



# Welcome to the Lincoln Prairie Conference, sports fans

By Kent A. Stock  
Staff Writer

In December 2017, fifteen of the 19 members in the Little Okaw Valley Conference voted to leave the league for the 2019-2020 school year. It was always known that this group would form a new conference, only the name was in question.

The four schools remaining in the LOVC--Martinsville, Palestine, Hutsonville, and Ob-long--made the determination to keep the conference label; they had the rights to the name, even though none of the schools were original members and three of the four joined the conference just five years ago.

Recently, a new name was recommended at a principal's meeting for the then unnamed group. The Lincoln Prairie Conference was recommended to the administrations of the 15 member schools.

The vote was unanimous to move forward as the Lincoln

Prairie Conference for the upcoming school year.

"ALAH is sad to lose the name LOVC, but we feel great about staying in a conference with some old alliances," said Arthur Lovington Atwood Hammond High School assistant principal and athletic director Jared Vanausdall.

"Adding regular season conference games with old rivals like Villa Grove and Tri-County is a plus for us. We continue to feel comfortable with our place in the new Lincoln Prairie Conference and know our athletes will be competitive for a long time to come."

The Little Okaw Valley Conference was formed in 1970 for the 1971-72 academic year. Seven of the smallest schools in the "big" Okaw Conference made the move to split away to form the original LOVC.

Those schools were Arthur, Atwood-Hammond, Bement, Cerro Gordo, Newman, Oakland,

and Villa Grove.

The fifteen member schools of the newly minted Lincoln Prairie Conference are Arcola, Arthur Lovington Atwood Hammond, Cerro Gordo, Bement, Argenta-Oreana, Sangamon Valley (Niantic and Illiopolis), Okaw Valley (Bethany and Findlay), Decatur LSA, Cumberland, Kansas, Oakland, Hume Shiloh, Villa Grove, Heritage, and Farmer City Blue Ridge.

The Little Okaw Valley Conference went through many changes over the last 50 years, and this will be the biggest alteration of the entity in its history.

The new Lincoln Prairie Conference will move forward as a 10-team football conference until 2021 when the Illinois High School Association's divisional play takes effect.

In all other sports and activities, the new conference will move on as set up as the IHSA divisional plan only applies to the sport of football.

# Simply Arthur to host annual meeting on April 30 at Yoder's

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Yoder's Kitchen is the site for the annual meeting of Simply Arthur (formerly known as Arthur Area Economic Development Corporation and Arthur Area Tourism Council) on Tuesday, April 30.

There certainly will be many new things to discuss at the gathering about moving forward and developing plans to assist all businesses in the Arthur area.

The doors will open at 5:30 p.m. with special guest Josh Benitone and staff serving complimentary coffee and a time for conversation among those attending.

Benitone is one of the owners of Crown Brew Coffee in Cartersville. Josh spoke at the mid-year meeting and was a huge hit, so he has been asked to

return for the annual affair.

Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m., and the Simply Arthur program will begin. Benitone will give his entertaining and pertinent presentation.

It will also be a chance to meet the new board of directors, learn about Simply Arthur's mission, plus discuss all things "new" about Simply Arthur to mention a few items on the agenda.

"We have a new look, new budget, new goals, and new energy as we move into our 2019-2020 fiscal year," said Simply Arthur president Mac Condill. "Please plan on joining us for a fresh and exciting evening."

You should RSVP for this event by Monday, April 29, at (217) 246-2860 or by emailing td@arthurillinois.us. You can also stop in and see Simply Arthur

director Christy Miller downtown or talk to Mac about attending.

Even if you forget to do so, you are still welcome to come out and learn more about Simply Arthur.

"It is sure to be an evening packed with conversation, collaboration, community and coffee," Condill said.



KATELYNN GINGERICH

## Gingerich winner of Shuman Memorial Scholarship

Katelynn Gingerich of Sullivan is the recipient of the 2019 Charles B. Shuman Memorial Scholarship sponsored by the Moultrie County Farm Bureau.

Gingerich is the daughter of Duane and Tammi Gingerich. She is a senior at Arthur Lovington Atwood Hammond High School and plans to attend Lake-land College and study agriculture with an emphasis on Ag Production and Management.

