

from our viewpoint...

## Political process comes to Kansas

Super Tuesday is one week away for the Democrat and Republican presidential candidates and in the mix Kansas Dems will be part of the 22 states making decisions on that day while the Kansas GOP will hold their presidential caucus the next Saturday, Feb. 9.

For the Dems in the 40th senate district the caucus will be held at 6 p.m. Mountain Time at the educational service center at 703 W. Second in Oakley. The Dems will select delegates to the congressional district meeting to be held in Hays on Saturday, April 12, where delegates to the Democratic National Convention coming up in August in Denver will be selected based on each presidential candidate percentage of support.

That is basically what the Republicans will be doing at the Colby Community Building on Saturday, but they will not be selecting delegates to the larger state convention or to the Republican National Convention to be held in September.

For those who consider themselves independent or unaffiliated, the political dance means that those who are involved in either party are deciding whom everyone gets to vote on in November. Everyone knows that neither party can win without attracting the lion's share of the independent voters in the General Election, but by being involved those who participate in the grass roots party process get to decide who is on that ballot.

It is in the best interest of both the Democrats and Republicans to put up a candidate who can carry the party faithful to the polls and attract the independent ones who have no allegiance and swing back and forth based on how they feel the candidate will affect their lives.

The sad truth about politics today is it appears more people are outside looking in than those inside making the decisions. The excitement of the political process has been diminished by the talking heads and the video clips that every politician tries to get on the nightly news to keep their name in front of the people.

The dramatic difference this year on the Democratic side is the battle between Sen. Barack Obama and Sen. Hillary Clinton giving the party the opportunity to put a woman or a black man at the top of the ticket for November. In the wings is John Edwards, who has to be hoping he can be the spoiler, and in a wide-open convention where neither Obama nor Clinton have the nomination locked up could be the dark horse or kingmaker.

On the Republican side it does not seem as dramatic, but underneath the surface the GOP is struggling to find a new direction. Sen. John McCain is the more moderate voice of the party while outsiders such as Mitt Romney, Mike Huckabee and Rudy Giuliani try to wrest the mantle away and find a new voice for the party of Ronald Reagan.

On the Democratic side the infusion of a woman and a black man has brought new faces into the process. Whether those new faces will stay in the Democratic ranks or slide back into the pool of unaffiliated could make a difference in the future.

Republicans continue to work to encompass the religious right and reach out to the more moderates toward the middle of the spectrum.

In the end both parties have to reach out for those in the middle — the giant unwashed independent voter, but as long as they stay unaffiliated they only count in November after the decision of whom they are voting for has been decided.

If you are a Democrat or Republican going to a caucus is an informative and wonderful experience and it is possible for one person to swing the focus of the caucus from one candidate to another because in both cases the outcomes are dependent on the percentage of people who are willing to show up in support of their candidate. — Tom Betz.



## Hospital Joins KU Cancer Alliance

By Jay Jolly

CEO Goodland Regional Medical Center

Residents from Goodland, the surrounding area and representatives from the University of Kansas gathered Monday morning to mark a significant occasion in Goodland Regional Medical Center's history as the hospital became a member of the Midwest Cancer Alliance.

The ceremony symbolized the beginning of a partnership that will benefit residents of our area for many years. With its membership in Midwest Cancer Alliance, Goodland Regional Medical Center has taken an important step in the fight against cancer.

Statistics from the American Cancer Society estimate that 1 in 2 men and 1 in 3 women will be diagnosed with some form of cancer in their lifetime. The cancer death rate in Kansas is only dropping at half the rate of the national average.

Cancer is a diagnosis that has touched nearly all of us at some point. Until now, finding and receiving cutting-edge cancer treatment meant traveling outside of Goodland for many. Today, through Midwest Cancer Alliance, Goodland Regional Medical Center can provide access to the latest cancer research and treatment to

residents of the Tri-State area.

Midwest Cancer Alliance is a membership based organization that includes hospitals, physician groups, cancer support and advocacy organizations, industry and government. It serves as the University of Kansas Cancer Center's outreach arm to Kansas and western Missouri. The purpose of Midwest Cancer Alliance is to provide strong support to community oncologists and cancer care professionals and enhance cancer care for patients.

As an Alliance community partner, Goodland's hospital has access to second opinion services through the University of Kansas Cancer Center, detailed information on clinical trials, networking events and conferences and on-site outreach programs. For cancer patients this means comprehensive cancer treatment can be obtained locally and improves access to cancer screening and prevention for all of us.

