

from our viewpoint...

# Fighting terrorism not about a man

Reports indicate, as of this writing, they are closing in on Osama bin Laden's No. 2 man.

Great! But most of us still think without the capture of No. 1, we're no closer to satisfaction in this fight with terrorists. Number 2 in anything is simply that: No. 2. The runner-up. The messenger.

With the pending capture — and that, as of this writing was not a guarantee — terrorism will continue. Even after the capture of Osama himself, that'll be the pattern. There will always be pockets of bullies who will continue to function, regardless of who is perched at the top of the ladder.

We're just making too much out of the capture of a mortal being.

Saddam Hussein's in jail. And come to think of it, when was the last time you heard his name mentioned? But car bombings and bloodshed and murdering continue. With Iraq's former No. 1 behind bars, there hasn't been a decline in the activity associated with terrorism. If anything, it's getting worse.

Before we begin tooting our horns and blowing our whistles and shooting off our fireworks and cheer and celebrate, keep in mind the daily reports of American military people losing their lives in Iraq.

That should be our focus.

We put too much emphasis on the faces of enemy hierarchy, and not enough emphasis on the faces of those wearing the uniform of the United States military fighting the war. They are bogged down in a war that almost looks endless.

President Bush has cautioned us that the war on terrorism will be a global fight, and it will go on for a long, long time. He's right.

Let's not make more out of the potential capture of a scumbag than need be. There'll be more scum to bag as we march on. — Tom (TD) Dreiling

## where to write

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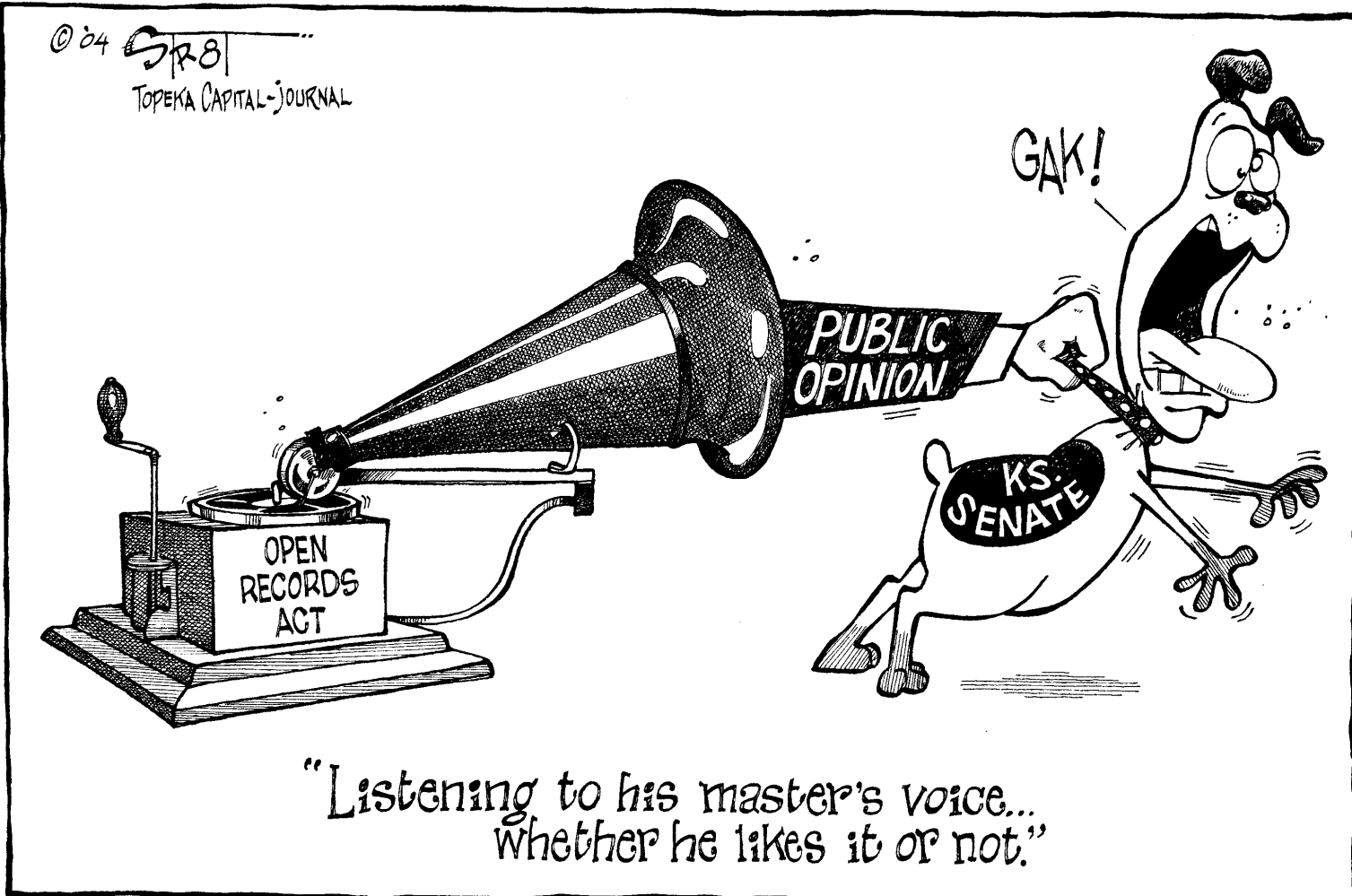
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"Listening to his master's voice... whether he likes it or not."

