

from our viewpoint...

Being thankful for positive attitude

Thanksgiving is truly an American holiday. The first Thanksgiving was a celebration of the bountiful harvest of the year, and the friendship of those who worked together to produce it.

There are many things to be thankful for this year, and we should remember the spirit of the holiday as we sit down to a feast with friends and family on Thursday.

Thanksgiving marks the opening of the holiday season, and in Goodland that began with the arrival of Santa on Saturday afternoon. The holiday theme this year is “Santa’s sleigh begins in Goodland,” and he got a good start.

Anytime there is a parade, people fill Main from 17th to Eighth. Kids waved to Santa and collected candy thrown by the people in the floats. It was good to hear the Christmas carols being sung by the many kids on the Big Brothers/Big Sisters float, and see the smiles on the kids and their parents who gathered at Aten’s Department Store, where Santa and Mrs. Claus welcomed the kids and got to ask them what they wanted under the tree this year.

The day got off to a positive start with the annual Nu Phi Mu craft show at Max Jones, which had a good crowd, and the I Made It craft show at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall likewise had a good selection of Christmas decorations and handmade gifts.

There was an enthusiasm in the air, a feeling there are better times ahead. That feeling was shared earlier in the week with the positive reports presented at Tuesday’s Economic Development Council meeting. The reports give a picture of hope and promise of the good things that have happened over the past year and the potential for even better things in the future.

Sometimes there is a feeling nothing good has been happening as we see businesses close, but in the balance there were more new jobs created this year than jobs lost. Things looked bleak with the failure of Aircraft Seal and Gasket in the spring, but before the summer, that had been replaced with an even better company.

It was wonderful to drive by the Adronics parking lot last week and see a dozen or more cars there, and know that at least 36 jobs have been created by the firm.

Another wonderful event was Friday morning when the city officials and the Goodland Ambassadors gathered to cut the ribbon on the new gateway to the city at Pioneer Park. A lot of people helped with that project, but from the Kiwanis Club, it was the Rev. Gene Tromble who kept pushing the project along.

Economic Development Council Chairman John Garcia reported on the progress being made at the Goodland Energy Center, and it is expected the state will schedule a public hearing on the permits soon. This complex will bring about 73 employees over the next year once the three plants are built.

Reports were presented about a number of new businesses which opened this year, and Garcia said the long awaited steakhouse diner should be delivered by the end of the year.

Earth moving equipment has been at work on the site of the old truck stop south of I-70, from which may rise a new Holiday Inn Express.

“Positive changes in the midst of tough times shows our community continues to go forward with spirit of commitment,” Garcia said. “We’re in it together and that should be our focal point.”

With the spirit of Thanksgiving we can point to the good things that have happened this year, and resolve to continue the progress.

Santa has promised to visit every weekend from now until Christmas, and we are sure his sleigh will be extra full of good things when he makes his rounds. — *Tom Betz*

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Questions for Cheney

Dick Cheney has a long and wonderful record of service to America.

As vice president, he’s helped carry forward the Reagan focus on making support for freedom central to our foreign policy.

But the indictment of his top aide raises important questions.

- 1) Did he discuss with “Scooter” Libby whether to release Valerie Plame’s name to the media?
- 2) When her name did surface in the press, did he ask Libby if he was the source?
- 3) When a probe was ordered into who leaked the CIA operative’s name to the press, did he ask Libby if he was the source?
- 4) Since he himself had twice told Libby about Plame, what did he say to Libby when he read media reports that Libby had told a federal grand jury that he learned about Plame’s role from a reporter?

Now that the indictment has told us that it was Cheney who first told Libby about Plame, the vice president’s long silence on his role here

dick morris
• commentary

becomes less reasonable.

Here we have a vice president sitting quiet while a special prosecutorial inquiry swirls around the White House — and the president demands to know who leaked. A vice president who remains silent about his own role in telling his top aide about her job.

It is simply beyond believability that Cheney — with national attention on the matter ratcheting up day by day — never asked his chief of staff about what he’d done, or about the inconsistencies between what Cheney knew and the story Libby was telling.

