

The president is a man who plans to get things done

Report from Washington:
Anyone who thinks the new president isn't capable of selling his program is underestimating the man. After listening to him define his position last week in Washington, we came away with a growing respect for the new administration.

It's common to underestimate George W. Bush. He likes to tell about his first race for Congress, when he "came in second in a two-man race." He's come a ways since the 1970s, when he was pounding the pavement in dusty west Texas towns.

In Washington, he intends to see his programs in place and his people running the government.

The columnists and cartoonists make much of Bush's way of speaking, but in person (and talking from notes), he comes across as pretty effective.

Speaking to publishers at a National Newspaper Association meeting last week, the president talked about his first race and went on with what might be a typical Bushism: He's working closely with friends in Congress, he said, "to try to get some legislation through the legislative process."

Then he came straight to the point, defining the debate on Capitol Hill: He wants to limit the expansion of federal spending, which jumped from around 4 percent in recent years to 8 percent last year. And he wants to give a lot of the tax money

rolling into Washington back to taxpayers before someone spends it.

Republican and Democratic spokesmen had defined the battleground earlier in the day: The Republicans are proposing to increase federal spending by about \$200 billion over the next 10 years and cut taxes by \$1.6 trillion. Democrats want to see \$900 billion in tax cuts and \$900 billion in new spending.

"All the talk about the surplus as the government's money misses the point," the president said. "Those who say the surplus is the government's money forget where it comes from. And one of the things I'm not going to forget is where it comes from."

It comes down to, "who do you trust to spend the money," Mr. Bush says, the people or the government?

"We've got pretty good cash flow coming into the treasury," he said. "In spite of the economy slowing down in the first four months of the year, the cash flow was \$40 billion more than anticipated — \$40 billion. It sounds like to me, somebody is getting overcharged. And I'm asking Congress for the refund for the people."

"And that's what the debate is."

We couldn't have said it any better.

— Steve Haynes



Page is for opinions, not news

Dear Stan,

I thought your letter raised some interesting questions, but I sure didn't mean the columns I wrote as "vicious attacks." I thought they were fairly well reasoned, and fairly reasonable, even polite, criticism.

As a public official, shouldn't you expect some criticism of your decisions?

These columns were not reporting. Like everything else on the Opinion Page, they were opinions. I have mine, you have yours.

We're not supposed to agree all the time, but does that make my opinions "vicious and untruthful reporting?" I suspect a lot of people in town would agree with me, maybe as many as agree with you.

I haven't been to many council meetings in the last few years, though there was a time when I went to all of them. I have other jobs now, and we have a reporter who covers city meetings. Like most people in town, I depend on her stories for what I know. They are pretty accurate.

I have been to a couple during your term on the council, at least once during the Victoria days. There were a lot of people there, so maybe you didn't notice. Like everyone else, I have my opinions. Tuesday, we'll decide who gets to be on the next council. I'm not sure who I'll vote for, and I suspect a lot of other people haven't made up their minds, either.

Some points:
I agree that the current council has



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
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been very good about getting public opinion. I remember taking notice of that in a positive editorial. But I don't agree that you have to meet twice a month to do that. The school board handles its business with one meeting a month and an occasional special.

It seemed pretty clear to me, when the discussion came up about changing the council's quorum last year, that the goal was to allow three members to meet without violating the open meetings law. I never suggested that anyone had violated the law. But some members did seek a way around the law.

The police chief got the usual raise everyone else got, but lost all his overtime pay. That sounds like a pay cut to me. I'll bet he thought so, too.

I doubt that we are going to agree on whether buying a police car was the thing to do. I think I would have voted yes. You voted no. If I don't agree, does that make me negative?

The Herald is full of news every week. A lot of the stories are positive, things happening at the schools, to people in town, with government. Some of them are just information, neutral at best. Some are negative, things

we'd all rather not see, but they happened and they're news, too. A community can't afford to ignore its problems. The Opinion Page is like the rest of the paper. It's full of opinions, ours and everyone else's. Some are positive, some critical. It wouldn't be very interesting if we kept the criticism to ourselves and printed just the goody-two-shoes stuff. It wouldn't much serve the purpose of good government or honest public debate, either.

As you said, our opinions are slanted. They're supposed to be slanted. We'll say nice things as often as we criticize, but it'll be a cold day somewhere, Stan, when we get on board.

We want to see the town grow, too, but not at the cost of anyone's freedom. It's our job to sit out here and comment, criticize, compliment and explain. We're supposed to be the outside voice, the independent opinion, not just agree with the council. As if the council always agreed with itself.

People pay us 75 cents a week to be their eyes and ears, and to have an opinion now and then, and with those big bucks like that rollin' in, we can't afford to let them down.

Aging gracefully is for others

You go, Girl! I'm proud of you, Cynthia. First of all for having the surgery in the first place. But then, to be brave enough to write about it.

I have always said to forget about "aging gracefully." I intend to fight it, kicking and screaming all the way. But I had better start saving now, because the "Kelley eyes" are creeping up on me. In a few years my eyelids will be touching my eyelashes.

—ob—

Surely, I must have some Italian ancestors. All I could do this weekend was cook and encourage everyone to "Eat! Eat!"

James brought his girlfriend Dannie (short for Danielle) home for the weekend to "meet the folks" and, of course, I wanted to impress her. Saturday I whipped up my famous "Texas Trash" breakfast/brunch. But because we had eaten so late in the morning, we weren't ready for my hearty "Four-Hour Beef Stew" until almost three. Then no one wanted any supper until they heard I had a layered, chocolate dessert in the fridge, chilling for Sunday dinner. So we had dessert for supper.

