

The Bonham Line

I'm not sure if it was the year of the first CIBR Cookoff or the second—but it was cold! Somewhat like the weather forecast for later this week, temperatures fell a day before the cookoff on this particular year.

It snowed on Friday evening, enough that some patches of white remained in the streets along the curbs and in the grass. Did I mention that it was also cold?

But backyard and professional BBQ'ers are a dedicated bunch. They just put another piece of hickory on the fire, pull their coats closed, adjust their stocking cats, and enjoy cooking the 'Q! They didn't seem to mind the dip in temperature.

Fortunately, since that year, we have been lucky enough to avoid really cold and really bad weather for the barbecue cookoff. Until this year.

We have plenty of time to get out the winter coat, clean it up (throw it into the washer), and prepare for possible cold temperatures. The Channel 3 weatherman even hinted that "mixed precipitation" could be expected Thursday after the storm front rolls through. Yet, he did qualify that by adding "in Northern Illinois!"

During the first year or two, the event attracted at least one celebrity cooker for the backyard event. I remember Bob Flider, our state representative at the time, standing guard with his spatula, fork, and tongs tending his grill. I think he even wore a chef's hat. I may have to dig up some of the photos I took at the event to see if other celebrities participated.

I wonder if anyone thought to invite State Senator Chapin Rose to participate in the Backyard Barbecue division. Or maybe some of the TV celebrities. How about it, J.C. Fultz?

One question I am always asked at the cookout is can you sample the barbecue as the teams are preparing it. According to George Fritz, event chairman, rules do not permit the teams to sell their products during the competition.

Therefore, in the last seven or eight years, efforts have been made to invite food vendors to set up downtown to provide barbecue food items (and other foods) for visitors who become hungry for "Q" while walking around and enjoying the wood-fired cooking fumes.

As a reporter and photographer, I have been able to attend areas of the competition that most people cannot—and that is to be in the room while the judges are actually sampling and rating the entries.

Judges are regular people like you and me. Mostly retirees, some were educators, law enforcement officials, businessmen and business women, accountants, farmers, and many others.

Some travel miles and miles to serve at competitions—so many miles that judging could be considered a second (or third) occupation.

The Bragging Rights Barbecue Cookoff is another event hosted by some dedicated individuals providing a reason for visitors to come to our community. Let's welcome everyone to the competition and enjoy the cookout.

Get your grills and utensils ready. Load the charcoal, light it up, and cook your favorite meats outdoors. Ignore the rain, sleet, cold temperatures, or whatever. Here's to great grilling. Be seeing you!

-rwb-

The Arthur Home accepting donations for a new bus

The Arthur Home has set up an account at the State Bank of Arthur to receive donations for a new bus.

The residents of The Arthur Home frequently use the bus for parades, country drives, festivals, to see Christmas lights, go to doctor appointments, and many other adventures.

Over half of the funds have been secured for the bus, and the administrators

are asking for donations to help fund the remainder.

The Arthur Home is a not-for-profit privately owned facility that has been a blessing to many families through the years.

Donations can be made at the State Bank of Arthur or at The Arthur Home. Contact us at (217) 543-2103 with any questions. Thank you in advance for your donation.

Shimkus sending staff to Tuscola

An aide to Congressman John Shimkus (R, Illinois-15) will be available in Douglas County next week to assist area constituents with any problems they may be having with federal government agencies.

The staff member will be at the TNB Bank, 900 South

Progress Boulevard in Tuscola, from 3 to 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 16.

Constituents who need assistance with a federal issue but are not available during the scheduled time can call the congressman's Maryville office at (618) 288-7190.

Back and forth, fall to summer

By KENT A. STOCK
Staff Writer

We'll have a couple days of fall weather then a return to summer with heat and humidity. The cycle is reminiscent of last spring when winter would not let go. ENOUGH! Sorry to shout, but fall is my favorite season and I don't want to go from summer to winter.

