

**Take two aspirins...**

(conclusion, from page 4)

A few short weeks ago, Wyoming's own Senator Mike Enzi was all over the news - in an effort to affect the healthcare of a Florida resident, Terry Schiavo. He was going to subpoena her to testify before a committee he chairs, even though she hadn't spoken in years. He and his colleagues could apply the influence to get the President of the United States to return to the Capital from Texas to sign a bill both houses had passed - again to affect the healthcare of a single person.

But, Senator Enzi, Senator Thomas and Representative Cubin cannot find a way to affect the healthcare of one of their own constituents here in Cheyenne.

As of presstime, this local resident has no source or resources to get her prescriptions refilled as they run out. The Wyoming Department of Family Services can make arrangements to bathe her but they have no programs to help her acquire the medicines she needs - desperately needs. There are no programs through her pharmacy - seemingly the only ones who try to help, when they can.

Someone at the local hospital is trying to find pharmaceutical companies who can provide at least some of the needed drugs. But that demand must be so incredibly high with so many people unable to afford prescriptions.

Because this woman is "entitled" to her deceased husband's Social Security, she must take it - even if it means gaining \$134 a month in cash to lose \$1805 a month in prescription drug benefits.

This is not one of Ronald Reagan's Cadillac Queens on welfare. She is entitled to \$48 a month in food stamps (now called PayWest). Her rent is \$210 a month. She is behind on her utility bills but Cheyenne Light has been patient.

A couple years ago, I asked the question, "How Could We?" when the state allowed a 29 year old mother of an 11 year old to die because the state Medicaid program would not pay for a needed organ transplant. This time, the Medicaid program was providing the necessary medicines to keep this resident alive. But, "rules" required that she be dumped from Medicaid to Medicare and that program does not have prescription drug coverage at the same level.

As a people, are we content to send billions of dollars overseas for foreign aid and to rebuild countries we destroyed while our own starve or waste away?

**Eyes on the Horizon,  
Nose in the Wind**

By Skip Eshelman

**Cotton Kills,  
Half Truths Kill Completely**

**Search and Rescue Training**

Cotton does kill. That's a fact I keep forgetting. It was reinforced at the Laramie Search and Rescue II training and certification class I have been attending the last couple weekends. I can always use a refresher on navigation using a compass, something I don't practice on a regular basis. The cheap part was the course at \$140 dollars. Stocking my backpack with survival gear totaled nearly \$300. It was the little things that added up to a big bill. The big bucks.

I keep reminding myself that the Wyoming Mounted Search and Rescue group justifies the Eshelman rammuda (sic). The steeds wintered as well as I did. I just had their teeth floated for \$300 dollars so I guess it is all relative. A horse owner needs to rationalize better than any county commissioner, which scares me some, as there are lots of people in training.

**County Landfill**

As of this writing, Mr. Jackie Smith, director of public works, is still putting out garbage for the dump. I've got to refocus on the Laramie County Aquifer Protection Plan, so the county commissioners can put an end to this nonsense. Then I consider how much of their responsibility the commissioners have transferred to the city, and I suspect I'd be wasting my time.

The implosion has started. The BOPU is begging for infrastructure money after buying the Belvoir Ranch for the city's dump. The city insists \$20 million more is necessary to open a new dump, and close the old. They had money set aside for that too at one time, but those dollars have long sense disappeared. The city can save the \$20 million by keeping the dump where it's at. Call it the "Jackie Smith Dump." I don't care. Actually, that is the only driving force I can see regarding the effort to open yet another environmental mistake on the plains.

I can't believe the city has no problem with taxing the residents yet again,

without a vote. Rate increases are not a tax technically, but tell that to the seniors and cowhand wage earners struggling with gasoline, electric, natural gas, insurances, tax reassessments, and a million other increases just to get by. A few dollars here, ten dollars there, the cost of a "Big Mac" maybe, and pretty soon bankruptcy doesn't look so bad. Except that option will soon be taken away too. I usually see patterns, but this is a whole quilt.

With all the fluff offered as legislation, it is too bad they did not pass a law requiring candidates and newspaper editors to visit each neighborhood, and talk with people. I do not believe the politicians would be so quick to tax folks. The daily paper's drumbeat for increased taxes should be ignored, as they do not pay taxes on their product. How convenient is that? Kind of like the press supporting and promoting open meeting laws to keep the politicians honest, yet consistently printing misleading articles. I still have not heard of any fines, or court action over the recent city/county meeting on building codes.

**County Library**

Someone should put a stop to the pathetic excuse proposed for a new county library. We have enough examples of early 20<sup>th</sup> century warehouse architecture. Please view Exhibit One: Cheyenne School buildings. The new community house was inspired, but what happened after that? Montana just finished a library much like the community house, which incorporates logs. That's exactly what this county needs to differentiate itself from the mundane and unimaginative. Even the Trilegiant Building has more character than what the librarian is now offering.

**Building Permits**

Building permits in the county may have dropped off the past few months, but a resident has only to drive out Campstool and see the preparation for hundreds of new homes on the east end of the HR Development, or continue toward Carpenter where subdivisions are flourishing or just getting geared up.

The other evening my son Ethan and I noticed how washed out the eastern sky has become from ranchette night lights. Wait till the residents living near those new developments get a load of the reassessments next year. I bet those lights dim pretty quick to pay for those increases.

**Reassessments**

I witnessed a recent outright condemnation of reassessments at a local hardware store, which brought commerce to a brief halt. One fella said his taxes went up 30% on his home.

At 77, he figured he needed to get some extra work to keep pace. I asked him if he had protested the assessment, but as usual, the county assessor had scared him off. I informed the man that was the routine, as the county doesn't want to hold those hearings, but he didn't want to push the issue - fearing his tax bill would increase even more, which apparently is the implied threat.

Another salesman offered I should run for county commissioner on the anti-reassessment platform, as I would certainly win. I told him that was part of my platform in the last campaign. I said all it would take is for commissioners to deny the increases levied by the assessor and side with the people. After awhile, the legislature might take notice and do something before the assessor has completed her version of ethnic cleansing. Of course you have to find commissioners for the people. Nothing will happen with the current trio.

**Dr. Ed Strader**

As the Cheyenne Herald continues to battle half-truths and promote positive change, remember excellent citizens like Dr. Ed Strader, who have suffered at the hands of arrogant government using Gestapo tactics. I am conflicted on Cheyenne's finest. Some are Centurions with integrity in their hearts, others have no business in law enforcement, but to participate in humiliating such an outstanding citizen is criminal. The mayor should have resigned immediately. If there were a recall feature in our Constitution, I would have promoted the cause.

I was aggravated by the response of the city powers to councilmen holding a public meeting at a public place, and forbidding future travesties of good faith from being practiced. The Strader scandal was way over the top. Mr. Strader has done more for folks in this community than any of the councilmen - and most churches. He actually practices charity and goodwill to those in need.

Cotton does kill in the outdoors.

Taking homes from those who cannot afford the reassessments - sending law enforcement to insult upstanding citizens - and spending tax dollars in complete disregard to good sense and consideration - are situations Laramie County residents need to recognize.

The spirit of the community is in serious trouble and could be killed completely.

Maybe that was why "Conversations with Wyoming" was a failure and perhaps a reflection on Wyoming's evolving way of life. All I know for sure is that wet cotton kills.

See, you learned something from this column after all.



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