# The Wichita Eagle

Founded in 1872

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## Time for a Look

The first impression, after a careful reading of the Betty Wells series in The Eagle on Larned State Hospital is that patients, though not brutalized, are sometimes mistreated, and that there is a serious shortage of professional help for them.

The impression probably is accurate, and would also be true of the other state mental hospitals, as well as state institutions in general.

It is no secret that Larned State Hospital suffers from its geography. It is at a considerable remove from any sizeable psychiatric community, and professionals always have been reluctant to stay there for any protracted period.

It suffers, too, from the same problem as the other mental hospitals, the prisons, and the colleges and universities, of having less money than it needs to do an adequate job. Kansas could afford to spend more money than it does on mental health. The question is just how much more it can afford to spend, and how it would be best spent.

The increase of regional mental health clinics in recent years has meant, for one thing, that the state hospitals get primarily the people needing long-term or intensive care. Larned Hospital's situation is complicated by the fact that it is the single state institution for the criminally insane. Perhaps it would be better if it were limited to that single function, and that the patients who are not criminal were sent to another state hospital.

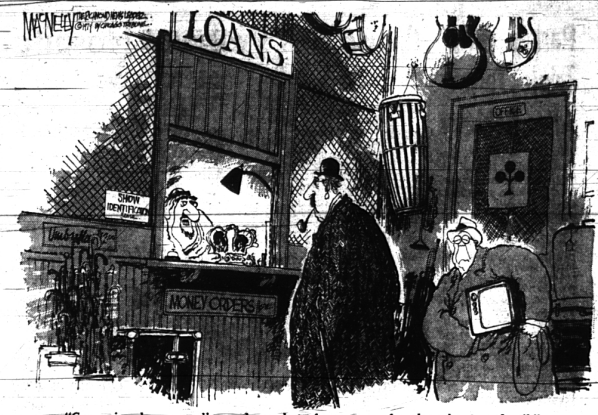
Some people interested in mental health believe state mental hospitals should be phased out altogether in favor of regional hospitals or clinics that would be well-staffed and capable of whatever care is needed.

Kansans have for many years been basking in the reputation of having the best mental health system in America. At one time it was undeniably true. But there has been a slipping backward in recent years, due perhaps in part to too much self-satisfaction and in part to inadequate spending on mental health.

If The Eagle's series does nothing else, it calls attention to the need for a thorough re-evaluation of the state's mental health facilities, with an eye to improvement.

Such an investigation ought to be the responsibility of the legislature, with all assistance from the Division of Institutional Management, which has the responsibility for administering the hospitals. The assistance of such other experts as Menninger Clinic officials would be most welcome.

Legislation has been introduced that would accomplish such an investigation of Larned State Hospital. It should be passed, though it might be in the best interests of the state if it were broadened at least to include the rest of the mental hospitals too.




"Crown jewels come a dime a dozen, but, for you . . . four barrels of crude oil."

## Should Be Spelled Out

The Senate Judiciary Committee has introduced a bill which would require certain qualifications for the attorney general, including the active practice of law for at least five years before election to the office.

It is reasonable to require the degree, but there's no magic about the five years of experience. Vern Miller, the present attorney general, took office without ever having practiced law, though he holds a degree, and his performance in office has been as good as that of some of his predecessors who had years of experience.

The attorney general is more of an administrator than a lawyer, and he has assistant attorneys general who handle much of the routine research of legal questions.

However, as the state's attorney, the attorney general must occasionally appear in court. If his training has been adequate his degree will equip him sufficiently for that.

For the past 113 years the state has managed to get by with a set of attorney general qualifications which don't even make a law degree mandatory.

The Kansas Supreme Court has ruled that for all practical purposes, the attorney general should be a lawyer, but it didn't say it was an absolute requirement.

It ought to be spelled out in a statute.

### Stan Delaplane's Postcard

## The Liveliest Ghost Town in the West

VIRGINIA CITY

I come up to mile-high Lake Tahoe, now filled with elegant ski people. But I make a nostalgic swing into the town I like best.

Virginia City, high in the barren Nevada hills, advertises itself as "The Liveliest Ghost Town in the West."

