

Who says we're losing the war on terrorism?

Are we winning the war on terror? Or are we letting Ossama bin Laden get away?

Charges and countercharges fly in debates, on the radio, in columns and editorials.

The truth is harder to come by.

While no one would argue that the threat of terrorism has gone away, al-Qaida has not mounted any serious attacks on U.S. interests in recent months.

Even the Democrats agree that President Bush did the right thing when he invaded Afghanistan, drove out the insane Taliban government and liberated its people.

Afghanistan is no longer a base for terrorism. The camps are gone, the support base that bin Laden depended on now denied him.

Did bin Laden "get away."

Maybe. We haven't arrested him, and he still sends out the occasional rant on tape.

Most people believe he's holed up in the lawless fringe of Pakistan, where American troops cannot go without losing one of our most important Muslim allies.

You know there are a lot of people — from the military to the CIA to many of our allies — looking for him. Some day, if he's alive, he'll be found. The \$25 million reward will prove much too tempting.

Meantime, his effectiveness as leader of al-Qaida is nil. He has abandoned radio and Internet communications, using only couriers with multiple cutouts. It may take weeks for his commands to move a few miles.

And over the last three years, we've killed or captured many of his top lieutenants. Al-Qaida ain't what is used to be.

The war in Iraq, in a strange way, is helping to win the war on terrorism. If terrorists are "flowing across the border" to fight in Iraq, they're not blowing up embassies in Africa or buildings in New York.

And in Iraq, we're killing these "foreign fighters" by the hundreds.

We haven't found any weapons of mass destruction — and what that says about not just our intelligence services, but everyone's, is disturbing. But we may well be winning the war by drawing terrorists out in the open where we can shoot them, round them up or keep them too busy to blow things up.

Americans are famous for our impatience. We want results, and we want them now. We tend to think that our government can do whatever we want it to, and do it right away.

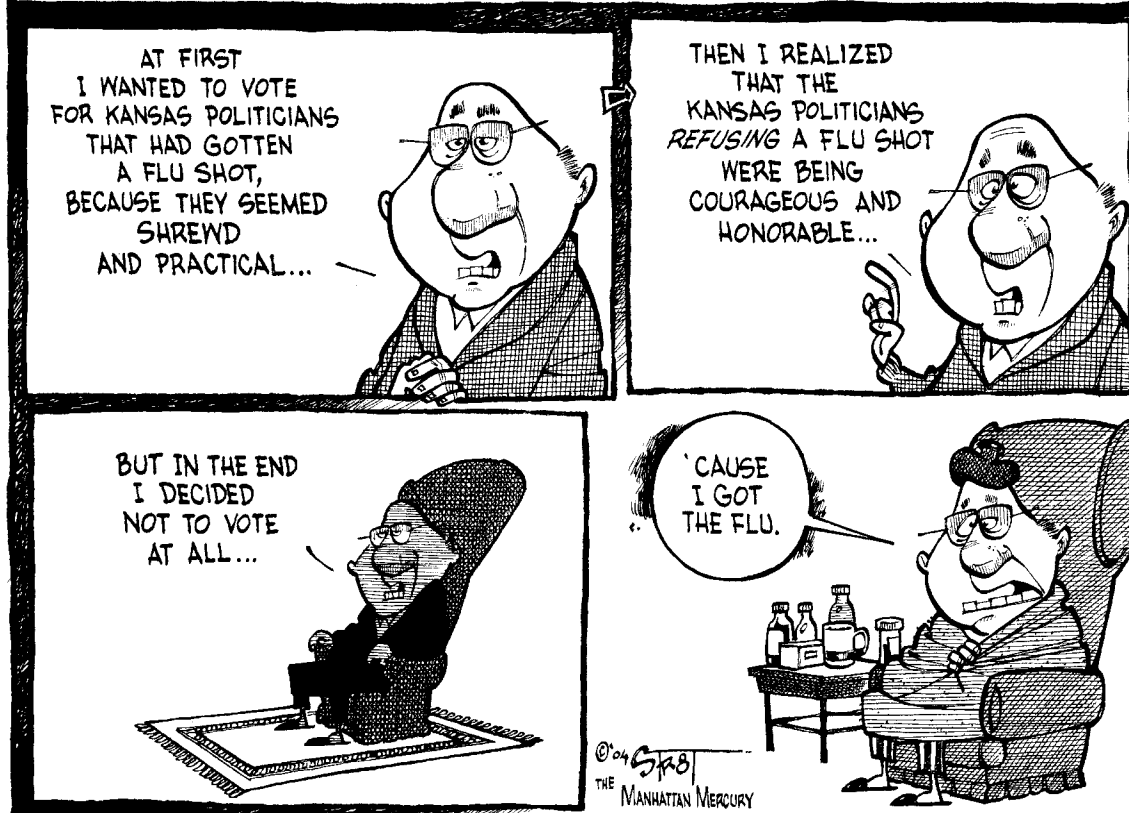
That kind of resolution has escaped us so far in the war on terrorism, but that's only to be expected.

