

One candidate running on a trumped-up issue

Voter fraud in Kansas? Not that anybody ever heard of. But one candidate for secretary of state has made rooting out voter fraud the centerpiece of his campaign.

Kris Kobach, a law-school professor from Wyandotte County, wants new rules for registration and requiring photo identification for each voter, similar to laws he helped write for Arizona.

Never mind that no one, including apparently Mr. Kobach, has any proof of widespread voter fraud in Kansas. This guy is on a mission.

Candidate Kobach, a former Republican state chairman who's considered a national expert on immigration law, helped to write the controversial Arizona law that requires police to question those suspected of being illegal immigrants. The voter-fraud rap apparently relates to his immigration phobia.

But if illegal immigrants are voting as Kansas citizens, no one seems to have caught them. Few, if any, criminal complaints have been filed. No one is complaining to the county attorneys across the state, or the attorney general.

There's just no evidence that illegal immigrants are trying to vote in Kansas, or that any other kind of election fraud is happening.

It's like the complaint that immigrants don't pay taxes. If they are on somebody's payroll, they're paying income and Social Security taxes, even if it's for a fake number. If they shop, they pay sales taxes. If they rent, the landlord pays their property taxes.

We're all for making people prove who they

are when they register to vote. Citizenship is a requirement for voting.

But what about the idea of showing a photo ID every time you vote? What's next? A law saying that citizens must carry papers to travel around the state, like in some communist dictatorship?

Kansas is a small, still largely rural state. Our election judges know their voters and should be able to spot fraud when they see it. We don't need insulting laws that threaten our basic freedoms.

We can and should enforce our election laws. The current secretary of state and the last one both say that's being done. The incumbent, Democrat Chris Biggs, a former prosecutor, says he knows of no problem.

"There's no suggestion in the evidence that we have a major voter fraud problem," Biggs said, "and certainly not one connected to illegal immigration."

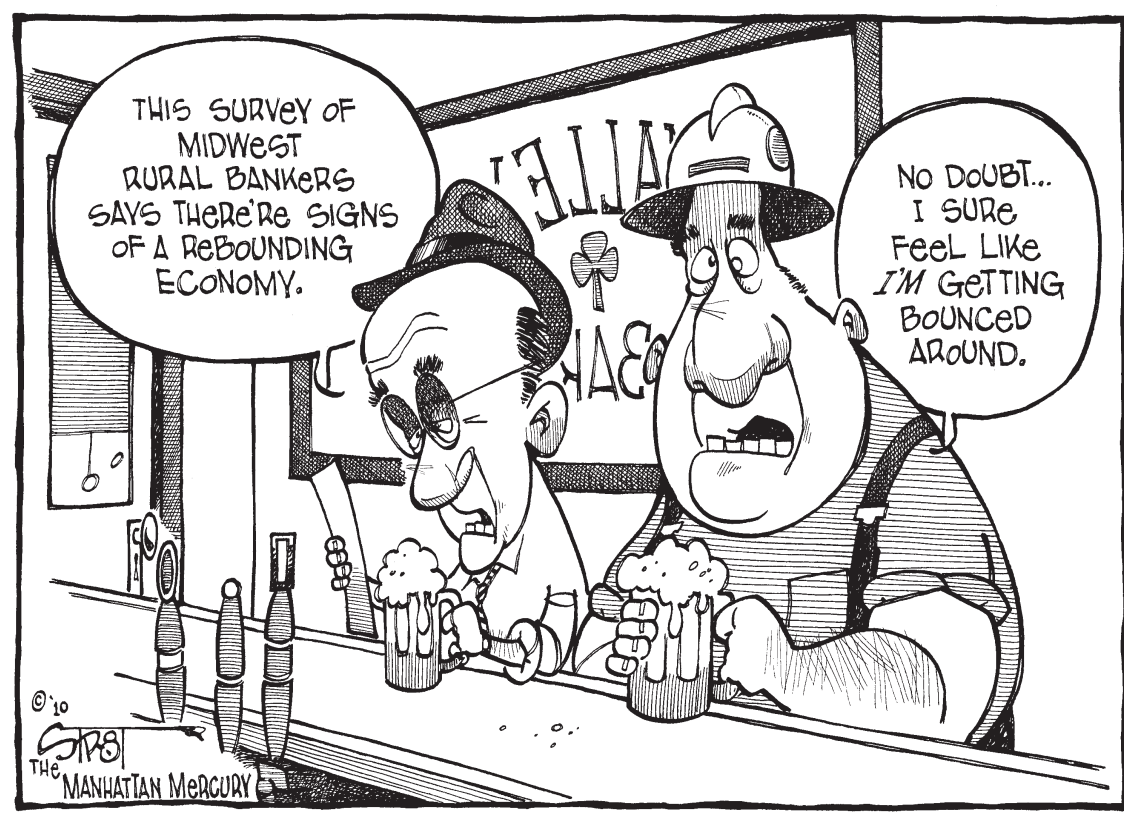
Every candidate has to have a platform, a theme to hang his campaign on. But the record suggests that Mr. Kobach is overly concerned with supposed effects of illegal immigration. It's as if he's trying to create an issue where no problem exists.

