

from our viewpoint...

# Plant questions can be answered

The development of coal-fired power plant, ethanol plant and biodiesel plants west of town is great news for northwest Kansas, but there are environmental questions that need to be answered.

Local people are spearheading this effort to bring development to Sherman County. They hope to give the area a shot in the arm that will bring businesses and people to the county.

This is not an effort where the city has reached out to find or recruit the developers, but a group that sprang up with the leadership of Sherman County people who have a vision for the future of the county and the citizens who live here.

We need the power plant, and coal seems to be the best way to fuel it. Coal is abundant; there's an estimated 1,500-year supply in this country. The coal found in the West burns cleaner and better than the coal from the East, where many of the older power plants are operating.

There have been problems with older coal-fired power plants, but many have been upgraded to reduce emissions. The Department of Energy is continuing a research program to further reduce harmful airborne emissions of dust, sulfur and mercury from coal-fired power plants.

Health studies done around coal-fired power plants in the 1,000-megawatt size with problems from airborne emissions recommended changes in the way power plants allow air to be released. Plants that made the improvements have dramatically reduced their emissions. They are not perfect yet, but in many cases the emissions are similar to what is found in the natural environment.

The spokesmen for the new plants here says they intend to be cleaner than the requirements of the Environmental Protection Agency or the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

We as citizens need to be sure the best information is available about the potential harm a coal-fired power plant might bring. At the same time the investors and their spokesmen ought to be given a chance to provide details of how the plants will meet emission standards.

About 60 percent of the power in the United States comes from coal-fired plants, and with the announcement of new plants — including a tripling of the size of the Sunflower Electric Plant at Holcomb — we need to continue to press for the best answers and highest standards from the people who want to develop them.

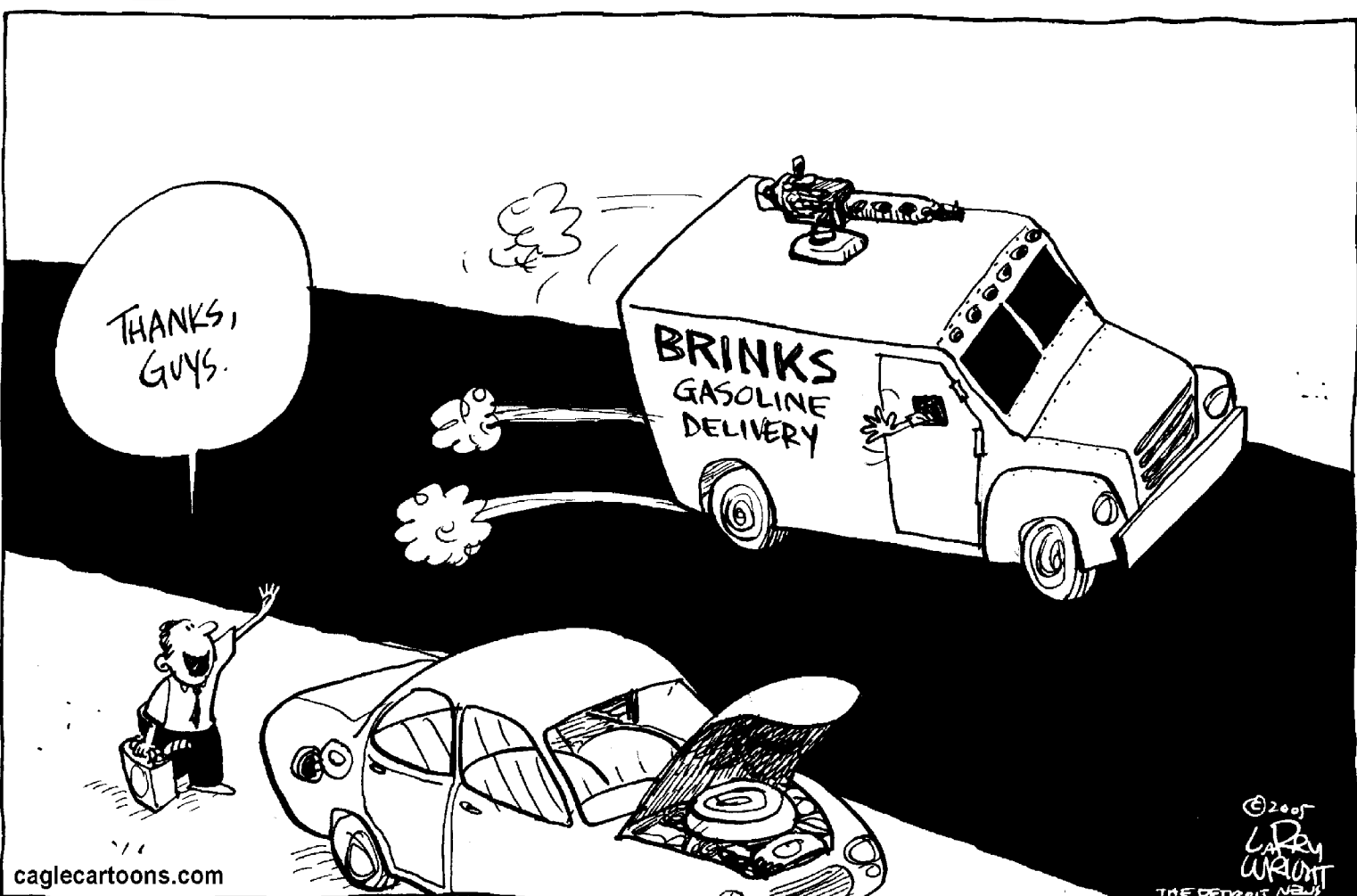
The 22-megawatt plant planned for Sherman County will be less than 5 percent of the output of the existing 595 megawatt coal-fired power plant at Holcomb, built in 1983, and about 1 percent of the total of 1,795 megawatts when the two new units are built southwest of Garden City.

