

Zion News

"Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem..." - Matthew 2:1

Yes, that's right, the three wise, or Magi, went to Jerusalem to see the Christ-child. Unlike the traditional Nativity scene, they were not there at the stable in Bethlehem.

In fact, baby Jesus had already been presented at the temple of Jerusalem and the family had taken up residence in Jerusalem quite a while before the Magi appeared on the scene with their expensive gifts.

Only the Gospel of Matthew mentions the wise men from the east. Their journey was probably from Babylon, which was more than 900 miles away. By the time they got to Jerusalem, they were looking for a toddler, not a baby, implying that they traveled for a long time.

One of the Magi was Melchior. He was the oldest of the three and sometimes referred to as the king of Persia. He brought the gift of gold to Jesus as one king would present to another king he is visiting.

The role the Magi played was probably more significant than one might think at first glance. On their travels they stopped to pay their respects to the king of Judea, Herod, and told him why they had traveled so far. Herod feigned an interest in also worshipping this newborn king, Jesus, and asked the Magi to let him know where he was after they found him.

Certainly the wise men, being wise, knew that Herod was up to no good and warned

Mary and Joseph. Sure enough, Herod had all the male children of Bethlehem, two years of age and under, killed in an attempt to eradicate this perceived threat to his throne.

Some people think that the expensive gifts from the Magi were more than just symbols of Jesus' authority, but were necessary for his survival. They were used to finance Mary and Joseph's flight to Egypt to keep Jesus safe from Herod.

Epiphany, on January 6, commemorates the visit by the Magi to the child Jesus. This is viewed as evidence that Christ, the Jewish Messiah, also came for the salvation of Gentiles. The story indicates that God wants to reach every person on earth with His message of love no matter how far they have to travel physically, mentally, or spiritually.

God accepts everyone. Let us bring him our gifts and worship him.

Happy birthday wishes go out to: Jan 10-Darlene Harshbarger, Jan 10-Haley Crist, Jan 15-Barb Smith, Jan 19-Natalie Harris, Jan 22-Megan Lebeter, Jan 24-Phyllis Romine, Jan 26-Jerry Hale, Jan 26-Rod Randall.

"Three Wise Women would have asked for directions, arrived on time, helped deliver the baby, brought practical gifts, cleaned the stable, made a casserole, and there would be peace on earth!" - Pinterest

If you would like to receive our monthly Good News email, send a request to ramonacarlyle@yahoo.com.

Zion's Sunday worship services begin at 9:00 AM. Everyone is welcome.

Southern Illinois University, Illinois State University and Western Illinois University.

- Bureau of Cannabis materials and Livestock Management Facility Training translated to Spanish. The state's pesticide exam is currently being translated.

- Entered into a \$14.4 million Local Food Purchase Cooperative Agreement with the USDA to increase markets for disabled
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Agriculture

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Cannabis Community College Vocational Pilot Program.

- Signed landmark legislation creating a Farmer Disparity Study to identify and examine the hurdles for minority populations entering the agriculture industry. The study is now underway, facilitated by the Department and research led by the University of Illinois,

January: Long, cold and my least favorite month

JANUARY BLAH

OK, hope I don't offend anybody but have to admit this is my least favorite month. It's long, it's usually cold and, except for basketball, there's not much happening. Have often thought I would just like to hibernate during January and, now that I may be getting my wish this year, not so sure I like the idea. Found a list of how the months got their names so thought that would at least be something I could share about January. In the list of months January appears at the bottom instead of at the beginning and here's why. Historically January belonged near the bottom because, "back when the original Roman calendar was in use, the months of January and February didn't even exist. Instead, winter was a monthless 70-ish-day period that stretched between December and March. That changed around 690 B.C. when King Numa Pompilius established Ianuarius, which is believed to be named for Janus, the two-faced Roman god of transitions and doorways. It's not certain when, exactly, January was moved to the top of the calendar; in some cases, Europeans were still treating March as the "New Year" into the 18th century." So now you know.

AULD LANG SYNE

By the way, found this bit of trivia about 'auld lang syne' and its meaning. "It's sung around the world at the stroke of midnight. But what is 'Auld Lang Syne' referring to? The poem is attributed to Scottish poet Robert Burns, although he suggested that the poem was older than him, and he was just the first to write it down. The title 'Auld Lang Syne' translates to 'old long since' and is often interpreted as 'for old times' sake' or 'since long ago.' As we sing it, we are singing nostalgically about the value of friendships and memories that have made the previous year so special."

