

Opinion



Press Viewpoints

Democracy at work for protestors

Anti-abortion activists who showed up last week to protest outside Wichita West and Southeast high schools had a right to be there. So did a group of high school students who protested the protesters Sunday outside a local church.

Protest. Counterprotest. Sounds like democracy in action. But it's important to enforce ground rules on public demonstrations to keep bystanders, especially students, from feeling coerced, harassed or threatened.

Activists of whatever political stripe have a right to picket as long as they follow local protest ordinances regarding location and noise. They also have legal protection to display graphic photos of aborted fetuses — not a moral right, mind you, but a legal “free speech” right.

In fact, anti-abortion groups routinely use such tactics at college campuses. And locally, they've parked vans with billboard-sized displays of fetal dismemberment at many public events, where anyone, including young children, can see the shocking display.

That's reprehensible, and violates the protesters' own avowed “respect for life” stance.

Besides, shock tactics don't persuade anyone and usually backfire: Even some students who object to abortion objected to the latest visual assault more, and joined the protest against it.

Still, police say the abortion protesters broke no laws and violated no ordinances.

But some of the incidents warrant closer scrutiny.

At West High, protesters harangued students as they got off school buses and pushed leaflets at them.

That's going over the line. ...

Students shouldn't be insulated from real-world political speech and controversies.

But neither should they feel physically cornered or intimidated by protesters.

Police and school officials should review the recent protests to determine whether a greater physical buffer or security presence is needed to separate protesters and students. ...

One bright moment at the church event: At least a few of the protesters and church members actually talked with one another and listened to opposing views.

Instead of shouting matches and shock tactics, we need more genuinely civil discourse.

Wichita Eagle

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U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202/224-6521

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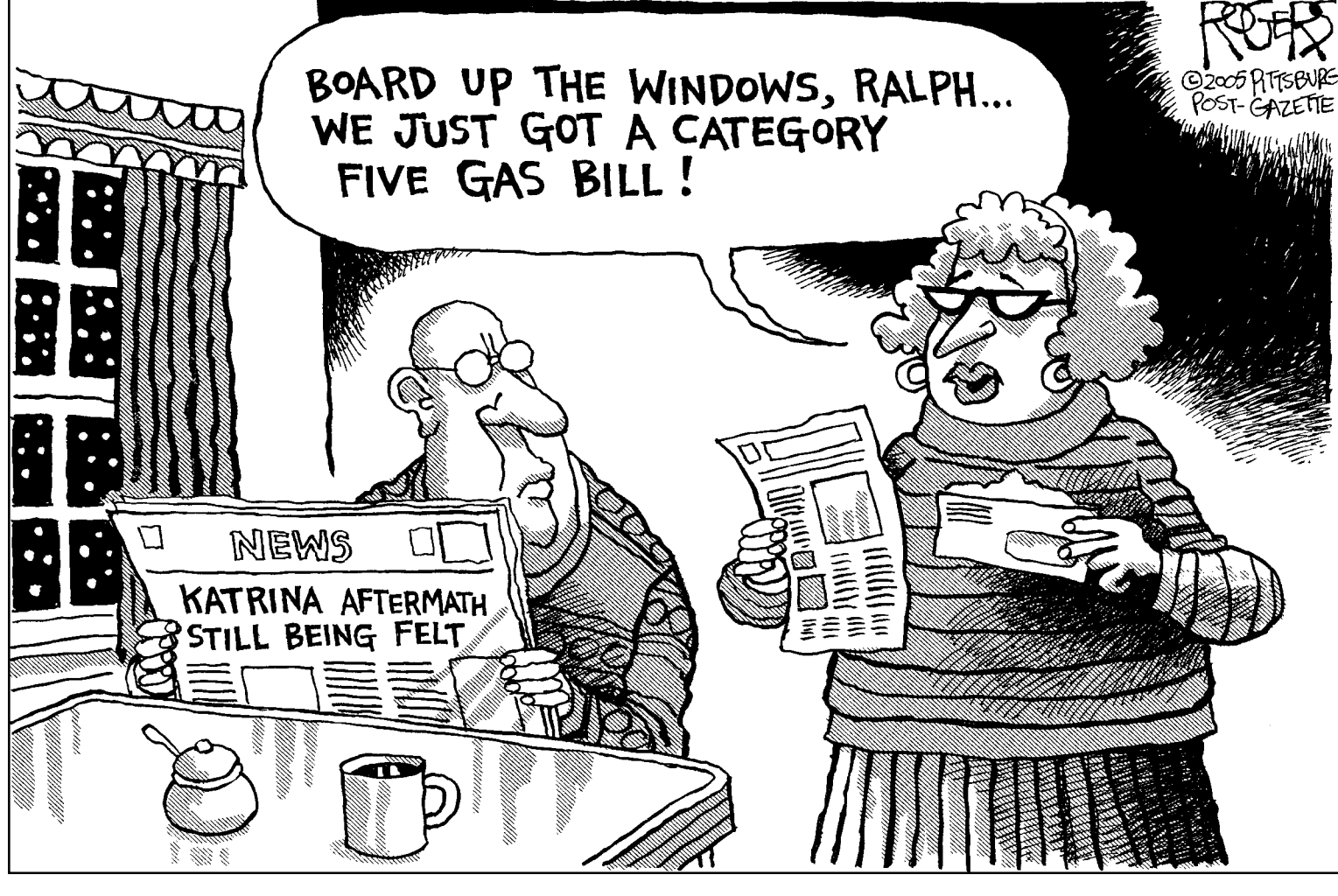
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Your turn

Visitor appreciates care in hospital

You can be proud of your hospital staff!

Your Citizens Medical Center Emergency Room staff went the extra mile to take care of me when I had no place to turn. Their professional training was evident but their attitude and compassion for someone in a “fix” was what impressed me.

