

from our viewpoint...

Amiable decision eludes commission

A disappointing county meeting Tuesday left the cooperation between the city and county over their joint road project bruised and battered.

Citizens who urged County Commissioners Mitch Tiede and Chuck Thomas to consider hiring an engineering firm with an office in Goodland were disappointed because neither man appeared to move away from backing a Plainville firm that has done some work for the county.

We feel it is only fair to give Penco Engineering representatives a chance to talk about the road projects, but we don't think there is any reason to warrant splitting the project apart.

Tiede said he felt a loyalty to Penco for the work they have done, and suggested the two firms bid for the design contract.

Both Gerald DeBore of Penco and Darin Neufeld of Evans, Bierly, Hutchison and Associates, agreed that was not a good idea. To do that, they said, the county would have to find a third engineering firm to draw up the bid specifications.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure said he thought the projects should be kept together, noting that Neufeld is already doing the city part of the job. He made a motion to hire the local firm, but it died without a second from either of the other commissioners. They decided the issue should be tabled until a special meeting set for 8 a.m. Tuesday.

Rasure kept asking the other commissioners why they did not want to use the local engineer, and what more they needed to make a decision.

Tiede said he had nothing against Neufeld, adding that he had done dirt work under contract with both engineering firms.

Rasure asked Tiede why he faxed a handwritten note to the Evans, Bierly headquarters protesting an e-mail Jona Neufeld sent after the meeting on April 11.

Rasure said he was "surprised and disappointed" an elected official would complain in such a manner, and read part of the note Tiede signed as a Sherman County commissioner.

"Myself and another commissioner are very upset at the way this is being handled," Tiede's note said. "This also makes it very difficult if not impossible to consider EBH for the project."

With tempers flaring, finding a compromise is going to be as difficult. There were signs last fall that the engineering contract might be a problem, but at that time, the focus was on getting the state Legislature to allow Sherman County citizens to vote the sales tax to pay for the joint road projects.

We understand the loyalty Curt Way, county public works manager, feels for Penco. He wore the jacket the firm gave him at Tuesday's meeting. Both Tiede and Thomas said they had talked to Way, who was encouraging them to support Penco for the contract.

We'd like to know where Penco was when the city and county commissioners were out selling the sales tax and the joint road project to voters. We know Neufeld, who lives in Goodland, was doing everything he could to help get the information out and get the sales tax approved. He wrote the proposal for an \$800,000 grant the county got to upgrade paving out by the new energy center.

It's too bad two county commissioners feel they are being forced into a corner by citizens who came forward to support Neufeld's firm, but these are the same citizens who approved the sale tax by a 4-1 margin.

Giving the joint project to Neufeld's firm seems the appropriate action, and one that would save the city and county the most money. That would make the sales tax stretch as far as possible to give this county the best roads possible. — Tom Betz

