

## Despite major tragedies, flying's safer than roads

The crash of Air France flight 447 on a transatlantic flight from Brazil carrying 228 people remains unknown, and in truth, may always be a mystery.

While airline crashes are rare, especially involving U.S. and European airlines, they do happen. And when they do, they almost always are spectacular.

That leads many people to fear flying, though modern airline travel is among the safest forms of transportation. Still, investigators, airline experts and manufacturers want to know what happened anytime something goes wrong. There's blame to assess, sure, but everyone wants to be sure that whatever happened does not happen again.

Finding out what happened to the Air France flight will be difficult, though, since the flight recorders are thought to lie 20,000 to 26,000 feet under the surface of the Atlantic, in an inhospitable region where big storms constantly sweep the sea.

French and Brazilian navy personnel are looking for wreckage and bodies, and finding enough of both to eventually offer some answers. While speculation has focused on bad weather and perhaps faulty instruments, which might have set the Airbus A330 on the wrong course or speed, no one has ruled out any cause, from human error to foul play.

The U.S. Navy is sending high-tech acoustic seekers designed to find the flight recorders, known as "black boxes" though they usually

are painted bright orange. With modern technology, who knows? They might just be able to bring them up.

Even the floating debris might offer some answers, especially if there had been an explosion or another catastrophic event in midair. Experts say the bodies may have a story to tell as well.

Everyone will want to know the answer. It may take months, even years to get one. We may never know the whole truth.

Weather, equipment failure, human error? It's something to think about next time you fly, but not for long.

After you clear security and stow your carry-on, the worst part of any airline trip likely is over. The truth is a lot less interesting than speculation on what happened out there over the ocean.

For by the time any of us starts out on a commercial airline trip, the most dangerous part of the journey is past.

It's the drive to the airport that is most likely to kill or injure us, not the flight. Yet, probably because most of us get behind the wheel each day and think little of it, few people fear driving.

Fly again? Sure. The airline industry and the airplane builders will do everything they can to make you safe.

Just be careful on the freeway.

— Steve Haynes

## Help! the lettuce's taking over

Lock your cars and hide the key to your front door — the lettuce is here.

Here, I know, that's supposed to be reserved for zucchini season, but this year I've got the lettuce crop that ate Chicago.

I long ago discovered that you can plant lettuce and spinach in the spring. When the greens are at their prime, you plant tomato and green peppers between the rows. By the time the tomatoes and green peppers have gotten big enough to start producing, it's gotten too hot for the lettuce and spinach.

That's worked well for us for many years.

Last year, I decided to try for a second crop of greens. I planted lettuce and spinach in a scatter pattern as soon as I had removed the first block of sweet corn. I over-seeded and it came up beautifully.

I decided that worked so well that this year, instead of rows, I'd use a scatter pattern in the spring and then pull out any greens that got in the way of the tomatoes and green peppers.

That worked pretty well, and I got all my little plants in and everyone was getting along fine.



### Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes  
c.haynes@nwkansan.com

But, it's been cool. The lettuce just keeps growing, and I can't seem to eat it or give it away fast enough to keep it from shading out the new plants.

The spinach wasn't a problem. It got hit by a warm spell and started to flower before we had the four inches of rain a couple of weeks ago. Once spinach flowers, in re-absorbs its leaves, and if you don't pick it really quickly, you end up with a tall, skinny, leafless flower. It doesn't even have a very good smell.

So, the spinach got picked, cleaned and eaten fairly early this year.

But the lettuce, it just keeps growing.

Every morning, I've been going out to the garden and pulling up plants by their roots.

I stuff them into plastic grocery

bags and drag them to the office, the drug store, the hardware, your doorstep.

I'm sorry about that, but I'm desperate here. I suppose I could just throw it away, but I'm a child of a child of the Great Depression, and I was taught to clean my plate and use everything. I just can't toss food out.

My fridge is full of lettuce and my sink is full of lettuce, my garden is still producing and my friends and neighbors are locking their doors and avoiding me.

And there are 13 zucchini plants and a dozen yellow squash plants ready to take off as soon as I get rid of the lettuce.

### From the Bible

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee:

The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:

The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them.