Town Talk

By Marty Yeakel

JANUARY 6-OLD CHRISTMAS

At the Arthur Welcome Center there is a sign with various holidays that let people know when Amish businesses are closed. One that always inspires questions is Old Christmas. Here is one explanation that I found as to what that means: "Twelfth Night, celebrated on January 5 or 6, marks the festival of Epiphany and the end of the 12 days of Christmas. During the Tudor period, this was a time of celebration and merriment. In some cultures, it is still celebrated with cakes and gifts, which represent those given by the Magi to baby Jesus. Twelfth Night also marks the opening of Carnival season in many Catholic countries. Notable carnival celebrations take place in New Orleans, Venice, and Rio de Janeiro." Recently I found on the Illinois Amish Heritage Center page the same explanation that I usually share as that has been my understanding of what 'Old Christmas' is and it goes as follows: "Old Christmas is exactly twelve days after Christmas, which was the traditional date of the Three Wise Men coming to Bethlehem to find the baby Jesus. It is also called, 'Epiphany'. Amish businesses will close that day, and all Amish workers will take the day off. Many will fast until noon and they share a big meal with fam-

ily in celebration." But I have also been told by a very dear friend that Old Christmas is actually the day Jesus was born. I would be interested to know if there are any other 'versions' of just what Old Christmas actually means. And by the way, the Amish do celebrate the 'English' Christmas of December 25 as well. Don't forget that all Amish businesses will be closed on Friday, January 6.

NEW SCOREBOARDS

Not sure when I will get to see them in person but was excited to see that the new scoreboards have been installed in the ALAH gym. They were very much needed and, from what I have seen, they look great. There is also a video board of some kind. Not sure yet how that will be used. Athletic director Nathan Seal says, "stay tuned." Also the senior banners have been moved and are displayed over the bleachers.

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

The Knights boys team acquitted themselves well in the St. Theresa tournament. From what I understand one of the best games they played was an overtime loss to St. T. Also, senior Wyatt Hilligoss and junior Jayce Parsons were named to the all tournament team. Congrats to both of them. The guys then had a home game with Leroy last Friday night. Junior varsity won and varsity lost but

they were both good games. As a lot of you probably remember, Leroy is coached by former Arthur High School standout Mark Edmundson, AHS '86. Mark is the son of the late Chob and Judy Edmundson. Mark took his Leroy team to the state championship game a few years ago and won! Pretty sure there was a lot of visiting going on after the game Friday. I'm sure Mark was happy to be 'home' and among many old friends.

The girls Knights team was supposed to host a holiday tournament from Wednesday to Friday right before Christmas but, because of bad weather moving in (and it was!) the participating teams all played a couple of games each on Wednesday. The tournament was to conclude this past Monday so here's hoping our girls prevailed and won it! Go Knights!

LIBRARY EVENT IN JANUARY

Just a reminder: Join the Arthur Public Library at 1 p.m. on Jan. 7, 2023 for a presentation from Chuck "The Marble Man" Garrett. Mr. Garrett, who has a vast knowledge of marbles, has a collection of over 40,000, some of which will be on display. Call 217-543-2037 to reserve your seat.

BANGING ON POTS AND PANS

We weren't really able to do this to bring in the new year last week but I did facetime with a couple of the granddaughters and there were sev-
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MANNEQUINS

Background: Illinois Amish Heritage Center, rural Arthur, IL

by Don S. Chambers

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Arthur History Fact #31

1877

Every town had to have their own band and its citizens bragged about their hometown band and followed it wherever it went.

These bands were generally made up of local businessmen.

Arthur's first band was organized in 1877 and called the "Von Lanken's Band." Members were George Von Lanken, Henry Moler, W.A. Dawson, Gilbert Maddox, J.W. Barrum, Ed. George, A.D. Sears, Tittle Warren, John Warren, and Charlie and Frank Hunsaker.

Later the band became known as the "Arthur Merchants Band" and was directed by Dr. O.C. Bruce, the town's dentist.

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, e-mail arthurgraphic@consolidated.net or arthurgraphic@yahoo.com, web site: www.arthurgraphic.com.

Deadline for advertising and editorial content, noon on Friday before desired publication date. Long legal ads noon on Thursday. Classified deadline is 4 p.m. Thursday.

Periodical Class postage paid at Arthur, Illinois 61911.

Subscription rates: \$50 per year in Douglas, Moultrie, and Piatt counties; \$60 out of county/state. A \$2.50 Senior Citizens discount is available. On-line subscriptions are \$35 per year.

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; Kim Gee, production manager; Britney Kirby, circulation manager.