

commentary

from other pens...

The shores of Tripoli, first fight with 'evil ones'

Captured on the Barbary Coast nearly two centuries ago, the weathered cannon lining the parade ground at the Washington Navy Yard are silent trophies of America's first war against terrorism.

The bronze guns, each long barrel a faded green, also represent the opening chapter in the story of U.S. relations with the world of Islam, a story that grew longer this year with the war in Afghanistan.

The wars against the Barbary pirates, who seized ships, held sailors for ransom and sold some into slavery, were accompanied by as much bravado and adventure as the age of fighting ships could offer.

The conflict offers a few striking parallels with the struggle today: a campaign far from U.S. shores enlisting foreign troops alongside American fighters; an enemy cast then as a "treacherous set of villains," now as the "evil ones."

A blockade of the Mediterranean coast ordered by President Jefferson in 1801 led to the bombardment of coastal forts, naval combat, disaster at sea, more American hostages, harbor raids, covert action and a desert march by a force of mercenaries held together by a squad of U.S. Marines.

The Marine Corps never forgot that march, writing the line, "to the shores of Tripoli," into its anthem.

It all began with the unanticipated consequences of U.S. victory over Britain in the Revolutionary War.

Before the war, the powerful British fleet protected colonial America's merchant ships from Mediterranean pirates operating out of the four Barbary states in North Africa: Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco.

Absorbed with nation-building at home, Congress authorized annual payments to assure safe passage. By one estimate Americans had paid out as much as \$2 million in tributes and ransom before hostilities began.

By the time Jefferson became president in 1801 the demands were increasing. American patience was wearing thin. And six newly built frigates were ready for action.

Jefferson dispatched a squadron that targeted pirates in Tripoli ruled by Yusuf Karamanli, the local potentate.

The American motto: "Millions for defense; not one cent for tribute." But fortune did not initially favor the Stars and Stripes.

The frigate Philadelphia, pursuing a blockade runner, struck a reef off Tripoli harbor and was captured; its crew of 307 were taken hostage.

The humiliation was partially answered on Feb. 16, 1804, when Stephen Decatur, then a 25-year-old lieutenant, led raiders who burned the Philadelphia to the waterline, depriving the pirates of their prize.

At this point, with Tripoli still holding hundreds of Americans, U.S. agents turned to covert action. William Eaton, a former U.S. counsel to Tunis, hatched a plan to replace Karamanli with his older brother.

Eaton marched across the desert from Egypt with several hundred Greek and Arab mercenaries and eight U.S. Marines under the command of Lt. Neville O'Bannon. They covered 500 miles in 50 days.

Reaching the pirate coast, O'Bannon's Marines captured a key town. But the situation had changed.

The U.S. government had cut a deal: The crew of the Philadelphia would go free. The Navy would liberate prisoners it had captured and make a one-time \$60,000 payment.

The drama had a second act.

By 1815, with Americans again at war with Britain, the pirates resumed their attacks.

Decatur, by now a commodore, was sent to Algeria. The presence of his powerful squadron prompted the local ruler to sign a treaty freeing U.S. shipping from the threat of piracy. The other pirate states fell into line and the Barbary Wars were over.

The captured cannon serve as reminders of it all.

But for the moment, the tightened security at the Navy Yard that is the legacy of today's terrorism has placed the artifacts of yesterday's piracy off-limits to the public.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Lawrence L. Knutson has reported on Congress, the White House and Washington's history for 34 years.



Think twice about long-term memberships

Dear Attorney General Stovall:

My family enjoys traveling in our recreational vehicle. One of the campgrounds we visited offered us a lifetime membership which includes the option of using other campgrounds which are affiliated with the same group. With this membership, the yearly rates would be extremely inexpensive; the problem is, we would be paying them for the rest of our lives. We can't decide what to do! Attorney General Stovall, what advice can you give?

Dear Kansas Consumer:

The best guidance my office can give is, absent very unique circumstances, you should never sign long-term or lifetime memberships. Many things can change in a lifetime, both for the consumer and for the company. Changes in income, personal health, job requirements, and a host of other factors can affect your desire (or ability) to continue the contractual relationship. Likewise, some "lifetime" contracts require up front payment that, while it may be substantial, appears attractive if it



carla j. stovall

• consumer corner

lasts "forever." But remember that lifetime may wind up referring to the lifetime of the business if the company goes out of business six months after you pay your fee.

Also, do not forget to calculate the up front fees and membership dues that are often not discussed until you sign the contract, if they are discussed at all. Read the contract very carefully to check for any hidden fees, sign up charges, or any clauses that would allow recurring fees to be charged or increased. Never sign a contract with blank spaces "to be filled in later." Contracts generally are enforced according to their terms and hardship is rarely a reason to avoid compliance.

