

# Morality, my ascot!

Morality. What a concept!

After all the immoral behavior of the previous city administration, the former mayor now wants to practice a little retroactive morality? Eight years late and forty-two million dollars short, Jack.

When you promised during your run for mayor in 2000 that you would never use public funds to remodel the depot without a vote of the people and then did just that within months of being elected, was that a show of morality in your mind?

When you opposed a downtown parking garage in that same campaign, then switched sides and used slight of hand to cause the unwise, unnecessary and unused garage to be built, was that a show of morality in your mind?

When you repeatedly led the fights to approve illegal annexations and caused county residents to spend tens of thousands of their dollars to fight your illegal actions and spent \$300,000 from the city coffers on third party attorneys to represent the city in the losing cases, was that a show of morality in your mind?

When you directed the city attorney to oppose residents who made claims for sewer line backups even though the Wyoming Supreme Court had ruled that negligence in maintenance of those lines is no defense to residents' claims, was that a show of morality in your mind?

When you directed the city attorney to fight residents who had been injured or sustained property damage in accidents caused by city-owned vehicles, in spite of accepting fault, but claiming governmental immunity, was that a show of morality in your mind?

When you continuously and repeatedly provided the daily newspaper with confidential information on city affairs but did not provide other Cheyenne media the same information, was that a show of morality in your mind?

When you supported a city employee who had brazenly stole from the city, and went so far as to help her find employment with another city government in California, even after she had pled guilty to the crimes disclosed in the Cheyenne Herald, was that a show of morality in your mind? For whom? Not the residents, that's for sure.

Is supporting criminal wrongdoing while not seeking restitution from a former employee capable of repaying for the theft a show of morality in your mind?

When a downtown fire destroyed the property and business of Mary Coonts and you determined in your own mind that she had set the fire or caused it to be set - without any evidence to back your preconceived belief but because someone told you the fire must have been the result of arson - who else could have set a fire except the owner of the property that burned down - does it say that in a book you've read? The owner must be guilty? No stranger would set a fire. Never do.

Then you and your gang approved the demolition of her property before she had a chance to have it done on her own - and then sought a lien against her land because the city had arbitrarily ordered the demolition and even pursued the claim to the Wyoming Supreme Court. You could have simply told Mary: "We're sorry for your loss, Mary, just as we are for your neighbor, Sue Miller's, loss. We were convinced the building had to be demolished for public safety and you did not move quickly enough to have it demolished, so we took an action we deemed necessary for the public good. However, we accept that you may have been able to get a lower bid for the demolition had you been provided the statutory time so the city will accept payment for the demolition we ordered done of your property in an amount equal to what you would have paid your demolition firm to complete the work. We do not intend to add to your problems by taking you to court to get a lien and then to enforce it and take your land. It would be immoral to take your land. Legal, but immoral."

Wouldn't that have been the moral thing to do instead of the heavy-handed way you treated an innocent downtown property owner and business operator, so far as any of us know, who had lost most of what she owned in the fire? Or was the way you treated Mary Coonts a show of morality in your mind?

When you trampled the Landfill Advisory Committee that had worked years to determine a feasible location for a new landfill and, out of the blue, told them that the Belvoir Ranch - a location dismissed out of hand by the committee previous to your interest in acquiring the Ranch from a guy you thought owned the Colorado Rockies - was the best and only choice for that new landfill and directed that the Landfill Advisory Committee be immediately disbanded, without them issuing a final report or having further input on the Belvoir Ranch choice, was that a show of morality in your mind?

When you decided to construct a worthless block-long skywalk from the downtown parking garage, down an alley to the east, for the benefit of two property owners who had not even filed plans to remodel or develop the projects they promised, and spend up to \$700,000 of difficult-to-access City money, was that a show of morality in your mind?

Are your high morals ever troubled by the mistakes you made, such as that skywalk now that both "developers" have reneged on their promises to improve the downtown with their projects? Now that the hole created from the downtown fire will remain nothing but a deep hole - and the Hynds Building is once again for sale at an exorbitant price no one will pay for it - do you lose any sleep wondering if your "morality" had anything to do with these multiple failures?