It has a more or less permanent population of 650 citizens and 21 bars.

VIRGINIA CITY'S sidewalks sag. Buildings dip alarmingly when an old mining tunnel caves. The underground of the town is a gopher's maze.

This is the Comstock Lode — the silver that financed Mr. Lincoln's war. The inflation that built the city of San Francisco. Once the home of booted millionaires, stuffing themselves on imported Maryland terrapin and Kentucky bourbon.

THE LIVELIEST GHOST town, however, lacks the presence of the elegant journalist, Mr. Lucius Beebe. And I swear those were the good old days.

Mr. Beebe was the last of the Comstock high livers.

Some years ago, Mr. Beebe came into the crumbling ghost town with type case and journalistic enterprise and editorials that boomed like a frontier model .44.

He restored the Territorial Enterprise. And from its brick doorway each morning, Mr. Beebe would walk across to the Delta saloon and refresh himself for the day's fray.

YOU CLIMB OUT OF THE Washoe valley, overlooking a backdrop of snow Sierra so clear, so white, it looks like a picture postcard.

If you are lucky, there is a dash of pogonip in the air. Pogonip is a kind of mountain fog peculiar to this land. Mark Twain wrote for the Territorial Enterprise here. (Some talk that it is being revived.)

Saloon keepers were nuggets for watch chains. Mark Twain observed that "to be a saloon keeper and have killed a man was to be highly regarded by all."

The saloons of today hew to the line. The bartenders wear sleeve garters. Player pianos tinkle in the cheery, beery interiors. And a rich smell of whiskey on bar varnish floats from each hospitable doorway.

LUCIUS BEEBE WORE a claw hammer coat and a black hat with a western brim.

Mr. Beebe had a gourmet taste to match those of the miner moguls who dug $750 million worth of silver out of the bleak hills.

He imported Bollinger champagne and Jack Daniels sour mash whiskey — and insisted that the saloons keep it on hand.

He fixed up a home in John Piper's mansion — Piper ran the old Opera House and imported the finest European signers.

HIS NEWSPAPER RAN nostalgic memories of Julia Bulette, a dance hall belle with a heart of gold. Some uncouth fellow pistoled poor Julia. They hanged him after one of the finest, wettest, teariest funerals in the history of Nevada.

Mr. Beebe raised her stylish ghost in silk and satin prose.

The Liveliest Ghost Town hasn't been so lively since Mr. Beebe went away.

IT IS A TOWN OF THIN, nippy air and a million memories. A few writers move in from time to time — for living is not expensive and book publishers don't spoil the help by overpaying them.

The silver dollars (alas no longer pure silver but fudged) clatter on the tables. Just as they clattered when the Fairs and Mackays and O'Briens and other million-dollar mining men watched the money roll in. (And no income tax.)

Silver fizzes fizz for breakfast. The eye openers open early in the Liveliest Ghost Town.

There's talk of silver again. Now that silver is up so high that our government no longer gives us silver for our paper dollars.

I come here and have a silver fizz in the Delta. And blast it, I miss Lucius Beebe, a man for all seasons.

Chronicle Publishing Co.

## Campaign Reform Here

By RICHARD L. WORSNOP

One of the foremost lessons of Watergate, nearly everyone would agree, is that laws governing campaign spending and financial disclosure are in need of drastic reform. Congress seems reluctant to accept this reasoning, but not the state legislatures.

In its year-end review of state legislative action, the Council of State Governments reported that, "More than half the states acted (in 1973) to bolster the public's decaying confidence in government at all levels by passing financial disclosure laws, campaign and lobbying regulations, open-meetings rules, and many other forms of open-government regulations."

THIS YEAR, 42 state legislatures will meet in some form of regular session, and at least two in special session. And "virtually every one of them," a council spokesman told Editorial Research Reports, will consider campaign reform and related issues. Legislature that dealt with the issue in 1973 will take a second look at their handiwork this time around.

