

WISE AND OTHERWISE

By Kent A. Stock



Don't go near the water

With summertime comes the season of getting out and about to do things. Many of you will get out by the water, on the water and in the water. I have to admit I like the first two and the third is okay but I don't care for it as much as when I was younger.

There is a soothing quality relaxing on a beach chair listening to the waves hit the sand or being gently rocked back and forth in a boat on the lake. Of course, then you have people who want to spoil all that relaxing and insist you "do" watery activities. Really because I'd rather you leave me and the peaceful water alone; thank you very much.

I know I write a lot about being clumsy which is sort of true but in my youth I was really pretty athletic. I liken it to someone like Mel Tillis who stuttered when he talked but when he sang the stutter went away. I was pretty quick and nimble when I was up and moving about. It was when things slowed down problems arose. "That Stock boy sure could run but, yes, that was also him that fell over and busted his noggin while taking off his spikes."

Of course, that all went out the window once you took me off dry land and put me in the water. I could passably "swim" but that was about it. For one thing, I can't keep water out of my nose even with plugs. I think

my septum or whatever is deviant. It's something like that but don't press me on it because I'm not Mr. Science. "It's all in your mind," everyone would tell me. Really, is that why half the water in Lake Shelbyville, a bluegill and a water ski just came out of my lungs? I remember going to the Tuscola pool for swimming lessons where I started drowning while standing next to the pool. "Why is this kid gasping for air, he isn't even in the water yet?"

I gave most water related activities, yes I bowed to peer pressure, a chance. Water skiing being one, snorkeling, and diving off tall things were others. I determined that those things are best left to others. I'll read a book while baby shark gnaws on your toes or that water ski smacks you in the head.

I remember going with my friends to the beach and they were all going to go parasailing. They started to insist I come along, float in the air above the beach and then land on a postage stamp size dock thingy bouncing around in the middle of the ocean.

They looked at me, I looked at them and we all decided that it would be best to prop me up in a deck chair with a book and a cool beverage while remaining a spectator on this one. My deviated septum and I truly appreciated that.

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Holding It All Together

by Amy McCollom



Southern Nights
I keep hearing it somewhere in the crevices, the deep recesses of my mind. That song. I was a kid, but I was a dreamer, so the song spoke to me. I longed to experience those Southern Nights that Glenn Campbell sang beautifully about; the whistling trees with familiar tunes on the breeze still beckon me.

So good, were those nights, they could be experienced even with your eyes closed. And the southern skies, their glorious beauty the backdrop for ancient tales down the bloodline. Old and young, the continuity of renewed life will never wear out or grow old.

Let Freedom Ring: Arthur Celebration set for June 29

The celebration planned for Saturday, June 29 might just be the biggest yet combining the community's annual Freedom Celebration Parade and the largest fireworks display in central Illinois.

This year's parade theme is "American Heroes" and will salute the men and women of the Arthur American Legion Post #479.

Two special 6-horse hitchers will be featured in this year's parade. The first team is Tim Berry of Villa Grove and the second is Duane Herschberger from Missouri. They will trot through the parade route starting at 2:00 pm and then will follow up at the end of the parade at a walk.

The parade, which starts at 2 p.m., will wind its way through downtown Arthur.

Restaurants downtown and along Route 133 will be open to feed the crowd and local merchants will be offer-

When I got older, I had the opportunity to live in a southern state for a while. The skies were different than here, a deeper blue, that didn't fade to pale blue at the horizon. The sunsets went from purple to gold to amber to red. The golden eagles soared along with us on vast stretches of empty highway. The night sky was always clear as a costly sapphire, and you could see for miles and miles, all the big city lights in the distance compared to fireflies perched on a bush.

The part I miss most about those days isn't just the song. It's not the friends I used to know. It's not the uplifting music, and the great artists

that performed them. What I miss most is the time I had to notice and enjoy such pleasures that were right there in front of me.

As time goes faster, my life gets busier and busier. My days quickly get filled up with chores, tasks, duties, obligations, and housework. If there is any spare time, I try to use it wisely, reading the Bible, or books that will teach me something. It is a good thing, though, to be reminded of the simpler times when you noticed the sky, or the breeze, or the song of the trees. I hope I never forget those southern nights.

ing special deals at the many different shops and businesses. A special Freedom Celebration Flea Market will be held at 127 North Vine Street downtown from 8-3pm.

At 4 p.m. the festivities then move down to the Moultrie-Douglas County Fairgrounds for the largest fireworks display in central Illinois.

There will be live music,

food, pony rides, kids' activities, skydivers and powered parachutes all leading up to some of the largest shells, the most unique fireballs, ground displays and one of a kind pyrotechnics you will not see anywhere else.

You may call the Arthur Welcome Center at 217-543-2242 for more information, visit

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Service Times
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Soul Cafe- 9am-9:45
Worship & Service—10:00 a.m.
RUSH Youth Group
1st & 3rd Sunday 5-7pm
Celebrate Recovery
7:15pm
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Thursday
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Website: www.vgumcweb.org
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Minister—Mike Zylstra
e-mail: fccvgmin@frontier.com
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Email: villagrove.hume@gmail.com
website: sacredheartandstmichael.com
Mass Times: Saturday 4pm
Sunday 10:00am
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