

THEATER

'Once Upon A Mattress' opens theater season for FFP | E3

WEEKEND

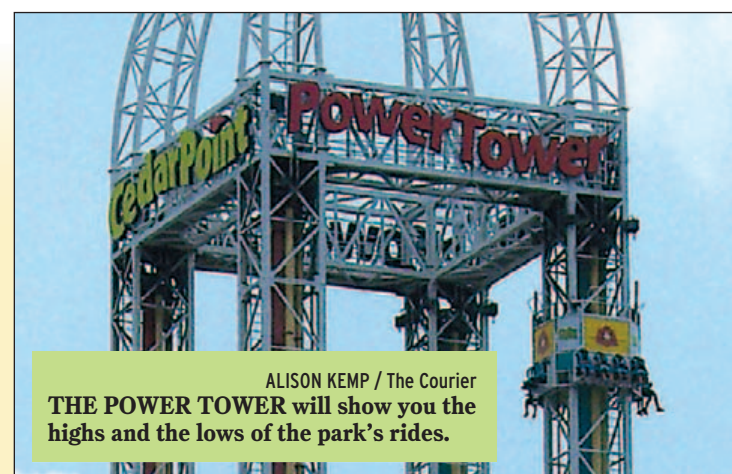
SPORTS

Picturing the Findlay Area Golf Association after 36 years | E7

Get the Point!



Photos provided by Cedar Point
RIDERS SPLASH DOWN the last hill of Cedar Point's newest ride Shoot the Rapids. The ride boasts a six-and-a-half minute ride time where you'll be soaked amongst 728,000 gallons of water.



ALISON KEMP / The Courier
THE POWER TOWER will show you the highs and the lows of the park's rides.

Best amusement park in the world

By ALISON KEMP
 WEEKEND EDITOR

Cedar Point, an amusement park in Sandusky, on the Lake Erie coast, is a place for all ages and a variety of entertainment options.

While the big-ticket coasters like Millennium Force and Top Thrill Dragster are what many people head to the park for, there is no shortage of other ways to spend a day — or more — at what Amusement Today has named the best amusement park in the world for 12 straight years.

There are shows, rides for children, water rides, games, and rides that stay low to the ground, move at slow speeds and don't spin, for everyone who does not want to spend the day riding coasters.

Fun for Everyone!

Although Cedar Point has 17 roller coasters, there are 58 additional rides and other attractions, such as shows and games, to round out the Cedar Point experience.

"To be honest, not all of our guests want to go 100 mph," said Robin Innes, Cedar Point's public relations director.

He explained that everyone needs to have a good time at Cedar Point, in order for the park to be successful. To do that, rides of each type are spread throughout the park so that there is a variety in every area.

There are over 30 rides and attractions for children, and adults can ride most rides with their children. Even the children's rides are spread throughout the park, with attractions split among Planet Snoopy, Camp Snoopy, Gemini Children's Area and Kiddy Kingdom. Among these rides are monster trucks at Peanuts Road Rally, Balloon Race, Kite-Eating Tree and two coasters, the Jr. Gemini and Woodstock Express.

There are also four new shows at Cedar Point this year. Rock Band Live features music from the video game and park guests can audition before the show begins for a chance to take part in the show. Tropical Heat Island Beat is full of summer-themed tunes, and Grand Ole Country features timeless country classics. The fourth new show is Everyone Loves Snoopy, an ice-skating show, complete with Lucy, Schroeder, Sally, Linus, Charlie, the little red-headed girl and Snoopy, who all ice skate, along with additional ice skaters.

Rides the whole family can enjoy

- **Coasters:**
 Disaster Transport
 Iron Dragon
 Wild Cat
- **Carrouseles:**
 Midway Carrousel
 Cedar Downs
- **Cars:**
 Turnpike Cars
 Cadillac Cars
 Antique Cars
 Dodgem
- **Other rides:**
 CP & LE Railroad
 Giant Wheel
 Paddlewheel Excursions
 Sky Ride



Shoot the Rapids

Shoot the Rapids, the new water ride at Cedar Point, is not just a wet experience. Yes, riders get wet, but not soaked after one ride, like what happens on Snake River Falls, a similarly designed water ride. The ride is also a sensory experience.

Riders wind through a misty tunnel and a canyon with waterfalls. There are decorations to look at, from old-fashioned signs to a distillery with a sign that warns all trespassers will be shot and survivors will be shot again. And while riders wait in line or are on the ride, other rides are part of the experience, too.

While waiting in line, riders must cross the train tracks of the CP & LE Railroad. The station abuts the water on which the Paddlewheel Excursion boat floats by. Millennium Force roars past the Shoot the Rapids track. Top Thrill Dragster is also visible and the screams of passengers can be heard.

The ride begins with entering a misty tunnel that gets riders just a bit damp. At the end of the tunnel is the first opportunity to get drenched. The boat comes out of the tunnel next to the bottom of the second hill of the ride, so with perfect timing, riders can be splashed by the splash from another boat.

Then the boat goes up the first hill. That's when it is time for riders to realize that 85 feet is higher than it sounds. And the boat crests the hill so slowly there is plenty of time to look over the front of the boat at the descent and all of the water waiting to be sprayed in your face.

The splash is less terrible than anticipated and just as riders have recovered from all the water, the boat heads through a canyon with waterfalls that are another opportunity to get wet.

The boat approaches the second hill and climbs 49 feet. Though lower, there is much more splash from this descent. The boat comes down between two piles of rocks with water flowing over them and lands in a giant cloud of mist.

Riders may think the ride is over at this point, but there is one final chance for a splash. Park guests, for a quarter, can shoot a burst of water at unsuspecting riders as they make the turn to head back to the station. Eight of these geysers are available. Four of the geysers are at the final turn and four others are at the turn before the first hill ascent.

Guests can watch the mayhem they cause from an observation deck near the ride's entrance.
This ride gets two thumbs up.

RIDE STATS

- Ride length: 2,100 feet
- First drop height: 85 feet
- Second drop height: 49 feet
- Boat seating: Individual seats; four rows of two per boat, but only six riders per boat
- Amount of water: 728,000 gallons of chlorinated, filtered water
- Ride time: Six and a half minutes
- Cost: \$10.5 million
- Manufacturer: IntaRide LLC of Glen Burnie, Md.



Tips to make the most of a day at the park:

- Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday are the least busy days of the week.
- Days in May and the end of August, when school is in session, are less crowded than the rest of the season.
- Bring a change of clothes, shoes and a towel if you plan on riding water rides.
- Ride rides as you walk past them, rather than walking back and forth across the park all day.
- Take breaks throughout the day, especially if it is hot out.
- A good place to cool down is in the theaters, which are air conditioned.
- Bags cannot be taken on all the rides, so either leave your belongings in the car or plan to get a locker.

For video on Cedar Point, to watch our reporter "Shoot the Rapids" and more, go to www.thecourier.com!





DAMIAN DOVARGANES / The Associated Press

A 20,000-YEAR-OLD AMERICAN mastodon found in Simi Valley, just 40 miles northwest of Los Angeles, stands as the centerpiece of the Age of Mammals exhibit at the new Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. With specimens that date back 4 billion years, the new Age of Mammals exhibit opened Sunday, July 11.

CALIFORNIA

New exhibit traces 65 million years of mammal evolution

First ever display of bone-crushing dog's complete skeleton in show

By SUE MANNING
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LOS ANGELES — Part of the oldest museum in Los Angeles County has been turned into a home for the aged — and the ages.

With specimens that date back 4 billion years, the Age of Mammals exhibit opened in the north wing of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County on July 11.

It's the first permanent museum exhibition in the world to trace 65 million years of evolution based on geology and climate, said curator John Harris.

"We are trying to figure out why the change took place, not just describe how the change took place," he said.

"Normally, mammals evolve to adapt to their surroundings. If that were the simplest part of it, after the dust cleared, after the asteroid exploded and the dinosaurs had been wiped out, then mammals would have filled the habitats left vacant by the demise of the dinosaurs and that would have been the end of the story. But it wasn't."

That's because a restless Earth wouldn't allow it.

"We've seen that humans themselves are a product of climate change. Now we are at the point where we are causing and contributing to climate change," Harris said.

The centerpiece of the exhibit is a 20,000-year-old mastodon found in Simi Valley, just 40 miles northwest of Los Angeles. A relative of the elephant, it is also the exhibit's largest complete specimen, standing 8 feet, 9 inches tall.

There is a paleoparadoxiid, an extinct relative of elephants and sea cows, that lived on the California coast about 11 million years ago. And there is an ancient species of sperm whale whose fossilized bones have been assembled for the first time by any museum and seems to float above the exhibit.

"Mammalian history is full of

remarkable creatures on land and in the sea and it is terrific that the museum chose to emphasize the role of climate change and shifting continents in the history of mammals," said Blaire Van Valkenburgh, a professor of ecology and evolutionary biology at the University of California, Los Angeles and a member of the exhibit's steering committee.

"It should help people understand the connections between the rocks beneath their feet and the history of life on the planet."

The Age of Mammals uses a mounted saber-toothed cat, a giant jaguar, a brontothere or thunder beast that resembles a dinosaur more than a mammal to help tell its evolution story. The largest animal represented in the collection is a Columbian mammoth. A jaw from the 14-foot tall mammal will be on display and stands 2½ feet high.

The first ever display of a bone-crushing dog's complete skeleton is part of the show. The 8 million-year-old species represents the largest dog family ever evolved. With its powerful jaws and teeth, the bone-crushing dog could crack the bones of its prey, like a modern hyena.

Big makes bold statements in the exhibit, but little is there, too. The smallest mammals represented are an extinct mouse and the shell of a fossil land snail.

The museum, with its trademark rotunda and three wings, opened on Nov. 6, 1913, as the Los Angeles Museum of History, Science and Art. Through the years, it has collected more than 35 million objects, some as old as 4.5 billion years.

Now called the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, it includes the 1913 building, the Page Museum at the La Brea Tar Pits and the William S. Hart Park and Museum in Newhall. In the early 1960s, the art portion of the museum moved out and became the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Renovation of the 1913 building is part of a \$107 million project that will include two more exhibitions (including Dinosaur Mysteries), a demonstration center, a nature lab, pedestrian bridge, a park and nature space, more gallery space, new stores and a cafe.

Stolen Elvis statue found in cemetery

ROSEDALE, Md. (AP) — Elvis has been found with the angels.

An Elvis Presley statue, taken earlier this month from the roof of a Maryland diner, was recovered Tuesday between two angels at a nearby cemetery.

Baltimore County police say a customer found the 80-pound statue at the Faith Cemetery in Overlea and returned it to the diner. Police say the customer is

not considered a suspect.

The now footless Elvis — its feet were left bolted to the diner roof — was taken earlier this month from the Happy Day Diner in suburban Baltimore.

Diner owner Maria Pigiaditis said after the statue was taken that a former owner bought the 7-foot-tall fiberglass Elvis for \$1,500 in 2001, and until the theft he had only been taken down once for a "facelift" after a storm.

GET OUT!

Your guide to fun in our area

There's always something to do.

Events

FLAG CITY AMATEUR EXTRAVAGANZA HORSE SHOW

July 24-25

Quarter horse exhibitors from all over Ohio and 12 other states will gather in Findlay for the 25th annual Flag City Amateur Extravaganza. More than 300 riders and horses will compete in Western and English-style classes for points and cash awards. Admission: free. Location: University of Findlay western horse complex, St. Route 68.

"JAMES A. GARFIELD: PASSIONATE READER"

July 24

President James A. Garfield's eclectic reading habits will be the subject of an evening campfire program at James A. Garfield National Historic Site. Admission: free. Time: 7 p.m. Location: 8095 Mentor Ave., Mentor. Information: 440-255-8722, www.nps.gov/jaga.

NIGHT HAUNT AT MALABAR FARM STATE PARK

July 24

Enjoy colorful legends of historic mysteries and hauntings, and explore the possibility of paranormal activity around the farm. Hours: 8 p.m.-midnight. Location: Malabar Farm State Park, 4050 Bromfield Rd., Lucas. Information: 419-892-2784, www.ohiostateparks.org.

