

Use some sense in clean up

The issue of blighted properties has been hot news here the last several months.

Everywhere I go someone has an opinion on what people should or shouldn't be able to keep in their yard. Others have opinions on what their neighbors or the city's code enforcement officer should or shouldn't be able to say about what you can keep outside.

Last week, a friend of mine received a letter from the city's code enforcement officer. In the letter is a list of stuff the young couple needs to remove or clean up from their yard, although it gives no date as to when that needs to be done.

The most surprising and appalling part of the letter for me was one of the items listed that needs to be cleaned up or removed. Sure, the list included items that people might think are offensive, including weeds in the fence and a pile of lumber. Other items were copper wire, an air compressor, tools, guttering from the house and even a cooler that was sitting next to the garage.

But there in the long list tucked between the metal and tools to be removed is a baby stroller. I could hardly believe it when she told me that they have to remove their baby stroller from the yard. My friend said the stroller was in their driveway. I have been by their house many times and often the stroller is in their fenced in yard.

Never once did I think, "Wow they need to clean up that stroller." I figure she'd had a long day, and after



As I See It

By Kimberly Davis
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taking the kids on a walk, didn't have the energy to get the stroller up the stairs and into the house.

I can relate; I've been there. My stroller has stayed in the yard overnight many times.

I don't understand why it's not OK to keep your stroller in your yard or your driveway. If my kids leave their bikes, basketballs, soccer balls or other toys in the yard, am I going to receive a letter?

If my stroller sits in my yard or drive, do I have to remove it?

Later in the day, I drove around the city and can list 10 addresses where there is a stroller, a bike or two and other kinds of kids' riding toys in the front yard or near the garage. Do they all have to be removed?

I understand that people want the town to be picked up. They want the trash and debris removed, but where do we draw the line?

It seems to me that we should be encouraging parents to spend time with their kids, take them on walks, or to the park, and if the stroller gets left outside on their property, who cares?

It seems there has to be some

common sense in all of this, and listing a baby stroller as something that has to be cleaned up, something that is offensive, something that is junk, something that fits into this ordinance, is ridiculous.

There's been lots of talk about cleaning up the town to help recruit a doctor or get people to move here. I guess I would be a little more worried about keeping some of these young people with kids here so that we have a town in the future.

From the Bible

What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.
— James 2: 14, 17, 18

Cancer center head says thank you

To the Editor:

I am delighted to share with you good news: The University of Kansas Cancer Center is the country's newest National Cancer Institute-designated center. This is a great honor for cancer researchers and clinicians, patients, caregivers and Kansas. We are now one of just 67 designated centers across the country.

I want to express my gratitude to the thousands of Kansans who helped us achieve this great feat, including the 18 member clinics in the Midwest Cancer Alliance, the Kansas Masonic Foundation and Masons from every corner of our state, and dozens of corporate and private donors. Without your support, this would not have been possible.

Letter to the Editor

We are proud of what this accomplishment means in the fight against cancer in the Heartland. As a nationally designated center, we will continue to recruit top researchers, apply for federal grants and open more clinical trials available only at designated centers. We will continue to extend the science developed at the Cancer Center to communities across the state through the alliance. We will continue to fight until we have won, and cancer is no more.

This designation is a huge leap in our battle against cancer, but it is not a destination. We have actively begun pursuing our next goal — the

most elite designation a cancer center can have: comprehensive cancer center status. While this new quest will take all of us working together, it will also benefit many as we expand our research in cancer prevention and control, as well as cancer screening and education efforts, in towns across Kansas.

Thank you for the important part you have played — and will continue to play — as we reach new heights in our efforts to eliminate the burden of cancer.

Dr. Roy A. Jensen, director
University of Kansas
Cancer Center

Many kids not getting vaccinated

Smallpox — polio — whooping cough — measles — tetanus — contaminated water — dental caries — the list goes on.

The accomplishments of vaccination in this last scientific century are so profound. Yet, many in this next generation are ready to return to the Dark Ages. Why?

Ironically, the success of science eliminates the very experience base that led to the medical breakthroughs.

My earliest memories are of the fear in my parents' voices following the radio announcement that polio cases had again shown up in our community. It was 1951, and they closed the public pools. Preschoolers like me stayed at home. The tragedy of polio, often crippling the very young and leaving many Americans in iron lungs, threw a shadow over that summer.

When the Jonas Salk polio vaccine was finally released, everyone was relieved. I gladly took my shot and my parents fears subsided.

Polio has been eradicated from this continent and heroic efforts are being made to wipe it out.

That indeed happened with smallpox. The last case in the U.S. was 1949. Worldwide vaccination and quarantine ended smallpox in the wild in the 1970s in Somalia. I witnessed the deeply pock-marked face of a smallpox survivor in the streets of Macao in 1976 and understand the tremendous motivation that a population that witnessed this plague would have to end such a disease — so disfiguring and often fatal.

Early American history is laden with the statistics of children who died or were stunted from the damage of contaminated water. Today's water treatment plants dramatically drop the counts of harmful waterborne bacteria.

