

Opinion

Family and followers foment hatred among us

It's hard to love the Rev. Fred Phelps and his offspring.

They're all nuts, and not in an amusing or entertaining kind of way.

The Phelps family and a few followers hang out at the Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, where they foment hatred, especially hatred of homosexuals.

God hates homosexuals, the Phelps say. They claim he's punishing America for harboring them by killing our soldiers in Iraq.

The family and the church have a long history of spreading this venom. They've staged rallies, marches, parades and demonstrations. They used to show up every day outside the home of the publisher of the *Topeka Capital-Journal* and once picketed a Kansas Press Association convention.

The press, they claim, pushes the homosexual agenda. And since God hates "fags," He must hate the press, too.

The attacks get personal. It's hard to take. No one likes dealing with Fred Phelps, but half his family seems to be lawyers (Fred himself is a disbarred lawyer, and at least two of his daughters have law licenses) and they sue over any attempt to block them.

Then a couple of years ago, this kooky clan got the idea that God was punishing the U.S. by killing our soldiers. They began picketing at the funerals of men and women killed in combat.

That's nice, isn't it?

Your son or daughter is killed in action in some God-forsaken foreign land, and a bunch of nutty demonstrators show up outside the funeral. It's hard to take. Disgusting.

And despite some attempts to curb the practice, it's perfectly legal. The church has a religious and political voice, both protected by the First Amendment to our Constitution.

Many would gladly take the Phelps' rights away, especially since they have been attacking war-battered families in their time of grief.

Maybe the most effective response, though, has come from an American Legion offshoot, the Patriot Guards, a group of motorcycle riders who station themselves between Phelps' rabble and the mourners at a funeral. The wackos get their say but the family is spared most of the indignity.

Is there something wrong with Americans that we allow this kind of behavior? Or something right? How can we let a small group of hatemongers spread venom at the funeral of a fallen soldier?

But if our troops fight to defend our freedoms, as we often say, doesn't that include the freedom of people like Fred Phelps to be nuts?

Even the American Civil Liberties Union, often criticized for backing whatever liberal cause comes down the pike, has defended Mr. Phelps and his decidedly unliberal behavior in the name of free speech.

That's the danger — and the genius — of our strong system of human rights. It includes the freedom to be obnoxious, the freedom to be wrong. But without the First Amendment guarantees of free speech and religion, our country would be far less than it is.

It's because our founding fathers had the foresight to protect our rights that we have the liberty we so cherish — that our troops defend — today.

The freedom to say unpopular things is part of that.

If liberty means putting up with Fred Phelps and his tribe, so be it. The Republic will survive, as it always has, and we're a better country because we allow everyone — even the nuts — to speak their piece.

— Steve Haynes

Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick



On Nov. 17, 1968, the "Heidi Bowl" was played. If you're not familiar with it, here's what happened.

An American Football League game was being played between the New York Jets and the Oakland Raiders. They were two of the marquee teams of the era and the game featured 10 future Hall of Fame inductees.

Behind quarterback Joe Namath, the Jets were leading in the fourth period 32-29. After a Jim Turner field goal, the Raiders got the ball with 65 seconds to go.

Suddenly, millions of television

sets changed from the football game to a made-for-TV version of "Heidi."

Now the story of Heidi is a good one. It is a fictional tale about an orphan girl in the Alps. Written in 1880 by Johanna Spyri, it is not only a great example of children's writing, but it is a well known piece of Swiss literature.

NBC, the station that was airing the game, and then Heidi, simply followed its programming schedule and at 7 p.m., eastern standard time, the children's show began.

The switchboard at the network's headquarters' literally blew out.

Back to the game, the Raider's quarterback, Daryle Lamonica, threw a 46-yard touchdown pass to halfback Charlie Smith. Oakland was up 36-32 with 42 seconds left.

Jet fans, at least those at the game, still had hope as Namath and his offense would get the ball again. However, the New York kick returner, Earl Christy,