This weekend we had tornado and severe thunderstorm warnings, so maybe the spring we never had is trying to get some more time in, too.

I want it to be fall, and right now! Every other season out there can take a hike because I am suffering from SOS, Seasonal Offense Syndrome. Yes, I just made that up, but there seems to be lots of that going around these days.

I'll calm down and drink my hot apple cider now even if it is 85 degrees.

Summer of 1978

There was a special anniversary recently that passed quietly in our area. The special occasion was the

Town Talk

40th anniversary of the S&K Rigging men's fast-pitch softball team winning the 1978 national championship in their sport.

Mike Monahan recently wrote a Letter to the Editor to the Arcola Record Herald, and I will share a couple tidbits and my own memories. I was 14 at the time, so forgive any memory lapses.

The team played in Class A and was based in Arcola. They ended up beating Granada Realty of Fremont, California, for the title. The game was played in Lake Tahoe, California.

There truly was a buzz in the entire area, including our town, as several AHS graduates, or people connected with our community, played key roles on the team that finished with an astounding 75-26 final record.

Steve Hall and Jerry

Blaudow, both Arthur High alumni, and Joe Cornwell were on the team that was inducted into the Amateur Softball State Hall of Fame in 2006.

I probably missed some other connections, and perhaps there is a memory or two floating around out there. If so, share with me at ilum986@gmail.com or call me at (217) 259-1294.

Thanks to Mike Monahan for bringing up a memory from our youth that was a big one 40 years ago in our little piece of the world. National champions, after all!

Upcoming Events

We all know our community is one of the busiest places around, and October is no exception. I hope you have made it out to The Great Pumpkin Patch this season to check out all the great fall things they have

out there to see, do, buy, and EAT!

Speaking of eating, this Friday and Saturday, October 12 and 13, is the Central Illinois Braggin' Rights KCBS competition. It is always a fun fall event.

The next weekend is the Illinois Amish Heritage Center Fall Harvest event on Friday and Saturday, October 19 and 20. The campus has been making great strides in its development, so you should go check things out.

Pumpkin house will be coming back again this year from October 24 to October 31!

The Haiti Benefit Auction will be held Friday and Saturday, October 26 and 27.

Arthur Woman's Club will host the Halloween Festival on Saturday, October 27. The Halloween Festival has been going on in our town since the early 1930's! Many different incarnations of the event existed back in

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County clerk warns residents of telephone voter registration scam in Douglas County

As the November 6, 2018, General Election draws near, Douglas County Clerk Judi Pollock reminds voters that Early Voting and Voter Registration is available in her office.

In addition, Pollock recently received information that some area residents have reported receiving phone calls impersonating an organization that provides voter registration assistance and mentioning various clerks and their offices by name.

There have been reports that these events are occurring in other election jurisdictions. The callers ask the recipients if they want to

register to vote or request an absentee ballot over the phone.

The Douglas County Clerk's office does not solicit phone calls nor will it ever call you to ask you to register to vote.

The calls raise the possibility of voter confusion or follow-on malicious activity. Those who provide information to the callers will not be registered to vote, potentially causing a large number of unregistered residents to appear at their local polling place on Election Day.

"We encourage any resident that has received such a phone call to report it to our office immediately,"

Clerk Pollock said.

In addition, voter registration requires residents to provide significant personal information such as date of birth, physical address, or partial Social Security numbers.

It is unclear at this time if the callers requested the sensitive personal information required for registration.

If provided, this information could be used to attempt fraudulent voter registration or conduct financially-motivated identity theft.

Clerk Pollock encourages all residents to be vigilant and cautions about giving

any personal information to any caller for any reason.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the office of the Douglas County Clerk at (217) 253-2442.

Pollock wants voters to know that Douglas County uses the most secure cyber security computer hygiene available in the office, and the security of the voting process is of the utmost importance to her office, the county, and our democracy.

For any additional questions please feel free to email to judi.pollock@douglascountyil.com or elections@douglascountyil.com.

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