

## Community needs to get involved in the carnival

The Decatur County Amusement Authority needs some help. It's members are ready for their third year of running the home-owned carnival at the Decatur County fair, and their terms on the board will soon be up.

The volunteer board members are tired. They're not sure how to continue without some more help. And you can't blame them.

The present members took over nearly three years ago after nearly the entire board quit at once, leaving just two experienced members. Since then, under the leadership of Judy Scott, the board — with no help from the old group — found out what had to be done, learned how to do it and put on two great carnivals.

Now it's time for some new leadership. Several things will have to happen to bring that about.

First, we hope at least a few of the current board members will stay on, at least as advisors. It's not a good idea to have total change every few years. No group can sustain itself that way.

A vital, continuing board has to bring in new members and start training them every year. Otherwise, the core group of hard workers will get burned out. That's what happened to the previous board, which did not recruit or train new members.

Second, the board needs to develop a system of recruiting and training new members each and every year. Terms need to be staggered so not everyone goes off at once. New members should be selected every year.

Putting on the carnival is a big job. The board has to raise money, buy and maintain equipment and supplies, recruit volunteers and schedule the whole mess. It needs plenty

of help

But while it's a big job, the carnival is a gem, one of the best things ever to happen to life and community spirit in Decatur County. The carnival requires about 220 volunteers each and every night during the fair, however. That alone is a mammoth task.

One suggestion floated at a County Commission meeting last week was to merge the fair and amusement boards. That might work, and it would ensure cooperation between the two, but more likely it would put new demands on the combined board.

As it is, the commissioners have had trouble filling Fair Board seats. Finding volunteers to fill both boards is tough, but finding people willing to plan and run both a fair and a carnival might not be any easier.

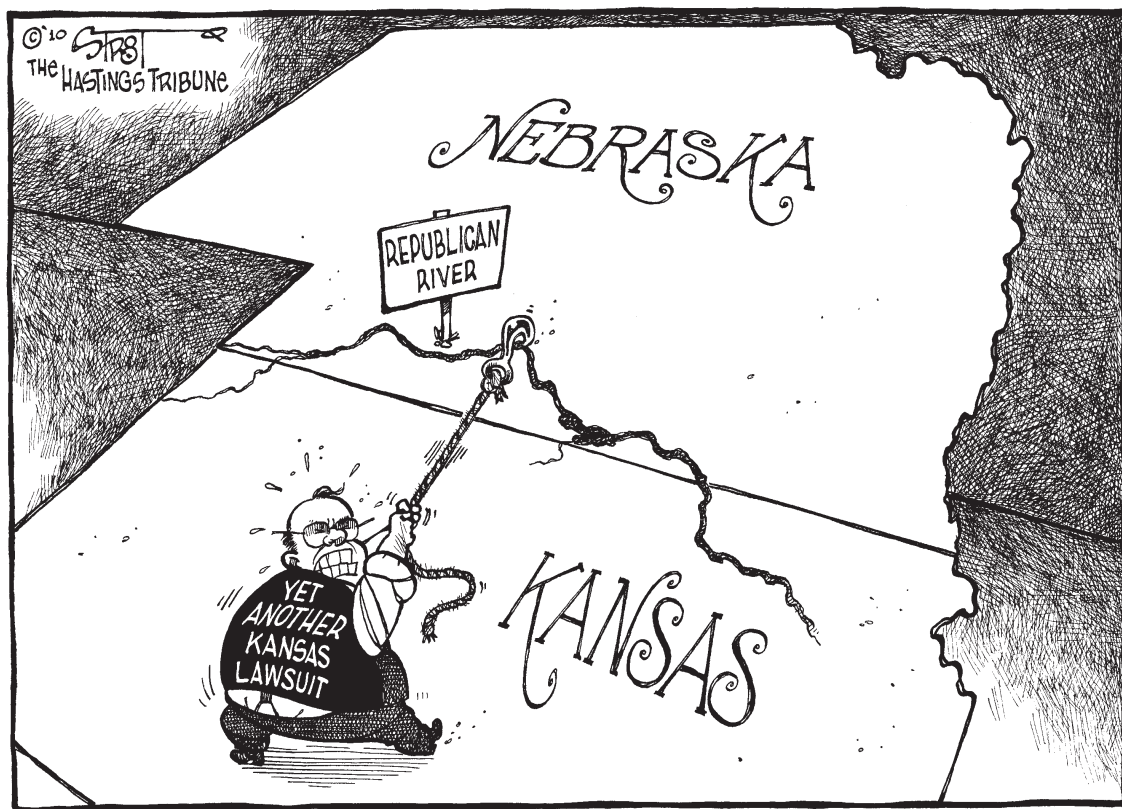
Carnival workers need to know that people do care about what they do. There surely are a few hardy souls out there who would like to join the amusement board and help make the carnival go.

