

We should look for truth in shootings, not revenge

People of good will in this country need to come together now and make some sense of the racial divide growing in the wake of the Trayvon Martin shooting and the senseless shootings of five blacks in Tulsa over the weekend.

The potential for more violence seems high. Another spark could set off events which could erase decades of progress in racial equality and interracial goodwill. That must not be allowed.

There's already been way too much irresponsible talk in the wake of the killing of Trayvon, a 14-year-old middle-school student who died Feb. 26 in Sanford, Fla. School pictures showed him as a smiling football player. The neighborhood watch volunteer who shot him claimed he was attacked.

The incident raises as many questions, maybe more, than we have answers. Civil Rights leaders jumped on a chance to trumpet the cause, assuming the shooter, George Zimmerman, had a racial motive.

NBC News reportedly fired a producer over his editing of the volunteer's 911 call reporting a "suspicious" teen. The edit omitted a question from the police dispatcher and made it appear the man had a racial motive for suspecting Trayvon.

In fact, when Mr. Zimmerman called police, the dispatcher asked for a description of the suspect, standard procedure, and prompted him for a race.

Such irresponsible reporting can do great damage, however. And those who want to believe Trayvon was killed because of his race likely won't hear NBC's retraction.

More disturbing, perhaps, is why a neigh-

borhood watch volunteer would call police, then go out alone with a gun to confront a "suspicious person." Why not let the cops handle it?

It has nothing to do with Mr. Zimmerman's right to carry a gun. The truth is, though, that no good can ever come from shooting someone in a situation like this unless a life is in danger. And that was not the case, at least until he stepped out into the street without waiting for help.

Comedian and social commentator Bill Cosby raised the issue Sunday in an interview with the *Washington Times*.

"We've got to get the gun out of the hands of people who are supposed to be on neighborhood watch," said Mr. Cosby. "Without a gun, I don't see Mr. Zimmerman approaching Trayvon by himself."

