

## Northern border too big to fight drug war over

A news story the other day recounts the problems along our "other" border, the 5,500-mile, mostly unfenced and often imaginary line that separates the U.S. from Canada.

Both U.S. and Canadian authorities realized the mostly unguarded border sees increasing traffic in both guns and drugs.

The U.S. is using unmanned aircraft to keep an eye on the border and plans to send hundreds more border agents to the north.

The length of the border and its remote nature, far in most places from major cities, makes tightening controls tough, if not impossible.

While Americans cry for a fence and tough enforcement to the south, there's little talk of tougher measures at the Canadian border, other than the requirements for identification in place everywhere people enter the U.S.

Fair enough. To the south, Mexico has become a hotbed of drug traffic — and violence. A crackdown by the Mexican government has resulted in as many as 10,000 murders in the last few years as drug cartels fight the army, federal police and each other.

But we hear little about drugs from Canada. Truth is, the Associated Press reports, it isn't the problem seen in Mexico, but illegal traffic from the north is growing. Biker gangs and Asian drug runners move marijuana and other drugs across the border. Indian reservations straddle the line in a few areas, allowing almost free access back and forth.

What's the answer? Government men always say it's more enforcement, both because they tend to think that way, and because they can't afford to

speak the truth.

And the truth is, without spending a lot of money and committing a lot of manpower, it'd be next to impossible to close off the 5,500-mile border. We can't afford that much fence and that many border agents.

The head of the Drug Enforcement Agency, James Burns, said as much to the AP: "It's a long border, mostly very remote, very wooded, very sparsely populated. It's easy to go from one side to the other without detection."

Truth is, you can make something illegal, but you can't keep people from getting what they want. They want drugs, someone will supply them. Making them illegal just drives up the price and improves the cartels' profits.

The border patrol, drug cops and others build empires on trying to stop this traffic, but mostly it's a waste of money. Contraband flows towards money and demand. Fences, airplanes, agents on the ground can only do so much. When they catch a big load, it looks good, but that's about it.

In the flow of illegal drugs alone into this country, one truckload is a drop in the bucket. Even a dozen don't amount to much.

We'd be better off spending the money to track and locate terrorists and to help people learn to stop doing drugs, than to spend billions on border controls. The benefits are too few, the cost too great.

That said, expect a big push to waste a lot of money on the border up north. That's what the bureaucrats will ask for, and likely, what Congress will do. The futility of it all will escape notice, but what's a few billion here and there? — *Steve Haynes*

## She fed everything in sight

Essay — What I did during my summer vacation.

I fed things. Remember that standard, start-of-school question?

Back then, my answers were pretty standard, too: went to the pool, went to the lake with parents, went to the library on bicycle, took care of pets, and so on and so on.

Well, we just got back from our summer vacation in Colorado, and looking back, I realize that I fed everything that moved, including quite a few hungry mosquitoes.

I started my week out making hummingbird food for the three feeders on the front porch. I use my neighbor's recipe — one cup of plain white sugar added to three cups water. I add a few drops of red food coloring to mine. It makes no difference to the birds, but that way I can see when the syrup gets low in the feeders. That was about every other day, since the hummers were both numerous and hungry.

The next step was to fill the birdseed holders to attract finches, sparrows and anything else that likes a mix of millet, corn and sunflower seeds. The two feeders hang on a double shepherd's crook in front of a medium-size evergreen tree in the front yard so I can see them from the front windows.

Those birds were voracious. I sat in the house one day and counted more than 30 in the tree and on the feeders. They would fly back and forth trading places. A dozen at a time could



### Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes  
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sit on the six perches on each feeder and chomp seeds. They also spilled enough on the ground to keep the larger blackbirds, who find it tough to cling to those little perches, walking all over the yard.

These bird feeders needed to be filled twice a day. I finally picked up a really big bag of seed. I didn't notice that it was a 50 pounder until I tried to fill the galvanized pail I keep the seed in and only half the bag would fit. However, before I came home, the last of the spare seed was in storage in the pail waiting the next sucker, or bird-feeder filler.

