

## We need to make do with less water than we use

Kansas needs to make a lot of decisions about water, and not all of them involve issues in the state's control.

Kansas farmers pump more water out of the Ogallala aquifer underlying the western plains than nature puts back, drawing wells down each year. Eventually, there won't be enough water to grow irrigated corn out here.

The big question is, should we slow down now, and make the water last? Or wait until we have to?

Water in western Kansas river basins, including the Republican River drainage in our northwest corner, isn't adequate to cover current uses, especially irrigation wells in the so-called streambed aquifers. (These are separate from the Ogallala.)

The state isn't giving out new well permits, but our use is more than interstate compacts allow. Nebraska farmers below us do the same.

Kansas is suing Nebraska in the U.S. Supreme Court to get its fair share of water from the river. Where does that leave northwest Kansas farmers?

There is water in most of our federal reservoirs, but less every year during the turn-of-the-century drought. All of the lakes out here in the northwest have fallen during the current drought.

Already, irrigation is losing out at these lakes, designed more than a half century ago as "multiple use" facilities. Recreation, cities, storage and industrial use seem to win out.

Back in eastern Kansas, though, the reser-

voirs are being sucked down to perpetuate the folly of barge navigation on the Missouri River. Relentless releases designed to bring the river up just a few inches draw down lakes which have become vital to the Kansas economy.

Over the years, the Army Corps of Engineers has deepened, narrowed and straightened the river channel to help move barges. In dry times, that's not enough, though, and the Corps calls on Kansas water.

Who benefits? Barge operators, mostly. Grain and other commodities moved on the river could be moved by taxpaying railroads and existing highways rather than using federal dollars to dredge and straighten the river.

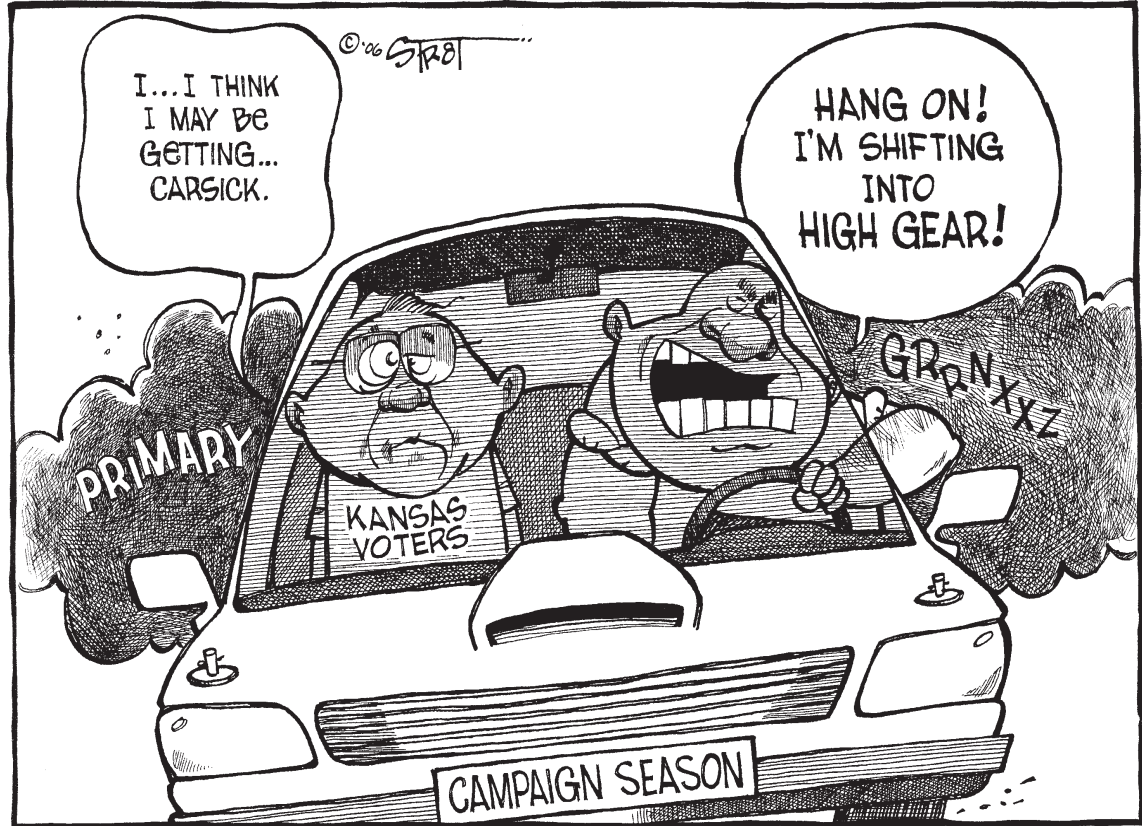
The deep, fast flow barge operators want threatens fish and other river life, with little benefit to anyone in this state.