ISLANDFEST

July 24-25

Includes a parade, waterfront craft fair, live entertainment and fireworks. Hours: Saturday 8 a.m.-midnight, Sunday 8 a.m.-10 p.m. Location: Kelley's Island. Information: 419-746-2360, www.kelleysislandchamber.com.

CELINA LAKE FESTIVAL

July 24-25

The entire family will enjoy the fireworks display over the lake, the classic car show, the parade and the sidewalk sales. Admission: free. Hours: Saturday 9 a.m.-10 p.m., Sunday noon-6 p.m. Location: Lakeshore Park, Main Street and Lakeshore Drive, Celina. Information: 419-586-2219, www.celinalakefestival.com.

DRUMS ALONG THE MAUMEE

July 24-25

See and hear live and drum corps from across the country play military music from the 1750s through the War of 1812. Hours: Saturday and Sunday 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Location: For Meigs, 29100 W. River Road, Perrysburg. Information: 800-283-8916, www.fortmeigs.org.

COLUMBUS JAZZ & RIB FEST

July 24-25

Enjoy hot ribs and cool jazz, a combination that makes this event undeniably delicious. Admission: free. Hours: Saturday 11 a.m.-10 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Location: Arena District and North Bank park, Spring and Long streets, Columbus. Information: 614-645-3800, www.hottribscooljazz.org.

SECOND ANNUAL MARGARET STINTSMAN RUN

July 31

This fundraiser for ABATE (American Bikers Aimed Toward Education) of Ohio and The Epilepsy Center of Northwest Ohio is in honor of Margaret Stintzman who was 27 years old when she died from complications due to an epileptic seizure in 2008. Admission: \$15 for single rider, \$20 for couple. Hours: Registration starts at 11 a.m. Location: Mon Ami Restaurant and Historic Winery, 3845 E. Wine Cellar Road, Port Clinton. Information: 419-797-9040 or www.spiderrays.com.

ROCK 'N' ROAR

Aug. 6

Groove to the tunes of one of the summer's hottest dance parties at the Toledo Zoo. Hours: 7 p.m.-midnight. Location: Toledo Zoo, 2 Hippo Way, Toledo. Information: 419-385-4040, www.toledozoo.org.

3RD ANNUAL WHEELS-N-WINGS HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Aug. 6-7

See pre-1985 cars and enjoy skydiving performances, children's activities and more. Admission: free. Location: Van Wert Regional Airport, 1400 Leeson Ave., Van Wert. Information: 419-238-9378, www.visitvanwert.org.

PARROTHEAD CONCERT WEEKEND

Aug. 6-7

Celebrate summer with beach activities and performances by Parrots of the Caribbean. Hours: Friday 9 a.m.-11:30 p.m., Saturday 7:30 a.m.-11:30 p.m. Location: Portage Quarry Recreation, 12701 S. Dixie Hwy., Bowling Green. Information: 419-352-9203, www.portagequarry.com.

DUBLIN IRISH FESTIVAL

Aug. 6-8

Enjoy Irish music and dance, storytelling and folklore, and hands-on workshops. Hours: Friday 4 p.m.-midnight, Saturday 11 a.m.-midnight, Sunday 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Location: Coffman Park, 5600 Post Rd., Dublin. Information: 614-410-4545.

Music

EVENING WITH KERRY CLARK

July 25

The Fostoria Community Arts Council will present an evening with balladeer Kerry Clark as part of its Summer Concert Series. Clark is a former member of the New Christy Minstrels. Admission: free. Time: 7:30 p.m. Location: Wainwright Amphitheatre, Meadowland Park, Fostoria. Rain location: Wesley United Methodist Church on Van Buren Street.

VANS WARPED TOUR

July 30

The 2010 Vans Warped Tour makes a stop in Detroit for a day of music with dozens of bands. Tickets: \$33. Time: 11 a.m. Location: Comerica Park Parking Lot, Detroit. Information: www.vanswarpedtour.com, www.ticketmaster.com.

ANDREW 'JR. BOY' JONES

July 30

Jones has released five albums, the latest in 2009, and was nominated for a W.C. Handy award for best new blues artist in 1998. Tickets: \$10 in advance, \$12 at door. Time: 8 p.m. Location: The Claz Theatre, 127 N. Main St., Bowling Green. Information: 419-353-5000.

Fairs

SENECA COUNTY FAIR

July 26-Aug. 1

This county fair has something for everyone, from livestock exhibits and arts and crafts displays to a rodeo and rides. Hours: Daily 8 a.m.-11 p.m. Location: Seneca County Fairgrounds, 11 Hopewell Ave., Tiffin. Information: 419-447-7888, 888-736-3221, www.senecacountyfair.org.

OHIO STATE FAIR

July 28-Aug. 8

For more than 150 years, Ohio's largest summer fair has entertained families with exotic animals, sporting competitions, fine arts shows, nationally known musical acts and more. Hours: Daily 9 a.m.-10 p.m. Location: Ohio Expo Center, 717 E. 17th Ave., Columbus. Information: 614-644-3247, 888-646-3976,



CHARLES SYKES / The Associated Press

AMERICAN IDOL RUNNER-UP Crystal Bowersox, who is from Elliston, near Toledo, performs in Central Park, on ABC's "Good Morning America" show, in New York in early July.

www.ohiostatefair.com.

seum.org.

Theater

THE CURIOUS SAVAGE

July 24

The Huron Playhouse presents a play by John Patrick following the adventures of Mrs. Ethel Savage. Tickets: \$16 for adults, \$14 for students and seniors, \$11 for children. Time: 8 p.m. Location: 325 Ohio Street, Huron. Information: 419-433-4744.

STATE FAIR

July 27-31

The Huron Playhouse presents a play by Richard Rogers, based on the screenplay by Oscar Hammerstein II. Tickets: \$16 for adults, \$14 for students and seniors, \$11 for children. Time: 8 p.m. Location: 325 Ohio Street, Huron. Information: 419-433-4744.

WICKED

July 28-Aug. 29

Long before the girl from Kansas arrives in Munchkinland, two girls meet in the land of Oz. Time: Tuesday-Friday 8 p.m., Saturday 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., Sunday 1:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Location: Ohio Theater, 39 E. State St., Columbus. Information: 800-745-3000, www.broadwayacrossamerica.com.

Exhibits

'CROQUET: A SPORT STORY'

Through Aug 1

The Hayes Presidential Center in Fremont will have the most extensive collection of printed croquet material in the nation on display examining the history of croquet during its peak in popularity in the 19th century. Admission: free. Hours: Tuesdays-Saturdays 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Location: Spiegel Grove, corner of Hayes and Buckland. Information: 419-332-2081, www.rbhayes.org.

ARTS GONE WILD

Through Aug. 15

This Toledo Museum of Art exhibit features multi-media "vignettes" representing the work of fifteen Toledo-Area art and culture organizations. Admission: free. Hours: Tuesdays-Thursdays 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Fridays 10 a.m.-10 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sundays noon-6 p.m. Location: 2445 Monroe St. Information: 419-255-8000, www.toledomuseum.org.

'OUT OF SIGHT'

Through Aug. 29

Discover the parts of objects that are not normally visible to Toledo Museum of Art visitors. Admission: free. Hours: Tuesdays-Thursdays 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Fridays 10 a.m.-10 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sundays noon-6 p.m. Location: 2445 Monroe St. Information: 419-255-8000, www.toledomu-

92ND ANNUAL TOLEDO AREA ARTISTS EXHIBITION

Through August 22

Highlights area artists with a variety of works, for viewing or purchase. Admission: free. Hours: Tuesdays-Thursdays 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Fridays 10 a.m.-10 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sundays noon-6 p.m. Location: 2445 Monroe St. Information: 419-255-8000, www.toledomuseum.org.

'THE PSYCHEDELIC 60s: POSTERS FROM THE ROCK ERA'

Through Sept. 12

The Exhibit at the Toledo Museum of Art features 150 posters on loan from the Houston Freeburg Collection, including 50 posters representing the height of black light designs, that visually define American music in the years 1966-1971. Admission: free. Hours: Tuesdays-Thursdays 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Fridays 10 a.m.-10 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sundays noon-6 p.m. Location: 2445 Monroe St. Information: 419-255-8000, www.toledomuseum.org.

MODERN MASTERS FROM THE SMITHSONIAN ART MUSEUM

Through Oct. 10

This exhibit features paintings and sculptures by celebrated modern artists who came to maturity in the 1950s. Hours: Tuesday-Wednesday, Friday-Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Thursday 10 a.m.-8 p.m., Sunday noon-4 p.m. Location: The Dayton Art Institute, 456 Belmonte Park N., Dayton. Information: 937-223-5277, www.daytonartinstitute.org.

Ticket Watch

Tickets are now on sale for the following events:

Green Day — Aug. 23, 7 p.m., DTE Energy Music Theater, Clarkston, Mich.; \$35-\$85; 248-377-0100, www.ticketmaster.com.

American Idol Live! — Aug. 29, 7:30 p.m., Huntington Center, Toledo; \$38.50-\$68.50; 248-377-0100, www.ticketmaster.com.

Aerosmith — Aug. 30, 7:30 p.m., The Palace at Auburn Hills, Auburn Hills, Mich.; \$60.15-\$209; 248-377-0100, www.ticketmaster.com.

These items are listed weekly from information provided to The Courier and Review Times. To be considered for submission, information must be received by the Monday before intended publication. For additional events, visit www.thecourier.com or www.reviewtimes.com. To include an event in this calendar, send an e-mail to getout@thecourier.com or write to P.O. Box 609, Findlay, Ohio 45839-06309.

Weekend contributors and e-mail address

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FORT FINDLAY PLAYHOUSE

Musical 'Once Upon a Mattress' opens Findlay theater season

Everyone knows the enchanting story of "The Princess and the Pea." The lovely princess, in order to be permitted to marry the charming prince, must undergo a night of sleeping on top of many mattresses stacked on top of a pea. But did you happen to know that Princess Winnifred actually traveled from the swamps of home and swam the moat to reach Prince Dauntless the Drab? Or that Lady Larkin's love for Sir Harry provided a rather compelling reason that she reach the bridal altar post haste? Or that Queen Aggravain will stop at nothing to keep her darling son from wedded bliss? This rollicking spin on the familiar classic of royal courtship and comeuppance provides the plot for the Fort Findlay Playhouse's opening production, the zany musical "Once Upon a Mattress."

Directed by Ryan Neal and produced by Marty Williams, the show will run August 5-8, 12-15, and 19-21. All shows are at 8 p.m., except for Sunday performances, which are at 5 p.m. Neal is also serving as the musical director and Tara Laciano is the choreographer.

Tickets will be available to the general public beginning Monday and can be purchased through the Arts Partnership, 618 S. Main St. in downtown Findlay, or by calling the Arts Partnership Box Office at 419-422-4624. Box Office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

With music by Mary Rodgers, lyrics by Marshall Barer, and book by Jay Thompson, Dean Fuller, and Marshall Barer, the playhouse's production features Mandy Bour as Princess Winnifred, Eric Hertenstein as Prince Dauntless, Kelly



PART OF THE CAST of Fort Findlay's production of "Once Upon a Mattress" are shown in this photo. The musical opens the season, with performances August 5-8, 12-15, and 19-21. All shows are at 8 p.m., except for Sunday performances, which are at 5 p.m. Tickets are available beginning Monday at the Arts Partnership in downtown Findlay or by calling 419-422-4624.

Fandrey as Lady Larkin, Jason Jerisha as Prince Harry and Julie Lane as Queen Aggravain. Rounding out the cast are Marty Williams as the Minstrel, Wes Taylor as the Jester, Dennis Clark as the King, Jim Yarger as the Wizard, Jean Daniel as Lady Lucille, Pat

Courtney as Lady Rowena, Cynthia Habagger as Lady Merrill, Carol Clark as the Kitchen Wench, and a chorus of knights and ladies in waiting, which includes Mandy Wolber, Linda England, Sam Henry, Lindsay Taylor, Rachel Rustemeyer, Richele Reynolds, Patrick Davis,

James Foust, Tim Cooper Andrew Varney, Pete Reynolds, and George Rustemeyer.

"Once Upon a Mattress" is produced through special arrangement with Rodgers and Hammerstein Theatre Library.

