

We simply can't tolerate torture by United States

Congress debates, the administration whines, the CIA wants this or that, but there must be a clear answer on torture.

No.
Sen. John McCain, tortured brutally during his years as a prisoner in Vietnam, know the score. He's led the fight to get the U.S. away from any kind of prisoner abuse.

The war on terror is vital, yes, and the military and intelligence agencies need to interrogate captured terrorists. That should never involve torture, and hopefully the bill set to come out of Congress will set some clear guidelines.

Torture is not part of our heritage, though it once was common enough in what we like to call Western Civilization. Our constitution bans "cruel and unusual" punishment and gives criminals the right to refuse to answer questions.

The standard we uphold at home is good enough for us to uphold abroad.

One problem is defining torture. Some of the excesses of Abu Ghrabi amounted to nothing more than sophomoric pranks, while other approached and some passed the limit. There's no excuse for mistreating prisoners, but ours is one of the few armies in this world that actually punishes soldiers for stepping over the line.

That's one thing. Torturing prisoners, using pain to elicit answers, is wrong whenever and

wherever it's done.

The United States should have no part in it. For one thing, prisoners will say about anything to stop torture, and the answers they give often are not accurate.

There are gray areas, too. Tactics aimed at disorienting prisoners and breaking down their will, such as leaving the lights on day and night or keeping a cell warm or cold, sometimes are lumped in with torture.

The CIA has kept key prisoners in secret lockups in eastern Europe, some inherited from the old Soviet regime Abu Ghrabi itself, a notorious Baghdad prison, came to us from Saddam Hussein.

Stalin, Lenin, Saddam. Are those names we want to be associated with?

The Bush administration has tried to make its own rules as the war on terror evolved. That's no way for a nation to do business.

Torture is not part of our agenda. It can never be part of our agenda.

When, as happens in any war, soldiers get out of hand, the U.S. should do what it's always done: prosecute the violators and teach the rest a lesson.

When agencies want to go beyond what's acceptable, we the people need to make our will clear.

And that doesn't include torture in any form. Are you listening, Washington?

— Steve Haynes

Two planes required for reunion

Through rain and sleet and dark of night and a foot of snow, I made it to my class reunion.

Although Concordia is only three hours away, I had to take two planes to get to my reunion. I was in Colorado on vacation.

When I woke up to a foot of snow that Friday morning, I was afraid I wouldn't make my plane. But I caught the plane in Alamosa and flew to Denver, then changed planes for McCook. From there, I drove to Concordia for the reunion.

Forty years is a long time, but 29 out of 30 of us are still around, though Sharon has suffered a heart attack, Bob's had both knees replaced and Marcia can't see out of one eye or hear out of one ear.

For a bunch in our late 50s, we're in pretty good shape.

The turnout was good. We had 21 class members and three former classmates for dinner or drop by afterwards.

I graduated from Notre Dame High School in Concordia in 1966. Twenty out of 30 of us had gone to school together for 12 years.

Several friends elected to go to the public high school, but we still counted them as classmates.

The award for the one who came the farthest went to Phillip from Seattle. The award for the grayest went to the homecoming queen — not because she was grayer than many others, but because they figured that since she's a beautician, she should have fixed it.

They didn't give an ugly-duckling-to-swan award, but it would have gone to Emily. She couldn't drive as a teen-ager because she couldn't see well enough to pass the test. She was tall and uncoordinated.



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
cahaynes@nwkansas.com

She was also the only girl in the school with braces — an expensive luxury for most of us in those days.

Today, she is a tall, confident woman who must have had eye surgery, since she drove to the reunion from her home in Topeka.

Steve couldn't go with me to the dinner, so I took my sister, Marie. She is six years younger than me but has lived in Concordia most of her life and knows everyone.

She seemed to have a good time and was better at identifying classmates, who had somehow aged about 40 years, than I was.

I wasn't the only one to bring my sister. Sam brought his, too. He said after the last reunion, his wife refused to return. I must have missed that one — sounds more interesting than most.

While two classmates never married, a good two-thirds of us have had the same mate for 35 years or more.

Most have children — Bob and Marcia, who married shortly after high school, have eight and Regina has five children and 13 grandchildren.

While most of us have been married for years and years and our children are grown or in college, Lyle has 5-year-old twins. He didn't bring his wife and I can only pray

that she is a lot younger than he is.

In high school, Dennis liked Leanna and Leanna loved Mike, whom she married right after graduation. Dennis moved to Arizona and married. Several years after both marriages broke up, they found each other again and were wed in 1995. They win my lovebird award.

Me, I was the know-it-all, the Lucy from Peanuts, the Margaret from Dennis the Menace.

I wasn't good at sports and wasn't socially adept, but I was the class valedictorian.

