

Schools need to explain science, philosophy of life

The state Board of Education has been holding hearings on evolution, much to the glee of those who think us a backward and uneducated place.

It's unfortunate, though, that the liberals who laugh at any mention of creationism don't see the intolerance that they foster.

In reality, this is a debate we shouldn't be having.

While the scientific evidence for evolution is strong, there is plenty of room to believe that God created this world. Since there is no way of proving that, however, it's not really in the realm of science.

Our schools need to be both rigorous and tolerant of all views.

That means they should teach evolution as science, and explain to students that not everyone accepts it as fact.

Evolution is a scientific theory. So is gravity. And like gravity, it rests on plenty of evidence.

Yet science has a way of changing as we learn more about any field. Religion tends to lag behind. Remember that once, everyone believed that the world was flat, and that the sun and stars revolved around us.

The church accepted that as God-given fact, and punished Galileo for challenging it with his theories.

There may still be a few who believe that the universe revolves around this place, and that is their right. Science, though, has left them behind.

There is no science behind the idea of cre-

ationism or of "intelligent design," rather philosophy and religious faith. But you can't prove either with research, and those who claim that you can almost always argue from a religious, and not a scientific, background.

One thing is certain: our understanding of all these things will change over the next century, and schools need to keep up.

Our schools need to teach the latest science, but they need to temper that with a healthy respect for other views. Creationism and intelligent design ought to be considered, but not as science.

They rightly belong in the realm of religion and philosophy. These are the intellectual underpinnings of our society. An education which ignores them would be poor indeed.

That said, it would be wrong to flog anyone's religious beliefs off as science.

Most Americans probably accept the idea that a greater power created this universe and the wondrous life it contains.

Most also would accept the idea that we know a lot less about life's origins than we think, and most would agree we should respect each other's views.

That's what Kansas schools should teach kids, but defining how is not easy. Humans tend to be low on tolerance, short on science and blind to the weakness of our knowledge.

Let the debate continue, but look with a jaundiced eye on those on both sides who claim they have all the answers. History shows they do not.

— Steve Haynes



Embassy visit quicker than flight

I visited Greece earlier this month without ever leaving the U.S.

Every year during the National Newspaper Association's Washington meeting, we're invited to visit an embassy. I've been going for the last four years, and I haven't been anywhere I didn't want to visit.

My first trip was to Chile, where I learned about wine, fishing, Easter Island and the incredible diversity of that long, skinny country in South America.

Next I visited Saudi Arabia. We learned a lot about Islam and its roots in that desert country. Hand me a burka; I'm ready to go watch camel races and hear the call to prayer.

Last year, we were closer to home in Costa Rica. Sandy beaches, tropical forests and a great exchange rate prompted the president to plan a board meeting in that Central American retreat.

This year, it was Greece.

The Greek embassy is a beautiful old building on embassy row in Washington. We were greeted by Minister Eleftherios Anghelopoulos and our choice of red or white wine, orange or tomato juice or water.

As we sat on divans and window seats, the minister told us about relations between his country and the U.S. and talked about the Olympics, which Greece hosted last year.

As he spoke, suited waiters circled among us with enough hors d'oeuvres to ruin my diet and my supper.

Mr. Anghelopoulos said that Greece felt that the Olympics were



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
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a success for his country and that the many upgrades made in infrastructure — roads, subways, stadiums — will help Athens move forward in the 21st century.

There are many U.S. citizens of Greek descent, he noted. Almost every city in the country has a sizable Greek population. Because of this, a lot of Greek citizens come to the U.S. each year to visit family and friends.

Over the past 10 to 12 years, he said, Greece has focused on Europe to draw tourists to its shores, and there has been a decline in U.S. tourism.

Part of that is because the euro, the European currency, is strong now against the dollar. This means that a U.S. dollar doesn't buy as much as it used to in Europe.

Greece gets about 14 million tourists a year, he said, but only 200,000-250,000 Americans.

On the international front, Mr. Anghelopoulos said, Greece favors all the Balkan nations being allowed to join the European Common Market. This would include Bulgaria, Romania, Albania, Croatia, Turkey, the Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia,

Herzegovia, Serbia and Montenegro. These nations should also be part of the North American Treaty Organization (NATO), which the U.S. helped to form after World War II, he said.

At home, he said, Greeks have lots of newspapers and magazines. Athens has at least 20 daily papers, Mr. Anghelopoulos said.

"Freedom of the press in Greece is sacrosanct," he said. "It is absolutely protected by law."

Young Greeks spend six years in elementary school, three in junior high and three in high school, he said.

The constitution does not allow private colleges or universities but this is being debated. Health care is free to all.

Taxes, he said, are at the European level, about 50 percent for most people.

So I learned about Greece, its people, its problems and its hopes for the future.

I didn't get to see a temple or a ruin or even hear the name of Alexander the Great. But, like Jeremiah the Bullfrog, on my visit I had some mighty fine wine.

G'ma slows down to save gas

Here's a little free advice: don't get behind me on the highway if you're expecting to drive over 45 miles per hour.

Granted, in the past I had a reputation for conducting low-level flights on Highway 36 in my cute little teal green Geo Storm. But that was before gas prices hit \$2.19 per gallon.

Now, I drive a conservative (matronly even) older-model white Cadillac. I hate to say I drive a Cadillac. It sounds so pretentious. But, like Jim says, "A \$6,000 Cadillac costs the same as a \$6,000 Chevy." And, I do hate car payments. My car has a display that tells you how many miles per gallon you are getting. Once, after forgetting to reset my cruise control after several miles in a 55 mph construction zone, I realized my miles per gallon rate was considerably higher than it had been at 65.

