

At the time, Las Vegas—or rather what is now known as Las Vegas—was thriving. Indeed, in 1890 the population of Las Vegas far exceeded that of Albuquerque; Las Vegas had 5,273 people compared to Albuquerque's 3,785. It wasn't until 1910 that Albuquerque's population surpassed that of Las Vegas.

The Optic began as a weekly—its first issue published July 31, 1879. But just four months later—on Nov. 4—it began publishing daily.

From the beginning, the Optic earned a reputation for getting out local news and for providing vivid accounts of noteworthy events. Mr. Kistler and his assistant wrote firsthand articles and editorials about political rallies, school programs, church services, sports, theatre performances and many other social events. Another popular staple in the Optic's news coverage was crime—from shootings and hangings to robberies.

The stories featured in the pages of the Optic over the past 125 years capture the colorful history of Las Vegas, a history that is the stuff of legends.

There were stories of gunfights, public hangings and notorious outlaws from the "Wild West" days. Also detailed in those early issues of the Optic were the births of some of the area's most beloved and critical institutions, among them what is now known as New Mexico Highlands University, Montezuma Castle and the Las Vegas Medical Center.

And then there are the chronicles of the struggles, among them the 91-year struggle to consolidate old town and new town into municipality and the political struggle for dominance between the local Republican and Democratic Parties.

The Optic also published the comings and goings of legends such as Wyatt Earp, Doc Holliday and Jesse James. In December of 1879, it noted that Jesse James had been a guest at the hot springs the previous summer.

The Optic has changed significantly over the 125 years it has been published. Ownership of the paper has changed hands nine times since its founding, but it has remained in the Beck family for 35 years.

When brothers Robert and Stuart Beck purchased the Optic in 1967, it had a circulation of 1,200. Today, its circulation is 6,000.

The Optic reached another milestone in April of 1998, when after the death of beloved Optic Publisher Stuart Beck, his widow was appointed publisher. Until Delia Romero Beck became publisher, no woman had served in that capacity.

Each publisher, editor and writer at the paper has left his or her mark on the Optic. Through the years, its pages have narrowed, the manner in which it is printed has eased, and the typewriters that once dominated its newsroom have disappeared in favor of computers. The Optic has undergone countless format changes, and the editorial style found in the paper's early editions bears little resemblance to today's.

But one thing has remained constant: The Optic's commitment to its readers and to the people and institutions it covers and its commitment to being fair and accurate in its reporting.

In the years since the Optic began publication, other newspapers have come and gone. But for more than a century, the Optic has survived and triumphed, each day capturing in its pages the stories of Las Vegas and its people.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to rise and recognize the Las Vegas Daily Optic and the citizens of San Miguel County on this truly momentous occasion. Their commitment to community spirit represents the finest qualities of New Mexico.

HONORING TOM MCKIBBAN, CRNA, MS, PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF NURSE ANESTHETISTS

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 2004

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to an outstanding Kansan, Tom McKibban, CRNA, MS. Mr. McKibban will soon complete his year as national president of the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA). I am very pleased that this son of Kansas was tapped as the 2003–2004 president of this prestigious national organization.

Founded in 1931, the AANA represents more than 30,000 practicing Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs). As you may know, CRNAs administer approximately 65 percent of all anesthetics given to patients each year in the United States. They work in every setting in which anesthesia is delivered including hospital surgical suites and obstetrical delivery rooms, ambulatory surgical centers, and the offices of dentists, podiatrists, and the plastic surgeons.

More importantly, CRNAs are the sole anesthesia providers in approximately two thirds of all rural hospitals, affording these medical facilities obstetrical, surgical and trauma stabilization services. In some states, such as Kansas, CRNAs are the sole providers in nearly 100% of the rural hospitals.

Tom earned his master's of science degree in nurse anesthesia from the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas, and his bachelor's degree in healthcare administration from Ottawa University, Ottawa, Kansas. He is currently a practicing nurse anesthetist and partner of the Butler County Anesthesia Services, LLC, which provides anesthesia services for Susan B. Allen Memorial Hospital in El Dorado, Kansas.

Tom has held various leadership positions in the AANA as president-elect, treasurer, and regional director before becoming the national president of the AANA in 2003. In addition, Tom has served terms as president, president-elect, treasurer, and secretary for the Kansas Association of Nurse Anesthetists.

During his AANA Presidency, Mr. McKibban has testified before committees of Congress on healthcare topics including nurse anesthesia education and the importance of nurse anesthetists to the U.S. Armed Forces and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Under McKibban's leadership, the AANA opened an important, new line of communication with the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA). These organizations of anesthesia professionals have not always seen eye-to-eye. The recent joint efforts of the two professional organizations would not have been possible without the initiative of Tom McKibban and his ASA counterpart.

Even with his demanding schedule as a practicing nurse anesthetist, Tom has found

time over the years to volunteer in his community. He has served as president and vice president of the Board of Education for Unified School District 490, and has been an active member of the board of education since 1999. He has also served as a member of the Endowment Board of Butler County Community College and board member for the American Red Cross Bluestem Chapter too.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Mr. Tom McKibban, CRNA, MS, for his notable career and outstanding achievements.

INTRODUCTION OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES EXPORT REFORM ACT

HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 2004

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing The Controlled Substances Export Reform Act, legislation to create and maintain U.S. jobs by reforming our Nation's outdated pharmaceutical export control laws.

Current law allows U.S. companies to export most controlled substances only to the immediate country where the products will be consumed. Shipment to central sites for further distribution across national boundaries is prohibited.

Mr. Speaker, foreign competitors labor under no such restrictions and can readily move approved medical products between international drug control treaty countries without limit or restriction. The exclusive prohibitions imposed by U.S. law on American manufacturers place them at significant disadvantage in international markets, creating powerful incentives for domestic companies to move production overseas, damaging local economies and costing U.S. jobs.

The legislation I have introduced today, along with a bipartisan group of my colleagues, authorizes the Attorney General to permit carefully regulated pharmaceutical exports to our international drug convention partner countries.

The bill retains full Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) authority over all shipments of controlled substances and establishes strict procedures to ensure these products are used solely for legitimate medical purposes. While the DEA's authority over exports is undiminished, by creating new parity for U.S. companies with their international competitors, the legislation encourages domestic production and job growth.

The Controlled Substances Export Reform Act supports American jobs and protects U.S. interests. I look forward to working with my colleagues to enact this important legislation.

MAINTAINING THE PROPER PERSPECTIVE ON CYPRUS

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 2004

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, today on the tiny Mediterranean island of Cyprus,