

## Better to register entry than try to seal border

You hear so much about border protection these days, but what does it really mean?

Most countries today are opening up their borders, encouraging visitors and investors alike, while the U.S. is tightening its entry requirements and driving people away.

Other countries make people feel like guests, with perfunctory customs inspections, or none at all, and quick processing. America makes visitors — and returning Americans — feel more like criminals.

While Europe is eliminating the need for passports as it becomes more of a nation, the U.S. is making even its own citizens get them to come and go. It's not our neighbors who want more controls, but our own government.

Foreigners who've been to our country tell horror stories about entanglements with the customs and immigration cops, especially the Arabs. Border protection, it seems, can't tell our friends from our foes, so treats everyone as a fiend.

There's a movement to build a wall along the Mexican border, though curiously, not along the Canadian line. Maybe that's because we see Canadians as our northern cousins while we see our neighbors to the south as racially and ethnically different.

Just what is the magic about a border? Most controls are aimed at enforcing tax and drug laws, artificial regulations that have little to do with our security. Preventing terrorism, while important, is a law enforcement and intelligence problem, and there's little evidence that our government has gotten much better at either since 2001.

The government has expanded its ability to track everyone, though, and no one knows quite where that might lead. The mania to

track and record border entry, especially by Americans, isn't really to prevent terrorism, though. It's just a way for the security apparatus to have more power over us all.

Our immigration system is broken, no doubt, but walls and cameras and record-keeping won't fix it.

If people want to come here to live, well, we used to welcome settlers who wanted to build a new life. There's plenty of room for more.

If people want to work here and send money home, well, America needs workers as much as people need our jobs.

Instead of building a wall, we should build a system to register workers and let them in legally, so they'd be sure to pay taxes and get driver's licenses and buy auto insurance.

Today, people pay thousands to be smuggled into the country because, simply put, there's no way to get in legally to work. We should make it easier to come here legally than illegally, and make illegal entry a serious crime.

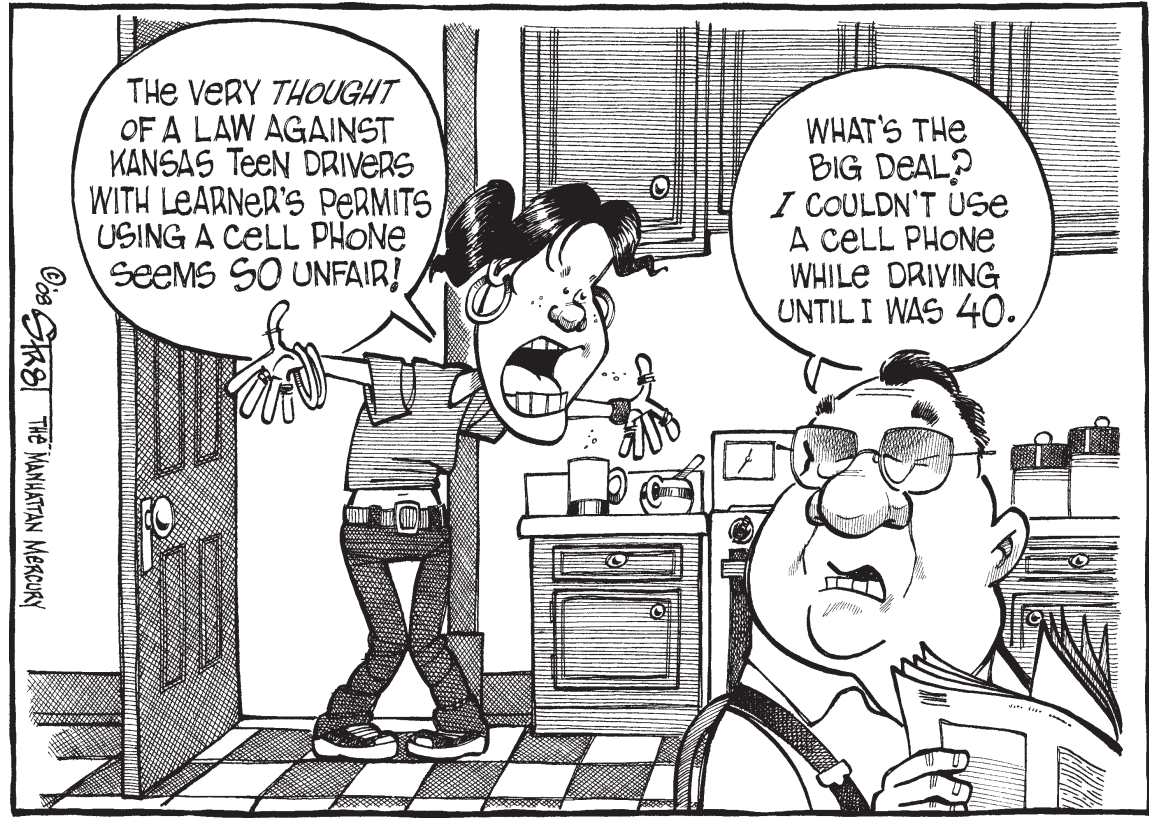
Then, the law would be easy to enforce. Today, it's impossible.

