

Would vote against Bush make Osama the winner?

Bush or bin Laden? That's one of the choices Americans will have to make when they vote this fall.

There's no doubt if President Bush is turned out, it will be a victory of sorts for Osama bin Laden and his like.

The Bush administration has pursued Osama into the hill on the Afghan border. He's hemmed in, far from his one-time military bases and training camps. The effectiveness of al Qaida is greatly reduced from four years ago.

If voters repudiate Bush, are they repudiating his policies?

Democrats won't like the answer, but it's yes.

Four years ago, the Clinton administration was doing little, if anything, to track down bin Laden and his tribe. Clinton handled al Qaida and terrorism as a "law enforcement problem."

The administration put barriers in the way of tracking down terrorists, including the infamous "wall" separating the FBI from foreign intelligence services.

It's easy to argue with Bush's motives.

Detractors say he was fixated on Iraq, that he wanted only to finish his daddy's war. But he struck first at the terrorist hideouts in Afghanistan, and he continues to pursue al Qaida there.

In fact, the liberation of Afghanistan ought to be listed among the administration's finest accomplishments.

Iraq is much more difficult to deal with. It's

a complex society where we face trained and dedicated opposition from many forces lined up against the United States. And the whole world would like to know where the weapons of mass destruction went to.

While American troops were welcomed as liberators as Saddam Hussein fell, there are plenty of people who would like to see us leave Iraq. Bin Laden surely is among those, but so are Saddam's supporters and a host of others.

Terrorists are not dumb. They know we can't stand the sight of Americans being killed, maimed and mutilated.

They are likely to kill as many as they can between now and election day, hoping that a new administration will change American policy and pull out of Iraq.

It worked in Spain. It just might work against the United States.

Is that what we want? If we do not stand against international terrorism, who will?

There are other issues in this election: The economy, jobs, big government, schools, you name it. Republicans and Democrats can disagree over those.

On foreign policy, we need to be united against terrorists and terrorist states. Pulling out of Iraq and leaving the people there in the hands of those who set bombs and kill both troops and children is not the answer.

Changing presidents is not going to help us win this war, either in Iraq or around the world.

You can vote for Bush. Or vote, in effect, for bin Laden.

— Steve Haynes

Backwards talk seems right

It just goes to show, if you keep doing something wrong long enough, it will begin to seem right. Or, "just shows to go ya," as Jim and I might say with our dyslexic lingo. For years our daughter Jennifer has said that we will need therapy in our later years because we have taken this whole "backwards talk" thing to another level. The scary part, she says, is that she is beginning to understand us.

Jim credits/blames me for having started it with my "junkbox jukie" faux pas on the radio. But he has perfected it. Jim can transpose phrases so glibly that, for a moment, they make sense. At a neighborhood bonfire he asks, "Do you want a 'dot hog' or a 'bamhurger'?"

At home he says, "I'm going to take a shower in the 'rathboom'," or "Honey, did you 'ceed the fat'?"

Jennifer has denounced her father's proclivity for re-inventing the English language. But, she herself fell victim when telling her father that Alexandria had fun riding an old lawn tractor Jim keeps just for the kids to "putz around" on. She said, "It's too bad. 'Kity sids' don't get to do these kinds of things."

Immediately, she realized what had happened. She had committed the very "sin" she had chastised her father for. She begged her dad not to tell. Maybe he promised, but I am not bound by any such restrictions.

It proves, once again, if you can't convince 'em, confuse 'em.

—ob—
My daughter Kara and I are trying to coordinate the logistics of



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
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getting her 5-year-old, Taylor, to our house for a couple of weeks this summer. She begins kindergarten this year and her school starts Aug. 4. That means she can't be here for the Decatur County Fair, when her mom and dad would plan their vacation to come retrieve her. So, we're shooting for the Norton County Fair, which happens earlier in July.

—ob—

Speaking of Taylor starting school, Kara told me about the day they went to enroll. Taylor was taking it all in, especially watching the second and third graders as they filed by on their way to recess.

Kara asked Taylor if she thought

she was ready to go to school. Taylor's only question was, "Am I going to be with those big kids?"

To a little 5-year-old, I suppose 8- and 9-year-olds look like big kids. It's all in your perspective.

