

## Game of chance vote will affect our community

There's not a whole lot Kansans can do about what voters in Nebraska decide, except pray.

And we should all be down on our knees, praying that the folks up north are smart enough to vote against an amendment to their constitution that will allow more gambling in the state.

Initiative 417 on the Nebraska ballot proposes a constitutional amendment that would allow people to vote on whether they wanted "to provide for the authorization, operative, regulation and taxation all forms of games of chance."

It sounds so innocuous, so simple, so safe. It's not. It's a prescription for a lot of headaches and heartaches.

Gambling is an addiction not much different from tobacco, alcohol or drugs, and allowing it to invade your state is not unlike having a family member with a drug problem.

And why should we be concerned if Nebraska has a gambling problem?

Gambling is social ill, and who wants to live next door to a person with a severe alcohol or drug problem? Our neighbor's problems will be our problems. They are just a few miles away.

Those problems will include husbands and wives spending the entire month's earnings in the casinos, people losing their homes, jobs and spouses to gambling, and increased crime.

About 16 years ago, the good folks of Colorado said it was OK to have small-stakes casino gambling in three mountain communities

to breathe new life into some old mining towns and "protect their cultural heritage." You can go into Black Hawk, Central City or Cripple Creek today and see the "cultural heritage" in the historic buildings on blocks beside the road. The towns are full of glitzy casinos and little else. The social problems are enormous and the traffic is unbelievable. People who work at the casinos can't afford to live there.

When a second round of initiatives hit the ballot in Colorado four years later, they were soundly defeated. Voters had seen enough of this "progress."

Up in South Dakota, it is the same story. Ask those who were living in a gambling town if they are better now than before craps, blackjack and slots came to town.

Again, why should we care? Because we live 13 miles from the border. If Nebraska allows gambling anywhere close to the border, Kansans will flock across to spend their money and the social ills of gambling will taint us as surely as it does our neighbors.

Are we anti-gambling? We sure are. While the whole country cracks down on tobacco, alcohol and drugs, gambling seems to be gaining a greater and greater hold on the hearts, minds and pocketbooks of our citizens, everything from state lotteries to casinos on Indian reservations.

We know that trends go back and forth, and we can't wait for this one to go back where it came from.

— Cynthia Haynes

## Rio Grande Gorge rugged

We skirted down off the mesa, rolling down the long, swooping approach to the Rio Grande Gorge bridge.

Blink, and you could miss the gorge, for the bridge isn't very long. But it is maybe the third or fourth deepest and most rugged canyon in the nation, though less well known than the Grand Canyon (the biggest) or the Royal Gorge of the Arkansas (best known in Colorado).

The Rio Grande had to cut through thousands of feet of volcanic debris to get out of the San Luis Valley of Colorado and into New Mexico. I have to say, it did a magnificent job.

Across the bridge, and we're almost to Taos, an ancient New Mexican settlement where today Pueblo Indians, Penitente descendants of the Spaniards and rich Americans co-exist.

There's a Wal-Mart now, a McDonalds and a Sonic, but downtown Taos looks a lot like the dusty Spanish village the eastern artists "discovered" after the turn of the last century.

There's no place to park, though, and the streets are lined with expensive imported autos and even more expensive shops. But the food is good, the view from the second-story verandah of the restaurant is spectacular and the fall sky crystal clear.

Up in Colorado, the aspen trees have shed their fall colors, but from Taos to Española, down the long canyon of the Rio Grande, the cot-



### Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes  
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tonwoods are in full color. They could set up a toll booth, and you'd pay for this ride. We stop to buy a ristra of fresh chilies, soft, red and fragrant.

From Española south, the road is lined with new houses and Indian casinos. Each pueblo tribe has a piece of the action, and those without a place along the main highway apparently bought land in town.

Nice hotels, nice stores, all kinds of businesses surround the gambling palaces. Not much compared to Las Vegas, perhaps, but pretty nice for dusty New Mexico. To keep up with the traffic, the state is turning the road to Santa Fe into a freeway, but today it's just a mess.

We plan to walk around to window shop the next day — we don't have any money to spend, and prices are high anyway — but the weather has other plans.

The town is buzzing because John Kerry spent the night here before the final debate. On the plaza, a CNN correspondent is doing a standup on the grass. We debate about whether we should try to make him smile, or walk behind him and wave to the kids.

A fellow from New York watches, fascinated. He says you'd have to go to every state to understand this election. In Santa Fe, he said, all his friends talk about is the environment. In New York, though, the issue is terrorism.

It's a big country, and we all have our own agenda, I guess. Today in Santa Fe, yuppies who saw Sen. Kerry riding his bike among the rich folks up Canyon Road are abuzz. George W. Bush is in blue collar Hobbs. New Mexico is a swing state.

As we head back from breakfast, it's starting to rain. So much for the walking tour.

We have coffee with a friend, drive up to get our lunch mate, drive downtown in the rain for blue corn enchiladas in red sauce. By the time we are done, it's a full-blown snowstorm.

"It's not supposed to rain here in October," our friend says.

Or snow. I start to wonder about the road over the high mesa, but it's dry by the time we get there.

It's cold when we get back to the San Luis Valley in Colorado. Fall already slipping off into winter.



## Scared right in to going on diet

Well, now that I've lost 10 pounds, I'll admit that I'm on a diet.

You know how it is. You still consider yourself a size 12, but the 16s are getting tight. When a pair of Steve's old jeans, which were loose on me last summer, refused to zip, I knew I had to do something.

While buying larger clothes was an attractive option, it's hard to buy jeans for a 5-foot, 1-inch woman with a behind the size of Cleveland. The alternative was to step on the scale and get scared into dieting.

