

Pipeline would bring new oil supply to the U.S.

Environmental protesters today are trying to block construction of the Keystone XL pipeline, designed to carry oil imported from vast Canadian tar-sands fields to the central U.S.

And while the protesters claim a leak could foul the great Ogallala aquifer as it crosses Nebraska's Sand Hills, that is no more likely than any other of the dozens of pipelines crisscrossing the nation.

This battle is not about leaks — that talk basically is just fear mongering — but about making oil more expensive, harder to get and less useful — and oddly enough, keeping the U.S. dependent on Arab suppliers.

The decision will be made, by the U.S. Department of State, not the Interior Department or the Environmental Protection Agency, which deal routinely with such issues.

The State Department held a hearing in Lincoln, Neb., last month where supporters and opponents jeered each other. Environmentalists claimed a leak could devastate the Ogallala, ignoring the fact that pipelines are a reasonably safe means of transporting oil. They shut down automatically when a leak crops up, for one thing.

Supporters said the line would bring jobs and badly needed, dependable supplies of oil.

Perhaps the real agenda slipped from one environmentalist: opponents don't like the open-pit mining process used to recover the sands, or the cooking it takes to extract the oil.

"We cannot afford to spill this toxic tar sands oil into our soil or groundwater," one declared.

But the Canadians have already developed the fields, and someone will burn this oil. Why shouldn't the U.S. have a steady, dependable supply that doesn't have to move in supertankers? And come to think of it, which is worse: an unseen pipeline across the midlands, safe from most hazards, from terrorism to storms, or a tanker floating on the seas and passing through jihadist-infested waters off war-torn nations?

Indications are the \$7 billion project will be approved, though that's far from certain. The builders claim it'll meet and exceed environmental and safety standards. The environmentalists are just against it.

Anyone interested in keeping the economy afloat on the High Plains, or in having a steady, dependable and reasonably priced supply of oil, might want to come down on the side of the builders. We need the oil, and we sure need the jobs. — Steve Haynes

Just ignore her bruised nose

Well, you ought to see the other guy! At least that's what I'm going to say when anyone asks, "What happened to your nose?"

We had planned a work day at the house we help run for families who come to visit loved ones incarcerated at the state prison not far from where we live. The high school football coach had volunteered his team to provide the muscle we needed for the heavy lifting, moving, pushing and shoving.

It was like a choreographed dance: carry this to there; throw that on the trailer; cut those branches; pull up that carpet; haul this to the thrift store. There were strong, willing young men everywhere, ready to do any task we asked of them.

I was running from one building to another just trying to keep ahead of the action. A room-size roll of carpeting, backing side out, was laying on the sidewalk when I stubbed my toe and took a header right onto the roll. It was like in slow motion: I saw the carpet roll coming toward me; one foot went north, one went south, my arms splayed out and I planted my face right into the rough surface.



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
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More embarrassed than hurt, I jumped back to my feet and looked around to see who might have witnessed my mishap. Jim, of course; one of our friends; and one of the football players were the only ones around. Jim rushed to my aid as I brushed myself off.

"This is our little secret," I told the others.

So my nose may be a little bruised, but the only thing really hurt was my pride.

-ob-

During a recent conversation with one of my friends she asked how I got started writing this column. I shared the story of how I kind of "fell into it" after my mom died. My friend asked how my writing is different than Mom's. That caused

me to think. How are we different? I'm a lot like my mother, but she was a much deeper thinker. She was also more political and had an opinion on everything.

Like the post office closing issue; she would have been all over that, leading the charge to keep small-town post offices open. It might be too late, but I'll throw my two cents in and campaign to keep our post office.

-ob-

I caught this modern-day version of how a "techy" might interpret the commandment of "honoring thy father and thy mother": "Respect your parents; they did high school without Google and Wikipedia."

Honor Roll

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

Elsewhere: Leroy Muirhead, Alma, Neb.; Donna Norman, Aurora, Colo.; Patricia Schultz, Enid, Okla.; Duane Waldo, Tucson, Ariz.; E.K. VanVleet, San Diego; and Cheryl Jenkins, Federal Way, Wash.

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From the Bible

For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else.

— Isaiah 45 4-6



Kitchen job has her packing

We've been talking about updating our kitchen for about 10 years.

We've been doing a lot more talking this year. We've talked to the bank. We've talked to the cabinet maker. We've talked to the flooring guy.

The bank said yes. The cabinet maker and flooring guy showed us samples and we're ready to go.

But first there's a little matter of the old cabinets.

I'm not worried about what to do with the old cabinets. They can be moved to the garage or basement and put to use holding leftovers, spares, parts and assorted junk — the second half of a two-light bulb pack, unused garden seeds, garden fertilizer, bug spray, charcoal, and all the other debris that clutters up every flat surface.

What I have to do now is clean them out — before the cabinet guys get here.

And if you've ever moved, you know that that's an incredible job.

I've lived in this house about 18 years now, but I haven't forgotten the incredible amount of junk that can be hiding in the kitchen cabinets.

Since the cabinets are still being made, I should have a month or so to clean everything out. I think.

I've started at the top. Above the cabinets, I had my antique Pyrex bowl sets, just like the ones my mother got as wedding presents 65 years ago. You know the ones, nesting bowls, yellow, green, red and blue. Most of the sets had been



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
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sitting up there undisturbed for at least 10 years.

