

Sure, snoops can listen if you're calling al-Qaida

There is a lot of chatter and a lot of misinformation about the president's spying on "domestic" conversations.

The administration probably doesn't want to talk about just how it listens in on people talking to al-Qaida backers, so the waters are muddy. But the rules ought to be clear.

If anyone, anywhere in the world, calls Osama bin Laden, they should expect to have the National Security Administration on one end of the line. Six or seven other intelligence agencies as well.

This is war, and the U.S. is going to listen in on enemy communications.

Makes no difference where the call originates, any more than it would if some American citizen called a Mafia kingpin whose phone happened to be tapped.

If you don't like having the Feds listen in, don't call the Mob. Or Osama.

The origin of the call isn't really relevant; the destination is.

And if that destination is an al-Qaida supporter's phone in a foreign country, so be it. An American calling out to a foreign country to talk to terrorists doesn't have much expectation of privacy. There should be no need for a court order, because the target is outside the U.S. and not subject to ordinary court process.

Besides, if someone is talking with a terrorist, there'd be no time to go get a court order. The government can't just turn off the tap and

wait. A whole different set of rules applies when the call is made, or e-mail sent, by and to a U.S. person within the country.

Then, the Bill of Rights applies. The president and his minions need a warrant to tap your phone, no matter what they think you did. If they are watching someone here, tapping out-bound communications, they should have a court order.

There are laws and procedures governing the process. Special courts to issue orders. Ways to get things moving.

Under the so-called (and bogusly named) Patriot Act, the government can get authority for "roving" taps on a suspect, covering multiple lines and cell phones.

As long as a judge signs off on that, it's legal and proper.

If the suspect, citizen or not, is in this country, then our normal laws and legal protections should cover them. The government has plenty of authority to go after terrorists and other criminals.

Our rights and freedoms as Americans are important. These are the things we treasure, after all. It wouldn't make sense to win this war and lose what we are fighting for.

But wiretapping foreign terrorists, even if they are talking to Americans?

There are problems with the Patriot Act and real threats to our way of life, but that's not one of them. — *Steve Haynes*

Shouldn't we vote on the ads?

There ought to be some kind of formal competition for those ads on the Super Bowl, shouldn't there?

The greatest minds in television advertising work all year to produce those spots. Millions of Americans see them, rate them, debate them, talk about them over coffee for weeks.

Only a couple of questionable calls by the zebras will linger longer in the mind.

At \$2.5 million for a 30-second spot, they're some of the most expensive advertising of the year, but then, experts say 91 million of us were watching.

But there's no award, no trophy, no medal for the best ad, the best director, the most original script.

And that seems a shame. Maybe they could make a replica of the Lombardi trophy with a television on top, instead of a football?

After the game, we'd all vote online, and the winners would gather in Hollywood or the parking lot at the stadium and get their prizes.

Until then, our informal selections will have to suffice.

It's hard to compete with Budweiser ads, and there were a bunch of them. Anheuser-Busch spends a lot of money in February. But my vote goes to a Pepsi brand, Sierra Mist.

The routine where the college boy is frisked for his soda at the airport is just hilarious. The gate agent makes beeping noises whenever her wand gets near the pop. She says he has to leave it with her.

"But you're just making those noises," he protests.

"Looks like we've got a trouble-



Along the Sappa

By *Steve Haynes*
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maker here, boss," she replies. "Just say the word, Wendy," he says, snapping his rubber gloves. "I'm good," the kid says, giving her the pop.

Loved it. No. 2: Bud Light for the revolving wall. In a series buildup, a guy installs a secret revolving wall to hide his 'fridge — and the beer — when moochers show up. Only the wall puts the 'fridge in the next apartment, where scruffy college boys dive into the "magic 'fridge" every time it appears.

The single FedEx effort drew praise from the experts, and I liked it. A hapless caveman courier ties his package to a pterodactyl's leg, only to see the flying dinosaur grabbed and eaten by a raptor.

"Package didn't make it," he tells his boss.

It was artistic, inventive, highly technical and good, but not as funny as No. 1 or No. 2. I grinned; I didn't split my sides.

Also worth mention was a Diet Pepsi series where an agent gets the soft drink a recording contract and a movie deal. The rap sequence is good, but using Diet Coke for a stunt double was a cheap shot.

