

## Wherever it comes from, evil always lurks near by

If anything, the shootings Friday in Aurora, Colo., show the existence of evil.

And evil is hard to understand.

Science might give us a multitude of answers, none of them precise or comforting — or ultimately, satisfying.

Evil acts can be explained by mental disease, by physical problems such as a brain tumor, by various sorts of intoxication and resulting brain damage, by the environmental influence of a violence-prone society, media exposure, gun worship, video games, you name it.

The church, on the other hand, teaches that evil exists, both in the hearts of men and in the person of the Evil One, the antithesis of all that is good. The church teaches that, given the doctrine of original sin, evil lurks within us all, and that we are only as good as we are successful at resisting its temptations, from racism to assault to murder.

But what makes an apparently normal young man plan quietly to kill and maim his neighbors in a solid, working-class, ethnically diverse neighborhood?

The Evil One, or a bad case of the evil within us all?

Perhaps it makes no difference. Once we recognize and admit that evil exists, do we need to know what sets it free? Or is it enough to recognize evil for what it is?

Both President Barack Obama and his challenger, Gov. Mitt Romney, acknowledged the reality of evil in the senseless violence Friday. But only the vast number of victims in this case elevates it above the ordinary, everyday violence of our world.

Killing and maiming, stealing and lying, abuse and neglect, are so common that we seldom remark on their evil nature. Man's inhumanity to man is legion. It's only when

the victim count starts to add up that we seem to recognize it.

We all might be able to agree on the evil nature of the likes of Adolf Hitler, Pol Pot, Josef Stalin and their ilk. Mass murderers and serial killers we recognize as evil.

But what about the prison guard who helped keep the Jews from escaping, or the police officer who looks the other way while his friends beat some prisoner senseless? The soldiers who, freed from restraint in the heat of battle, kill civilians or even their own comrades?

And how could our loving God, however you look at Him, allow evil to exist at all?

Does evil have to exist?

The answer should be apparent, theology aside.

Evil does exist. And seldom is it seen more starkly than it appeared Friday.

But that was only the tip of the iceberg. It'd be easy to forget that humans are, mostly, noble creatures more likely to help their fellow man than to kill or maim him.

Still, we're reminded again and again that it may take only one small thing to release the evil within any one of us. Happens all the time.

And that should be cause for both prayer and watchfulness, repentance and celebration. For despite the presence of evil, that's not what we were intended for. We're better, far better, than that. Every evil event brings out the best, the very best in us; witness the woman who stayed behind to save her best friend from bleeding to death.

Evil is not in control; we are. But we cannot afford to let down our guard, because evil could be, probably is, right around the corner.

— Steve Haynes



## Cool bed requires a little work

It was hot outside. And, unfortunately, it was hot inside, too.

Well not altogether. We have a two-story house with two air conditioning units, and the one for the main floor worked just fine. The upstairs one, however, was on the fritz.

We put in a call to our heating, air conditioning, appliance and just about everything else repairman. He promised to come by as soon as he could. However, the temperatures were in the 100s and we weren't the only ones without air conditioning. He was trying, but...

We understood, and felt we were lucky. While our bedroom was upstairs, we still had a spare bed downstairs. Of course, it had been our son's. He graduated from high school in 1999 and the room had been used only rarely since. The amount of junk it had collected was incredible. The bed was almost entirely covered by papers, books, photos, posters and cat hair.

The area around the bed was almost as bad. I had rounded up junk out of the living room a few years ago and moved most of it into the unused bedroom until I could figure out what to do with it. It was still there, and I still hadn't figured out



### Open Season

By Cynthia Haynes  
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what to do with all that stuff.

I quickly moved small piles onto other piles to make mountains out of paper hills, then changed the sheets and covers. I brought our pillows down from upstairs and made a narrow path on both sides of the bed.

This would just be for a little while, so I didn't have to do too good of a job.

Soon Steve and I were sleeping in a double bed instead of our queen size and the cat was trying to get to her regular spot, which was entirely taken up by us. She was not amused.

Now, we've slept in double beds many times, and while it's a little cozier than we're used to, we don't have a real problem with it. This time, however, we had to edge sideways to even get in bed. If we fell out, we might dislodge a pile

that would bury us.

