

from our viewpoint...

Solemn thoughts on Memorial Day

True to her word, Mazie Sutton was on duty at the Goodland Cemetery at 5:30 a.m. on Monday to hand out flags and coordinate the volunteers to decorate the graves of the more than 700 veterans buried there.

A mist was falling. At times, it turned into a steady rain accompanied by rolling thunder as the volunteers walked along the rows of gravestones, looking for the special markers where the American flags went.

It takes about an hour for the volunteers to walk the cemetery, which has over 7,000 graves. About 740 of those are veterans. Two graves date back to the Spanish American War of 1898, and there are a few that trace back to the Civil War.

Sutton was asked why the flags were being put out in the rain. Her answer was, "I don't suppose the soldiers and sailors were given a choice about fighting in the rain or the mud. Yes, we are going to put out the flags."

Because of the damp weather, the Memorial Day services were held at the Veterans of Foreign Wars' Hall with over 120 attending. Pastor Scott Grimshaw of the Emmanuel Lutheran Church talked about what the day means to him. He used the pattern of President Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address for part of his speech, saying that the former president would probably be disappointed in how this special observance has become lost.

Going back out to the cemetery in the afternoon to help pick up the flags, it was wonderful to see the many people there to place flowers on the graves of those they remembered.

When the names of the veterans who died in the past year were read, at the end there was special mention of Sgt. Derrick Lutters, who is remembered as a former Goodland citizen and hero, but who is not buried here. Sutton, who keeps track of all the veterans in the cemetery, said there 14 died in the past year — that is May to May.

Even as we pause to remember the loves ones and those who died in the service of their country, we read about more deaths in Iraq. The death toll is not climbing as it did in previous wars, such as the two World Wars, Korea or even Vietnam. However, it does continue to climb closer to 2,000, and we are told to expect to have soldiers in Middle East and Asia for several more years.

Testing the American resolve is certainly part of what the terrorists are doing. We are committed to action by our political leaders, and must ask our military to perform under tough circumstances.

Looking back at this Memorial Day, we should be thankful for the good rains the area has received in the past few days, and pray our troops return safely to their homes and families.

— Tom Betz.

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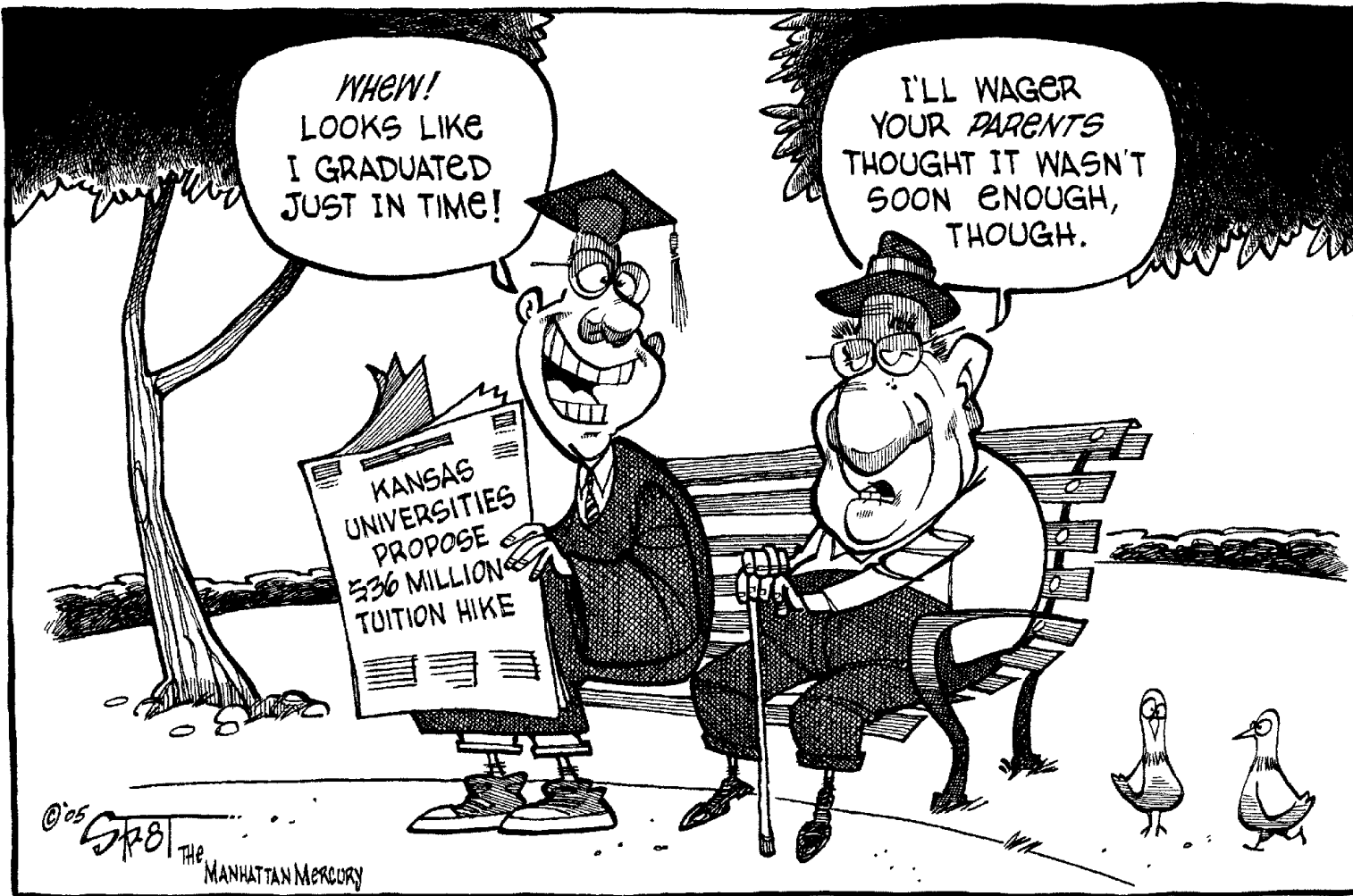
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Fun on the beach in Georgia