HOWARD P. MOYER / For The Courier

I Write Like erupts online; paste your writing and voila

Only 50 authors part of website

By JAKE COYLE
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

NEW YORK — For anyone who has ever thought Charles Dickens was lurking inside his or her prose, a new website claims it can find your inner author.

The recently launched I Write Like has one simple gimmick: You paste a few paragraphs that exemplify your writing, then click "analyze" and — poof! — you get a badge telling you that you write like Stephen King or Ernest Hemingway or Chuck Palahniuk.

The site's traffic has soared in recent days and its arrival has lit up the blogosphere. Gawker tried a transcript from one of the leaked Mel Gibson phone calls. The suggested author: Margaret Atwood.

The New Yorker found that an invitation to a birthday party was James Joycean. Many others were aghast to discover they wrote similarly to "The Da Vinci Code" scribe Dan Brown.

The New York Times tried putting in actual novels, such as "Moby-Dick." Herman Melville, it turns out, writes less like himself than King, according to I Write Like.

Atwood, herself, tried the site only to discover she also apparently writes like King. "Who knew?" she tweeted.

Obviously, I Write Like isn't an exact science. But simply the idea of an algorithm that can reveal traces of influence in writing has proven wildly popular.

Though the site might seem the idle dalliance of an English professor on summer break, it was created by Dmitry Chestnykh, a 27-year-old Russian software programmer currently living in Montenegro. Though he speaks English reasonably well, it's his second language.

"I wanted it to be an educational thing and also to help people write better," he said.

Chestnykh modeled the site on software for e-mail spam filters. This means that the site's text analysis is largely keyword based. Even if you write in short, declarative, Hemingwayesque sentences, its your word choice that may determine your comparison.

Most writers will tell you, though, that the most telling signs of influence come from punctuation, rhythm and structure. I Write Like does account for some elements of style by things such as number of words per sentence.

Chestnykh has uploaded works by about 50 authors — three books for each, he said. That, too, explains some of its shortcomings. Melville, for example, isn't in the system.

But Chestnykh never expected the sudden success of the site and he plans to improve its accuracy by including more books and adding a probability percentage for each result. He hopes it can eventually be profitable.

"I think that people really like to know how they write, even if it's not accurate results," Chestnykh said. "Still it's fun for them."

It's easy to find a laugh. Obama's Oval Office speech in June? David Foster Wallace. Lady Gaga's lyrics to "Alejandro"? William Shakespeare.

Whatever the deficiencies of I Write Like, it does exude a love of writing and its many techniques. The site's blog updates with inspiring quotations from writers, and Chestnykh — whose company, Coding Robots, is also working on blog editing and diary writing software — shows a love of literature. He counts Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Agatha Christie among his favorites.

"I had a typewriter when I was 6 years old," he said. "But I'm not a published writer and I don't think I write very good."

Online: <http://iwl.me/>

COMIC-CON

Storm troopers get ready to invade

501st Legion is an international costuming group

By SANDY COHEN
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

LOS ANGELES — On the outside, they all look the same: White armor, white helmets, black blaster rifles. Imperial soldiers from a galaxy far, far away, they're loyal only to the Empire and recognizable everywhere as "Star Wars" storm troopers.

Inside, though, are different stories. Those armored clones are lovingly occupied by moms, dads, doctors, cops, lawyers, exterminators, artists and other passionate "Star Wars" fans who devote thousands of dollars and countless hours to building screen-accurate costumes and wearing them all over the world to support the beloved franchise as well as dozens of children's charities.

They are the 501st Legion, an international, all-volunteer costuming group. And this week, they're coming to Comic-Con.

"It's a major event for us every year," says Christi Ladnier, 42, a mother of three who will be wearing an eight-years-in-the-making homemade Boba Fett costume. (Legion members dress as all kinds of "Star Wars" characters, with storm troopers the most popular.)

At least 200 members of the group — which boasts nearly 5,000 members in 40 countries — will be in full costume at the annual pop-culture festival, which began Thursday and runs through Sunday at the San Diego Convention Center.

Comic-Con is just one of dozens of events Legion members attend each year. A major supporter of the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Legion members also lend their Imperial glory to children's hospitals, the Ronald McDonald House, the American Cancer Society, Toys for Tots, the Boys and Girls Clubs of America and March of Dimes. They've appeared in commercials, marched alongside "Star Wars" creator George Lucas in the Tournament of Roses parade and handed out Halloween candy at the White House.

Charity is at the heart of the 501st Legion, and friendship and fandom



TWO COMIC-CON attendees dressed as "Star Wars" Storm troopers pose for a photo at the July 2009 Comic-Con in San Diego.

are its soul, but it really comes down to the costumes.

Their storm trooper outfits aren't store bought, nor are they cheap, and they must be identical to what's in the original films to be good enough. The Legion's standards division assesses the screen-accuracy of each member's attire.

Storm trooper armor is made from vacuum-formed plastic, heated in home ovens and poured over molds meticulously sculpted based on careful analysis of the characters on screen.

The artisans who make the outfits are Legion members themselves, and they sell their work for practically no profit under a unique agreement with Lucasfilm, owner of the "Star Wars" franchise.

The company allows the fan group to use its intellectual property without fee or fine so long as the costumes, T-shirts and collectible coins that result are strictly for Legion members.

"It's an extended family," says Steve Sansweet, Lucasfilm's director of content management, describing

copyright concerns as "a non-issue" with the 501st Legion.

Marcelo Gallo, 43, of Riverside, Calif., discovered hidden artistic talents when he decided to make his own storm trooper helmet. A married father of five and owner of a pest-control business, he spent his free time researching how to make molds and vacuum form plastic. Now he's built hundreds of helmets for fellow members and charity auctions.

"Sometimes I wish I could do this every day, but I can't make it a top priority in my life because it's not a source of income," he says, adding that any money he makes goes back into the club and his costume.

Mike Ozeroglu, 36, of Glendale, Calif., a radiation therapy physicist with the U.S. Navy, ended up doing all the leatherwork on his Jango Fett costume.

"It's not something that you can just buy. You pretty much have to make it yourself," says, adding that refining the costume is a continuous process. "I've been working on that Jengo Fett literally since I first

started in 2004."

While he loves to "geek out on 'Star Wars' fandom," he says the real reward is bringing joy to sick kids.

"The most fun is where we go off to the hospitals," he says. "The kids really think you're the character most of the time. It's fun to go in there and cheer them up a little bit. The following Monday I'm there as a staff officer and nobody knows I was there over the weekend."

Though the helmets can get hot, they also help hide emotions and keep these costumed fans firmly in character, says Ladnier, who lives in Highland, Calif. "Sometimes you're glad you have a bucket on your head because you just start weeping up."

The costume itself also can be uncomfortable. Beneath the armor, which breaks down into some 60 pieces, members wear long-sleeved shirts and leggings, plus a swath of fabric around their necks. It takes around 20 minutes to get in costume. Wearers can be a bit clumsy, too, since the helmets obscure peripheral vision.

But owning and wearing the storm trooper suit is the ultimate fan experience, says Los Angeles attorney Lawrence Green, who says he's "over 30."

"Some people collect action figures," he says. "We get to BE action figures."

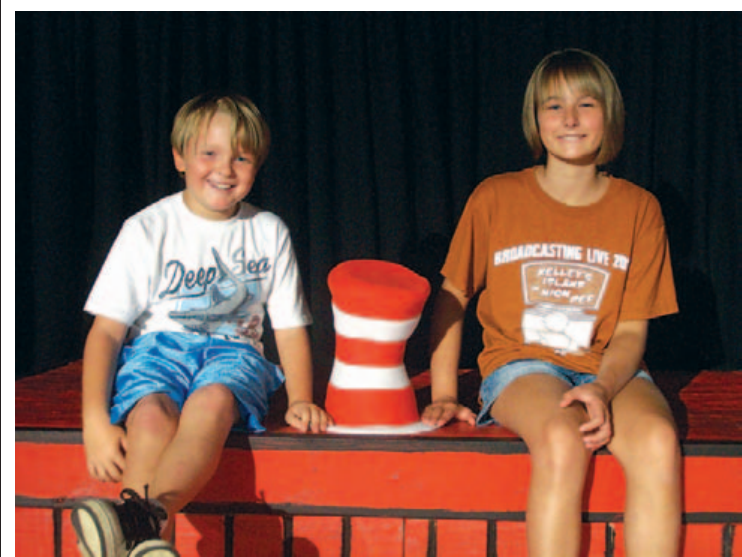
Doing charity work began as an afterthought, says Legion founder Albin Johnson, but is now at the core of the group's activities.

"We had to find things for people to do in armor," says the 41-year-old from Columbia, S.C. "And charity would validate us in a way that says, 'Hey, world, you can make fun of us as kind of goofy but we're justifying what we're doing by charity alone.'"

A decade later, the Legion's charitable outreach extends both inside and outside the group.

Members have donated kidneys to each other — twice. When Johnson's daughter was diagnosed with a brain tumor, Legion members cooked dinners for the family, cleaned their house and mowed their lawn.

"These guys are literally giving parts of themselves to keep other 'Star Wars' fans alive and well," Sansweet says. "They're giving back to all fans by doing what they do and providing this sense of wonder and excitement."



Provided to The Courier

'Seussical'

The Star Players in Upper Sandusky will present "Seussical" at 7:30 p.m. today, July 30 and 31, and at 2:30 p.m. Sunday and August 1 at the Star Theatre, 121 W. Wyandot Ave., Upper Sandusky. Jonah Donnell, left, and Curran McKain, right, both play the part of Jojo, a little boy with a big imagination. For ticket information, call the Star Theatre box office at 419-294-1411. Tickets are \$8 for members and \$10 for non-members.

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100 percent of Chicago school's first class is college-bound

Just 4% of Class of 2010 read at or above grade level when entering Urban Prep

By SHARON COHEN
AP NATIONAL WRITER

CHICAGO — For each boy, the new school offered an escape and a chance at a life that seemed beyond reach.

Krishnaun Branch was getting D's, smoking reefer a lot, skipping school twice a week. His mother was too busy working to know what he was doing. He liked to hang out in the streets; having relatives in gangs was his armor.

When a young man came to tell his eighth-grade class about a new high school on Chicago's South Side, Krishnaun wanted no part of it — until he heard students would have laptops. Suddenly, he was on board.

Marlon Marshall was nonchalant about everything, school included. His mother pressed him to go to college, but it seemed like a pipe dream. Sometimes she'd yell at him and his brothers for his bad grades. Once she just cried when she picked up their report cards.

Marlon had heard, too, about the new school. Students would be accepted by lottery so his mediocre grades wouldn't disqualify him. He thought it was worth a shot.

Marcus Bass figured there just had to be something better for him. Barely a teen, he'd been shot at, robbed a couple of times and had seen terrible things in his housing project. His parents argued constantly; life was chaotic.

He was sold by the recruiter's description of a "different" high school.

Urban Prep would be a charter high school. It would bring together some 150 boys from some of the poorest, gang-ravaged neighborhoods and try to set them on a new track. They'd have strict rules: A longer school day — by two hours. Two classes of English daily. A uniform with jackets and ties.

And Urban Prep had a goal — one that seemed audacious, given that just 4 percent of the Class of 2010 was reading at or above grade level when they arrived at the school in 2006.

In four years, they were told, they'd be heading to college.

From the very start, Tim King had a grand plan.

"I wanted to create a school that was going to put black boys in a different place," says the founder of Urban Prep, "and in my mind, that different place needed to be college."

It had taken four years for King to win permission to open the Urban Prep Charter Academy for Young Men, which receives about 75 percent of its funding from the Chicago public schools; the rest is private.

King's plan was both idealistic and grounded in the harsh realities of inner-city life: He'd take boys from tough situations, many way behind in school, and if they followed his road map, they'd get into college.

If the premise seemed simple, implementing it was anything but.

About 85 percent of the Class of 2010 came from low-income families, the overwhelming majority single mother households. The students would face problems far beyond poor academics.

Safety, for example. Some kids had to alter their bus routes so they wouldn't face gangs who might see their blazers and ties as inviting targets.

The uniforms are part of a philosophy that blends discipline with an oath that is the school's guiding principle. Every morning, students repeat the creed:

"We believe... We are college bound. ..."

