

So sure. But oh so wrong.

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by Dave Featherly

It is a policy of the Cheyenne Herald to do everything necessary to make certain that anything presented as a fact is so.

It's not that mistakes have never happened on these pages. They have. And when they do, and I know about them, they stick in my memory. I once used Heidelberg (a printing press) for Hindenburg (the passenger airship that burned). I know the difference but didn't catch the mistake before printing.

I try to make sure people's names are spelled correctly and, if a title or position is used, that it also be correct. Otherwise, don't use the name or position.

There are some great quotes about people who are positive about their statements but absolutely wrong. Nothing should be more embarrassing than pontificating about a subject, only to learn that everything said or written was wrong.

"Human beings are perhaps never more frightening than when they are convinced beyond doubt that they are right."

The daily paper proclaimed their intent to correct any mistakes they make - in a later paper and in a secondary place in the paper. It is obvious from observing them over the past few years that they simply don't know when they're wrong.

They editorialize or report on events and get the facts absolutely wrong but never publish a later correction. The few corrections they do print are usually from obituaries. Perhaps that's why so many local people pay to get an obituary printed. It is safer to provide their own words than risk the daily messing up such an important announcement.

Comedienne Gilda Radner did a bit on the once popular Saturday Night Live television program in which she would blavocate about something, only to be told by Chevy Chase that she had the wrong issue. She could go on and on criticizing a position on busting schoolchildren, only to have Chase tell her the issue was actually "busing schoolchildren." "Oh, I'm sorry. Never mind," she'd say.

Now we have the "Never mind" editorial stances of the Tribune-Eagle.

They seldom bother to correct their goof-ups and I've told readers of this paper that I wasn't going to deal with every one they make. I don't want to use half of my space to correct their mistakes.

Some, however, are just too precious to ignore.

Such was the case with their Our View column of Saturday, November 12, 2005. The subject of the column was "Annexing its land is city's right." A position, by the way, that has now been contested.

"This is not the first time that the city has taken such an action," said the WT-E.

Oh, really, pray tell, when did it happen before?

"Soon after it bought the 17,000-plus acre Belvoir Ranch, the city annexed that land rather than leaving it in the county. There have been no problems since, and there shouldn't be with the grassland research station property," they smugly wrote.

You don't say. The reason there were no problems with the Belvoir annexation is that it didn't happen. The statement is absolutely wrong. Or a fabrication.

The city has annexed land it owns which sits in the county (the sanitation transfer station and waste water treatment plant - both east of town) but not this one. No attempt was made to annex the Belvoir.

As Chevy used to say, "Ah, Miss Litella, that never happened." She'd say, "It didn't? Oh, I'm sorry. Never mind."

After loudly proclaiming a fictitious annexation on its EDITORIAL page, the correction appeared four days later on ANOTHER PAGE, in a gutter position: "The city has not annexed the Belvoir Ranch."

With an intercom between the editor's office and the mayor's office, how could such a major screw-up occur? Do they think their readership has shrunk to the point that no one reading would catch the gaffe? Many, many did. Never mind.

Art in remote places



About ten years ago, voters of Cheyenne agreed to provide \$250,000 for "Art in Public Places." A committee, presumably of locals with some knowledge and appreciation of "art" was formed. Yet, the city's governing body has overruled the judgment of that committee and refused pieces the committee had recommended or surrendered to neighborhood groups who objected to a piece of art being placed in their area. The piece above was intended for Sun Valley but was refused by a self-appointed group of Sun Valley neighbors.

(Each budget session, the mayor and council are supposed to provide additional funding for the project because it has never been put to the voters again. Whether that is done or not depends on the other arbitrary spending in the budget. Not always.)

Now the piece, dubbed "Red Sea" for obvious reasons (the piece on the ground splits the shape above it and is colored red), has been placed alongside the new Storey Boulevard extension. It is near the far east end of the roadway, northeast of where Canyon Drive extends up from Buffalo Ridge and intersects Storey.

From a distance, it looks like an abandoned farm implement. Up close, the ground piece looks like a wrecked grader blade. The upper shape must be the "art". The piece has plates at the base of each "leg" but those steel plates do not match the small concrete slabs provided for the marriage. As of November 17, the 1/2" steel plate piece of art just sits there - unsecured. But, despite the concerns of a Cheyenne Herald reader, it will not blow into Nebraska because it is very heavy. Very, very, heavy.

Is the prairie an appropriate place for this piece? It doesn't seem so. "Public places," as approved by voters, should be where people are likely to view the artwork. It's as though the piece was parked out there so few people would see it. City Code states:

Section 12.24.010 (Art in Public Places) Purpose. A. The city recognizes that art is important to the quality of life in the community. This chapter is intended to encourage and enhance artistic expression and appreciation and to add value to the community through the acquisition, exhibition and maintenance of public art. B. 2. To increase public access to works of art and promote understanding and awareness of the visual arts in the public environment; ...

Check the 2006 calendar before buying it. Please.

"Yesterday, December 7, 1941 - a date which will live in infamy - ..."

President Franklin D. Roosevelt, December 8, 1941

Respect the memory of a critical date in our history. If December 7th is not recognized - Pearl Harbor Day Remembrance - don't buy that calendar. Tell the store manager or owner why you're not buying the calendar and ask that their company demand future production correct the omission.

ad placed by a World War II veteran's widow

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