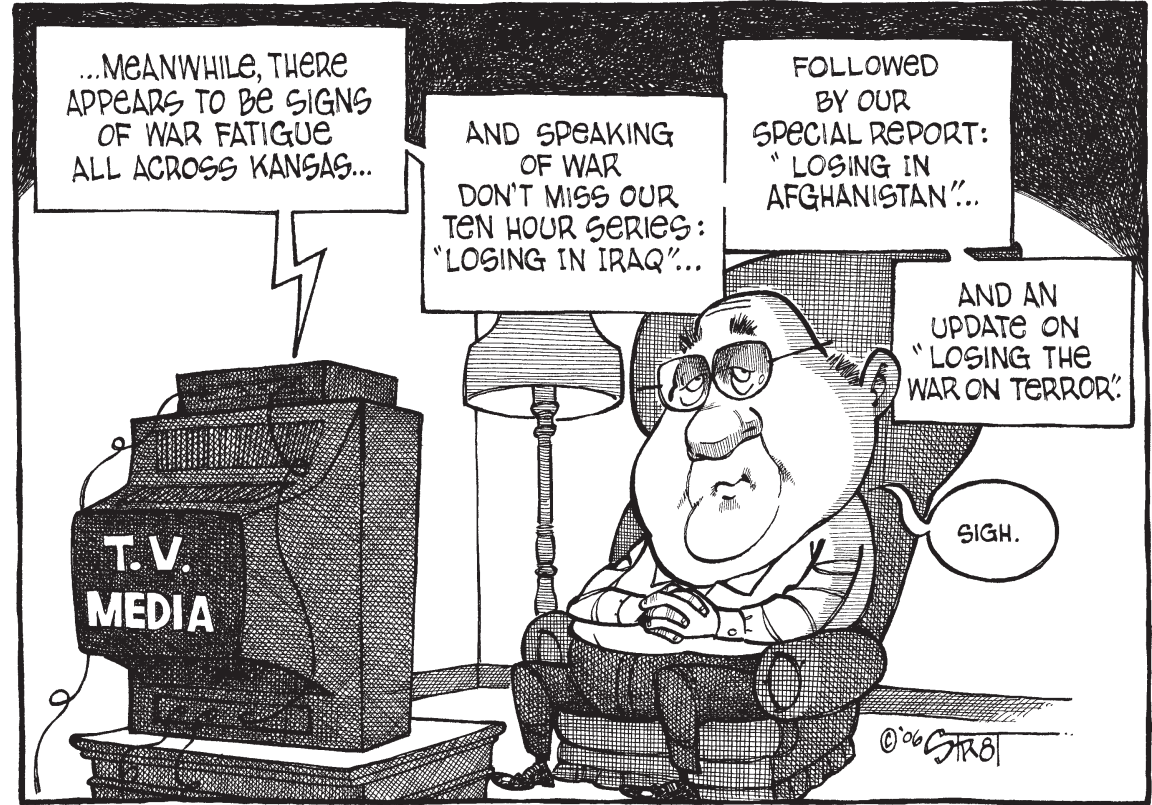


# Judge causes another school funding uproar

The mood was optimistic when the Legislature opened its session this year. A new study of education costs suggested a slightly lower figure than one done a couple of years ago. House and Senate leaders and the governor worked together to craft a compromise everyone thought might please the Supreme Court, which had ordered millions in new spending for public schools. Everything looked rosy until politics in the Senate blocked action on any of the pending proposals. Democrats weren't buying either plan put forth by the Republicans — \$633 million from the House and \$724 million in the Senate — and conservative Republicans weren't buying the leadership's plan. The third plan, a \$495 million design by Sen. Jim Barnett of Emporia, a candidate for governor, met with objections from Democrats, who of course have their own candidate, and from the more liberal leadership. So when the Legislature went home, it had done nothing on schools, despite the threat of action from the high court. How could that happen when everyone agreed on the plan? Word was even a Supreme Court judge sat in on some of those talks, but who could believe that? Except, apparently, it was true. When a reporter asked, one of the judges' fessed up. Friday, the court's spokesman announced that Judge Lawton Nuss, a Salinan who is a recent court appointee and once represented the Salina School District, had withdrawn from the school case. The judge admitted having lunch with two senators, including the president and top Republican leader, Steve Morris of Hugoton. The judge further admitted they had talked about school finance, though he said — and the senators agreed — that he had only asked for information about various school proposals. There was no admission of any deal mak-

