

The Sidney Scoop

By Ann Rhoton
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Your correspondent needs to make a correction to her April 20 Sidney American Legion Post 433 Meeting Coverage published in last week's edition of the Southern Champaign County Today Paper. There were 11 members and one guest in attendance not nine members and one guest in attendance. I apologize for the mistake and hope that it didn't cause any inconvenience.

Look for your correspondent's Sidney Lions Club Fish Fry SCCTP Feature Article published in this week's edition of the Southern Champaign County Today Paper.

I hope that everyone made it through the Monday, April 27 morning, afternoon, and evening storms safely. There was standing water in some places around Sidney where there hadn't been for a while and my rain gauge at home showed 3.2" of rain.

The Village of Sidney Board of Trustees regular monthly meeting should have taken place on Monday, May 4. Look for a report from your correspondent in next week's edition of the Southern Champaign County Today Paper.

The inaugural Sidney

Spring Fling event brought to you by The Goose & The Gander, LLC and the Sidney Improvement Group will take place on South David Street in downtown Sidney on Saturday, May 9 from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. The event will take place the day before Mother's Day so vendors will focus on gifts for Mom and more.

Reach out to Brett Franzen at The Goose & The Gander, LLC at (217) 530-5696 or by email at tgandtglc@gmail.com for more information.

The next "The Mid Central Woman's Christian Temperance Union" meeting will take place on Saturday, May 16 at 11:30 a.m. at Monical's Pizza in Villa Grove. A representative from Empty Tomb in Champaign will speak about the services they provide and provide an opportunity for folks to ask questions.

New members (men and women) are welcome and folks can call Vice President Marjorie Miller at (217) 202-4397 for more information.

The Sidney American Legion Post 433 will hold their next monthly meeting at the Post Home located at 221

South David Street in downtown Sidney on Monday, May 18 at 6:00 p.m. Prospective new members are always welcome and encouraged to attend and all monthly meetings, unless otherwise posted, are held at the Post Home.

Sidney American Legion Post 433 Commander Bill Hensch reached out to your correspondent and asked me to publish a request that anyone that was around when the Sidney Village Board time capsule was buried in 1976, please reach out to him at (217) 649-6989 as he would like to find out more about the capsule.

Have a great week!

If you or your organization have news items you want published drop a line to Ann Rhoton at P. O. Box 491, Sidney, IL 61877 or call (217) 688-2812 between 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Don't hesitate to leave a message if there's no answer.

News items must be turned in by 10:00 a.m. each Friday to be published in the following week's paper. Items submitted after the deadline will be published in the following week's column.

Rocket Nation

By Diane Ducey



The weather was challenging for our community at the end of April. With so much rain coming in at once, pooling occurred in fields east of Tolono with some flooding in streets and reports of basements retaining water.

Tornado sirens went off in southern Champaign County as schools and local businesses initiated their safety plans to take shelter. Principal Darin O'Connell at Unity West Elementary School (enrollment around 400 students) made comments to local media about this incident being the first time in his career that involved an order to shelter in place and lost power at the same time! Mr. O'Connell said, "In a moment of chaos, our entire building staff acted quickly, care-

fully and with care to get all students ushered into their designated zones and keeping the kids calm. Communication was great with the district administration team in case the power did not come back on, but fortunately we did not have to use Plan B."

Unity West's Teacher Appreciation week has themes on different days through May 8 like wearing spirit apparel, writing fun messages with flair pens on post-it notes, enjoying some "Rocket Brew," or getting a Teacher Supply Box created with craft supplies along with lunch off the grill on Friday!

Spring is always busy with Unity West PTO having their final meeting of the school year on Tuesday, May 12 (2nd Tuesday of the Month) at 6:30

p.m. in the school library. Plans will be spelled out for the last day of school, Friday, May 22, which will be "Fun Day." An elementary school mile fun run is scheduled for May 19, and opportunities to sign up for summer camps at Unity High School, the U of I and Parkland with notices sent out about deadlines.

May 15 is the last day to get school nurse, Suzanne Gately, the dental forms (within the last 18 months) turned in for kindergarten and second graders. Plus, yearbook pictures and updates on events well into the Spring Semester has those interested getting orders turned in before June 15 for delivery in the Fall of 2026)

Sixth, Seventh and Eighth graders interested in the Junior Rockette team can attend at least one dance clinic taking place at Unity West's Gym between 6-8 p.m. on May 5 and 6 with the tryouts to perform the dance routine on Friday, May 8 between 6-8 p.m. Results will be posted that evening on the team's Facebook page.



