

from other pens...

Oberlin facing liquor sales issue

Should Oberlin stores be allowed to sell beer, wine and liquor on Sunday?

Absolutely. Now that Kansas has modernized its liquor laws to allow Sunday sales, there is no reason why Oberlin should not fall into line.

It's a local decision now, and it ought to be a simple one. There no reason to force people to drive to Nebraska — or even another Kansas town — to buy a six-pack on a Sunday.

There is no reason to allow business and money to flow out of town when we can keep it here.

Oberlin's beer and liquor dealers are small business people who need all the income they can get. We should support them.

This isn't all that big a deal. We already have liquor stores and beer in stores. We doubt allowing Sunday sales will increase liquor consumption here by more than a drop. But every dollar counts to a small business, and most are struggling.

It's hard to imagine any serious drawbacks from allowing Sunday sales. It's legal now to drink on Sunday, but we're not seeing any problems around town.

Sure, there are alcoholics and drunks addicted to booze. It's a major social and medical problem. But they buy their stock now, legally, on weekdays.

It's customary in Kansas for a few preachers to oppose any change, in any town, in liquor laws. That could happen here.

Religion and the Sabbath should not, however, be part of the discussion.

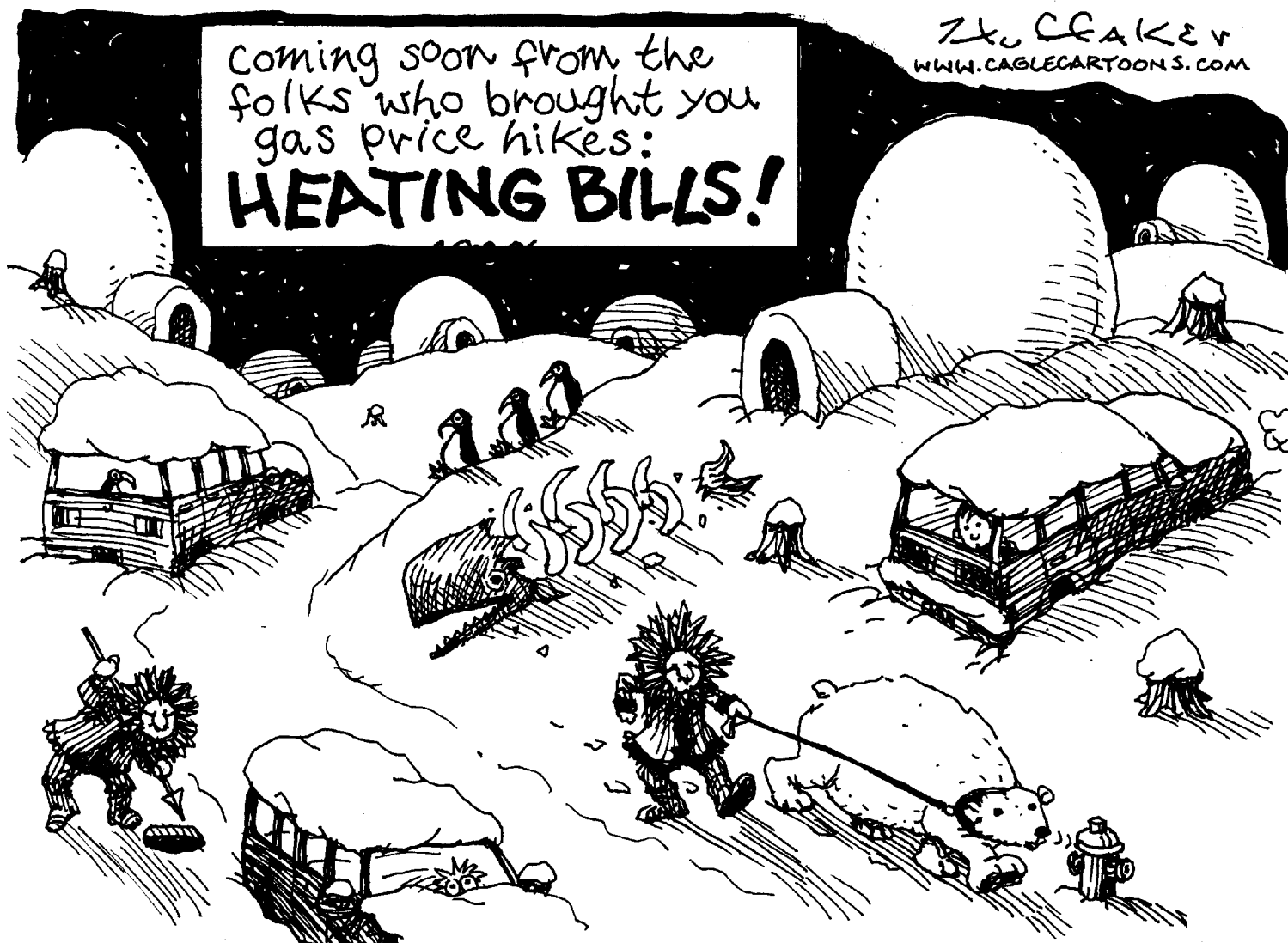
It's true that Sunday is a holy day observed by many, but not all, churches. Under the U.S. Constitution, though, the government is not allowed to "establish" a religion.

