

from our viewpoint...

Reporter spending summer in jail

A *New York Times* reporter is spending the month in jail while her son waits for her to get home.

No one knows how long Judith Miller might be in the slammer. It might be until a federal grand jury ends its term in October. By that time, her son will be in school.

Miller went to jail rather than give federal prosecutors the name of her source in a story about a CIA spy.

It's illegal to divulge the name of a secret agent, and after much to do during President Bush's first term, a special prosecutor was named to find out who spilled the beans.

The name of Valerie Plame, wife of a former U.S. ambassador, was first published by columnist Robert Novak, who strangely enough, has not been called before the grand jury. Miller herself wrote no stories.

A Time magazine reporter, Matthew Cooper, did an about-face at the jailhouse door, and said he'd testify. He and his employer said their source had authorized them to.

Miller was not willing to break a promise, so she's in jail.

If courts can order a reporter to divulge a confidential source, then important government misconduct will go unreported. Sources won't be willing to talk if they know the reporter might be rolled by a federal judge.

It's not this case is all that important. It's mostly political; Democrats hope to find a top administration source to crucify over the Plame revelations. Both President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney have been interviewed. Top White House aides, especially strategist Karl Rove, are on the short list of suspects.

Whether the naming is even relevant — or illegal — is in question, since Plame's role as a CIA operative was widely known in Washington before her name was published. Her husband was out criticizing the administration for supposedly ignoring a report he wrote dismissing the idea Iraq had tried to buy nuclear material from Africa. She was mired deeply in the political mess.

So, it's quite possible no crime was committed.

Nevertheless, the prosecutor, Patrick Fitzgerald, has pushed ahead to jail the reporters. Judge Thomas Hogan found them in contempt in October, but just this month got around to jailing Miller.

The whole thing points up the need for a shield law to allow reporters to keep sources confidential. More than two-thirds of the states (Kansas not included) have one. The federal government definitely needs one.

Nationally, newspaper and First Amendment groups are renewing the push for a shield law, not because reporters want special privileges, but because the watchdogs need to be able to shield their sources.

We all lose when no one can investigate the government. *New York Times* reporters may not be the most popular, element in our society, but they do serve a noble purpose.

Judy Miller thinks it's worth missing summer with her son. That's quite a commitment. — *Steve Haynes*

The Goodland Star-News

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562)
Member: Kansas Press Association
Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association
National Newspaper Association
e-mail: star-news@nwkanssas.com

Steve Haynes, President

Tom Betz, Editor

Pat Schiefen, Copy Editor

Sharon Corcoran, Society Editor

Kathryn Burke, Reporter

Doug Jackson, Advertising Coordinator

Mona Carver, Advertising Sales

Sheila Smith, Office Manager



Nor'west Press

Jim Bowker, General Manager
Richard Westfahl Ron VanLoenen Judy McKnight
Betty Morris Monica Ford Jerry Kirkpatrick Lana Westfahl

 nwkanssas.com

N.T. Betz, Director of Internet Services
(ntbetz@nwkanssas.com)
Evan Barnum, Systems Admin.(support@nwkanssas.com)

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@nwkanssas.com. Advertising questions can be sent to: goodlandads@nwkanssas.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, \$24; six months, \$42; 12 months, \$76. Out of area, weekly mailing of two issues: three months, \$34; six months, \$49; 12 months, \$84. Mailed individually each day: 12 months, \$119. (All tax included.)

Incorporating:
The Goodland Daily News
1932-2003

The Sherman County Herald
Founded by Thomas McCants
1935-1989

Nor'West Newspapers
Haynes Publishing Company

THE SHERMAN COUNTY
STAR
Founded by Eric and Roxie Yonkey
1994-2001

Fun getting down and dirty in the garden

I've been getting down and dirty nearly every day, and I love it.

It's all part of my new philosophy of gardening — don't try to do it all at once.

I've been taking 10 to 15 minutes most mornings and evenings and working in the garden — weeding, mulching, weeding, planting, weeding, staking, weeding.

As you might have guessed, my biggest job is weeding, and the foxtails, elm trees, dandelions, crab grass and morning glories grow faster than I can pull.

Morning finds me on my knees, wiggling my way through the corn stalks to where I left off the night before. After about 10 minutes of pulling, I carefully back out of the corn with handfuls of weeds and dump them on a pile in the corner of the patio.

The garden isn't perfect, but the 10-to-15-minute regimen has gotten it a lot cleaner and made me a lot happier than the old way.

That was waiting until I had time to weed the garden.

I never had time to weed the garden.. There was always the laundry to do, dishes to put away, dinner to fix, stories to edit and naps to take. There was never that hour I needed to weed the garden. And if there was time, it was too hot or too dry to weed.