From the Bible

Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole. Job 5: 17, 18

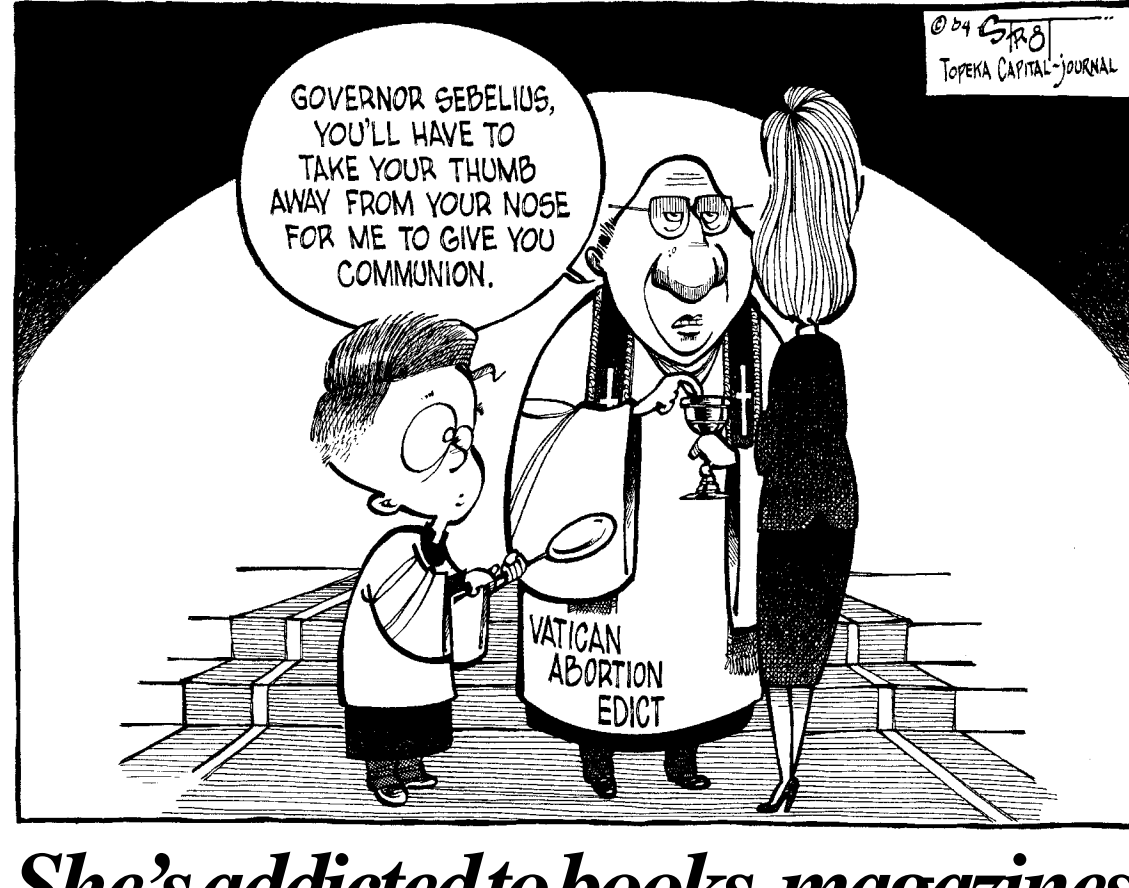
Write

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She's addicted to books, magazines



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
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My name is Cynthia, and I'm addicted to books and magazines.

There really should be a self-help group, 12-step program or support group for those of us who can't pass a book store, hotel gift shop or supermarket newsstand without glomming onto something.

We're really sad cases.

I admit I'm hooked on reading material.

I prefer mystery books — mostly those set in another time, but I also enjoy mysteries with cats, dogs and birds. I spice up my reading with fantasy and science fiction and an occasional western. My mother likes historical romance, so I look for those for her. I find something I would like in that section now and then.

I also love cookbooks and try to buy one on every trip. The idea is to write about the trip on the inside of the front cover, but sometimes I never get to the writing part and my cookbook shelf is littered with everything from Creole cooking to one on how to make treats for your pets.

Oh, I don't really use these cookbooks to make anything. I seldom cook anything new and I know all the old standbys by heart — pour two cups of water in pan, add a pat of margarine, bring to a boil and add box of whatever.

Besides, if I ever feel the need to really cook, I've got the magazines — 15 years of Gourmet, 10 years worth of Bon Appetite and five to six years worth of Taste of Home. I gave up on the first two after I quit writing a cooking column 15 years ago, but they're still in the basement taking up space.

The basement bookshelves are divided into magazines, old calen-

dars and books. The books take of the majority of the space, but the calendars and magazines provide the most clutter. Let's face it, who leaves space for 25 years worth of Trains Magazine, an average of 12 to 15 calendars per year, a dozen years of National Geographic and all those cooking magazines?

Every month or so, I gather up the books and magazines, which have been collecting in the "finished" pile and take them to the basement, where I pile them in the "finished-to-be-put-away" pile and leave them for a couple of years.

That basement bookcase is a disaster.

But back to my uncontrolled book and magazine buying.

I got an offer last year to get Woman's Day for a ridiculously low price. So, stupid fish I am, I took the bait. Now I get another slick, colorful magazine that I have no time to read once a month.

