

## Council needs to keep Sappa Park on its list

It's interesting to note that Sappa Park, the city's No. 1 priority just a year or two ago, has all but dropped off the council's radar screen.

Looking through the council-ranked list of 26 city priorities, nothing at the park appears before No. 20.

On the city's list of current projects, the lake is an also ran, despite the fact that a \$75,000 "wetlands" and pond is abuilding in the old lake bed. A volunteer group is supervising construction, not the city staff.

Perhaps council members think that, now that the wetlands project is under way, the park no longer needs as much of their attention. The current improvement is a major step, no doubt, something many have dreamed about for years.

Returning water to the lake bed will make the park immensely more appealing to many. Use already is up from 10 to 15 years ago. Interest in the park has been on the uptick since before the "Fest of All" of 2000, which got a lot of people interested in improving the facilities and usage.

This is a good thing. Dozens, sometimes hundreds of people use the park every week. It's becoming a valuable resource for recreation, socializing and events which draw people to town. And the best is yet to come.

That means the park no longer needs as much council attention as it once got, perhaps, but just a couple of years ago, in sessions designed to draw up a new strategic plan, it ranked No. 1 in citizens' minds.

It should remain a city priority.

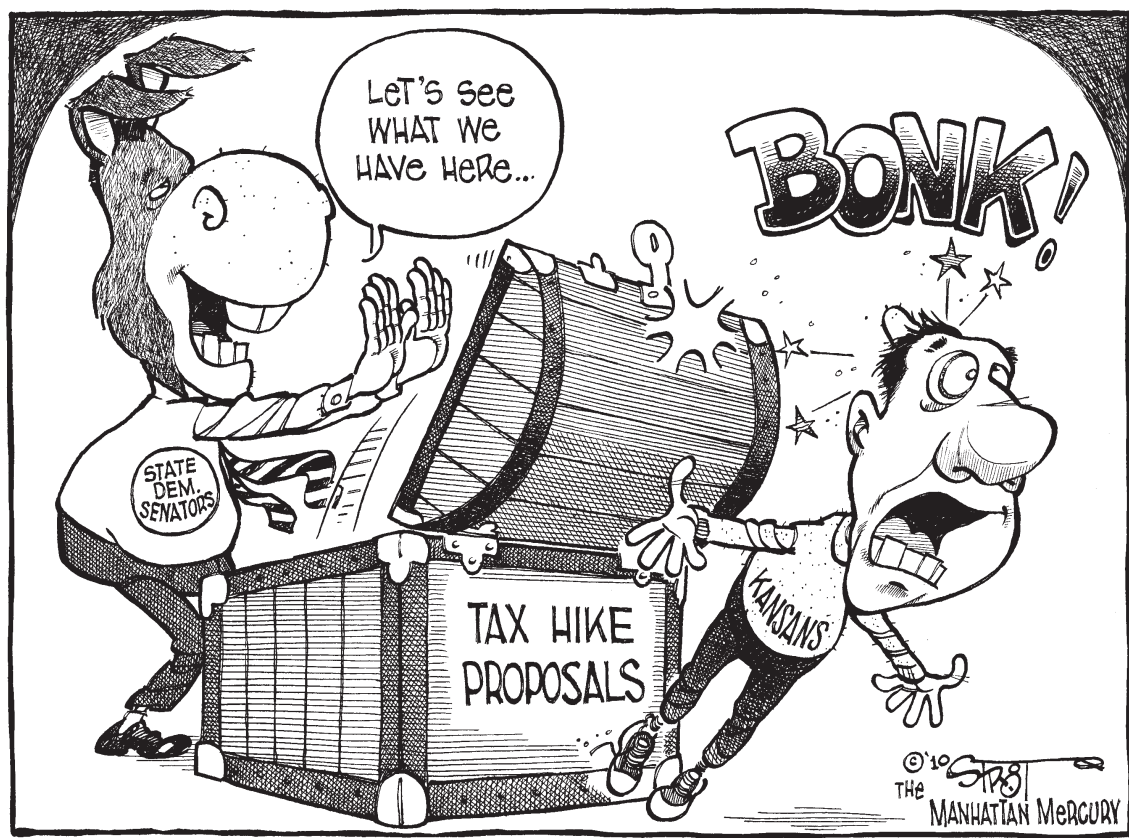
So, noting the progress made and the improvements the wetlands and pond offer, we'd ask the city to just keep the park in mind as an overall priority. The work it needs is far from done, and someone needs to be sure the progress continues.

Volunteers have worked wonders in creating and mowing a trail system, a disc golf course, wildlife improvements and a general cleanup. The group Pheasants Forever has been instrumental in leasing and improving the habit in the park, and in pushing for and supervising the wetlands.

The park still needs a lot of care, and we need to be sure that interest, maintenance and use continue at high levels, or the progress could be lost. The council and city staff need to take some responsibility here.

So, speaking for many friends of the park, we're asking the city to keep its needs in mind, even as bigger projects take center stage.

If quality of life is critical to a town's life, then Sappa Park is a big of part what we need here. — Steve Haynes



## We rushed the spring season

I'm so glad that spring is here. Actually, we sort of rushed the season. We took off March 19 and drove to Augusta, Ga., to see our new granddaughter and her assorted relatives — mother, father, aunt and uncle.

Georgia is in the south. It's a lot warmer there than here. The fruit trees were all in bloom. There were flowers — daffodils, tulips and even a few irises — along walkways. The grass was green and the trees were starting to leaf out.

