

Reinstating the draft is an invalid issue for campaign

The phony issue of the 2004 election? The draft. John Kerry keeps trying to hang the specter of a draft to provide troops for Iraq on George Bush. The president has promised, flatly, that he has no plans to begin a draft, but that doesn't stop Sen. Kerry from his attacks. It won't wash, though. First of all, Congress isn't going to institute a draft for Iraq or any foreseeable war. There's no support for a draft. Too many Americans remember Vietnam. We hated the draft then. We don't like it now. We won't vote for it. Neither will Congress, where memories are long and the desire to be re-elected strong. Mr. Bush is criticized for a lot of things that aren't his fault: An economy that started south on Bill Clinton's watch, a supposed quagmire in Iraq that many who've been there say isn't nearly that bad, the list goes on. That's politics. But of all the phony issues, the draft is the worst. The president has never once advocated

a draft, and there's no evidence he's planning to ask for one. The Army is keeping up with its enlistment requirements, and Mr. Bush says he will work to see that it stays that way. The only statements the president has made are simply that there will be no draft next year. Make no mistake: No president could promise that he would *never* ask for a draft. The country needed a draft to fight two world wars, and that could happen again. But that time has not come. We see no reason not to believe the president. Even if he wanted a draft, it unlikely Congress would give him one. By bringing up this issue, Sen. Kerry is pandering to the fears of younger Americans. It's dishonest politics, and it could backfire on him. There are plenty of issues on which he and Mr. Bush disagree — taxes, health care policy, how to fight terrorism, to name a few. The senator ought to stick to those honest disagreements and get off this phony issue now. — Steve Haynes

Trivia game questions hard

"Thank you. Yes, please. I'll have another piece of that pie." Humble pie, that is. Just when you start thinking you are so smart, that's when you get knocked down a peg or two.

Saturday night, a local charity sponsored a fund-raising trivia contest. You were to organize a team, answer questions and walk home with the prize money. Simple enough, except for that pesky part about the answers being correct. Judges always seem to want the right answers.

I love trivia games and thought this would be fun and a chance to pick up some easy money. Wrong! Evidently, there are a lot of really smart people in this part of the country. Who knew? Unfortunately, they weren't on my team, and they knew enough not to ask me to be on theirs.

Here was my strategy. Jim was to cover religion and geography, Jennifer was in for movies, Brian was the history buff, Ila for music, Bob, Susan and I were general knowledge, and Veronica, the youngest person on the team, was our ace-in-the-hole for questions pertaining to anything that had happened in the last 20 years.

We were close on lots of questions. But, as you know, "close" only counts in horseshoes and hand grenades. Here's an example: "What amendment to the Constitution abolished slavery?"



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
cplotts@nwkansan.com

Our answer: the 14th amendment. Wrong. It was the 13th amendment. Like I said, we were close.

Bottom line: we didn't even place in the top 10, but we sure had fun. And I will forever remember that the birthplace of Hawkeye Pierce from M.A.S.H. was Crabapple Cove, Maine.

I didn't know any of the people on the winning team. We, obviously, don't run in the same intellectual circles. Perhaps I should start hanging around some of them, though. I'm already starting to recruit next year's team.

—ob—

We weren't home one day when Jennifer and Alexandria stopped by our house. I had told Jennifer to pick up a cherry pie I had baked for her. Also cooling on the counter were some chocolate, chocolate-chip cookies I had baked while the oven was hot.

They were in their vehicle, ready to leave, when Alex said to her mom, "Do you think it's all right with

Grandma if I had a couple of those cookies?"

Jennifer assured her she thought it would be OK.

Confidently, Alexandria replied, "Yeah. She'll forgive me."

Do these kids know their grandma, or what?

From the Bible

And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy. . . . And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. Luke 18a, 19, 20

Good pet owners clean up behind

To the Editor: As a member of the City Council, it has been brought to my attention that there is a problem of dogs running loose in the park. The problem is not so much that the dogs are enjoying freedom and getting some exercise, but that some owners are not responsible and do not clean up after their animals.

This thoughtless behavior causes an inconvenience and health risk for the majority of park users and gives a bad impression of responsible dog

owners. Children play in the park, families have picnics, Decatur Community High School students have classes and there are tailgate parties. It is a beautiful and attractive part of our community.

Coming in contact with and tracking dog feces around is not the main

reason Oberlin residents go to the park.

To put it bluntly, if you take your dog to the park and the dog considers the park its personal bathroom — clean up behind it!