Our air conditioning man worked on the offending unit and had it going for a day before it had another fit.

We gave the poor man a break this time. We headed for a small lake near Emporia for a week with our daughter, son-in-law and most importantly granddaughter. The cabin there was air conditioned and the double bed had no piles on all sides.

When we returned a week later we spent the first night downstairs, since we had left the air off while we were gone. While we were asleep, the upstairs cooled off and we were able to return to our own room.

Thank you to Robert, the fix-it man. We are lucky to have you. The cat appreciates your efforts, too. Those people were getting sweat all over her bed.

## Writer prefers our representative

To the Editor:

Two years ago, I wrote a letter in support of Ward Cassidy as our representative in the state House for the 120th District. Thanks to voters who were ready for a change, he has done just that.

Up until early June, it looked like he would be opposed for reelection, then the courts did what the state government could not — and redistricted our state. Mr. Cassidy found himself in the same district as State Rep. Rick Billinger from Goodland, who had been appointed to fill a term vacated by the death of the elected representative.

Truth be told, I don't know much about Rep. Billinger other than he has been supportive of our schools and western Kansas. I do know what Rep. Cassidy has done for us in the two short years he has been there. Rep. Cassidy fights every day for western Kansas schools, businesses

### Letters to the Editor

and the rural way of life.

He does not give in to party leadership, but finds ways to build coalitions that will work with him, to benefit us.

In his first year, he was the only freshman legislator to draft a bill and get it passed. In his second year, he was appointed to the House Appropriations Committee, the most powerful in the House. He also made an amendment to the governor's Tech Ed bill which allowed the Northwest Kansas Technical College to expand.

If re-elected, he stands a very good chance of being the chairman of the Education Budget committee in the upcoming session. All of this has shown House leadership what

we out here already knew: Ward Cassidy is a passionate fighter for the western Kansas way of life, and he gets things done! He wants outstanding schools and communities to thrive for generations to come in this area we call home.

I hope you will all get out and vote on Aug. 7. You have a chance to make a difference for our schools and our communities by choosing Ward Cassidy to represent us again in Topeka. He needs our support and our vote.

I choose two more years of productive representation. I hope you choose Ward Cassidy, too.

Duane Dorshorst,  
Oberlin

## Miles flew by the window

In the last two weeks, I've logged more miles than an over-the-road trucker. I've been from Steamboat Springs, Colo., to Dallas, Texas, and back again.

All this travel made me consider how far we've come since pioneer days. A distance that would have taken weeks to cover can now be accomplished in hours.

The only plus to covered-wagon travel is that they got to really see the countryside instead of it rushing by at 70 mph.

My thoughts in Colorado were that the countryside would have been beautiful if it weren't for all the people.

I could only imagine what a pristine Colorado mountain meadow would have looked like before it was subdivided and developed.

-ob-

The trip to Texas produced a granddaughter (Taylor) who will get to stay with us two or three weeks. She will get in at least one county fair, perhaps two.

It all depends on whether her Aunt Halley can come get her or if I will have to meet her mother halfway to return her. We're just playing it by ear.

Taylor and I both have been so tired since our return that we've scarcely done anything but sleep.

My kitchen is still a wreck from having left Jim alone for four days,



### Out Back

By Carolyn Sue Kelley-Plotts  
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but quite frankly, I don't care.

Except we are running out of clean silverware.

Jim may not be much of a housekeeper, but he did do something that earned him more Brownie points with me. He started construction on our library shelves.

I was pleasantly surprised when I walked in the front door Thursday night to find the framework for cabinetry and shelving started. It's one of the last major projects to tackle on the inside. And I couldn't be happier.

Finally, we'll be able to put all of our reference books in one room and not have them stored in boxes in the basement.

I'm hoping there will even be room for some knickknacks. I love my little chachkiis, but have never had enough display space for everything.

My friend who occasionally helps me clean may not be too excited about having more dust collectors

setting about.

If we're garage saling together or at an auction, she will say, "Carolyn, put it down; you don't need that."

I know; I don't need most of the things I have. And it's a fine line between need and want.

I can usually rationalize myself out of buying something. But every now and then I just have to step over that line.

### From the Bible

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.

— Ephesians 3: 14-16

## 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

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

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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

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### 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.

