

Judy Case
 County Commissioner



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Paid for by Judy Case

Issue No. 200 of the Cheyenne Herald

Keeping everything in perspective, it probably isn't that big of a deal to have published 200 of anything. But it's kind of a big deal when you realize that no alternative newspaper in Cheyenne has ever published that many - at least none that can be remembered.

A daily newspaper, of course, publishes nearly twice that many in a year. And that probably accounts for why their pages are filled with "pick-up" material - from wire services, syndicated comics, match making services, crossword puzzles, space-gobbling large photographs or stock photos, banner headlines on insignificant stories, legal notices, sports standings, box scores and statistics. Anything to fill space. They take the easy way.

On the pages of the Cheyenne Herald, virtually everything is original. Except for the issues during political campaign cycles, somewhere between 12,000 and 15,000 words appear on the 12 pages. Over the eight and a half years it's taken to reach 200 issues, others have contributed stories but that is happening infrequently now. Norm French, Skip Eshelman and Jim Mathewson have been semi-regular contributors in the past and each have offered something different yet important in the development of the Cheyenne Herald.

I've been contacted by cartoonists who

offered their work for just the credit, no pay. But I promised when I began the Herald that I would not use pick-up material - comics, crosswords, etc. - to fill space. It would reduce my workload and time to produce one of these things but this is the easiest work I've ever done.

Falling trees in Wisconsin and Montana was hard work. This isn't. Stacking hay on a ranch in Montana with a friend who would become actor Dirk Benedict was hot and dirty work. This isn't. Serving four years in the Navy was sometimes boring and tedious. This isn't. Walking the streets or taking the subway to my office in Manhattan was risky. This isn't. Writers block? Don't know what that is. Lack of material? Never gonna happen.

What has been most important in producing a publication like the Cheyenne Herald? Probably knowing my way around politics and having countless reliable sources. Sources provide many of the storylines - I just develop them. Trust is critical. People have to know that I won't give them away - that I won't carelessly identify them, even if unintentionally. People fear for their jobs and will only share information if they are sure they won't be betrayed. Deadlines are easy to meet. There are 24 hours in every single day and I've never used all 24 in any of them. Like I said, this is the easiest work I've ever done.

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Polls and endorsements

It's about a push as to which, a poll or an endorsement, has less value. And, when it comes from the Tribune-Eagle, neither have any validity. Recall their poll results a couple years back that showed the rec center 6th penny proposition highly favored and the Archer Property item on the ballot being doubtful? Exactly the opposite vote occurred.

This morning (Saturday, August 7, 2010) the WT-E published results of a poll done by a non-polling outfit called Aspen Media and Research. In the past, the WT-E used an elderly couple up in Kalispell, Montana who used their prepaid cell phones purchased from the Libby Walmart to make calls until the minutes were depleted. That was the WT-E polling.

Even established and credible polling organizations like Zogby, Gallup, Quinnipiac, Rasmussen and Mason-Dixon have trouble getting reliable results because of cell phones and caller ID's. For a company based in Boulder that normally does circulation or subscription calling to try to produce meaningful political polling is absurd. The Casper Star-Tribune used Mason-Dixon and the results are markedly different from those commissioned by the WT-E. Unable to pay more than \$500 for a statewide poll will get you such laughable results.

I have been told, ahead of this week's Sunday edition of the WT-E, that they will show a race for governor in which Micheli is ahead of Mead and both trail Rita Meyer. At this point in the election cycle,

it is foolhardy to make any predictions, whether based on polling or personal feelings. The race for governor is, as they say election night, "too close to call."

The WT-E polling is silly but the endorsements they hand out are downright embarrassing. In one race, before the interviews, one of the WT-E interrogators said, "[So and so] is our man." Before the candidates had even been interrogated!

In the WT-E write-ups, they tend to lie about what was said by candidates in those "interviews." And the purpose of meeting with candidates is not to find out what *they* know and what *they* stand for but to try to indoctrinate them to the WT-E agenda. Any resistance will cost a candidate the coveted "endorsement."

The only product from this useless exercise is that candidates and their families feelings get hurt. A wife who knows her husband is intelligent - or vice versa - may take seriously fabricated criticism of her husband - usually generated because he would not kneel in front of Eckhardt, Fecht and the other doofuses at the Inquisition.

Is there anybody left who really is influenced by the newspaper's choices? Let's hope not. As Reed put it in his explanation as to why they do this charade, "we have the time, no one else does." That's right. No one else does have the time because they're trying to gather news and produce stories of interest, not sit endlessly with candidates to argue with them about shutting down the Air Force base.