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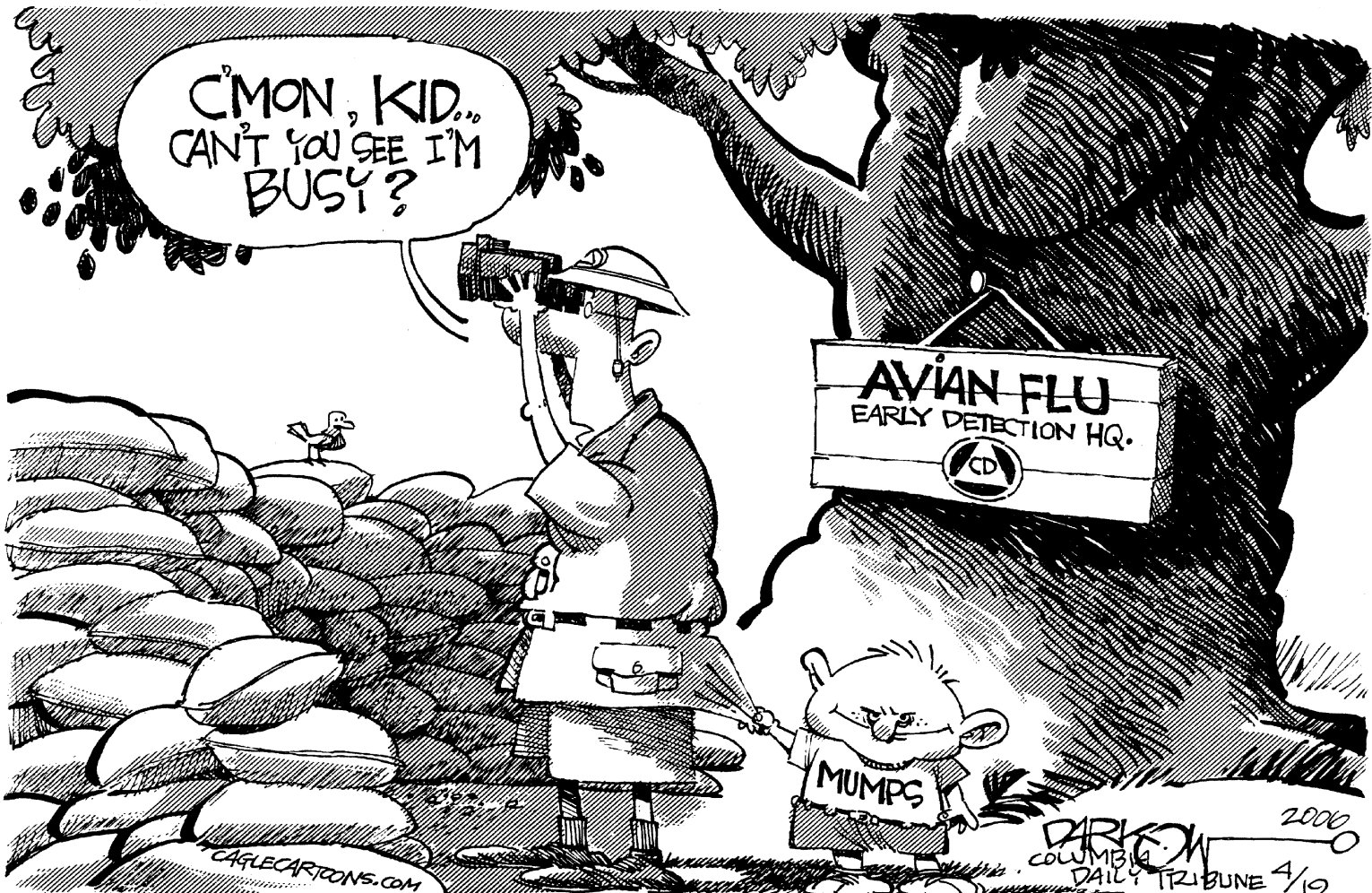
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The 'cats' have taken over

We were gone for two weeks and the cats took over.

Not just our cats — every cat in the neighborhood dropped by and made themselves to home.

We got back on a Sunday. That night as we were having supper in the dining room, Steve looked into the kitchen in time to see a grey, white and yellow cat meander through.

"Who are you?" he asked.

She looked totally surprised to find a human in the place and skiddled down the basement stairs before I could get a look at her.

I believed him, however. It's just the sort of thing that happens around here.

I got a real good look at her the next night as I took some spare clothing to store in youngest daughter's room.

Youngest daughter hasn't used that room in 10 years, but our cats like to curl up in the bed under



cynthia
haynes

• open season

the covers. In fact, they regularly unmake the bed so that every week or so I have to remake it.

The grey, white and yellow cat was sleeping on the bed. At least she was sleeping until I walked into the room and closed the door. At that point she was up and ready to go, but the exit was blocked.

I grabbed her and checked her out.

She was well fed — probably on my cat food. She seemed to be in good health and was, if not friendly, not actively hostile. She just didn't trust me and wanted out.

So, I let her go and told Steve I was thinking of naming her Patches.

He winced.

Two days later he spotted a part-Siamese cat walking up the stairs.

While I haven't seen this feline in the domicile, I've spotted him heading into several neighbors' yards.

I don't know if we're a feeding station, a stop on the underground cat railroad or just time-sharing pets with our neighbors.