Do you know how much dust, grime, grease and filth can collect on anything that isn't moved or touched for 10 years?

Each bowl had to be hand washed and dried, wrapped in newspaper and placed in a box. It took about a week just to clear the tops of the cabinets.

Then I started on the top rows — the ones that neither Steve nor I can reach without a step stool or small ladder. These shelves contain large pieces of Corningware used once a year at Thanksgiving, plastic glasses, ceramic mugs and unused glassware.

Since these things had been in the cabinets and actually used once in every blue moon, they just needed to be wrapped and packed.

Next, I went on to the food odds-and-ends shelves. This is where I put the cider spice mix, tea bags, ultrafrancy mustard and bags of this and that.

Most of the tea was so old it could apply for Social Security. I found things in there with labels

that weren't even in English. I mean really, I don't know what language it was — Japanese maybe?

These treasures filled a trash bag, but at least nothing crawled out of any of the ancient foodstuffs.

So far, I have 10 boxes all neatly taped and labeled in the basement. But I still haven't touched the stuff we use every week. The plates, silverware, knives and utensils, pots and pans, plastic tubs for leftovers, cups, bowls and food we actually use, including condiments, flour, sugar, coffee and cereal.

I know that I'm going to get that call — "We'll be there tomorrow," and panic. Everything will get dumped into whatever boxes, bags or baskets I have left and dragged to the basement. I'll end up with 10 to 15 neatly labeled boxes of stuff I never use and won't be able to find a skillet, plate and fork to make a scrambled egg.

I guess Steve will just have to take me out to eat for a week or so.

Gee, that would be so bad, would it?

No 'tarmac' at the airport?

Word abuse, I call it.

I first noticed it a couple of years ago when wire-service reporters were writing about people stuck on the aprons and taxiways of our airports.

In bad weather, they could be trapped out there for hours, waiting to be deiced, for a runway to open, for the tower at the destination airport to give the OK to leave. In a couple of extreme cases, people were held on the apron for most of a day, prompting new federal rules and stiff penalties for holding passengers against their will.

And that's when some bright and supposedly literate reporter — probably one who'd read a British novel or two — started referring to these people as "trapped out on the 'tarmac.'"

Sounds kinda cool, huh? Very British. I really noticed when my daughter was spouting the phrase when describing an airline trip.

Only tarmac isn't just a synonym for pavement, or even asphalt. It refers to a specific process for building up a road surface, the way many roads out here were paved from the 1920s to when I was a kid.

I sort of knew that, but I didn't know the whole story until I looked it up, and thereby learned a few esoteric facts to be filed away in that great vault of random information that makes me a fair trivia player.

First, the term tarmac comes from two origins, tar, or heavy oil, and macadamization, a technique for building up roads perfected in the 19th century by a Scots engineer named John Loudon McAdam.

Mr. McAdam didn't invent tarmac pavement, as I had thought, and he certainly never envisioned paving the parking area at an airdrome. What he invented was basically the process still used today to build a gravel road — cutting a ditch on either side, grading out and packing the surface with only a slight crown, then putting down layers of small, crushed rock which pack to form a solid, relatively waterproof surface.

The engineer perfected this process about 1820, and within a couple of years, roads in America — and around the world — were being improved his way.



Along the Sappa

By Steve Haynes
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Wagon-wheel tires actually packed the top layer into a tight, smooth surface, and that worked until the advent of motor cars. Speeding vehicles sucked up dirt and gravel off the surface, causing a dust problem and tearing up the road. It fell to a Brit engineer, Edgar Purnell Hooley, to notice that tar covered with crushed rock made a dust-free surface for a Macadamized road.

Mr. Hooley secured a patent for his "tar macadamization" process in 1904, giving the world tarmac. And while modern hot-mix asphalt paving was invented in the 1920s, it didn't fully replace tarmac in this country until about the 1960s.

I can remember contractors rebuilding western Kansas roads in the '50s by packing the base, then building up layers of larger rock which were worked back and forth with a grader as traffic passed. That left a pile of rock in the center.

My mother got stuck on that pile going through one job, probably on K-96 down by Dighton. Dad gave her a lot of grief, but a nice man from the construction firm came by and pulled her out. He said it was no big

deal; he pretty much spent his days doing just that.

Anyway, the final layers would be smaller rock, just as Mr. McAdam specified, though undoubtedly broken by machine, not by convicts or laborers swinging hammers. Those were sealed with hot asphalt, sometimes before spreading, but always after.

Today, it's hard to find any tarmac pavement. Asphalt rules the highways, at least where the traffic doesn't justify concrete paving. You still find it on older county roads and on city streets in places like Oberlin, where the paving has been built up over years and years of sealing.

But it's been 50 years or more since any tarmac was laid down on a U.S. commercial airport. Taxiways and aprons are mostly concrete today, with some asphalt here and there. Tarmac probably wouldn't hold a 737, which could sink into the goo on a hot summer day.

So, stuck on the tarmac? A romantic notion, perhaps, but hardly accurate. A stretch at best. But, for a while, at least, the phrase caught on, and that's how word abuse gets its start.

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 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. We need a clear, sharp picture. Dark or fuzzy pictures will not work.

We cannot return photos unless you submit a self-addressed, stamped envelope with clear instructions for return.

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