Sunday morning, I said, "You're on your own for breakfast." We've been going to early church lately, so that means we have to walk out the door at 7:30 and I really don't have time to get myself AND breakfast ready. They all managed, however, to grab a piece of toast or a bagel.

For dinner I had one of James' favorite meals planned: Pork chops baked in a mushroom/sour cream sauce, rice and brussel sprouts along with a tossed salad and some of my home-canned beet pickles. And before they left to return to Hays, we had more chocolate dessert. See what I mean. "Eat! Eat! Be Happy!"

—ob—

Kara called the other day just to talk. When I asked her how Taylor was, she said, "Oh, Mom. She's been...she's been.... Well, she's just been TWO all day!" It seems the potty training was



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
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going just fine, but something happened, and now, she won't have a thing to do with it. Who knows what rationale goes through their little minds.

Kara and Adam are moving to a new home and perhaps the hustle/bustle of packing and disrupting her schedule are to blame. Anyway, my advice, "Don't worry about it. By the time she goes to college, she'll train herself."

—ob—

I've got to start wearing a notepad and pencil around my neck to write down all the cute things I hear during the week that, at the time, I think would be great for this column. I don't make notes, I forget it. Just like this week, I remember Jim saying something that was really funny. But do you think I can think of it now? No!

Mom used to jot notes down everywhere. And because they were usually in shorthand, only she could translate them. There was always a notepad by the phone, one in her purse, one mounted on the wall in the kitchen, paper on her bedside table (for those

middle-of-the-night inspirations) and even one in the bathroom. She always took notes during Sunday sermons and often quoted the preacher. Especially if he was funny.

If I intend to do this much longer, it's a habit I need to acquire.

—ob—

An old high school chum is back in town, sadly, for the funeral of one of her sisters. But she and I plan to meet for a late lunch and catch up on the past few years since our last get-together.

Judy was the person who befriended me my first day of high school. I was such a scared little country bumpkin that I had no idea how to get from one class to another, how to open a locker or how to even find the lunchroom. She sat next to me in opening assembly that first day and we became fast friends.

Our bond lasted clear through high school and we've kept in touch all these years, picking up the threads of our friendship each time our paths cross. Old friends really are more precious than silver and gold.

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It's easy to get lost in Washington

We visited Washington last week and my lasting impressions will be metal detectors and being lost.

I was 16 the last time I was in the capitol, sightseeing with my parents.

This time I was all grown up and I was supposed to know what I was doing. I didn't, but I can fake it pretty well after all these years of being lost and confused.

We went through the metal detectors at the airport, when we entered the room where President Bush was speaking, when we went to visit our congressmen and senators, when we entered the Capitol and (best of all) when we visited the National Aquarium. Then, of course, we got the treatment again at the airport.

I passed all but one when my badge, which I thought was plastic, set the alarm off.

Steve couldn't get through anything without practically undressing. If it wasn't his badge, it was the brads on his shoes, his pocket change or the metal back of his notebook. He was the tin man as far as the metal detectors were concerned.

None of the museums we went to had detectors and all were free. We saw some of the greatest accomplishments of the American people at the Smithsonian buildings and wonderful art at the National Gallery.

It cost \$3 each to get into the aquarium, which is in the basement of



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
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the Commerce Building — thus the metal detector at the door. The biggest draw was four small alligators, which stared at us without moving until we went away and then went into frenzied activity until we returned. I wouldn't want to play Statue with them critters. They can out-stare a cat.

The aquarium is neither large nor modern. It was last updated in the 1930s and, while it has been painted and new signs put up, it is small, cramped and not up to modern standards.

On the other hand, it's got plenty of fish and only costs \$3 to get in. I think that Denver's is around \$14 a head.

Washington is a maze. I think I read somewhere that it was laid out like Paris, which explains a lot about the French.

I was lost most of the time. I walked around for several days with a map in my hands — sometimes it was even right side up. I finally gave up and took a cab most places I wanted to go. It was more expensive but I got there and

home again. Of course, there was the problem of the museums. They are all huge, with rooms and passages going every which way.

I got lost in almost every one of them. Most of the time this was OK, but the day I was supposed to catch a plane and I couldn't even find the door (Steve was at a different museum), I became a little panicky.

Those places need colored lines on the floor. Follow the red line to the exit. Follow the green line to the exhibits. Follow the blue line to the bathroom. Follow the black line if you never want to find your way out.

From the Bible

Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips and is a fool. Proverbs 19:1.

Man worries about releasing killers

To the Editor:

The fox is still guarding the chicken house.

The Kansas Department of Corrections once again does their own review, in the case of Reginald Carr, a parolee accused of killing four people. Once again they find no problem.

These are the same people who did a three-week review of my case (my daughter was murdered by a parolee) and reported no problems.

Gary Kleypas had murdered and raped before. He pleaded insanity due to alcohol and drugs. He was let out on parole after 15 years.

Information that came out during our trial included two driving under the influence convictions; one rape; one letter from the college saying, "drinking all the time," only two or three alcohol tests; no drug tests; no notification to

Letter to the Editor

employers that he was on parole; worked in a place that sold alcohol; worked part-time with a parole officer; court testimony saying, "He drank every day;" court testimony saying, "He was on drugs entire time."

In the Purkey case (story Wichita Eagle June 11, 2000), the department had to release the records for a court case. A horrendous job was done. They lost this violent criminal for three months.

During the last five years, at least 27 people have been murdered in Kansas by parolees. Many more will be murdered if we continue to let the corrections people do their own reviews.

The Legislature should at once do a thorough review of the records of the parolees who committed murder the last five years. Their lack of action after having proof of the terrible job the department is doing has cost lives. They have to live with their conscience. Myself, I will keep trying to get the truth out.

A special note to Chuck Simmons and Bill Miskell: If anything I am saying is not true, please correct me.

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