

State government lacks immigration authority

The people raising a hue and cry in Topeka for bills to hamper illegal immigration don't understand a lot of things.

First of all, they don't understand that whatever they do, it won't happen.

People come here to work because we have jobs and no one to fill them. They come illegally because we have no way to let them come work legally.

A Mexican citizen trying to get here to work might have to wait 10 years for legal permission. These people want jobs now.

The state has no authority over immigration anyway. It's not against state law to be here without the proper paperwork and the state has no authority to regulate immigration.

It's a federal problem, but people scared of immigrants are frustrated because Congress hasn't done anything that works.

But if Congress can't do anything, why do they think the state can?

The state used to issue driver's licenses to immigrants, regardless of status. Then we changed the law to deny licenses to illegal immigrants.

Guess what?

People who hike or swim or fly across the border under cover of darkness have no fear of driving without a license. Or insurance. Shot ourselves in the foot with that one, Kansas did.

Another bill would deny state benefits to illegals. There's no reason, in fact, to offer any

benefits to illegal immigrants. They come here to work and we shouldn't offer them welfare.

But does anyone believe this bill will slow down the flow of immigration?

Not as long as there are jobs to be had.

Some people want to build a fence along the entire Mexican boarder, but the cost is astronomical, approaching a trillion dollars. Thank the Lord Kansas won't have to pay for any of that out of the state budget. No one knows who would build it anyway.

Others want to declare English as the official state language, claiming that "for the first time in the nation's history," a group of immigrants doesn't want to learn English.

That's not true — most have to learn English to work, and children in schools learn English — but it belies the fact that across Kansas, schools held classes in German, French and other languages less than a century ago, yet those groups did learn English. So will today's immigrants.

Perhaps the biggest thing these people don't understand is that by playing to the rabid anti-immigration crowd, the Republican Party it throwing out all the work President Bush and his crew did to cultivate and incorporate the Hispanic vote into the GOP mainstream.

They will seal the party's fate as a minority for a generation if they keep this up. It's wrong, offensive and foolish.

But they don't understand much.

— Steve Haynes

Abode not ready for roaming

Friends have asked when we're having an open house to show off our remodeled home.

First, let's define "open house." The name implies that one — literally — opens their house to guests, allowing them to roam at will throughout your abode.

Since there are still some hard-hat areas in our house, that is not an option, yet. We don't want anyone struck by falling debris.

It's going to be awhile before we install permanent floor covering. Until then, we're using carpet Jim salvaged from a job.

The cats love it. There is a roll of carpeting leaning in the corner of the kitchen. Sammy and Pete think we brought it in just for them. They climb to the top of the roll, then perch there like little spies.

Sometimes they play a kitty version of "King of the Mountain" and knock each other off. They're so much fun to watch, we're talking about building them some sort of climbing post with nooks and perches close to the ceiling.

We are ready to make a big push on two upstairs rooms. They both need the sheet rock finished and painted. Then we can bring the rest of the furniture over from the other house. That has to happen soon because we have rented The Sunflower Inn and the new occupant wants to move in on March 1.

But, that's just us. We work better under a deadline.

My other dilemma is where to hang all my pictures. We've been putting a few pieces up — those without a decision required.

Since I'm all about theme rooms, some pieces can only go in certain



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
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areas. The family room is cowboys and Indians, the bathroom is sand and sea shells, the kitchen is sunflowers along with cobalt blue and yellow, the powder room is out-houses, and so on.

That leaves me wondering what to do with my collection of windmills. They don't seem to fit anywhere. My friend Kathy, also a windmill collector, probably has a suggestion. But I'm not ready to turn them over, yet.

I dialed my youngest daughter's home number over the weekend and her sister, Halley, answered.

After the usual pleasantries, I asked, "Where's Adam and Kara?" "They went skiing," she said.

My next question was, "So, is Taylor staying with you while they're gone?"

"Are you kidding me?" Halley said. "They barely trust me to watch the dogs. Do you really think they would trust me with their daughter?"

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A Sunday School teacher asked, "Johnny, do you think Noah did a lot of fishing when he was on the ark?"

"No," replied little Johnny. "How could he with just two worms?"

From the Bible

But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

I Corinthians 8:6

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.,

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Guide at Carthage



Wife of mechanic



Children at school singing for us



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Our guide

Tunisia — land of many faces

What are the people of Tunisia like?

