

from our viewpoint...

Fair time topic for our nostalgia

County fairs have long been a topic for nostalgia. What is it about a fair that appeals to people? Is it the rides, the entertainment, food or exhibits?

Even the Northwest District Free Fair has undergone changes over the years. In the seventies and eighties a carnival company brought in the rides. When that became much too expensive a group was organized to buy rides and run them for events.

The Sherman County Community Services is the group that maintains, assembles and stores the rides. They are completing their 10th season of running the carnival rides. Their first rides included the Octopus, Farris Wheel, Tilt-a-Whirl, Scrambler and a roller coaster.

The fair date was moved up a week more than 10 years ago from the first full week of August to the last week of July. Some years that has created problems for the gardeners with no ripe tomatoes to display.

Entertainment has changed some. Demolition Derby's have gone and come back. Big name entertainment is out but lesser known artists have taken up the slack.

Kids of all ages enjoy the stick horse races, turtle races, tricycle races and catch-it pig contests. The carnival rides and games still draw out the younger crowd for the thrill.

I remember taking my son for his first carousel ride and his entering garden produce in the open classes. I look forward to the time as grandma I get to take grandkids for their first carousel ride.

I believe everyone who donated the many hours to maintain the carnival rides feels the effort was well worth it.

The fair board and the Sunflower Extension Council spend hours organizing and helping kids get their 4-H and exhibits ready. There are many others who donate time or money to make the week-long fair possible.

To all of them I want to say a big thank you. Thank you for the many memories that make nostalgia possible. — Pat Schiefen

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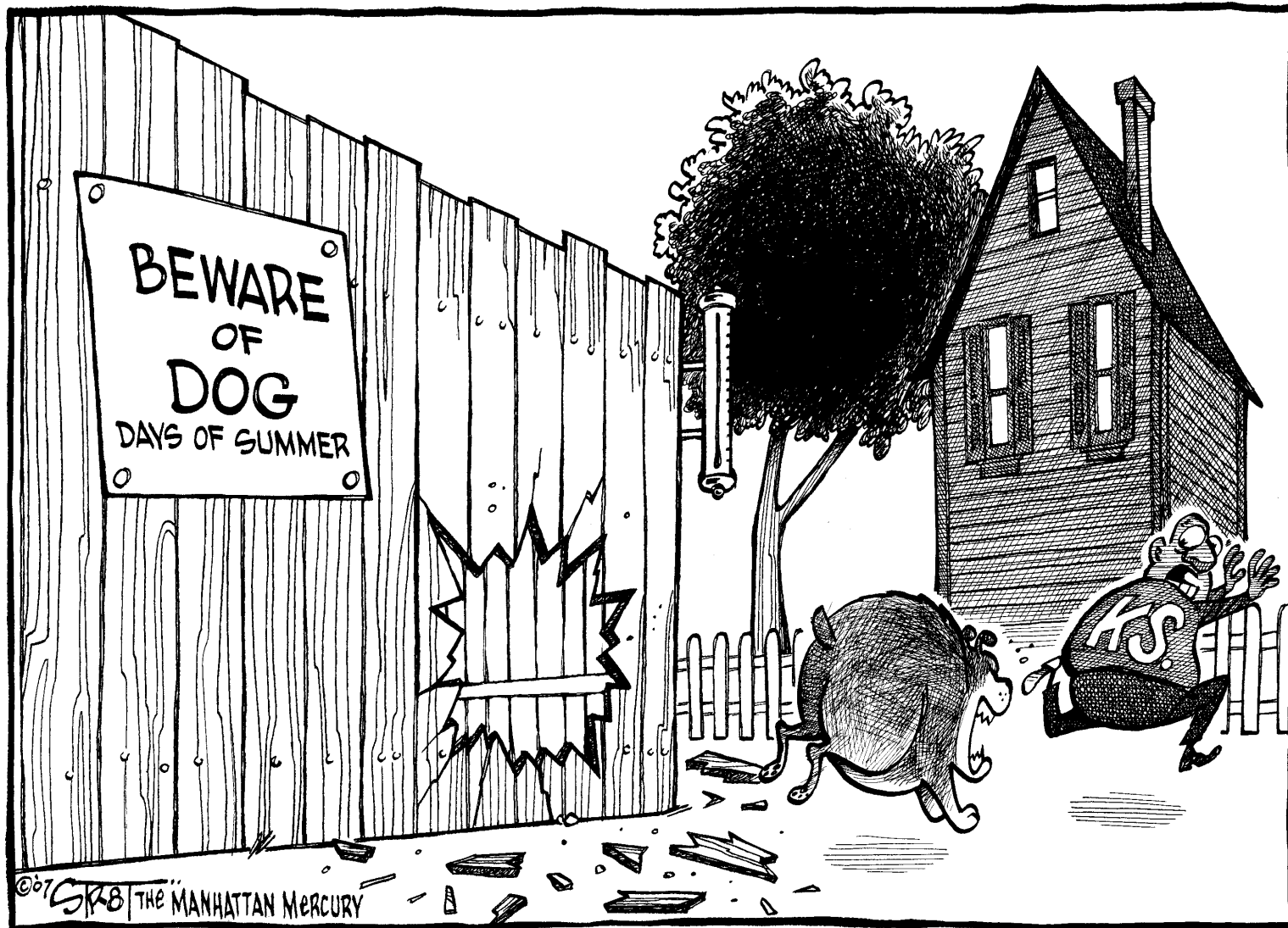
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We had to make a run for cover

Steve and I got caught late Saturday night and had to make a run for it.

