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First Jamboree experience a blast

Being from the city down south, this year marked my first Fiddlers' Jamboree and I'll just go ahead and tell you, I had a blast even though I was working most of the time. Sure, I'd been up to walk around a couple of times in past years but this year was the first immersive experience from cover-to-cover of the annual event. This after watching the stage go up over the past couple of weeks and seeing the anticipation build for what is surely the Super Bowl of DeKalb County.

Granted, the Jam got out to a rough start as Mother Nature released her fury just after noon Friday.

"Hail!" I exclaimed as I got hit right in my bald spot by the first pea-sized piece of ice that fell from the angry skies Friday. Granted, my bald spot gets

easier and easier to hit every day. After two hours of taking refuge, I returned to watch the afternoon competitions which were played in front of a small crowd, Jam fans likely wary of the coming storm on the radar. I understand it is pretty well a given that it will always rain on the Jamboree.

While the second storm didn't bring the ferocity of the first wave, it was still a wet one, forcing organizers to put up a tent on stage to shield the performers from the steady drizzle that persisted most of the evening. And, much to my chagrin, the steady rain filled a puddle in front of the *Review's* front door – a puddle I inevitably stepped in every time I exited and entered the building.



THAT NEW GUY
by Duane Sherrill

My feet were soaked by the time I laid down for a night's rest on my inflatable mattress I set up in the back room of the office here. That's right, I'm so gung ho about the Jam that I spent the night. Actually, I didn't want to get up at the crack of dawn to drive back to get the start of the Fiddler 5K so I figured it'd be more efficient to stay here. Let me just say, an air mattress on the floor of the Review is not conducive to a good night's sleep.

Now Saturday was a perfect day for a Jamboree. The oppressive heat was replaced by a cloudy but comfortable day and huge crowds that packed downtown. It was as I was walking around

taking pictures that it occurred to me what all the hubbub is about. First off, the music is great with all the talented musicians on stage. And, it is also reminiscent of something I've always enjoyed – the county fair. In Warren County, the fair is religion, much like it is here. And, one of the best things about the fair is walking around the midway in circles, seeing folks you only see once a year. In the case of the Jam, nothing was different. I not only saw new friends I've made here but several people up from my hometown.

After my first year I'll go ahead and admit that I'm a Jam fan. Maybe next year I'll remember to watch where I step.

Contact Duane Sherrill at news@smithvillereview.com

Passports to Heaven

In July, 1789, the U. S. Department of Foreign Affairs established under the Articles of Confederation became a part of the Constitution, and its name was soon changed to the Department of State. One of its duties was to issue passports to allow citizens to enter or exit the U.S.

Ever since the beginning of the world, angels from heaven have been sent by God to the Earth to carry out special missions for Him, and they did not have to have any kind of passport. God eventually sent His Son Jesus to the earth, and He did it in an extremely unusual way. Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit and was born of a virgin named Mary. He lived in human form for about thirty-three years, died on a Roman cross, rose from the dead after three days, and then after 40 days He returned to heaven in a cloud. Neither when He entered the world, nor when He left the world, did He need a passport to return to heaven.

Likewise, all citizens of this earth who have entered this world did so without a passport. Citizens who choose to be members of the kingdom of God will one day be gathered up out of the earth and taken by Jesus to heaven, and will not need a passport to leave the earth or to enter heaven. When Jesus left the earth, He was taken up in a cloud,

and when He returns to gather up His Church, He will once again appear in a cloud.

Although the members of the kingdom of God do not need a passport, there is an important requirement for them to be transported by Jesus to the city of God called Heaven. That requirement is that they must absolutely have their names written in what the Bible calls the Lamb's Book of Life. In this book is written the names of all the saints of God who have invited Jesus into their lives, and who have accepted His amazing gift of salvation and eternal life.

To invite Jesus into our lives means that we come to realize that He alone can forgive us of every sin that we have ever committed against Him when we confess those sins to Him and ask for His forgiveness.

Inviting Jesus into our lives also means that we are willing to be obedient to His commandments and conduct ourselves according to His instructions and His will.

People who apply for passports must do so in advance and cannot wait until the day they wish to travel. Likewise, anyone who wants to go to the city of God must prepare in advance.

Larry R. Steffee is pastor of the Center Hill Brethren In Christ Church on Miller Road in Smithville. Everyone is welcome to attend. For information, you may email lrsteeftm@yahoo.com.



WORDS FROM ABOVE
by Larry R. Steffee

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

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GOOOOOOAAAAL!

I've been forced to watch a lot of World Cup football this year, because I've been traveling outside the the U.S. If, like me, you don't follow soccer, it's hard to imagine what a news-dominating event this is for the rest of the world.

Each soccer-playing country recruits a team of all-star players and hopes for four years of bragging rights. When underdog South Korea stunned defending champion Germany, it was front-page news. When France smacked down Argentina in a 4-3 match, for days, the only news was how unusual it was to have such a high-scoring game. A 4-3 score in soccer is like a 50-40 win in a baseball game. It's unheard of.

Every hotel lobby and bar TV blared the Portugal/Uruguay match. It was the same in Spain for the Spain/Russia meet-up, where the Russians upset Spain with a tie-breaking penalty kick. England also upset Colombia in a penalty shootout. All of Colombia wept bitter tears, but there was dancing in the streets in England.

And this is just the quarterfinals. The final game will be July 15.

Soccer at this level is a high-contact, brutal game. Imagine a basketball game where you're allowed to stick your foot between the legs of a guy dribbling full-bore towards the hoop. Imagine punting a football with your forehead. It is a game of elbows in the face and aggressive shoving and pushing. They use no sissy shoulder pads, no wimpy helmets. Soccer makes American football play-

ers look like medieval knights in armor who are afraid of a little groin pull. It makes hockey look a walk in the park.

Before this trip, I'd watched 10 minutes of soccer in my life. It was a college playoff game where my full-ride-sports-scholarship niece was carried off the field with a broken leg when a player kicked her instead of the ball. She's fine now, but she never played soccer again.

I understand a lot of parents are concerned about their children playing American football due to the news about permanent brain damage. But if they think soccer is a safer alternative, they might want to tune in to a World Cup game. It's not as safe as they think.

You'd think a game this brutal and exciting would be a huge hit in the U.S., and you'd be right. Except for one thing: The game never stops. There is no time to squeeze in a commercial. When a soccer player gets hurt on the field, play continues and the clock keeps ticking. There's a foul shot, the clock keeps ticking. They spit out some teeth, the clock keeps ticking. After every goal, there is a bunch of manly hugging -- and still the clock keeps ticking.

I don't care how many schools have varsity soccer teams, or how well our soccer teams do at the Olympics. Unless the timing rules change, you are never going to see Monday Night Soccer on a major U.S. TV network.

There's no money in it for them.

Contact Jim Mullen at mullen.jim@gmail.com.



VILLAGE IDIOT
by Jim Mullen