Our immigration laws could use some reform, but that's mostly a federal issue. Kansas has no need to get involved.

As for Mr. Kobach and his cries of voter fraud, we think it's a case of a solution looking for a problem.

And while Kansas has a lot of problems, this just isn't one of them. It's a phony.

— Steve Haynes



Driving to McCook was easy

There was the John Hughes movie, "Trains, Planes and Automobiles," but we may have gone that one better last week.

We started out simply enough, driving from Oberlin to the Amtrak depot in McCook. That was the easy part of the trip.

We caught the Zephyr about 12:45 a.m. and crawled into our berths. Woke up the next morning somewhere in Iowa, more than an hour late because of thunderstorms and flash-flood warnings overnight — the rules require a train to proceed at "restricted speed," no more than 25 mph, in a "critical area" susceptible to flooding — but at last we were rolling along.

Cynthia and I enjoyed breakfast in the diner and the first of several conversations with people seated across from us at the table. There's no such thing on Amtrak as a "table for two," but meeting and talking with people is fun.

We started to worry a little about our two-and-a-half-hour connection in Chicago, but there wasn't much we could do about it. We figured the "pad," the extra time schedulers build into the end of a trip, should allow us to make it.

Track work slowed us further. Lunch came rolling down to the Mississippi and out across the Big Muddy, where the railroad is building a new drawbridge to replace a swing span dating to 1896. Then we took off across Illinois, trying



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
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to make up some time. Coal trains backed up trying to get into Chicago got in the way, but we made it.

In fact, at Union Station, we arrived at 4:45, plenty of time to catch the 5:35 Pere Marquette to Grand Rapids. Lucky for us, it was on the next track. I even had time to go upstairs to buy some popcorn.

Grand Rapids, reached at 10:30 p.m. after an easy, relaxing trip across parts of Indiana and Michigan, was as far as we could go by train. Chill, cloudy weather kept us from getting any good view of the sandy beaches around the southern tip of Lake Michigan, but there were plenty of soggy blueberry fields along the tracks.

In the morning, we had to go to the airport to get a car so we could drive to the far tip of the Lower Peninsula at Mackinac City, around 240 miles up U.S. 131. That kept us from visiting the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum across from the hotel.

Michigan is pretty, in a damp, green sort of way. Lots of trees, lots of water. It's surrounded by deep, blue water, and the state claims more

lighthouses than any other. Who would have known?

At Mackinac (pronounced Mack-inaw) City, we parked and caught the 6 p.m. ferry to Mackinac Island, a state park in the middle of Lake Huron where the only automobiles are a fire truck and an ambulance. Otherwise, you walk, ride a bike or catch a horse-drawn cab. Even the UPS man has a team, brown, of course.

And the cab took us past the quaint, if touristy, downtown. I didn't count the fudge shops, but the street was lined with them, about one for every T-shirt or clothing or trinket shop.

Up the hill awaited the Grand Hotel, built in 1887, and one of the largest surviving Victorian resorts. The dining room is said to seat 1,500, and we had three days of meetings there to look forward to. Not just the press was here, either, but the state's lawyers and a couple of other groups. It's a big hotel.

So, car, train, train, car, ferry, horse-drawn cab, a trip back in time, but no airplanes. Maybe next time.

Citywide sale guarantees rain

Next year, the planning committee for our little town's annual citywide garage sale, should consult with the farmers to see when they would like it to rain. Almost every year, we get pounded with rain the night before or the day of the sale.

