

Why not label our meat for country it came from?

We're not much on expanding government regulation, but let's make an exception for the pending law that requires meat to be labeled with its country of origin.

Big packing houses, big ag companies and big livestock concerns are against it. Farmers and stockmen, especially the little guys, tend to be for it.

The measure is law, but opponents succeeded in getting a House vote to prohibit the U.S. Department of Agriculture from implementing the law tacked on to a spending bill.

Farm-state senators says that provision will pass the upper house over their dead bodies, and they include influential Democrats and Republicans. We'll see, but our money says the Senate won't pass the rider.

Why should it? We've required country of origin labeling on most products for years. In the days when hamburger was kept in big heaps in the butcher case, meat defied labeling. Today, though, meat is labeled for everything from food safety to scanable price. Adding the country of origin should be a piece of cake.

Opponents claim the law will drive prices up, but we think not. Given a little time, big ag firms and small packers alike should be able to comply and with little cost. The meat already has to be coded to show it's origin; officials can track it, but consumers can't.

Today, the government says, around 11 percent of the beef we eat, 7 percent of the pork

and a third of the lamb is imported. There is nothing wrong with that. We all buy imports now and then. Who hasn't bought a Danish ham or eaten a hamburger made with Argentinean beef?

OK, so you didn't know where the hamburger came from. That's the point. If you did know, you could make a choice: cheaper foreign beef or supporting American farmers and ranchers.

If computers and gizmos and cars and combines have to be labeled, what's wrong with letting us know where our spare ribs and steaks come from?

Having the labels alone won't increase sales of American beef. Ranchers are going to have to convince us that there are benefits to buying their product over beef from Brazil or Australia.

But some growers have been successful in convincing people to eat natural beef or black angus cuts, so selling American products might not be that hard. If the foreign meat is much cheaper, however, expect a lot of people to buy it anyway. Even loyalty has its price.

It's hard to see why anyone here in cattle country wouldn't back this law, though some respectable livestock groups have come out against it. We assume they have their reasons.

But it's hard for us to see how the law can do anything but benefit our stockmen and ranchers.

— Steve Haynes

If it's yucky, the kids will try it

Why is it when you tell a child that something tastes good, they clam up and won't try it? But as soon as you proclaim a food item disgusting, they all want a sample?

Jennifer and I had taken Alexandria and Taylor out for a kid-friendly lunch of cheeseburgers, french fries and soda pop. Except for me; I ordered iced tea. When our food arrived, I took a deep, long draw on the straw and immediately came up for air, practically spitting it out.

You know how tea gets a musty taste when left out too long? This stuff tasted like it had been out on the back porch for a couple of days, and I promptly proclaimed it horrible. Instantly, both Alex and Taylor clamored, "I want to taste it! Let me try it!"

I let them and they both agreed it was awful. But the point is, they WANTED to taste it. I can't help but think that if I had said it was delicious, I couldn't have force-fed it to them. There must be a repulse factor that matures with a person. The younger you are, the less disgusting things bother you.

One day, Taylor helped me clean out the refrigerator. All the leftovers that looked like science projects gone bad went into the five-quart plastic bucket we keep for chicken food. This stuff was pretty rank, but Taylor volunteered to carry it, blithely chattering all the way to the chicken pen. Nothing can be too gross for a kid.

Halley and Kara arrived last night, and except for the few hours of sleep I allowed them, it has been non-stop talking and laughing. I finally had to banish them to the out-



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
cplotts@nwkansas.com

side while I wrote this. I discovered I can't write, type and talk all at the same time.

—ob—

After two weeks away from her daughter, Kara is certain Taylor grew an inch. And Taylor couldn't show her mother everything she had done here fast enough. She had to demonstrate how she feeds the ducks, "picks" the eggs, mixes the calves' milk, how to "ding" the bucket so they will come, and how to scoop their pellets into the feed bunk. Everything is a huge accomplishment.

—ob—

Halley told us this story and swears it's true. As you know, she works in Washington, and typical party conversation is political. At a

Mailman applauds city crew

To the Editor:

Recently there was a water problem in the 700 block of North Penn and 100 block of East Jefferson. Much digging done and it turned into quite a project, disrupting some mail delivery on my route.

