

U.S. 36 group trying to get four-lane road here

The main goal of the U.S. 36 Highway Association is to get an expressway west from St. Joseph, not just to draw off some of the traffic which burdens I-80 and I-70, but to bring economic development to a poor and underserved part of Kansas.

That will require some doing, since the state has no plans to widen the road any time soon. Highway people usually want to put the roads where the traffic is today, not where someone wants it.

But the “build-it-and-they-will-come” approach is just what we in northern Kansas need. Our Road of Dreams might just bring back some of the traffic the state took away from us when it built the Interstate system 40 years ago.

If you look along U.S. 36, you’ll find mostly motels built half a century ago, not the flashy new franchise outfits they have along I-70. There are few truck stops, fewer still fast food franchises and other highway-oriented businesses.

I-70 is choking in services, while we have few. Why?

Traffic count, that’s why. The traffic down on I-70 is four to 10 times more than traffic on U.S. 36, because people just gravitate to those double lines on the map.

Most people will take a freeway wherever they are going, even if it is out of their way. They figure it’ll be faster and easier than the two-lane, even though that’s often not true.

The freeway towns get the lion’s share of new investment. They get the McDonald’s

and the Holiday Inn Express, but also the jobs that go with them.

In the pre-Interstate era, traffic was more spread out. All the east-west roads in Kansas had their share. That changed when I-70 went in. Just compare the traffic — and the roadside businesses — today.

The U.S. 36 group wants to do something about that. It has declared it’s main goal and purpose to be to get the road widened west from St. Joseph. The hope is to see four lanes to Belleville in the next 20 year, and beyond that as it’s possible.

There may not be a freeway through Oberlin or St. Francis in our lifetime, but as I-70 and particularly, I-80 through Nebraska, fill up with big trucks, the overflow will have to go somewhere.

We don’t really want all the traffic here anyway. A freeway brings not just money, but crime and other problems.

We just want enough traffic to spur some development and let the people along U.S. 36 get a share of the pie.

The state has committed to the first few miles of expressway to Wathena, but beyond there, nothing but two-lane. It will take some persuading to change things and get U.S. 36 into the state’s highway plans. That’s what the association intends to do in the next decade, though, with the support of people across northern Kansas.

To join in, just join the U.S. 36 Association. It’s a small investment to make in our future. — Steve Haynes.

Pastures are looking real good

Driving down the highway recently, I said to my husband, “My, aren’t the pastures green! Look at those cows. Grass so tall, you can barely see their heads.”

“Uh, dear,” Jim replied, “they’re lying down.”

Oh, right! I knew that. I don’t care, though, standing or lying, the pastures look the best most people can ever remember. Amazing what a few inches of rain will do.

Of course, we’re human, and we will find something to complain about. Right now it’s the humidity. It’s not East Coast humid, or even South Texas humid, but for this part of the country, it’s humid. That “icky-sticky” clammy, can’t-wait-to-take-a-cool-shower kind of humid.

However, I did reach my melt-down point this weekend. I finally turned the air conditioner on. We had survived quite nicely without it up ‘til then. Mornings have been nice and cool, nights too.

Since I’m gone during the day, there didn’t seem to be a need to turn it on. But this Sunday when we returned home from church, there was no avoiding it. If we were going to take our customary Sunday afternoon nap, something was going to have to give. A push of the button, and we were in cool comfort.

Last summer we had calves and lambs so the grandkids could do chores. This summer, we’re making it easier on ourselves. We have two more baby calves, but we’re not going to bottle feed them until they’re



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
cplotts@nwkansas.com

ready for market like we did last summer. They don’t know it yet, but tonight those two calves will learn to drink out of a bucket.

It’s relatively easy to teach a calf to drink. First you let them suck on two or three fingers (their tongues are like sandpaper), then plunge your hand into the bucket of milk. They inhale a little at first, but soon get the hang of it. It’s kind of a slimy, slurpy job but not having to do the bottle thing will make my life much easier. Mixing milk in a bucket is better. Besides, these two are so aggressive that they butt the bottle right out of my hand sometimes.

—ob—
Did you hear about the couple who went for marriage counseling? “You must communicate with

each other,” the counselor said. “You must talk to each other. Know each other’s likes and dislikes.” Turning to the husband the therapist asked, “For instance, what’s your wife’s favorite flower?”

Pondering his reply very carefully, the husband finally turned to his wife and said, “Pillsbury All Purpose. Right, dear?”

