

## Immigration problem due to our foolish laws

All the talk in Washington is what to do about the "immigration problem."

And this country does have an immigration problem, brought on by our foolish, unrealistic and outmoded laws.

The fact that we have an estimated 11 to 12 million illegal aliens in the country today is testimony to that.

It also tells us that simply making it hard to come here legally won't solve the problem. As long as America is the land of opportunity, people will be desperate to get in.

And as long as people are desperate to come, they will.

We can fence the border, at a cost of billions; triple or quadruple the size of the Border Patrol; and turn the Southwest into a police state, but we won't stop the waves of immigration. Nor should we.

Our heritage is open borders. Our history is assimilation. Anyone whose last names lacks vowels or begins with "Mc" or "O" or ends in "i" — all of us really — should appreciate that.

We're all from immigrant stock. All interlopers. We all came here for the same things, the things people seek today: Economic opportunity, freedom, a new life in a New World.

Wild proposals abound: close the border, build a wall, stop anything that moves in Texas. Wild-eyed opponents claim immigrants clog the courts, the schools and the welfare rolls. There's no evidence of that.

The truth is, illegals make up about 5 percent of the labor force and this country could not prosper without their labor. Most have families, pay taxes and raise children who will be citizens.

But won't they change the makeup of America?

No more than any of the rest of us did. As a nation, we are the sum of our parts: People who came looking for a new life, people brought here in chains, people sent here as criminal, people who swam the Rio Grande.

All of them Americans.

But, yes, it is time to change our laws, though Congress seems to be having a tough time with that.

We need to monitor and control the flow, and the only way to do that is write a reasonable law that can be enforced.

We're not going to send anyone home. We're not going to deport 11 million people.

We shouldn't make employers pay the price by creating burdensome regulation over hiring. We shouldn't put that cost on our businesses.

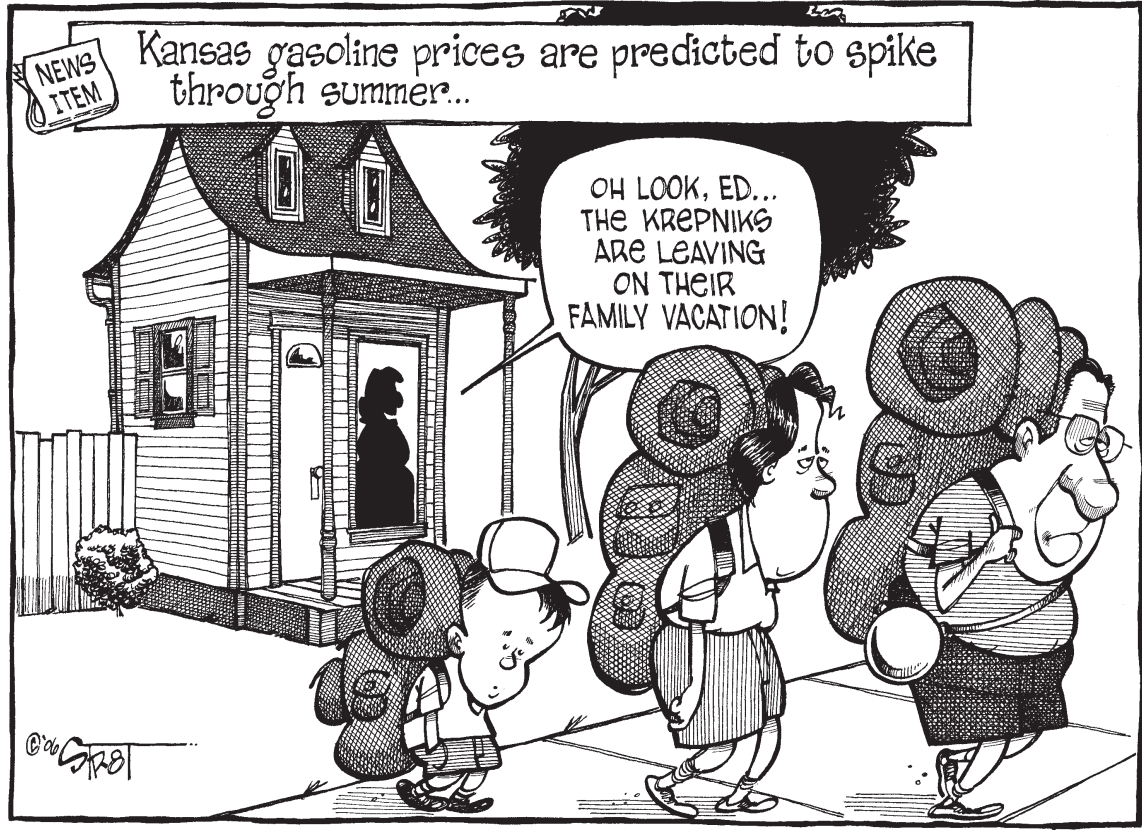
And the political party that proposes those things might well be voted out. Republicans should not make the mistake of thinking they can ride a wave of anti-immigration feeling into the next century. The opposite may be true.

