

City needs to lead way for water conservation

It has rained. The city has more water. But still, it seems like something is missing.

It's nearly July, and still no hint of watering restrictions for the city.

How's that?

Maybe we shouldn't ask. It hasn't been all that hot until the last week. There's still time.

So far, the city reports water use below the trigger for rationing. But even if the water system is keeping up, we'd suggest the city put some water-conservation measures in place.

If there's no emergency, there's no need to scare people or have a lot of rules. Still, we all need to know that water — especially water from expensive new wells that has to be treated to remove relatively harmless trace minerals — is not an abundant commodity.

Start with some of the rules that accompanied the every-other-day even-odd watering plan the city has used the last few year:

- Don't water in the heat of the day to reduce evaporation. Water late in the day, overnight or in the morning.

- Don't over water. K-State experts say an inch a week in one or two sessions is fine. Anything more is wasted. Daily night watering promotes mold growth.

- Don't waste water on the sidewalk or the street where it can be avoided.

- Don't water every day. Twice a week on any one spot is fine.

- And maybe have a waterless day on Mondays to give the system a recharge.

We are not advocating fines and mandatory rules, not yet, but a gentle warning to those who ignore the guidelines would be in order.

Go for education rather than enforcement.

It's anybody's guess whether Oberlin will ever have enough water to go back to the free-and-easy attitudes of just a few years ago. We may still have a water "emergency" this summer. Soon if it doesn't rain.

Even with a water treatment plant, which should allow use of more of the city's wells, capacity may never be what it used to be. Water is scarce in western Kansas. City wells have not recovered to pre-drought levels.

Still, if we learn to conserve, our water will go farther and the city will have less need for expensive water improvements. That will save everyone money.

Even in a relatively wet year, that should make sense.

— Steve Haynes



What? Mow the grass again?

I don't do lawns — at least not when I can avoid it.

Steve cuts the grass. He's good at it and says he enjoys the exercise.

I think the last time I cut the grass was when we moved from Monte Vista, Colo., to Oberlin.

Steve and the children were living in Oberlin and I was going back and forth working at a pharmacy in Colorado on long weekends and living in Oberlin during the week. We hadn't sold the house out there and I had to mow the lawn each week after getting off from work.

It was a big lawn, but reasonably flat, so mowing was a chore but not a terrible one.

In nice, flat Kansas our lawn is on two levels and everything seems to be uphill. Still, I've avoided pushing the green monster for almost 15 years.

However, last week Steve was out of town, out of state, out of the country and mostly out of his mind.

It rained. It was hot. The grass grew and grew.

I had to either mow it or wait a few days and take a machete to the jungle.



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
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I opted to mow. In fact, since he was gone over two weekends, I mowed it twice.

Steve is a perfectionist with the lawn. He doesn't mow in squares, he mows in diamonds.

He loves baseball and has always admired the way the grass is mowed on the fields at professional parks. He wants his lawn to look like Coors Field.

This isn't going to happen, but he keeps trying.

I tried the first week to cut pretty little diagonals. Halfway through I was doing squares and feeling virtuous for getting the job done.

On the second week, I was muttering and mowing anything higher than a grasshopper no matter what

direction it was in.

A few years ago, while watching the Red Sox in the World Series, Steve noticed that the groundskeeper at Fenway Park had cut a pair of socks into the grass. He's always wanted to do something like that.

Personally, I don't care that they cut pretty patterns into baseball fields or that Fenway has a pair of socks on the outfield.

I'm not surprised that there are socks out there — after all, baseball players are men, and they always leave their socks all over the place.

My only surprise, having done the laundry around here for years, is that it's a pair.

Helpers save spaghetti supper

My life was so consumed this past week preparing for a benefit spaghetti dinner that the rest of my life seems like a blur.

I made the mistake a lot of people make. I thought I could do it all myself, like a child who stomps their foot and says, "I do myself."

I realized soon enough I needed help. But, like stubborn people (there's a fine line between stubborn and stupid) always do, I hated to ask. Thank God, and my church family, that they stepped up to the plate, anyway. Dishwashers, spaghetti cookers, salad makers, servers, drink pourers, cake cutters and table washers — they all knew just what to do to make the dinner a success.

And what a nice crowd we had. We promised an all-you-can-eat spaghetti dinner and judging by the number of "repeat customers," I guess it was pretty good, too. If anyone left hungry, it was their own fault.

But, you talk about tired. When we got home from delivering all the borrowed pots and pans, extension cords and cookie sheets, we just collapsed. We sat down in our recliners, turned the fans on high and "zonked out."



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
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The next thing I knew Jim was shaking my foot saying, "Carolyn, do you know what time it is?"

I roused up enough to realize it was totally dark outside and I ventured a guess: "Eight o'clock?"

"Try midnight," he corrected me.

The next shock came when I tried to get out of my chair. My legs and feet didn't want to cooperate, and they felt like logs. After a couple of tries I managed to climb the stairs and fall into bed. Seven hours later, I still didn't want to get up.

But you know what? It was worth it. And when someone asked me this morning when we are going to do it again, I said we are going to call it the annual spaghetti benefit dinner. So, look for it again in a year.

