

## Other Viewpoints

# Ike memorial 14 years overdue

It was encouraging to see the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts grant general approval July 18 to Frank Gehry's design for the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial. The national tribute to the 34th president and the supreme commander of the Allied forces in World War II is long overdue, considering it was authorized by Congress 14 years and two presidents ago.

The four-acre urban site in Washington could not be more reflective of the Kansan's life and two terms as president. What will be known as Eisenhower Square is in front of the Education Department, which he established as a Cabinet-level agency in 1953; next door to the Federal Aviation Administration, which was created during his administration in 1958; and across the street from the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum, whose story is wedded to the Eisenhower-era establishment of NASA.

And the value of Eisenhower's legacy only seems to deepen, especially given his roles in passing the nation's first two civil rights acts since Reconstruction and in upholding the U.S. Supreme Court's 1954 ruling desegregating public schools.

Though the \$142 million project also needs congressional reauthorization and National Park Service approval, the arts commission's 3-1 vote should help its momentum. The project been stalled for more than a year by objections to the design raised by Eisenhower's relatives and some groups.

No one wants to disrespect the family's wishes, so efforts toward consensus should continue.

But Gehry is an unrivaled star among architects working today. And controversies over memorial and monument designs are common; they often must be built and experienced to be embraced. Consider what the Vietnam Veterans Memorial's "Wall" has come to mean to the nation, after being fiercely opposed for its unconventional simplicity and artist.

Plus, trying to correct the perceived problems with Gehry's design might mean downplaying Eisenhower's boyhood, which his fellow Kansans know was integral to his makeup and leadership. Although the memorial includes statues and stone carvings, the point of contention has been the plan to surround the space on three sides with large metal "tapestries" depicting the Kansas landscape of Eisenhower's youth. Such emphasis properly frames, rather than diminishes, the enormous scale of Eisenhower's achievements, as it accurately reflects Eisenhower's famous declaration that "the proudest thing I can claim is that I am from Abilene."

The commissioners made a suggestion to eliminate two small side tapestries, leaving the large one as a backdrop. The change would cut down on the number of large stone columns in the design, and give the park a more open atmosphere.

Now, the Kansas delegation should step up its efforts to see the Eisenhower Memorial through to completion, and fight off a House bill to start over (at an unacceptable cost estimated by the Congressional Budget Office last week to be \$17 million).

Each delay only postpones the day when visitors to the nation's capital can learn about Eisenhower's inspiring life and historic accomplishments — and better understand not only why so many liked Ike but why Ike so liked Kansas.