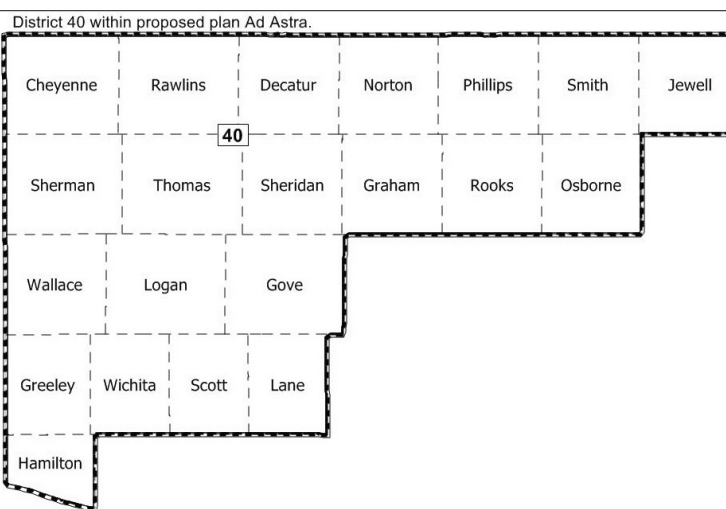
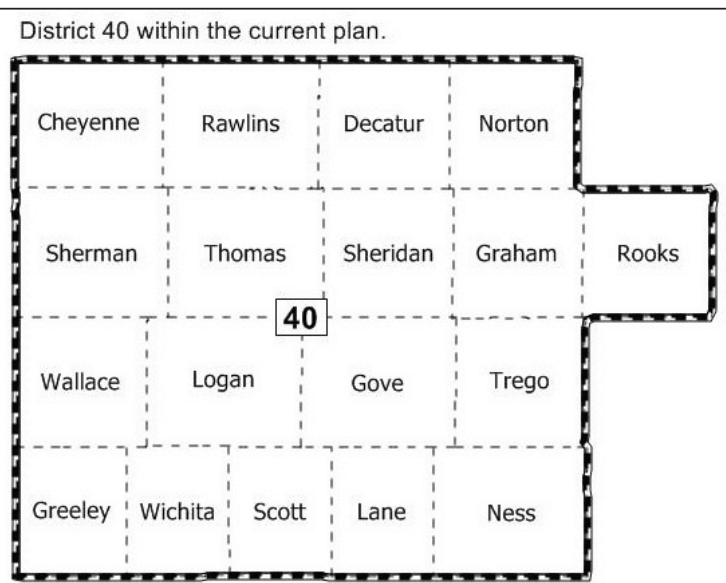
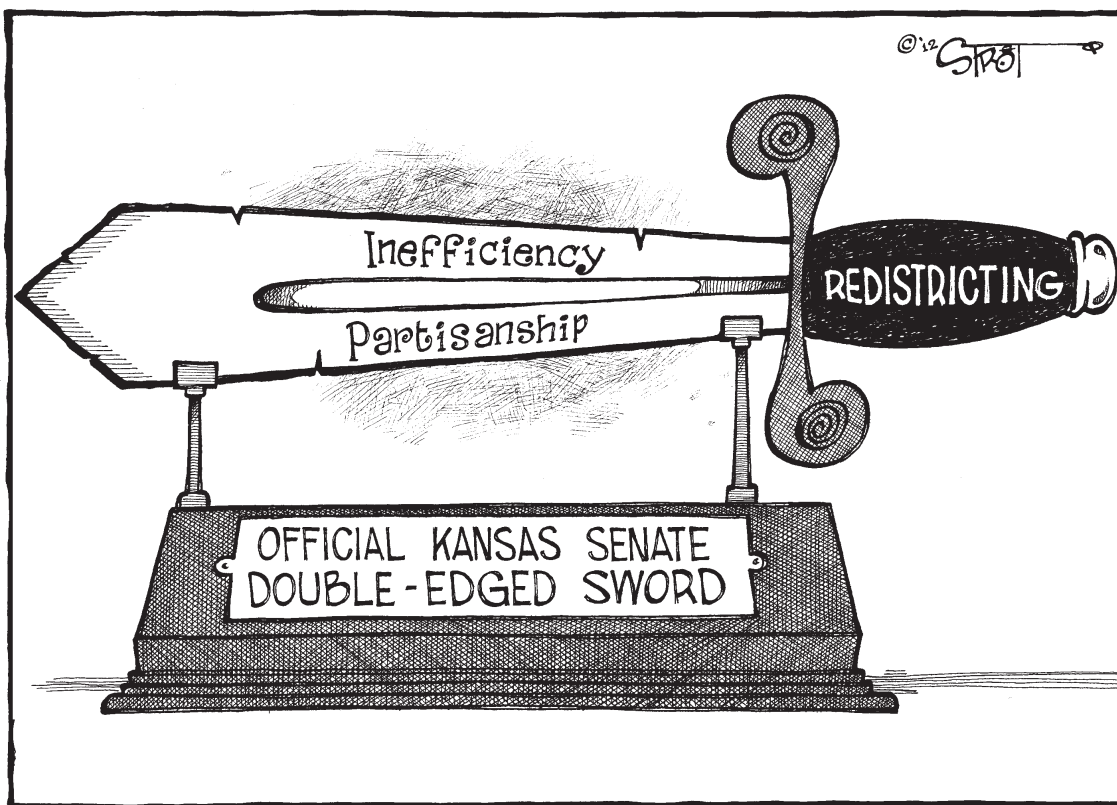
The situation is further muddied by the fact that Mr. Zimmerman apparently is, like most Americans, of mixed ancestry, half hispanic, and technically a minority himself.

Quick police action in Tulsa led to the arrest of two men, but police cautioned not to judge their motives, at least not yet. People began to return to their normal routines after a weekend of fear.

Perhaps the whole thing will blow over. Maybe not. But those who care need to develop a voice that says race is not the issue. Justice. Less crime, less violence. More love, more understanding. Those ought to be the issues.

Not hyped up, distorted and overblown events. America is better than that.

— Steve Haynes



Maps tell tale of district

By SEN. RALPH OSTMEYER

Here are maps for the 40th Senate District. Ad Astra is the name of the Senate map in the Ways and Means Committee which should be passed out during the veto session. The other map shows the current district.

