

Let's all pull together to push runway project

As we turn a new year, it'd be a good time for Oberlin's leadership to put all past issues aside and get together behind a project the people of this town obviously want: a longer runway and more modern airport to keep us in the aviation "game."

This is not a time to fight, to be petty or to fritter away the momentum a 3-1 majority for the airport project should create. This is the time for everyone to work together to make this happen.

The City Council, which has been divided on the project, needs to take a leadership position now that the voters have spoken. No, they didn't speak. They shouted.

Same for the city administrator, who says he understands that he needs to be behind the airport project 100 percent. The city-county Economic Development Corp. has been solidly behind the project from the start.

The "airport committee" needs to keep up the good work its members have done to push this project along. And the committee needs to make a few changes along the way.

If this "committee" is to continue to have a part in this process, the group needs to focus positive energy on getting a runway built and drop everything else.

At a time when supporters should have been magnanimous in victory after the Dec.

15 special election, a couple of members went down at the City Council demanding the administrator's head. That's not going to accomplish anything.

Now that the council has spoken — and the administrator has said he's on board — everyone should forget past offenses and get back to work.

To succeed, and grow public support, the committee needs to get its cards out on the table. There should be no secrets about the airport, a major civic asset.

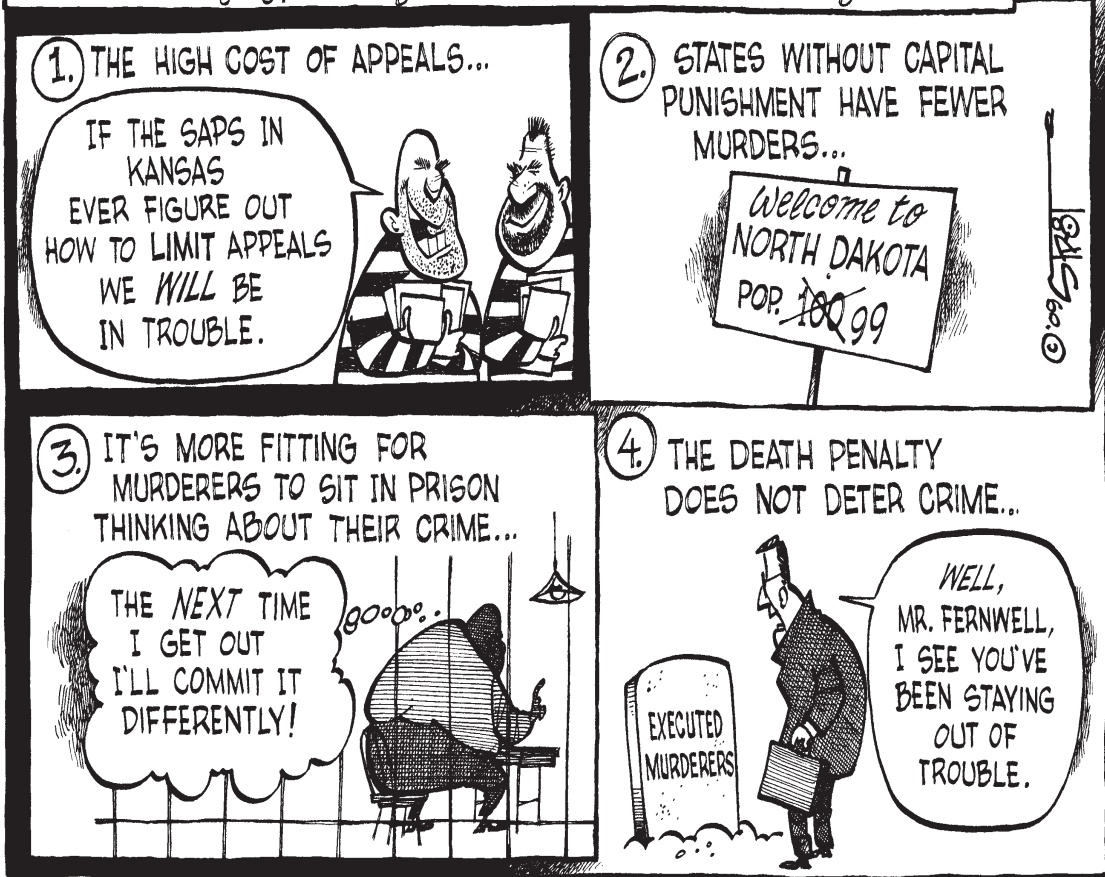
All meetings of the committee need to be held in the open, announced in advance to the public and all actions need to be accountable to the voters.

That's the only way this process will garner enough support and volunteer labor to continue. That way, no one can claim the people are being kept in the dark or the state Open Meetings laws are being ignored.

