

from our viewpoint...

Leadership efforts begin to pay off

There was a changing of the guard last week when the Sherman County Economic Development Council named a new chairman.

The council is about 5 years old, dating back to the early citizen organizing meetings at Gambino's to the election of Shelly Thompson of Bankwest as the new chairman for this year.

John Garcia, who was the chairman and a founding member of the council, said he had been proud of the professionalism of the council members, and wished them well in the upcoming years.

Garcia deserves a lot of credit for the economic development success of bringing Adronics to town last spring. The impact of those jobs is beginning to show. Efforts to find an economic development director, however, were not as successful, as several prospects turned the job down.

Part of the problem with finding a new director was getting all of the council members on the same page, and agreeing what the job of the director should be.

A goal-setting session Wednesday will give the council an opportunity to look at the short term of this next year, and the long term of the next three to five years.

Development of the energy center is going to move forward in the spring, and that will bring attention to the area. The council should be ready and willing to help the energy center and any other business prospects who want to relocate to the county.

Having 40 home and business owners file applications for the tax rebate program, which the council worked hard to develop and get implemented, is a great start. Those people are taking advantage of the incentive program, which could be even bigger this year as the energy center expands.

Duane Timm, council member from First National Bank, who leads the incentive committee, said there is at least one business looking to apply for the tax abatement program adopted last year. That is another incentive program, developed by the council and adopted by the city and county to help new business.

Steve West, council member from Western State Bank and a representative to the industrial park committee, said a business looking is at the site for a possible location.

This is going to be a busy spring and summer, with construction and expansions beyond the energy center. Soon there should be a new hotel where the old Apple Trail truck stop was, and the long-awaited diner is on the road.

It will be a busy spring on the roads and highways, as the brick intersection projects downtown are going to bid, and there will be construction south on K-27 to the Sherman-Wallace County line to rebuild the road and tie into the new bridge. There will be work on I-70 from Goodland west to the state line, and on Business U.S. 24 from the east exit to Cherry Ave.

All the activity will bring workers to the city, and their spending will help raise the economic level and income for the county and city.

The latest snow was a godsend, and the good fortune it may bring to the farmers will undoubtedly spill over into the city.

The new leadership on the council can be ready to take advantage of the opportunities and continue the effort of the incentive committee. — *Tom Betz*

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Tying meth fight to Patriot Act bad politics

A report from Washington complains that the Senate's failure to extend the Patriot Act means "another setback for efforts to curb methamphetamine abuse."

Huh?

What does that have to do with the Patriot Act?

It turns out that two senators, Jim Tallent of Missouri and Dianne Feinstein of California, had tacked a meth bill onto the Patriot Act, assuming it was in for a fast ride through Congress.

And that illustrates a couple of things wrong with the system in Washington:

- There are no rules. Pretty much anything can be slipped into any bill on the floor, even an appropriations bill which supposedly deals only with money.

Unlike some state legislatures, Congress had no rule requiring amendments to be "germane," that is, have something to do with the original bill.

- Congress wants to make everything a federal case.

In this instance, the Tallent-Feinstein amendment would have made it federal law that cold remedies containing pseudoephedrine, known as Sudafed, must be kept behind a pharmacy counter.

Sudafed, the most common over-the-counter remedy for sniffles, happens to be a key ingredient in home "cooking" of meth. It used to be avail-



steve haynes

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able on grocery and pharmacy counters and on display racks out in the store. With the growing meth problem, many states (starting in Oklahoma and including Kansas) have banned easy sales.

People have to ask a pharmacist for the drug now, and they have to sign for it, showing identification. States that have the law say it's cut meth production 40 to 80 percent, but users just switch to imported drugs.

This kind of lawmaking is wrong for two reasons:

First, it's not a federal issue. States have shown they can and will act. There's no reason for the federal government to be involved. It's not fair to people in states outside the Midwest where meth is not such a big issue to ban sales there, and it's a disservice to states which have their ducks in a row.

In fact, you could argue that the only real purpose of this bill is to make its sponsors look good

Pioneer Park makes a great city entrance

To the Editor:

As I cleaned out my files on Pioneer Park, I was reminded of the many individuals, families, businesses, organizations and community leaders from Goodland and Sherman County who worked to change the south entrance to Goodland from an ugly mud hole to beautiful new park.

Do you know of a prettier entrance to a city between Denver and Kansas City than Pioneer Park?