It's up to churches to convince their members either to drink responsibly or to abstain from alcohol, whatever their beliefs require. That is not the city's concern.

The facts of life are these: Oberlin people do drink, and Oberlin consumers and businesses will benefit from this change.

The City Council should approve it and move us on into the 21st century. — *Steve Haynes*

Editor's note: So far the Goodland City Commission has not been asked to consider Sunday beer, wine and liquor sales. — Tom Betz



Now time to rebuild my wardrobe

I didn't reach my goal, but it was a good year and I'm making my new resolutions right now.

Nope, this isn't a New Year's column that got lost in the shuffle. It's an anniversary celebration for my diet.

On Aug. 15 last year I decided that I was tired of not being able to button my jeans, of wearing only elastic waistbands and of being pleasingly plump.

I decided that I would lose 20 pounds.

Steve pointed out that if I lost a pound a week for an entire year, I would lose 52 pounds. This got me to thinking that I could be back down to the weight I was when I got married in 1971.

At the same time, I found a weight and height chart that claimed I was obese.

Obese, not overweight, not pleasingly plump — just plain fat. And, unfortunately, I had the too-tight pants to prove it.

So I hit the diet trail.

The first few months were exciting. Over the



cynthia haynes

• open season

first few weeks, I lost a pound every three to four days. This was good. This would be easy.

Then came the holidays, and the losing slowed down. After that it was a pound a week for several more months.

Then came the summer, and things slowed to a crawl as I lost a pound every two weeks. Then from July 1 through Aug. 15, I lost just one pound.

And that's where I am. Down 37 pounds in 52 weeks.

The good news is I've gone from a size 16 pant size, almost ready for an 18, to a tight 10.

The bad news is nothing fits. I'm watching the

sales and hitting thrift stores and yard sales, so I'm rebuilding my wardrobe.

Still, I'm not done. There are 15 pounds of fat still sitting on my hips and butt and they're going to have to decamp.

So, I'm taking a deep breath, giving my old clothes to the thrift store and planning my next campaign. Those size 10 pants I bought are really too tight and I need to shrink into them.

☆☆☆☆

I have been resisting the temptation to write a cat column, but some stories have to be shared.

I have to stop leaving my windows down.

I was in Norton earlier this week and ready to head for home. I started the car and turned around to check to see if there was anyone behind me on the street. There wasn't any traffic, but there on the back seat was a pretty little tabby.

"Meow," she said. "Out," I said.

Sorry kitty, I'm full up in the cat department

Letter Policy

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The President's promiscuous passions

By John F. Rohe

The graphic details of suffering, malnutrition, and death of innocent children in Niger strike to the core of our humanity.

The caring search their soul, and reach into their pocket for a response dictated by their perception of the crisis.

Disturbing images of scarcities in food, water and medical necessities in Niger scour the planet at the speed of light. News reports confirm the effects of horrifying food shortages. Compassion mounts. At breakneck speed, our president recognizes and responds to the shortage by increasing food aid.

Let's concede that President Bush is a compassionate human being. When a need is perceived, he would strive to respond to the crisis, as framed by his depth of vision.

Sadly, the frenetic response only addresses symptoms, not causes. The primary culprit is ignored or forgotten amid the hurried reaction. The President's well-intentioned, but impulsive, efforts can perversely do more harm than good. In his rush to assist, the root cause of the problem is obscured.

The president's perspective is constrained by the depth of his vision. What might look like a friendly gesture through a close-range camera can resemble a Trojan horse in a telephoto lens. Photographers expand a camera's depth of field by squinting the aperture. That might explain the problem. If the president would squint just right, he might perceive the long term with greater clarity.

Niger is home to over 12 million people. It has a fertility rate of 8.0 children per woman. This is by far the highest fertility rate in the world according to the Population Reference Bureau. The next highest fertility rate is 7.1 children per woman in Somalia.

Notwithstanding Niger's tragic loss of life claimed by malnutrition, AIDS, malaria, and other human threats; its 12 million people are projected to reach 53 million in 2050! Meanwhile, the alarming description of "shortages"



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• commentary

is destined to continue wearing on the president's short-sighted conscience.

In continuing to send urgent food aid while withholding funding for international family planning, President Bush perversely compounds the eventual human suffering. Will his conscience be eased when the starvation exponentially expands to 53 million?

Ask the person on the front line. They would tell you there are too many mouths to feed. But from the vantage of the White House, no one ever dies of overpopulation.

Has it become unfashionable to discuss population pressures in polite company? Is it too harsh to consider fertility as a culprit? Would our humanity suffer a fall from grace if the propensity to procreate is indicted in this tragic loss of life?

For the nearsighted, scarcity is palpable in the African subcontinent. Meanwhile, others envision a burgeoning emergency in the future.

where to write

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