Funny, but why advertise the competition?

Worst ad? Got to be the Bud Light spot where a young officer worker assures the boss he's worked all weekend hiding beer all over the office to boost moral. When they stop off the elevator, the place is a wreck.

"Is that the image you want to present of your product?" my picky partner asks.

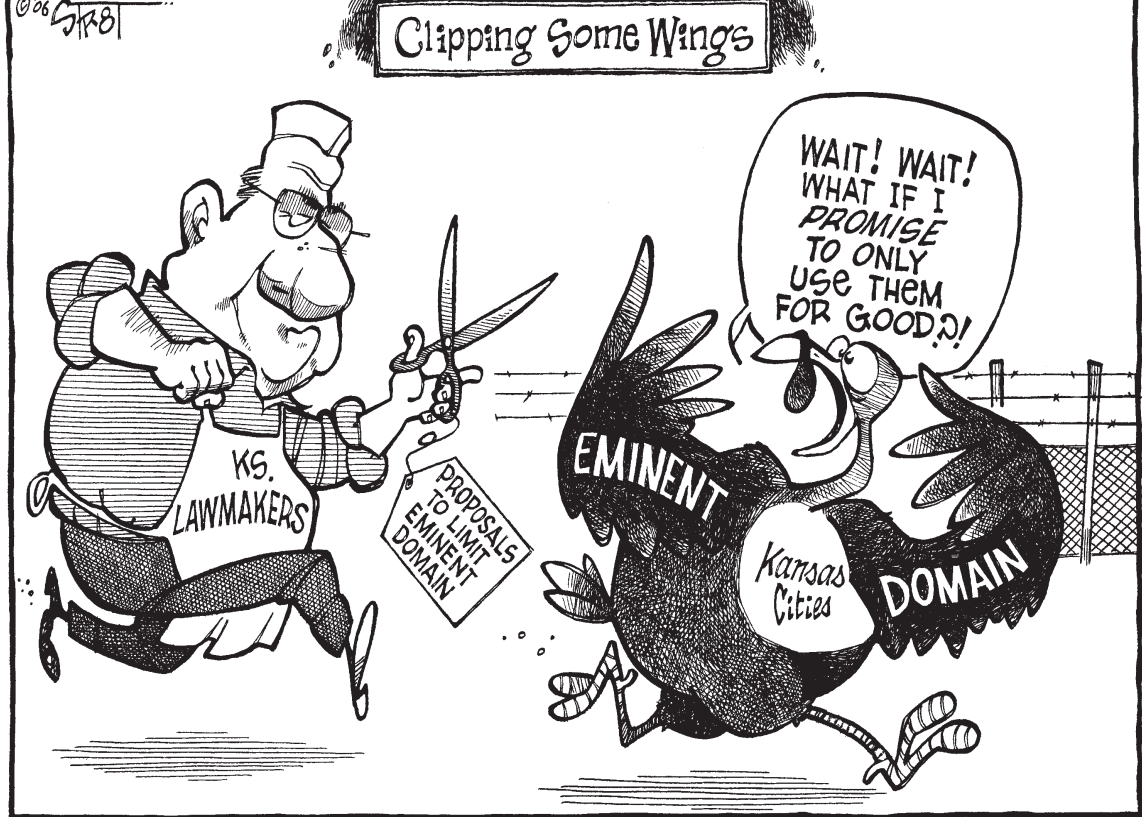
No. Babes in bikinis work better. Bud spent a lot of dough, though, and some of the others, including the baby Clydesdale sequence, were fine.

That's my take. Maybe next year, they'll hire me to organize the voting and awards. It might be the only way I'll ever get to a Super Bowl.

From the Bible

Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. ... Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

James 3: 10, 12



She mourns the loss of friends



Out Back

By *Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts*
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I lost two friends this week. Jack died last Monday and Max died this morning.

Jack was from the old Liberty-Star neighborhood and his mother and mine had been good friends. Both Dorothys.

Jack was my brother Dick's age, so I never went to school with him, but he was someone I had known forever. That was the thing about Jack. You felt like you had always known him. And he, for sure, knew you. Jack knew everybody. He never met a stranger.

He had a habit of nicknaming people. I told his wife I would miss hearing him say, "Hey, Carolina, Marilina, Hoopensteina, Whopensteina." Where that came from, I don't know.