"We are exceptional — not because we say it, but because we work hard at it ..."

"We believe in ourselves. ... We believe."

Krishnaun didn't believe. When he discovered what he'd signed up for, he wanted out immediately.

No girls? School until 4:30 p.m.? A jacket and tie? You've got to be kidding. But his mother urged him to hang in. So did an aunt who threatened to stop buying him clothes and giving him spending money.

So he stayed, and raised hell.

He fought, he cursed the teachers, he got suspended. He wanted to get kicked out.

"I went to the principal and said, 'I don't want to be here. Just send me home,'" he recalls. "I didn't like the discipline. I didn't like the surroundings. I didn't like the uniform. I didn't like anything."

Krishnaun started sophomore year on probation. He was failing some classes and straddling two worlds: A student at Urban Prep. And a kid clinging to street life who'd tuck a white T-shirt into his bag — part of the uniform of the gangbangers — so he could hang out with them.

After fighting with another student sophomore year, Krishnaun transferred to a Chicago public school. But he couldn't stop his downhill slide, earning lots of F's and D's.

Then came a brutal wake-up call. A close friend was beaten to death.

Krishnaun started seeing Urban Prep in a new light. He pleaded to return.

"I knew I was going down the wrong path," he says. "I had to graduate or my life was going to be nothing. ... I'd seen the streets were not going to get me anywhere."

He lobbied Evan Lewis, the recruiter who'd visited his elementary school and had become a mentor.

"He didn't take no or maybe for an answer," Lewis says.

Krishnaun was readmitted. He buckled down, and during his junior year was honored five times with a "student of the week" designation.

"My personality changed," Krishnaun says. "My posture changed. My speech



Photos by CHARLES REX ARBOGAST / The Associated Press

URBAN PREP HIGH School graduating senior Marcus Bass, above, celebrates with classmate Cameron Barnes after receiving his diploma June 12 in Chicago. It has been a rocky four years for Marcus, with struggles in biology and an attitude adjustment. Below, senior Marlon Marshall talks to underclassmen about his last four years and his future in a class where he has helped as a student teacher in Chicago. Before Urban Prep, Marshall was nonchalant about everything, school included. He did just enough to get by. His mother pushed him to go to college. Sometimes she'd yell at him and his brothers for their bad grades.



changed. A lot about me has changed."

At Urban Prep, every student has at least one mentor — maybe a coach or a teacher. About 60 percent of teachers at the Englewood campus (Urban Prep has another school and plans to open a third this fall) are black men. They serve as confidantes and role models to students, many of whom have no fathers in their lives.

All staff members have school-assigned cell phones so students (and parents) can phone day or night. And they do.

Just ask Corey Stewart, a 24-year-old history teacher.

Students will call and say, "I'm stranded and I don't have a way from downtown to get home," Stewart says. "Can you come pick me up?" Absolutely, I'm on my way. Or "Mr. Stewart, I'm afraid that I might get jumped on after school today. Is it possible you can take me

home?" Of course."

Stewart says he doesn't worry about becoming too friendly with his students and won't hesitate to fail someone who's not measuring up.

Stewart leads a "pride" (more lion imagery) — another name for home room that meets three times a day.

It's one of the unorthodox steps taken for a student population that requires extra attention. That's the reason for longer school hours, the double dose of English and mandatory 20 minutes of reading daily, the assessments every six weeks, Saturday classes and summer school for those who need it.

Of the 150 teens who started in 2006, 95 lasted four years. (Another dozen were transfers.) They've become a tight-knit group.

So when Cameron Barnes' mother died last year, he returned to school the next day. "It was like being with family," he says.

And when it came time for his mother's funeral, the members of his "pride" stood with him.

Marlon Marshall was in a bind.

His mother announced she was moving to Michigan. She was tired of the violence engulfing her neighborhood; her brother was shot on their front porch.

Marlon wanted to attend Urban Prep his senior year. But he had no home.

Urban Prep staff huddled, and with his mother's permission, he was taken in by assistant principal Richard Glass, a Don Cheadle lookalike with an unflappable manner and a buttery voice made for radio.

After nine months under the same roof, Marlon calls Glass "godfather" or "Pops."

Glass calls Marlon "a great young man" who falls in love easily — a declaration that prompts the 18-year-old to rub his hand over his face in embarrassment.

Marlon had moved around a lot, frequently living in neighborhoods so dangerous his mother kept him indoors.

"Living here has given me so much freedom just to be a kid," he says, sitting in Glass' spotless kitchen. "I really haven't had a childhood. I couldn't go outside."

Just having a curfew (11 p.m.) was thrilling. "I can't even explain the feeling I had when we were going over the rules," Marlon says. "I need structure. I sometimes get sidetracked or a little bit lazy."

And when Marlon's grades began slipping, Glass pushed him to turn things around — and he earned a 3.0 average his senior year, his best ever.

The acceptance letters began arriving this spring.

Trinity College. The University of Illinois. Howard University. The University of Virginia. Morehouse College. Indiana State University. Tuskegee University. And on and on.

When all 107 seniors had received letters, there was a celebration.

Marcus Bass wanted to cry — but he refrained. It had been a rocky four years, riddled with doubts, struggles in biology and an attitude adjustment.

"At first, I thought everybody was out to get me," Marcus says in a barely audible voice. "I wasn't used to taking orders from anyone. I was used to just doing my own thing."

There were warnings, he says, from teachers and administrators. There were outside pressures, too.

Guys he grew up with, would say "You ain't even with us no more ...," Marcus says. "I try to tell them there's something better than that. They just ... blow me off."

He's convinced Urban Prep has kept him out of trouble. "It's hard to say how they've saved my life," he says, "but they have."

But the Urban Prep graduation is an unfolding story and King knows it.

"It's just a milestone," he says. "It's not an endgame. This is not the fulfillment of our mission. (That) comes when

we are able to see our students succeed in college and that may not be apparent for four or five years."

On a muggy June night, the graduates are gathered in cap and gown, reflecting on their journey.

Krishnaun Branch, the kid who stopped himself from going over the edge, is heading to Fisk University in Tennessee.

He rattles of his emotions: "Happiness. Sadness. Proud. Proud of myself. Thankful. Successful."

Marcus Bass, the kid who wondered if he'd make it, grins with relief as he ponders a future at Jackson State University in Mississippi.

"It feels like I don't have anything to prove to anyone but now I have to prove something to myself — and that's making it through college," he says.

And Marlon Marshall, the kid who found a new anchor in life, will attend Earlham College in Indiana. "Everybody said we wasn't going to make it," he says, "but we're here and about to do bigger and better things."

Marlon's father — he left the family when his son was 3 months old — is in from Mississippi, his mother from Michigan.

Marlon doesn't remember when he last saw his dad, but on this night, they share a tearful embrace. "You're a much better man than I ever was," Marlon Sr. says, burrowing his face in his son's chest.

"Don't blame yourself 'cause I never stopped loving you ...," his teary-eyed son consoles him. "I never gave up on you, man. I always knew that you was trying."

There would be another embrace before graduation night was over when Marlon Sr. thanked Richard Glass — the man who guided his son to the finish line.

Tim King asks the graduates to take the stage and recite their creed one final time.

They repeat the lines, rapidly and forcefully. The last words are joyous, and emphatic.

"WE BELIEVE."

A few raise their arms in triumph.

Then they toss their mortarboards in the air, red-and-gold tassels flying as the crowd cheers.

Living alone teaches confidence, but visitors still appreciated

I had visitors this weekend to my little apartment in Washington, D.C., the first since I moved here for the summer back in mid-June.

My internship has been going extremely well and my living situation is great, but I won't pretend I wasn't ecstatic to have some company.

It's a good thing I don't mind doing things alone, because until this weekend that's been my only option. Outside of maybe three people from my school and a tiny handful of distant relatives and friends-of-friends, I don't have any



LAURA REINEKE

kind of support system here — or, at least, no one I would feel comfortable calling up for a midnight showing of "Inception." That's definitely a change from the experience of living with seven other women in college housing, who always remained entertaining.

I'm a relatively independent person, and I didn't mind the solitary lifestyle initially. That is until I re-watched an episode of NBC's "30 Rock" in which Alec Baldwin's character notes, "I would think that the single woman's biggest worry would be choking to death in her apartment." Later in the episode, Tina Fey's character does, indeed, choke on a microwave dinner in her apartment, which leads to all sorts of hilarious shenanigans.

But as I glanced back and forth from my TV screen to my plate of reheated spaghetti I grew terrified, not amused. I was suddenly over-

come with panic. What if I choked on a noodle?

I write a lot in this column about the milestones between high school and post-college-land, and I think this is another one. Coming to grips with the fact that sometimes I'm going to be totally alone is, frankly, terrifying, but every day I feel a little bit more capable of handling it.

It took a few days for me to calm down after that, but calm down I did. I am, after all, an optimist.

My increasing familiarity with my surroundings has certainly

helped me to adjust. On the weekends I've been trying to better take advantage of the cultural opportunities offered by such a diverse (and easily navigable) metropolitan area, hopping from museums to monuments to boutiques to restaurants based totally on my own personal whims and desires.

The pros: I've found it hard to work myself into a bad mood about the humidity when there's no one to whom I can complain, and I get to indulge my artsy interests without worrying about entertaining others. The cons: I look silly trying to take pictures of myself in front of

national landmarks.

But I'll keep trying to find a good angle at which to hold the camera, because I'm living in this lovely city for only a few more weeks. I feel confident in my ability to pull a Mary Tyler Moore on the District of Columbia, hat in the air and all.

Rest assured, though: If you're interested in visiting, I won't turn you away.

Reineke is a senior at Ohio University and a 2007 graduate of St. Wendelin High School in Fostoria.

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4-H Camp makes lasting impressions

What is it about a 4-H Camp experience that left most campers and counselors in tears the last of five nights because they were not ready to return home?

Upon arrival, all cell phones are tucked away in plastic bags and taken away. There are no video games or Facebook. No practices for sporting events. There are no televisions. Camp is in the rolling hills of Licking County where you feel every muscle in your legs as you walk.

With all the "stuff" campers do not have, why wouldn't they be ready to go home?

The simple answer is that when it comes right down to it, these kids were ready for a break and some fun.

What are some favorite camp experiences?

Friendships made will last a lifetime. At camp, it doesn't matter which school you attended. It doesn't really matter whose school was more competitive in a sporting event. Individuals are what really matters.

Opportunities to try new things. Campers are able to experience scuba diving, the high-ropes course, team challenge course, mountain biking, the climbing wall and pioneer studies. Some opt to just have fun at sessions like crafts, indoor games, duct tape, bottle rockets, dance, wet fun or water games.

Evening programs. About 160 campers participate in large group activities for two hours. This included making a dragon from plastic, decorating it and racing it through an obstacle course.

It may include a scavenger hunt where one person stands in the center and calls out items that the runner from each group takes to the middle. It may be the dance on the last night of camp.

Campfire programs. This includes singing, challenges, skits and storytelling with lots of laughter and smiles.

Morning activities. Campers actually rise at 7 a.m. to go swimming, dancing or jogging to earn points for their group. That's a half-hour before required, and no one complains.

Flags programs. Each year,



SUSAN RUSSELL
AROUND YOUR HOME

the group anxiously waits to see when and how the giant American flag will appear. Campers learn to respect the flag and honor those in the military. This year we were able to experience a retiring of the flag ceremony.

Signatures each night provide an opportunity to reflect over the day and look at new challenges to accept for the next day.

Those are all great experiences, but are they enough to make kids want to stay for longer?

The talking and laughter that takes place during each activity is priceless. It's great to see that young people are still able to communicate without texting. Camp gives them the freedom to give up the cell phone. There is no peer pressure to have a phone.

Instead of video games, campers play games with each other. There is always a game of pingpong, ladder golf or even tag taking place. It's great to see boys hurrying to the ball closet to grab a basketball just to shoot hoops for fun.

Lots of walking is done as we travel from one side of the creek to the other several times during the day. There is no flat land, so everyone gets plenty of exercise.

The answer must be people. Maybe kids want camp to last because they just have time to hang out with friends and be kids while they are there.