Congress, meanwhile, has been mired in bickering. Last July 30, barely a month after the nation heard how President Nixon's 1972 re-election committee had helped to finance the Watergate burglary, the Senate approved the first comprehensive campaign reform act in 48 years. The bill placed limits on expenditures and contributions in campaigns for federal office, lifted restrictions on broadcast appearances, and created a new elections commission.

When the bill reached the House, it was left to twist slowly, slowly in the wind. Critics accused Wayne Hays, D-Ohio, chairman of the House Administration Committee, of stalling tactics. For his part, Hays promised to report out a version of the bill by February 1974.

IN LATE NOVEMBER 1973, the Senate tried another approach. It attached an amendment calling for public financing of election campaigns to a bill extending the federal debt ceiling. But the House refused to accept the measure, and when it returned to the Senate a filibuster killed the amendment.

At the state level, the campaign-reform movement predates Watergate. An initiative approved by voters in Washington State in November 1972 opened campaign funding, the personal finances of public officials, and lobbying activities to public view. Strong enforcement powers were given to an independent commission. Colorado voters took similar action.

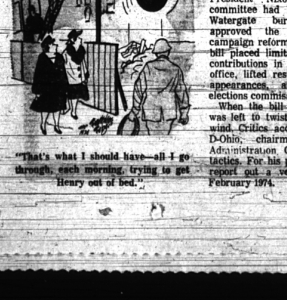
ALABAMA'S NEW CODE of ethics, enacted in 1973 with Gov. George Wallace's strong support, may be the most comprehensive in the nation. It covers certain state officials, state employes, members of the press, and persons having business dealings with the government, and requires them to disclose their economic interests and the incomes and occupations of their immediate families. In addition, the code prohibits cabinet members and gubernatorial appointees from owning any interest in any enterprise that does business with the state or from receiving income from any other governmental agency.

Campaign reform and financial disclosure make for smart politics these days. A number of Texas office-holders found that out too late a couple of years ago. Disturbed by a bank scandal that erupted in 1971, Lone Star State voters unseated the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house, and numerous legislators in the 1972 statewide elections. In 1973, the Texas Legislature approved a package of campaign-financing and related reforms.

Editorial Research Reports

### Morning Prayer

Almighty God, remind us that all things are possible in Thy hands. Thou has sent Thy son—may we receive Him. May each of us serve Him, as we strive to love our fellow man and to understand one another. Amen.




"That's what I should have—all I go through, each morning, trying to get Henry out of bed."

## The Public Forum

**All letters to the Public Forum must be signed and include the writer's name, address, and telephone number. Only name and city will be published. The Eagle reserves the right to edit or condense all letters. The opinions expressed in letters and syndicated commentary are those of the writer and not of the newspaper. Letters from the same person will not be published more often than once every 30 days.**

### Commuter Buses, Not Trains

I read with interest the Jan. 28 editorial espousal of the editor's ideas about train travel on a commuter basis for towns west of Wichita.

I have expressed in the past my desire to see such a scheme in my own area of town which is southeast. Where I work, and at the plants near my house, many of the employes come from Ark City and Winfield. K-15 is one of the more direct routes from that area, also taking in Mulvane, Derby and other towns whose people shop and work in Wichita. Parallelling K-15, as U.S. 54, is a train route, in fact, the one used by Amtrak.

I have promoted on occasion that it would be good to establish a commuter train out of Ark City each day to serve people there who work in Wichita on regular shifts.

I offer an idea that can be readily put in action for a test quiet economically. Continental Trailways and some of the smaller bus lines operating out of Wichita could possibly supply several of their road diesel buses for commuter service on these runs. The only personnel involved are the drivers and a few ticket agents and people could park their cars centrally or be delivered by family to the bus which could make connection with city bus lines or continue in a direct route of its own to plants and shopping facilities. There would be no major investment in unique, limited scope equipment of the self propelled railbus variety.

I believe we could use to advantage just such a limited commuter system by bus in the metropolitan Wichita area.

CHARLEY WHITWORTH
Wichita

### Just What Is 'Criminal'?

Mr. Kilpatrick states: "If the President is to be . . . impeached it can only be for some high crime or misdemeanor in which he himself is involved."