Well, sort of like us. They're black and white and brown. They're mostly Moslems with a sprinkling of Christians and Jews. Many aren't sure what they believe, so they're sort of generic Moslems or quiet agnostics.

Tunisians feel a little bit gypped because they don't have much oil. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have gushers of the stuff. Neighbors Libya and Algeria have plenty.

What Tunisia has is the Mediterranean, with miles of beautiful beaches and a lot of not-so-good farmland along the salty coast. They have history and the Sahara, both of which are nice, but not so good for making a living.

The main industries are agriculture — olive oil, dates and citrus fruit, wheat, melons, aloe and vegetable — and tourism, mostly from Europe and other parts of Africa with a few Orientals and people from the former Soviet Union.

And they have their people — strong, hardworking, intelligent — and their government, led by two hardheaded presidents who saw that their country needed to use all its resources to move forward.

In 1960, under President Habib Bourguiba, Tunisia abolished polygamy and proclaimed universal suffrage. It took a few years for the old ways to die out, but under President Bourguiba and his successor, President Ben Ali, who took over in 1987, all Tunisians have the opportunity to attend school and for those who can make the grades — both



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
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men and women, a free college education through a master's degree.

While all is not sweetness and light in this Arab North African country, the people appear busy, happy and, for the most part, well educated. In a week, we saw no beggars and while many of the women wore traditional dress, it seemed to be because they wanted to rather than because they had to.

After being in Tunisia for most of a week — in Tunis, the capital, in the country and in a couple of other towns — I decided to make a scrapbook of faces.

On the road there was the policeman who didn't give our driver a ticket, even though he made an illegal turn. The driver got "The Sermon," known to cops everywhere, and the policeman posed for a picture.

In the mall were a woman and girl who smiled for the camera, and on the street the two boys who wanted me to take their picture, too.

One girl was walking down the street talking on her cell phone. The archeologist who organized an exhibit of ancient mosaics for the Getty Museum in California posed as well

Our guide at Carthage was both

gregarious and informative, while the movie maker we met was colorful.

Visiting small businesses and a government laboratory studying the effect of drought and salinity on grape vines, we met working men and women and their spouses.

At a school, a group of children sang to us, while their classmates smiled and acted shy, but they all brightened up when it was time to hand out the candy we had brought.

At the airport, the man helping get us through customs smiled and posed.

How are these people different? They wear a little more colorful clothes. Their diet is probably healthier. They eat lots of fresh fruit, vegetables and fish, and Big Macs.

They go to church, date, raise families, play ball, eat at restaurants, hold hands, go to school, work and enjoy holidays just like us.

They speak a different language — sometimes two or three in fact. They dress a little differently and a lot of them don't like what our government is doing, but most say they like Americans and would go to America.

What would they bring home for souvenirs? Jeans and sneakers!

Reader's view on Iraq War different

To the Editor:
Enclosed is my subscription renewal. Even though I often disagree with editorial comments, I find the paper enlightening.

My main disagreement is the viewpoint being expressed on the Iraq War. This war is a prime example of neocolonialism.

Powerful British and American corporate heads were expecting to easily cash in on the potential profits that a new Iraqi leadership would provide.

Profits have soared for some; others are still itching for their cash prize. Probably never before in our history has the corporate world had this much control on our government. The war in Iraq was and still remains a lie.

We must ask ourselves: How

Letter to the Editor

would we feel if an Islamic country invaded our country? Would we lay down our arms and not fight? Would we be upset that our security forces were fired and told that they were no longer needed? Would we be upset if we were being treated disrespectfully? Would we be upset if an innocent loved one was killed, imprisoned, or tortured? Would we be upset if this Islamic invading country was trying to privatize our public, natural resources for corporate profits, etc.?

It's time we face the truth and stop the wealthy from raiding our treasury and stop sacrificing our heroic

men and women for the greedy. A \$1,200,000,000 debt awaits our children and more lives will be ruined if we don't stand up and demand a stop to this proposed escalation.

Let those who live in Iraq protect their own neighborhood.

Let the rich, who have fled, return and give their people jobs to rebuild and provide services for their country.

It's only human nature to do violent things if your life is threatened or there is no longer any hope.

Lyle Black
Los Angeles, Calif.

THE OBERLIN HERALD

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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.)