There's no special formula. Maybe, it's time to simplify. Maybe, the things that we experience at camp could be things we experience while at home.

Campers and counselors have returned home. I'm sure schedules are as busy as ever. I know, though, these kids will be ready to go again come next June.

Russell is extension educator, 4-H Youth Development, for Ohio State University, Hancock County. She can be reached at 419-422-3851, via e-mail at russell.388@osu.edu or online at <http://hancock.osu.edu>.

What's the big deal, Mom? It's just pierced ears and a tattoo

Some states don't allow minors to be tattooed at all

By BETH J. HARPAZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

NEW YORK — One day your kid wants a new bike. The next day, a new cell phone. Before you know it, your little darling is as tall as you are, demanding pierced ears or even a tattoo.

Pierced ears, you say, what's the big deal? In some cultures, girls get earrings as infants! But how do you feel about pierced ears for a boy? Or five holes in one ear for a girl?

As for tattoos, these statistics might surprise you: 22 percent of women and 26 percent of men said they had tattoos in a 2004 survey published in the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology. The numbers are higher among young adults: Tattoos were reported by 36 percent of 18- to 25-year-olds and 40 percent of 26- to 40-year-olds in a Pew Research Center survey from 2006.

But among 41- to 65-year-olds — the demographic most likely to have teenage children — only 10 percent reported having tattoos.

So how do parents of teens, most of whom probably don't have body art or untraditional piercings themselves, cope with kids who want nothing more than to look like LeBron James? Tattoos and earrings didn't hurt his job prospects, so can you really argue that nobody will hire your child

because of a flower on the shoulder or a stud in one ear?

Shelley Davis Mielock, who works with colleges and corporations on dress codes as part of her image-consulting business in Lansing, Mich., says parents should point out that tattoos and unusual piercings are still frowned upon in some industries and segments of corporate America. Disney employees, for example, are not permitted to have visible tattoos.

"At 17, 19 or 20, you don't know what your future holds," said Mielock. "I am not against tattoos or self-expression, but other people are going to form perceptions of you based on these things. I recommend if you're going to get a tattoo, get it where you can cover it up."

Mielock has two tattoos, but has not allowed her 17-year-old son to get one. "He argues that I am being a hypocrite, but this is a decision I made as an adult and I made it knowing the perception other people could have," she said.

Parents should also research state laws. Some states prohibit minors from being tattooed altogether; others permit minors to get tattoos only if they have parental permission or if a parent is present.

You might also point out that tattoos are not as easily discarded as video games or out-of-style shoes. J. Kim Wright told her daughter, then 15 and living in Chapel Hill, N.C., that she could get a tattoo as soon as she wanted the same design for a whole year. "She wanted Betty Boop for a

few months. Then Tweety. She is now 26 and has no tattoos," said Wright.

Kathy Sussell, like many parents, made the argument that as long as her teenagers were dependent on her financially, they had to live by her rules. "It's my house," said Sussell, of Brooklyn, N.Y. "If they needed to get pierced or tattooed, they could find another place to live." Her kids are now 20 and 23, "and I think they are happy today not to have tattoos."

But aside from rational reasons — legalities, health, future careers — experts say it's also OK for parents to simply set limits based on what matters to them.

"I am not a believer in giving in to all kids' demands," said Dr. Fran Walfish, a family psychotherapist in Beverly Hills, Calif. "You say that the rules and practices are different in every family, and until you're 18 years old, it's a bummer, but this is what our family believes."

She added that "nobody likes to be told what to do, or forced or over-controlled, so you need to say it clearly, but with empathy for how hard it is to be told what to do."

Maggie Macaulay, a parent educator and parent coach who leads an organization called Redirecting Children's Behavior in South Florida, also recommends setting reasonable limits while "side-stepping the power struggles when it comes to issues like this with teenagers. Make it a discussion so it isn't laying down the law."

You might ask your child why he or she is so interested in ear-

rings or a tattoo. If you think you might agree to, say, pierced ears when the child is older, Macaulay recommends saying, "I am not ready for you to do that now," while promising to reconsider in six months or a year.

Some parents have a more relaxed view. Dianne Sikel of Phoenix, Ariz., allowed her 7-year-old son to get his ear pierced. "He's now 10 and rarely wears (an earring) but I don't think it was a big deal," she said. "It's a tiny little hole."

She feels a little differently about tattoos. She got one when she was 18, and now, at age 41, is considering getting it removed. "I don't think tattoos are that big of a deal, but I am happy that he doesn't have a permanent tattoo at 10," she said. "Instead, we stock up on temporary tattoos like crazy."

Susan Tordella of Ayer, Mass., doesn't approve of tattoos, but three of her four children — now all young adults — have them. "If they want a tattoo or piercing, they're going to find a way to do it eventually," said Tordella, who writes a blog about parenting at RaisingAble.com.

She still thinks parents who are opposed to tattoos should let their kids know how they feel; withhold permission if they're underage and hope that if they do get one, it's "in an obscure place." But she added: "There are many worse things they can do to themselves besides piercings and tattoos — which are not fatal, self-destructive or addictive," she said. "Don't make it a big deal or power struggle. That will only make it more attractive."

Getting older does not mean time in the garden must stop

Reject perfection, thin perennials are two ways for continued success

By DEAN FOSDICK
FOR THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sydney Eddison believes you can weed out loads of demanding yard work as you age without reducing the enjoyment of gardening. The 78-year-old author says it's simply a matter of gardening more wisely.

"I knew so many friends older than myself who drove themselves away from the land they loved and then promptly died," said Eddison, who opted to remain alone on her secluded but celebrated four-acre-plus in Connecticut after her husband's death, rather than move to smaller surroundings.

She has shaped the wooded property, with house and barn, into a country showcase over the last half-century, giving tours and writing a half-dozen books about her experiences. Yet something had to give, and that something was painstaking garden maintenance.

"I threw my body at the garden over the years and got away with it, but I have to watch it now," Eddison said.

First, she had to have a hip replaced, and then she developed a cyst on her back, leaving her bedridden for a time. "I had a horrendous winter, but it made me realize there's nowhere I'd rather be but here," she said. "I couldn't do anything last year, but now I can at least stake tall plants and weed."

She gets the job done with some help from friends, and by applying many of the shortcuts described in her most recent book, "Gardening for a Lifetime: How to Garden Wiser as You Grow Older" (Timber Press, 2010).

A few of her "gleanings":
• Reject perfection. "Nature does not clean up every dead leaf



KIMBERLY DAY PROCTOR / The Associated Press

THIS UNDATED PHOTO provided by Kimberly Day Proctor shows Sydney Eddison's garden at her home near Newtown, Conn. Eddison believes you can weed out loads of demanding yard work as you age without reducing the enjoyment of gardening. The 78-year-old author says it's simply a matter of gardening more wisely.

in the fall and gardeners don't have to either. Dead leaves left under shrubs serve as a mulch, which eventually breaks down and contributes nutrients to the soil.

• Thin the perennials. "In my garden, the square footage devoted to flowering perennials demands more time and energy than the rest of the acre and a half under cultivation. The greater the variety of perennials you grow, the more work your border will entail."

• Switch to shrubs. "Shrubs afford more value for less work. Some rarely need pruning."

• Shade gardens are good. "Shade-tolerant plants are easier to maintain than sun lovers. One of the reasons is that weeds are also sun lovers. In the shade, they become feeble and can be controlled by a layer of mulch."

• Incorporate your surroundings. "If you own even a scrap of woodland, you can make it an extension of your garden by edging it with a few berried and flowering shrubs. Naturalize daffodils on the forest floor."

• Miniaturize. "There is nothing fake about a container garden. It is the real thing. And for anyone who can't do the heavy labor of in-the-ground gardening, gardening in containers can provide much of

the same pleasure."

Gardening can be physically and emotionally rewarding as you grow older, and there are many ways to overcome the challenges of a deteriorating body.

"If your vision is failing, choose tools with bright handles," said Rebecca Haller, director of the Horticultural Therapy Institute in Denver. "Be more careful with trip hazards — uneven paving stones or hoses lying across a path. Grow vertical so you don't have to stoop. Put things on wheels rather than pushing or pulling. Garden closer to the house so you don't tire so much coming and going. Have a spot where you can rest. Pace yourself."

Making the most of the time you have left is one of the older gardener's primary tasks, Eddison said.

"How beautiful can you make your garden with the resources you still have at your command?" she said. "This is the question I keep asking myself. I don't have the answer, but I'm working on it."

Online: See this Ohio State University Extension fact sheet about gardening for the elderly: <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/1000/1642.html>.

Swipe, smile, blow: Pa. has wine vending machines

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — Swipe your driver's license, look into the camera, blow into the breath sensor and — voila! — you have permission to buy a bottle of wine from a vending machine.

Pennsylvania, which has some of the most Byzantine liquor laws in the nation, recently introduced the country's first wine "kiosks." If the machines are successful in their test run inside two grocery stores, the state Liquor Control Board could place the high-tech alcohol automats in about 100 others.

But does anyone want to buy wine this way?

It seems the answer is yes. Customers using the machine at a Giant supermarket outside Harrisburg were thrilled that it could be a permanent fixture.

"This is just convenient one-stop shopping," said Darby Golec, 28, of Enola. "It'll be nice to have it all in one area."

The vending machines are a testament to both the wonder of technology and the obscurity of Pennsylvania's complicated liquor laws.

Individuals can buy wine and liquor for home consumption only in state-owned stores staffed by public employees. Private beer distributors sell cases and kegs only. Licensed corner stores, delis, bars and restaurants can sell beer to go, but only up to two six-packs per customer.

Numerous attempts at reform have been turned back by special interests intent on keeping their slice of the pie.

So simply stocking Chianti and cabernet on supermarket shelves is not an option under the state's post-Prohibition liquor laws.

The liquor board has tried to be more consumer-friendly in recent years, including opening 19 full-service state stores in supermarkets.

The board touts the kiosks as another step toward modernization — "an added level of convenience in today's busy society," liquor board Chairman Patrick Stapleton said in a statement.

Shari makes tasty chicken salad with pecans, red grapes

(Shari) seem to be surrounded by girlfriends who really know how to cook.

This chicken salad is from my friend Suzanne. One afternoon, she had a bunch of us gals over for a luncheon and we all fell in love with her chicken salad.

I often say that food tastes better when someone else makes it and that might be part of the case here, but you'll see from the ingredients, this is going to be tasty!

Something you'll notice is that the amounts of some of the ingredients aren't exact. Why do good cooks use "abouts" and "pinches" and "somes"? I think they don't want us to ever get the recipe as good as they make it.

However, I've been able to replicate it, so I know you can, too.

Ingredients List:

- A rotisserie chicken or any cooked chicken
- 1½ stalks celery
- 2+ green onions
- 1 cup pecans, (more if you like them!)
- ⅓+ cup fresh Italian parsley, chopped
- ⅓+ cup fresh dill
- ¾ cup real mayonnaise (more if chicken is dry)
- ½ cup sour cream
- ¼-½ cup ranch salad dressing
- 1-1½ cup red seedless grapes
- Sea salt and pepper to taste



MATT and SHARI

• 6 large croissants
Instructions:

1. Pick the meat off the chicken and cut into bite sized pieces and put into a bowl.

2. Add to the chicken the chopped celery, chopped green onions, halved pecans, chopped fresh Italian parsley, fresh dill, mayonnaise, sour cream, ranch salad dressing, salt and pepper, and mix together well.

3. Toss red seedless grapes in last and gently stir them in.

At our afternoon luncheon, we cut the large croissants in half, so six would theoretically feed 12 people.

We then sliced them to add the chicken salad to the inside. I will admit that I was a pig and had two halves so, therefore, a whole chicken salad croissant.

Most of the other ladies were daintier than I was, but I gave the cook the biggest compliment by gorging myself.

Enjoy these croissants with a nice green salad, soup or fruit salad.

Matt Fox, formerly of Findlay, and Shari Hiller, formerly of Avon Lake, hosted HGTV's "Room by Room" decorating show. This is from their Web site, www.mattandshari.com.