What other decisions that you made as mayor were legal, but immoral? Or is the one with the investors in the IKON Center the only one you'll claim?

Was your morality challenged when you had a friend work on building the unsafe tree house at Lions Park? Was it moral to open that tree house to children only to have the Cheyenne Herald force its closure, redesign and reconstruction?

Are your high morals ever troubled by the countless mistakes your office made with every "trash-to-ethanol," etc., scheme? By your willingness to enter into contracts with schemers who didn't have two nickels to rub together and with a felon who convinced you he could turn municipal trash into diesel?

I supported the swap of what I considered to be valueless land to the owners of the IKON Center. I would not have supported that swap if I knew Jack Spiker had his fingers crossed behind his back and would later want to change the deal to benefit the sellers, not the residents.

**Jack, you never quite grasped that your role as mayor was to represent the people - the residents of the City of Cheyenne - and not special interests. One of your betrayals to voters resulted when opponents suddenly embraced you after you won the 2000 election. Well-known business owners who had supported and publicly endorsed your opponent in that election - and a daily newspaper that would not endorse you even after they had called upon your opponent to resign - came to you on bended knee and you bought their apologies and offers to be your friend, Jack. They would use you as long as they could and discard you like a dirty napkin when they had no more use for you. Important people, well-educated people and military officers always turned your head. Your loyalty shifted from the voters who had elected you to the people who, once you had won the election, told you that you could be their friend. You couldn't but you believed them. Now you're in a lonely place. Now you're all alone.**

The original deal that was made on the IKON Center needs to stick. If other backroom deals about that trade were struck, they need to be disclosed. If laws were broken, that needs to be determined and responsible parties prosecuted.

In a small town like Cheyenne, things in politics are so interwoven that nothing is just about itself. The principal of the law firm that made the deal with the City to trade a valuable IKON Center facility and land for "P" zoned land that was of dubious value, whether rezoned or not, founded the law firm bearing his name that also represented NextMedia on the infamous billboard litigation that the City recently lost and then the City changed the ordinance to allow NextMedia to install even more billboards - electronic billboards. The new ordinance was drafted in an attempt to protect an illegally permitted billboard on Patrick Collins' property at the Bicycle Station store.

IKON Center investors knew what they were getting in trade. Caveat emptor.

## Children's parade vendor permits dropped by almost half. No wonder we couldn't buy a pop on the parade route.

The City governing body needs to undo the mess they created when they approved an increase to a license fee that does not produce revenue and discourages youngsters from trying to earn a buck. One thing comes quickly to mind and that was the needless and foolish doubling of CFD parade vendor permit fees.

Apparently, many parents took the increase to mean CFD, through the City, simply did not want kids pulling wagons along the route of the four CFD parades. It wasn't that the increase was crippling - it went from a dollar to two dollars.

Plus, a generous local offered to pay the fee for children under 18 who applied for the permit. Still, the kids quit.

Little by little, the number of permits has declined. An earlier story here pointed out that the most the City was likely to gain to contribute to their wanton spending habits was \$74.00. At double the fee. But only 40 kids applied for the permit. The City gained but six dollars and stole the chance to make a buck from 34 kids.

## Just what you should do with an angry college professor and a guy packing heat. Get together for a beer. Not!

Pop-a-top diplomacy.

As his poll numbers drop, the POTUS appeared at the All Star game in "Mom's" blue jeans and then, after taking the side of a friend (against the police) without knowing any of the details, he invited the two Cambridge protagonists to the White House. **FOR A BEER!**

Remember when the American people were uncomfortable with President Jimmy Carter making a televised appearance **IN A CARDIGAN?**

Now, our First Guy, in a misdirected effort to be **ONE OF US**, is trying too hard to look like **ONE OF THEM!**

And, why didn't the American public get to see the POTUS throw one in the dirt at the All Star game? Most of us, even former athletes, probably would have come up short without a warmup. Home plate turns out to be farther from the pitcher's rubber than it looks.

"Pop-A-Top Again" belongs to Jim Ed Brown. Or Alan Jackson. Act and dress like a real POTUS. Thanks. Appreciate it.