A spring storm had chased us out of Kansas, first with flakes, then with rain. It was cloudy in Missouri and Illinois. Kentucky was overcast and it didn't start to clear up until we hit Tennessee.

Georgia was a miracle. The sun was shining. The air was warm. And everyone in Augusta was out working on their lawns and homes.

It turns out this is an annual ritual as the town readies itself for the Masters Tournament, a golf event so exclusive most of the inhabitants never get a glimpse of the course, which is protected by miles of fence and hedges.

We were a little early for the azaleas, the area's most famous and showy flower. The azaleas, like the Masters, show up the first



### Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes  
c.haynes@nwkansas.com

few weeks of April. I'm not sure if the golf tournament was scheduled to coincide with the flowers or the other way around.

But we couldn't stay for either the azaleas or the Masters. We had to get home, so we said goodbye to the world's most beautiful grandchild, her parents and our other daughter and son-in-law, and headed north as March neared its end.

It rained on us in Tennessee but the sun came out as we made a run for the Mississippi at Memphis and kept on smiling down on us as we got on U.S. 36 at Hannibal, Mo., and prepared to cross most of two states to get home.

Back in Oberlin, the sun was shining, the daffodils were blooming and the trees are thinking about leafing out.

We don't have fruit trees in bloom here yet, and the tulips haven't appeared. I don't expect to see any

irises until May. But spring snuck in while we were down South.

Easter Sunday afternoon we spent cleaning garden beds and sorting seeds. I've got plenty of lettuce, radishes, beans, peas, carrots and corn but I'm short of spinach, zucchini and yellow squash, as usual. The tomatoes, green peppers, cucumbers and broccoli will be purchased when the plants appear at the local emporium.

As I worked in the yard, I listened to the excited squeals of the neighbor's grandchildren hunting Easter eggs, watched the little girls down the block ride their scooters up and down the sidewalk and watched a couple of fat robins hopping around in my garden-to-be.

I love spring, and I've already had an extra two weeks of it.

Thank you, Mother Nature.

## Mechanic still on the payroll

It seems every time I get our mechanic paid off, something new goes wrong with my car. This time, it's electrical. The power sliding door has no power and won't slide; the electric window on the passenger side will go down, but not up; and the other sliding door won't even open. I'm almost afraid to get in for fear everything will "lock down" and I won't be able to get out.

Our mechanic has been on the family payroll for so long now, perhaps he won't mind a little longer.

— ob —

Everyone should celebrate Easter at a Sunrise Service. We try to go out to my old home church in the country every year. More than 30 others joined us for the beautiful service. As the sun came up, it peeked through the overcast sky as a meadowlark sang his little heart out.

After singing "The Old Rugged Cross" and "Up From the Grave He Arose," everyone went to the Community Building for breakfast. This is the second year we've served ham-and-egg casseroles, fresh fruit, juice and coffee. I added a cheese Danish for a little "sweet."

Anyway, I don't think a single person missed having pancakes, sausage and eggs. And, by having everything done ahead of time, no



### Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts  
quality-pro@webtv.net

one had to "stay back" to get breakfast ready.

— ob —

April 1 was the 16th anniversary of our first date. It also turned out to be the wedding anniversary of some new friends.

Last week, a couple in our little town called to see if Jim could and would perform a wedding ceremony for some friends of theirs. The bride and groom had the marriage license and were slightly beyond the "age of consent." They liked our little town and chose the shelter in the city park as the setting for the nuptials.

The bride-to-be wanted to be married at 4:10 p.m. That seemed a strange request. When I asked her about it, she said, "April is the fourth month of 2010. So I wanted to be married at 4:10 on 4-10." Makes sense to me.

After the "I dos," and the tears of happiness were wiped away, the

bride announced, "I want to sing a little song for my new husband." She broke out in a spirited rendition of "Oh, we ain't got a barrel of money; maybe we're ragged and funny; but, we'll travel along, singin' our song...side by side."

We think they are going to do just fine. Best wishes, Greg and Gina.

### From the Bible

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

Galatians 6:9-10 NIV

### 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.

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

E-mail: oberlin.herald@nwkansas.com

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## Take a stand against child abuse

To the Editor:

When peeling back the layers of our community, child abuse and neglect is an underlying presence that most wish wasn't there. Unfortunately, wishing away child abuse and neglect is not a realistic solution.

Instead, it will take community-wide efforts to reduce it. If each adult took the responsibility to report child abuse and neglect and get involved in a child's life, our children would live in much safer homes and communities.

This April, please take on the responsibility to make children safer in your neighborhood and community. Be a voice in your community. Advocate for healthy children and help reduce child abuse and neglect.

Take a stand for prevention of child abuse and neglect in your community. Practice Prevent Child Abuse America's five "R's." You

### Letter to the Editor

can be part of reducing child abuse and neglect in your community.

**Remember** that children are the future. Early years have an enormous impact on their future health and success.

**Recognize** prevention is a shared responsibility. We are responsible for ensuring parents and families have access to support, information and services.

**Raise** the issue of prevention. Call or write elected officials, talk with others, encourage schools and churches to support programs for parents.

**Reach Out** to kids and parents. Be a good neighbor, baby-sit, donate, be supportive and kind.

**Recommend** ideas that your community can use. Facilitate friendships and support, strengthen

parenting, respond to family crisis, link families to opportunities.

As an outward sign of your support, I urge you to wear a blue ribbon — the symbol of child abuse prevention efforts. If you do not have one, you can get one by contacting Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, 140 W. Fourth, Colby, Kan., 67701, (785) 460-8177.

Paige Campbell, Colby program director