As volunteer coordinator from the Goodland Kiwanis Club for the project, I want to say a great big thank you to everyone who helped make Pioneer Park possible.

A next question may be, "What next things can we do to improve the looks of our city?"

One thing we can do is to support the new energy complex to be built west of town. The benefits to Goodland and Sherman county are many — a stable price for our electricity, many new families moving to Goodland and the economic benefits they bring, more children in our schools, more persons joining our service clubs and giving leadership to community activities, just to name a few. You can think of many more.

Another thing we can do is to remove unsightly things. The city should be commended for cutting down and removing the old, dead trees. The dead trees south of the United Methodist Church are gone and certainly improved my view of town.

Isn't it gratifying how removing old abandoned vehicles, dilapidated buildings that are about to fall down, old furniture tossed out of a house but not hauled to the dump, trash picked up from a yard, empty beer bottles and cans picked off the curb or out of the gutter, improves the appearance of a whole block?

Back to Pioneer Park. Most people turn off



from our readers

- to the editor

Interstate-70 and enter Goodland on K-27. Wouldn't it be nice to have a *Welcome to Goodland* sign, same design as the sign at Cherry Avenue but smaller, at an appropriate location along K-27 south of the U.S. 24 intersection? As those enter Goodland come north off the Interstate, a beautiful welcome to Goodland sign would let our city put its "best face forward."

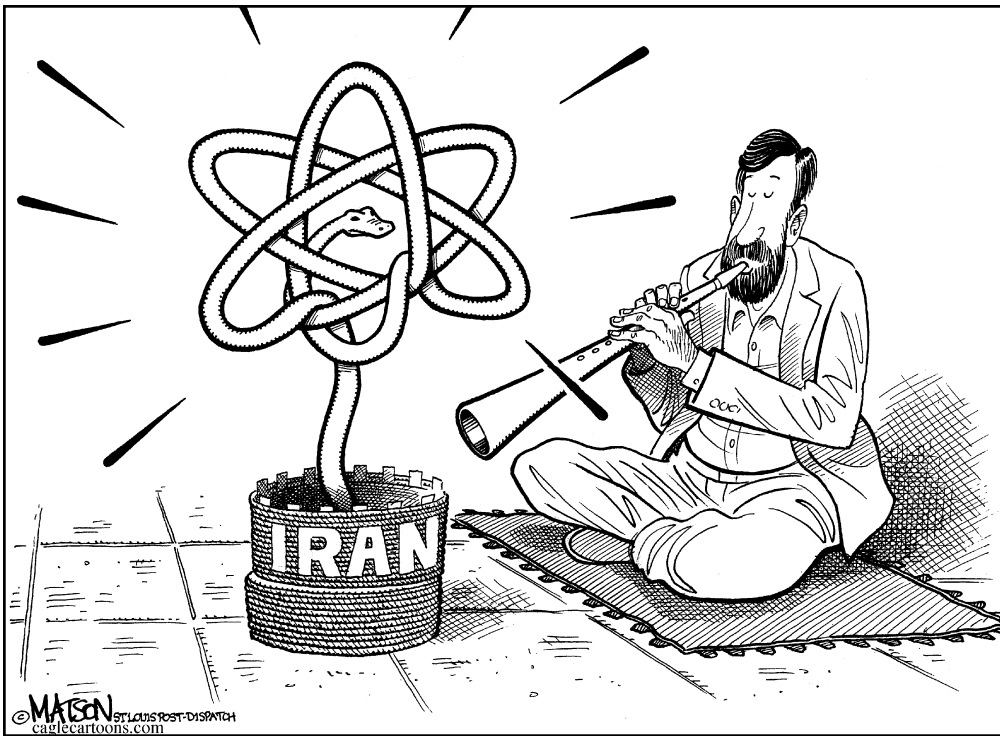
Last week, I presented this idea to the Kiwa-

nis Club's board, and I have visited with our city manager, Wayne Hill.

If you like this idea of a way to improve our city, give me a call at 890-7201, send a note to the Rev. Gene M. Tromble, 403 W. 12th, Goodland, or visit with me, and we can decide how to put some money together to pay for the attractive sign.

If your organization, club, or business can make a donation, let me know. I'm working with persons to get authorization from the Kansas Department of Transportation, city, etc., that will let us install the sign at the best location

The Rev. Gene M. Tromble
Goodland



garfield