As an example of charges against the President which are not high crimes or misdemeanors, Mr. Kilpatrick lists the bombing of Cambodia as not constitutionally a high crime. If our Constitution permits raining ruin on any country and the killing and maiming of its people (as Mr. Nixon did, in secret, without informing those in whose name it was done) then we must change the Constitution.

It is also stated the attempting to suborn a judge is a mere blunder; that extortion is really unlawful in campaigns but is not bribery because it is commonplace; that Mr. Nixon's tax returns were just errors (if, indeed, they were even that) and are civil, not criminal. (This may be disputed by many who have been and are imprisoned for tax evasion and other such "errors.")

This is a shocking view of our attitudes.

Is it true?

MILDRED GROVE
Wichita

### Please Say It Isn't So

Let's face it. The American housewife is to blame for the gasoline shortage.

Only a few years ago, most households had one car which the breadwinner, usually the husband, took to work with him. The wife stayed home.

Now, she is traipsing up and down the highways and byways and main streets of every town in the United States burning up precious gasoline while her husband is working.

I would like to suggest that the American housewife rediscover the pleasures of keeping a nice home, enjoy the genuine pleasures available in the home, and keep away from the gasoline stations during the day, and use that second car only for serious emergencies.

OTTNEEL ADELMAN
Pittsburg

### On Trips to the Countryside

In view of the recent flood of letters condemning the "environmentalists" as the cause of our energy shortage, I feel compelled to write in their defense.

First of all, the "environmentalists" do not make the laws. They have a lobby in Washington just like corporations, labor unions, planned parenthood and many other interests. The laws are made by legislators elected by the people.

In defense of environmental concerns, I want to submit my plea not to be so short-sighted as to demand that we go ahead blindly and at full throttle in the name of progress with complete disregard for our surroundings. Mankind has done that in the past and we are now reaping the results of 50 or 90 years of industrialization. We have polluted the rivers and streams, the atmosphere and, yes, the seemingly boundless waters of our great oceans. We are finding only traces of toxins in our marine species. Wake up, while there are only traces.

Weekend excursions to the countryside are becoming more popular among the people. On these excursions, do you want to see "amber waves of grain" or do you want to see lacerations in the land caused by strip mines (in the name of progress, of course) and smoke billowing refineries and power plants. All I ask is that you think about it.

JOHN SPRINGER
Wichita

### It Doesn't Hold Water

Of all the excuses and alibis which Mr. Nixon has come up with to explain his shenanigans, the one relating to the milk deal is the flimsiest. It holds water about like a screen door. Congress, he said, was about to overwhelm him and his secretary of Agriculture with a bill to raise milk supports to unwarranted heights. So what was he, poor guy, to do but head it off by raising them more moderately himself.

The facts are that out of the 535 members of Congress, this milk hike was supported by only 14 members — not nearly enough to pass such a measure, let alone override a veto. Furthermore, not a single bill on milk supports had been considered in any committee at the time Nixon raised them.

The great majority of congressmen and senators represent districts and states where milk consumers outnumber milk producers at least 50 to 1. The idea that they would vote to make their constituents pay more for milk is ridiculous.

Suppose there had been a proposal in congress to extend veterans' benefits — something which Nixon strenuously opposes. Does anyone think he would have caved in to congressional pressure no greater than that for milk price raises? You can safely bet your last little corroded dime that he would not have.

Anyone so gullible as to swallow the milk yarn could probably be made to believe that the churches and the WCTU were pressuring for the legalization of gambling and prostitution.

ALFRED S. BENNET
Wichita

### Don't Change the Flag!

In a statement in your Sunday paper you ask, "Do you like the state flag?" We sure do.

Our present state flag designates much more reality of the times when our state was settled than the other five pictures printed in your paper.

I am 84 years of age—a daughter and granddaughter of pioneers who came from Illinois and Indiana in 1876 in a covered wagon with two teams of horses. They settled in Greenwood County. The little town of Severy was just being started. A railroad track was under construction and a new school and church was built. County roads were surveyed.

