

The Bonham Line

Tragedy struck a world landmark Monday. Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris caught fire. The structure, over 850 years old, survived wars, earthquakes, and, it seems it will survive the fire.

Firemen got the blaze under control but not before it gutted the interior of the cathedral. The structure was saved. The French president declared it will be rebuilt.

Some of the factors that made Notre Dame a must-see for visitors to Paris--its age, sweeping size, and French Gothic design featuring masonry walls and tree trunk-sized wooden beams--also made it a tinderbox and a difficult place to fight a fire.

In addition, it was never fitted with modern fire-protection systems (sprinklers) as some cathedrals, especially in the U.S., have in recent years.

Paris has no long ladder tracks as we do in the United States. It would be impossible to navigate such a huge vehicle through the narrow streets of Paris.

As one article I read put it, The Seine River is next to the cathedral and has all the water you need to extinguish the blaze—but there is no way to get the water to the fire. The ceiling is too tall to fight it inside. You have to attack it from the outside.

Cause of the fire was not determined Monday night as this was being written.

Notre Dame will be repaired. In the meantime, it lives on in literature, photos, and art.

-rwb-

The generous outpouring of support for the Schrock family at the benefit on Saturday at Arthur Christian School is another example of the benevolence of this community.

Over \$30,000 was raised for the family who lost their home in a gas explosion which also killed one family member and injured another.

The night before the Schrock benefit, the annual auction for the Beacon was held at the Otto Center. We understand that event was well attended and supported, also.

We applaud everyone who supported these causes and those who planned and worked to serve the hundreds of people who attended. Well done!

-rwb-

The Moultrie-Douglas County Fair will be a little different this year. The Saturday night concert will take place at the tractor pull track grandstand.

After Wednesday evening of Fair Week, the bleachers at the north grandstand will be moved to the south end of the fairgrounds.

If we understand what fair board president Jim Fleming has been saying, the concert stage will be set up with the back of the stage toward the bleachers on the north side of the track. During the concert, the audience will stand in front of the stage or sit in the grandstand.

-rwb-

Last week, I wrote about searching for and finally finding a particular ink cartridge for my printer. I received some comment about that article.

I even had one reader who offered to do my taxes for me. I declined the offer, but after spending the whole weekend with the computer and H&R Block, I wonder if I should have accepted the offer.

The tax code changes every year, so I trust the computer program. I hope those will not be "famous last words."

Do you remember the big thick books that were published every year to help you do your taxes? I used those books to teach myself how to fill out the forms. It isn't really very difficult—usually. It would be difficult if you buy and sell property or have many investments.

But when you keep it simple math, even an English major like me can do it.

By the way, WEIU, which brought us the Our Story series, has a new program, "EIU—This Is Who We Are." If you get a chance to watch it, do so. Especially if you are an EIU grad, have a son or daughter attending the university, or have an interest in EIU.

Former governor Dean Edgar narrates two segments, one on his days as a student and student body president and another about the school's mascot Napoleon.

I was particularly interested in the segments on The Warbler, campus radio station, and The Eastern News. The latter mentioned one of my all-time favorite EIU professor, Dan Thornburgh, who was head of the journalism department. Actually, he was the journalism department at the time! Eastern offered only a minor in journalism when I was there.

More about this fascinating show in a later column. Have a great week. Be seeing you!

-rwb-

Town Talk's Easter egg hunt story

By KENT A. STOCK
Staff Writer

It has taken me over 40 years to tell this tale of heartbreak and woe. Over time, the physical wounds have healed, but the scars--oh, those dreadful scars of the mind--still haunt me.

Bright yellow sunshine...not a cloud in sight...a deep, blue sky...all made it a perfect day. Ah, yes...for some...but not for me.

It was my first hunt, but little did I know it would be my last. The days preceding the momentous occasion were very normal in the life of a four-year-old soon to be five. Play, eat, and sleep in no particular order. Life was carefree then, but, oh fickle fate, that was all to change.

Next year, kindergarten would be starting, and I would be forced into the ordered world of matriculation. However, one rite of passage was laying directly in front of me...The Hunt.

My parents had prepared for the day by bringing home the intended "quarry" in a neat little carton. We had sat up late into the night as a family, even my older siblings, coloring the skins of these creatures with brightly colored dyes. Of course, this was after we gouged holes into the beast and drained all the viscera, creating a hollow shell.

Others, it was rumored, threw the prey into boiling water before the coloring process. They would later peel the skin and eat the meat. BEASTS! HEATHENS! As far as the tradition of decorating the hide, our family was more of the traditionalist school. We simply used little tablets dissolved in water and vinegar for color; whereas others wrote, drew pictures, or stuck tacky stickers to the little creatures. It was all great fun.

But on that fateful Saturday, I would not be dealing with these tame, store-bought beasts. I would be hunting the kind that came wrapped in plastic and edible on the spot. Oh, yes. It would be myself versus nature and what would seem like hundreds of other children of all ages.

I sat in the family automobile in my bright green jacket and

my light blue corduroy pants. I had my "gear" with me...a colorful basket filled with an unearthly green plastic substance known as "grass." It was unlike any grass I had ever seen nor ever would, not even many years later in my college days.