We're not alone in this. Nebraska and Dakota economies depend on federal reservoirs, too. Many people up there want their lakes left at levels that promote recreation. Drawdowns to promote barge traffic can leave boat ramps and marinas high and dry, driving off boaters and fishermen.

All across the plains, farmers face the same decisions about wells and irrigation. There's not enough water anywhere.

The right thing to do is to maximize the resource, which means using water well and wisely. Knowing what that means isn't always easy, but one thing is for sure:

In the future, we'll all have to do more with less. — Steve Haynes



## She just has to borrow grandkids

I don't have any grandchildren, but my baby sister Marie has five.

It's just not fair. My kids are all older than hers and one of mine is even married, while both her boys are single.

Of course, she cheated.

While my kids are out partying and getting older and older — the oldest is 32 and the youngest 26 — little sister went off and married a guy with six kids and a pair of granddaughters.

Since her marriage two years ago, the step-children have added twin boys and another little girl.

Last month, Marie and her husband took off for our place in Colorado with a son, daughter-in-law, the two oldest granddaughters and twin boys in tow.

I'm told they had a great time.

I know I had a great time planning for their arrival.

We have a children's room in Colorado with bunk beds and a closet with a few toys — mostly boy toys, since my youngest is a boy. The girl stuff had long disappeared into who knows where.

I wasn't sure what to do about the boys. They weren't going to be able



### Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes  
cahaynes@nwkansas.com

to play with my son's "guys." (Boys don't play with dolls. They do action figures, known in our family as "guys.")

Still, I picked up a couple of toddler toys at the thrift store. Later, I heard that they fought over my choices.

The girls were a different story. I was a little girl once, a long time ago, and some of my favorite memories are standing in front of grandma's mirror decked out in her costume jewelry, scarves and aprons.

I hit the yard sales and thrift stores and searched my jewelry box.

I came up with dozens of strings of fake pearls, satin beads, bright strings of Mardi Gras leftovers and hair ribbons. I picked up a couple of

dolls and some clothes and about two dozen filmy scarves some little old lady once used to protect her hair as she left the beauty parlor.

I left all my goodies in the closet and told my sister she had to report back.

The report was that she had two little fairy princesses decked out in beads on their heads, necks, arms, legs and middles. Many of the necklaces were used to hold the scarves in place and the bedroom was a shambles, with stuff strung everywhere. The dolls ended up wearing nothing but hair bows.

There's nothing like a messy kids' room to spell success.

I may not have any grandchildren — lucky sister — but I was a little girl for about 20 years, as I recall.

## Terrorists want minds, souls

In case you've been wondering what this war is all about, al-Qaida has thoughtfully issued a video explaining.

Osama bin Laden and his troops, it seems, are just looking out for our immortal souls. And you thought they were just a bunch of nut cases out to blow things up.

The 48-minute video features Osama's No. 2, Ayman al-Zawahri, and a young American the FBI believes has been training as an al-Qaida terrorist.