In your case you need to ask several questions. Are there campgrounds in places where you are interested in traveling? What if you become seriously injured or ill and can no longer travel? Will the club allow your membership to be cancelled? Unless the contract terms provide for termination on these grounds there is a good chance you will be making payments for a membership you are unable to use.

Attorney General Carla J. Stovall offers this public service to help you avoid becoming a victim of consumer fraud. Although some of the details have been changed, the cases appearing in this column are based on actual complaints.

For further information or to file a complaint, please write Attorney General Carla J. Stovall, Consumer Protection Division, 120 SW 10th, 2nd Floor, Topeka, Kansas 66612, or call the toll-free Consumer Hotline, 1-800-432-2310. Leave your name, number and subject of your inquiry with the receptionist and an agent will return your call promptly.

Sexual promiscuity not romantic

In reading Cris Lovington's column about the horrific effects of sexually transmitted diseases, I thought of how many people hold the attitude that everyone is allowed to have sex with whomever they want whenever they want so long as both parties are consenting adults.

The advice most people would give to avoid sexually transmitted diseases is to use a condom. That is usually safer than just throwing caution to the wind, but it is no guarantee.

As with unwanted pregnancy, the only 100 percent guarantee of avoiding sexually transmitted diseases is to abstain from sex. As Lovington pointed out, there are often no visible signs of the disease, therefore no way to be sure your partner is disease-free, especially if you don't know your partner well.

And many sexually active people today do not know their partners well. It is thought romantic to be swept away by the moment, just like in the movies.

But there is nothing romantic about AIDS, gonorrhea, herpes, genital warts and other diseases. Nor is there anything romantic about having a relationship only because the sex is good. That view of romance is promoted by the entertainment industry to make money but is not a reasonable view of real life.

I am reminded of a story I was told of a woman who met a man while vacationing on a tropical island. The couple had an affair the entire two weeks she was on the island. She felt swept away and was having the time of her life.

Then the man gave her a black, velvet box when he said good-bye to her at the airport and told her not to open the box until after her plane took off. Giddy with anticipation, the woman opened the box as soon as the plane left the ground, expecting to find a diamond ring and a declaration of love.

Instead, she found a note that said, "Welcome to the wonderful world of AIDS."



sharon corcoran

• use it or lose it

This is easily the least romantic story I have ever heard. The woman was obviously disturbed by this message and wondered what kind of a monster could do such a thing. As soon as she got home, she made an appointment with her doctor and was tested for AIDS. She tested positive, and knew immediately that the days of her life were numbered because of that one "romantic" experience.

The only way to avoid sexually transmitted diseases is to follow the Bible's commands to stay away from sexual encounters before marriage and to remain monogamous after.

But this way of life is nearly obsolete in the modern world. Some people even hold the view that every person needs sex and could never do without it for an extended period of time.

If that were true, it would be unreasonable for God to require us to live morally upstanding lives. But he tells us at Col. 3:5 to "dead, therefore, your body members that are upon the earth as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

This is clearly a command to fight improper sexual urges. But the entertainment industry sends us the message these urges are to be nourished. We would miss out on all the romance in our lives if we didn't.

But is that really true? Is it not more romantic to find one person to spend the rest of your life with? To love and honor that person and be treated the same?

Does marriage suck all the romance out of the relationship just because there are responsibilities?

Hardly. The happiest people I have ever known have been the ones who married once and stayed together because they wanted to, even when there were problems.

Have you ever heard of someone married for 50 years saying on his deathbed that if he had it to do over again, he would have dozens of affairs before marriage, cheat on his wife, divorce, remarry and repeat the cycle all over again?

I wouldn't think so. It's not the people who marry once and stay together who are truly miserable. It's the ones who miss out on the happiness of marriage because they are constantly looking for something else. And, of course, those who will never marry because they contracted a disease from one sexual encounter that will never go away until it kills them and would immediately give any partner they chose the same fate.

Single people can find happiness in their lives but not from illicit affairs that will never lead to anything lasting. Such relationships just bring heartache.

After having such a relationship, when the couple breaks up, it is similar to getting a divorce. How many people have you known who were overjoyed to be getting a divorce?

The Bible's guidance on sex and marriage, though over 2,000 years old, is as applicable in the modern world as it was when it was written. Even so, most people ignore the only advice that can protect them from sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies, heartache and divorce. And oddly enough, they instead seek the advice of the promiscuous Hollywood players who often don't stay married to the same person for more than a month.

