#### from our viewpoint...

## **Communications** key to good relations

While we agreed with the Goodland City Commission decision to give Aircraft Seal and Gasket Corp. a couple more months to get production going at its new plant, we wonder why it came to this.

With the \$500,000 the city has sunk into the plant so far, it just makes sense to keep trying to make things work. But why was the city manger frustrated and ready to recommend that the city give the firm the boot?

Why was the only information about the plant rumors on the street?

Maybe we all need to be talking more.

The company promised to be training some workers last week and have production going by the end of the year. If that happens, we'll all be winners.

If not, well, the city can start looking for another tenant. What had been a burned-out shell is now an attractive manufacturing facility.

Economic development is always a gamble. Many a community has sunk money into a plant that never made a widget, a call center that never saw a phone, a railroad that never was built.

But we keep trying, because we like jobs and need growth and prosperity.

Aircraft Seal and Gasket sounded like a dream come true. The firm wanted to get away from high-priced, high-taxed California and establish itself in the midlands. It promised to bring 30 jobs here this year, with the hope for 100 in the future.

Enthusiasm was high when the plant was dedicated in February, but since then, the few employees the firm did have drifted away, the insurance on the building has not been paid, and the plant has sat idle.

From the start, founder Herb Menold said he needed \$800,000 to get things going. It was clear the firm needed a refinancing, but state securities regulators nixed a plan to form an investment pool. They said it amounted to selling stock without jumping through the regulator hoops.

That left Menold in a fix, one he says he's getting figured out

Menold needs to realize, though, that he sometimes has been his own worst enemy in dealing with the city and with the people of Goodland. He's made promises and set dates he's not been able to meet.

People here are pretty understanding, but they can see when things aren't happening. Having taken the community's money and support, the firm needs to keep people informed.

Good, honest, open communication could have avoided some of the hard feeling and suspicion surrounding the firm's failure to get things going when promised.

That hasn't always been the case. Menold can be hard to find. Answers sometimes are hard to come by.

It's embarrassing to talk when things go wrong, but necessary. Aircraft Seal needs to keep the city and the rest of us fully informed if the firm wants our continued support.

With luck, the company will get things going and all this will fade away. Whatever happens, though, good communications will ensure good relations.

And that won't cost the company anything. - Steve Haynes

- "Global test." **F1**
- "Flip-flopper." **F2**
- "We can do better." **F3**

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- "He'll say anything **F4** to get elected."
- "Trial lawyer." **F5**
- **F6** "I have a plan."
- "He can run but **F7** he can't hide."
- "Wrong war, wrong **F8** place, wrong time.
- F9 "Tax and spend."
- F10 "Pay and go."
- F11 "God."
- F12 "Nuculer."



# Why do hotels insist on 40 watt light bulbs?

What's with hotels and light bulbs? Don't they believe in them?

I like light and I need it to read.

I think I strained my eyes when I was a preteen reading science fiction magazines under the covers with a flashlight when I was supposed to be asleep.

Whatever the reason, I really need a good, strong light to read.

So we stay in a hotel with a nice comfy overstuffed chair and ottoman and a reading lamp. You turn on the lamp only to find that it has a 40-watt bulb. Since the only other light in the room comes from two more 40-watt lamp at my desk. The young man asked me if I bulbs at the head of the bed, you need to remember to bring your miner's hat with the little lamp on top to read at night.

of light nearly drove me over the edge, as did the lack of light bulbs.

the line, but nice hotel. It was near the plaza and bed — dead bulb. oozed old-world charm. It did not, however, ooze customer service.

After finding the desk light had a dead bulb, I walked back to the front desk where a 20-



something sweet young thing was flirting with a 20-something young man. Since they were both behind the counter and had neat little name tags, I assumed they both worked at the hotel. I was the only one at the counter.

I told them that there was a light out on the would like a light bulb. On getting an affirmative, he handed me a 40 watter.

For what I was paying for that room, I should We went on vacation recently and the lack have received a 200 watter and someone to run right down and put it in for me.

In Santa Fe we stayed at a nice — not top of up with the same problem on the light over the

In the morning, I called down to maintenance and was told that someone would be "right up" to fix the bulb. I left for meetings and that night, I found I still had a dead bulb.

