

## Will we get to decide which food we'll grow?

Mixed in with the hype and hysteria about global warming is a group of people who, deep in their hearts, hopes the recession will last, the seas will rise, the next drought or hurricane will prove them right.

These people want to see modern agriculture turned out to pasture and return us to the days when everyone had to grow all or part of their own food, scratching out a meager existence on a small plots of land.

They see production agriculture as evil, an enemy of the land, and corn as the devil's tool, ruining the environment and our health. They believe, with the fervor of an old-time revival preacher, that the world will be a better place if we give up air conditioning, cars, oil, jet airplanes and coal-fired power plants.

And there is a fine line between this bunch and reality.

We'd all be better off if we grew some of our own food, and it's not that hard to do in your backyard. One 30-something we know says you start being more healthy when you graze on the "outer ring" of the grocery, fresh produce, fresh meat, fresh dairy products, and stay away from the canned, the preserved and the prepared, anything that's white and anything containing high-fructose corn syrup.

It makes sense to clean up our environment, including those coal-fired power plants; turn up the air-conditioning; and turn down the furnace. Walking more and driving less would be good for us, as individuals and for the obesity epidemic.

It makes sense to worry about endangered species and polluted rivers, but not to spend billions and billions of dollars to get another 1 or 2 percent of the contaminants out of drinking water. Heck, 10 to 20 years ago, science couldn't even measure some of the amounts the do-gooders want to ban today.

Much of the fuzzy thinking on these issues gets done at the Land Institute, an ultraliberal think tank outside of Salina, where an author is to discuss his new book, "The End of Growth: Adapting to Our New Economic Reality," on Sunday.

Richard Heinberg, a "senior fellow" at something called the Post Carbon Institute in Santa Rosa, Calif., told a reporter he advocates measuring our economy not by the gross domestic product, but on something he calls "Gross National Happiness." He says the idea was developed in Nepal.

"If we plan, we can have an economy that is dynamic and supports people," he said. "It can be like an ecosystem ... some services would do better than others, we'd still have innovations, just like we have now."

Whatever. The key phrase there is, "if we plan," as in planned economy. As if the Soviets hadn't proved the case against that.

But without modern agriculture, how will we feed a big and growing world? Without continued exploration and development of resources, how will we make it run?

And when the planners miss the mark, who will pick up the pieces? Government? Sure, the government is efficient and knows exactly how to make things work. We all know that.

The real question is, do we get to make up our own minds about what we eat and how it's grown, or do Mr. Heinberg and the Post Carbon Institute do that for us? Do we get to eat meat or tofu? Grow hybrid tomatoes or heirloom? Eat fresh food or stuff doused with corn syrup.

For the Gross National Happiness would be a lot higher, we suspect, if people get to make up their own minds about these things and not have someone do it for them. But that's just a guess. — Steve Haynes



## Blind lead blind to Arkansas

My sister and I decided that we needed to see relatives in Arkansas. We do this in the fall every year or two.

Mom died in June, and Uncle Jeff, Aunt Frances and cousins Judy and George came from Arkansas to be with us.

Jeff is mother's last living sibling, a brother just a year younger and a fit 85.

We decided that we needed to go see Jeff and Frances and on the way, we would visit with as many of our other cousins as we could find.

Now I can't find my way around the block without getting lost, and my sister isn't a whole lot better, but we had a Garmin global positioning system. How could we get lost driving the roads we'd gone on with our mother dozens of times?

Let me count the ways. We got off to a good start in my sister's car with her driving. We didn't even get the Garmin out of the trunk. We just headed south from Concordia to Wichita.

Since we couldn't leave until after she got off work on Wednesday, we were a little late getting going and little sister doesn't like to drive at night. I took over and guided us on to Tulsa. All was going well, if you didn't count the 20-mph off ramp I didn't see any too soon and took at 50 on about 2 1/2 wheels.