Under the careful supervision of Dan Castle, city supervisor, and the crack water crew, headed by Willard Perrin, the problem was taken care

of professionally and swiftly. I am sure City Manager Gary Shike is proud to have such professional employees under his care. Way to go, men!

Mike Helm, Norcatur

From the Bible

His name shall endure forever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. Ps. 72: 17, 18

Letter to the Editor

of professionally and swiftly. I am sure City Manager Gary Shike is proud to have such professional employees under his care. Way to go, men!

Mike Helm, Norcatur



Radios, cell phones give up there

The folks in Colorado were complaining about the heat. It had gotten up to 85 degrees Fahrenheit, and they were melting.

It was a little warm, but compared to the 104- to 109-degree heat we had left in Kansas, we were just enjoying the weather.

We were in Creede, a little mountain community set at 8,800 feet in the San Juan Mountains of southern Colorado.

It's an interesting place. There is no radio or over-the-air television. Downtown, there are no stoplights, and there are no lawyers resident to the county.

Folks in town can get cable television and those out in the country use mini satellite dishes or go without. Even campers have mini dishes, though.

There's little anyone can do about radio. There's just too much mountain between the transmitters and the receivers. At night, when the 50,000-watt stations come on line, you can get a little crackle music or a ballgame, but mostly the folks are pretty cut off.

The town itself is set in a cleft of rock, so that even police channels are mostly useless. Cellular phones don't work in town or out by the airport, where we stay.

Over the years, we've learned to live with the oddities of no electronics.

We warn folks that the cell phone will be useless but we have landline service and even an answering machine.

We have a television, but it only



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
chaynes@nwkansas.com

is good for watching videos. We don't bother with radio, but have a CD player, cassette deck and even an old record player with albums from our youth.

Because we have a landline telephone, we can and do get dial-up Internet service. This enables us to get some work done between fishing, hiking and enjoying the cool mountain weather.

One summer, I counted four computers sitting on various tables and desks around our vacation home. There were four of us on vacation, and we each had to get our e-mail, surf the web and get some work done.

Of course, not everyone feels like getting some work done while on vacation.

A young architect visiting the area told his boss, with a straight face, that computers just don't work in Creede. Something about the mountains or the altitude.

When I expressed my amazement that anyone would believe that malarkey, he replied that once he had explained that he couldn't be reached by cell phone, it wasn't too hard to convince the boss that an



area so inaccessible that it didn't get radio or television would not have what was needed to make computers work.

Well, I do know places that have so much lightning that its hard to run computers except on battery because the electricity keeps getting knocked out. Creede isn't one of those, but the architect's boss didn't know that.

Hey, Steve, I can't take my computer next vacation. They don't work in Creede.

Why are you rolling your eyes that way?

Honor Roll

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

Bill Mrstik, Milwaukee, Wis.; Crichton Roberts, Honolulu, Hawaii;

California: Marcy Pearson, Indio; Jon W. Mapes, Santa Cruz;

Colorado: Mrs. A.L. Muckey, Kathy Campbell, Aurora; John Wells, Arriba;

Nebraska: Ron's Application Service, Danbury; Carl and Sherrel Adams, McCook; Murphy Tractor and Equipment, North Platte;

Kansas: Trudy Stockham, Doris Mizell, Norton; Donna Lawver, Alice Urban, Jo Deyoung, Edward Miller, Richard Dempewolf, Colby; Brad Erickson, R.W. Johnson, Golden Plains USD 316, Rexford; C.G. Holliday, Jean Ann Confer, St. Francis; Rochelle Mather, Gene Gallentine, John K. Gallentine, Robert Linden, William LaSalle,

Clayton; Keith Mines, McPherson; Leonard Cullison, Elaine Chambers, Dr. Norbert Zander, Donna Reinert, Luce Information Services, Mrs. Robert Baer, Topeka; Janna Landgraf, Scott City; Walter Moore, South Hutchinson; John Jones, Mullinville; Bard Claar, Marilyn Linn, Chuck Johnson, Wichita; Mrs. Donna Fisher Reist, Duane Vessey, Olathe; Barry Brooks, Manhattan; Adelia Perrin, Ellis; Kathy Heather, Stilwell; Patricia Tongish, Newton; Clyde Vernon, Frontenac; Donald Arnold, Earl Hartzog, Hoxie;