From the Bible

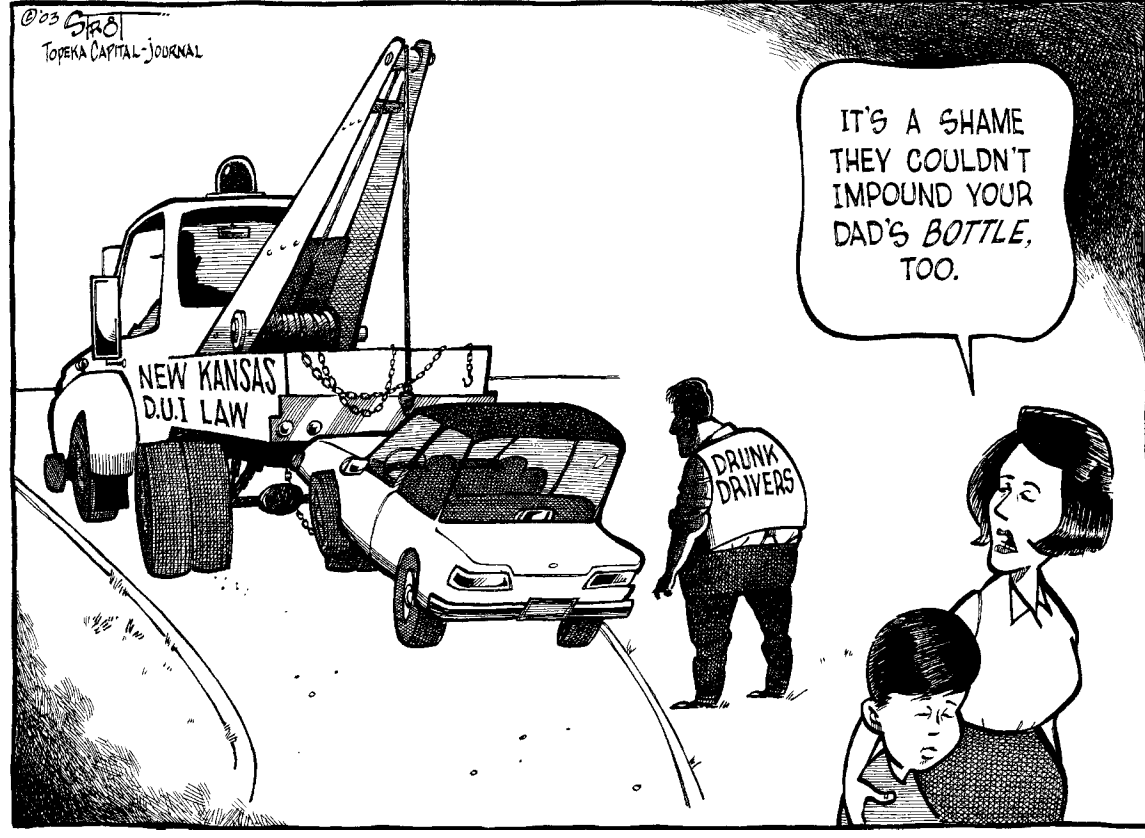
Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed; but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded. Proverbs 13:13

Honor Roll

Welcome and thanks to these recent subscribers to *The Oberlin Herald*:

Teddy May Reber, Mesa, Ariz.; Connie Smith, Eden Prairie, Minn.; Jana Oliver, Raleigh, N.C.; Shelly

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Trip was an eye opener for her

New Orleans — What’s the first thing that comes to your mind?

Bourbon Street, jazz, Mardi Gras, swamps, food, alcohol, the War of 1812, partying, sin, sex and booze? You’re right — all that and more.

We just spent Wednesday through Saturday in The Big Easy, and we saw a little of all of the above. And a few things we hadn’t bargained for.

Our hotel took up a block in the French Quarter, with one side facing Bourbon Street. We had a nice room overlooking the hotel pool, which was in a courtyard in the middle. The kids — oldest daughter Felicia and her husband Nik — had a balcony room overlooking the famous street of sin. Their’s was a great room for watching the moving party and a bad one for sleeping.

We walked everywhere and put in more than 15 miles during our four-day visit.

We arrived on Wednesday and went out for red beans, rice, sausage, crawfish and shrimp. The food was great.

Thursday, the plan was to go to the aquarium, take a boat ride to the zoo and then take the streetcar back to the hotel. We did most of those things in the rain.

The aquarium was great and we saw the alligators. The boat ride up the Mississippi was in the rain, so we didn’t see very much but a couple of tugs and an angry river. It was still raining when we got to the zoo, and zoos tend to be outdoors, so we took a quick tour and headed for the street car.



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
chaynes@nwkansas.com

The ride was great for the first 15 blocks, but we noticed that the water was filling the streets and people were starting to abandon their vehicles. We soon had to abandon the streetcar and sash back to the hotel as people started to park their cars on the tracks — the highest ground around. It was a long, wet walk.

At the hotel, we encountered sandbags and learned that the French Quarter had been flooded while we were out playing in the water.

As the water receded, we headed down the street to see what night life was like on Bourbon Street. That’s where we found the sin, sex and booze.