Airport expansion could be a key to economic vitality in the 21st century, as it was in the last. A 4,300-foot runway built for prop planes won't carry Oberlin through the next few decades, when jets will dominate.

So let's get behind this project and get it done, without further rancor or disputes. It's too important to let petty agendas get in the way. — Steve Haynes

Death Penalty Repeal Arguments for Kansas' 2010 Legislature...



December hard on little car

My car is really, really glad that December is over.

My little white Solara had a bad month, but it had nothing to do with Christmas.

It started after the first big snowfall.

The roads were mostly clear, but it was dark and the temperature stood at 7 degrees as I left my job at the Pamida Pharmacy in Norton at 6:30 p.m.

I navigated out of the parking lot and headed west towards supper and my evening job of helping put together *The Oberlin Herald*.

About a mile past the last lights of Norton, I knew there was a problem. I suspected a flat front tire, so I pulled as far to the right as the snowy shoulder would allow.

My flashlight didn't have the best battery, but it showed that I was right. The right front tire was not going to take me to Oberlin — or even back to Norton.

I called for help, and two guardian angels arrived to get me back to the co-op service station in Norton and change my flat for the "donut" spare.

I drove home at 40 mph and was a little late for both supper and work. The car got two new front tires.

Then came more snows, and as



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
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Christmas drew near, I decided I needed to empty my trunk of all the recyclables I store in there.

I fill paper grocery bags with glass, plastic, newspapers, magazines and chip board and then store them in the trunk of my car until it is full. Then it's time to go to the recycling center and unload.

Unfortunately, I didn't even get close.

The snow was too much for my little car. We got stuck at an intersection several blocks north of the center. I could back up a little, but I couldn't go very far forward.

Using all my snow-driving tricks, I finally got the car headed back the way we came. We were still stuck and I was about to get out and try to find my shovel under all the trash in my trunk when a city truck stopped and the driver got out and gave me a push. That little oomph got me and my trashy car on our way home.

Then the Monday after Christmas, I was on my way home from Norton again.

I saw them. I jammed on the brakes and moved to the right without jerking the wheel.

It was no use. Bambi ran right in front of me, and I bounced her into the left lane.

The housing around the left headlight was broken but the bulb miraculously was spared. Although the hood was slightly dented, the car was drivable. The deer didn't fare as well.

It's been too cold to worry about much more than getting where I have to go and getting home, so nothing has gotten fixed.

Still, it's not December anymore, and that's got to be good news for my poor little trashy, dented Solara.

It was a darn fine new year

Usually, Jim and I at least go out for dinner on New Year's Eve. I am especially partial to Chinese food as a "good luck" talisman to ring in the New Year.

This year, however, found us both at home, Jim asleep before 10 p.m. and me darn ing socks.

Darning socks is almost a lost art, but in the wintertime, Jim prefers heavy-duty, 80 percent wool socks that cost about \$12 a pair. You can bet I'm going to darn those.

At first, I thought I could sacrifice one sock to unravel and crochet that yarn into the offending hole and, thereby make a nice, smooth patch. I soon learned that machine-made socks don't readily unravel.

But, they can be cut. I also learned that a light bulb makes an adequate darning "egg" and the "toe" of the sacrificed sock can be split in two and makes a good substitute for a heel.

My mother and her mother, Grandma Davison, both were expert menders. Grandma taught me her technique for mending little holes. First, make small stitches all around the hole. Then, starting at one side, outside the circle of stitching, weave the needle back and forth across the opening, catching as many threads as possible. After working across the hole that way, turn the piece a half-turn and work back the other



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
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way. Don't pull the threads real tight, as that will make a "pucker." Keep the thread snug and soon the hole will be filled with a nice, tight "weave."

My mom always kept a bag of mending in the car so that if she had to sit and wait on someone, she would have something to do. I'm not that extreme but, I can't see throwing out a perfectly good pair of socks because of a hole or two. I also sew on buttons and turn up a hem if need be.

Mom didn't make clothes, but she sure kept us in patched shirts, pants and overalls.

Jim said my patches were perfect. Didn't rub his foot or feel the least bit uncomfortable. I must have sewn something right.

— ob —

The new year has also brought on a renewed interest in "getting things in order." Let it be known I have started to work on the dreaded basement.

Over the years, it has become a "catch-all." I started sorting through boxes of stuff I have hauled around for 45 years. I know it's that old, because some of it is from my high school days. I'm a sentimental sucker, so I can't just pitch it, but, I have reduced it considerably.

It was fun, all over again, to read notes my best friend Galene passed to me in study hall. At the time, I'm sure I knew who "HE" was. "HE" would have been the object of one or the other of our affections. "HE" is just a memory now. But, I still couldn't throw those notes away.