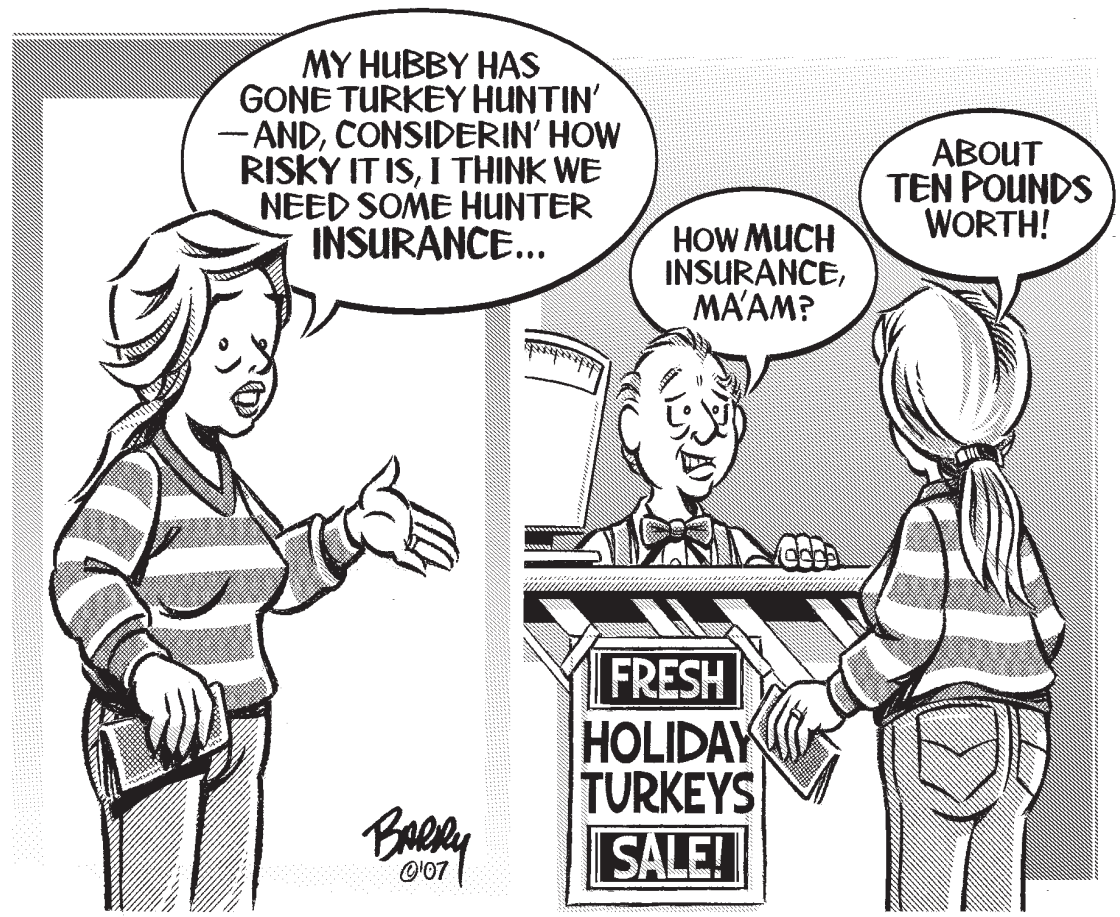
fumbled the ball on the kickoff. Raider Preston Ridlehuber picked up the loose ball and ran it in. The Heidi Bowl ended in a 43-32 Oakland win.

Of the future Hall of Famers that day were, from the Jets, head coach Weeb Ewbank, wide receiver Don Maynard and Namath.

The Raiders had wide receiver Fred Biletnikoff, quarterback-kicker George Blanda, cornerback Willie Brown, center Jim Otto, tackle Art Shell, guard Gene Upshaw and owner Al Davis.

So the Heidi Bowl was only played once. It was a moment when the monstrous, toothless and bloody old school members of the AFL came together with the gentle, pastoral meanderings of the tiny Swiss orphan named Heidi. So now you know.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours!



News From the Past

20 years ago - 1987

Kari Milliken won the Reserve Grand Championship at the Kansas State Fair. She competed in the Fashion Revue Clothing Carousel division.

The St. Francis Equity finalized the agreement for the sale of the Idalia facilities on Oct. 1.

Tammy Cress, Matt Bandel, Chris Leibbrandt and Kelley Milliken were all winners of the 4-H Key Award. The awards were presented at the annual Achievement dinner.

Sarah Ochsner will represent Cheyenne County at the Kansas Junior Miss State Finals in Belleville.

Debbie Gauert assumed the position of administrator of the Cheyenne County Hospital.

Frederick's Jewelry is celebrating its 40th anniversary. They opened the business on Nov. 15, 1947. The Crums purchased the old Dunn Bakery Building and their new store in 1962.

Pastor David C. Rossbach and his wife Lucille moved to St. Francis on Oct. 30. He has assumed the duties of pastor of Peace Lutheran Church.

50 years ago - 1957

Pvt. Carl J. Williams, Pvt. Kenneth Willt and Pvt. Marvin D. Confer recently began 6 months of active military training under the Reverse Forces Act at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

Nearly 200 people attended the annual Cheyenne County Farm Bureau meeting. Emmor Graves was re-elected to serve as president for another term. Paul Walter was elected vice president.

Ruth Zweygardt, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gus Zweygardt, was recently selected as one of the four state winners in the 4-H Promotional Activity.

Fred Flowerdew began his duties as St. Francis Police Chief. He replaced L.C. Baxter, who was chief the past three years.