PICTURE FROM UNITY WEST'S "Living Wax Museum" event as 5th graders at Unity West worked on their project for a few months to research, create and memorize a speech for their presentation honoring someone who believes in justice, shows bravery and exemplifies leadership. Photo courtesy of Diane Ducey.



Some plants have been acting strangely this year. White clover (*Trifolium repens*) usually blooms around the beginning of June. Mine's blooming now. Likewise, some of my common milkweed and butterfly weed are forming flower buds, a month earlier than usual. Most other things have been progressing "within normal limits". Chives have been blooming a while. Thyme is getting into full bloom. Sage has flower buds showing color. Lavender is sending up flower stalks. Volunteer cilantro is well along. Hmm, there's some more Black Walnuts coming up. I need to dig those out.

Tree-of-heaven seedlings are coming up. More each year. They must be yanked on sight. Stars-of-Bethlehem have been blooming awhile. They keep appearing in my front lawn, where they are well hidden until their star-shaped white flowers give away their position. Herbicides will not kill it (at least none fit for use in residential areas), though some will knock them down for the season, which at least keeps the problem in check. The only truly effective treatment I know is digging them out, bulbs and all. It is tedious, exacting, time-consuming work.

The rain on Monday April 27 has kicked a lot of plants into high gear, and enabled

a lot of seeds to germinate. My experimental plantings of grass and clover are coming up. Sunflowers are coming up. Zinnias. Cilantro.

The rain brought field work around here to a stop until farm equipment could be deployed without getting shipwrecked. There was some road equipment moving bits of farm field out of roadways and public rights-of-way, where the rushing water had left them.

Operation Epic Fury seems to be in abeyance. The prez declared a cease-fire, which, his vassals aver, means we aren't "at war" with Iran any more, even though (AFAIK) Epic Fury has not been declared over. And even though other vassals have said that we have been in an "ongoing conflict" with Iran since the 1979 Iranian Revolution.

Perhaps one reason for the cease-fire is the lack of remaining targets. The prez has declared, "We have destroyed their navy, destroyed their air force, destroyed all of their - if you look at their anti-aircraft equipment, their radar equipment, their leadership, their leadership is destroyed. We've destroyed everything." So what would we target if, as the prez has threatened, we resume bombing?

He is discovering that wars don't always conclude them-

selves to meet a schedule. I have a vague recollection of some of the war planners for the Central Powers having made a similar discovery in 1918. The war's failure to end on time did not work in their favor.

In the present instance, the time frame has gone from "4 to 6 weeks" to "quite soon" or "very soon," to "Don't rush me!", to "We have to have guarantee they will never have a nuclear weapon."

Well, at least that's a definite objective. However, as I sometimes remark, "never" is a very long time. And in this case, the guarantee is being sought by military means. Sounds like a defining instance of a "forever war" to me. I will add the cheery note that Iran doesn't have to build a nuclear weapon to have one. They could (in theory) buy one. To foreclose this possibility, we would have to patrol Iran's land borders as well as ship traffic in the Strait of Hormuz. And, last I heard, the Administration was having enough difficulty patrolling our own country's land borders.

There is some good news about Epic Fury. The USS Gerald R. Ford is finally on its way home after being deployed for ten months. There was a major fire aboard a while back that left hundreds of crew members sleeping on floors, tables, etc. Some of the more recent news reports of mealtimes during deployment reminded me of the complaint, "The food here's terrible. And such small portions!" So I wish the crew a long and happy shore leave. Including plenty of whatever they would like to eat.



HEAVY RAINS on April 28 bring flooding to Fisher farm land East of Tolono the morning after the storm. Photo by Diane Ducey.

Stamp out hunger drive USPS collecting for food pantries

Each year, letter carriers across the country head out on their routes on the second Saturday in May to collect donations of non-perishable food items to benefit local food pantries. Since launching in 1993, the National Association of Letter Carriers' annual Stamp

Out Hunger Food Drive has grown into the nation's largest one-day food drive, helping to fill the shelves of food banks in cities and towns throughout the United States.

The need is great, but you can help. We invite you to join letter carriers and our partner

organizations in the fight to end hunger in our communities by participating in the annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive.

Simply leave your donation of non-perishable food in a bag near your mailbox on Saturday, May 9, and your letter carrier will do the rest.

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