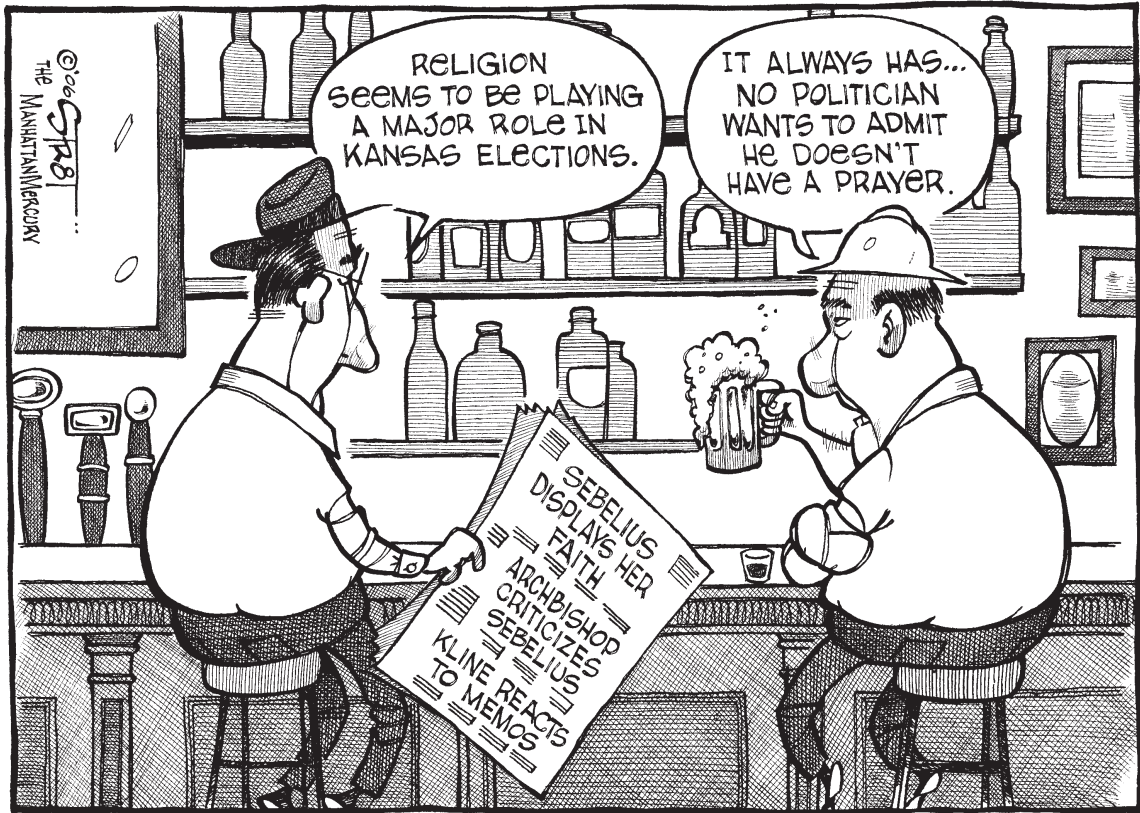
But, most of you could have guessed that already.

After spotting the differences in weight, hair and wrinkles, we got down to some serious gabbing and discovered that we really hadn't changed all that much at all. Marcia is still a tomboy, Sharon is still shy, Regina is still the organizer and I'm still a know-it-all.

From the Bible

The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

Psalm 64: 10



Integration takes some time

One of the arguments you hear about immigrants today is that "they" come here with their own culture, band together, speak their own tongue and don't mix with the rest of the populace.

How soon we forget. In a nation where all of us descend from immigrants, you'd think we'd understand this process. Yet the Cassandra's are everywhere. Even Paul Harvey, the noted news commentator, jumped on the bandwagon, decrying "the end of American culture."

It's pure hogwash. We grew up, reading in our history books about the great "melting pot" of cultures that makes up America. We believe that, or used to.

Of course immigrants speak their own language. Immigrants always have.

No one gets off the boat speaking perfect English, at least not in the last century and a half. Often, the first generation never really masters the new language.

The second usually does, and the third tends to move clear away from its roots.

It wasn't that long ago that the Kansas plains were dotted with schools where students learned in



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
schaynes@nwkansas.com

the languages of their parents' homelands. There are plenty of people in this county who can remember speaking low German in Lutheran schools.

Few of them today could carry on a conversation in German, we'd guess. In fact, the state has a project to preserve the language as it was once spoken here. It seems the third-generation descendants wanted nothing to do with it.

Cynthia tells an old family story that she was left with a couple of aging aunts near Concordia as a baby, and the first words she spoke were in French. Her parents were mortified, of course.

The point is, we're not that far removed from the last round of foreign-born, non-English-speaking immigrants.

The Republic withstood that wave, emerging stronger, more vibrant, more diverse and more inter-

esting. It will survive the current wave, too.

Immigrants, as they do today, always have faced obstacles to integration into society. Spat on and discriminated against, they always gather in some ghetto, take the worst jobs and bear the slings and arrows of outraged, if misguided, "natives."