This will give you a better idea of what leadership intends for the 40th District, the elimination of the 36th District and combining it into the 38th District. Sen. Vicki Schmidt and I hope to overturn this map when we return for the veto session.

I don't believe the public realizes what these districts will look like with the changes, so I am sending these maps now.

Birds tell story of springtime

The birds are telling me that it's springtime.

Mind you, I have a yard full of flowers. The daffodils are almost gone, but the tulips are up and at 'em all over the place. And back in a sunny southern corner, three irises are blooming.

Irises aren't supposed to bloom before my daughter's birthday on May 9. However, no one seems to have told the blossoms that they're way early. As are just about everything else that flowers, from lilacs to cherry trees.

Still, it's the birds that let me know spring is truly here.

I watched a robin singing his heart out at the top of a tiny white blossom-covered apple tree the other day. More robins were greedily checking out our newly turned garden and taking a bath in the water bowl I leave out for our cats and the dog.

Over by my bird feeder, our feathered friends line up for the seeds that sat there most of the winter without a taker.

Now, however, I have to fill both feeders every other day. As I sit at my dining room table, I watch the grackles try to figure out how to fold, spindle and mutilate themselves into a small enough package to get to that delicious seed. It's pretty hilarious watching them.

There was a red-winged blackbird out there on Sunday. He was having a similar problem. The feeders are



Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes
c.haynes@nwkansas.com

set up for chickadees, sparrows and finches, not for the larger species of seed eaters.

Each evening as we take our walk along a shelterbelt, we hear hundreds of pairs of wings flapping. The grackles have taken over that row of trees and bed down there each night. They are not happy to have a couple of humans and a dog walk past their bedroom and annoy them just when they're getting ready to take a nap.

Up in the sky, we are seeing the vultures. They don't seem to be perching on the Oberlin water tower as much as they have in years past, but that may be because they are in the trees making their nests. My guess is after the eggs are laid, we'll see more of the old men hanging around the water tower. Their mates will toss them out of the nest and tell them to go find something else to do, 'cause they're in the way.

Out on the highway, you can't go more than a few miles without seeing a cock pheasant making goo goo eyes at a bunch of hens. It's like

watching teenage boys and girls at a dance. All the boys are on one side and all the girls are on the other, and they're all trying desperately to figure out how to cut one of 'em out of the herd on the other side of the room.

Atom turkey we saw Sunday had no such problem. He was fanning his feathers for three or four hens, hoping to make a good impression.

Love is in the air, and that means it's spring.

A little birdie told me so.

From the Bible

And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, "Peace be unto you." But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

— John 24: 36-37

She's home; that's enough

First off, let me apologize to everyone I did not call after we got home.

That means I have to apologize to everyone. I didn't call anyone that day, and I still haven't called anyone. I'm sorry, but I've barely managed to crawl from the recliner to the bed. After four days home, I'm still exhausted.

Jim finally got the van unloaded Sunday night. Now the front room looks as bad as the van did after we lived in it for three weeks. Monday is a work day for me, and I will leave the mess behind. Like Scarlet O'Hara I say, "Fiddle dee dee. Tomor-rah is another day."

I think Jim will stay home and try to get ahead of the weeds and grass. Maybe even try to put away some of the tools that went to Mexico with us.

The cats were sure glad to see us. All three of them couldn't get close enough and all three slept with us that first night home. Which, in itself, is unusual, because they don't get along that well. Evidently, they signed a truce for the evening.

-ob-

Yes, we were in Dallas the afternoon of the tornadoes. We had no idea how severe they were until we watched the evening news. Our oldest daughter, Halley, had gone to lunch with us at — you guessed it — a Mexican restaurant. Our youngest daughter, Kara, and her husband, Adam, were both at work, and our granddaughter, Taylor, was in school.

The skies were dark and rain came in spurts. Radio reports kept coming in of tornado watches and warnings, but Halley and I had a



Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts
cplotts65@gmail.com

spa appointment, so we couldn't be bothered. After all what's more important — taking immediate shelter or having a foot detox bath? We chose the foot bath.