The next day I unscrewed the bulb and set it on the bed, intending to take it to the front desk for replacement, but I forgot it. When I returned, the maid had thoughtfully taken the dead bulb and the light socket was bare.

The next day, I finally called the desk, and while I was out, they gave me another 40 watts of light for my poor strained eyes.

One place we frequent always has 40-watt yellow lights. If the white kind aren't dim enough for you, try yellow. I have taken to carrying light bulbs with me when I visit.

In Columbia, Mo., last year I went to a convention with Steve. He had three days of meetings and I had nothing to do but read and take hot baths. The hot baths were OK, but after I had pruned up, I realized that I wasn't going to get any reading done with the small amount of light I had.

I took a trip to the closest hardware store and Last week, at a convention in Denver, I came came up with a three-way 50, 100 and 150 bulb, since I had already discovered that the lamp had a three-way switch.

I enjoyed the rest of my trip and took my light bulb when I left.

I should have left it in my luggage. I could have used it last week.

## If we vote on who we know, I'll vote for Bush

If we base our votes on whom we know, I guess I'll have to vote for George Bush again this year.

I shook his hand once in Washington. He was speaking to the National Newspaper Association, and those of us in the front row got to shake his hand and say a few words after his talk.



got in to talk with him at his office, before the days that it was an undisclosed location. From what they said, he was a pretty nice guy

### **The Goodland Star-News**

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562) Member: Kansas Press Association Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association National Newspaper Association

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Published every Tuesday and Friday except the days observed for New Year's Day and Christmas Day, at 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735. Periodicals postage paid at Goodland, Kan. 67735; entered at the Goodland, Kan., Post Office under the Act of Congress of March 8, 1878.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Goodland Star-News, 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: star-news@nwkansas.com. Advertising questions can be sent to: goodlandads@nwkansas.com

The Goodland Star-News assumes no liability for mistakes or omissions in advertising or failure to publish beyond the actual cost of the ad.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: In Sherman County and adjacent counties: three months, \$20; six months, \$38; 12 months, \$72. Out of area, weekly mailing of two issues: three months, \$30; six months, \$45; 12 months, \$80. Mailed individually each day: 12 months, \$115. (All tax included.)



That was before 9/11, Iraq and the campaign, and things were a lot more hopeful then.

I notice that Mr. Bush has more gray hair now, his face more lines.

That same day, we heard from Secretary of State Colin Powell, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi, Secretary of Health Tommy Thompson, and Secretary of Education Rod Paige.

But Mr. Bush, I got to shake his hand.

Sen. Kerry, he seems like a nice enough man, though until he ran for president this spring, I couldn't have picked him out on the Senate floor. His colleague, the "conservative" senator from Massachusetts, I'd recognize.

Sen. Kennedy's niece is married to the governor of California, I hear, though I doubt she approved of his Republican convention speech. Doesn't matter. I haven't met him, either.

The next year, I missed most of the speeches because our own Sen. Pat Roberts was one of the presenters, and I was assigned to escort him to his spot. Him I could recognize.

The year after that, it was former Sen. Bob Dole on the program, and he came early, so we sat around and talked with him about Kansas and old-time politics, back in the 1960s when he was a congressman and I was a student. I wasn't old enough to vote for him then.

Later, we got a personal briefing from Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton in her building. She told us there was no way that they

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would list prairie dogs as an endangered species on her watch, and sure enough, that issue has gone away.

I knew her already, a passing acquaintance anyway, because she was attorney general in Colorado when we lived there. She's bright, lively and intelligent, well-spoken and never beats around the bush. No pun intended.

I don't see how she can survive long in Washington, but she seems to manage. I'd vote for her; in fact, I have.

I haven't met Dick Cheney, supposedly the a press pass. evil influence behind the crown. Some friends from Wyoming, where he was a congressman, another story.

for an evil genius.

And then there's Sen. John Edwards, the vice-presidential candidate from South Carolina. He's a trial lawyer with a big, toothy grin.

But then, my dad was a lawyer. Let's leave the jokes there.

Anyway, I haven't met Edwards, either. Don't think I can vote for him.

I remember in 1968, I saw or met all the candidates, Republican, Democrat, Hubert Humphrey, Dick Nixon, Nelson Rockefeller, even George Wallace. I took their pictures, listened to their speeches, talked with some of them.

I'm not sure that's possible today, even with

I didn't vote for Wallace, either, but that's