TV Sports Watch

Saturday's Schedule

AUTO RACING

8 a.m.
SPEED — Formula One, qualifying for Grand Prix of Germany, at Hockenheim, Germany

10 a.m.
ESPN2 — NASCAR, Sprint Cup, pole qualifying for Brickyard 400, at Indianapolis

12:30 p.m.
ESPN2 — NASCAR, Nationwide Series, final practice for Kroger 200, at Indianapolis

2 p.m.
SPEED — American Le Mans Series, Northeast Grand Prix, at Lakeville, Conn.

3:30 p.m.
ESPN2 — NASCAR, Sprint Cup, "Happy Hour Series," final practice for Brickyard 400, at Indianapolis

5 p.m.
ESPN2 — NASCAR, Nationwide Series, pole qualifying for Kroger 200, at Indianapolis

6 p.m.
VERSUS — IRL, pole qualifying for Honda IndyEdmonton, at Edmonton, Alberta

6:30 p.m.
ESPN2 — NHRA, qualifying for Mile-High Nationals, at Morrison, Colo. (same-day tape)

8 p.m.
ESPN — NASCAR, Nationwide Series, Kroger 200, at Indianapolis

BASKETBALL

10 p.m.
ESPN2 — U.S. men's national team, exhibition, intrasquad, Blue vs. White, at Las Vegas

CYCLING

8:30 a.m.
VERSUS — Tour de France, stage 19, Bordeaux to Pauillac, France

EXTREME SPORTS

4 p.m.
NBC — Dew Tour, BMX Open, at Chicago

GOLF

7:30 a.m.
TGC — European PGA Tour, Scandinavian Masters, third round, at Stockholm, Sweden

Noon
ESPN — Senior British Open Championship, third round, at Carnoustie, Scotland

1 p.m.
TGC — LPGA, Evian Masters, third round, at Evian-les-Bains, France (same-day tape)

3 p.m.
CBS — PGA Tour, Canadian Open, third round, at Etobicoke, Ontario

4 p.m.
TGC — USGA, U.S. Girls' Junior Championship, championship match, at Pinehurst, N.C. (same-day tape)

6:30 p.m.
TGC — Nationwide Tour, Children's Hospital Invitational, third round, at Columbus, Ohio (same-day tape)

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

4 p.m.
FOX — Regional coverage, N.Y. Mets at L.A. Dodgers, Colorado at Philadelphia, or Chicago White Sox at Oakland

MOTORSPORTS

7 p.m.
SPEED — AMA Pro Moto-cross 450, at Washougal, Wash.

8 p.m.
SPEED — AMA Pro Moto-cross 250, at Washougal, Wash. (same-day tape)

9 p.m.
SPEED — MotoGP World Championship, qualifying for U.S. Grand Prix, at Salinas, Calif. (same-day tape)

SOFTBALL

2 p.m.
ESPN — World Cup, women's, exhibition, U.S. Futures vs. U.S., at Oklahoma City (same-day tape)

4 p.m.
ESPN — Border Battle, men's slow pitch, Canada vs. U.S., at Oklahoma City

8 p.m.
ESPN2 — World Cup, women's, round robin, Japan vs. U.S., at Oklahoma City

TENNIS

1:30 p.m.
ESPN2 — ATP, Atlanta Championships, semifinals, at Johns Creek, Ga.

Sunday's Schedule

AUTO RACING

Noon
FOX — Formula One, Grand Prix of Germany, at Hockenheim, Germany (same-day tape)

1 p.m.
ESPN — NASCAR, Sprint Cup, Brickyard 400, at Indianapolis

5 p.m.
VERSUS — IRL, Honda IndyEdmonton, at Edmonton, Alberta

7 p.m.
ESPN2 — NHRA, Mile-High Nationals, final eliminations, at Morrison, Colo. (same-day tape)

AVP VOLLEYBALL

4 p.m.
ABC — Long Beach Open, men's championship match, at Long Beach, Calif.

11 p.m.
ESPN2 — Long Beach Open, women's championship match, at Long Beach, Calif. (same-day tape)

CYCLING

7:30 a.m.
VERSUS — Tour de France, final stage, Longjumeau, France to Paris

1 p.m.
CBS — Tour de France, final stage, at Paris (same-day tape)

GOLF

7:30 a.m.
TGC — European PGA Tour, Scandinavian Masters, final round, at Stockholm, Sweden

Noon
TGC — European PGA Tour, Scandinavian Masters, final round, at Stockholm, Sweden

Noon
ESPN2 — Senior British Open Championship, final round, at Carnoustie, Scotland

1 p.m.
TGC — LPGA, Evian Masters, final round, at Evian-les-Bains, France (same-day tape)

3 p.m.
CBS — PGA Tour, Canadian Open, final round, at Etobicoke, Ontario

7 p.m.
TGC — Nationwide Tour, Children's Hospital Invitational, final round, at Columbus, Ohio (same-day tape)

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

1:30 p.m.
TBS — Colorado at Philadelphia

8 p.m.
ESPN — St. Louis at Chicago Cubs

MOTORSPORTS

5 p.m.
SPEED — MotoGP World Championship, U.S. Grand Prix, at Salinas, Calif.

SOFTBALL

5 p.m.
ESPN2 — World Cup, women's, round robin, Canada vs. U.S.

NASCAR

A tough transition

A tough start to for Patrick's NASCAR career

By CHRIS JENKINS
AP SPORTS WRITER

JOLIET, Ill. — Those who know Danica Patrick mainly for racy photo shoots and commercials are seeing something decidedly different in her public persona these days: humility.

For a high-profile driver trying to make the transition from IndyCar to NASCAR, responding to high expectations by running outside the top 20 is a formula for modesty.

"I just have a lot to learn," Patrick said. "I don't want to make excuses. It's hard. So I think it's been OK. I don't know what else to say. I'm learning. I'm learning what I'm supposed to be doing, I'm learning with people watching — which is hard. But it's just the way it is and I'm lucky that people are watching."

Patrick finished 24th in the Nationwide series race at Chicagoland Speedway, her best finish in five starts in NASCAR's second-tier series this season. Despite her tough transition, Patrick remains upbeat that she'll eventually have success.

Even if it's going to take more time than she might have thought going into the season.

"I'm starting to realize this is really challenging, it's really hard," Patrick said. "And I need to not be so hard on myself and I need to just stay upbeat and take every lap as an improvement from the one before and just keep marching forward. I feel kind of bad that it's not more amazing out there, and I'm not higher up and it's more entertaining for fans and it's a better story. But it's just very hard, and I think it speaks volumes about how good these drivers are in stock cars, and how challenging it is."

In a sport where a driver and crew chief need precise, clear communication to make a car handle properly, Patrick doesn't even really speak the language yet. Making suspension adjustments on an Indy car has little or nothing to do with making suspension adjustments on a stock car, so Patrick can't do much to help crew chief Tony Eury Jr. find the right setup at this point.

"Is it a spring, is it the camber, is it the bar, is it geometry? I don't have any idea," Patrick said. "No idea. So I'm not very good at helping Tony Jr. go in a certain direction. All I can say is what the car is doing. I wish I could help out more with that, but that's just going to come with time."

Although some established NASCAR drivers expressed annoyance about the amount of attention Patrick received at the beginning of the season, nobody's really knocking her for not running up front in stock cars right away.

But some wonder if she'll have to commit full time to NASCAR — and give up on IndyCar — to make the most of her talents.

"Right now, she's very limited because she's still committed to the IRL schedule," Kurt Busch said. "This is just a work in progress. We'll have to wait and see the final product when she decides what road she's going to go down."

Busch expects Patrick to eventually make a full-time move to NASCAR — "She'll probably have a one-hour ESPN prime-time special when she wants to announce it," he joked — and expects her to perform better once she does.

"I think once she commits full-time to NASCAR, she'll have a better understanding of the flow and the feel, not just with the schedule, not just of the race car, but everything that has to happen," Busch said. "It's just not jumping in the car and wheeling it. You have to handle all the different areas of sponsor appearances, media requests and time with the team."

Adding to that argument is the sense that she has taken a step backward in IndyCar this season. Patrick insists that her part-time NASCAR schedule isn't hurting her IndyCar efforts. And while she acknowledges that going to NASCAR full time probably would help her in the transition, she doesn't think it would make a huge difference.

"If you want to be really good at anything, you have to obviously centralize your focus," Patrick said. "But at this point in time, I have a tremendous amount to learn. If it was full-time would it be going better? Maybe. But it wouldn't be some big, dramatic — I don't think — difference."

Patrick intends to stick to her current plan through 2011.

"We're going to do the schedule like this for this year and next year, and then we'll sort of assess where we're at and what we want to do in the future," Patrick said. "And maybe it'll be more of both, maybe it'll be one or maybe it'll be the other. I'm really not sure."

Next up for the Nationwide Series is the Kroger 200 today at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.



NAM Y. HUH / The Associated Press
NASCAR NATIONWIDE SERIES driver Danica Patrick prepares for the start of the Dollar General 300 auto race earlier this month at Chicagoland Speedway in Joliet, Ill.

Sprint Cup Schedule & Winners

Feb. 14 — Daytona 500 (Jamie McMurray)
Feb. 21 — Auto Club 500 (Jimmie Johnson)
Feb. 28 — Shelby American (Jimmie Johnson)
March 7 — Kobalt Tools 500 at Atlanta (Kurt Busch)
March 21 — Food City 500 (Jimmie Johnson)
March 29 — Goody's Fast Pain Relief 500 (Denny Hamlin)
April 10 — Subway Fresh Fit 600 (Ryan Newman)
April 19 — Samsung Mobile 500 (Denny Hamlin)
April 25 — Aaron's 499 (Kevin Harvick)
May 1 — Crown Royal Presents The Heath Calhoun 400 (Kyle Busch)
May 8 — Showtime Southern 500 (Denny Hamlin)
May 16 — Autism Speaks 400 (Kyle Busch)
May 30 — Coca-Cola 600 (Kurt Busch)
June 6 — Gillette Fusion ProGlide 500 (Denny Hamlin)
June 13 — Heluva Good! Sour Cream Dips 400 (Denny Hamlin)
June 20 — Toyota/Save Mart 350 (Jimmie Johnson)
June 27 — Lenox Industrial Tools 301 (Jimmie Johnson)
July 3 — Coke Zero 400 Powered By Coca-Cola (Kevin Harvick)
July 10 — LifeLock.com 400, Joliet, Ill. (David Reutimann)
July 25 — Brickyard 400, Indianapolis
Aug. 1 — Sunoco Red Cross Pennsylvania 500, Long Pond, Pa.
Aug. 8 — Heluva Good! Sour Cream Dips at The Glen, Watkins Glen, N.Y.
Aug. 15 — Carfax 400, Brooklyn, Mich.
Aug. 21 — Irwin Tools Night Race, Bristol, Tenn.
Sep. 5 — Labor Day Classic 500, Hampton, Ga.
Sep. 11 — One Last Race to Make The Chase, Richmond, Va.
Sep. 19 — Sylvania 300, Loudon, N.H.
Sep. 26 — AAA 400, Dover, Del.
Oct. 3 — Price Chopper 400, Kansas City, Kan.
Oct. 10 — Pepsi 400, Fontana, Calif.
Oct. 16 — Bank of America 500, Concord, N.C.
Oct. 24 — TUMS Fast Relief 500, Ridgeway, Va.
Oct. 31 — AMP Energy 500, Talladega, Ala.
Nov. 7 — AAA Texas 500, Fort Worth, Texas
Nov. 14 — Kobalt Tools 500, Avondale, Ariz.
Nov. 21 — Ford 400, Homestead, Fla.

Sprint Cup Points Leaders

1. Kevin Harvick, 2,745. 2. Jeff Gordon, 2,642. 3. Jimmie Johnson, 2,557. 4. Denny Hamlin, 2,542. 5. Kurt Busch, 2,524. 6. Kyle Busch, 2,488. 7. Jeff Burton, 2,465. 8. Matt Kenseth, 2,446. 9. Tony Stewart, 2,389. 10. Carl Edwards, 2,345.
11. Greg Biffle, 2,292. 12. Clint Bowyer, 2,286. 13. Dale Earnhardt Jr., 2,271. 14. Mark Martin, 2,249. 15. David Reutimann, 2,190. 16. Ryan Newman, 2,187. 17. Kasey Kahne, 2,166. 18. Jamie McMurray, 2,105. 19. Joey Logano, 2,103. 20. Martin Truex Jr., 2,060.