This area was gradually inhabited by hard working families that tilled this soil for the first time. They dug their own water wells, walled them with native rock to prevent the walls from caving in. The water was pulled up by bucket and rope and carried by pail for household as for all other purposes. Yes, it was all hard work for everyone. It required a desire and ambition in helping to build their own modest homes. "They earned the honor" of developing their part of the state and having it admitted to the Union. They chose their own state motto, "Ad Astra Per Aspera" ("To the stars through difficulty), which they had truly earned.

So now why should be stand by and approve of some "modern artists" to change our state seal and state motto? Again, I definitely say no. Just make them larger and brighter.

MRS. BERNARD B. CLARK
Wichita

### Save the Old Courthouse!

I am very happy to learn that Wichita is again interested in saving the old courthouse. In 1961 I sat in the basement of that building, with a telephone, and worked to interest people in preserving it. Before that, Mrs. Ruth Hibbard had worked to the same end. We were backed by the Wichita Historical Museum, and it is gratifying to know that we did not fail.

Every city needs to keep some of its early buildings so that the current generation can learn what type of people the pioneers were — what aims and thoughts they had about this land in which we all like to live. Here in Long Beach, there are two early ranch homes, mostly furnished. One can appreciate how well people lived a hundred years ago without modern inventions. At Christmas time the tree at Los Cerritos was beautiful with only popcorn and cookies.

In Wichita, youngsters will find it easier to evaluate their pioneers if they can see the massive and beautiful old limestone courthouse with its dainty iron fence. The Civil War monument on the south grounds reminds us that Kansas played a leading role in the war. It was "bleeding Kansas" then, not the prosperous, industrialized state we know today.

On both coasts, we are almost submerged with citizens from other lands who are gaining citizenship here. The Midwest needs to preserve American history so that we can realize how and why these people sought to come here and are still coming.

JUNE H. MAYER
Long Beach, Calif.

### Speculating on Theory

The past and history are the same, inseparate and relative, unlike space and time which is separate but relative. Without the written past, history would be forgotten, lost in the wilderness of space and infinite time.

Respectively, nothing lost nothing gained but a continuance of re-occurring cosmic events, pulsating the characteristic laws of the universe. Changing its patternable design from birth to decay to its original basic elements. Biblically speaking, "dust thou art made and unto dust thou shall return."

Speculating on theory, perhaps the past, present and future are premeditated, secretly locked up in the folds of all living matter, generation after generation unfolding and unfolding, responding to its natural physical genetic code, like tiny time capsules releasing its programmatic historical sequence and obeying only to the repetitive cycles of life.

"Lest we forget," life is like a recording machine recording on tape all the special events in life. It can't be erased, only in the minds of men who tried to forgive and forget, his greed for wealth and power, political feuding tempest-wars, the tragic mistake at Watergate, we may not earn our right for love of life, laughter and song, constructive creative accomplishments, our "Bill of Rights," "The Ten Commandments," and love for God — "Lest we forget." It's time to remember.

HAROLD W. MOUTRAY
Wichita

### Truths From Titus, Timothy

Titus 1:15:16 "A person who is pure of heart sees goodness and purity in everything; but a person whose own heart is evil and untrusting finds evil in everything, for his dirty mind and rebellious heart color all he sees and hears. Such persons claim they know God but from seeing the way they act, one knows they don't. They are rotten and disobedient, worthless so far as doing anything good is concerned."

I think this statement is true about many of the critics of our President. They can't see the good that has been done.

Verses from II Timothy 3 say: "In the last days it is going to be very difficult to be a Christian. For people will love only themselves and their money; they will be proud and boastful, sneering at God, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful to them, and thoroughly bad. They will be hardheaded and never give in to others; they will be constant liars and troublemakers and will think nothing of immorality. They will be rough and cruel, and sneer at those who try to be good. They will betray their friends; they will be hotheaded, puffed up with pride, and prefer good times to worshiping God."

I see these truths every day in disobedient students, our TV programming, the terrible things shown in our theatres, witchcraft, false eastern religions, the news media, rising prices, etc. Watergate is only a drop in the bucket, stealing, murder, suicide, abortion. Let's turn back to God. He has so many wonderful and beautiful things to offer.

MRS. LORINA M GILLEN
Ulysses