Since I log quite a few highway miles going to and from work, I decided to conduct a little experiment and slowed down even more. The results are in: Your best gas mileage is between 40-45 miles per hour.

Don't get excited. I only drive 45 when there is no one on the road behind me. I ease it up to 60 when I see someone coming. A car traveling too slow is as much of a hazard as a car traveling too fast. Bottom line is, I'm trying to squeeze as many miles out of every gallon as I can.

From Sunday School classes to coffee breaks at work, people, ev-



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
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erywhere, are discussing the Terri Schiavo case. And, even in Sunday School, emotions can run hot about what is the difference between someone's right to die and the medical profession's obligation to keep them alive and "do no harm".

Giving someone food and water has never been considered "heroic means" of keeping them alive. Artificial breathing and heart machines and drugs are.

That has never been the case with Ms. Schiavo. She can breathe fine on her own. But, like a newborn baby, she just can't feed herself.

Isay, "Ms. Schiavo," because her so-called husband has broken his marriage vows, has been living with and making babies with another woman. He has made money from Terry's condition and, seemingly, has only selfish reasons for wanting to see his "wife" dead.

The issue hinges on his "rights" as her husband to make the decision to end her life. No one disputes how agonizing a decision it is for a spouse or family to decide to turn off life support when there is no sign of brain activity and their loved one's body cannot sustain life on its own.

That is not the case here. Terry Schiavo's body functions and so does her brain. She can smile at her parents, her eyes follow objects and some have said that with proper therapy, she might even be able to talk.

If someone were to put a puppy in the town square and tell the world, "I am not going to feed and water it, and you can't either. We are going to watch it die," there would be such an outcry you wouldn't believe. It would not be tolerated. Starving to death and dehydration is a slow, agonizing way to die. It is not humane.

The honorable thing for Mr. Schiavo to do would be to get a divorce and let her parents take care of her, like they have always wanted to. Then he can go crawl back under the rock he came from.

As a Christian nation, it seems ludicrous that this discussion is even taking place. Turning off machines is letting someone die; not feeding them is murder.

I think I read, somewhere, that we're not supposed to do that.

Vandals steal plaque, flowers

To the Editor:

Memorials created in the loving memory of a deceased person are not for the dead, they are for the living. How overwhelmingly petty is it for someone to desecrate the memory of a deceased person? I ask this because of what I discovered after church on Sunday.

I drove to the cemetery for a moment of reflection. When I arrived, I drove to the spot where my son and I had placed a park bench in memory of my deceased husband, Rich Keeling. There I found the park bench sitting empty, void of the bronze engraved plaque that was purchased with memorial monies graciously donated by the people of this community who were touched by the loving, genuine spirit of Rich. Gone

too, were the flowers that had been placed there several Memorial Days ago by an anonymous friend. Gone too, were the peach roses that I had placed there this past year.

It is not like the plaque could have fallen off; it was tightly secured, as were the flowers, securely wired to the bench. It must have taken some effort to remove these items. So, I ask the petty person(s) who removed them, does it make you feel good knowing that you hurt not only me and my son by your actions but also the many, many friends and people in this community who truly

loved such a kind and caring man as Rich? Does it make you feel like more of a man to take your hostilities out on us by desecrating our memories?

Due to the expense, the plaque will not be replaced for quite some time. But believe me, it will be replaced! You can vandalize the park bench again and take the next plaque, too, but you will not take the memories of the kind and gentle man whom this park bench honors.

Tracy L. Keeling
Oberlin

Letters to the Editor

attempting to throw up huge smoke screens so as to cover up the huge blunders of our politicians. As long as we have lobbyists in Washington, we are going to have corrupt politicians.

It is time to take action, or in a few years we won't be called the United States of America.

I will be watching carefully to see if you have enough sand in your craw to print this.

Jack Roberts, 2216 Squires St.
Longmont, Colo. 80501

I have no argument with the legal immigrants.

You say our economy is so good that we can't find workers at home. This is a crock, as all the big businesses know that the immigrants will work for less. This brings down the labor costs for the companies that hire them.

Why don't we just send all of our businesses to China and India? This way we don't worry about our huge trade deficits, as they will have it all. All of you good Republicans are

Over 3 million illegal immigrants crossed our southern borders last year. Of these, 45,000 to 48,000 were not identified as Mexican.

In these last few years, it's estimated that over 20 million illegals are in our United States.

association recommends that we have the A1C test done at least twice a year, blood pressure at every doctor visit, and cholesterol checked at least once a year.

What can you do to reach your goals and be healthier?

- Develop a health care plan with your health care team or doctor.
- You may have to change some of your goals.
- Make some changes in your meal planning or exercise routine.
- Medicines usually are needed to keep your diabetes in control.
- Get regular check ups.
- You may need special testing on your heart and blood vessels.

Warning signs of a heart attack:

- Pain or tightness in your chest, shoulder, neck or jaw.
- Shortness of breath.
- Trouble talking or seeing.
- Severe headache.

Some goals recommended by the American Diabetes Association:

- A1C below 7, blood pressure below 130/80, triglycerides below 150, cholesterol LDL below 100, HDL above 40 in men and 50 in women.

Your health-care team may advise other tests to check the condition of your heart and blood vessels.

The more knowledge you have on diabetes, the better your chances.

Elsie Walters, Oberlin

Did you know that two out of three people with diabetes die with stroke or heart disease? The American Diabetes Association has advised Diabetes Under Control on research findings, hoping that knowledge may help many people avoid complications from diabetes.

You can reduce your risk by managing your ABCs of diabetes.

A is for the A1C test that measures what your blood sugar has been for the past two or three months.

B is for your blood pressure.

C is for cholesterol

Talk with your doctor and ask the questions you need to know. The

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