After the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, President Bush warned us that this would be a long, dangerous and difficult fight. He didn't promise a quick victory, because he knew that wasn't possible.

Still, if we haven't won this war, we've certainly won some battles. We've also made some mistakes.

Only time will tell the rest.

— Steve Haynes



Clothes just magically appear

Clothes multiply if you don't keep a close eye on them.

On Sunday, I decided to clean out my closets. It wasn't going to be anything so desperate as pulling stuff out and actually sweeping the floor or anything like that.

No, I just wanted to put some winter clothes in my main closet and move some of the summer stuff to the auxiliary closet.

Having an auxiliary closet sounds better than saying I'm storing stuff in the kid's room. Since youngest daughter moved out eight years ago, I've been slowing sneaking stuff into her closet.

None of the closets in this house is big. If I stood in our closet or in those of the rooms our son and daughter occupied, I could touch all four walls without fully extending my arms. Steve and I have to share our closet, and luckily, it's the biggest.

Since his wardrobe consists of two suits and half a dozen sport coats, plus slacks and short-sleeved shirts for the summer and slacks and long-sleeved shirts for the winter, he doesn't need quite as much space as I do.

While my wardrobe is not as extensive as some I've seen, I do need the necessities — long skirts, medium-length skirts, short skirts, long-sleeved tops, short-sleeved tops, sleeveless tops, short dressy



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
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dresses, long dressy dresses, short casual dresses, long casual dresses, suits, slacks, jackets and accessories. And those are my winter clothes.

I also need all of the above plus swimsuits and shorts for summer. I don't do fall and spring. I wear whatever seems best from the summer and winter wardrobes, and usually end up being too hot or too cold halfway through the day.

Since it was the last day of October, Sunday seemed like a good time to move summer into daughter's closet and winter back into mine. I couldn't quite figure out from where all those short-sleeved shirts came. I don't remember some of them, and I'm sure I didn't wear half of those this summer. They really must have been hiding back there, multiplying like mold on a loaf of bread.

Then I realized that the floor of the closet was covered with clothes. I'm not sure how long things have been moving off their hangers and taking

up residence down there. I guess I haven't been looking down often enough.

Some of the stuff had fallen off their hangers. Those I either rehung or threw down the laundry chute to be re-washed. (Anything on the floor is destined to pick up a lot of cat hair).

But, what about the pile of neatly folded slacks, which I'd never seen before in my life? Is some slacks fairy sneaking into my house? Did I buy five pairs of slacks at some time and put them on the floor? Did the moths bring back the sweaters they ate last year and re-sew them into slacks? Or am I just losing my mind?

With these thoughts in mind, I decided that I had done enough clothes moving for one day and went off to take a nap with the blanket I found hiding behind the slacks.

EDITOR'S NOTE: I know where she got those slacks, and if she's nice to me, I may tell her. It was only a couple of years ago.

Outdoor plants pretty inside

That "snap" in the air is more than brisk fall air.

Winter is on the way. This morning, the Weather Channel showed snow falling in Colorado. It's doubtful it will make it this far, but when our westerly neighbors get it, we can't be far behind.

I know it's almost winter because the lobby at my office is filling up with the employee's outdoor potted plants. It's a large, sunny room with the west wall made almost entirely of glass. It makes a perfect greenhouse.

We have some real "green thumbs" in this office. Geraniums spilling over huge pots add a splash of color all winter. The ivy is going wild and my big aloe vera plant is loving its new spot. I just wish I had a way to get my big yard cart with portulaca and baby's breath into the lobby. It would take a small trailer to bring it in, and I don't think I dare ask Jim to do that.