— *The Wichita Eagle, via the Associated Press*

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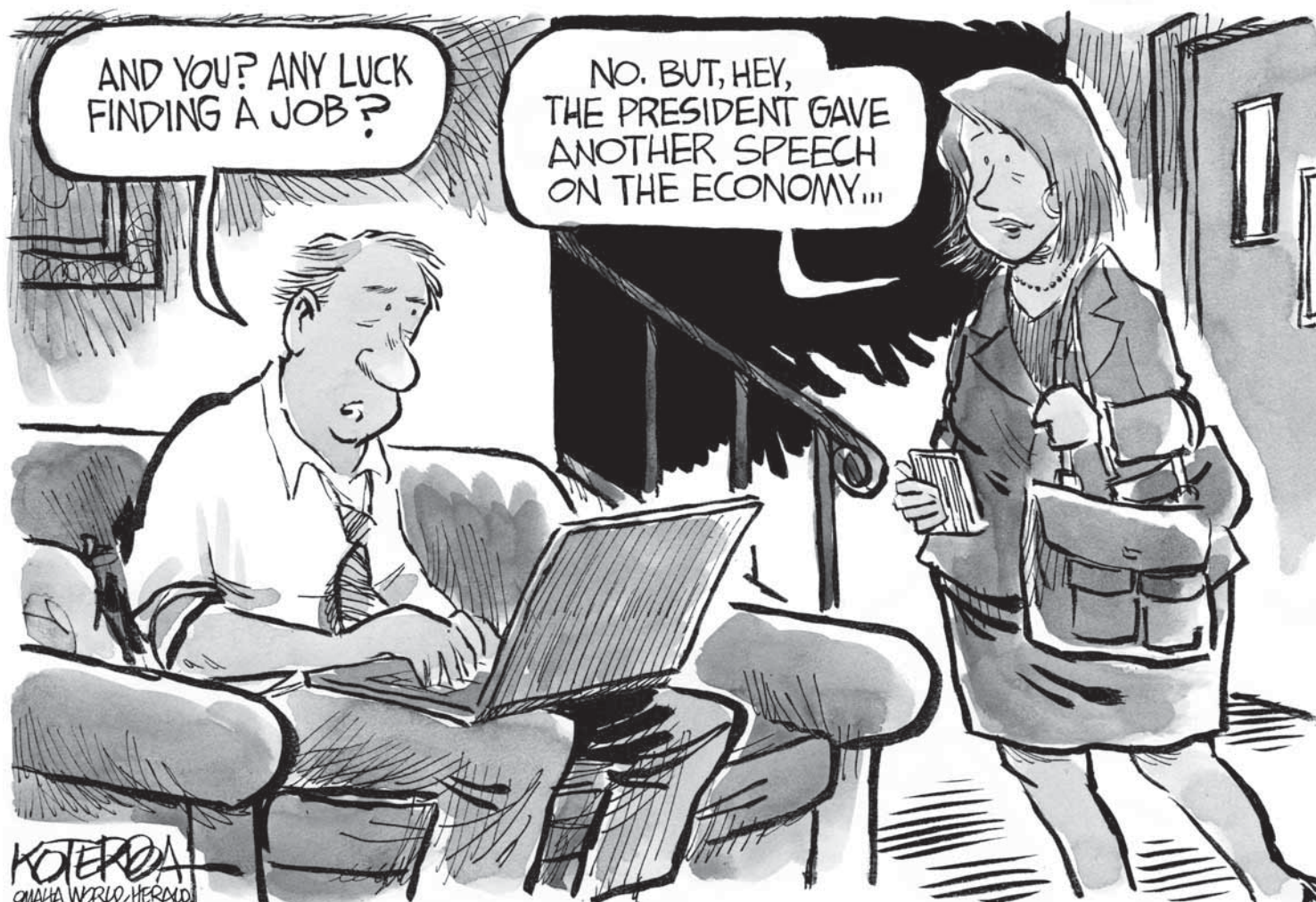
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# Government grant helped fix up park

Information for this history is from research gathered by Opal Linville at the Prairie Museum of Art and History in Colby.



**Marj Brown**

## • Marj's Snippets

After receiving \$2,577 from the government Works Program in December 1932, Colby city workers installed a two-inch water main through Fike Park. It formed a network throughout the park with frequent T-joints and hydrants for watering the entire park with lines and hoses.

According to the *Colby Free Press Tribune*, a hydrant was placed at the end of the lines and it would be possible for more hydrants to be installed later at the T-joints. The article also stated that dirt was being hauled in from streets and basements to make two elevated drives through the park leading to each corner. Several more trees were also being removed. The article said, "The expense to the city for a few hundred feet of water mains and some hydrants would only come to about \$200."

In March of 1933, Mayor W.G. Shafer made a plea to all clubs and other organizations in Colby to take a part in the development of Fike Park into an outstanding and beautiful recreation area.

The response was tremendous according to a May 21, 1933, Colby newspaper article. The article said the clubs were doing their part in planting flowers and grass, building picnic tables and donating iron benches. It also said that a Greek Theatre building, better known as

a band shell, was being constructed. It would be 21 by 36 feet, facing south, and would sit north of the center of the park about 150 feet. The article also said all of that triangular area would be leveled off and graveled to set park benches and tables in front of the building. The back and each end of the band shell would contain dressing rooms. They also planned to have toilets for men and women in the basement beneath the building. The band shell was to be used for summer band concerts, plays and any other performances when the weather permitted.

That band shell stood in Fike Park for many years. I remember being in summer band one year and performing in the park. We only did it one summer, so the concerts must not have continued too much longer after I came to Colby in 1948.

While the band shell was being constructed, the American Legion was in the process of building tennis courts in the northeast portion of the park and plans were also being made for croquet courts and horseshoe pitching ar-

eas. Clubs helping with the beautification of the park included: Bible Study Club, Sorosis Club, Busy Bee Club, P.E.O., DeMolay, Priscilla Club, American Legion Club and Auxiliary, Shakespeare Club, Rebekahs, Eastern Star, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Lady's Country Club.

Colby Lions Club, with the suggestion of Dr. Davis, Tom Bellamy and Othel Pratt, purchased a statue of a lion named Zimba while they were attending a state Lions Convention in Abilene in June 1933. They arranged to have it shipped to Colby and placed on a cement base in the park.