As folks held out 25-cent Mardi Gras beads from the many balconies, college boys and girls would show off parts of their anatomies normally covered so that they could get the beads. You could also pay to see just about any form of strip show there is. Shops offered items of clothing made out of net, feathers, leather and tiny bits of cloth. Every other storefront was a bar and alcohol was sold on the street, as well as inside such establishments as Pat

O’Brian’s. Friday, Felicia and I took a home tour and attended a cooking school. Now we can cook gumbo, jambalaya, bread pudding and pralines. We also went down to the French Market to purchase T shirts, Mardi Gras beads and masks and feather boas.

That night, Bourbon Street was filled with party-goers. Most of them were young and drunk. Many were dressed up in wild outfits with fancy hats, feathers, short shorts or skirts and tall shoes. This was a slow night in the summer. I can’t imagine how crowded the place is during Mardi Gras.

I really didn’t see much about the War of 1812, but they do have statues to Joan of Arc, Robert E. Lee and Andrew Jackson in town. The swamp I only saw from the plane as we left.

Next trip, I plan to see a real swamp close up and visit one of the voodoo shops and a cemetery.

Of course, it only took me 55 years to make the first trip. Who knows how long it’ll be before I return.

Did you ask, ‘did we get wet?’

My sister called. “Were you near the flooding in New Orleans?” she asked. I just laughed. Near the flood? We were IN the flood. We weren’t watching the news. We were out making it. Us and half the town. I blame Cynthia. She makes all the plans.

We had to fly down for a board meeting I was to attend. The president comes from New Orleans, y’all, and where the president lives, the board meets.

Usually, it’s someplace hot. Last year, we had to go to Omaha when it was 110, you remember.

But New Orleans was not hot. It was just real humid.

We went down a day early and talked the kids, daughter Felicia and husband Nik, into meeting us. Cynthia spent days studying New Orleans on the Internet and booking tours.

She had us going to the Aquarium of the America downtown at 10, on a tour boat to the Audubon Zoo at noon and then back downtown on the St. Charles street car.

The street car ride alone is worth the trip, by the way, and a heck of a lot cheaper than the zoo. But I digress.

The aquarium was great. It started to rain before we got on the boat, but we thought little of it. By the time we got to the zoo, though, I was pretty much expecting the animals to be waiting to board two by two.

It started raining heavily as we pulled out from the quay. Pretty soon, you couldn’t see the other side of the river. The twin bridges downtown, two blocks away, just disappeared in the downpour.

Some wise guy, namely me, insisted on riding the upper deck for a better view. As it turned out, we could see the rain just fine. By the time we made a break through open deck for the cabin, we were soaked. We’d expected Louisiana to be humid, but not quite 100 percent humid.

We did get to the zoo, though the seven-mile trip was none too scenic. The zoo is beautiful, I think. All I



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
shaynes@nwkansas.com

really saw was the reptile house, a komodo dragon and a lot of flamingos.

We agreed to bail out early and catch a streetcar downtown. I had a 3 p.m. meeting to attend.

When we got to St. Charles Avenue, though, people said something must be wrong with the line. No cars were coming. One did come, though, a beautiful creaking green monster straight out of the 1920s. The standee straps came in handy as we lurched past the Tulane and Loyola campuses, past stately homes and churches and beautiful greenery.

Then the motorman’s radio squawked. “There are cars stalled all over. We can’t even see the rails.”

Huh? Soon, we knew what they meant. A supervisor sent the car ahead of us back to cover the north end of the line. She told our motorman to “go as far as you can.”

That was a couple more miles, but eventually we ground to a halt in the center of the flood. Water filled the southbound lanes of St. Charles past the curbs. Most people either pulled out or tried to pull onto the tracks. One contractor in a four-wheel-drive pickup just motored on as if nothing had happened. You’d have thought he had a boat, what with the wake he was leaving.

Eventually, about Jackson Av-

enue, everything stalled. Here the water was deepest. Here, cars were stalled all over the place.

“You’ll have to walk,” the motorman said. “There’s a bus on Jackson that’ll take you downtown.”

Sure. Half an hour later, not a bus to be seen. The stop was under three feet of water. Some cabs came by. One took two ladies. The rest of the drivers claimed they were off duty.

Downtown, our hotel, we were told, was 22 blocks thataway.

And so we started walking, first trying to keep our shoes dry, eventually just slogging through.

And though we regularly walk 3-4 miles at a time for exercise, that’s with dry shoes on dry pavement or dry gravel.

This was different. Squishy. Sloshy. Wet.

We made it, though. As soon as we walked under the I-10 bridge, we found dry ground. We were tired, soaked, bedraggled, but a hot shower and dry socks fixed that. We were ready to go wander down Bourbon Street, at least after my meeting, which was still going on. I was only an hour late.

Down in the quarter, the watering holes had swept out the flood and opened for business. It took two days to get my shoes dry enough to wear, though.

In New Orleans, it seems, nothing ever dries.

Write

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170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749-2243
Phone: (785) 475-2206 Fax (785) 475-2800
E-mail: obherald@nwkansas.com

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