Dr. Jay Anderson
Oberlin

Letter to the Editor

THE OBERLIN HERALD

Serving Oberlin and Decatur County since 1879

USPS 401-600

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

E-mail: obherald@nwkansan.com

Nor'West Newspapers

STAFF

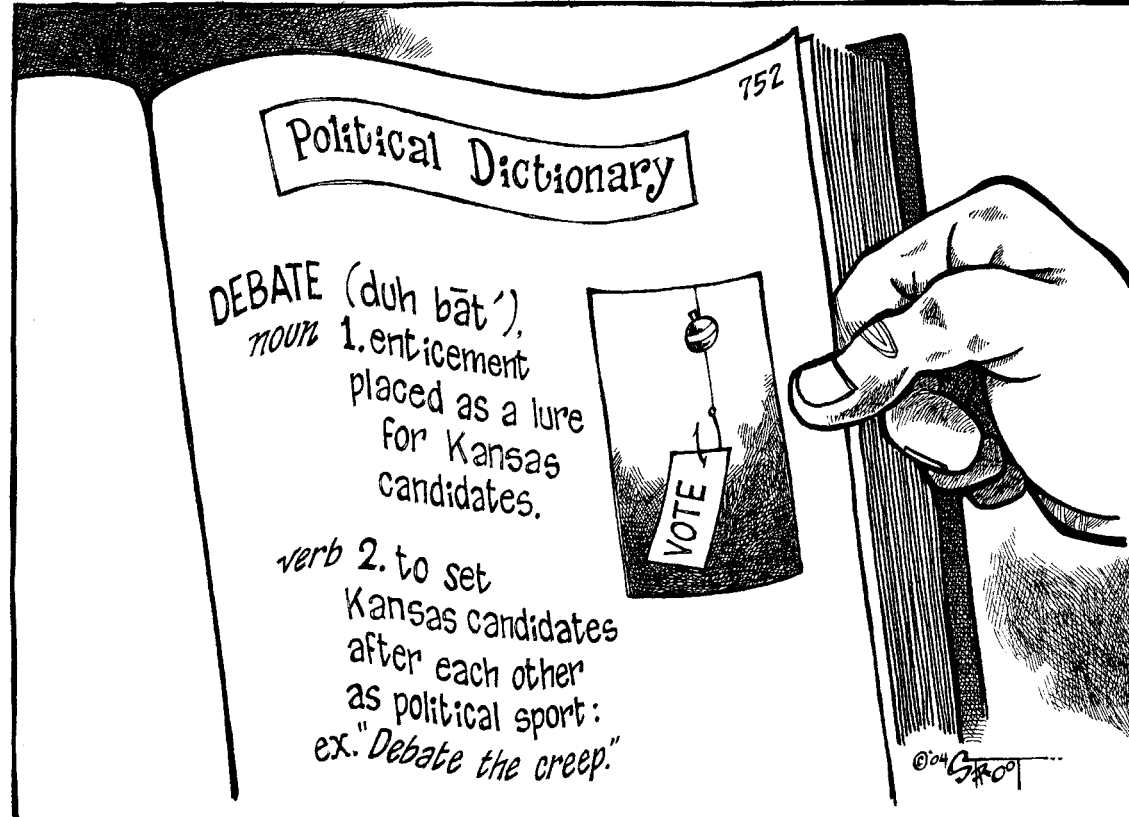
Steve Haynes editor
Kimberly Davis managing editor
Mary Lou Olson society editor
Judy Jordan proofreader
Carolyn Kelley-Plotts columnist
Cynthia Haynes business manager
David Bergling advertising manager
Pat Cozad want ads/circulation
Karla Jones, Doris Miller advertising production
Joan Betts historian
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, Decatur, 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, \$30 (tax included) in Decatur, Norton, Rawlins, Sheridan, Thomas and Red Willow counties; \$34 (tax included) elsewhere in Kansas; \$37 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.)



Lights in hotel just not bright

What's with hotels and light bulbs? Don't they believe in them? I like light and I need it to read. I think I strained my eyes when I was a preteen reading science fiction magazines under the covers with a flashlight when I was supposed to be asleep. Whatever the reason, I really need a good, strong light to read.

So we stay in a hotel with a nice comfy overstuffed chair and ottoman and a reading lamp. You turn on the lamp only to find that it has a 40-watt bulb.

Since the only other light in the room comes from two more 40-watt bulbs at the head of the bed, you need to remember to bring your miner's hat with the little lamp on top to read at night.

We went on vacation recently and the lack of light nearly drove me over the edge, as did the lack of light bulbs.

In Santa Fe we stayed at a nice — not top of the line, but nice hotel. It was near the plaza and oozed old-world charm. It did not, however, ooze customer service.

After finding the desk light had a dead bulb, I walked back to the front desk where a 20-something sweet young thing was flirting with a 20-something young man. Since they were both behind the counter and had neat little name tags, I assumed they both worked at the hotel. I was



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
chaynes@nwkansan.com

the only one at the counter.