Sprint Cup Money Leaders

1. Kurt Busch, \$4,413,201. 2. Jamie McMurray, \$4,248,625. 3. Jimmie Johnson, \$4,205,450. 4. Kevin Harvick, \$3,954,046. 5. Kyle Busch, \$3,565,763. 6. Jeff Gordon, \$3,403,143. 7. Denny Hamlin, \$3,326,008. 8. Kasey Kahne, \$3,102,444. 9. Matt Kenseth, \$3,100,093. 10. Dale Earnhardt Jr., \$3,005,053.
11. David Reutimann, \$2,989,164. 12. Tony Stewart, \$2,948,536. 13. Jeff Burton, \$2,947,844. 14. Carl Edwards, \$2,907,945. 15. Ryan Newman, \$2,793,575. 16. Juan Pablo Montoya, \$2,792,058. 17. Joey Logano, \$2,787,855. 18. Greg Biffle, \$2,758,162. 19. A. J. Allmendinger, \$2,572,419. 20. Mark Martin, \$2,547,488.

Nationwide Schedule & Winners

Feb. 13 — DRIVE4COPD 300 (Tony Stewart)
Feb. 20 — Stater Bros. 300 (Kyle Busch)
Feb. 27 — Sam's Town 300 (Kevin Harvick)
March 20 — Scotts Turf Builder 300 (Justin Allgaier)
April 3 — Nashville 300 (Kevin Harvick)
April 9 — Bashas' Supermarkets 200 (Kyle Busch)
April 19 — O'Reilly Auto Parts 300 (Kyle Busch)
April 25 — Aaron's 312 (Brad Keselowski)
April 30 — BUBBA burger 250 (Brad Keselowski)
May 7 — Royal Purple 200 (Denny Hamlin)
May 15 — Heluva Good! 200 (Kyle Busch)
May 29 — TECH-NET Auto Service 300 (Kyle Busch)
June 5 — Federated Auto Parts 300 (Brad Keselowski)
June 12 — Meijer 300 (Joey Logano)
June 19 — Bucyrus 200 (Carl Edwards)
June 26 — New England 200 (Kyle Busch)
July 2 — Subway Jalapeno 250 Powered By Coca-Cola (Dale Earnhardt Jr.)
July 9 — Dollar General 300 Powered By Coca-Cola, Joliet, Ill. (Brad Keselowski)
July 17 — Missouri-Illinois Dodge Dealers 250, Madison, Ill. (Carl Edwards)
July 24 — Kroger 200, Indianapolis
July 31 — U.S. Cellular 250, Newton, Iowa
Aug. 7 — Zippo 200 at The Glen, Watkins Glen, N.Y.
Aug. 14 — Carfax 250, Brooklyn, Mich.
Aug. 20 — Food City 250, Bristol, Tenn.
Aug. 29 — NAPA Auto Parts 200, Montreal
Sep. 4 — Great Clips 300, Hampton, Ga.
Sep. 10 — Virginia 529 College Savings 250, Richmond, Va.
Sep. 25 — Dover 200, Dover, Del.
Oct. 2 — Kansas Lottery 300, Kansas City, Kan.
Oct. 9 — CampingWorld.com 300, Fontana, Calif.
Oct. 15 — Dollar General 300, Concord, N.C.
Oct. 23 — Gateway 250, Madison, Ill.
Nov. 6 — O'Reilly Auto Parts Challenge, Fort Worth, Texas
Nov. 13 — Wypall 200, Avondale, Ariz.
Nov. 20 — Ford 300, Homestead, Fla.

Nationwide Points Leaders

1. Brad Keselowski, 2,806. 2. Carl Edwards, 2,529. 3. Justin Allgaier, 2,318. 4. Kyle Busch, 2,291. 5. Kevin Harvick, 2,163. 6. Paul Menard, 2,077. 7. Joey Logano, 1,933. 8. Steve Wallace, 1,922. 9. Brendan Gaughan, 1,895. 10. Jason Leffler, 1,839.

NASCAR's 2010 baby boom rolls on

MIAMI (AP) — NASCAR driver Juan Pablo Montoya and his wife Connie have welcomed their third child.

Montoya announced the arrival of daughter Manuela on Monday

through his Twitter account.

Manuela joins brother Sebastian and sister Paulina. The 34-year-old Colombian said both mother and baby are doing great.

The birth following a rare

NASCAR off week means Montoya will almost certainly be in Indianapolis this weekend for the 400-mile Cup race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Montoya is 21st in the standings.

NASCAR is in the midst of a baby boom this season: Jimmie Johnson, Carl Edwards and Elliott Sadler all became first-time fathers this year, and Jeff Gordon and his wife are also expecting.

Photo leads to seven charges against poacher

During last year's extra-deer gun weekend, Brian Sims of Port Clinton shot a hermaphrodite deer, an animal having both male and female reproductive organs.

He sent photos of himself and the deer, which had an unusual set of thick velvet antlers, to several newspapers, which published the photos and related articles.

But, soon, Wildlife Officers Josh Zientek and Brian Bury received information the deer may have been killed illegally.

Working off tips, the officers developed enough information to obtain a search warrant for Sims' home. They discovered he had killed two antlered deer, includ-

ing the hermaphrodite, on the same day after already harvesting his limit of deer in Sandusky County.

Sims tagged the hermaphrodite in Huron County, claiming it had been killed there. The second buck was tagged in Ottawa County by Sims' fiancée as one she killed in Ottawa County.

Additionally, several sets of untagged antlers were discovered in Sims' home and at a rented storage facility. The information and search results lead to seven charges being filed in three different courts.

Sims was convicted of providing false information to a deer check station, over-limit on deer, possession of untagged deer



JIM ABRAMS
FIELD NOTES

parts, over-limit on antlered deer, and hunting without a deer permit. He was ordered to pay fines and costs totaling \$755, was placed on probation, his hunting privileges was revoked for two years, and he was ordered to pay \$500 in restitution for the animals.

Along the Way:
The Hancock Park District's annual Litzenberg "Hunting with Permission" lottery will be held Aug. 5. Immediately following,

the Hancock County Landfill will conduct its hunt drawing.

Both lotteries will take place inside the Activity Barn at Litzenberg Memorial Woods, located on U.S. 224 west of Findlay. Maps, parking passes and information sheets will be available.

The lottery will begin at 6:30 p.m. with the drawing of 10 youth hunt permits. These applicants must be 11-17 year of age at the time of the drawing, and accompanied by an adult. The youth hunt is provided in cooperation with White Tails Unlimited and will take place Nov. 20 and Nov. 21 at Litzenberg.

After the mandatory 7 p.m. meeting, the remaining cat-

egories for both the Litzenberg and Bright Farm Conservation Area properties will be drawn. Hunters may enter any category, but will only be allowed to win in one.

Permits will be issued following each drawing. Any remaining permits will be made available that evening, first come-first served.

Daily permits will continue to be available for those not drawn during the lottery. Ten daily permits will be available to the public each week but will not be issued during any deer firearms seasons.

Contact the Hancock Park District at 419-425-7275 for additional details.

Step Outside:

• Tomorrow: Safari Shoot, Field & Stream Bowhunters. Registration opens 8 a.m. 11400 Hancock County 109. Contact: 419-423-9861.

• Thursday-Friday: Trap & Skeet, UCOA, 6943 Marion Township 243, Findlay.

• Aug. 8: The Ohio State Fair. Visit the ODN Natural Resources Park.

• It's time to start thinking about enrolling in a Hunter Education Course.

Abrams is wildlife officer supervisor for the state Division of Wildlife in Findlay. He can be reached at P.O. Box 413, Mount Blanchard, OH 45867-0413 or via e-mail at jimfieldnotes@aol.com.



ALI MALLETT follows through on a fairway shot in the recent Findlay Area Golf Association match play tournament at Sycamore Springs Golf Course in Arlington.

MARK DECKARD / For The Courier

SUMMER SCRAPBOOK

FAGA celebrating its 36th season

It's time to tee it up! Area boys and girls of all ages get plenty of practice each week playing in events sponsored by the Findlay Area Golf Association.

It's the 36th season for FAGA golf, according to the organization's website.

FAGA is about encouraging participation in golf as they want their young players to have a great time,

learn how to play, learn the game of golf and it's rules, and carry this great experience throughout the rest of your life, according to the mission statement on their webpage.

The final event of the season for the organization will begin Monday at Findlay Country Club.



CODY RETTIG takes a shot on the practice green prior to the finals of the FAGA match play tournament.

MARK DECKARD / For The Courier



OFFICIAL CLIFF BROWNE (right) hands out sheets with the course rules and pin placements at the start of the first round of the Findlay National Junior Golf Tournament. Receiving the sheets are, left to right, Eli Stacy, Tyler McHugh, and Evan Hartnett.

MARK DECKARD / For The Courier



THE TEE flies past the ear of Curtis Eckert of Findlay as he tees off in the first round of the Findlay National Junior Golf Tournament at Red Hawk Run.

MARK DECKARD / For The Courier



MATT MUNOZ chips onto the second green at the FAGA match play tournament at Sycamore Springs.

MARK DECKARD / For The Courier



KAHUNA IN THE MORNINGS

MONDAY—FRIDAY 5 AM TO 10 AM



1063THEFOX.COM

Dance teacher helps keep seniors strong, flexible

Also opportunity for socializing

By LAURA MCKNIGHT
THE (HOUMA, LA.) COURIER

SCHRIEVER, La. — The silver-haired woman in black tennis shoes and a red windbreaker moves her walker to the side, near the 1-pound weights labeled "Beulah," so she can better move her legs back and forth, then raise one leg up and down.

"We don't want your other leg to be jealous," Sharon Boudreaux tells her circle of students at the Schriever Senior Center, as they switch legs.

A man in a wheelchair joins the group and begins following Boudreaux's movements, which gradually involve each part of the body.

The circle continues to grow, eventually doubling in number, as more seniors arrive and chat as they lift small weights and stretch their legs.

The Schriever residents look forward to their weekly exercise sessions mainly for a chance to mingle, says Brenda Gibbens, senior manager for the Schriever Senior Center.

But the simple movements help the seniors stay stronger and more flexible, making it easier for them to accomplish tasks vital to daily life: getting out of bed in the morning, getting up from a chair, walking without stumbling.

"Sometimes, it's a challenge to get them here," Boudreaux says. "Once they get into the program, and start reaping the benefits of it, they enjoy it a lot."

A key part in bringing those benefits to the group is 60-year-old Boudreaux, who has led the Senior Stretching and Flexibility class at the Schriever Senior Center for about five years.

"She motivates them," Gibbens says.

"She just makes it so nice for us. She's just so sweet," adds



The Associated Press
SHARON BOUDREAUX, LEFT, leads an exercise class at the Schriever Senior Center in Schriever, La., in this March 2010 photo. Boudreaux teaches an aerobics class for seniors at the center every week.

Norma Roten, 70, of Schriever, who attends the classes with her husband, David, 69. "We do need to stretch and get these old bones and knees working."

The class forms Boudreaux's first stint working with the older crowd, but decades of teaching dance helps her in guiding the seniors in moving their bodies, she says.

"I've danced all my life," Boudreaux says.

The Schriever native started taking dance lessons at age 2 and continued throughout high school and college, when she traveled to New Orleans for classes with a professional ballerina. She danced with a ballet company there, performing for Mardi Gras balls, the Sugar Bowl and recitals. She also performed on the dance team and in band at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, where she earned her bachelor's degree in health and physical education.

The year after Boudreaux graduated from high school, her dance instructor retired, asking her to take over the studio. She began teaching jazz, ballet, tap and twirling to children ages 2½ through high school.

Boudreaux, who was a junior-

and senior-high majorette, also helped train majorettes, color guards and a dance team at local high schools. After college, she worked with the majorettes and color guard at Nicholls.

She closed her dance studio about 10 years ago but still works with color guards at local high schools.

The Schriever resident taught some exercise classes, mostly for parents of her dancers, in the 1970s and '80s. She had taught no regular exercise courses since then until Gibbens asked her to fill the gap left by the center's previous exercise instructor.