We've been taking our daily walk closer to midnight than noon lately — a lot closer, usually between 10 and 11:30 p.m.

Lately, even at 11 p.m. the air has been muggy and the temperature near 80 degrees. Still, it's better than the muggy 90s with sunshine that we were having most every day.

On Saturday, we started up the street and noted that the night was overcast and there was lightning streaking intermittently across the sky. Still, there was no thunder, not much wind and the evening looked pretty calm.

We walked up the hill to the water tower, then turned and crossed the highway by The Gateway, Oberlin's civic center. Now we were up top of the hill and the breeze felt wonderful.

There was a wedding dance going on and young folks were coming and going. Dressed in old white T-shirts and raggedy shorts, we weren't exactly dressed for a dance, but it was tempting. We love to dance and they all seemed



cynthia haynes

• open season

to be having a great time.

We love these evening walks. The crickets chirp, the cicadas sing and sometimes we hear an owl far off in the trees.

The dog goes with us. She loves to run and chase rabbits, although we've been trying, without much success, to teach her that she's a bird dog — not a bunny hound. If it runs away, though, she'll try to chase it.

Luckily, most skunks don't run. They turn around and walk off, tail high and sprayer ready. So far, we've spotted them soon enough to alter our course, and the dog hasn't tried to chase any of them.

We didn't run across any skunks on Satur-

day. We didn't go dancing although in retrospect, maybe we should have crashed the party.

After we had gone about two blocks from The Gateway, it started to rain — gently at first.

It smelled wonderful on the hot pavement. Big fat drops gently pattered down on us and we smiled and kept going.

Then the big fat drops started falling faster and faster, and we started walking faster and faster.

Soon we were running through the rain, our clothes drenched and our hair dripping. The dog was in seventh heaven. She loves water almost as much as running, and running in the rain is great as far as she was concerned.

Just as we got to our back door, it started to thunder — talk about being late for the party!

Other than getting wet and getting our walk cut short, we decided the rain was great. The dog loved it. The garden and yard loved it. The weatherman loved it, since he was finally right.

After all, it was Saturday night and time for a bath.

My terrorist Doc



tom purcell

• commentary

"Hiya, doc. Thanks for taking time to see me. I think I tore something in my knee and wondered if you could look it over."

"The problem is all you western swine are weak in the knee! All of you are corrupt and evil and that is why I and other doctors plot your murder!"

"Huh, doc?"

"What I meant to say is you are getting older now, Tom. You need to slow it down. Tell me, when I press on this spot does it hurt?"

"Ouch, doc. That hurts."

"You want hurt! I'll give you hurt — the kind of hurt your people give to my people with your imperialist ways. You should know that when you next enjoy a beverage at your neighborhood pub, I will blow you and your friends into the next life!"

"Huh, doc?"

"What I meant to say is you have strained a ligament, Tom. I will X-ray it to get a better understanding, then I will apply my medical training to restore you to good health."

"Great, doc. You studied in Iraq, didn't you? Isn't it wonderful that you could move to America, a free and open country, and enjoy such a good life?"

"Huh, doc?"

"What I meant to say is that you are right. There is no greater gift than to nurture life. That is why being a doctor is such a perfect cover. We can hide among you, pretending to care and give, when what we are really after is your death!"

"Huh, doc?"

"You American pigs do not understand who we really are! We laugh at you. You think it is

fession yours is to be able to save and nurture life."

"Nurture life, Tom! Ha! Didn't you see the article in the Telegraph? A group of 45 Muslim doctors have threatened, in Internet chat sites, to use car bombs and rocket grenades within America! We apply our sharp intellects to devise new methods to kill you — clever methods that no free and open society can prevent!"

"Huh, doc?"

"What I meant to say, Tom, is that you are right. There is no greater gift than to nurture life. That is why being a doctor is such a perfect cover. We can hide among you, pretending to care and give, when what we are really after is your death!"

"Huh, doc?"

"You American pigs do not understand who we really are! We laugh at you. You think it is

the poor and uneducated among us who strap on vest bombs and sacrifice themselves for the cause."

"Doc?"

"But that is not so at all. Our ideology cuts across all classes, all geographies all levels of intelligence and education. You fail to understand what we are trying to tell you — that we want to kill you. We WILL kill you unless you accept our teachings."

"Doc?"

"You decadent Westerners are corrupted by the excesses of your culture. Your people are confused and unfocused. You are ignorant, too — you do not understand what we are trying to tell you. We will kill you while you sleep!"

"Doc, I'm not sure I follow you. You're talking about my knee?"

"Yes, Tom, your knee. What I meant to say is you need to rest your knee and pack it down with some ice. I want you to take two aspirin. And, if for some reason our car bombs fail to detonate and you survive the night, call me in the morning."

Tom Purcell is a nationally syndicated humor columnist. For comments to Tom, please email him at Purcell@caglecartoons.com.

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