Numbers 6:24-27

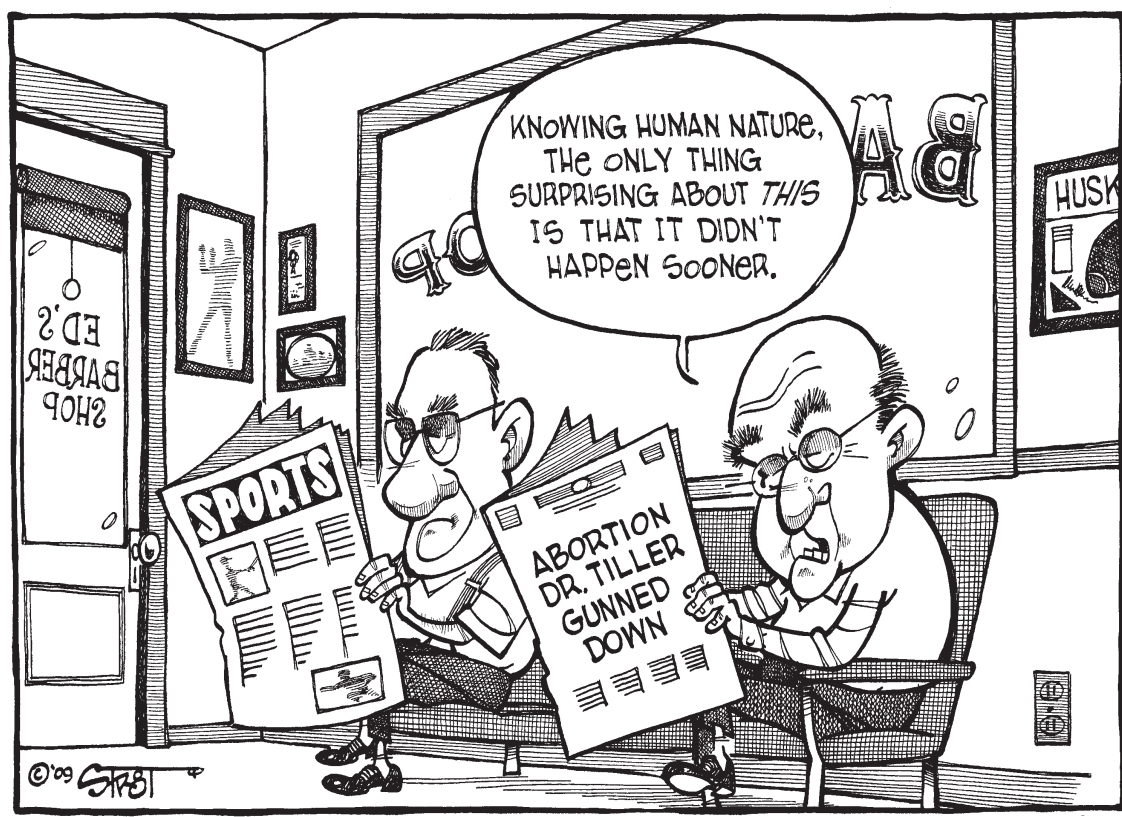
### Honor Roll

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

John Laidig, Holmdel, N.J.; Donald Wolfe, St. Charles, Mo.; Ferd Borsheim, Green Cove, Fla.; Delbert Townsend, Fort Washington, Md.; Elmer Waterman, Bonaire, Ga.; Mary Frank, Phoenix, Ariz.;

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## She's not looking at this one

Wednesday, I'm going to do something I haven't done, willingly, since 1972. I'm going to the hospital. Kara, my youngest daughter, was born 37 years ago and I haven't been back to a hospital since.

What I thought was a mole on my right lower eye lid is now suspected of being a basal cell carcinoma: a skin cancer. A specialist examined it and that was his diagnosis. He explained how he will put me to sleep and then remove a wedge of skin, containing the entire growth.

I said, "Doc, as little as this thing is, are you sure I have to be 'put under?'"

Looking over the top of his glasses at me, he matter-of-factly stated, "Oh, honey! You don't want to see this coming!"

Good enough answer for me. I'll just plan to have a nice, long nap.

— ob —

The calves have been moved to greener pastures. All it took was three bottles of milk. They would follow anyone, anywhere if they have a bottle of milk in their hand.

What had been our attempt at a



### Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts  
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tall-grass prairie test plot (otherwise known as our back yard) is now home to Curly, Moe and Larry, the three black calves. That's not really their names, but it might as well be.

The three are lovin' it. They're grazing away to their heart's content and doing us a service at the same time. Eaten grass is grass that doesn't have to be mowed.

We have electric fence on three sides of their pen, and I don't know if they've tested it yet. When they do, it will teach them some respect for boundaries.

— ob —

Here it is, almost the middle of June, and I was tempted to turn on the furnace Sunday night. This

is crazy weather. I love it, but it's crazy.

Talk about unseasonably cool. We haven't used the air conditioner yet this summer. I know the heat is coming — and soon. But, until then, the house is staying open and I'm working outside as much as I can. I still have dozens of flowers to plant.

Then, there are the flowers that plant themselves. I'm talking about sunflowers. In tribute to my mother, who used the pen name Sunflower Sue, we let several wild sunflowers grow wherever they sprout in the yard. I think sunflowers are such a cheery flower, and each time I look at them, I remember Mom.