The cats had their bowl that required regular refills, and the dog got her cup of food a day.

Then there were the chipmunks. I didn't see to many, but the peanuts on the stump out back disappeared and the dog went nuts whenever she got near the woodpile, so I'm guessing that's what I was feeding.

Then there was us. I made steak soup, fried chicken, bean soup, barbecue beef sandwiches, green chili, twice-baked potatoes, blueberry scones and zucchini bread. I made enough of

everything that the freezer was full and I was having trouble finding places to put the rest.

I made a ton of zucchini bread — which I passed out to everyone I knew. I took some to Mary J, the 86-year-old reporter we hired nearly 30 years ago to do society news. She's still doing it. Brownie and Christie got a loaf; he's a painter and photographer and she's an actress.

The neighbors got tomatoes, zucchini, cucumbers, carrots and garlic from our garden. In the high country, they really appreciate that.

And I brought food back to Kansas. Now my freezer is full — at least until I go to Lawrence to feed my last chick. Our son always appreciates his bachelor status and closeness to home when it comes time to get frozen steak soup, fried chicken, bean soup, barbecue beef sandwiches, green chili, twice baked potatoes, blueberry scones and zucchini bread.

It was a pretty good summer vacation, and I'm looking forward to feeding more birds, cats, dogs, chipmunks and friends and family next year.



## Vacation with girls enjoyable

It was a rude awakening when I realized it was Monday morning. This vacation has done its job, and one day has blended into another. It is our last day in San Antonio, where we have stayed with our daughter Jennifer and her two girls, Alexandra and Aniston. We also spent an afternoon and evening with our daughter Becky, and her family.

But, Monday means "column," and my 14-year-old granddaughter set me up in the front-room recliner with a cup of gourmet coffee and a laptop computer. Ah-h-h. This is the life.

We have had great fun, with lots of time spent talking, shopping and cooking. A lot of attention has also been paid to our 3-year-old granddaughter, who is a bundle of energy. She keeps everyone busy. In fact, she's sharing Oreo cookies with me right now. Some breakfast, huh?

I had promised Jennifer a strawberry-rhubarb pie and homemade ice cream. So, that was our Sunday dinner. On vacation, all the rules of nutrition and balanced meals go out the window.

We have set aside one day for ourselves to spend in Glen Rose, Texas, at the Creation Evidence Museum. It's one of the few places on earth where you can actually see the fos-



### Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts

silized footsteps of a man inside the footprints of a dinosaur.

Stop and think what that really means. Man and dinosaurs existed together at the same time. Some catastrophe (like a world-wide flood) rapidly laid down a layer of sand that hardened and preserved the prints. We've been there before and are anxious to return. Ask us and we'll show you our pictures.

We stopped off in Dallas for a couple of days with our kids there before driving on to San Antonio. Jim hauled some car parts down in order to get them sand blasted and powder coated. They should be done by the time we get back to Dallas and ready for the road home. These are the "seed parts" for restoration project Jim has planned for when he really retires.

As much fun as I've had on this trip, I am anxious to get home. I've

heard just enough of Jim's end of conversations with son James to be curious about what James is doing while we're away. Words like, "trim," "eighth-inch reveal," and "silicone sealer" to make me think he is completing the remaining details of our dining room remodel.

Oh, I hope so. That would be a nice surprise to come home to.

### From the Bible

Jesus cried and said, He that believeth not on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.

I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

John 12:44-46

## Lost stuff drives him crazy

There are a few things that, when mislaid, are just going to drive you crazy.

Your car keys. The sheaf of papers you were carrying when you went for coffee. Your watch.

I don't think this has anything to do with age. Age affects your short-term memory, causing those "hereafter" moments.

You go to the basement, and when you get there, you wonder what you're here after.

You go back upstairs and notice you needed flour and worcestershire sauce for the recipe you're making. You go back to the basement.

You see the load of clothes in the dryer needs to be taken out. You unload the dryer, folding the pants and hanging the shirts. Go back upstairs. Remember you were cooking. Check to see what you need. Go to basement for flour and worcestershire.