-ob-

Last week, I was talking about

how harvest was just around the corner. When I got to work the next day, the first load of wheat had been cut and hauled to the elevator.

During that week, fields seemed to "turn" overnight. At this writing, harvest is in full swing and will be pretty well done by the next time I check in.

-ob-

When I left the house this morning, Jim was installing duct work for the central air conditioning system. I don't know how much work there is to do, but I know we will enjoy it when it's finished.

When Jim added on to and rebuilt our house he really insulated it well. It has been quite comfortable without even so much as a window unit. But the full force of summer is starting us in the face and we both know we need a little more comfort.

-ob-

Here is another proverb from my 8-year-old granddaughter, Taylor: *Don't count your chickens before they — cluck.*

From the Bible

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

John 10:10

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The Oberlin Herald wants to emphasize photos of people doing things in the community. If you know of an event or news happening that we should attend, please call 475-2206.

Please be sure to allow a couple of days' notice so we can arrange to be there.

Space in the paper is limited and so is the time of our staff, so we may not be able to get to every event, but we will try.

Because space is so limited, we

cannot run team or group photos, any pictures of people lined up or of people passing checks, certificates and the like. (We will always try to make room for a story about any of these events, however.)

We do run wedding and engagement pictures and "mug" shots with stories and obituaries. We need a clear, sharp picture.

We cannot return photos unless you submit a self-addressed, stamped envelope with clear instructions for return.

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: oberlinherald@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

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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.)



Woman lauds push for shoulders

To the Editor:

I am a landowner in Rawlins and Thomas counties. After years of using highway K-25 for the main route from the farm to Atwood and Colby, I began asking our legislators, calling the Department of Transportation division office at Norton and talking with George Sutton with the department in Atwood (now deceased), urging for ways to add or widen shoulders on this highway from Atwood to U.S. 40 south of Colby. The past 25 years, I have asked our legislators to help.

Our family, neighbors, and truck drivers want to thank Jerry Younger, chief engineer for the Kansas Department of Transportation, for

Letter to the Editor

looking for ways to add or widen the shoulders on K-25 and K-23.

We don't expect the state to bring K-25 and K-23 up to fancy current federal specifications. These roads were built before the 1960s; they served the area well.

What I have heard for years was, the state doesn't have this money. How can we thank the new top officials that seem to have a different attitude?

With the traffic on K-25 and K-23 increasing daily beyond belief, there

is not another project in Kansas needed more than this minimum shoulder project.

Our sons and their families farm in Cheyenne, Rawlins and Thomas counties using K-25 every day for business, hauling grain, and school activities. Our daughters-in-law drive to their jobs, and our neighbors do the same.

Thank you, Mr. Haynes, for promoting information concerning a major issue we face each day.

Lorraine Downing, Colby

help of existing institutions.

"They didn't just occupy Iraq," he said. "They dismantled the country. How can you administer a country after that?"

He said the U.S. needs to have a clear plan, not just cut and run.

"A sudden pullout would create chaos," he said. "I would like the U.S. to believe its first priority is bringing peace to the region."

He added that the U.S. should give regional institutions some role in whatever plan it comes up with. A plan to divide Iraq along ethnic lines won't work, he said, because nearly every Middle Eastern nation has similar divisions.

"If you divide Iraq," he said, "you would have to divide every country in the region. Instead of 200 members in the United Nations, you would have maybe 600."

"Would Turkey agree to a Kurdish state in Iraq? How long would it take before the Turkish army would move into that area?"

He suggested an Islamic force to stabilize the area.

"I think if it has a clear plan, it will work," he said. "The U.S. needs to make a clear statement that it does not want to stay."

"The countries of the region are ready to play a role."

At the Gulf Research Center, a

Getting out of Iraq not simple



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
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So how does the U.S. get out of Iraq?

Like the gazelle that wakes up among a pride of sleeping lions, carefully. Very carefully.

It'd be fair to say that nearly everyone in the Arab world thinks we made a mistake getting into Iran. It'd also be fair to say that hardly anyone wants us to just pull out.

Mohammed Hussain Al Shaali is minister of state for foreign affairs for the United Arab Emirates, with the title of foreign minister. A career diplomat who has spent much of his life in the U.S., Mr. Al Shaali is convinced the U.S. must leave Iraq, less certain how that can happen.

"The most devastating situation in the region is in Iraq," he tells a group of American editors. "Nobody knows how it can be resolved in the foreseeable future. Nobody has a plan."

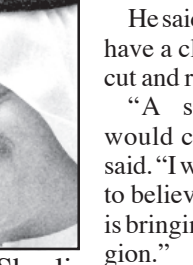
"Hundreds of people are killed every day.... The more prolonged the war, the more who are killed, but so far, nobody knows how to get out."

Like many U.S. allies in the region, he said, the U.A.E. tried to advise America not to invade Iraq. No one wanted to listen to our friends, he said.

"We have to have a plan," the minister said. "These people deserve peace."

Continued warfare can only encourage the extremists, he said, inviting them to move into other countries, "exactly like what is happening in Lebanon today."

It's tough to administer a large and diverse country like Iraq, he said, but the U.S. made a mistake when it decided to try without the



Mr. Al Shaali