Miss Sherry Childers, a senior

at Bird City High School, was named Homecoming Queen at the football game on Saturday.

Richard L. Kail and William R. Walker, Kansas State University students from St. Francis, are members of the new K-State Glee Club.

Work has been resumed on the new Masonic building in St. Francis. The work stopped early in the summer when most of the working members were forced to return to their farm work.

The 4-H Achievement Awards were given out at the banquet on Saturday night. Ruth Zweygardt, Ben Leibbrandt and Roger Douthit, members of the Plum Creek 4-H Club were given special recognition for outstanding leadership. Community leaders awards were presented to Mr. and Mrs. Joe Neilan, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Hendricks, Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Wright, Mr. and Mrs. Thad Douthit, Mr. and Mrs. Rodney Partch, Mrs. Sam Brunswig and Mr. Francis Harrison.

Behind the Scenes

By Janet Carman



Forty-three members attended the Nov. 13 Cheyenne County Historical Society meeting.

Elections were held for 2008 officers. Lea Keller was elected to serve as organization president. Other officers chosen were: vice President, Janet Carman; secretary, Dee Dorsch; treasurer, David Rossbach; trustees: Marcia Hickert, Helene Landenberger and Lucille Rossbach.

Volunteers are still needed to fill standing committee positions. Those interested in serving may call one of the board members.

Other business items included approval to purchase a computer and printer-scanner for the museum office. Ten more "Arikaree Breaks" videos were purchased and are available at the museum.

Grant received

Good news for Ye Olde Country Church! WalMart Foundation, through the Goodland store, awarded the Historical Society a \$1,000 grant for use on Ye Olde Country Church.

In addition, the staff at the Kansas State Historical Society has reviewed the Preliminary Site

Information Questionnaire submitted for Ye Olde Country Church and has determined that it is potentially eligible for inclusion in the Register of Historic Kansas Places. The staff was particularly intrigued with the church's architecture and how intact the building remains. The next step is to prepare the nomination.

Other grant ideas for the church are under consideration. These include the Gerber Grant and grants from the Department of Transportation.

Honor Roll

New and renewed Herald subscriptions: Troy Gardner, California, Mo.; La Vaugh Cemensky, St. Francis; Shannon Grover, St. Francis; Rex Murray, St. Francis; A.E. Zimbelman, Battle Creek, Mich.; Dorothy Rummel, Littleton, Colo.; Chris Farmer, St. Francis; Libby Curry, Colby; Gordon Smith, Greeley, Colo.; Jody Gienger, Lawrence; Donald Reichert, Boulder, Colo.; Bob Elliott, St. Francis;

Rick Lucas, St. Francis; Al and Pat Mailloux, Orange, Mass.; Leon Merklin, St. Francis; Alice Walz, Parker, Colo.; Chris Loyd, Spring, Texas; Jon Zweygardt, Windsor, Colo.; Billy Slyoff, Montrose, Colo.; Stan Gienger, El Centro, Calif.; Pastor Ken and Karen Hart, St. Francis; Laverne Boll, St. Francis;

GOD SAYS
I love them that love me;
and those that seek me
early shall find me.
Proverbs 8:17

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Praise the Lord

<p>Church of Christ 332-2380, Pars. 332-3424 502 W. Spencer Norman Morrow - Minister Bible Class 11 a.m. Morning Worship 10 a.m. Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m.</p>	<p>St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church 625 S. River • 332-2680 Fr. Roger Meitl Sunday Mass 10:30 a.m. Weekday Mass 8 a.m. Confessions Sat. 4-4:30</p>	<p>First Baptist Church 2nd & Scott • 332-3921 J.W. Glidewell, Pastor Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. Sunday Evening Service 6:30 p.m., Wed. AWANA Club 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. St. Francis Community Church 332-3150 204 N. Quincy Street www.sfccfamily.com Pastor: David Butler Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Potluck & Communion - Every 2nd Sunday Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.</p>
<p>United Methodist Church Church Office 332-2292, Church 332-2254, 512 S. Scott Pastor Morita Truman Early Bird Service 8:30 a.m. Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m.</p>	<p>Salem Lutheran Church 332-3002 Pastor Chris Farmer Sunday School: 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.</p>	<p>Peace Lutheran Church, AFLC 202 N. College Pastor Ken Hart 332-2928 Pars. 332-2312 Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. Sunday eve Bible Study 7 p.m.</p>
<p>Seventh-Day Adventist Church 332-2888 • 3rd & Adams Pastor Mike Larson Sabbath School 9:30 Morning Worship 10:45</p>	<p>Solid Rock Baptist Church 412 S. Denison Welcomes You! Pastor Allen Coon Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 Prayer Meeting, Wed 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>First Christian Church Pastor Jeff Landers 332-2956 • 118 E. Webster Bible Fellowship 9:20 a.m. Church Service 10:30 a.m.</p>

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