If you're one of them, get ahold of a current board member and ask if you can help. It's not too late — and certainly not too soon — to get involved. The commissioners, the Fair Board, the newspaper, many civic groups all would be willing to help.

The home-owned carnival, the first in northwest Kansas, and still the best, got its start because of volunteer leadership and community spirit. We're confident that will continue for many years.

But it won't happen unless a bunch of people step up and get involved. What about you?

— Steve Haynes



## Kiss your curls good-bye

What's with this crazy weather? One minute you're pulling on a warm jacket and the next you're flipping on the air conditioner, and the air is so thick with humidity you can kiss your curls goodbye.

— ob —

With this weird weather came an infestation of a flying insect. I said they were flying ants, Jim was convinced they were termites. We both agreed something had to be done.

Sunday morning, we were running a little late leaving for church when Jim announced that as soon as we cleared the door he was setting off two "bug bombs." He said the cats were out of the house and all food had been put away.

We were safely in the car when I asked, "So how long before it's safe to go back in?"

"I don't know," said Jim. "The print on the box was too small, so I brought it along. James' eyes are good enough to read that small print."

"So, James. What does it say?" "Well," he began, and I already knew we were in trouble. "It says here we can go back in after only two hours. But, it also says all pilot lights should be shut off."

I knew a little heating stove and the hot water heater both had pilot lights.

"Jim, you've got to go back in and shut off the flames," I insisted.

"We're already late," he said, "and besides, I couldn't hold my breath long enough to get to the basement and shut everything down. Don't worry. It'll be fine."

Fine! I was beside myself. All



## Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts  
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I could envision was coming to a smoking pile of rubble. And, all our family pictures destroyed. I was extra prayerful during worship, but I admit as soon as I could, I called my friend and neighbor, Barbara, to look up the street and see if there were any flames coming from my house. She reported everything was fine, and I relaxed.

Jim doesn't see me upset too often. Let's just say he won't be dropping any more bombs without reading the directions first.

— ob —

Judging by the number of dead snakes I've seen on the roads, the weather has confused the wildlife, too. It's like the heat brought them out of hibernation, then, just as they reached the highways, a cold snap stopped them in mid-slither and the next semi "nailed" them.

Don't get me wrong: I have no sympathy for snakes. I think the only good snake is a dead snake, but it doesn't look like they even had a fighting chance.

— ob —

Because I had not heard from my friend Galene, I was afraid she was going to call to say she was not coming for the alumni banquet. I told someone I didn't want to find

out she wasn't coming until I could wrangle a few more remodel jobs out of Jim. Am I bad?

I am happy to report the tile job is D-O-N-E... done. And, I love it. It looks perfect. Not all appliances are moved back to their appointed spot, but that will come.

The other good news is that the spare bedroom is now, officially, open for business. The bad news is that my friend really isn't coming. But she's forgiven. I called and found out she had been in the hospital following a mild heart attack and complications from her diabetes. She's back in her home but too weak to travel.

We agreed 20 years is too long to have not seen each other and have vowed to somehow get together. Life is too short.

## From the Bible

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!  
Romans 11:33 NIV

## Kids choices aren't mom's

Whenever two mothers get together, they begin to talk about their children.

Well, complain, explain and commiserate is more like it.

At my age and that of most of my friends, we talk about our children's relationship and career choices.

The complaints go like this:

"Why couldn't he/she have gone to a nice, close junior college like their brother/sister. It would be so much cheaper and closer."

"You wouldn't believe the terrible manners of his/her girlfriend/boyfriend/group of friends. And they stay out to all hours. They're never home"

"Johnny/Mary is capable of getting a much better job. They're so smart. They could go back to school and be a lawyer/doctor/engineer."

The bottom line is the kids don't spend enough time at home and they didn't make the choices that Mom thought they should.

They never do. We all think our child should be the next president. We just don't want them to be a politician.

So it wasn't surprising that while the guys were out in the back yard with a beer, May and I were in the kitchen with our second glass of wine and deep into a psychological discussion of our children.

Hers are a little younger than mine. They are just testing their wings. Graduating and looking at



## Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes  
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careers. Mine are mostly settled with good jobs and happy marriages. They just live too far away.

So between sips, she gave me her take on success.

I liked it and the next day, I called and asked her to repeat it for this column and all mothers, who like me, are worried about their adult or almost-adult offspring.