The American, Adam Yehiye Gadahn, 28, reportedly makes a long speech in the tape, his second with al-Zawahri. He explains how God sent the Prophet Mohammed to correct the "errors" in Judaism and Christianity.

In his introduction, al-Zawahri exhorts us to convert before it is too late:

"To the American people and the people of the West in general... God sent his Prophet Mohammed with guidance and the religion of truth."

Gadahn warns American soldiers fighting "Bush's crusade" they're on the losing team:

"Instead of killing yourself for Bush, why not surrender to the truth (of Islam), escape from the unbelieving army and join the winning side? Time is running out, so make the right choice before it's too late."

So there you have it. You thought it was about oil.

But it's oh so much more than that.

And yes, the terrorist leaders may be nut cases, but they're dead serious about this. Like those two crazy



### Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes  
schaynes@nwkansas.com

cartoon mice, Pinky and Brain, they spend every day plotting how to take over the world.

They think it can be done. They have a vision of a Muslim paradise here on earth, where every knee bows to Mecca and every tongue acknowledges Allah.

It seems so silly, such a... nuisance. A tiny army without a country, fighting the great powers of the world. Trying to dominate them.

But stranger things have happened.

Bin Laden and his cohorts don't represent a majority of Arab thought. Most Arab leaders believe in a live-and-let-live approach to world affairs. While they have their issues, they know we all have more in common than the things which separate us.

"We are all sons of Abraham," one said to me, referring to the three great religions based on "The Book."

But al-Qaida represents, if not a majority, a movement, a dangerous one at that.

It's not an Evil Empire, not a powerful nation-state, but more deadly.

The Russians are a threat, but only a threat. Armed to the teeth with nuclear weapons, they knew they

could never use them.

The terrorists, however, have little to lose. It's more than likely that they will get and use a nuclear weapon. They would set one off in Washington with glee, shedding not a tear for the millions of innocents who would die.

War between Islam and the West is their goal. They don't care how many die, even if most of them are Muslim.

It's not that they want the U.S. out of their world. They want the whole world.

And if we don't stop them, they might win.

That would be a disaster for us — and for the millions of Muslims around the world who share neither their ideology nor their rabid fundamentalism.

It would be easy to say, "let them rot." But Osama and his ken won't let us.

We owe a duty to the world, especially to our grandchildren, to put a stop to this menace. We cannot ignore it, for the penalty will be great.

So might the rewards of success.

For given the chance, all the sons of Abraham might just learn to get along.

## 9-11 added to horrific days

Just like Dec. 7, 1941, and Nov. 22, 1963, Sept. 11, 2001, will be one of those days etched in your life's story.

I wasn't alive in 1941, but those who were remember exactly where they were when they heard the news of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.

I was alive in 1963. I was a junior in high school, sitting in a bookkeeping class on the second floor of my school. The principal came over the public address system, "President Kennedy has been shot. Our president is dead. School is dismissed." We filed out of the building in stunned silence.

Now, five years after the terrorist attack on America, our memories of that infamous day are still raw. Tears well up when we watch film clips of the events. America's innocence was lost.

This morning, it was hard to tear away from the televised coverage at Ground Zero. A friend said she watched as Donald Rumsfeld got choked up during his speech. We recorded President Bush's address.

It's painful to remember — but we dare not forget.

We dare not forget that these Muslim extremists want to kill us. "Us" is every non-Muslim on the face of the earth.

It is a religion often spread at the



### Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts  
cplotts@nwkansas.com

end of a sword. Convert or die. Pretty simple.

Those who say it is a peaceful religion don't understand that it is peaceful only for obedient Muslims. Ask what happens to a Muslim who wants to leave the faith or convert to Christianity.

Oh, goodness, I didn't mean to get so heavy handed. I just don't want us to get complacent, thinking it can't happen here, or that if we're tolerant, "they" won't bother us.