After that we decided to stop at Sand Springs, a Tulsa suburb, and find a motel. The next morning, she said that I could drive again. Sneaky little thing. She didn't want to drive through the city. But, hey, we got the Garmin out of the trunk to guide us through the tricky spots.

The first problem occurred when we ran into road construction. The Garmin's couldn't reconfigure our trip fast enough. Just as it said to turn at Exit 34A, we looked over to see that the exit was two lanes over.

Miraculously, we got through



### Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes  
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Tulsa with only two wrong turns, enduring two miles of four-lane-traffic backed up due to an accident on a one-lane bridge that was under construction. We figured we were lucky we weren't heading for work.

The rest of the trip was a piece of cake, except that we found that we were headed for the wrong town. Our uncle wanted to meet us at Cousin George's house at Clinton and we were headed for the old home place at Dardanelle. Well, they are only about 40 miles from each other as the crow flies. We didn't have a crow, and it's two hours as the mountain roads curve, so we just kept driving. This time, it was Marie who took a couple of wrong turns, but we eventually got there.

We had a good visit with the relatives, but we still hadn't seen the old home place or visited our grandparents' graves, so we headed back to Dardanelle.

As we left, George asked if we knew the way. We assured him that we did, drove out of his yard and turned the wrong way as he stood there with his hand in the air in a final goodbye. He was probably wondering how we would ever find our way back to Kansas.

In Dardanelle, Cousin Judy took us around so we couldn't get lost, fed us and sent us on our way.

We were doing fine as we crossed in Oklahoma, but worried how we would get back through Tulsa.

As I navigated the first curve into

the city, and noticed I was driving through Tulsa again, I came up behind a school bus for the Sandites. A quick check of the sides proved that it was a Sand Springs School District bus.

I tailed that bus like a stalker and prayed it would lead us through the maze.

It twisted and turned, changed lanes, took off ramps and on ramps that said everything but Sand Springs, but led us across the city and straight home.

If it hadn't been for that school bus, we might still be trying to get out of Tulsa.

We did pretty good from there until we got to Wichita. We got off and spent the night and the next morning couldn't figure out how to get home.

My sister swore we weren't supposed to get back on the Kansas Turnpike but Garmin kept sending us there. We came up to the toll booth three times before I told her that as we had tried the other three directions, we might as well go through and see where it got us. By that point, I figured we had spent more in gas and frustration than the toll would cost.

The next sign said I-135 North. That was our road.

Our husbands just shook their heads. They know better than to try to give us directions.

But I think I did hear one of them laugh.

## No, it really wasn't her at all

A phone call this morning caused me to have one of those "huh?" moments.

An old friend called to ask if I had called and left her a message about a cream can that had belonged to her grandfather.

When I asked Jim if he had called Mary about a cream can, he echoed my response with his own, "Huh?" That was Mary's clue that we knew absolutely nothing about her cream can. With a little sleuthing, however, she found out it was my sister-in-law who had left the cryptic message. Mary's husband had taken the message off the answering machine. When he heard "Kelley," he just thought it was me.

Moral of this story: I not only have to worry about being blamed for my own misdeeds, now, I have to worry about what my sister-in-law, Donna, might do and pin on me.

You'll have to cut me a little slack. I'm not up to full operating speed. The weekend past was the annual women's retreat I attend, and I'm still prying my eyes open. I hate to concede anything to my age, but I sure don't bounce back like I used to.

The retreat is held at a campground that would be considered "rustic" by some, "primitive" by others. Hey, it has showers and



### Out Back

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toilets! People from Third World countries would call it "luxurious."

Women from our church like to leave early so we have a chance to stop and shop in a relatively large city close to camp. I've always contended that God gave me catalogs so I wouldn't have to go shopping, but this trip, shop I did. Now, to convince Jim of how much money I saved him.

This is an "all-girls" weekend, and I don't want to miss a thing. Consequently, I stay up late snacking, playing board games or just talking. We try to attend every one of the workshops, and most importantly, we try to absorb everything from the speaker. This year our speaker was a missionary who, along with her husband, had spent 15 years in Papua New Guinea.

