.

So did we go back to 15 minutes and do it every day?

Oh no. Now he thinks we should go for 30 minutes four or five days a week and an hour on weekends.

In the spring and fall, we go out in the country and enjoy the beauties of nature.

In the winter, we walk around town a lot because we don't want to get caught out on country roads in a storm.

In the summer, we walk around town if we are going out after dark and in the country if it is still daylight.

If it looks like a storm is coming, we try to stay close to home so that we won't be too drenched if it catches us.

tom betz

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finding fish tails and that I had not found a large jaw bone in the five years we had been hunting. I had found several fish tails, vertebrae and even a handful of shark teeth.

That all changed Sunday morning as we were walking part of the first canyon and I spied a piece of bone on the side of a slope. I turned to look at it and my feet slipped off the slope, and I found myself on my knees looking at a protruding set of teeth.

I was looking at my first jaw bone, and it was a Mosasaur, which was one of the largest carnivorous fish in the inland sea those millions of years ago. That was my major find of the day.

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 e-mail address — brownback.senate.gov/CMEmail.me

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

The other day, we were walking along after dark when the wind came up. Now, it had been a hot, humid walk and a nice breeze would have been welcome.

This, however, was not a nice breeze. This was the gusty front of a thunderstorm, and we were walking on a gravel road.

It was like we were being sandpapered without the paper. Now I know how a window feels when someone throws small rocks at it.

To add to my worries, there were trees on both sides of the road and the gusts were making them bend and sway. Rustling leaves can be very loud in the middle of the night on the edge of a storm.

Just as I was worrying about falling branches, a big one swept past me. It was on the ground moving, but my mind was able to come up with trees falling on us and limbs coming down to bash our heads.

We got back home a bit faster than usual because of the storm. Our speed was one part fear, one part caution and one part wind at our backs.

Despite the scary night walk and a day's work of mowing and weeding, Steve is ready for another walk.

I think I'll buy him a ticket to the nearest gym.

Steak surprise makes for cool fossil hunt

I know I am showing my age saying anything is "cool," but since I hit 55 on Saturday, it fits.

Sunday, my wife and a friend from Holly really surprised me by driving out to where we were fossil hunting and cooking us steaks.

It was a wonderful surprise, and with the temperature hovering around 100, it was great that they brought along a large supply of cold water.

Two fossil-hunting friends had a hand in setting up the surprise, and both kept from dropping any hints to give it away.

Rella Steele from Holly has been a friend for about 30 years, and it was her idea to drive her motor home out to the field to fix dinner.

My wife Ava and I had talked about meeting in Tribune on Saturday for dinner, but we decided that since I had two interviews that day and was going out fossil hunting on Sunday, we would wait until the next weekend and celebrate my birthday and our 33rd wedding anniversary together.

Rella and Ava cooked up the surprise Saturday afternoon with the help of Larry Harper, who introduced me to fossil hunting in the Kansas ocean in the Smoky Hill River valley near Russell Springs, and Sheriff Doug Whitson, who I went fossil hunting with Sunday.

Earlier Sunday morning, after arriving at our hunting site — actually is more of a fishing site, as we are looking for fossil fishes about 63 million years old — we tried a canyon that I had not been in before. Whitson said he had walked it about three years ago.

Saturday afternoon, I had gone out to Harper's to drink a few tall ones and scratch on a fossil fish tail we had found on a previous hunt. I told Karrt that I seemed to be stuck on

After we had walked that area for about three hours, Whitson said we should change to another canyon and he led us over to where my wife and friend found us about an hour later.

I was walking a canyon to the west and thought I heard a horn honk and people yelling, but I thought the wind must be playing tricks. As I came up from the bottom of the canyon I could see the top of a motor home and the roof-mounted air conditioner. Coming up a few more feet, I spotted my wife and realized what was happening.

We had a great steak dinner and enjoyed the shade of the awning on Rella's motor home.

She and Ava told me not to expect this treatment for my birthday every year, but they sure seemed to enjoy surprising me on my 55th.

It was a day which will go down in my memory as the first time I have found a Mosasaur jaw bone and then been served a grilled steak with cherry pie for dessert.

garfield