I told them that there was a light out on the lamp at my desk. The young man asked me if I would like a light bulb. On getting an affirmative, he handed me a 40 watter.

For what I was paying for that room, I should have received a 200 watter and someone to run right down and put it in for me.

Last week, at a convention in Denver, I came up with the same problem on the light over the bed — dead bulb.

In the morning, I called down to maintenance and was told that someone would be "right up" to fix the bulb. I left for meetings and that night, I found I still had a dead bulb.

The next day I unscrewed the bulb and set it on the bed, intending to take it to the front desk for replacement, but I forgot it. When I returned, the maid had thoughtfully taken the dead bulb and the light socket was bare.

The next day, I finally called the

desk, and while I was out, they gave me another 40 watts of light for my poor strained eyes.

One place we frequent always has 40-watt yellow lights. If the white kind aren't dim enough for you, try yellow.

I have taken to carrying light bulbs with me when I visit.

In Columbia, Mo., last year I went to a convention with Steve. He had three days of meetings and I had nothing to do but read and take hot baths. The hot baths were OK, but after I had pruned up, I realized that I wasn't going to get any reading done with the small amount of light I had.

I took a trip to the closest hardware store and came up with a three-way 50, 100 and 150 bulb, since I had already discovered that the lamp had a three-way switch.

I enjoyed the rest of my trip and took my light bulb when I left.

I should have left it in my luggage. I could have used it last week.

It's who you know that counts

If we base our votes on whom we know, I guess I'll have to vote for George Bush again this year.

I shook his hand once in Washington.

He was speaking to the National Newspaper Association, and those of us in the front row got to shake his hand and say a few words after his talk.

That was before 9/11, Iraq and the campaign, and things were a lot more hopeful then.

I notice that Mr. Bush has more gray hair now, his face more lines.

That same day, we heard from Secretary of State Colin Powell, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony Principi, Secretary of Health Tommy Thompson, and Secretary of Education Rod Paige.

But Mr. Bush, I got to shake his hand.

Sen. Kerry, he seems like a nice enough man, though until he ran for president this spring, I couldn't have picked him out on the Senate floor.

His colleague, the "conservative" senator from Massachusetts, I'd recognize.

Sen. Kennedy's niece is married to the governor of California, I hear, though I doubt she approved of his Republican convention speech. Doesn't matter. I haven't met him, either.

The next year, I missed most of the speeches because our own Sen. Pat Roberts was one of the present-



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
schaynes@nwkansan.com

ers, and I was assigned to escort him to his spot. Him I could recognize.

The year after that, it was former Sen. Bob Dole on the program, and he came early, so we sat around and talked with him about Kansas and old-time politics, back in the 1960s when he was a congressman and I was a student. I wasn't old enough to vote for him then.

Later, we got a personal briefing from Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton in her building. She told us there was no way that they would list prairie dogs as an endangered species on her watch, and sure enough, that issue has gone away.

I knew her already, a passing acquaintance anyway, because she was attorney general in Colorado when we lived there. She's bright, lively and intelligent, well-spoken and never beats around the bush. No pun intended.

I don't see how she can survive long in Washington, but she seems to manage. I'd vote for her; in fact, I have.

I haven't met Dick Cheney, sup-

posedly the evil influence behind the crown. Some friends from Wyoming, where he was a congressman, got in to talk with him at his office, before the days that it was an undisclosed location.

From what they said, he was a pretty nice guy for an evil genius. And then there's Sen. John Edwards, the vice-presidential candidate from South Carolina. He's a trial lawyer with a big, toothy grin.

But then, my dad was a lawyer. Let's leave the jokes there.

Anyway, I haven't met Edwards, either. Don't think I can vote for him.

I remember in 1968, I saw or met all the candidates, Republican, Democrat, Hubert Humphrey, Dick Nixon, Nelson Rockefeller, even George Wallace.

I took their pictures, listened to their speeches, talked with some of them.

I'm not sure that's possible today, even with a press pass.

I didn't vote for Wallace, either, but that's another story.

Woman won't vote for senator

To the Editor: Do you really know the people you visit with?

A few years ago, I thought I did, and I allowed Sen. Sam Brownback's sign in my front yard for the election. Yes, he did win.

After a few years, he was going to do me a favor and have his staff investigate a problem in Topeka. His staff got back to me and tells me

there is nothing!

A few years later, I paid an attorney \$7,500 to find out the truth, and Sen. Brownback was wrong, and he never answered my letter to date!

My mother was right. You do not

know a person until you have a business dealing. How true it is, and no, Sen. Brownback, you will not get my vote this year.

Elsie Wolters
Oberlin

Letter to the Editor

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@nwkansan.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.