I found an old diary, the cast from my broken arm in fourth grade, report cards, a stuffed baby alligator from my trip to Florida when I was 11, bushels of pictures and my oldest daughter's baby shoes.

Oh, fiddlesticks! I think I'll just keep it all and let the kids deal with it when I'm gone.

Sign says a bit too much

This and that.

Here's a test. Drive by The Gateway on U.S. 83 and try to get the time and the temperature.

It can be done, but not often.

The programable sign out in front of the civic center does give both time and temperature, along with a LOT of other messages. Total cycle was 36 seconds this week.

There's "Welcome to Oberlin," a safety message, "Happy New Year," and more, all introduced with fancy fades and flips that double the time each one takes. Some days there's a smiley face or a little car.

The end result is that drivers trying to see how cold it is wind up craning their necks as they go by — and still don't know.

When there's nothing to say, why say it? Just give us the time and temp.

It's cold outside, and most people are bundled up in front of the fire when they don't have to be out. The farthest thing from most people's minds is planting trees, I'm sure.

But Oberlin needs to be thinking about trees now to begin planting them again when spring thaws the ground. That's only a couple of months away.

The city's parks and the Gateway grounds are, for the most part, in



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
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pretty good shape as far as trees go. There are some holes to be filled in, though, and the city needs to look around and see where new trees could go. We should always be expanding our "urban forest."

Planting trees isn't just the city's job, either. Property owners need to get involved, especially if they have bare street-front spaces or when they take out old trees.

Nothing makes a town more beautiful than big, arching street trees. Our predecessors planted trees on the barren plain to give us shade and protection from the wind. We all have an obligation to perpetuate that gift and leave a beautiful place for those who follow.

The city used to have a tree expert. Maybe someone on the crew has taken that place. But the city should lead the way, along with its Tree Board, in encouraging and planting trees.

The city crew had the town cleared

within a day or so of the snow last month. Or so they thought.

Then over the Christmas weekend, the wind blew all the snow out of the yards and into drifts, mostly on the streets. So much for one-pass plowing; by Monday the streets were in even worse shape than they had been.

The crew responded by plowing them out again last week, some of them twice, despite drifts and packed snow everywhere.

The county crew was out, though they reported the roads mostly blown clear. Where they found drifts, though, they were doozies, however, five and six feet and more.

The state highway crew worked day and night through the storm and the wind that followed, quitting only when they could report the roads as open and passable. It was quite an effort in single-digit weather. All that while most of us were warm and toasty indoors.

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.

Mail letters to 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan., 67749, or by e-mail

to oberlinherald@nwkansas.com.

We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise.

We do not publish form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous from this area should be submitted

to the Want Ad desk.

Letters will not be censored, but will be read and edited for form and style, clarity, length and legality. We will not publish attacks on private individuals or businesses which do not pertain to a public issue.

THE OBERLIN HERALD

Serving Oberlin and Decatur County since 1879

USPS 401-600

Phone: (785) 475-2206 Fax (785) 475-2800

170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749-2243

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Published each Wednesday by Haynes Publishing Co., 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749. Periodicals postage paid at Oberlin, Kan. 67749.

Steve and Cynthia Haynes, publishers
Official newspaper of Oberlin, Jennings, Norcat, Dresden and Decatur County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, Colorado Press Association, Nebraska Press Association and Inland Press Association.

Subscriptions: One year, \$38 (tax included) in Decatur, Norton, Rawlins, Sheridan, Thomas and Red Willow counties; \$42 (tax included) elsewhere in Kansas; \$48 elsewhere in the U.S. Foreign subscriptions, \$50-\$250 (in U.S. dollars only) extra per year (except APO/FPO). POSTMASTER: Send change of address to 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749-2243.

Office hours: 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.

Nor'West Newspapers

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Photo Policy

The *Oberlin Herald* wants to emphasize photos of people doing things in the community. If you know of an event or news happening that we should attend, please call 475-2206.

Please be sure to allow a couple of days' notice so we can arrange to be there.

Space in the paper is limited and so is the time of our staff, so we may not be able to get to every event, but we will try.

Because space is so limited, we cannot run team or group photos, any pictures of people lined up or of people passing checks, certificates and the like. (We will always try to

make room for a story about any of these events, however.)

We do run wedding and engagement pictures and "mug" shots with stories and obituaries, when they are provided to us. Please remember that we need a clear, sharp picture. Dark or fuzzy prints will not work.

We cannot return photos unless you submit a self-addressed, stamped envelope with clear instructions for return. Other photos submitted may be picked up at our office within two weeks. After that, they will be disposed of.

Laser proofs of photos which have run in *The Herald* are available, first come, first served.

From the Bible

If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

For I have done for you, and ye should do as I have done for you.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

John 13:14-16