My wife and I were traveling from Edmond, Okla., to Denver on Sunday, Sept. 4 (Labor Day weekend), when at a rest stop near Hays my right calf cramped so severe that I couldn't walk or even stand. I had never had a pain this bad in my life! If felt like my shinbone was broken. Having two artificial hips, artificial left knee and double bypass surgery, I am a “veteran” patient and know pain.

Being worried about a blood clot, I checked into your ER about 4:30 p.m. The calm and efficient nurse on duty, Kerri Shippers, checked us in before going off duty and Shelly Wolfe took over. She too worked fast to find the problem. Dr. B. Kellogg took all the correct steps.

The blood test indicated I was dehydrated. Wolfe started an IV. Being the expert that she is, I never felt the needle when she stuck it in my arm.

An ultra-sound test would be required to rule out a blood clot. The problem was the ultra-sound expert, Amanda Fisher, was off for the weekend and wouldn't be back on duty until Tuesday.

That would require me staying in the hospital two nights and taking medicine to insure no blood clot broke loose.

Dr. Kellogg went the extra mile to help me with my problem. He called Fisher at her home and you should have heard him talk! He was so smooth and tactful in telling her the problem she couldn't resist agreeing to come in and do the rest. She left her relatives who visiting her for the holidays and came to the ER to do the test.

A more pleasant and upbeat woman I've never met. She explained everything she was going to do and then even though she had guests waiting at her home, she didn't hurry the important test. She was so meticulous and gentle. She was also very patient in explaining every detail to my wife. (You know how worried a wife can be at a time like this!) I appreciated the great “bedside manner” Fisher displayed. No blood clot! With this information, Dr. Kellogg could proceed step by step to stop my pain.

The next problem was after all the treatment, I still couldn't walk. I would need crutches. At 10:30 p.m. Wolfe and Dr. Kellogg went the extra mile and got on the phone and called everyone in town and couldn't find any crutches. However being so resourceful they finally came up with a pair!

I admire Dr. Kellogg's expert medical knowledge. I responded to treatment exactly like he said I should. My pain subsided when he said it would. I walked in “two or three” days precisely when he said I would. I'm a professional speaker and was able to give three motivational talks to Duke Energy in Denver on Friday...just like Dr. Kellogg said I could!

Janice McCart, CEO Citizens Medical Center, I could have said, “I had a sore leg and your ER people fixed it. Thanks” But that would not have conveyed the super attitude, compassion and professional manner in which your staff took care of my problem! I've been in hospitals in Denver, Oklahoma City and Dallas and your people are second to none. You have a right to be proud!

Vern Holder
Edmond, Okla.

A fat by another name still a fat

I am an avid reader of the Colby Free Press and I am also a Registered Dietitian. As an RD and an health professional, I would like to correct a false statement from your article dated October 13 titled “Quick and Healthy” recipes with fewer carbohydrates. In the fourth sentence of the second paragraph you state the third goal of the writer as: “And finally (the third goal) was eating a low fat diet by using monounsaturated and

polyunsaturated fats while limiting saturated fats and avoiding trans fats.” Both monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats have the same amount of fat as saturated fat. Substituting them in place of saturated fat would not lower the fat content of a diet. It would alter the fatty acid composition but would not lower the amount of fat in a person's diet. This is an important distinction concerning a low fat diet. The public is bombarded with confusing

nutrition information and the media needs to be accurate and consistent with public health messages concerning nutrition.

Mariha Collins RD,LD

Citizens Medical Center, Colby, Kan.

Thank you for your correction. I used the information that was in the book without checking on it. In the future I will try to check.

Pat Schiefen

Don't be duped by bottled water

Patricia Lynn

• Other Viewpoints

The industry, led by Pepsi, Nestlé, and Coke is trying to dupe us. Misleading advertising is fueling the explosive growth of this industry. According to the most recent statistics available, in 2002 bottled water corporations spent \$93.8 million to portray their products as “pure,” “safe,” “clean,” “healthy” and superior to tap water.

They position bottled water as healthy, when in reality it threatens our health and our ecosystems, costs thousands of times what tap water costs, and undermines local democratic control over a common resource.

Water bottling, is a fast-growing \$55 billion a year business. Corporations take water from underground springs and municipal sources without regard to scarcity or human rights, and are setting out to replace our public water with a high-priced, aggressively marketed product.

Increased demand for water worldwide is draining away our rivers, lakes, and other fresh water. Today, over 1 billion people around the world don't have access to safe water to drink. Each year, more than 1 million children die of diseases caused by unsafe water. And as water scarcity grows, these

numbers will rise. By 2025, two-thirds of the world's people won't have access to enough water, putting the lives of millions more people at risk.

Corporations view water as one of the great investment opportunities of the 21st century, and increasingly seek to control it. Water is already a \$400 billion a year business. That's 30 percent larger than the pharmaceutical industry. If transnational corporations control our water, they can decide who gets it-and who doesn't.

Just like air, water is precious and sustains all life on earth. Access to clean, safe water is a fundamental human right. Decisions about a life-giving substance and a fundamental human right must not be left to corporate shareholders unaccountable to the public.

Corporations like Pepsi, Coke, and Nestlé are seeking to transform water into a commodity that can be sold for profit to the highest bidder. Instead of buying into this approach, people across the United States should be demanding that our public water systems are well maintained. Clean, safe, public water is worth fighting for.

Patricia Lynn is the campaigns director for Corporate Accountability International-formerly Infact-a-nonpartisan membership organization that protects people by waging campaigns challenging irresponsible and dangerous corporate actions around the world. For more information visit www.stopcorporateabuse.org <http://www.stopcorporateabuse.org> Distributed by www.minutemanmedia.org.

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• Gary Trudeau