And as I travel in Asia or meet with international colleagues from Russia who nearly universally have lost permanent teeth at an early age from lack of fluoridation, I am saddened by their needless pain, suffering and continual discomfort that they will have all of their life.

But we now see concerted efforts to end chlorination, fluoridation, and vaccination in the U.S. There are several causes. But the main one is the very success of science itself. When a new generation grows up



Education Frontlines

By John Richard Schrock

without any direct knowledge of infectious diseases, they no longer have the awareness or memories to make the vaccines seem needed.

The United States provides its children with one-third the science education of other developed countries. Most never receive any knowledgeable instruction in how our bodies work and therefore lack the "owner's manual" knowledge that is common in other developed countries.

Our new generation is jaded by media. Historical footage of cases of smallpox or tetanus or polio are little match for zombie movies and anti-vaccination propaganda.

And the Internet makes it far easier to spread conspiracy theo-

ries about "big pharma" and the medical-industrial complex.

Pioneer families who settled the Great Plains often had 10 or more children because so many died in their first few years. Today, with modern medicine we can have two children with a reasonable expectation that both will survive.

But with these diseases gone from their experiences, a new generation is susceptible to claims that vaccines are harmful.

We live in an age when the press often gives equal time to unequal ideas.

I can only ask: If today's Internet existed back in the 1940s to 1970s, could we have eradicated smallpox and polio from America?

Just hangin' around



CLUTCHING HIS FOOTBALL and wearing red, 7-year-old Grady Lohofener rested against the railing of the stadium seats at Friday's football game against Phillipsburg. — Herald staff photo by Stephanie DeCamp

Upsets mess up guessing

Only one person picked UCLA to beat Nebraska and only one person picked Rice to down KU this week in the second round of the Pigskin Pick'em contest. Everyone else got those games wrong.

About half the contestants thought that Oberlin could beat Phillipsburg but the Panthers were too big and tough for the scrappy Red Devils.

The tie breaker had to be used to determine the winners this week, as five people got six out of eight games right.

Clayton Carter of Jennings came in with the closest guess on the tie breaker, so she is our first-place winner, receiving \$15 in scrip. Tom Martin of Oberlin was right behind her and he takes the second prize of \$10. Wilbur Reichert of Dresden came in next and he wins the \$5 third prize.

Others coming in with six right were Gary Anderson and Tim Hrnchir of Oberlin.

Coming up with five out of eight were Ryan Leitner, Rusty Addleman, Tyler Bruggeman, Ivis Hanson, Kel Grafel and Jordan Davenport, all of Oberlin.

Winnings can be spent only with the sponsors: Ward Drug Store, the LandMark Inn, Fredrickson Insurance Agency, Decatur Co-op, Hanson Mueller, Creative Collision and *The Oberlin Herald*.

- Scores of this week's games:
- Rice over KU, 25-24.
 - Phillipsburg over Oberlin, 24-0.
 - Kansas State over Miami, 52-13.
 - UCLA over Nebraska, 36-30.
 - St. Francis over Benkelman, Neb., 48-6.
 - Scott City over Colby 47-7.
 - Rawlins County over Cheylin, 24-14.
 - Norton over Goodland, 45-20.
 - Washburn over Fort Hays State, 45-20.

* Rates will increase

(Continued from Page 1A) electricity. The 4.7 percent bump in these rates will result in a service charge of \$7 and an average monthly charge of \$85.42.

This will bring in \$44,078 more from residential electricity, she said. The city will be raising the rates for commercial use by even more — a 5.2 percent increase, which will bring in another \$32,693 a year.

The remaining \$13,229 that the city will need to fill that \$90,000 hike from Prairie Land will be made from slightly smaller increases to agriculture, church, government, hospital and school usage. Agricultural use will see a 4.4 percent increase, churches will have a 4.6 percent increase, government will have a 4.7 percent increase, hospitals will have a 3 percent increase, and schools will have a 3.6 percent increase.

* Veteran could get national Legion post

(Continued from Page 1A) He was department commander for Nebraska in 1987-88 and national vice commander in 2003-04. Mr. Helm is in his third year as chairman of the National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission. He served as chairman of the Legion Foreign Relations Commission from 2004 to 2009.

He chairs the "System Worth Saving Task Force," a team that provides analysis to the status of Department of Veterans Affairs health care to Congress and to veteran's advocates nationwide.

He also is a member of the Veterans Planning and Coordination Committee and American Legion ad hoc committee studying the military and veterans affairs response to traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress.

The son of Helen Helm of Oberlin and the late John Helm, he was born in McCook and reared in the Norcatour area. He is a rural mail carrier in Oberlin for the U.S. Postal Service.

In the Legion, he has served as post adjutant and commander, county commander, district commander, department area and senior vice commander.

He was Nebraska's first Vietnam-era veteran elected as department, or state, commander. He said he takes great pride in having been selected to serve as Nebraska's official American Legion representative at the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in 1982.

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