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Don't prepay for gas

Enough already.

After twenty-five years of pumping your own gas, the stations now want you to pay for the gas before you even know how much you want.

Can you imagine going in Target and being greeted at the front door with: "What will your purchase be today, sir?"

"I just need to pick up some Charmin."

"Eight rolls or twelve?"

"I'd like to see the price first."

"Sorry, no can do. If you want to buy something from our store, you'll have to pay first. We've been having a lot of trouble with shoplifters."

"Toilet paper shoplifters?"

"Yep. When times get tough, people aren't about to do without toilet paper. So we've had to make people pay before they can decide just what they want. That'll be \$6.39. If you settle for only eight

rolls, stop on your way out and we'll refund your overpayment." Ridiculous? Maybe not.

Twenty-five years ago, gas stations starting offering self-service pumps. They still had attendants but you could save a couple cents a gallon by pumping your own gas.

I remember my first exposure to self-service. I was dressed in a suit and the gas jockey asked if I wanted to move to the other pumps where I could pump my own gas and save a dime or so. "It'll be a cold day in hell when I pump my own gas," I told him, "I don't want to smell like gas when I get to the office." Last I noticed, Hades was a minus five.

So, after years of pumping our own gas and sometimes smelling like gasoline all day, in spite of no savings in price now, stations are demanding that motorists pay before they pump. New stations were designed in such a way that they cannot monitor the pumps and they're too cheap to hire an attendant to work the islands or pump the gas.

The advice of the Cheyenne Herald is: Don't prepay. Pull off and go elsewhere.



Public defenders

The death of Wyoming Public Defender Ken Koski should remind us all of the role people like he play in the justice system. There may be some knuckle scraping Neanderthals who believe that everyone charged with a crime is guilty of that crime and should rot in a cramped prison cell.

Thank God for those like Ken Koski and the others in the Public Defenders office who have chosen to represent those who otherwise would not be represented by legal counsel.

"Innocent until proven guilty" is a catchy line but bears little resemblance to reality. Innocents are held, sometimes without a bail or bond amount set or attainable by them, for lengthy periods of time only to be found not guilty by a jury. Not even an apology is required of the prosecutor or system that allows detention before proven guilty of a crime. Our one-time line of "better a thousand guilty men go free than one innocent be imprisoned," has been juxtaposed to be exactly the opposite.

Public Defenders like Ken Koski contend with a deck stacked against them and their clients.

Prosecutors decide which cases to prosecute and try only those of which they feel certain they can gain a conviction. It is easy to claim a high winning percentage when you can choose which cases to try. Public Defenders, then, must defend those charged the prosecution is certain they can convict. Public Defenders also have to take the appeals those convicted are entitled, with or without merit.

Expert witnesses are paid by the State to prosecute the accused. The Defender's Office does not have the budget to contend with paid witnesses like forensic pathologist / Arapahoe County Coroner Michael Dobersten. He was paid \$10,000 to testify against Johnny Lopez in Casper, even though Natrona County has its own coroner and forensic pathologist (who also testified). The Public Defender has chump change for experts. Ken did his best to represent those with no other voice.

State statutes on write-in candidates

In the 2001 General Session of the Wyoming Legislature, SF154 (Election code amendments-2) was introduced by Senator John Hanes. There were changes proposed in multiple Sections of the election statutes.

In what was an apparent effort to clarify the minimum number of write-in votes required in small town elections, the Bill below was introduced by Hanes. Up until 1998, 25 votes were write-in votes were required and it was felt that was unreasonable in tiny towns like Hanna. The attempt to require fewer votes (3%)

allowed candidates with one write-in vote access to the general election ballot. You could have a ten-way tie with one vote. The unintended problem would have been corrected had the Senate passed the Hanes Bill as proposed. Instead, CoW (Committee of the Whole) amended the Bill to remove the 3% provision, knowing it was covered in 22-5-216 and redundant here.

CoW struck (and LSO missed the contradiction) ~~at least three percent (3%) of the votes cast for that office and~~ from the Bill approved in Corporations (5-0).

22-23-207. Candidates nominated; certificate of nomination.

The candidates equal to twice the number to be elected to each office who receive the highest number of votes are nominated to run for the office at the next general election and shall be issued a certificate of nomination by the county clerk. A write-in candidate shall not be nominated and shall not be entitled to have his name printed on the ballot for the next general election unless he received at least three percent (3%) of the votes cast for that office and at least three (3) votes. (Black: Statute before. Red: Proposed changes.)

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