So I did, and I was, and I did. I usually avoid scales. Who needs them anyway? All they ever have is bad news. I can turn on the television and get that.

I was surprised to find that over the last 20 years I've accumulated a few ounces here and there, a few pounds around the middle, a ton or two in the fanny. I weighed more than when I was pregnant, and I remember gaining a lot of weight with that last one.

So, I decided something had to be done.

I've been down this road before. Remember, I said I gained entirely too much weight with my son, and I took most of it (well at least 8-pound, 10-ounces, 19-inches of it) off.

This time, I thought, there has to be a better way — especially since I'm 56.

I checked out the diet columns in a few magazines while munching



### Open Season

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candy bars. I looked over the nutrition information from a dozen pharmacy programs while having an ice cream cone. I checked out a couple of diet books and made a chocolate cake.

I finally decided the only way to lose weight was to eat less.

I know, I have friends who've lost 20 pounds on the Atkin's Diet. There are those who swear by the South Beach Diet. My mother was on a diet where she ate only boiled eggs and grapefruit once.

Still, it seemed to me that if I started eating half of what I was eating, I would start to lose to weight.

One magazine suggested that when going out, you ask for a doggie bag as soon as you order, and put half your food in it before you eat.

This seemed sensible, if a little odd, to me.

After all, we were all taught to clean our plate when we were youngsters. We're still doing that, only now that plate has five times as much food on it. And, we're still cleaning them.

So I started in August, and just stopped eating everything in sight.

I've also cut out most of the desserts, french fries and snacks.

This doesn't mean I don't enjoy a piece of fried chicken with some mashed potatoes and gravy. I just try to divide the order into two meals.

I started this diet in August. On a good diet, I'm told, you can lose about two pounds a week. I seem to be on the one-pound-a-week variety.

I was a little down about that, but Steve reminded me that if I kept up at a pound a week, I would lose 50 pounds in a year.

That doesn't sound so bad. I hardly ever stand slobbering in front of the refrigerator any more, and I've given all my candy stashes away.

I just might make this thing work. Check back with me in six months. I should have lost more than that Atkins smarty.

PS: I'm wearing that pair of jeans, and they fit just fine.

## Mom stands behind daughter

When one of your children says, "Mom, I need to tell you something," you better find a chair, sit down, shut up and hang on.

My oldest daughter, Halley, began a conversation with me that way last week. "I've quit my job at the White House," she said, "and I'm going to be a consultant. Whadya think?"

"You couldn't wait 'til January?" was my first response. I really wanted to go to one more White House Christmas party.

I soon got over that when I heard the excitement in her voice. I knew there was no chance for advancement in the position she held. And she is far too young, and too educated, to settle into a J.O.B. when a dozen other careers are waiting for her "out there".

She thinks being a consultant is perfect for her.

"Just think, Mom. I can tell people what to do. Then I can leave and don't have to care if they do it or not. And, ... I still get paid for it."

"Besides, my office will actually be air conditioned in the summer time and heated in the winter."

The accommodations in the Eisenhower Building, her soon-to-be former office, are less than ideal. Built in the 1800s, it is a majestic, grand structure, but electricity and duct work were far-fetched concepts at that time. Architectural preservationists went into apoplexy



### Out Back

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at the thought of destroying the integrity of the building with the installation of (gas) heating and air conditioning.

Because Halley's desk is directly in front of the only window in her office, she freezes in the summer, because that's where the window air conditioning unit is located. She freezes in the winter, too, because the warmth from the small floor heater doesn't reach back into her corner.

On several levels, I am happy for my daughter's advancing career. But, a little part of me will miss dropping the phrase, "Oh, you know Halley. My daughter who works at THE WHITE HOUSE."

—ob—

I have a friend, who is usually demure and mild-mannered. Up to a point. She reached that point when a young person recklessly caused damage to their property.

That's not the worst part. The youth never apologized. Not a word. Not even an acknowledgment.

My friend about popped a cork. "What kind of parent would let their kid get away with something like that?" she ranted. "My dad would have made us kids go apologize, make the repairs and probably indenture us to whoever we wronged for a month."

What kind of parent, indeed? One needn't look far. When people refuse to accept responsibility for their actions, it is more than likely that, as children Mom and Dad never held them accountable. One of life's hardest lessons to learn is that actions have consequences.

### From the Bible

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. Numbers 6: 24-26

## Reader enjoyed driving on U.S. 36

To the Editor:  
I wanted to write you about our trip east and return on U.S. 36 so that your readers might learn more about the road.

Recently Dottie and I made a trip back to Indianapolis so she could celebrate her 80th birthday with her brother and sister. Heretofore, we have always taken Interstate 70, but this time we decided to try U.S. 36 in order to miss the heavy traffic all the way east of Kansas City. It was not long before we were glad we made the choice.

After you cross the river into Missouri, U.S. 36 becomes a four-lane. It is that way across the state except for two short sections in the eastern

part that are now being made four-lane.

Going through St. Joe was a breeze, as there were no stop lights. In fact, we did not realize we were going through a city. In the rest of the state, we passed through one town, where U.S. 36 meets I-35. During the rest of the trip, we passed through no towns and no stop lights before we exited to take the Interstate.

We left Oberlin at 9 a.m., traveled below 70 mph and arrived in

Hannibal on the Mississippi River at 7:15 p.m. We have never been able to make the river in one day on I-70.

Leaving Hannibal, U.S. 36 becomes interstate 72, a new highway, and a beautiful trip across Illinois with traffic not being a problem. I-72 runs into I-74, which takes you into Indianapolis.

The return was likewise pleasant and relaxing. Try it. You'll like it!  
Floyd Lotker  
Oberlin

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