

Survey says ...

The city is in the midst of tabulating the responses from the latest mayor's survey. Of course, the results are virtually meaningless now because three copies of the same survey were mailed to each respondent.

Scientific surveys are helpful but they are not compelling. Right now, for example, people nationally are saying that the young woman in Florida should not be kept alive with the feeding tube. Even religious zealots who were expected to have contrary views, agree. And, a huge majority of Americans are not buying into the president's wishes to privatize social security.

Here in Cheyenne, the WT-E dusted off "surveys" which have been conducted in the past to support their position to ban smoking in restaurants.

While the Herald preceded the daily in that position, it is the reliance on surveys to reach such a position that is comical.

The Cheyenne Herald does not wait for surveys to take a stand.

And to decide by survey leaves one very vulnerable to ridicule and criticism.

To prop up their argument on the results of bogus polling done before the last election is foolhardy. Then, to editorialize as though surveys have significance to their positions when having previously dismissed those not in lockstep with theirs, further tarnishes their reputation.

For years, the residents of Cheyenne spoke out against using public dollars to remodel the depot. Whatever the scheme was, the public despised it. Vintage train cars, a sales-tax funded transportation museum, a 40-foot call girl - you name it, the public opposed it. They opposed it by the most accurate survey of all - an election.

But the daily had an owner on the board of directors of the museum corporation board so those survey results were not

deemed reliable.

The same mayor's survey that the daily points to in support of banning smoking in restaurants consistently opposed using public money for any depot project.

Survey results are only reliable if they agree with the predetermined outcome supported by the daily newspaper.

The WT-E "Our View" of March 13th refers to a "scientific survey" done last October. That survey showed, conveniently, that 58% of those polled supported banning smoking in local restaurants. And, by God, if that is what the survey done by the Kalispell couple said, that is gospel.

Conveniently, this purveyor of truth in tiny bits, did not mention that the storm water drainage utility was favored by 67% in that same survey. The survey **THEY** commissioned. 17 percent were "against measure - survey" the headline read.

There are a couple of facts the diminishing newspaper needs to keep at hand. First, that the local advocacy journal (that's the Cheyenne Herald) has copies of previous WT-E issues and second, that an election was actually conducted on the drainage utility.

The margin of error claimed by the Kalispell couple was 4.1 percent. If this pair had surveyed before the Titanic left dock, the results would have been 93% in support of it finishing its maiden voyage. The mayor called the verdict on the drainage utility "huge." What did he call its loss at the polls? It was the huge one.

Nearly two thirds of the Cheyenne voters said "no," regardless what the Kalispell phoners said they, the voters, thought.

If the smoking ban poll results are as faulty, what do the locals really think?

Where is the local daily? Really? Do they have to stick a finger into the wind to form their editorial positions? Follow, not lead? Of course. It's worked so far.

Wild horses

by Skip Eshelman

There is a difference between conservationists and preservationists. The difference is striking as I read an article in the Denver Post's "Denver & The West" section dated March 11th announcing the relocation of 200 head of feral horses at the base of Sheep Mountain, a wildlife reserve between Laramie and Centennial, Wyoming. These horses are the equivalent of children without boundaries, youth without manners, and adults without consideration. Having a mixed genealogy leaves most of them homely beyond belief. Many can trace their roots back to stock that was turned out because of problems in their mental and/or physical makeup.

The picture in the paper showed these wild horses lined up. Upon closer inspection, a true conservationist can tell you the pasture has already been overgrazed, the horses are tamed to the point of eating hay distributed probably by truck, just like the elk in Jackson Hole, and they are ill-tempered from the placement of the ears on the mare at the right. The owners have located 200 head on a 3500 acre spread, with intentions of getting more.

That works out to 12.5 acres for each animal now, already far under the standard 20 acres per animal in a good moisture year. Wyoming, as much of the west, has experienced drought for nearly 5 years now. The pasture does not provide enough forage for a few antelope, let alone horses that eat only the choicest of grasses. Conservationists would not allow such overpopulation, but preservationists would. The reason these guys have the "feral" horses is due to conservation measures to save the range in the first place.

I believe this is another scheme to milk the endless, bottomless pockets of bleeding hearts that do not have a clue what the problem is, except the poor horses were run off by the terrible government, those heartless b-----s that can't see these horses need to roam and eat the grasses, forbs, and scrubs until another dustbowl situation arises. The horses may be able to trace their heritage back to the Spanish mustangs, but they are no more mustang than I am Swiss, as my family has been here for over 400 years now. But a certain appeal and mystique is generated by such references.

They are beautiful. Like any woman on a beach - at 500 yards. All sweaty and oiled with the sun glistening off their hides, these creatures are magnificent running across the plains. Get closer and you realize they are as homely, as poorly bred, as unhealthy as any neglected animal. Their hooves are cracked and broken from hard surfaces such as rocks and hard pan. They are scarred from fights for pecking order and feed.

The preservationists have seen this as an opportunity ... a business. They could have paid between \$1.7 and \$3.5 million for the parcel. My bet is these guys are entrepreneurs that have seen a chance for a growth industry, plus a great place to hunt with the public land just to the east of them. Why the Wyoming Game and Fish did not pick up this ranch, to augment the parcel they own just down the road, about the middle of the mountain, is hard to understand. I am thinking this whole thing has been kept quiet as to not excite the natives in Wyoming. I wonder what will happen when they buy the ranch on the other side of Wyo. 130 and bring in the 4,800 head proposed

Here is a simple solution to end all this silliness regarding wild horses, buffalo, grizzly bears, prairie dogs and wolves: Ship the surplus to the forests east of the Mississippi. Bar the inhabitants from trying to control the populations until the animals are completely dictatorial of what can take place as far as camping, and damage to other livestock and people, and see if views change regarding these animals. Folks in Colorado move to the country, only to chase off the farmers and ranchers for smells and noises, and they have not had to deal with anything but prairie dogs. Maybe they could use some grizz and wolves as a test case.

Wait till an Easterner got a load of a wolf eating their precious dog and cat. What about finding a buffalo eating their shrubs, or a grizzly rummaging in the garbage cans and camp sites. Perhaps the wild horses could graze the interstates instead of mowers. Works for me. No one would want to pay to see a bunch of feral, evil tempered horses in an over grazed pasture, so those guys in Centennial would have to take in stray Iraqis or something.

Then again, folks drive to Wall Drug for no good reason either.



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