I keep my magazines in the bathroom so that when I take a bath or use the facilities, I can read. Of course, with an average of a magazine every other day, the reading material is piling up. In fact, the back of the commode is a landslide of magazines waiting to happen.

When I do get a chance to go through my pile, I find that the ar-

ticles in Woman's Day tell me I should clean the grout in my bathroom tile and the rubber thiege on my fridge once a month. My fridge and stove are lucky to get cleaned once a year to get rid of the jelly stains and grease spills. The rubber thiegees are on their own in my house.

Then there are the books. I have authors I like and series I follow. But, I haven't had as much time to read in the last six months as I used to. That doesn't keep me from buying these books as soon as they come out in paperback. My to-be-read pile is almost as big as the finished pile, and not nearly as neat.

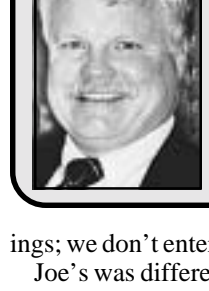
The problem is, I can't stop at buying the books by my favorite mystery authors. I have to buy anything that strikes my fancy.

This is why my unread-but-I'll-get-to-it pile includes "Uppity Women of the Middle Ages," "The Secret Life of Bees," "On the Road" by Jack Kerouac and about 150 others.

Please, someone stop me before I buy again.

PS: I let my National Geographic subscription run out in January. We never read it. Now they have an article and pictures on Oberlin. I'll have to get a dozen, and add them to the pile.

Winning came as big surprise



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
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Cynthia said I'd have to put a "thank-you" in the paper for Stanley Hardware, seeing as how I won the "wishing well" drawing at the store Saturday.

I guess so. First, I'll have to see the prize to believe it. I never win anything. I always figure I'm making a donation when I buy a raffle ticket. (OOPS. No raffles here. Sorry. Not legal in Kansas.)

I especially think that, about the donation, when I'm at Rotary meetings. Not that Rotary would do anything illegal.

The truth is, Joe Stanley about had to bend my arm to get me to enter his drawing, which was, by the way, perfectly legal. No purchase required to win, and all that.

We had bought a bunch of stuff in the store and were about to leave when Joe grabbed me and prompted me to enter the drawings. He had a bunch of them for his 15th anniversary.

Usually, we don't enter downtown drawings. They're mostly sponsored by either the Oberlin Business Alliance or the paper, and either way, it wouldn't look too good for us to win.

So usually we promote the draw-

ings; we don't enter.

Joe's was different. Joe was giving stuff away. We were customers. We could enter. And so I did. I didn't figure to win.

Kim, our editor, won, too, picking the key to open the Treasure Chest. She said someone in the back of the crowd muttered about a "fix" for The Herald. I wish.

Now, I guess, I get a new electric chain saw. All it will do is get me in trouble with my wife.

She doesn't understand guy stuff. "You already have a chain saw," she said, arching her eyebrows.

"But I need one here," I said, pointing out that the one I have is more suited to felling trees than home improvement. Besides, I told her, it's in Colorado.

"You could bring it back," she said.

Feminine logic.

When was the last time she used the chain saw, anyway. The big one, we bought when we lived in the mountains and needed something to cut firewood. It's not quite a logger model, but it's a pretty fair chain saw. Used it to cut down trees and chop them up into logs. I sawed. She and the kids carried and stacked.

"Why did you want a chain saw?" she asked.

I told her I need to cut down the fence and the lilac bush.

She just looked at me, eyebrows arched.

Hey, it's a free chain saw. It's like asking Santa for toys.

Next year, maybe I'll ask for a new drill, one of those nice battery-powered jobs.

I can't wait to hear what she says about that.

U.S. soldier convinced cause is just

To the Editor:

Specialist 4th Class Jason Hahn is stationed in Baghdad, and the following is part of a letter received by his parents, Larry and Sue Hahn of Parma, Idaho, last month. Jason, 22, is a nephew of Dee Magers, Norcat. These fine young Americans need to know how proud we are of them, and how very much we appreciate their sacrifices.

Dee Magers
Norcat

As far as me keeping safe here, I do what I can. If I do put myself in harm's way, it is for a good reason. I hope you know we are fighting

for a reason here. If I do end up getting hurt, it's for all the starving families, and children on the outside of these walls, who have been living under suppressed conditions for their entire lives. I hope to make a difference in the lives to come in the future to this country, even if that means losing mine.

We went to a local school last week to give Beanie Babies to the kids. These are the wealthy kids, who can actually afford to go to

school, and they were skin and bones. The ones on the street corners begging for food as our heavily armed convoy rolls by are far worse off.

Maybe this will make you feel better about me being here. I love you.

Jason

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