Through our membership in the cancer alliance, we will offer cancer screenings on Saturday at the Sherman County Health Fair from 8 to 11 a.m. at the Goodland Activity Center. Normally, residents would have to travel to obtain this service, but now we are able to bring this to Goodland.

The opportunity to join the alliance would

not have been possible without the dedicated effort made by the leaders of the University of Kansas Cancer Center who envisioned a mission to reduce the burden of cancer on the Heartland.

With more than 160 world-class researchers and clinicians, the University of Kansas Cancer Center is raising cancer research, drug discovery and development, prevention and survivorship to a higher standard.

Our membership in Midwest Cancer Alliance was made possible through a generous donation from the Northwest Kansas Regional Medical Foundation and the University of Kansas Endowment Association.

Goodland hospital's membership in the alliance and association with the University of Kansas Cancer Center will give the citizens of northwest Kansas local access to the most up-to-date and proven treatments through the resources and expertise of a nationally recognized cancer center.

This collaborative effort is another example of how Goodland Regional Medical Center works with other providers so that access to quality healthcare is available for all rural citizens in the area.

## Environmental Terrorism and price of oil

Here we have the humiliating spectacle of a president of the United States begging an Arab potentate to increase our supply of oil while Democrats, who bear the major responsibility for the problem, scoff at him as a mendicant groveling at the feet of a foreign monarch.

As humiliating as it is for the United States to be put in a position where our economy is held hostage to foreign oil producers who can make or break our nation simply by limiting their petroleum production, thus causing the price of oil to skyrocket, it is even more shameful that we have allowed the so-called environmental movement to escape the blame for our predicament.

Make no mistake about it, you are paying exorbitant prices at the gas pump solely because the environmental terrorists and their Democrat allies in Congress have all but shut down our domestic oil production while refusing to allow the exploration and creation of new sources of this resource so vital to our economic health.

While President Bush was left with few if any alternatives to seeking help from the Saudis thanks to our inability to exploit our own untapped oil supply, it is disturbing that instead of demanding that Saudi Arabia act on our behalf by beefing up oil production, we asked them politely to do what they should do without being asked. They owe us at least that.

When my dad, Ronald Reagan, was in Berlin he did not mince words when addressing Chairman Gorbachev about what he should do about the Berlin Wall. He didn't ask, "Mr.



**michael reagan**

• making sense

Gorbachev, would you please be a good fellow and tear down this wall?" He demanded: "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall."

Instead of politely saying to the Saudi king, "If possible, your majesty, consider what high prices [of oil] are doing to one of your largest customers," as he said he would when he met with the king, the president should have bluntly informed the king: "Hike up production, or from now on you are on your own and at the mercy of al Qaeda."

George Bush should have stood on his bully pulpit and pointed his finger at Capitol Hill and Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid and said, "How dare you not give the nation an energy policy? Because you won't give us an energy policy I have been forced to go the Saudi Arabia, get down on my knees and beg them to give us what you refuse to give us — an adequate supply of reasonably priced oil."

George Bush should point the finger of blame at Mrs. Pelosi and Sen. Reid and their environmentalist co-conspirators for refusing to enact an energy policy that dictates drilling in ANWR and the Florida Gulf — where the Chinese and Cubans are drilling for the huge plentiful supply of oil beneath the seas to their heart's content. We should also be harnessing

nuclear power, and mining clean coal now locked up for alleged environmental reasons in well over a million acres of land in southwest Utah in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, which contains at least 7 billion tons of coal worth over \$1 trillion.

To get an idea of just what using nuclear power can do for America, look at the USS Ronald Reagan. During the life of the two nuclear reactors on that carrier, the American taxpayers will be saved \$579 billion in fuel costs. Nobody has died on nuclear-powered aircraft carriers or submarines, and nobody has died in the U.S. because of a nuclear accident.

We can't exploit nuclear power or drill for oil in ANWR or the Gulf because Democratic members of congress have been bought and paid for by the most dangerous terrorists in America, the radical environmentalists.

They make the Taliban and al Qaeda look like Mother Teresa's nuns. They have wreaked such havoc here in the U.S. with their terrorist tactics that the president of the United States is reduced to begging for oil, a plentiful domestic resource but, thanks to them, off-limits to the American people.

We need a surge here at home to deal with these terrorists. With the Capitol Hill Democrats, they are the American people's deadliest enemies.

Mike Reagan, the eldest son of the late President Ronald Reagan, is heard on talk radio stations nationally. E-mail comments to Reagan@caglecartoons.com.

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