

# Columns

## Rhyme time should be a crime

I ran into my old friend, Mike Knotmike. I'm a little apprehensive around him because I don't know what to call him. I mean, it's Mike, but it's Knotmike.

Anyway, he told me all about his new job as a metal fabricator. That was a riveting conversation. Then he started telling me about frogs. That was a ribbeting conversation.

There was a program playing on the radio about old railroad tracks that have been

### Ramblin' Man

By David Porter



turned into walking and biking paths. They call them rail trails.

Mike told me about the time

Yale University tried to do that in a nearby valley, but it didn't work out. He said it was a rail trail fail in Yale's vale.

Mike said he thinks it didn't work because it was designated as a men-only path. It was an all-male rail trail fail in Yale's vale.

The only men who used it could barely walk. It was a frail male rail trail fail in Yale's vale.

One of the attendants actually died on the path. That was the nail in the pail for Yale's frail male rail trail in the vale. Now it's for sale.

I said I think you're just making this up. He said he nev-

er lied about a guide who died because he has too much pride inside.

I told him that I needed to book, but he gave me that look as his head shook. He said, "It breaks my heart to see us part. Let's get together soon. We'll break some bread, and when we've been fed, we'll head over to the saloon."

I said it's been sublime, and it's not that I don't have the time. I just can't handle another rhyme.

He said that's a crime.

I said, "It's absurd, you dirty bird, how you have to have the last word." But I don't think the nerd even heard.

He just whistled like a bird and shuffled outside, and down the road he went. He made his retreat to the street complete with a sweet tweet.

© Copyright 2023 by David Porter who can be reached at [porter@ramblinman.us](mailto:porter@ramblinman.us). Mike Knotmike. What's not to like?

## Your immune system are like husbands!

Zsa Zsa Gabor said, "Husbands are like fires. They go out when unattended". I can totally relate to this quote. This is also true with your Immune system. It is extremely important for you to tend to your Immune system on a regular basis so you can keep your Immune fire burning brightly!

Over the last three years, the confusion and focus on your Immune system has been unbelievable. What if I told you that your Immune system is like every other system in your body, if you don't use it, you will lose it! Would that surprise you? Allow me to explain how that works.

The first thing about your Immune system is that 80

percent of it lives around your digestive tract. Therefore, if you have digestive issues, your Immune system gets aggravated and irritated on a regular basis. When undigested food is presented to your Immune system, as it leaks out of your gut, it causes an unhealthy Immune reaction. If you don't correct your ability to digest your food properly, you will never get your Immune system to balance itself out.

Your Immune system has developed over millions of years to fight different invaders to your body. This system is always on alert for viruses, bacteria, parasites, and other critters. If you don't use your Immune system daily, it be-

comes sluggish, weak, and ineffective.

There is 10 to the 30th viruses (that's 10 with 30 zeros behind it) always floating around in the air you breath. There is also 10 to the 24th viruses within your blood stream right now! We literally never get away from viruses...

ever! But this is a good thing. Viruses are the way we all transfer genetic material between each other and our environment. 99.99% of viruses are good for you, not bad. If we didn't transfer viruses between each other, our species would become much weaker and finally die out.

So, the more you expose yourself to new viruses and bacteria, the better your Immune system gets at identifying the good ones from the bad one. The best example of this is found in people who don't leave their home for extended periods of time and then when they do, the get sick. Their Immune system hasn't had to identify and kill new invaders for an extended period and has gotten lazy.

To keep your Immune system healthy for life, you need to seek and enjoy new environments all the time. The more places you go, see and experience, the more your Immune system can learn and build your antibodies for

different bad invaders. Even minuscule exposures to different invaders provide your Immune system with enough genetic material to build future antibodies.

Why don't most Amish children get Asthma? They are out playing every day! They are exposing themselves to all kinds of different invaders in their yards. This keeps their Immune system sharp and in balance from a very young age.

We all need to get out of our own homes and go out and experience life around us. The more we do this, the stronger your Immune system becomes and the better health you can enjoy.

See you around!

## Baked beans and Jello salad for your BBQ

It's just about time for those beloved cook-outs! There are so many meals I am looking forward to having! I am also looking forward to trying some new recipes on the grill. Please, if you have a favorite to share, send it my way.

This week I have a favorite side dish to share with you in time for grilling season. My husband is not a fan of canned pork and beans, and he yearned for baked beans like his mom used to make. After multiple tries to duplicate her dish, I finally found a winner! This recipe starts with canned baked beans, but once doctored up becomes sooo good!

I always get compliments on this dish and have been asked to bring this to potlucks. It's a great side dish with hamburgers or ribs!

### Best Baked Beans

2 15 oz can baked beans with pork  
1/4 cup brown sugar  
1/2 onion, chopped  
1/4 cup ketchup  
1 Tbsp yellow mustard  
1 tsp Worcestershire sauce  
1 tsp red wine vinegar  
salt and pepper  
2 to 4 slices bacon

Cook bacon, cut into bite size pieces. In a 9x9 baking dish, combine all ingredients. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour.