Now there is a story in itself. We each soaked our feet in a tub of water with an electrical charge running through it. Duh! How bright is that with an electrical storm raging all around? Let's just say some disgusting "gunk" floated to the top. The technician attending to me said, "Metals," while she told Halley, "Liver."

I felt really good after the foot-soak, so no harm was done, but back to the tornadoes.

I've always thought Dallasites (or Dallasonians) overreacted to their weather. If the city gets even a skiff of snow, schools cancel classes and no one goes to work. They can't get to work, but they always manage to go shopping. Anyway, that's what I attributed the semipanic all around us to.

After our spa treatment, Halley and I needed to stop by a major discount store in the same shopping area. The parking lot was empty and the store was almost deserted. A skeleton staff met Halley and me. We were it. Everyone else had scattered.

It wasn't until that evening that

we flipped on the television and saw the destruction that had occurred about 20 miles away: Roofs ripped off, truck trailers blown about like toys, trees uprooted, total destruction in some areas.

Tornadoes are no respecters of anyone, but in this case, the warning system worked and no deaths were reported. People who had just lost everything had that glazed look on their faces, but as they clung to each other, all said they were just glad to be alive.

-ob-

I think we're home for awhile now. No trips on the horizon. We just want to get back to normal (whatever that is) and try to catch up.

Mission trips are kind of like having a baby. When it's brand new, you don't think you'll ever want another one. But then the memory of the pain starts to fade and babies start to look cute again. Soon, you're wanting another one in the worst way.

That's the way it is with mission trips. You hurt so bad when it's done, you don't think you'll ever go on another one. Then, you heal and start to long for the people and know there are families that need a home. Soon you're planning another trip and can't wait to get there.

Give me a couple months, and I'll be ready to go again.

THE OBERLIN HERALD

Serving Oberlin and Decatur County since 1879

USPS 401-600

Office hours: 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.

170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749-2243

Phone: (785) 475-2206 Fax (785) 475-2800
E-mail: oberlin.herald@nwkansas.com

Published each Wednesday by Haynes Publishing Co., 170 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749. Periodicals postage paid at Oberlin, Kan. 67749.

Nor'West Newspapers

STAFF

Steve Haynes editor
Kimberly Davis managing editor
Mary Lou Olson society editor
Carolyn Kelley-Plotts proofreader, columnist
Joan Betts historian
Cynthia Haynes business manager
Pat Cozad want ads/circulation
Crista Sauvage advertising makeup

Steve and Cynthia Haynes, publishers
Kimberly Davis, assistant publisher

Official newspaper of Oberlin, Jennings, Norcat, 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.



Honor Roll

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

Elsewhere: Evan Shuler, Corpus Christi, Texas; Esther Ready, New York; Jim and Nadine Barker, Lebanon, Ore.; Richard Barrett, Glendora, Calif.

Colorado: Romajeane Hahn, Aurora; Betty Rall, Robert Keefer, Colorado Springs; Jean Earlywine, Louisville; Jacqueline Mayberry, Grand Junction; Doris Runyan, Greeley; J.B. Hubbard, Lakewood; Charles Kelley, Lamar; Rita Ann Carey, Westminster.

Kansas: Tyler Roe, Overland

Park; Jeanette Bosch, Beverly Delano, Wichita; Margery Adams, Olathe; Leona Kasper, Hays; the Rev. and Mrs. Douglas Hasty, Cheney; Alan Shuler, Salina; Jack Kelley, Clay Center; Cecil Kimball, Lenora.

Area: Farm Credit of Western Kansas, Colby; Victor Ritter, Jennings; Janice Hayes, Atwood; Richard Colling, McCook.

Norton: Allen Tacha, Mildred Schwab.

Selden: Earl Brown, James Carwell.

Oberlin: Merlin Rippe, Lois Meitl, Jack E. Fortin, Elaine Bryan,

Mabel Zimmerman, Charles Frickey, Juanita Eckhart, Chris and Sharon Nelson, Gary Fredrickson, Coyote Ridge Ranch, Everett Shuler, Roland May. Col. Gary Allen, Mabel Bailey.

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.