But, I digress. The air was thick with anticipation as we pulled into the hunting grounds where it was immediately obvious I would not be alone on this mission. As we parked our vehicle next to the other "tanks," I was able to discern some familiar faces of my comrades from the neighborhood.

But there were also many strangers, some rumored to be from out of town. There were older kids, too, the veterans. Beads of sweat broke out on my tiny forehead as sense of what could be described as dread crept into my soul.

NONSENSE! I told myself as I stepped out of the car and into the bright sunshine...into the stares of thousands of children and their chaperones. My mother, who had been chosen to accompany me on this life journey, quickly found other mothers and fathers she knew, and I hastily joined their children to run around aimlessly in unbounded excitement.

All of us were dressed in what was, quite likely, the gaudiest pastel garments that could only be used once a year. Thankfully, we would outgrow them by the next year: only to be replaced, assuredly, by brilliantly hued garments of equally ridiculous luminosity.

Many of the parents were attired the same way, too. It was as if the entire light end of the color spectrum had thrown up all over humanity. It was not, necessar-

ily, a pretty sight. But we children didn't care. "They" were out there waiting....

The woman running the show was trying her best to get everyone's attention. She, not to her benefit, was being assisted by an oversized rabbit going by the name of Peter Cottontail, whose head and hands were terrorizing the children my age and younger while simultaneously annoying the older kids.

There was also a giant duck who performed anonymously and had a gigantic tail feather that knocked several children over on their pastel behinds without ever seeming to notice or care.

The duck smelled vaguely of what I would later come to recognize as beer, but that may have been the enticement for him to dress up so foolishly. They all, along with our minders, were trying to herd us into groups by age. We were finally set, and The Hunt would soon be on.

We, as the youngest, were taken to one area of the hunting grounds while the "vets" were

(Continued On Page 3)

Produce Auction, UI Extension form partnership to feed hungry families in five-county area

Arthur Produce Auction and University of Illinois Extension announced last week a partnership to help get more fresh produce to needy families during the summer produce season.

University of Illinois Extension staff are already involved in nutrition education to the local communities.

Extension works with local food pantries in Coles, Cumberland, Douglas, Moultrie, and Shelby counties.

Arthur Produce Auction has produce available for sale all season long at auctions held every Tuesday and Friday in Arthur.

While the first auction of the season is scheduled for April 30, main season produce does not begin to ripen till early June.

Extension staff will be present at most auctions during the produce season to receive donations of fresh produce from generous auction buyers or auction growers.

"Sometimes buyers buy more than they really need, and we think if we can provide a good way to get it directly to someone who needs food, it will be a wonderful way to feed more families this summer," said MaryBeth Massey, who is the SNAP Ed Program Coordinator for Unit 19 of the University of Illinois Extension.

"Sometimes our growers have imperfect produce that is hardly worth selling but is still very good to eat, and they would be glad to give to a hungry fam-

ily," commented Sheldon Raber, manager of Arthur Produce Auction.

"If the Extension can help make the distribution simple and easy, this is a winning plan for everyone. We are excited to be able to keep good food from going to waste."

If someone wants to make a financial gift, Arthur Produce Auction will create a fund to use that money to purchase produce to donate to local food pantries. University of Illinois Extension staff will deliver donated fruits and vegetables to the pantries so they can distribute the food.

For more information, talk to Extension staff at their table during an auction at Arthur Produce Auction this summer.

EXPLORE new places

with a Platinum VISA Credit Card from your Hometown Community Bank.

Enjoy an incredibly low 9.50% APR interest on any unpaid balance.



State Bank of Arthur

A Division of Morton Community Bank
Member FDIC

www.HometownBanks.com

Rate is current as of 04/15/2019. Rate is variable and determined by adding a margin to the prime rate. Offer of credit is subject to credit approval. Cash Advances/ATM: 3.0% of the amount advanced (\$10.00 min - \$300 max). International Currency Fee: 1.0% for transactions involving currency exchange, 0.8% for transactions not involving currency exchange

NEWS FROM THE HEART OF THE AMISH COUNTRY ARTHUR GRAPHIC-CLARION

Published every Wednesday by Arthur Publishing Company (USPS 032-960) at 113 E. Illinois Street, P.O. Box 19, Arthur, Illinois 61911. Telephone (217) 543-2151, Fax (217) 543-2152, e-mail arthurgraphic@yahoo.com or arthurgraphic@consolidated.net, web site: www.arthurgraphic.com.

Deadline for advertising and editorial content, noon on Friday before desired publication date. Long legal ads noon on Thursday.

Periodical Class postage paid at Arthur, Illinois 61911.

Subscription rates: \$32 per year in Douglas, Moultrie, and Piatt counties; \$34 per year elsewhere in Illinois; and \$36 everywhere else. A \$3 Senior Citizens discount is available.

Postmaster: Send address changes to The Arthur Graphic-Clarion, P.O. Box 19, Arthur, Illinois 61911.

Personnel: Greg Hoskins, publisher; Stephanie Wierman, general manager and advertising manager; Roger W. Bonham, managing editor; Kim Gee, production manager; Makenzi Kauffman, circulation manager.