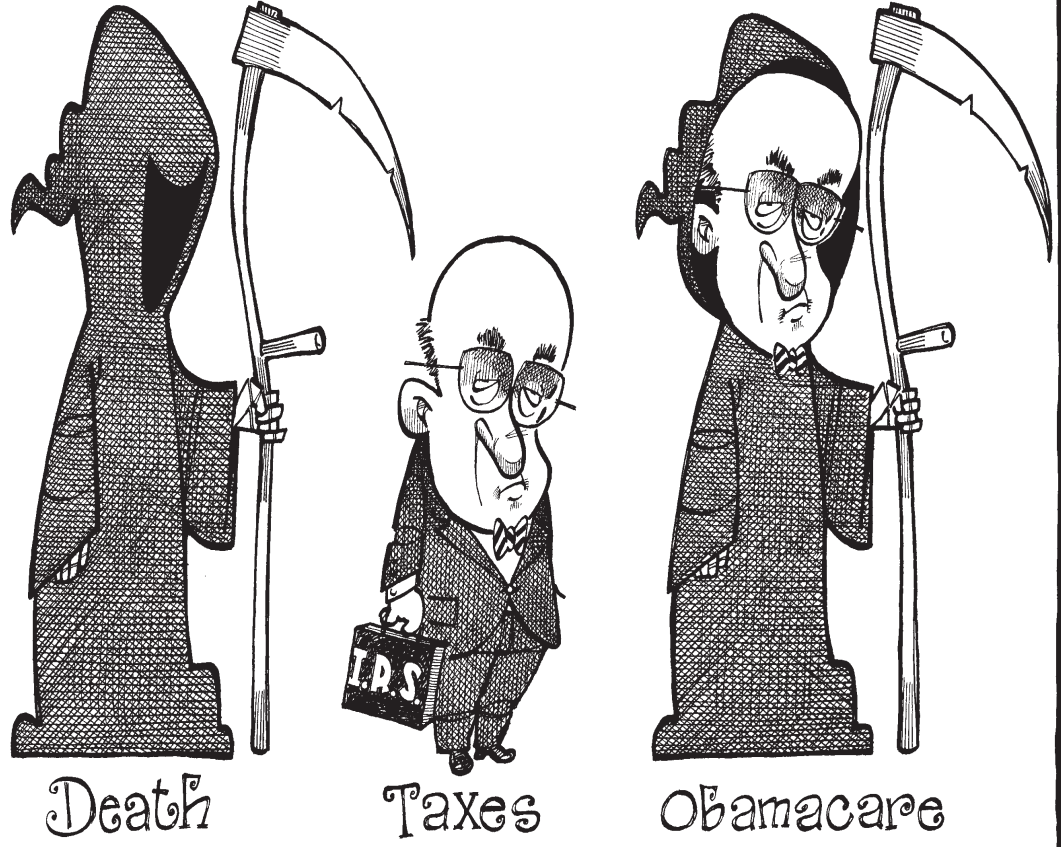


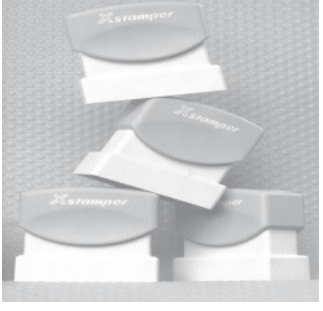
the 3 THINGS YOU CAN'T ESCAPE:

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We can 'unblight' this place

Everybody has the opportunity to complain when it comes to the neighborhood, and everyone knows how to file a complaint. But how many of us know how to do something to fix what's wrong?

On the Fourth of July, I found myself thinking about blighted property. I had just read an article suggesting that what America really needed was a sense of community and a sense of obligation, and the subject was rattling around in my brain. I thought of the show "Extreme Home Makeover" and how, at my first city council meeting, Councilwoman Fonda Farr had said that between blighted property and animal control, the council was always busy.

I connected the dots, and while a little outlandish (and more than a little idealistic), I came to the conclusion that if blighted property brought things down—people, property values, neighborhoods—then perhaps a community could reach a renaissance by coming together to fix it.

Maybe once the air becomes cooler and the summer sloth fades away, we could set up a project that everyone could participate in. Working with donations and our own two hands, we could start repainting houses, hanging tree swings and turning over a few garden plots. People who live in home deemed "blighted" could enter a lottery to have their home worked on. Kids who get in trouble would be assigned weekends to the cause.



**Newcomer's View**  
By *Stephanie DeCamp*  
sdecamp@nwkansas.com

It wouldn't be too hard. We might be able to make over the whole town over a period of years. At worst, one house on the block would look a little better.

People who own homes that stand vacant and for sale could sign a contract with the city. The volunteers would make the house look nice, and when the house sells, the owner will promise to pay something to the city. If the owner wanted steady maintenance for a property, he would pay a steady fee to those neighbors who volunteered for it.

We could learn some carpentry skills and get to know our neighbors better. And we'd all know how complaints really got fixed around here: by people who care.

So that's what I thought about Wednesday afternoon, when I looked around me and saw an America going through some tough times. What we have here, amid our drought and our recession, is a real opportunity.

There is untapped potential within our frustration at government bureaucracy.

Maybe, just maybe— we could

tell the big guys not to worry about it. We'll fix it on our own.



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Honor Roll

Welcome and thanks to these recent subscribers to *The Oberlin Herald*:  
**Elsewhere:** Mabel McLaughlin, Vacaville, Calif.; Dennis Campbell, Oro Valley, Ariz.; Edwin Waterman, Ponca City, Okla.  
**Kansas:** Marilyn Linn, Wichita; Chris Gardiner, Salina; Dorothy Rowh, Scott City.  
**Area:** Kathleen Hanzlick, Atwood; William LaSalle, Clayton;

Golden Plains High School, Rexford; Selden Elementary School; Linda Bunney, Norcatour; Eric Fleckenstein, Jennings; Doris Mizell, Norton.  
**McCook:** Peg Smith, Howard Mace.  
**Oberlin:** Chuck Harms, Melvin Smalberger, Gerald Olson, Nancy Proffitt, Margaret Steadman, Kellie Black, Matt Bordoni, Jessica Bremer, Lois Lamb.

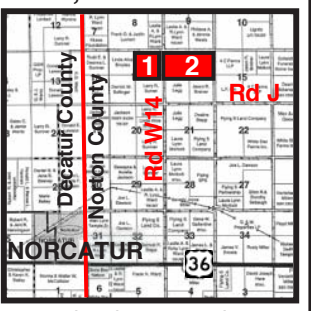
**480+/- ACRES NORTON CO, KS  
CROPLAND & GRASS  
LAND AUCTION**  
ABSOLUTE  
FRI., JULY 20, 2012 @10:30 AM, CDT

**AUCTION LOCATION:**  
St. Francis Parish Hall, Norton, Kansas

**SELLERS:** Schulte Trusts, et al.

Land will be offered in two tracts and combination of tracts.

**LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS:**  
**TRACT 1:** NE/4 of 16-2-25-85.6 ac cropland, 60.2± ac grass & 14.2 ac CRP  
**TRACT 2:** N/2 of 16-2-25-217.0 ac cropland & 103.0± ac grass



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