Two World War I field guns were donated by the government and installed as decorations in the park.

Finally, it was time for the grand opening of Colby's Fike Park on July 4, 1933. It was a giant affair with music, speeches, a baseball game between American Legion teams from Oakley and Goodland and then between Colby and Levant. The newly installed wading pool was a favorite of the little ones.

The following day it was reported in the *Free Press Tribune* that a large crowd showed up and most stayed to enjoy the entire day.

I will continue with the history of Fike Park in my next column. Please look for it.

*Marj Brown has lived in Colby for 62 years and has spent a good deal of that time writing about people and places here. She says it's one of her favorite things to do.*

# Community banks hurt by regulations

In response to the financial crisis of 2008, Congress passed the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act in 2010.

This July marks three years since President Obama signed the bill into law, and we've had ample time to evaluate the impact of its more than 400 new rules and mandates.

It is increasingly clear that what was aimed at protecting consumers and bringing stability to our financial system has instead done harm to the financial institutions rural Americans depend on most: community banks.

Community banks are vital to small businesses and economic growth, the drivers of job creation. They are the only financial service providers available in 1,200 counties. Although community banks contributed little to the financial crisis, they were swept up in the rush to regulate and have been drowning in a sea of costly regulation ever since.

In both size and mission, community banks differ significantly from the Wall Street banks deemed "too-big-to-fail." While investment banks engage in a wide range of business activities, Main Street banks focus on traditional banking and personal relationships with customers; they accept deposits and reinvest them back into the community in the form of loans.

Dodd-Frank's one-size-fits-all regulatory structure subjects large banks and community banks — institutions that serve vastly different customer bases — to the same standards. Banks large and small play important roles in our economy, and we need a regulatory framework that acknowledges and reflects differences.

Community banks are disproportionately hurt by Dodd-Frank's rules and record-keeping requirements because they are less able to absorb costs. Resources that would otherwise be applied to serving clients are being spent



**U.S. Senator Jerry Moran**

## • Moran's Memo

hiring the staff and consultants necessary to comply with the flood of new regulations.

As community banks abandon their traditional business models and redirect resources to comply with Dodd-Frank, millions of Americans will have a tougher time accessing financial services. In Kansas, that means fewer loans to small businesses and fewer loans to farmers and ranchers who need to fund operations through harvest. This decrease in the availability of capital could result in stagnant growth, a reduction in business formation, and less job creation.

These negative consequences are not just hypothetical; a study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City shows the harms of Dodd-Frank regulatory burdens are manifesting. Of the 322 small financial institutions surveyed, 79 percent rated regulatory compliance as a significant challenge for their institution — up from 66 percent in 2008 and 42 percent in 2004. Consequently, 91 percent are bracing for increased expenses.

It is clear more must be done to make this law workable for financial institutions and the customers they serve. With hundreds of regulations yet to be enacted, community bankers know the full implementation of Dodd-Frank may be too enormous for them to bear. Last fall, a community bank in Missouri was forced to close its doors because the owners fore-

casted that Dodd-Frank would add \$1 million per year to the bank's expenses and make it unprofitable. This is not a lone case; a 2013 policy paper published by the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis estimates that hiring two additional employees to deal with compliance would make 33 percent of smaller banks unprofitable. In Kansas, we've seen community bank mergers due, in large part, to this issue.

If community banks continue to go out of business or are forced to consolidate, we can expect to see an even greater concentration of assets among the "too-big-to-fail" institutions — and a greater number of Americans without a local bank. These consequences will not protect consumers, stabilize the financial system, or promote the American economy.

These developments are worrisome because of the vital role community banks play in our economy, particularly small businesses and rural areas. Community banks provide more than 48 percent of small business loans issued by U.S. banks, nearly 43 percent of farm loans, and nearly 16 percent of residential mortgage loans. Every dollar a community bank must spend on compliance is a dollar less they can invest in businesses and lend to families.

Congressional Democrats and Republicans agree Dodd-Frank wasn't perfect three years ago and remains problematic today. Continuing to make sensible modifications to Dodd-Frank would go a long way toward bringing more stability to our financial system while protecting the viability of rural America and the special way of life it provides.

*U.S. Senator Jerry Moran is a member of the Senate Banking Committee and serves as the Ranking Member of the Banking Subcommittee for Housing, Transportation, and Community Development.*

## Mallard Fillmore

### • Bruce Tinsley



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