The Goodland Daily News

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562)

Member: Kansas Press Association
The Associated Press

Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association
National Newspaper Association
e-mail: daily@nwkansas.com



Steve Haynes, President
Tom Betz, Editor/Editorial Page
Rachel Miscall, Managing Editor
Pat Schiefen, Copy Editor
Doug Stephens, Sports Editor



Sharon Corcoran, Society Editor Skilar Boland, Reporter
Eric Yonkey, Bill Wagoner, Advertising Sales
James Schiefen, Adv. Production Sheila Smith, Office Manager

Nor'west Press

Jim Bowker, General Manager

Richard Westfahl Ron VanLoenen Judy McKnight
Betty Morris Lana Westfahl Helen Dilts

nwkansas.com

N.T. Betz, Director of Internet Services (nbetz@nwkansas.com)
Evan Barnum, Systems Admin. (support@nwkansas.com)

Published daily except Saturday and Sunday and the day observed for New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day, at 1205 Main St., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

Periodicals postage paid at Goodland, Kan. 67735; entered at the Goodland, Kan., Post Office under the Act of Congress of March 8, 1878.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Goodland Daily News, 1205 Main St., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: daily@nwkansas.com. Advertising questions can be sent to: gdnadv@nwkansas.com

The Goodland Daily News assumes no liability for mistakes or omissions in advertising or failure to publish beyond the actual cost of the ad.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: In Sherman County and adjacent counties: three months, \$22; six months, \$38; 12 months, \$72. By mail in Kansas, Colorado: three months, \$28; six months, \$50; 12 months, \$95. (All tax included.) Out of area, weekly mailing of five issues: three months, \$25; six months, \$40; 12 months, \$75.

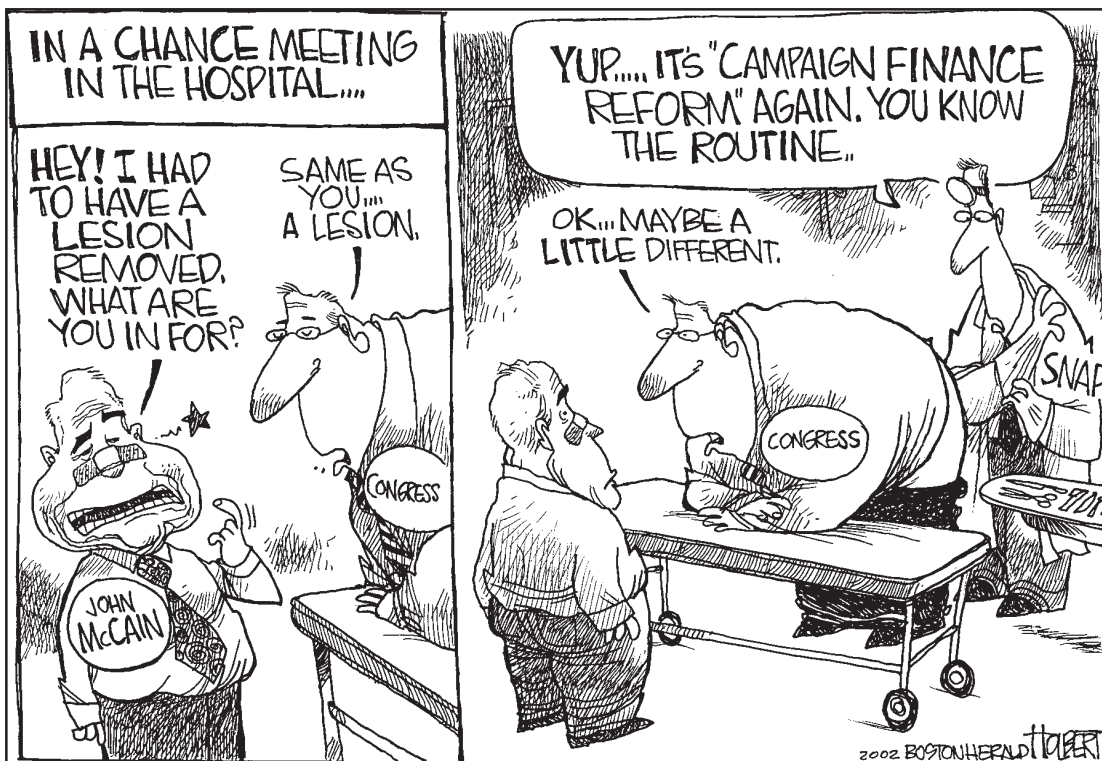
Incorporating:

The Sherman County Herald
Founded by Thomas McCants
1935-1989

THE SHERMAN COUNTY STAR
Founded by Eric and Roxie Yonkey
1994-2001

Nor'West Newspapers

Haynes Publishing Company



berry's world