We arrived at the real estate office at midnight, and we had no place to stay.

We were supposed to spend two days on Tybee Island, a small resort off the Georgia coast, with our daughter Felicia and her husband Nik. Younger daughter Lindsay and her boyfriend were to show up near the end of the trip for a day on the beach.

Felicia made the arrangements for us to get a condo for two nights — Thursday and Friday. She and Nik had plans to take off at noon on Thursday so we could drive the three hours to the island.

But, their company, Morris Digital Works, was getting ready to move to bigger quarters and noon became 4:30 p.m., which became 6:30 p.m.

I wasn't surprised or upset. I figured, with the move, they had been fooling themselves, thinking they could get off early.

So by the time they got home, packed, fed the cats and left the dog at the sitters, it was nearly dark.

Finally, however, we were off to the island, with swimsuits and sunscreen, ready for a short night and a long day on the beach.

We had careful directions from the agency which handled the condo rental. We were to stop at their office, and if it was after hours, they would



cynthia
haynes

• open season

leave our key in the mailbox with our name on it. Our instructions included directions to the condo.

We stopped in Savannah, Ga., for supper and arrived at the real estate office at midnight. Nik grabbed the only envelope out of the mailbox but then we realized that the name on it was Sanders, not Haynes, and the condo had the wrong name and number.

Felicia, ever prepared, drug out all correspondence, including her signed rental agreement, which showed that we were to have Idle While 1A for two nights, Thursday and Friday, May, 19-20, exactly one week away.

There was an emergency number on the forms, and Nik made the phone call. The woman he woke up said it would take her half an hour to get there, but she would come.

Steve and I figured she'd find us a place to stay, Nik was philosophical and Felicia was rolled into

a fetal ball in the back seat, too tired and worried to even think.

She wasn't even ready to come out of her misery when Steve reminded her of the time he and I arrived in Denver for a big train trip only to find that the trip had been a week before.

The real estate lady was better than her word, arriving in 15 minutes. She looked at our contract, admitted that she had helped Felicia with the arrangements might have made the mistake. She dug out the key to Idle While 1A since it was still off season and no one had rented the condo for the weekend. Since it was already Friday, she even extended our stay through Sunday.

We had a great time at the beach, playing in the ocean, catching a few rays, shopping in Savannah and sampling low-country Southern cuisine.

Steve and I danced to Elvis on the pier when the children weren't around — seeing their parents dancing in public during the middle of the day would probably have been more humiliation than Felicia could have taken at that point.

Now our trip is just a memory, but it's one we won't forget — and we'll make sure Felicia never does.

No one lives anything down in this family. And I make sure it's all in print.

New Pope may not change much in church

And so the world pauses to applaud a new pope. Everyone wonders what will change.

The short answer is, not much. The long answer, everything.

The world's watchers have been studying every paper and speech penned by the man known for 78 years as Joseph Ratzinger. They hope to predict what he'll do.

But when a man becomes pope, he takes on more than a new set of clothes. The job is for life. In that way, it's like being elevated to the Supreme Court.

As Benedict XVI, the pope may look to his fellow cardinals for advice, but he will turn also to God. And God may be less easy to predict.

