

# Zion News

Thought for the day: “The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart.” – Helen Keller

Christmas lights are one of the favorite things about Christmas for many people - getting to turn the tree on each evening and have the soft glow of the lights fill the room, or getting to drive around the Arthur community and see all the houses bright with lights. It's pretty sad when January rolls around and it's time to pack away the tree and all the decorations.

The lights at Christmas are actually a great reminder about another light, a light called “The Light of the World.” This Light is actually a person, and we celebrate his coming into our world at Christmas.

As the Light of the World, Jesus is not a flashing, dancing reindeer display, nor is He hung on a tree to decorate it. But He does make a huge display of His love for us and that is most clearly

seen when he was hung on a different kind of tree, the cross, and died for the sins of the world. At that moment when Jesus died for us, we see how He is the Light of the World. He brings the light of the gospel and salvation to us and allows us to be freed from the darkness of sin and death.

On many of the December 19 Arthur Graphic newspapers there was an ink blotch over part of the Zion News that was about “Something to remember for Christmas.” The information then offered is just as important for a New Year as well, “A person must hold an image in their mind for at least twenty seconds for it to become a long-term memory.” Hopefully, in 2019, you will take many 20-second opportunities to make wonderful long-term memories.

God is in the business of answering prayer. We often only stress prayer “requests,” but it is also a joy to share “answers” to prayer. Mary Fern Carlyle is doing much better after surgery to

repair a broken hip. She is now recuperating in the Arthur Home.

Another answer to prayer was our Christmas Eve service at Zion. We had a full church, old friends and family of the church came, and new friends were made. We all worshiped together in a Lessons and Carols Candle-Lighting Service. Many had not met Rev. Gartung and his wife Ruthie. It was a great joy and a beautiful service. An interesting thing for us was that, since this type of service was first used in 1918 in England, traditionally the local mayor or magistrate would read the lessons which were scripture passages. So, we were true to form as Arthur mayor, Rod Randall, was involved in the service. Ramona Carlyle and others provided awesome music for the service.

Please mark your calendars. There will be a Blood Drive at the Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, 128 E. Illinois St. in Arthur on Thursday, January 10 from 1:00 PM until 6:00.

The Arthur Ministerial Association is planning a Pulpit Exchange on Ecumenical Sunday, January 20, 2019. Rev. Bruce Weiman of the Arthur United Methodist Church will be speaking at Zion, and Rev. Gartung will be speaking at the First Baptist Church of Arthur.

Our prayer concerns continue to include Paul Knobloch, Katana Ponder, Jerry and B J Hale, J B and Jean White, Todd Martin and his family, Bobby and Reagan Miller, Jim and Jackie Tholen, Sharon Parsano, Donna Schultz, Jeff Romine, Ben Valerio, David Walker, Elsie Winings, Betty Sawyer, Wilmer and Lela Otto, LaVerne Smith, Jim Dycus, Marvin Helmut, Henry Schrock, Charlotte Eagan, and Lane Drake and his family.

Chuckle for the day (and maybe good advice for the New Year): “I find television very educational. Every time someone turns it on, I go in the other room and read a book.” – Groucho Marx

Rev. Gartung welcomes your calls and email. You may reach him at 460-1892 or at dennis@gartung.me. He and his wife, Ruthie, would be glad to visit with you. Just give them a call or send an email.

Zion's worship service starts at 9:00 AM each Sunday with various Sunday School activities following at 10:30 AM.

## Cerro Gordo Board of Education meeting

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Board Secretary Karen Freese stated, “I think our coaches are going to figure it out. Perhaps have a smaller group of kids to work on fundamentals....I think our coaches can figure it out. I don't see it as idle downtime for our kids.”

Board President Todd Henricks added, “I don't think they are opposed, just trying to figure out a way to make it work...it's just something new they are trying to get used to in the future and trying to figure out the schedule.”

The high school volleyball co-op agreement was approved unanimously, with both cross country and Junior High sports to be further discussed.

### Principal and Superintendent's Report(s)

650 items were collected in the Elementary annual food drive states Principal Jodi Neaveill. Both Neaveill and Social Worker Shelley Frye delivered 16 food baskets to the community on December 20 and 21.

# Looking Back at 2018

**January**

Temperature dips below zero, at least 14 below without the wind chill, for 40 hours straight. It was the longest stretch of frigid temperatures since 1968.

Cerro Gordo Police Chief Pat Carter submitted his resignation to the village board. This leaves Cerro Gordo with two part-time police officers.

Butch Harper, representing Sloan Implement, appeared before the Atwood Village Board, to discuss the company's plan for a new addition to work on combines.

Gabrielle Block (5th grade) is the 2018 Bement Grade School Spelling Bee champion. Quinn Flavin (6th grade) was runner up.

2017 Moultrie-Douglas County Fair Queen Madeline Clabaugh will compete in the Illinois County Fair Queen Pageant in Springfield.

A map of the Battle of Cerro Gordo was presented to Hope Welty Library. A former Cerro Gordo resident who now resides in New York found the map at a flea market.

The ALAH HS National Honor Society is preparing care packages for students at Rockport High School in Texas in the area devastated by Hurricane Harvey.

The Cerro Gordo-Bement boys won their first regular season conference game against the Purple Riders of Arcola, 59 – 48. The game was played at Walsh Gymnasium in Bement.

Jeremy Welch has been sworn in as a member of the Atwood Village Board. He replaces David K. Venis who resigned his position.

Makenna Green and Zane Crist both finished in second place at the Section 17 FFA public speaking contest held at Monticello. Green participated in the Varsity Extemporaneous Public Speaking category. Crist participated in the Prepared Public Speaking category.

Bryant Cottage in Bement celebrated the 200th birthday of Francis Bryant.

