

from our viewpoint...

You can get help to prevent suicide

The death of a young person by their own hand leaves most of us saddened and with many unanswered questions.

If you have heard someone talk about ending their lives, take them seriously. They may be joking, but only God knows who is serious and who is not.

There is still a stigma attached to getting help for mental problems. Many psychiatric disorders have been found to have physical, chemical origins.

Chemical imbalances in the brain can be treated with medicine. There will be a day, we hope, when mental problems are handled like the flu or a broken arm.

Suicide affects children more than adults. Children blame themselves for a parent's suicide, much on the same scale as a divorce. It's hard for them.

If you know someone is dying, there is some preparation when the event happens. Accidents are sudden, but most of the time the victims do not choose to die.

In a suicide, death is the only way that that person can see to escape pain, physical and mental. They may feel like they are sliding down a black hole, trying to hang on by their finger nails. Some quit fighting.

There are people who keep saying they want to die. After repeated forced placements in mental facilities, there seems to be the moment of choice for those people. They must either decide to get the job done or finally get help.

This writer has known two people who, after repeated rescues, reach that point. Their friends realize that forced hospitalizations aren't working and they decide to stand back and let that person pick which way they want their lives to go. Stepping back is hard for these people. They really care. If there is a threat to others in the home or community, of course, there is no choice but to intervene.

One of the examples turned their life around. The other person got the job done.

Drugs and alcohol many times play a big in suicide. Both release inhibitions. Alcohol and some drugs are depressants.

Teens, who are at that age where they feel invincible, may commit suicide without realizing its finality. Those deaths seem to be more tragic even than that of an adult.

There is a message of hope in all of this. If you feel you have no choice but to end your life, talk to a professional, a school counselor, a minister or friend. Get help. Also realize you must be willing to accept the help they have to offer. It may not be pleasant or fun, but it will not be as final as death.

As long as there is life, there are possibilities. Cry, but remember there is also laughter. — *Pat Schiefen*

Letter Policy

The Goodland Star-News encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten, and must include a telephone number and a signature. Unsigned letters will not be published. Form letters will be rejected, as will letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and good taste. We encourage letters, with address and phone numbers, by e-mail to: <star-news@nw-kansas.com>.

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Mike Keefe THE DENVER POST 2005 www.caglecartoons.com

The fun of traveling is coming home

If I stayed at home, I'd want to travel. Since I'm on the road all the time, I'd like to stay home.

Steve and I figured that we were going to be in five beds in six days.

Last Wednesday, we headed for Concordia to see my mother and go to a funeral, then on to Lawrence to see our son.

We spent the night at the Springhill Suites in Lawrence and took our daily walk along the levy of the Kansas River. The levy in Lawrence looks good and the river runs placidly until it hits a dam right above our hotel. The spill over the dam is quite a show.

On Thursday, we headed toward Kansas City to get some barbecue for lunch. Ribs and barbecue beef are some of the things we miss from our former lives as city dwellers on the Kansas-Missouri line.

From Kansas City, we headed west and south to the Lake of the Ozarks, our final destination. We were there to represent the National Newspaper Association at the annual Missouri Press Association meeting.

We spent the next three days and two nights at the Four Seasons Resort on the lake. I'm not com-



cynthia haynes

- open season

plaining, mind you, but the Lake of the Ozarks is a much cooler place for a convention than the Holiday Inn in Topeka or Manhattan, which is where the Kansas Press holds its conventions.

On Saturday, we said good-bye to our friends in Missouri and headed back towards Kansas City for another round of barbecue.

After a late lunch, we made the run across Kansas. We finally got home about 10:30 Saturday night and it was good to sleep in our own bed after three days of travel.

Sunday morning after church, we made lunch, but when we started to clean up, the garbage disposal choked and started spitting stuff back into the sink. Steve accused me of putting too much vegetable matter down the drain, and since that was true, I told him it was his fault.

However, when I went downstairs to run a load

Not enough energy to continue the pace

To the Editor:

After being in business for 27 years, Mary Ann and I have decided that we no longer have the energy to continue the pace we need to keep Picnic in the Park growing.

We started out with Windy Plains Schwinn in 1978, added our own passenger railroad, The Windy Plains Express, and later adding a concession trailer. In 1986 we opened Picnic in the Park Subs and sold submarine sandwiches. In 1996, we bought the trolley, which we used at fairs, festivals and stock car races for many years. In 2002, we opened Picnic in the Park at 1016 Main, with a Chester Fried Chicken franchise. We still do bicycle repairs and have our trolley.

After much soul searching, we decided that what is best for our family is that we will be closing Picnic in the Park on Thursday, Oct. 20. On behalf of myself, Mary Ann, Jeremiah and Jedediah, we would like to thank our customers for their patronage these last three years at Picnic at the Park and at all our various businesses.

During the three years, we have donated over \$1,000 worth of chicken to Genesis, and with your 25-cent drink refills you have donated over \$1,100 to Hospice, Handy House and the Boy Scouts.

Thank you for your support. We built the business and feel Goodland and the surrounding area benefit from our efforts. We hope someone will continue the business.

Harold Snethen

Goodland

To the Editor:

About four months ago I found that my \$3,500 Dell computer had been stolen from my house.

I immediately reported it to the Goodland police. The next couple of months, the extreme lack of interest from the police department was



from our readers

- to the editor

very disconcerting.

I had friends telling me that they knew where my computer was, giving me details of what they saw, and still the police showed no concern. The situation began to feel hopeless.

I then contacted the sheriff's office with my concerns and gave them the same information



garfield