Katelynn is a member of the Arthur National Honor Society Chapter, the ALAH FFA Chapter, and Moultrie-Douglas 4-H. Katelynn is also a 2019 Illinois State Scholar.

Moultrie County Farm Bureau in 2000 established the Memorial Scholarship in honor of Shuman, who started farming in Moultrie County in 1929.

During his career, he helped organize the Coles-Moultrie Electric Cooperative, Moultrie Grain Association, and the first consolidated school district in the county. He served as president of the Moultrie County Farm Bureau from 1936-1945.

He was elected president of the Illinois Farm Bureau in 1945 and president of the American Farm Bureau in 1954. He served in that capacity until 1970.

With this scholarship, Moultrie County Farm Bureau honors Shuman's life by assisting an outstanding student from his home county in achieving their potential.

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Wednesday, April 17, 2019 ARTHUR GRAPHIC-CLARION



## Town Talk

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taken further away. I watched them, their battle-hardened eyes steeled to what lie ahead. They marched toward their own destinies, with a few backward glances to younger siblings, and were gone.

We were all now left standing in what might be called a row, but only if one's eyes were crossed. But it was clearly determined by the frazzled hunt leader that this was going to be as good as it gets, and everyone had better like it!

We were ready. A zigzag line of freakishly attired children, some whose parents had regretably placed bunny ears on their heads, clutching baskets of the quite possibly toxic grass, ready to burst forth into the world of The Hunt.

ON YOUR MARK! A chill wind blew across the park area. GET SET! Heart racing...focus...listen...be ready to run...GO!

With an ear-splitting scream that could only be made by small children and sorority sisters, we were off. The cacophony even drew the attention of the older kids in the distance who raised their eyes, the parents grimaced, and the hung-over duck grabbed his swollen head in what was probably real pain.

We didn't care, the little warriors we were. We were running with the wind through our rabbit ears, the swooshing of our windbreakers, and laughing hysterically. Thankfully, that which we were hunting had no ears to hear this riot draw closer.

Later, I would learn that some had turned back immediately and ran crying to their guardians. Others wandered aimlessly. While at least one, sat on the ground, and began shoving plastic grass into his mouth.

I, on the other hand, was speeding full tilt. Some chose to race toward the playground equipment; too obvious, I thought. The real booty would lie

back in the trees. So, I ran forward, my eagle eyes trained to spot the slightest pastel shade in the green of the grass.

LO AND BEHOLD! There it was; very near a tree, a pink ovate shape on the lawn. You are mine and only mine, I smugly smiled at the thought. All I could see was pink on green, and I ran as fast as my little powder blue clad legs would carry me.

It was near...very near; all that was left to do was lean down, snatch, and keep moving. I had practiced at home; this was too easy. However, at home, I had been the only hunter. Now I was to know the agony of defeat.

CRASH! Two tiny little heads banging together. THUMP! Two tiny little behinds hitting the freshly mowed grass. There we were. Startled, I sat looking into the eyes of a huntress that I would later come to know as Michelle. That day, she, as was the style at the time for girls, wore a yellow dress with pink flowers on it. She had a pink windbreaker, which actually matched the knot on her forehead not to mention my own.

We stared at one another for what might have been several of Shirley MacLaine's lifetimes, but, in reality, was only a few seconds. The pink egg was there. Pink coat, blue cords, pink egg, green windbreaker, pink knots... NO PINK EGG!

We saw another youngster run off, an opportunist who cruelly took advantage of our distress. We would have names for a person like this as we grew older which I shall refrain from mentioning here. I looked back at the little girl and I saw my own pain reflected in her eyes, which began to swim with tears.

Somewhere on the planet there was a happy hunting ground, but not at this spot. We fell, as if in slow motion, backwards in opposite directions on the luxurious green, spring battlefield. Two brightly shod prone bodies, wailing in anger, pain, fear and dejection. Would anyone hear? NOOOOOOOOO!

Laughter and shouting still ruled the day as others collected their prizes. Then, out of the

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## Jeff & Sheri Easter

at Penn Station  
Friday, April 26  
7:00 p.m.

Tickets \$10.00  
Children 12 and under free.  
217-962-0015

## In Our Community

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