# It must be getting close to rattlesnake season

Did you know that Kansas has a rattlesnake season?

I always figured that it was open season on the little buzzers anytime you saw one.

Now, I really like snakes. I had a bull snake as a pet when I was younger. But, I've never been fond of critters that are meaner than me, with perhaps the exception of the cats. Cats, no matter how obnoxious, are not poisonous.

So standing at the counter in the county clerk's office, I was surprised to see a brochure entitled "2004 Western Prairie Rattlesnake *Crotalus viridis* application and Season Information"

It wasn't a very fancy brochure. It was an 8 1/2-inch-by-11-inch piece of goldenrod-colored note paper that had been tri-folded to give you six sides to look at. It wasn't really printed, just badly copied.

The cover had the name of the brochure and a picture of a coiled snake I assume was a western prairie rattler.

Under the caption in small letters was the information that commercial prairie rattlesnake harvest permits and commercial dealer permits expire on December 31, 2004. Below that was the usual equal opportunity notice.

On the same side of the sheet, the next two folds had information for commercial harvest and commercial dealer.

In a commercial harvest, prairie rattlesnakes



**cynthia haynes**

• open season

less than 18 inches long can be possessed only during special events and then have to be let go unharmed and unrestrained.

"Prairie rattlesnakes or their parts may only be sold during a commercial prairie rattlesnake special event to a person legally authorized to purchase prairie rattlesnakes," the brochure says. "A bill of sale shall accompany each sale of prairie rattlesnakes or their parts."

Now, if you want to purchase rattlesnakes or their parts for resale or export out of the state, you have to have a dealer permit.

Dealers may not have snakes under 18 inches. It's nice to know they protect the children.

The other side of the brochure sheet has the commercial harvest permit application. It costs \$6 if you have a Kansas hunting license and \$21 if you don't.

No matter whether you have a hunting license or not, you need a lot of nerve, a cool head and a little bit of stupidity to apply.

The next fold has information on the annual Sharon Springs Rattlesnake Roundup and the

last fold an application form for commercial dealers.

A commercial dealer's permit costs \$51 and if you're smart, you'll only buy dead snakes.

I was most interested in the Rattlesnake Roundup, which I have heard of but never attended. Apparently, Sharon Springs is the only town in the state that had the bright idea to capitalize on something you normally couldn't give away.

I wonder why no one else has thought of this? Oh yeah, see above.

Morbid curiosity kept me going. The bag limit on western prairie rattle snakes is 10 per day with a possession limit of 20. That's a lot of rattles.

Snakes may only be taken by hand, by noose, by snake hook, tong or fork or other methods approved by the Department of Wildlife and Parks.

I guess a shotgun isn't on the "other approved methods" list. Nor is garden hoe, my grandmother's favorite weapon against snakes. When she was done, they were all "parts."

While I'm making fun of this, my friends who have been to the roundup say it's really lots of fun.