Note about above recipe: I

use one 28 oz can Bush's Best Original Baked Beans, and I always use 4 slices of bacon.

If you need a jello salad to round out your cookout, try this recipe. I found this in a church cookbook years ago.

### Strawberry Jello Salad

6 oz pkg strawberry Jello  
2 cups boiling water  
3 med (or 2 lg) bananas  
10 oz frozen strawberries, thawed  
4 oz chopped pecans  
1 cup sour cream

Dissolve Jello in 2 cups boiling water. Let cool. Meanwhile, mash the bananas. Drain the juice from the thawed berries. Once Jello is cooled, add the

bananas berries and pecans. Mix well. Pour half the mixture into a mold or serving dish. Refrigerate until set, about one hour.

Spread the sour cream over the set Jello. Slowly pour remaining Jello mixture or top.

Refrigerate until set.

I have a couple suggestions for grilling. I like to marinate ribs in cola overnight before cooking. The cola makes the meat more tender. I also like to prebake the ribs in the oven a bit before putting on the grill.

### Let's Cook

By Linda Hoskins



I bake the ribs at 325 degrees, covered, for 45 minutes to an hour. Another tip, for great brats, I precook them in beer before grilling them!

If you have a recipe or baking tip to share, please send to [letscook!@heraldpubs.com](mailto:letscook!@heraldpubs.com), or mail to Mascoutah Herald, PO Box C, Mascoutah IL 62258. If you handwrite your recipe, please be sure to write clearly. If I have to guess at what it says, I won't be able to use it. Also, include something about your recipe. Did you create it yourself, was it handed down from your grandma? Thanks and as I like to say, Happy Cooking!

## Better politics, smarter government: Inviting Illinoisans to identify statesmanship in prairie state

By JOHN T. SHAW

"A statesman," said the great Prussian diplomat Otto von Bismark, "is a politician who thinks of his grandchildren."

Three years ago, former Illinois Governor Jim Edgar and I decided to create the Paul Simon-Jim Edgar Statesmanship Award to shine a spotlight on remarkable leadership that is taking place in our state and our communities.

We were looking for Illinois political leaders who are thinking about their grandchildren – and acting to create a better future for them.

The annual Simon-Edgar Statesmanship Award is presented to an elected state or local government official in Illinois who has demonstrated a

pattern of public service characterized by vision, courage, compassion, effectiveness, civility, and bipartisanship.

I believe that Governor Edgar and Senator Paul Simon, the founder of the Institute that I'm privileged to lead, represent the best of Illinois statesmanship. Governor Edgar, a loyal Republican, and Senator Simon, a steadfast Democrat, were always willing to work with members of the other party and independents to get things done for Illinois.

Governor Edgar and I are eager to receive and review nominations about inspiring leaders in Illinois — mayors who are crafting creative plans for their cities and making hard decisions to realize their

aspirations; city council members who are committed to long-term strategies for their communities; and state legislators and constitutional officers who are willing to break from party orthodoxy to advance solutions that improve the lives of fellow Illinoisans.

For our inaugural award, we selected 11 Republican members of the Illinois General Assembly who supported a critical budget package in July 2017, breaking from their party in the interest of fiscal solvency for Illinois. That budget ended a two-year fiscal stalemate that tarnished Illinois' reputation, damaged schools, battered the state's credit rating, and led to about \$15 billion in unpaid bills. The 2017

budget paved the way for subsequent fiscal progress in the state as reflected in upgrades to Illinois' credit by rating agencies.

Last year we selected former House Majority Leader Barbara Flynn Currie as the recipient of the Simon-Edgar Award. We cited her four decades of forceful, creative, consequential, and civil leadership in the Illinois General Assembly. Representative Currie, a Democrat, served in the Illinois General Assembly from 1979 to 2019 and was the House Majority Leader from 1997 to 2019. She helped create Illinois' Earned Income Tax Credit, championed clear air and water legislation, pushed for the first Freedom

of Information Act, advocated for same sex marriage, drafted critical school funding and juvenile justice reforms, and fought to end the death penalty in Illinois.

The nomination process for this year's Simon-Edgar Award opened on April 1 and we are accepting nominations until June 1. To nominate a candidate or candidates, please write a brief letter describing how the person has displayed the qualities of statesmanship outlined above. Please send an email to [PaulSimonInstitute@siu.edu](mailto:PaulSimonInstitute@siu.edu) or send your letter to Paul Simon Public Policy Institute, Southern Illinois University, Mail Code 4429, 1231 Lincoln Drive, Carbondale, IL, 62901-4304.

Governor Edgar and I are

confident that the nominations we receive this year will identify exceptional leaders who are improving Illinois and giving us confidence about the future.

The recipient of the 2023 Simon-Edgar Award will be announced in early August.

**John Shaw is the director of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Shaw's monthly column explores how Illinois can work toward better politics and smarter government.**

**Editor's Note: This op-ed was distributed by Capitol News Illinois on behalf of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute. The opinions expressed in this article are the author's own.**

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