They persevere then and now, because they see the promise of a better life in a free country. They want that for themselves and for their children.

That's part of our heritage, the good and the bad of it.

They speak another language? They always have. It used to be Greek, Italian, German, Polish, Russian, French, Croatian, Serbian; today it's mostly Spanish and Asian languages. Tomorrow, who knows.

They'll get over it. So will we, if remember our history.

Job is more work this week

Some weeks are full of fun, excitement and new people. And then, some weeks are nose-to-the-grindstone, don't-look-up, get-the-job-done kind of weeks.

That's what last week was. In a small office, everyone wears a lot of hats. In a newspaper office, there are lots of hats to wear. One moment, you might be writing a feature story, then the phone rings and you have to dash out for a picture.

Or you are on the phone confirming facts when a customer walks in to place a want ad. There's always something happening. Then take one employee out of the picture and, all of a sudden, the pieces of the work pie get a whole lot bigger.

Veronica is the "kid" of our work team. I know she's a young adult, but she's still a kid to me. Like everyone else in this country 30 and younger, being computer savvy is second nature to her.

When I ask her how she knew to do whatever function, she says, "Oh, I just figured it out."

I don't care how much time I have, I never can "just figure it out."



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
cplotts@nwkansas.com

This is all leading up to the fact that Veronica is on vacation, forcing me to absorb some of her workload. She left written instructions for every one of her job duties. In minute detail. Right down to "click," "arrow down," "double click" and "enter."

It hasn't been easy, but we did survive last week. At the beginning of the week, I wouldn't have given you odds on our chances of actually getting a paper out.

But, we did, and in the process I learned some new skills. Not perfected yet, but new skills nonetheless. This "old dog" learned a new trick.

—ob—

Progress on the house is moving right along. We finished painting the closet and utility room this weekend, moved the woodworking equipment into the old living room and got the new living room ready to finish.

Just a few more pieces of sheet-rock to hang and Jim can top, tape and texture, and then we'll paint that room. He's building our entertainment center in a rustic style. The front will be out of weathered cedar to resemble old barn doors.

We're neither one of the "foo-foo" type, and we want our home to be comfortable, livable. It will, definitely, be a place where you can put your feet on the furniture.

Man says church campaign wrong

To the Editor:
Asking the question "What would Jesus do?" is an excellent method to reflect on the ethics of your actions.

That question came to mind when I read about how Attorney General Phill Kline was going to various churches to further his re-election campaign. His own campaign memo states that one objective for attending these worship services would be to meet "money" people for the purpose of getting large campaign contributions.

Reader sends news, enjoys paper

To the Editor:
I read the paper all the time. I was raised three miles northwest of Traer.

I have had some bad luck lately. I lost my middle daughter to melanoma April 6 and my wife passed away June 15 from an aneurysm. Thanks for keeping the paper coming.

Edward J. Wurm
855 S.E. Clay Street
Albany, Ore., 97322

Letter to the Editor

Every gospel in the New Testament tells of the wrath of Jesus against those who were misusing His temple to gain wealth and power. The Gospel according to St. John states: "Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple..." (chapter 2, verse 15).

The answer is obvious what Jesus

would have done to Phill Kline because of his repugnant abuse of God's house. It is equally obvious what voters must do.

They must vote him out of office.
Tim Peterson
2015 Cedar Crest
Monument, Kan., 67747
(785) 846-7834

Honor Roll

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

H. H. Benton, Vienna, Va.; Sarah Hurla, Alexandria, La.; Lyle Pummer, Ozark, Mo.; M. L. Welter, Iowa City, Iowa; Duane Waldo, Tucson, Ariz.; Bettie Janning, Storm Lake, Iowa; Elmer Waterman, Bonaire, Ga.; Patricia Demaree, Idaho Falls, Idaho; Sheila DeKnight, Stockton, Mo.; B. J. Klingenstein, Dayton, Wash.; Patty Sagenstein, Loganville, Ga.; Mrs. Gladys Schichtel, Traverse City, Mich.; Betty Gosar, Casper, Wyo.;

Beckie Almquist, Zumbreta, Minn.; Keitra Clark, Edgewood, N. M.; Thomas McCoy, Belle Fourche, S.D.; Frank Ashley, Elmhurst, Ill.; Lynda Mueller, Enid, Okla.; Crichton Roberts, Honolulu, Hawaii.

California: Fred Reith, Chico; Fred Wilkening, Roseville; Lorraine Love, Coronado; Mae Hester, Sugarloaf; Robert Martin, Westlake Village;
Colorado: Jean Ronia, Aurora; Lester Williams, Northglenn; Dennis Fraker, Meredith J. Huff, Denver; Rick Kiser, Greeley.

THE OBERLIN HERALD

Serving Oberlin and Decatur County since 1879

USPS 401-600

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

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, Norcatur, 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, \$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.)