ing. "Nuss said, 'I think the court should know this conversation occurred,'" spokesman Ron Keefover said. "He decided to rescue himself, and the court agreed." "I guess he wanted to be above any appearance of impropriety," said Sen. Pete Brungardt of Salina, one of the two senators, "but there was none there." Whatever. Everyone else agreed the incident was a shocking breach of judicial ethics. That a Supreme Court member would allow himself to be so compromised seemed incredible. That senators would involve themselves in such a discussion was remarkable indeed, considering the Legislature was the main target of the school lawsuit. The repercussions from Judge Nuss' admission have yet to be felt. The scandal will throw the school debate into an uproar. Legislators are supposed to settle the issue when they come back this week. That may not happen now. Beyond that, it's even money that Judge Nuss will be out of a job before the summer is out. The situation calls for judicial discipline, and it will be interesting to see how the other judges handle the case. Someone needs to ask if Nuss just bumped into this mess, or if he was representing the rest of the court in an attempt to broker a deal, a theory that Topeka rumors a week or two ago would support. In the end, the court, which had seized power over budget-making in Topeka, may find itself in a much diminished role. The court's enemies will jump on it with all fours. For a court that was on a roll, the result might be devastating. Tsk, tsk, your honors. Even the high and mighty can take a fall. —Steve Haynes



# Moving just makes body hurt

You've heard of "out-of-body" experiences? The experiences we had this weekend were completely "in-body" experiences, but now we wish we could be out of these old bodies. We hurt. Moving is for young people. We spent two days on the road with an over-loaded U-Haul truck, one pickup pulling another (both also loaded), and an SUV with two cats, one 11-year-old, one pregnant woman, every piece of computer equipment you could think of, an enormous dried flower arrangement — and me. Delays on the road put us several hours behind schedule. By the time we arrived in San Antonio, unloaded the truck and deposited household belongings in the relative vicinity of the rooms where they belonged, it was almost dark. We piled back into one pickup (not air-conditioned, in Texas, I might add) and made the trek north to Dallas, arriving at our daughter and son-in-law's home about 12:30 a.m. It's amazing, though, what a good night's sleep will do. We woke at our usual 6 a.m. and tip-toed around the house until "the kids" got up. Kara said Taylor came into their bedroom and said, "Mom, Grandma and PaPa aren't in their bed." Soon, the whole household was up, and another work week had started. Jim rode along with Adam to take Taylor to school. While they were gone, an emergency alarm came



**Out Back**  
By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts  
cplots@nwkansas.com

over the two-way radio. Adam is a volunteer firefighter in the area where they live, and he had to respond. It was a medical emergency and we haven't heard the outcome yet. Jim left to pick him up at the fire station, so we'll get briefed before we leave. It's always fun to see the kids. I just wish it wasn't always on the run. Time for us to get home, though. It's going to seem lonely for a while, with Alex and her mom gone. But we know this move is best for Jennifer and her family. —ob— It's said as we get older, we become more like children. I must be back at about the 18-month age, where they put everything in their mouth. Jim and I were rummaging through Kara's cupboards to find oatmeal for breakfast. Soon, I had a little pan cooking and I was looking around her kitchen. Um-m-m, I found a little bowl of jellybeans. One or two before breakfast wouldn't hurt. Hm-m-m, what's this? Looking through the cellophane wrapper, it looked like a cheese snack. "Never seen these before," I thought to myself. I popped one in my mouth and began to chew. "Yuk, these are terrible," I thought as I chewed and chewed, guessing the Texas humidity had toughened them up. I picked up the bag and began to read. Chicken-flavored, quesadilla cheese snacks, so far, so good. Read on. They were called "Smackles Puffs," treats for dogs. DOGS ... spit, sputter, spit, spit! Between laughing and spitting, I was afraid I was going to choke. No harm done, though. Except now I have this uncontrollable desire to chase cats.

**From the Bible**  
Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Hebrews 9: 12

# She hates to say goodbye to old car

It's hard to sell my Sebring. Not hard because nobody wants it. I've had several people ask about it and a couple have taken it for a spin. It's hard because I have trouble giving up my cars. Eldest daughter had an old brown station wagon as her first car because I sold it to her. She didn't particularly want an old brown station wagon. She would have preferred a nice shiny, red Porsche or Mustang. Her pocketbook, however, was more in the brown-station wagon mode, so she bought it and complained for years until she was able to upgrade to a nice sporty Cavalier. At that point, she sold my old station wagon — back to me. I got a red Probe for my birthday in 1990. I drove it until 1999, when my son borrowed when he was a senior and I was out of town. He ran it through a barbed-wire fence. He wasn't hurt, but he was walking most of his senior year. His father didn't take kindly to him "borrowing" Mom's car without permission. I had two choices at that point — take the insurance money and get a new car or fix up the Probe. Steve pointed out that the Probe, while it