Cheney’s silence is especially hard to understand when we consider the media battering that Bush — his boss — was taking on this. When

the president asked for a special counsel, would it not have been reasonable for Cheney, Bush’s loyal No. 2, to call in the group that was working on the Wilson/Plame matter to check if any of them was responsible for the leak?

That Libby may have lied before the grand jury came as a surprise to most of us. But it was no surprise to Cheney. He knew full well that his aide was being disingenuous in telling a grand jury that he first learned about Plame from Tim Russert. Cheney knew because he knew that he was the one who had told him, not some journalist.

Once Cheney realized that his top aide may have committed perjury, did he call Libby to account? Demand an explanation? Press him on whether he was, in fact, the leak? And if he didn’t, why not? Was his silence a signal that it was OK for Libby to continue to cover up his role?

Dick Morris was an adviser to Bill Clinton for 20 years. Send e-mail for Dick Morris to dmredding@aol.com

Visiting ‘Our Lady of the Barren Plain’

As the church was rising on the plains east of Denver, we started referring to it as “Our Lady of the Barren Plain.”

Obviously Catholic, it was nothing like the frou-frou modern architecture of suburban churches. Hard aside I-70 at Watkins, it had no neighborhoods around it to feed a parish.

It has the form of a classic Roman church from a century ago, and it turns out, that’s pretty much what it is.

St. Isadore the Farmer is the home church now in Denver of the St. Pius X Society, that group of Catholics formed after the Vatican II conference of the 1960s to fight change and preserve the old ways.

It’s not fair to say the group split from the church; they would tell you the church split from them. But the names of the pope and the archbishop of Denver are chiseled indelibly into the cornerstone — in Latin.

We had been curious about the service at St. Isadore, but leaving Denver on a Sunday, we’re often not dressed the way this parish lives: Coat, tie, dress shoes for men; dresses and head covering for women. We had the clothes recently, though, even if Cynthia did have to borrow a lace mantilla to cover her head.

It’s hasn’t been that long since these things were part of Catholic worship around the world, and not just in the Roman church. When I joined the Episcopal church in the 1960s, you wore a tie and ladies were expected to cover the heads. It didn’t last long.

The reforms of that era swept traditions away

steve haynes
• along the sappa

from all the mainstream churches, but none changed more dramatically than the Catholics.

A lot of people didn’t like it.

Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre of France led the Pius X movement, citing theological grounds to cling to the old ways, especially the “tridentine” Latin Mass. The protest not just about form, but substance.

So St. Isadore is a church frozen in time. The Mass book comes from the 1962 missal, the last one issued in Latin. It includes a good English translation for those who can’t follow the Latin, and these days, who can?

There is a school now, struggling, but teaching the old ways to new students. Bingo is the big fund-raiser, and please, Father says, the parish really needs the money from extra sessions to make budget.

For the 10 a.m. service, though, the pews are only half full. There are fewer old traditionalists than you might expect, but lots of young, conservative ex urban families.

There’s a scattering of Hispanics, many of them older couples. And a few you wouldn’t expect — a biker in leathers, wearing a scarf for a tie; a guy in a mullet and leisure shirt, straight from the ’70s.

Except for a more modern Colorado-style roof, the church is finished not in the style of the last century, but the one before.

The kneelers are wood, the altar rail mounted on cold marble. Did you ever consider how much harder marble is than wood? Me neither, until then.

The ushers knelt flat on the marble floor for five minutes before communion. It’s a place, and a service, more about penance than celebration.

In his sermon, the priest talked about why it’s a sin to eat meat on Friday, even if you like fish better, and, I swear, pushed indulgences.

It’s impossible to know who’s right and who’s wrong in these arguments. I’m comfortable seeing those who cling to tradition have their time and place.

St. Paul said we won’t know these things until it’s time, and then we’ll understand. Meantime, the harm done is mostly in the animosity that develops when one group tries to force its ways on any other, in any church, in any time.

where to write

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