—ob—

I, for one, am ready for cool weather. But, summer isn't quite over and we'll probably have one more heat wave before the shorts and flip-flops can be retired. Of course, anymore kids wear flip-flops year around, so that's no sign of when summer is over.

This summer has been so oppressively hot for so long we need some relief. Not that I want snow and ice

just yet, but cool days and nights sound really good to me.

—ob—

Jim is beginning to feel like a rock star. I am his private paparazzi.

Every time he finishes a cabinet door, installs a light or hooks up a water line, I am in his face with the camera. I am documenting every phase of the remodel job on our house. What a scrapbook we will have.

Fair warning — if you don't want to see pictures, don't ask, "How's the house coming?"

### From the Bible

Better is a handful with quietness, than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit.

Ecclesiastes 4: 6

## Oberlin makes news on public radio

To the Editor:

Did you know that Oberlin was mentioned on the National Public Radio (NPR) national news show "All Things Considered?"

I believe it was Aug. 9 in the 4 p.m. hour.

It was in a story about unusual ways to relieve stress. One man

### Letter to the Editor

from Oberlin said he did it by working the wheat harvest.

I thought that was interesting. Perhaps you can go to the NPR ar-

chives to see this.

Dr. Serena (Moody) Bradshaw  
Columbus, Ohio

## Honor Roll

Welcome and thanks to these recent subscribers to *The Oberlin Herald*:

**Kansas:** Myrtle Shaw, Alice Urban, Colby; Marilyn Henke, Manhattan; Pat Franz, Shawnee; Donna Reinert, Topeka; Larry Anderson, Ludell; Chuck Johnson, Marilyn Linn, Wichita; Larry Johnson, Leroy Brown, Phillip Ritter, Alfred Cressler, Bill Nelson, Jennings; Lonnie Morford, Burlingame; Marj Konoalske, Lenexa; Milton Anderson, Vliets; Clay Anderson, Harlan Grafel, Kevin Schiessler, Herndon; William LaSalle, John K. Gallen-

tine, Clayton; Wanda Schuhs, Leoti; Rex Vernon, Independence; Marilyn Hatch, Debby Gunselman, Lawrence; Gary Fisher, Atwood; Dewayne Jackson, Robert Strevey, Stan Miller, Mike Mapes, Norcat; R.W. Johnson, Rexford; Dan Shuler, Jetmore;

Dick Kelly, Goddard; Nancy Larson, Hiawatha; Larry Wolfe, Lynne Flanders, Overland Park; Doris Mizell, Lula Hix, Norton; Robert Wessel, Selden; Shanna Richards, Garnett; John Faber, Brewster; Mike and Mary Stephenson, Leavenworth; Eloise

Holliday, St. Francis.

**Nebraska:** Don Macfee, Lebanon; Violet Myers, McCook; Shirley Wishon, Ron's Applying Service, Danbury; Gail Rippe, Indianola; Mary Smith, North Platte.

**Oberlin:** Fred Counter, Roger May, Crystal Moore, Mike Coleman, Dorothy Jackson, Melvin Smalberger, Lyn Reynolds, Dan Grafel, Luella Sloan, Ralph LaSalle, Floyd Brown, Lois Lamb, Bill Goodnight, Irene Fringer, Steve Nelson, Dwight Garnhart, R.W. Hessenflow.

## THE OBERLIN HERALD

Serving Oberlin and Decatur County since 1879

USPS 401-600

170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749-2243

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

E-mail: obherald@nwkansas.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 ..... wantads/circulation  
Karla Jones ..... advertising production  
Joan Betts ..... historian  
Jim Merriott ..... sports reporter  
Whitney Beinke ..... page makeup



Subscriptions: One year, \$33 (tax included) in Decatur, Norton, Rawlins, Sheridan, Thomas and Red Willow counties; \$38 (tax included) elsewhere in Kansas; \$42 elsewhere in the U.S. Foreign subscriptions, \$50-\$250 (in US dollars only) 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.)