Any new law has to be something we and Mexico can live with, something that allows workers to come north and legalizes those who've lived here for years.

Above all, a new immigration law needs to be humane and reasonable if we, as a people, are going to live up to our heritage.

Love and freedom should drive our decision making, not hatred and legalism. If we can think that way, we can succeed.

— Steve Haynes



## Yard work grows every year

If we put in any more flower beds, vegetable gardens or even cement, someone please kick me.

In the spring, a young man's fancy turns to love and a middle-aged couple's turns to gardening.

Steve and I have spent the last three Sundays cleaning flower beds and preparing the garden.

Now, I love spring. I like having a garden. I don't even mind working in the yard. But it seems that there's more of it to do every year.

I started on the lily bed to the north, by the alley.

Last fall, I had planted daffodils in amongst the lilies because Steve read an article in some newspaper that said you should do that to get some spring color before the lilies started to really grow. The idea is the daffodils come up, bloom and die down while the lilies are still trying to figure out that its time to grow.

This really works, except that it's kinda hard to plant the bulbs when you can't see the holes because of all the lily leaves. Still, we have lots of yellow-and-white blossoms among the green rings of lily leaves.

The next project was the asparagus bed along the driveway. I found two tiny asparagus buds coming up through the soil. That was more than a week ago, and those same two buds are about an inch taller each. They haven't taken off but the ground is clean and I should be able



## Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes  
cahaynes@nwkansas.com

to see the rest of them when they show up.

We got someone to rototill the garden. I've spent many an hour with that trusty potato fork. At the same time, we cleaned the south lily bed (no daffodils over there) and two small iris beds, one beside the back porch and one on the south side of the house, and the tulip beds on either side of the front steps.

On Saturday, we tackled the iris bed that runs along the front walk and the wildflower bed at the corner of the lot.

We planted spinach, lettuce, peas and corn. Every year, we get the seeds out of the basement where we store them. As spring approaches and the garden areas start to sprout

in the hardware and grocery stores, Steve and I start to buy seeds.

It's a sort of spring fever, I think. We had eight packages of lettuce, 10 of spinach, six of radishes, one cucumber, and 24 flower varieties. Corn and peas we had left over from last year. With the seeds we returned to the basement, we could feed the town for a couple of years.

After we got done with the yard, I swept the garage floor. It had accumulated a nice layer of leaves and gravel over the last couple of months, a lot of them the same ones we dug out of the asparagus bed the week before.

With the old garage, I didn't worry. It had a dirt floor. The new building has a nice cement floor that's really got to be swept now and then. I've thought of paving the driveway, but shuddered at the cost — besides then I'd just have another thing to clean.

And I definitely don't need another thing to clean, outside or in.

## Assignment: take me to prom

At the little newspaper where I work, the other reporter and I kind of "divvy up" weekend photo assignments. The criteria for who gets what is determined by prior commitments, interests — and who gets the short straw.

From now until the end of the school year, life at the paper will be a blur. There is going to be some kind of activity every day. Double that on weekends.

It was prom this weekend and Veronica, who went to a big city school, announced, "I didn't go to my own prom. I'm not going to this one."

I looked around, and as far as I could tell, I was the only other candidate for the job. Which, really, was OK with me. I loved both of my prom parties and thought the assignment would be fun. Jim wasn't going to be home until late, so what else was I going to do on a Saturday night?

No one knows where school traditions come from — they just are. At this school, the prom goes promenade in the high school gym. Some couples tried to make their entrance unique. Boys would twirl their partner as they were introduced. Two apparently dateless boys got the biggest laugh of the evening. They donned sunglasses and carried canes, entering the gym tap-tap-tapping like two blind men.

After the official, ceremonial walk-through, the master of ceremonies announced the end of the promenade. Parents and friends



## Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts  
cplotts@nwkansas.com

swarmed the floor to take pictures. It was a melee, chiffon, taffeta and tuxes in a swirl. But it was fun, too.

Girls so beautiful they took your breath away. Boys so handsome they made your palms sweaty. Were these the same kids I saw the day before in baggy T-shirts and torn jeans?