Her lesson on "Faith" had the most impact on me. She told of how important being able to go swimming was to her family when

they visited a larger town, quite a distance from the village where they lived. I forget what happened but, they had lost their swim suits.

The family arrived in the larger town and on their first night there, as their children were saying their prayers, the youngest prayed that God would send them all swim suits. Our speaker said she and her husband tried to explain that God wasn't like Santa Claus.

The next day, they received word that a package awaited them at the church. When they opened it, inside were, you guessed it, new swim suits for everyone. The mother said when she told them about the suits, the youngest looked at her like, duh, "That's what I prayed for."

That package had been sent to them months before, long before they even knew they would have the need.

Oh, to have the faith of a little child.

## Son blamed again for trip

You may have heard, our weekend trip to Lawrence and Emporia ended in Salina.

We were home by noon on Friday when we were supposed to be relaxing at the lake and getting ready for dinner with my brother and sister and their families.

It's not the first time we've had to abort a trip, though most go off without a hitch. While the cat seemed to be the culprit this time, we've decided to blame our son, Lacy, because he's usually the one who makes us change our plans.

The first time I can remember was the first time he broke his head. We lived in Colorado then, but down in the valley. We planned to spend some weekend time near our old home up in Creede.

It was a brilliant late summer afternoon, I remember. Lacy was about 6. I was fishing. Cynthia was reading her book. The kids were climbing around some rocks when Lacy fell and hit his head.

A helicopter ride to Denver and a week in the hospital later, we sort of forgot about that weekend.

I should say that I can't ever recall canceling a trip because of something the girls did. They had their trips to the emergency room, but stitches, bandages, stuff like that. Never even a broken bone. Lacy, on the other hand, was hard on his little body.

When he was in junior high, he went out for track. He was at practice one day while we were at the state press convention in Overland Park. Lacy and his sister, who was in high school, were at home fending for themselves.

We were out for dinner with some other publishers and didn't get the message until we got back to the room about midnight. Lacy had fallen off the slide in City Park and broken his wrist. He was OK, but ... he fell off the slipper slide at



### Along the Sappa

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age 14?

That's the night we found out just how long it took to drive from Kansas City to Oberlin without stopping — six hours flat. Lacy was home and doing well when we got back; Lindsay and Pat had done all the right things.

When Lacy was in high school, we were on the way to Kansas City to visit my sister and her baby at KU Medical Center. We were west of Salina when the sheriff's dispatcher from home called: "Lacy's been in a wreck. A deputy is on the way to check."

We did a U at the next exit. The dispatcher called back: "The deputy is there. He thinks Lacy's OK, but the ambulance crew is going to check him."

We slowed down to the speed limit. Later, we couldn't decide whether to hug him when we got back, or kill him. We settled on grounding him.

Then when he was in college, we got a 3 a.m. call from a doctor in Harlingen, Texas, near Padre Island where Lacy had gone for spring break.

"Your son has fractured his skull," the doctor said.

"Oh, no," his mother moaned. "Not again."

The doctor laughed and assured her he was going to be alright.

We were scheduled to fly to Boston for a convention the next morning. Instead, Cynthia flew to Texas, where she met her mom — who

lived just 50 miles away — at the hospital. I was to speak at the meeting, so I went on to Boston alone.

Since then, Lacy hasn't broken anything. He's in his 30s now and works in Lawrence, but I suppose if he did, his mother would want to be there for him.

The last time we had to abort a trip was Sept. 11, 2001. Can't blame the kid for that.

Then there was the trip that ended in Salina. I suggested that we really should blame the cat, but Cynthia said it was Lacy's fault. How? I asked.

She smiled and said, "Well, we were on the way to see him. It must be his fault. It's *always* his fault."

I wasn't sure I followed her logic, but you know how she feels about her cats.

### From the Bible

Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

— Isaiah 55:6-7

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