As I drove by the cemetery on my way home after the funeral, I said, "So long, Jack."

—ob—

My other friend was Jim's cat, Max.

Now, I mean no disrespect to Jack by including him in a column about our cat. In fact, Jack would probably get a charge out of it. I don't know if he was a cat lover or not.

The similarity is, they were both

good friends.

When I married Jim, I inherited Max. When we merged our households, my cat Snuggles and Max became instant "step-brothers." Max wanted to be everyone's friend while Snuggles was indignant about having to share his home with this interloper.

Snuggles died a couple of years ago and that left Max as the sole beneficiary of our laps and affection.

I have to admit that Jim always held the top spot in Max's heart. He liked me well enough, but he loved Jim. He would be on my lap, but when Jim came into the room, Max would abandon me and plop himself on Jim's. Wherever Jim was, you could be sure Max was nearby. If Jim was welding, Max would be laying under the lilac bush, watching. If Jim was building a pole barn for

the calves, Max would be laying in the shade of the truck, waiting to see where he might be heading next.

I used to worry that he would get run over, because he would follow if Jim walked up town to get the mail. He always watched for traffic and never got hit.

We knew Max was on borrowed time after his diagnosis of diabetes. Twice-daily injections of insulin kept him healthy and active until the very end. Jim estimated his age at 15-17, about 95 in people years.

We don't get to choose the way our lives end. Most of us would like to just go to sleep. But, I think my two friends came as close to having it their way as could be.

Jack had always said he didn't want to linger. And Max died in Jim's arms. Both, surrounded by someone who loved them.



A JAGUAR SS100, circa 1936-'40, — the one that got away.

Car called, but a long way off

My husband, my children and many of my co-workers think I need a new car.

I'm not so sure. I hate changing things.

I resole shoes, hang on to a purse until it falls apart and refuse to part with a dress I've had for more than 30 years. I have two cars — the Sebring, which I drive most of the time, and my Probe.

Steve got the Probe for my birthday in 1990. Our son wrecked it in 1998. I used the insurance money to buy the Sebring, but I had the Probe cobbled back together and use it as a spare.

Still, the Sebring's odometer is approaching 150,000 miles and little things are starting to give me problems.

Minor things, like you can't open the passenger's side door from the outside, don't bother me all that much. I seldom have passengers anyway.

Still, I've started to look around. There is no lack of car dealers willing to sell me a new or almost-new vehicle.

Still, it's hard.

I've never loved the Sebring like I love the Probe. The Probe was my red sports car, purchased when I was in the mood for a midlife change. It was wonderful.

I looked at a cute little number up in McCook — even took it for a test drive — and got stares and whistles from some boys that were about my



Open Season

By *Cynthia Haynes*
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son's age. Now that does wonders for an old gal's ego!

But it was a convertible and I had no garage. A convertible wouldn't be a good car to have unless you have a garage to park it in. The top would soon be ruined by the sun and constant exposure.

I finally got my garage, but someone else had already driven off in the cute little number in McCook.

Then, last week, I saw the Jaguar. My heart stopped. It was red. It was gorgeous. It was under \$10,000!

It's also older than me.

Since I know next to nothing about cars, I went to the Internet. I think this beauty is a SS100 built sometime between 1936 and 1940 by SS Cars Ltd of Coventry, England.

I could be wrong, of course, but the pictures I saw looked like this car, including the mesh shielding for the headlights. The only difference I could see was the cars on the Internet all had rear-mounted spare tires.

Of course, there was another small problem. I was on vacation when I spotted this rare beauty — in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico.

Cabo San Lucas is at the very tip of the California peninsula about 1,000 miles of bad, Mexican two-lane from Tijuana, which is just across the border from San Diego, which is one heck of a long ways from western Kansas.

My son-in-law, who was on vacation with us, was all for me buying the car. He offered to help me drive it home.

I don't think he gets that much vacation, though.

My husband pointed out that I needed a mechanic, not a geek — both my daughter and son-in-law work for an Internet company — if I wanted to get the Jag home.

He also said he figured we would drive the 1,000 miles to the border only to find that our car was "hot."

Boy, after all those pep talks about changing cars. You just can't please some people.

But it sure was cute.

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