Randy Fisher, Benton; Summer Creed, Conway Springs; Mrs. Paul Starbuck, Great Bend; John Koerperich, Solomon; Gary Fisher, Atwood; Larry Wolfe, Steven J. Hess, Dianne Waldo, Overland Park; Dan Hess, Salina; Marcia Emig, Meredith J. Huff, Goodland, Mike and Mary Stephenson, Leav-

enworth; Rex Vernon, Independence; R.L. Crabill, J.H. Boettger, Dodge City; Bill Craig, Stan Miller, Forrest Jackson, Robert Strevey, Norcatur; Neff Realty, Francis Porsch, Selden; Charles Unger, Ann M. Martin, Don Grafel, Herndon; Mrs. Elwood Bailey, Jennings; Dan Shuler, Jetmore; Diana L. Cochran, Black, Newton; Meredith J. Huff, Goodland.

Oberlin: Floyd Brown, Irene Fringer, Sandra Weigel, Robert E. Anderson, Pizza Hut, Fred Counter, Thelma Spiers, James W. Plotts, Ralph LaSalle, Floyd Lotker Jr., Lyn Reynolds, Steve Nelson, Enid Anderson, Gary Meitl, Decatur Cop Association, Dennis Sloan, Mike Coleman, Dan Grafel, Dick Kelley, Red Crown, Lairy Goltl, Walter Schiessler, Esther Carlson, Kevin Anderson, Bill Matchett, Bob Fraker, Neva Townsend, Victor G. Bryan, Lawrence Wenger.

THE OBERLIN HERALD

Serving Oberlin and Decatur County since 1879

USPS 401-600

Phone: (785) 475-2206 Fax (785) 475-2800

E-mail: obherald@nwkansas.com

Nor'West Newspapers

STAFF

- Steve Haynes editor
- Kimberly Brandt managing editor
- Mary Lou Olson society editor
- Judy Jordan proofreader
- Carolyn Kelley-Plotts columnist
- Cynthia Haynes business manager
- David Bergling advertising manager
- Sherry Bergling advertising
- Pat Cozad want ads/circulation
- Karla Jones, Doris Miller advertising production
- Joan Betts historian
- Marsha Morford mailing
- Whitney Beinke page makeup



Published each Wednesday by Haynes Publishing Co., 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749. Periodicals mail postage paid at Oberlin, Kan. 67749.

Steve and Cynthia Haynes, publishers Official newspaper of Oberlin, Jennings, Norcatur, Dresden and Decatur County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, Colorado Press Association, Nebraska Press Association and Inland Press Association.

Subscriptions: One year, \$28 (tax included) in Decatur, Norton, Rawlins, Sheridan, Thomas and Red Willow counties; \$32 (tax included) elsewhere in Kansas; \$35 elsewhere in the U.S. Foreign subscriptions, \$20 extra per year (except APO/FPO). POSTMASTER: Send change of address to 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749-2243.

Office hours: 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.

(Also open most Saturdays when someone is in.)

Photo Policy

The *Oberlin Herald* wants to emphasize photos of people doing things in the community. If you know of an event or news happening that we should attend, please call 475-2206.

Please be sure to allow a couple of days' notice so we can arrange to be there.

Space in the paper is limited and so is the time of our staff, so we may not be able to get to every event, but we will try.

Because space is so limited, we cannot run team or group photos, any pictures of people lined up or of people passing checks, certificates and the like. (We will always try to make room for a story about any of these events, however.)

We do run wedding and engagement pictures and "mug" shots with

stories and obituaries, when they are provided to us. Please remember that we need a clear, sharp picture. Dark or fuzzy prints will not work.

We cannot return photos unless you submit a self-addressed, stamped envelope with clear instructions for return. Other photos submitted may be picked up at our office within two weeks. After that, they will be disposed of.

Laser proofs of photos which have run in *The Herald* are available, first come, first served. Special-order laser prints of photos will be available at \$3 each for about two weeks after publication.

We can take passport photos if you provide a roll of color film. ASA 200, 12 exposure works fine. The charge is \$8.50 per person.

Write

The *Oberlin Herald* encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of public interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

Mail letters to 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan., 67749, or by E-mail to obherald@nwkansas.com.

We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise.

We do not publish form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous from this area should be submitted to the Want Ad desk.

Letters will not be censored, but will be read and edited for style, clarity, length and legality. We will not publish attacks on private individuals or businesses.