**Open Season**  
By Cynthia Haynes  
cahaynes@nwkansas.com

was my baby, was a nine-year old car with almost 150,000 miles on it. When he put it that way, I went car shopping. I needed a vehicle and I needed one now!. I ended up getting the Sebring, and it's been a good car, but I never connected with it like I did my station wagon or that Probe. In fact, I ended up buying the Probe back from the insurance company. For \$1,000, I got a not-too-fancy repaint and repair job and I use it as a spare when my car is getting serviced or is in the shop. Steve started talking to me about getting a new car almost a year ago. I dragged my feet. Even though I've never "connected" to the Sebring — probably because my kids called it an "old lady's car" when they heard it had automatic transmission and power windows — I wasn't ready to make a break. Steve, however, is persistent. He would bring the subject up every couple of months and drive me by the car lots, pointing out the advantages of various models. He almost had me sold on a sporty little two-seater, but I decided I liked my "old lady" automatic transmission and power windows and wasn't ready to go back to a manual transmission. I finally found a Solara and now I have to part with one of my cars. We only have a two-car garage and there already isn't any place to keep the Probe. I can't have three cars. That's a few too many spares. But, gee, I hate to give up the Sebring. I just learned how to spell the name and I still don't have a clue what a Sebring is. Come to think of it, I don't know what a Solara is either, but it's cute.

# Third time was not a charm

Some days, you just shouldn't get out of bed, I think. In fact, that sounds like a pretty good idea for today. It's wet and cold and nasty out there. But it's paper day, and I have to go to work. If I don't, the rest of the staff knows where I live. They'd come find me. I think Fabiola wished she hadn't gotten out of bed on Thursday. If she'd have called in sick, she'd never have met Cynthia and I. And her life would have been much better for the experience. Not that we were mean to her, mind you. Just that she had a whole lot of trouble getting us into a hotel room. We drove to Wichita for the annual Kansas Press convention. It was at the Marriott, which is billed as being on East Kellogg, the main drag, though it isn't. The hotel actually is on a sort of private drive that wanders in from a side street. Wherever you are on Kellogg, you can see it, but you can't get there from there, no matter where there is. The hotel property backs up to the east Turnpike entrance, but the access road runs about a quarter mile east on private land. That came in handy the last time the convention was there, because Fred Phelps came to picket. He has to stay on public property, which was so far



**Along the Sappa**  
By Steve Haynes  
schaynes@nwkansas.com

away that nobody noticed him. Anyway, we left late and drove all afternoon, skidding in just in time to check in and go on the tour. Fabiola gave us a room on the second floor and we zipped on up. When we got there, the key worked but the room obviously was occupied. I was parking the car and met Cynthia on her way back to the desk. Fabiola gave us new keys for a room on the third floor. As we opened the door, we knew something was wrong. The beds weren't made, the bathroom was a mess and there were personal effects on the desk. The room was, in a word, occupied. Cynthia's jaw dropped. After she came to her senses, she exclaimed her disappointment: "Two occupied rooms," she said, "and I don't get to see one naked man." I assured her it would have been a middle-aged businessman with a pot belly, and she'd seen that already. She went back to the desk. The look on Fabiola's face was priceless, sort of. She gave us another room, on the fifth floor this time. I was starting to worry, because the hotel only had eight floors, and time was slipping away. When we got to the third room, though, it was clean and unoccupied. We unpacked the luggage cart and Cynthia started to draw a bath. "Oh," she exclaimed. "The water isn't hot and it'll take all night to fill at this rate." She was right. The shower would barely run a drip. I started for the front desk. I didn't think Fabiola wanted to see Cynthia again. Halfway down the hall, Cynthia called to me. "I got it to run," she said. I was glad. As I got back to the room, the phone rang. It was Fabiola. "Is your room all right?" she asked in a worried voice. "Fine," I reassured her. She had no idea.

**THE OBERLIN HERALD**  
Serving Oberlin and Decatur County since 1879  
USPS 401-600 Phone: (785) 475-2206 Fax (785) 475-2800  
170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749-2243 E-mail: obherald@nwkansas.com  
Published each Wednesday by Haynes Publishing Co., 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749. Periodicals mail postage paid at Oberlin, Kan. 67749.  
**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 ..... wantads/circulation  
Karla Jones ..... advertising production  
Joan Betts ..... historian  
Jim Merriott ..... sports reporter  
Whitney Beinke ..... page makeup

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). POST-MASTER: 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.)

**Kansas Press Association**  
NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION

# Children welcome at FROGS Camp

**Letter to the Editor**  
To the Editor: The April 12 issue of *The Oberlin Herald* contained an article outlining several great ideas to improve our community. Some of these ideas dealt with the needs of our children. The Outreach Team at Oberlin Covenant Church would like to remind people that we have a great children's program at City Park every summer. It is called FROGS Camp and this will be the fifth year. The camp will run Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., from June 26 through the month of July. The camp is free and open to kids

entering second through sixth grade. This camp includes of games, crafts, singing, stories, special event days, field trips and family nights. It is a great program, and this year's "Head Frog" will be Anthony Marshall. We are excited to have him head up FROGS this summer. We would love to see your child there. We would appreciate any help anyone would be willing to offer. We always need volunteers to help with crafts and snacks. We would also appreciate any donations so we can continue to provide this service to the children of our town. If you have any questions, or can provide assistance, call the church at (785) 475-2769.  
Oberlin Covenant Church Outreach Team  
Joan Glading