This year was no exception, with a real gully washer coming down during the night on Friday. The good news was the streets had been newly graveled, so travel was no problem. It was a little greasy off the beaten track and in alleys, but the biggest share of vendors had set up shop in the former school building. Made for great one-stop-shopping.

My women's club held a bake-garage sale in half of the new restoration shop Jim and son James built over the winter. Turned out that we were our own best customers. Veda brought brownies and for 10 cents apiece we all had one. Margaret sent homemade cinnamon rolls, and after selling some singles to customers, Jim decided if he was going to get any, he better just buy them all. He also snatched up a nice



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
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jacket Joyce contributed, and Kathy bought the fresh radishes Veda had picked that morning. Deanna brought a cute soup tureen and bowl set that a neighbor "cabbaged" onto. I baked two pecan pies and threw in five dozen eggs.

It was so chilly, we all grabbed for jackets and Veda's daughter Carol even wrapped up in one of the baby blankets she was trying to sell. It's unbelievable that, in the middle of June, we were trying to bundle up.

It was a lot of fun, and as the day wore on, I was sorry I hadn't put on a pot of stew. I did, however, remember I had the makin's for a batch of chili. With Jim's help (he browned the hamburger), I had a pot

of chili on in no time. And as soon as the club members had packed up what didn't sell, we sat down for a meal together. The one pecan pie and the few brownies that didn't sell became our dessert.

Spur-of-the-moment entertaining is the best. It always exceeds expectations.

From the Bible

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.
Philippians 3:20 NIV

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@nwkans.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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A woman's work is never done

God must be a man, because after working hard for six days on the seventh, he rested.

Which makes woman the devil, because she never rests.

This isn't the gospel according to Cynthia. It's just a general observation about everyday life in most American homes.

Now, my husband Steve is a hard worker. He puts in five long days at the office most weeks. On Sundays, he mows the yard and edits copy for two papers.

However, after mowing he sits down with his weekly beer and relaxes. And on Saturdays, he takes the day to read, relax and enjoy his favorite hobby — train watching.

He and the dog load up and head for McCook, where they find a nice tree and settle down for a nap between trains. Then Steve reads and the dog protects him from errant squirrels, rabid rabbits and pesky chipmunks.

While Steve is checking out the trains, I'm usually at the office catching up on the book work or dealing drugs at the corner store.



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
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(For those of you who don't know, I was in pharmacy school when I met that cute young reporter. My wedding and my pharmacy license came through the same year — 1971.)

My Mondays through Fridays are about the same — do book work for the papers, sports for *The Oberlin Herald* or fill prescriptions in any one of a dozen stores that need occasional pharmacy help.

On Sunday, while Steve is mowing, I weed the gardens and yard, spread the clippings and fight the ever-present elm seedlings.

While Steve has his beer, I go into the house to finish the laundry and start supper. Then it's time to clean up and do the dishes, fold the

laundry and put it away, clean the cat boxes and get the trash ready for its Monday pickup and write sports for the paper.

Sometimes I wonder about this, but I figure that I've made my decision. I'd rather have the household chores halfway done than have a beer, especially since I'm not very fond of beer.

And Steve. Well, he says he'll be glad to help me. But, it's the Sabbath, you know, the day of rest.

I think I ought to give him a quick jab with my pitchfork!

Editor's note: I guess you have to give the Devil her due.

Photo Policy

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, when they are provided to us. Please remember that we need a clear, sharp picture. Dark or fuzzy prints

will not work.

We cannot return photos unless you submit a self-addressed, stamped envelope with clear instructions for return. Other photos submitted may be picked up at our office within two weeks. After that, they will be disposed of.

Laser proofs of photos which have run in *The Herald* are available, first come, first served.

Woman hates to see official leave

To the Editor:
I hated to see City Administrator Austin Gilley leave.

I did manage to go and see him. I wanted him to know what a good job he did. He was very knowledgeable and had a lot to offer. Oberlin was lucky to have him, even for a short time.

He understood and told me loud and clear, "That I had lived in Kan-

sas all of my life and no one did anything to help me." I am sure he meant in the death of my child.

Austin suggested that I move away to a different state.

Because I believe you cannot run away from your problems, I will

stay as long as I am able.

I also believe that where there is a will, there is a way. And I am finding that way. I am sure Austin will do well where ever he goes.

Elsie Wolters
Oberlin

Letter to the Editor