She has three criteria to measure success, she said.

1. Are you happy with the choices you've made?

If you're a long-haul trucker, don't complain because you're never home. If you're a merchant, don't complain about the buying public. If you're in school, are you happy with your studies and your life and will you be able to finish and do what you want to do?

2. Can you fulfill the obligations you have undertaken?

If you are a parent, can you raise and educate your children? If you own a home, can you pay for its upkeep and taxes? If you join a club, can you donate some of your time

and energy to it goals?

3. You are not a burden on society or your parents.

Can you stand on your own two feet and support yourself and your dependents?

If you can answer yes to all three, she said, you're a success whether you are a dishwasher at the restaurant or a congressman.

There is one other thing, she said, which she hasn't quite figured out how to incorporate into her formula, but which is still important.

4. Do you give back to your community?

Do you offer your time and talents to others?

I looked over her list and decided that all three of my children are successes and they all give back.

But, darn it, they still live too far away.



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## Building could be refurbished

To the Editor:

I read in *The Oberlin Herald* about helping the new owners of the former Oberlin Inn. Has anyone seen Mr. Podoll's motels in Wheaton, Minn., or New Rockford, N.D.? What kind of modernization can be done by Memorial Day — new paint?

What concerns me most is tearing down the "old restaurant or old filling station." This building could

## Letters to the Editor

easily be refurbished and become a historical part of the city. The architecture is unique, one of a kind.

This building could be used as a tourist information center for "Oberlin Yesterdays." Old photos, such as the Chief Theater, could be digitized, enlarged and displayed in

a lobby. Besides the lobby, a men's and women's restroom would have to be constructed. I know I personally would be interested in investing in the project.

Lyle E. Black  
Beverly Hills, Calif.

## Amusement Authority needs help

To the Editor:

To fair... or not to fair... that is the question. The current members of the Decatur County Amusement Authority board are concerned about the future of the Home-owned Carnival at the county fair. This is the third, and last, year of our terms.

When we accepted this responsibility, we did so with little or no knowledge of what was expected. To say we were overwhelmed would be more than an understatement!

Twelve members were appointed by the Chamber of Commerce at that time. The Chamber, the next year, severed its ties with the authority, so now we stand alone. We have been working with about six members since we were appointed. We were blessed to have Dana Marintzer and Vicky Ray stay on to take care of the toys, and the John Sauvage family has continued to run the cotton candy and sno cone stand.

We gradually learned the ropes. Thank God for Lonnie McEvoy. Without his guidance, we would never have learned how to set up and take down the rides. The spouses of some of our members have gone

over and above to help out, so thank you to Chris Koerperich, Dan Grafel and your crew.

We've had help from fair board members, and we have supported their endeavors as well. Thanks to all the people who have helped us on our work nights, even donating equipment for our use. (And thank you Eldon and Charissa Huff for the tractor, trailer and all your contributions.)

We made some improvements, adding the slide, having the carnival rewired, started a wristband night, went exclusively to tickets for rides and games, updated equipment in the concession stand, painted (thank you Dave Olson), erected a second ticket stand, and too many other items to mention.

It has been the volunteers, though, that helped us be successful. Volunteers from every community, including Oberlin, Norcat, Herndon and Selden, have stepped up to help out, and without all of you, there would be no carnival. I did the numbers the first year, and it takes between 200 to 220 people every night of the fair to operate everything.

Which brings me back to my

question: Is the carnival going to continue?

We certainly hope so. There were times we didn't think we could do it all. More often than not, we were unable to enjoy the fair with our families because we took our job seriously and were determined not to let the community down. I, personally, want to thank my fellow board members, Dana Koerperich, Jim Wesch, Candi Ketterl, Melinda Grafel, Jennifer Schissler, Robert Rouse, and the county commissioner representatives, Stan McEvoy and Ralph Unger. The community owes you all a big hand!

For the carnival at the Decatur County Fair to continue, it needs people who will step up, become members of this board, learn the ropes and be responsible for continuing the best tradition this community ever started!

Please don't hesitate to contact any one of us. We'd be honored to have you on board, but I may have mentioned before... this is our last year!

Judy G. Scott, President  
Decatur County  
Amusement Authority

## Honor Roll

Welcome and thanks to these recent subscribers of *The Oberlin Herald*:

Marjorie Tacha, Huron, S.D.; Ralph Vernon, Corpus Christi, Texas; Nola Thompson, Fredricksburg, Texas; Donald Wolf, Saint

Charles, Mo.; Mark New, Leesburg, Va.; Francis Kathka, Humansville, Mo.; Calvin Anderson, Nienoken, N.D.

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