Despite the size difference, it's important for the people developing the plant here and the people who live here to see that the emissions fulfill the promise of "do no harm."

We believe in municipal utilities. The proposed cogeneration plant here is the best way to supply the needs, short of the city spending millions to build a new plant to replace the aging diesel and natural gas units it has now. There is a good possibility emissions of the current plant are higher than from the new coal-fired plant, though it would have about twice the capacity.

Having a power source that is not controlled by an outside corporation can give the county and city a real advantage in the future. It will put people to work, increase the number of kids in the schools and help fill the empty buildings on Main Avenue.

We believe it can do all that and not be a health risk to the people who live here. Our future will depend on the plant to keep our lights and computers running. This can be a win-win development for all of us. — Tom Betz



# Reading a good way to pass the summer

As I sat down at the beauty shop to wait my turn for a haircut last week, I noticed the library cards on the table next to me. They were lying next to a Nancy Drew novel.

Boy, did that bring back memories. Summertime in the 1950s and '60s meant swimming and reading.

There were a few summer recreation programs for kids where I grew up: cutting construction paper and using glue at the city park shelter house on Saturday morning. But there was no swim club, no softball for young women and no air conditioning in the homes in our neighborhood.

Mornings were for chores — dusting, sweeping, laundry and gardening. Swimming lessons did take up mornings for two weeks during late June or early July, but the rest of the time was ours.

We lived a long way from the pool and the best way to get there was our bikes. We could walk, but we could never decide whether it was better to go with or without our shoes. If you wore your flip flops, you ended up with blisters between your toes and if you left them home, the hot tar on the streets burned your feet.



**cynthia haynes**

• open season

By 2 or 3 p.m., however, we were headed home. Polio was still a problem back then, and our mothers were sure that you got it at the pool on hot days.

The Carnegie Public Library was on the way home, and my library card got used almost every day. Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys were favorite fare.

I was partial to seafaring tales of youths who ran away and became cabin boys for Drake or Raleigh.

I would lie on my bed in my underwear with a fan running full blast and a lemonade at my elbow and delve into other worlds as the temperature climbed into the 90s and 100s.

These days, we're told, youngsters sit in air-con-

ditioned comfort and play video games by the hour.