One thing I am sure of, Steve is getting tired of the extras. He has the silly notion that one or two cats are enough for any family and he's not crazy that we seem to have four at this point. He's definitely not in favor of adding every stray in the county.

Too bad. The newcomers are kinda fun.

I wonder who will show up in the house next?

Role of archeology celebrated this month

To the Editor:

The professional archaeologists of Kansas have designated April as Kansas Archaeology Month to celebrate the role of archaeology in studying and understanding the state's historic and prehistoric past.

Through archaeology we begin to understand who was here, when and why.

The purpose of Kansas Archaeology Month is to increase public knowledge about the past and the science of archaeology, and to involve the public in protecting our cultural heritage. Much is yet to be learned about the past, especially here on the High Plains, where less research has been done.

The Kansas Anthropological Association is an organization of avocational archaeologists with chapter groups scattered throughout the state. The High Plains Chapter is our local group. Our purpose is to learn together and work with other interested individuals to locate, verify, document and preserve regional prehistoric and historic sites.

Our goal is to educate the public in not only the importance of documenting these sites but also to include them as northwest Kansas tells its own history. Dr. Donna Roper, an archaeologist, is coming to Colby April 19-23 to investigate possible sites and look at collections the public has.

We will have an open house on Friday, April 21, for area people to visit with Dr. Roper. She will talk at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, April 23, at the Prairie Museum in Colby on "Recent Explorations of an Early Wichita Indian Village in Central Kansas."

Brad Geist, a Goodland High School student, will give a computer presentation on his participation last year at the Kansas Anthropological Training Program near Kanorado at 1:45 p.m., prior to Dr. Roper's presentation.

E-mail highplainschapter@yahoo.com or call me at (785) 460-6653 for information. Please join us in celebrating the history of our land and its people.

So much is yet to be learned. It takes everyone sharing their knowledge, collections and questions to put the pieces of the history puzzle together.



from our
readers

• to the editor

Nancy Arendt, president

High Plains Chapter, Kansas Anthropological Association
Colby

To the Editor:

When I think of a small-town newspaper, I think of a paper that supports and honors the residents. This assumption may be true for most small-town newspapers, except *The Goodland Star-News*.

On April 6, there was an article written about my grandfather, Robert E. Notz, who was killed when a semi struck his truck on the Interstate. In this article, it stated that Trooper Brian Horney said that the semi had no choice. Which to the family sounded like my grandfather pulled out in front of the semi and they had no other choice but to run him over.

After writing the story that had incorrect facts about what really happen the night of my grandfather's death, was an obituary. Robert E. Notz was born in Goodland, was a residence of Goodland for many years, and he was in the United States military and yet he wasn't good enough to make the page that is called "Our Friends." What had this man done to the paper that he deserved to be omitted from this section?

When I brought this matter to the attention of the editor, he was very rude to me and said I needed to talk to the state patrol officer who he quoted, and when I asked him to reprint my grandfather's obituary on the "Our Friends," page he rudely again told me he would see.

When my father-in-law talked to the state patrol office, they told him they did not make those statements to the newspaper and would call the editor. We were told after the state patrol office got done talking to the editor, there would be a reprint. When I looked at April 11 newspaper, there was a tiny little story on Page

3 stating the semi driver received a ticket for following too close after reviewing the evidence. The editor made no apologies to my family for the hurt he had caused.

A family deserves to remember there loved ones in a happy way, not in an article stating a truck had no choice but to run him over. On the bottom of page 3 there is a section that states "Goodland Star-News will correct any mistakes or misunderstanding in a news story. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard." When I did call, I was treated rudely, so are you meaning you really don't want us to call?

My grandfather was a great man and deserved much more respect than what he received. I will never count on this newspaper to deliver the facts or stand by their town residents. Wouldn't it have been better to simply print the obituary and consider the feelings of the local family you are there to serve? One advice I have for the editor is, this is not Hollywood and you are not the paparazzi! Improve your standards!

Gretchen Smith

Goodland

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@nwkansas.com>.

garfield