Sure, terrorists may try to come. Some may be here already, though there's not much evidence of that. We need to develop sophisticated ways to watch for and track them, as the Europeans and especially the Israelis have done, and not worry so much about making everyone a suspect.

It can be done, but it takes good intelligence and sophisticated law enforcement, not more red tape and ill treatment.

Immigration reform is way overdue, but walls and a bigger border patrol aren't the answer. We need to welcome the world while watching for criminals with a wary eye.

It can be done. — *Steve Haynes*



## Under gravy, who can tell?

Pie are round. Corn bread are square.

That's the punch line to an old joke where a high school student tries to show his granny how much he's learned by reciting the formula for the circumference of a circle —  $\pi r^2$ .

That's sort of how I felt when I was making biscuits last week and realized that, not only didn't I have a biscuit cutter, I didn't even have a decent glass to cut my rounds with.

I use a glass at home. Why buy a fancy cutter when a thin-lipped glass works just as well and doesn't clutter up your utensil drawer? (After all, you need that room for the lemon zester, carrot peeler, cheese grater, garlic press, radish rose maker, bagel cutter, melon baller, salad tongs, apple corer and ice cream scoop, as well as the usual spatulas, ladles, sharp knives and pancake turners.)

This time, however, I wasn't at home and every glass in the place had a half-inch lip — not exactly knife sharp or even spoon sharp. Now, I really hate it when Steve's right. Especially when it has to do with cooking. But, when he looked



## Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes  
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at me as if I had lost my mind as I ripped around and complained and then suggested I just use a knife and make square biscuits, I felt really foolish.

Why not? Who made granny the arbitrator of all things cooking? Why not square biscuits? We were having biscuits and gravy with sausage for supper and I doubted that either the sausage or the gravy would complain, and son Lacy, who was eating with us, wasn't going to damage any chance of another free meal with a complaint.

It turned out to be a lot easier than round biscuits because I didn't have to remake the dough after the rounds were made for another cutting. I just formed the dough into a rough square and cut it with a bread knife into a dozen pieces. The squares cooked and ate as well as rounds

ever did.

So now it's pie are round, but corn bread and biscuits are square at our house.

The biscuits reminded me of my father, who used to take a couple of pounds of hamburger and flatten it on a cookie sheet. He would then take a butter knife and cut the burger into square patties. After freezing the whole mess, he would break the square patties apart and put them in freezer bags for hamburgers whenever we wanted them.

Dave Thomas, founder of Wendy's, just thought he invented square hamburgers. Actually, Buford Desilet invented them in 1954, but he wasn't a restaurant owner, so he never got the credit.

I wonder if Steve will ever get credit for his "almost famous" square biscuits?

## Now, why won't this key fit?

I am more like my mother than I thought.

One time, she threw her handbag (I don't think they were called purses until the '60s) into the back seat of the wrong car.

Another time, she put her hat (when was the last time you saw a woman wearing a hat?) in the wrong vehicle.

Keeping the tradition my mother established, I did something very similar last week.

On my way to work, I needed to run about three errands. Stopping at the grocery store was one of them.

I quickly made my purchase and was headed for the van when my cell phone rang. I answered it, talking as I got in the vehicle.

After fumbling with the keys, I tried to start the engine. Funny thing: the key wouldn't go in the ignition.

I turned the key upside down and tried again. No luck.

All the while, I didn't miss a beat in my conversation. I tried again, this time leaning over to see the ignition more clearly, thinking I must have missed it.

That's when I saw it. An eyeglass case. An eyeglass case resting in the cup holder.



## Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts  
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What's unusual about that, you ask? I don't have an eyeglass case.

I looked around and noticed loose change in the bottom of the cup holder. I don't put loose change there.

Nor do I have a sweater like the one in the passenger seat.

Oh, no, I am in the wrong van! It's red, just like mine, but definitely the wrong van.

Quick! I looked around. Any witnesses?

No. Thank goodness. Quickly, I gathered my things and exited.

Sure enough, parked right beside the vehicle was MY red van.

By this time, I was laughing so hard my friend on the other end of the phone couldn't understand what I was saying and probably thought I'd had a stroke.

I explained what I had just done

and my friend laughed, too.

"Don't tell a soul," I said. "This will be our little secret."

So, don't you tell, either. I wouldn't want anyone to know. Especially the owner of that other red van.

-ob-

I just had a sobering thought. In about 40 years, we'll have thousands of old ladies running around with tattoos, and rap music will be the "Golden Oldies."

