

So long, for now



It is with deepest regret I write this column this week. This will be my last opinion piece in the Holyoke Enterprise as I have accepted a new job that will take me away from Holyoke at the first of the year.

Most of you are used to me writing about sports and my favorite team, the Nebraska Cornhuskers. I've recently taken some flack over their latest butt whooping against Wisconsin. I'm sort of afraid it will be the same scenario in the bowl game when they meet up with No. 6 Georgia. I will say my prayers and hope for a good outcome.

I want to take this time to tell the Holyoke community and surrounding area thank you for putting up with me for the past three and half years. You have let me barge into your homes, businesses and lives to tell your stories to the Enterprise readers. You have been nothing but generous. Not everyone likes sharing their stories with the world and I want to thank everyone who has let me talk with them and publish certain parts of their lives in the paper.

I also want to take this time to apologize to those who I may have offended with my reporting over the past few years. We all make mistakes and I'm not perfect. I just hope I haven't done anyone wrong.

Another aspect of my job has been photography. I've taken thousands of photos of this community and the great people who live within it. Your kids participating in sports, your kids playing, your kids at the county fair, your kids interacting with the community and even you going about your business, thank you for letting me stick that lens in your face. You are the people that make this the great community it is. It's tough to let the press pry into your lives but you all have taken it with a smile on your face. Holyoke has a lot to be proud of!

As I end this chapter in my life and hand the reigns off to the capable members of the Enterprise staff, I will never forget the relationships I have built in this great community. You have taken me

under your wing and treated me with nothing but respect. It's been a blast meeting you all and learning how you work.

I've seen a championship basketball team, championship wrestlers, champion tracksters, a football playoff team and lots of other wonderful things. I've also seen a town rally around numerous fantastic causes including Relay For Life, children facing tough diseases and many other charities and organizations.

I've witnessed the completion of the Phillips County Event Center, Homesteaders Park playground project and been fortunate enough to work and interact with people in a state of the art hospital. This town knows how to support! Way to go!

I'm not leaving because this isn't a great place to live. I've been offered another opportunity that was hard to turn down. And it means I'll be getting out of the paper business. The job happens to be in my hometown right across the state line in Imperial—so I'll still be close.

I'll never forget the memories I've made here. You've even let me help by joining the Holyoke EMS squad. I've been a part of your personal lives by showing up on emergencies with the ambulance. I can only hope I've touched your lives as much as you've touched mine. We've lost some great community members in my time here and celebrated the lives of others.

I've been fortunate enough to sit on the Phillips County Relay For Life committee the past few years. What a great cause! I just hope it can keep moving forward.

Speaking of moving forward, this town is going places. It's not every day you drive through a rural town and find seven restaurants operating downtown—and operating well. Not to mention the numerous other businesses lining the streets of this city.

The town is gearing up for a new hotel and the reopening of another restaurant. What a great place to be. You all need to pat yourselves on the back. This is a special place and I want to thank you for letting me be a part of it for awhile.

See it like C-Lee

Written by Chris Lee

Again, thank you for everything, Holyoke. You've been awesome! Keep on keepin' on!

Sincerely,
C Lee

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