His final sermon as Cardinal Ratzinger was conservative and orthodox. Yet his first acts as pope have been to reach out to the world — to Jews, Muslims, the Orthodox church and others.

The world's leaders went to Rome, first for the funeral of John Paul II, then for the installation of Benedict. It's amazing, the awe inspired in all the world, and not just Roman Catholics, by the office of pope.

Far from being "just" the leader of a billion Catholics, the pope inspires reverence throughout Western civilization, indeed, throughout the world.

The man who presides over the Holy See stands, tradition tells us, in a direct line from the Apostle Peter as Bishop of Rome. His office makes him the most prominent Christian leader, though he heads a church that is fractious and, as some see it, ridden with problems.

Don't forget, though, that the 2,000-year-old Roman church is also the world's oldest bureaucracy. Change does not come quickly to such a venerable organization.

But change will come. Only the pope, and his chief adviser, know what it will be.

Here's a guess.

I don't expect to see a woman priest in a Catholic pulpit, not in my lifetime. That tradition is too well ingrained.

I think we might see married priests. The celi-



steve
haynes

• along the sappa

bate clergy is a relatively new rule, only a few centuries.

I think the church will respond more to the need to clean up its own act. The child-sex scandal has cost the American church too much in terms of money, respect and members to ignore.

While the American church is a small part of the whole, the Cardinals surely can't condone any of what happened.

Whatever happens won't satisfy many, and it won't make the church any more perfect than it

has been throughout history.

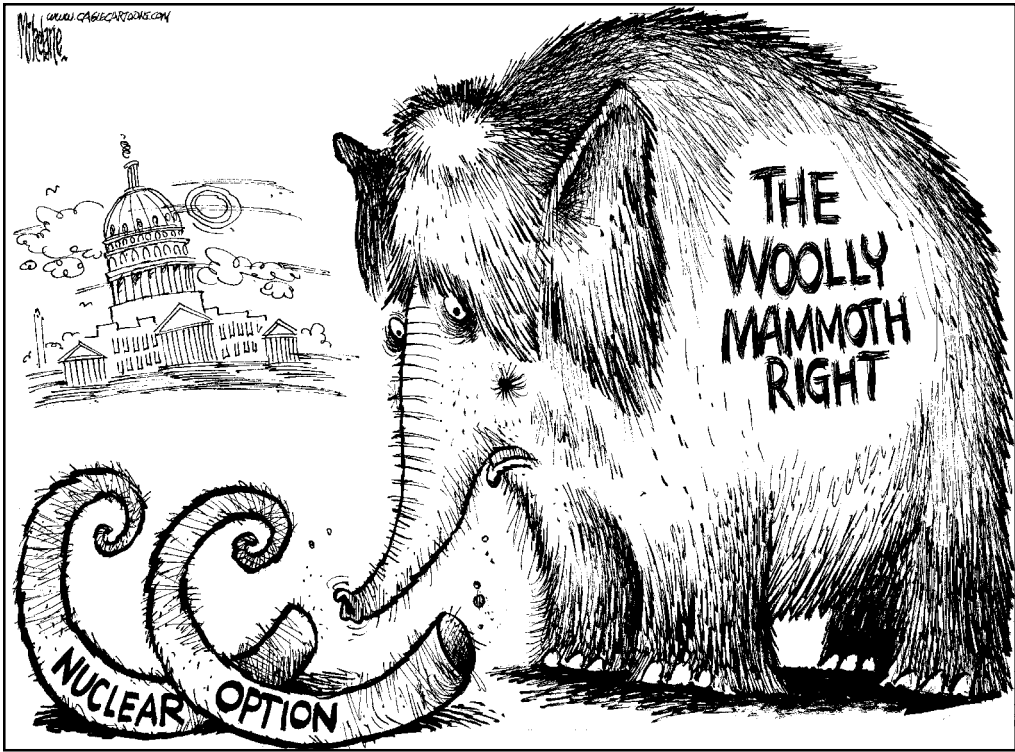
We expect perfection in matters of God, but we forget that the church is made up of men — members, priests, bishops, popes — who are as all sinners, imperfect beings doing their best in the service of the Lord.

Like us all, they struggle on, doing the best they can.

The new pope has a great opportunity, in the next year, or the next decade, to advance the work of the church and the cause of world peace and solidarity.

Let us all — Catholic, Protestant, Jew, the unchurched and even the unbelieving — say a prayer for Benedict XVI, that the Lord will lead him down whatever path he has planned for him.

The world likely will be a better place. If nothing else, it'll be a fascinating trip.



garfield