Festival dates are Friday and Saturday, May 7-8 this year.

Slither on down.

# Few visit American cemetery in Carthage

Americans off the cruise ships rounding the Mediterranean traipse through the American cemetery in Carthage, but not many.

Only a few hundred Americans a year see this lost corner of our country's history, tucked away in the hills of northeast Tunisia.

Here lie the remains of 2,840 American servicemen — and women — who gave their lives in the North African campaign. Those buried here represent nearly all the American dead from the first great sweep against the Nazi war machine.

The remains were gathered from temporary burial sites across Africa and, curiously, from Iran, where Americans ran a supply line up into the south end of the Soviet Union.

The cemetery was built in 1948 to consolidate these temporary sites and hold all the American war dead from North Africa — at least those who were not shipped home.

The paths bisecting the neat lawn of the cemetery are quiet. A couple strolling through the ranks of white marble crosses, broken only occasionally by a Star of David, are not hurried or bothered by other visitors. There are none this day.

Mike Green, the retired Marine sergeant who runs the cemetery, warns photographers not to take pictures of headstones showing names of the dead. People don't like that, he says.

Hair close-cropped and slightly graying, Green leads visiting editors to the tiny chapel, then outside to the tomb of an unknown American serviceman. They offer a small, brief tribute to the fallen, and Taps sounds.



**steve haynes**

• along the sappa

Along the south, above and beyond the graves, a long limestone wall is scribed with the names of 3,725 Americans either missing in action or buried at sea: 3,095 Army (including many fliers), 615 Navy and 15 Coast Guardsmen.

The names read like a roll of the states. Most of them likely never imagined their only memorial would be in some forgotten corner of North Africa.

Ralph W. Long of Kansas is listed as a Navy chief commissary steward. Ruth E Warlick of Texas was a private in the Women's Army Corps.

Another Kansan, Stephen Surbaugh, was a staff sergeant in the 428th Bomb Squadron, 310th Bomb Group. Bruce F. Scheer was a corporal in the 42nd squadron, 12th Ferry Group, bringing planes across the Atlantic.

Sidney J. Gibbs, a staff sergeant, served in the 438th Bomb Squadron, 489th Bomb Group (M).

Their ranks march down the wall to the flag, flying each day over this tiny piece of American soil, Mike Green's reason for being.

Inside, photos celebrate the chairmen of the American Battle Monuments Commission. General Pershing held the job before World

War II, and Gen. Mark Clark led the agency after the war. President Eisenhower, who commanded the Allied invasion of Morocco and Algeria and led the expedition to free Tunis, came back to dedicate the cemetery.

There will never be another. Americans no longer leave their dead in shallow graves or bury them on foreign soil. Victims of war are flown home for interment, at home or in a National Cemetery on U.S. soil.

With modern science, there likely will never be another American soldier buried under a white marble cross, marked "Known but to God."

Mike Green does not care. He tends to his 2,840 charges and shepherds the occasional American visitor through his pride. He knows what price these soldiers paid. He only wishes more of us would come to see.

## Letter Policy

The Goodland Star-News encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten, and must include a telephone number and a signature. Unsigned letters will not be published. Form letters will be rejected, as will letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and good taste. We encourage letters, with address and phone numbers, by e-mail to: <star-news@nw-kansas.com>.

## garfield



# The Goodland Star-News

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

Member: Kansas Press Association

Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association

National Newspaper Association

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Published every Tuesday and Friday except the days observed for New Year's Day and Christmas Day, at 1205 Main Ave., 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 Star-News, 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: star-news@nw-kansas.com. Advertising questions can be sent to: goodlandads@nw-kansas.com

The Goodland Star-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, \$20; six months, \$38; 12 months, \$72. Out of area, weekly mailing of two issues: three months, \$30; six months, \$45; 12 months, \$80. Mailed individually each day: 12 months, \$115. (All tax included.)

Incorporating:

## The Goodland Daily News

1932-2003

## The Sherman County Herald

Founded by Thomas McCants

1935-1989

## THE SHERMAN COUNTY STAR

Founded by Eric and Roxie Yonkey

1994-2001

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Haynes Publishing Company