**February**

Hannah Copeland (5th grade) won the Cerro Gordo Spelling Bee. Daemien Taylor (6th grade) was runner up. Hannah would later advance from the Piatt County Spelling Bee to the Regional Spelling Be held in Decatur.

The Arthur Lovington Atwood Hammond eighth grade volleyball team won the Junior High Okaw Conference Tournament championship. The Knights defeated Tuscola for the title.

Eastern Illini Electric Cooperative awarded monies to several area school teachers and personnel for the classroom and various school programs. Denise Strack and Tim Manselle from Atwood-Hammond Grade School, Shannon Blesse of Arthur Lovington Atwood Hammond High School along with Katherine Ruggless and Angie Corum of Bement Schools received donations.

Cerro Gordo Fire and Rescue held their annual Groundhog Day breakfast at the firehouse. Over 250 people attended the event.

ALAH seniors Abi Duzan and Kolby Rickman were guests at the DAR/SAR luncheon held in Villa Grove.

Piatt County Habitat for Humanity is seeking applications to build a home in Hammond.

Cerro Gordo and Bement school boards continue to discuss concerns over and possible changes to the co-operative arrangement for sports.

**March**

The 2018 Miss ALAH

## Cerro Gordo Village Board meeting

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mailing, and is considering posting some sort of survey on their village website.

Trustee Tim Allen brought up the idea of the village forming their own water insurance program, to which the village agreed to look into.

Trustee Williams stated that they have to do something, “Our losses are too high.

Hopefully, with the water main replacement our losses are going down.”

There was no action taken on this item or on the Zoning Board of Appeals recommendations. Both were tabled to be discussed further.

Piatt County Deputy Stewart Williams was present during the meeting. Trustee Linda Ash asked him if he is going to be Cerro Gordo's deputy. Williams stated that he is training him, “I will be training him. He should be back in January from the Academy and then he will be field training.”

Adding, “Depends on how he progresses...everything I have heard in the academy is good things. I am the canine so not up for any posi-

tion of the contract.”

Trustee Jeff Powers asked him if he has been conducting extra patrolling. Williams stated that, “We have been doing these seatbelt and driving impaired things in the State. I know I spend about 1-2 hours strictly overtime down here, and I think every officer was doing that.” Williams went on to add that there have been issues of juvenile delinquency, but they are isolated and every town seems to have those issues.

The School district will have a School Resource Officer starting January 3. That officer will be shared with Bement, Monticello, and Deland Weldon Schools.

Other News and Information

- The village hall closed early for Christmas Eve
- The village voted to release closed session minutes from November of 2018
- One water adjustment approved for Jamie Adams \$606.93 to \$213
- The village will be working with village engineer Tom Overmyer to put together a map of the water lines/mains.

## Objection of Nominating Petition

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to run as an independent. Consulting the State Board of Elections the village was told it violated election laws because of his attendance at the December 3 Caucus.

After Hyde filed, Allen objected to because of the timeframe.

After this, the Electoral Board had to meet within 5 business days, a requirement from the State of Illinois. Since Christmas Eve was Monday, and with Christmas on Tuesday, the board agreed to meet on December 26.

Trustee Mike Martin asked for time to review the adoption of the rules as he did not feel adequately pre-

pared stating, “In all fairness I want to be educated in what I am doing here.”

Trustee Tim Allen has been on the village board for around 8 years.

Tom Hyde owns Tom & Carol's RV Park and resides in Cerro Gordo with his wife, Carol.

Both individuals were given information for an attorney, which will be paid for by the individual.

When asked why he would like to run, Hyde replied, “My theory is we don't have a swamp to drain, we have a cesspool and you know what floats around in a cesspool.” Adding, “I'm running for Cerro Gordo.”

**WISE AND OTHERWISE**

By Kent A. Stock

## What are you doing New Year's Eve?

Since many of you are probably reading this in 2019, the question should be what did you do New Year's Eve? Party all night long, see in the first sunrise of the New Year and/or asking yourself if you had a good time because you can't remember most of it?

Not these days, buddy, as many of my age or even younger have hung up their all night ways. Maybe not entirely because God has given us short term memory loss so we go out there and, despite being mid-50s, we try to act like we are in our mid-20s. Life will remind you the next day or several days, that is definitely not the case; trust me on this one. God has a sense of humor, you know.

Today it is more like, “Honey, are we staying up to watch the ball drop?” The spouse doesn't answer and you are like, “Yes! Bedtime!” Does snoozing together in your respective recliners count as a celebration? I'll allow it. The snoring can be like your own noisemakers welcoming in the next year.

Our family gets together and plays games, eats, watches some sort of sporting event, eats, tells stories, eats...I think you get the picture. We adults do our best to keep each other awake until midnight.

Our tradition is at the stroke of twelve on New Year's Eve, we go outside of our house to bang on pots and pans. Thankfully, we have lived for decades near these people and they know of our noisy tradition. They put up with us anyway. No one has shot us yet. Let me emphasize yet, please and thank you.

Just like noisemakers or party horns it is supposed to scare away the evil spirits from the old year. Tradition also says you are supposed to come out one door, make your ruckus and then go back in another door because that will confuse any evil spirits that might not have been scared off by all the noise. If that is the case, evil spirits are just plain stupid.

It is normally a quick trip out of doors because, well, we live in Illinois and quite often it is a balmy four degrees below zero on December 31. The evil spirits probably aren't even there those nights because they are in their nice, warm home watching Dick Clark's Rockin' New Year's Eve.

We end up by us all trying to sing Auld Lang Syne which, out of all the noise we make, is probably the most likely thing to scare off most anything!

Happy New Year 2019! Hope you made it until midnight!

**Southern Piatt RECORD-HERALD**

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