I'm sure that happens a lot. Still, I watch the kids heading for the pool on the other side of town and they don't look any different than we did. Some are wearing flip flops and some are hopping along barefooted.

Then, there are the books.

It's good to know that Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys are entertaining another generation of youngsters, even if the books are looking a little ragged.

As I traveled around the country a couple of weeks ago, I saw dozens of youngsters with their noses in the latest Harry Potter book. J.K. Rowling is a good writer, and her tales of mischief and mayhem at the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft have many a video gamer with their nose in a book.

It reminds me of high school, when every boy had one of Ian Fleming's "James Bond" paperbacks in his back pocket.

I don't think those last couple of Harry Potter books are gonna fit in a pocket, but I bet a lot of them can be found in backpacks this fall.

# How to draw President George W. Bush

By Daryl Cagle

Political cartoonists are not much different from comic strip cartoonists; both draw an ongoing daily soap opera featuring a regular cast of characters.

While comic strip cartoonists invent their own characters, the political cartoonist's characters are given to him by events in the world; we are all drawing our own little daily sagas starring the same main character, President Bush.

Around the world, cartoonists almost always draw President Bush as a cowboy. Outside America, a Texas cowboy is seen as: uneducated, ill mannered, a "trigger-happy marshal" or outlaw who is prone to violence. Cowboy depictions of the president by world cartoonists are meant to be insults, but Americans see cowboys differently. In the USA, cowboys are noble, independent souls, living a romantic lifestyle by taming the wilderness and taking matters into their own hands whenever they see a wrong that needs to be righted. We are a nation of wanna-be cowboys.

The image of President Bush evolves with each cartoonist's personal perspective. Bush started out as most political cartoon characters start out, as a caricature of a real person, meant to be recognizable from a photograph. As time goes by, the cartoonists stop looking at photographs and start doing drawings of drawings, then drawings of drawings of drawings, so that the George W. Bush drawings morph into strangely deformed characters that look nothing like the real man, but are instantly recognizable because we've come to know the drawings as a symbol of the man. It is surprising that each cartoonist's drawings of the president look entirely different, but each is easily recognizable as representing the same character.

For some cartoonists, the president's ears have grown huge; a strange phenomenon, since the president doesn't have unusually large ears, and isn't known for listening. Some cartoonists have seen President Bush shrink in height, and a combination of these has the



from other pens

• commentary

president sometimes looking like a little bunny rabbit.

The president who shrank most in cartoons was Jimmy Carter. At the end of Carter's term, he was a Munchkin, standing below knee height on almost every cartoonist's drawing table. President Bush has shrunk for only some of the more liberal cartoonists. President Reagan grew taller during his cartoon term in office. President Clinton grew fatter, even as he lost weight in real life. Bill Clinton's personality was fat, and the cartoonists drew the personality rather than the man. President Clinton is now skinny, but he will always be fat in cartoons.

Another cartoon characteristic that has grown from years of drawing President Bush are his eyes, two little dots, close together,

topped by raised, quizzical eyebrows. The close, dotted eyes are an interesting universal phenomenon, shared by almost every cartoonist, that doesn't relate to the president's actual features. Over time, most cartoonists will draw a character with eyes that grow larger, but President Bush's eyes shrink, while his ears grow. There may be a political message in that, but I can't figure it out.

I once played "Political Cartoonist Name That Tune." The game went like this:

"I can draw President Bush in SIX LINES."

"Well, I can draw President Bush in FOUR LINES!"

"I can draw President Bush in THREE LINES!"

"OK. Draw that President!"

...and I did, two little dots topped by a raised, quizzical eyebrow line. It looked just like him.

Daryl Cagle is the political cartoonist for MSNBC.com. He is a past president of the National Cartoonists Society and his cartoons are syndicated to over 800 newspapers. His book, "The Best Political Cartoons of the Year, 2005 Edition," is available in bookstores now.

## 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, \$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

THE SHERMAN COUNTY STAR

Founded by Eric and Roxie Yonkey

1994-2001

Nor'West Newspapers

Haynes Publishing Company

## garfield