—ob—

I don't mean to frighten anyone, but Christmas is just 54 days away as of this writing. I thought we just packed away Christmas stuff a few weeks ago. And here it is again. One columnist wrote about catalogs a few weeks ago. She and I must be on the same mailing lists because I, too, have been inundated with catalogs. I'll know it's officially the holiday season when I receive my Figi's catalog with the "it's your last chance to order" sticker on the front.

—ob—

My granddaughter Alexandria is sporting a new pair of glasses. Bifocals. Can you believe it? She's only 9. Her mother said she puts them on



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
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first thing in the morning and doesn't take them off until she goes to bed at night. The doctor hopes that the prescription plus a regimen of eye exercises will improve her vision to the point that she won't need glasses at all. Styles are so cute nowadays, though, and kids don't mind wearing them at all.

Which brings to mind my first pair of glasses. The year was 1962, I was a sophomore in high school and I had to have a pair of those horrible black bat-wing, gold-at-the-corner glasses. Whatever possessed us to think they looked good?

But that was the style, for both boys and girls. Well, the boys didn't wear the cat-eye kind of frames, but theirs were just as bad.

—ob—

I have had the most amazing week. It has been my honor to interview several World War II veterans in preparation for a special edition before Veterans Day on Nov. 11. The recurring themes amongst these men were modesty, commitment and patriotism.

"We did what we had to do," is the phrase I heard over and over.

Almost 60 years have passed since the end of that war. Dates and names have faded for some but

memories of friends, living and lost, are still vivid.

Attention! Gentlemen, I salute you.

From the Bible

Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established: And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches. Proverbs 24: 3, 4

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 oberherald@nwkansas.com.

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

Thank-yous should be submitted to the Want Ad desk.

Late weekend weather perfect

Maybe it'll snow, but the weekend was just about perfect.

Saturday was for relaxing. I caught up on reading and took the dog for a ride. She likes that.

Cynthia went to the office to sort out her desk. Sorting out her desk on Saturday is relaxation for Cynthia.

OK, I was reading office memos and press association bulletins. It was more relaxing than actual work.

In the evening, we went out to the valley to walk. It was warm enough for short sleeves, at least when we started.

Along the creek, most of the trees have long shed their leaves, except for the big cottonwoods. They're in full glory to slightly past their prime, bright yellow with a green underlay.

In the golden light of late afternoon, they seem to catch fire. There were some clouds, but the sun dipped below them, and sent golden rays out to kiss the bluffs along the Sappa.

Who cares if the rest of the leaves are gone?

We grilled a T-bone for dinner and went to bed with the window open. It was like spring.

Sunday, we strolled to church, then walked to the grocery for let-



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
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tuce. It was cooler, but the day warmed up fast.

Sunday is yard work day and copy editing day for me. For Cynthia, it is mostly sports day.

After lunch, we turned to the yard and garden. I mowed, mostly leaves, but it's all mulch. Cynthia raked, clipped and cleaned. She wanted to get the leaves up along the curb and around the steps.

Of course, she raked them all out for me to mow up. She got the clippings spread out on the garden after she rounded up and bagged the zucchini vines. She found one little squash still growing.

We picked tomatoes, knowing that the killing frost was hard on our heels. Halloween isn't bad for the last harvest, though, and we have three boxes of fruit to ripen this month.

It was another beautiful day to walk, and we went back to the valley. The clouds on the leading edge of a big low system were moving off to the east, and the sun back lighted the remaining cottonwoods.

The dog loves it when we walk in the valley, because there are so many birds. She loves birds, all kinds of birds. She'll chase a dove for a quarter mile.

We felt lucky to have two evenings out in the valley. On the way back, Annie went on point, and there was serious clucking in the cornfield next to the road.

We watched as first one, then another hen pheasant burst out of the corn. Last came the rooster, an easy going-away shot if only the season was on.

Maybe the dog will amount to something after all.

Entertainment rated as first class

To the Editor:

Our hats are off to the Southwest Nebraska Community Theatre and the Oberlin Arts and Humanities Commission for bringing "Arsenic and Old Lace" to the Morgan Theatre last Saturday.

It was first-class entertainment for a capacity crowd. The set design

Letter to the Editor

was outstanding and the acting superb.

We are indeed fortunate to have so much talent in the area and such

a great facility in which to perform.

Kay Marcuson
Oberlin

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