## From the Bible

Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

I Peter 4:16

So there we were, tapping our feet, swaying a little to the music, clapping our hands and singing "Puff the Magic Dragon" with Peter himself.

Most of us, anyway. The college kids across the table, fresh-faced and well scrubbed, didn't know the words and weren't really sure who the old guy was.

They wore bemused expressions, obviously didn't have a clue. Just who is this Peter Yarrow, anyway? Peter, Paul and Mary?

Ah, but the rest of us knew. The words. The tune.

"No," Peter assured us, "It's not about drugs. Believe me; I'm the original Puff Daddy."

Just a song about childhood dreams. No hidden meanings.

Then he sang a few bars from Bob Dylan. "The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind; the answer is blowin' in the wind," and talked about being at the March on Washington in 1963 when Dr. King made his "I Have a Dream" speech.

He's backed causes ever since, from Civil Rights to the antiwar movement on up. Today, he said, in his 60s, he's given his time to a new cause: Teaching the children of the world to respect the worth and dignity of each other — and everyone else.

The need should be obvious. In the U.S. alone, he said, 160,000 children stay away from school every day because of bullying of some type: name calling, violence, discrimination, exclusion.

And nearly everyone has experienced some form of this treatment, from the fat kids who are made fun



## Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes  
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of, to the misfits and racial outcasts, to those who were always picked last for any game or sport.

Mr. Yarrow helped found Operation Respect, a nonprofit that developed a school curriculum to deal with the problem in a positive way, using music to teach children to not just get along, but value all their classmates. Both the course and the song are named "Don't Laugh at Me."

You can see the words or hear the song, and get the curriculum, at [www.dontlaugh.com](http://www.dontlaugh.com). The program, he said, is in more than 22,000 schools around the world, from the U.S. to Europe, and in places as diverse as Croatia and Israel.

The singer said popular culture today isn't helping people see each other as individuals to be valued rather than types to be laughed at or worse. Reality shows encourage treachery and discrimination; others encourage people to lash out. Commentators preach hate and division; talent judged belittle the losers.

"I believe that we're in a terribly difficult time in the world..." he said. "We have enough animosity and anger in this world. We need to reach out and be friends."

He had come to the Wisconsin Newspaper Association conven-

tion, where we spent the weekend, to talk about part of the program aimed at Newspapers in Education efforts, where the package is in the paper and used in schools to promote goodwill and respect.

Peter asked, near the end of his "talk," if the editors would at least consider using it. Nearly everyone raised his or her hand.

Then he called the association's leaders and Hall of Fame inductees and some children and a baby and, yes, some college students, up to the podium, and we all got to sing "Leaving on a Jet Plane" with him, toes tapping, hands clapping.

Peter Yarrow, a very nice man, stayed around to talk with the students, sign autographs and chat with anyone who wanted to meet him. Hugs all around — I got one and so did Cynthia — then he was off for a bowl of soup with Peter Fox, the Wisconsin Press executive director and his wife Nikki. ("Oh, I've got all his albums.")

Peter wasn't leaving, though, until he'd sung a special chorus of "Puff" to one young girl who had trouble hearing the words, face to face at her table, and taken care of all the fans. Soup could wait.

Go to the website. Listen to the song. It's worth the trouble.

## Writer mourns passing of a friend

To the Editor:  
Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2008, the town of Oberlin lost a good and brave man. Yes, Elmwood Treeheart is gone. Slick roads and a hapless driver erased a life that had taken many years to grow.

He started as a mere seed blown on the wind and carried by some feathered friend to his place in Oberlin. To his place in history I say, "He was a source of shade in his prime. In his later years, he became a symbol of Oberlin's quiet inner strength. He was a beacon in the dark and a friendly face to greet visitors from out of town.

Some say he was riddled with disease and worthless after an ice storm ravaged his branches, but what it did was open his inner beauty

## Letter to the Editor

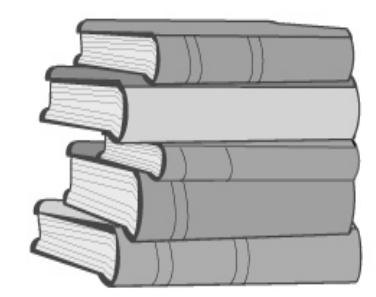
to the world.  
I say this was a man with good fiber in his heart. He was quiet and did not listen to idle gossip. Never had a strong word against anybody nor said anything in anger. Now he is only a pile of scrap wood, kindling and roots.

Goodbye, old friend.  
Ouch! I just got a sliver in my finger from him. Maybe it was a sign from the wood gods. No, it'll probably get infection and swell up. Thanks a lot, tree.

John Stanley

Editor's Note: Mr. Stanley is

referring to the old elm tree which had been carved into a sculpture of a farmer with a shock of wheat at Commercial Street and U.S. 83. The landmark bit the dust when it was struck by a vehicle.



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