You know the drill. The older you get, the more trips you make to the basement.

You get a lot done this way. But losing the car keys? Anyone, any age can do that.

One theory is that once you set them down, they can move on their own, at least as far as a decent hiding place.

If you have cats, you can blame them. Cats can and will move car keys. Cats will push about anything off a shelf, just to see what happens.

Telekinesis might explain some of these things. Your wife might be willing the keys to go into hiding. Or the cat.



### Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes  
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If you don't have cats, maybe it's best to stick with the keys-can-crawl-into-hiding theory. It works for me.

Anyway, I lost my watch the other day, and it was driving me crazy when I couldn't find it.

I was running around the house, looking under, on and beside everything, because it's just a nuisance to not have your watch. I mean, you look at that bare wrist at least three-four times an hour and — it's not there.

We were on vacation in Colorado, where our daily routine includes a hike up some trail, usually with sandwiches for lunch. Cynthia has put the lunch in the pack, freed the dog and loaded the car.

The only thing that was missing was me — and that darned watch.

So I looked on the couch where I had been reading. On the table. In the bedroom, where I'd changed to go to the hot tub. Around the hot tub. In the hot tub.

Nothing. I think I was driving Cynthia crazy. She said, "You're driving me crazy. Though I admit, it's not a long trip."

Eventually, I gave up. I went crazy without my watch, but still

managed to enjoy the walk. Cynthia says it's important not to let small things spoil your day, so I try.

When we got home, we looked again, but we were too tired to search much. Took a nap. Got up and went to church. Went shopping. Stopped, had a glass of wine and an appetizer. Went home, turned on the ball game. Rockies behind 5-1. Then 6-1. Then the game got interesting. Almost forgot the darned watch.

Legs stiff from walking, etc., I decided to get in the hot tub. Looked over. Saw the watch on the step, under water, right up against the wall.

"Watch!" I shouted.

"Where?" she asked.

I held it up, dripping. She shook her head.

"I hope it's still running," she said.

"It says it's 9:02," I replied. Apparently, I'd taken it off to keep it from getting wet when I'd taken that first dip.

Maybe it jumped in. Maybe the cat pushed it in. I'm pretty sure I didn't put it there in the water.

I looked at Cynthia. Would she have willed it to jump in?

Naw. Too much effort. I think.

## Reader upset by cemetery plight

To the Editor:

My husband Ron is on the Beaver Township Board and we received a call from a neighbor with concerns about the Cedar Bluffs Cemetery. Unfortunately, the members of the township board do not have any authority over the cemetery. The Cedar Bluffs Cemetery caretakers are paid from a cemetery fund which is separate from all Beaver Township affairs.

I went to look at the cemetery on Saturday. My first reaction was tears! I was sickened by the overgrown grasses. Many areas had grasses taller than the headstones. It looked to me as if the only headstone which had been mowed around be-

### Letter to the Editor

longs to a relative of the caretaker. Everyone's family members who were lovingly put there for their final resting place deserve the same respect.

I took pictures of the sad conditions as I walked around in disbelief. The grass was so tall that it will be impossible for a regular lawn mower to mow the north half of the cemetery.

I went back to the cemetery on Sunday, and was surprised to see that part of it had been mowed. There are still tall grasses covering

some of the headstones. Hopefully, they will be back with a weed eater. The north part was still not mowed.

I hope that my fellow neighbors join me in my efforts to get the paid cemetery caretakers to do their job properly on a regular basis or resign. The current cemetery condition is not acceptable! The job needs to be given to someone who will actually take care of the cemetery and give all of its residents a respectful final resting place.

Dawn Diederich, Cedar Bluffs

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Published each Wednesday by Haynes Publishing Co., 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749. Periodicals 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, \$38 (tax included) in Decatur, Norton, Rawlins, Sheridan, Thomas and Red Willow counties; \$42 (tax included) elsewhere in Kansas; \$48 elsewhere in the U.S. Foreign subscriptions, \$50-\$250 (in U.S. 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.

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