## Avenue of Flags made a big impact

To the Editor:

I have two thoughts as a follow-up from my visit to family in the Decatur County area over the Memorial Day weekend.

First, I was saddened to hear of the closing of Addleman's and stopped by for one last treat from the fountain but was disappointed to learn that the fountain was not open. Let's hope that the fountain will stay in town, whether used in a business or resurrected within the museum.

I stopped at the Oberlin Cemetery on my way out of town on Memorial Day morning to take some photographs of the Avenue of Flags. For the last two years, the event was either limited or did not occur because of the inclement weather.

A man in his late 40s or early 50s drove up while I was taking my pictures and he approached me and said, "I have never seen anything like this before." He explained that he had driven all the way across two states on U.S. 36 from Illinois in the last day. He said that where he came from, they put out small flags.

I explained to him what I knew about the Avenue of Flags and that

### Letters to the Editor

the project involved the American Legion and a large part of the populace. He said that he was on his way to Colorado Springs to see his nephew graduate from the Air Force Academy.

I told him to thank his nephew for his service. Then he said, "And, I have a daughter serving right now in Afghanistan and I am going to take a picture of this because they need to see this." I also asked him

to thank his daughter.

I wanted the citizens of Oberlin, the volunteers, sponsors and the American Legion to know this story and of the impact of the Avenue of Flags had on this man and his family. You need to know that what you do to honor the veterans is noticed and appreciated and makes a difference. Job well done!

Rita Carey  
Westminster, Colo.

### Ex-resident enjoyed visit

To the Editor:

I just returned from a most enjoyable trip to Decatur County, where I was born and grew to adulthood, mostly in the Jennings area. In my opinion, if Decatur County had a crown, four of its stars would be the LandMark Inn, the Jennings Czech Museum, Oberlin's Last Indian Raid Museum and The Gateway.

The residents who have made all of these jewels worthy are and have

been tirelessly dedicated to their projects. Though the players are too numerous to mention by name (and I don't know all of the names), I offer my heartiest congratulations and thanks to all for their efforts over the years and for their continuing work.

Oh, how I enjoy visiting my roots.

Dr. Jack J. Bainter  
1949 Jennings High graduate

## Amusement group needs helpers

To the Editor:

Fair time is fast approaching. It's hard to believe the year has gone by already. The Decatur County Amusement Authority is already gearing up for the carnival. We are a little more prepared this year, having one year under our belt, but realize there is so much more to do in order to have everything up and running in time for opening night.

We are facing some major issues, as always. Our insurance may increase greatly, some rides need major overhauls in order to be running and safe, and we are unable to maintain an adequate number of board members to accomplish all that needs to be done.

We are asking for help!

We are scheduling a work night for every Wednesday evening beginning today. We will start at 6:30 p.m. each Wednesday from now until fair week. Some of the projects are deep cleaning of concession and work areas, organizing supplies and equipment, painting, repairs and upgrade for all rides, repairs of buildings (we need to replace roofing on two game booths), and general maintenance.

We only have 6-7 board members at each meeting. We have some who help when they can, but are not always available. We would love to be able to get all that needs to

be done ourselves, but we have to admit that is not physically possible. Anyone who would like to donate a few hours to help us out is more than welcome. You don't have to be on the Amusement Authority. We need men, women and responsible young adults to keep this home-owned carnival going.

We have already begun signing volunteers up for fair week. The concession stand is staffed except for the late shift on Saturday. If you would like to help that night, please contact us. We will be placing a sign-up sheet in the entry of the Chamber office building (the BEE center). This worked well last year. Please go in and sign up the night and game/ride you would like to help on. We will also start calling volunteers in a week or so. If you would rather just call to sign up, please call Judy Scott at (785) 470-7269 or Stephanie Blau at (785) 470-0222.

We made it through the first year of our term by the seat of our pants, but with help from so many people, I lost count. We made it through the recent session of the Legislature, securing passage of a bill to exempt us from a law that would have shut down home-owned carnivals.

We are determined to make it through this year in even better shape, but we can't do it on our own.

This is the Decatur County Fair, and everyone in the county should be proud to have it and willing to help keep it going.

God bless everyone who helps in any way they can. We'll see you at the fair!

Judy G. Scott, president  
Decatur County Amusement Authority

### 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., Oberlin, Kan., 67749, or by e-mail to oberlinherald@nwkansan.com. We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise.

We do not publish form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous from this area should be submitted to the Want Ad desk.

Letters will not be censored, but will be read and edited for form and style, clarity, length and legality. We will not publish attacks on private individuals or businesses which do not pertain to a public issue.

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