—ob—

It's tax time. And I feel really proud. We actually have it done with a few days to spare, unlike other years when we've been up the night of April 14 still posting and adding columns of deductions.

Like everyone else, I'm not crazy about paying taxes. However, I do like driving on nice roads, sending my kids to a good school, and having a modern hospital at my service. It's that old "render unto Caesar" syndrome. If we want it, we have to pay for it.

—ob—

I have always said that God gives us our children while we're young for a reason. An e-mail I received over the weekend explained why:

With medical advances, fertility is now possible for many more

years. It seems a 65-year-old woman recently gave birth. After she brought the baby home, friends came to call. When asked if they could see the baby, the mother replied, "No, not yet."

This happened several times, until finally a friend pushed her to answer when could they see the baby.

Her answer confused her friends: "You can't see him until he cries," she said.

"Why can't we see him until he cries?" they asked.

"Because, I can't remember where I put him."

## From the Bible

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

II Timothy 2: 15, 16

## I just don't need to carry gun

I'm happy, I think, that Kansas finally has a "concealed carry" law that allows citizens to carry a handgun with proper training.

In theory, I think it's a good thing. Statistics show it should deter street crime. People will have to pass a course in gun safety.

It's a constitutional right to own and carry a gun, though states used to ban concealed weapons pretty uniformly. It's always been legal here to walk around with one strapped to your hip.

The concealed-weapon ban is a law that's been widely violated. A lot of people felt the need to pack heat, especially in the city.

Not me. I confess, I just don't get it.

It's not that I'm anti gun.

I own several, but I prefer to have a shotgun.

I've never had the slightest desire to carry a pistol, even in the 11 years I lived and worked in Kansas City.

I worked the police beat many of those years. I went to the worst parts of town at the worst times. I never felt then I needed a gun.

Getting robbed on the street once didn't make me want a gun. I'd have lost it that night when the guy got the drop on me. He'd have had two, and I'd have had none.

It did make me want even more to



## Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes  
schaynes@nwkansas.com

move to a small town.

Now I live in one of the safest places on Earth.

The incidence of robbery, assault and mugging here is below zero. Murder is unheard of, unless your wife (or husband) is really mad at you, which is another good reason not have a pistol around.

I have no illusions, though, about getting shot at home. My wife would poison me if she got that mad. Gun-shot wounds are way too messy for her.

As a newspaper reporter, editor and publisher for 35 years, I have had just one serious threat. A man said he'd "take care of me" if I ever put his son's name in the paper again. His kid was a murderer; I took him seriously. We did, he didn't.

That's as close as I've ever come to even thinking about needing a gun, and that was 15 or 20 years ago.

If you want to get a permit and slip a heater into your pocket or your

purse, it's OK with me. As long as you aren't mad at me, anyway.

I just don't expect to join you any time soon.

My Second Amendment rights are secure. I feel safe walking down the street at night. I don't fear for my safety, no matter what I write.

That's one big reason why I live out here.

I am curious to see what happens. Maybe there will be more guns and more accidents. That's one theory. Maybe if a lot of people get good training, there'll be more guns and fewer accidents.

I doubt the murder rate in north-west Kansas will go up or down. I don't think it will make much difference in crime here, because we don't have any.

But if people want to carry, fine with me.

I mean them no ill will. I just don't plan to join them.

## Reader points out error in article

To the Editor:

I would like to correct one statement in this 1955 football team article in the Dec. 28, 2005, issue of *The Oberlin Herald*. It said "It had been 25 years since the Oberlin football team had beaten Norton. That would mean that Oberlin had not beaten Norton since 1930! The 1943 and 1944 teams were unbeaten after the first game of the 1943 season, a loss to Phillipsburg. We did play Norton each of those years. In fact, the coach of the 1955 team was the captain of the 1944 team.

In those years, there was only one class for all high school football teams in Kansas. The 1944 Red Devil team was ranked third of all the Kansas high school teams — trailing only Wyandotte and Wichita East!

Of the 11 starters on the 1944 team, only four survive: Herschel Betts, Raymond Emerson, Rea

## Letter to the Editor

Magers and myself. Of the 1943 team, Bruce Guinn and perhaps others survive.

Leonard Cullison  
Topeka

Editor's Note: The Oberlin Red

Devils did beat the Norton Blue Jays in 1944 by a score of 41 to 6. The error was made because of misinformation given to the paper.

The Corrector Dictator staff found the correct information in old newspapers at the school.

## Write

*The Oberlin Herald* encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of public interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point.

They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

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### STAFF

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Kimberly Davis ..... managing editor  
Mary Lou Olson ..... society editor  
Judy Jordan ..... proofreader  
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