You can't go out in 99-degree heat at midday to garden. And you can't expect the weeds to come out by their roots if the ground is so dry that the tomato plants are requesting glasses of water.

Now, we water twice a week at night and by 8 or 9 a.m., the ground is damp but not wet, the air is still cool and the garden is still in the shade of the garage.

I get down on my hands and knees and go for it.

Of course, you can weed standing up and leaning over, but it's hard to breathe that way and the



cynthia haynes

• open season

next day your back will be killing you. You could sit down, but we plant things pretty close together and you'll likely sit on a zucchini that way.

So I sneak into the garden, tiptoeing along the back row of corn to get to the zucchini and yellow squash, or kneeling down and crawling between the rows.

By this time of the year, corn and squash are about all there is left in the main garden. We have tomatoes, cucumbers and green peppers growing in a 36-inch strip on the south side of the house.

This is easy to weed, since all I have to do is kneel in the grass and reach under the plants to pull the interlopers. Still, it takes two to three 10-minute periods to get the section cleared.

I think if I didn't have so much help from the cats, it might be faster, but they always seem to think that anytime I'm in any part of the garden, I'm in their territory. The corn and tomato plants make shady places to sleep, and people just don't usually get down nose-to-nose with them.

Well, move it Furball, you're relying on a weed, and I only have another minute and a half today to get rid of it.

Bush should not fire Karl Rove

By Dick Morris

The "gotcha" game is in full swing in Washington as the vultures circle slowly over the White House, hoping for Karl Rove's scalp.

The ritualized homicide/suicide is well-programmed. A White House insider is accused of doing something, the news media hype the story and, finally, without proof or presumption of innocence, the staffer resigns so as not to become a "distraction" from the president's agenda.

But maybe this time the cycle can be stopped before it runs its bloody course.

Karl Rove did nothing wrong. The statute he allegedly violated has a number of very specific triggers. The person who reveals the identity of a covert CIA operative has to intend to uncover her identity, know she is a covert operative and know that he is blowing her cover.

The law is designed to stop the likes of Philip Agee, whose 1975 book *Inside the Company* revealed secret CIA information to sell books. Rove's actions are a far stretch from those the statute was designed to cover.

Rove did not call Time magazine's Matt Cooper. Cooper called him. He did not mention Valerie Plame's name. He may not have even known it. He had no intent to reveal her identity. The context of the conversation was that Rove was trying to disabuse Cooper of the impression that CIA Director George Tenet had been the moving force in choosing former Ambassador Joe Wilson to investigate the nuclear dealings reported to be going on in Niger.

Rove said that it was not Tenet who pushed the appointment but that it likely stemmed from the fact that Wilson's wife "apparently works" at the CIA.

To call that conversation a deliberate revelation of an agent's identity designed to blow her cover is a far, far stretch of the statute's wording and intent.

But just as Rove did not intend to blow



from other pens

• commentary

sweep the matter under the rug. But he should allow Rove to clear his name through the normal process of investigation and testimony.

He should keep Rove onboard, stipulating only that he fully answer all questions from a grand jury, should the prosecutor need him to appear again.

If Rove is indicted or even named as a target, Bush will have to let him go. But that's not going to happen based on the current facts, and Bush should not let himself be pushed ahead of the process by firing Rove.

Indeed, there is some question that the reporters who took Rove's lead, looked up Plame's name and published it may themselves be more likely to have violated the statute than is Rove himself. Whoever took the information Rove provided and named Plame was, in fact, deliberately outing a CIA operative and may be a better fit for the law's intent than Karl Rove.

Bush should not fire Rove. He should stick by him until or unless the criminal investigation makes it evident that he may have violated the law. Otherwise, he should stay on the job.

Dick Morris was an adviser to Bill Clinton for 20 years. © 2005 Dick Morris, All Rights Reserved. Distributed by Cagle Cartoons Inc. www.caglecartoons.com.

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, 2443 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715; Fax (202) 225-5124 e-mail address — jerry.moran@mail.house.gov

State Rep. Jim Morrison, State Capitol Building Rm. 174-W, Topeka, KS 66612. (785) 296-7676; e-mail address — jmorrison@house.state.ks.us

State Sen. Ralph Ostmeier, State Capitol Building, Rm. 128-S, 300 SW 10th, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785)-296-7399; e-mail address — ostmeier@senate.state.ks.us

Kansas Attorney General Phil Kline, 301 S.W. 10th, Lower Level, Topeka, KS 66612-1597 (785) 296-3751 Fax (785) 291-3699 TTY: (785) 291-3767

garfield