"When they don't exercise, I can see a big difference in them," Gibbens says. The seniors become sluggish, she says, which explains her catchphrase: "He who rests, rusts — so get up and exercise."

Boudreaux decided to focus on strength and flexibility instead of aerobic exercise.

"The idea is to keep the joints more mobile and the muscles more flexible and stretched," she says.

The Wednesday classes start at 10:30 a.m. and last about 45 minutes, averaging eight to 15 participants.

"You feel better after you take

it," says Gertrude Josey, 90, of Scriever. "You breathe better."

Boudreaux says she felt challenged by the idea of teaching movement to seniors of varying abilities and ranging in age from 60s to 90s, but has been "very much surprised" at the improvements made.

A number of the seniors have grown stronger and more flexible, allowing Boudreaux to add more exercises and weights to the program. The classes help them develop and maintain a better range of motion and balance, she says.

"They have more confidence in doing things," Boudreaux says.

Maggie Antoine, 78, of Schriever, says the program keeps her exercising and prevents her joints from getting stiff.

"It helps you just limber up," agrees Jennie Frederick, 77, of Schriever, who battles arthritis.

The benefits extend beyond the physical.

"It keeps them alert, keeps their mind motivated," Gibbens says.

Edward Joseph, 76, of Schriever, says he attends each week to "loosen up the muscles" and spend time with other seniors.

"It's the camaraderie. They all become so friendly," Boudreaux says. "They joke around with one another."

The longtime dance teacher also has been choreographer for the Senior Citizens Dance Team, or Les Danseur de Bonne Terre, for the past several years. The group of about 15 Terrebonne Parish women compete in the Senior Olympics, annually earning first place in the region and second in state, and perform at local social events.

"We try to get out and entertain, let the seniors know they don't have to sit at home and twiddle their thumbs," Boudreaux says. "They can get out and enjoy life."



The Associated Press
BLUECROSS BLUESHIELD EMPLOYEE Jeffery Choice works and walks on one of two treadmill workstations in their complex in July 2010 in Chattanooga, Tenn. Employees are welcome to take turns walking and working simultaneously, in an effort to improve employee health and beat "the afternoon slump."

TENNESSEE

Workers allowed to workout on the job

Small exercises add up over time

By BRITTANY COFER
CHATTANOOGA TIMES FREE PRESS

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — The faint hum of a slow-moving treadmill mingles with the rapid clicking of keyboard keys inside a BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee office building.

Wearing a pair of tennis shoes, Jeffery Choice, a customer service representative, fields phone calls and enters data into a computer workstation attached to a treadmill that tops out at 2 miles per hour.

In an effort to encourage a healthier lifestyle for employees tied to their desks by work, last fall the state's largest insurer began a pilot program that put three treadmill workstations in its offices on Cameron Hill. Since then, at least 100 workers have used the treadmills while completing their day-to-day tasks.

"For a while I didn't even come up to it, because I didn't know how to use it," said Choice, who has regularly been using the machine for the past two months.

He said it didn't take much to get used to typing while walking at the slow pace, and now prefers to do the work standing up. When sitting at his desk, he gets cold easier and feels lazy, he said.

"It's better to get up and stretch your legs," Choice said. "I would prefer some sunlight and some fresh air, too, but I will take this."

John Bilderback, program coordinator for Step One, the anti-obesity initiative of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department, said it's the small exercises that can add up over time and help people reach their health goals. Though not all offices are equipped with fancy machinery to allow employees to walk while working, there are other ways to stay physically active while at the office, he said.

Simple changes such as park-

ing further from the building and taking the stairs can help people get more steps each day. Bilderback said people need to take about 10,000 steps every day to stay healthy, but most don't get nearly that amount.

"There really are a lot of things people can do to be active," he said. "You've just got to be a little creative sometimes, and even the smallest bit is better than nothing."

Bilderback encourages other businesses in the Chattanooga area to think of ways to make it easier for employees to get some sort of exercise during the day. Extending lunch hours so workers can get outside and walk, providing bicycle parking areas and partnering with local gyms are all low-cost ways to promote wellness in the workplace, he said.

An added benefit of exercise during the workday is that it helps to recharge the brain, Bilderback said.

"When you're sitting over extended periods of time, that can be a serious problem," he said. "You need to be able to get up and increase circulation in the legs themselves, and it does go beyond some sort of novel idea."

On Cameron Hill, where Choice tries to spend at least an hour on one of the three treadmill workstations a few times a week, employee morale and overall health have improved, said Corporate Wellness Manager Ryan Picarella.

"From last year to this year, through a lot of our wellness initiatives, we have seen an improvement in our employee health," he said. "We're reaching people, and the next step is isolating which programs are seeing the biggest impact."

In addition to the treadmill workstations, the company also offers an on-site fitness facility, a wellness program and a new bicycle rental program where employees can rent one of six blue bicycles instead of taking their car out for lunch or get to another of the company's office buildings, said company spokeswoman Mary Thompson.

Weekend Doctor

Q: I would like to know a doctor's thoughts on Sketcher's/LA Gear exercise shoes, especially for 60+ women.

I recently started a walking exercise program with LA Gear shoes, which have two prominent bumps under the heel. The shoe is cushioned within. The shoes claim to exercise leg muscles more effectively.

However, I experience stiff hips and some soreness with each step as I try to increase my distance. I always experience stiff hips after walking and have to stretch; these shoes seem to exacerbate the issue.

Many of my friends, active women in their 60s, are turning to these shoes. It would be good to read about the long-term effect on hip joints, etc., and any age considerations one should have before purchasing shoes. — Judy Hall, Findlay.

By DR. MICHAEL STUMP

A: Leg-shaping shoes have become much more popular within the last year because of the increased marketing of their professed benefits.

Included in this type of shoe are Masai Balance Technology, Skechers Shape Ups, Reebok EasyTone, LA Gear Walk N Tone, Fit Flops, Avon Curves, and Kmart Therashoes.

While there are some differences between these different models, they all work on the concept of causing instability while standing and walking.

The idea is that our feet were designed to walk barefoot on uneven terrain, not in shoes that have relatively flat soles on flat surfaces.

By creating instability, muscles of the legs, back and abdomen have to constantly contract to keep the body in balance, requiring more work for our bodies.

Most leg-shaping shoes, such as Skechers Shape Ups and MBTs, accomplish this by having a thickened sole that has a rocker bottom instead of a flat surface.

The Reebok EasyTone and LA Gear Walk N Tone instead have multiple small rounded structures in the sole that act like miniature balance balls to achieve this instability.

Regardless of how they cause instability, leg-shaping shoes claim to strengthen and tone leg muscles, improve circulation, burn extra calories, and improve posture and balance.

Do leg-shaping shoes work?

Well, that is hard to definitively answer as there are few independent studies that have looked at the claims of these various shoe companies.

The studies that have been done do suggest that these shoes increase the work done by the leg muscles, and many users do report better tone in these muscles.

While leg-shaping shoes do increase calorie expenditure, the increase is fairly small and could be achieved by walking a few extra blocks in normal walking shoes.

They will probably not have a significant effect on weight loss over normal walking.

Leg-shaping shoes are definitely not for everyone and have their negative side.

Anyone having underlying problems with balance or other medical disorders that increase the risk of falls should not use these as they may further increase the risk of falling.

Many leg-shaping shoes have very thick, clunky soles, making walking on uneven ground difficult.

It is important to read the recommended uses for these shoes as many are designed only for walking and not running.

Since leg-shaping shoes work muscles differently than normal walking shoes, the problems that you have with muscle soreness and stiffness are common, especially when you are first using them.

As with any new exercise routine, it is important to increase both intensity and the mileage of your walking slowly to allow your muscles time to adjust to the new stresses.

The biggest disadvantage of leg-shaping shoes may be the increased cost (\$100-\$200) compared to normal walking shoes.

Many people wonder whether the benefits are worth the increased cost. The answer to that will depend on each individual.

Stump is with Blanchard Valley Hospital Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine, Findlay. Questions for Blanchard Valley Health System doctors may be sent to weekend@thecourier.com, or to Weekend, The Courier, P.O. Box 609, Findlay, OH 45839-0609.



Stump

FCC seeks to boost rural health care program use

By JOELLE TESSLER
AP TECHNOLOGY WRITER

WASHINGTON — Federal regulators are proposing changes to expand use of the \$400 million government program that subsidizes Internet services at hospitals, clinics and other health care facilities in rural areas.

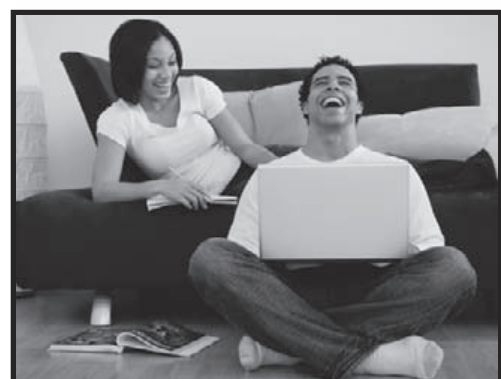
The Federal Communications Commission voted unanimously last week to consider changes to its rural health care program, one of four programs paid for by the \$8 billion federal fund that subsidizes telecommunications services in poor and rural areas.

The FCC said that despite great need for high-speed Internet connections at rural health care facilities, it believes the rural health care program is underused because it has not reached its annual spending cap in the past.

The agency is proposing to leave the \$400 million funding cap in place, but allow the program to pay for 50 percent of monthly broadband access charges at eligible health care facilities — up from 25 percent now.

The FCC also wants to use the program to subsidize the construction of broadband networks. And it is seeking to expand the range of health care facilities that can qualify for funding to include acute-care facilities such as renal dialysis centers, administrative offices and health care data centers.

The FCC's national broadband plan calls for overhauling the federal Universal Service Fund, and the proposed changes to the health care program are part of that. The agency wants to use that fund, established to subsidize telephone service in underserved communities, to bring high-speed Internet connections to even the most remote corners of the country.



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books, farm life, food, fustoria life, peace & faith, pet peeves, politics, pop culture, sports, trains, travel, and more.

MIRROR ON YESTERYEAR

Fostoria makes name for itself in automobiles

The following news stories first appeared in the Fostoria Daily Review in November and December of 1915:

Fostoria will soon gain an enviable reputation as an automobile manufacturing city as the third such industry is being prepared for operation by the first of next month.

The Kressler Auto Co. has been formed and has already leased the cooperage shop of the Fostoria Stave & Barrel Co. in the west end of the city (later, Seneca Lumber & Millwork). This building has 15,000 square feet of floor space, sufficient for the present needs and with plenty of room to enlarge as desired.

The men composing the firm are George K. Kressler, P. J. Blaser, of this city and Henry Ockhim of near this city. The new firm has a financial backing of \$100,000 and later expects to incorporate for twice that sum.

The name of the auto manufactured will be the Kressler Kar. They will make a specialty of sedans, coupes and commercial trucks, ranging in price from \$650 to \$800.

Messrs. Kressler and Blaser were in Detroit last week

and placed orders for several carloads of material for early delivery. While there, the manufacturers complimented them on the determination to make a success of the business and it is assured from the start as the two men have had many years of experience in their respective lines of work.

P. J. Blaser, who has spent practically all of his life in Fostoria, was for twenty years

GENE KINN

employed by the Peabody Buggy Co. and for the last eight years was superintendent of the trimming department. Later, he originated the Fostoria Storm Buggy Co. and until a few weeks ago, was the general manager.

Mr. Kressler has had eight years experience in the auto business. For six years, he was with the Overland Auto Mfg. Co. and later, he was the factory representative of the Allen Motor Co. in this city. Until recently, he was with the Fostoria Storm Buggy Co. and closely associated with Mr. Blaser.

The Kressler Auto Co. has already secured two large orders to furnish truck bodies for manufacturers in other cities. Within such a short time, after the organization, to receive two such orders, is indicative of future success.

Messrs. Kressler and Blaser expect to employ twenty men from the first of December and eventually, as the business increases, it is predicted that several times that number will be on the weekly payroll.

The plant of the Fostoria Glass Novelty Co. will double the output beginning Dec. 20, when seventy-five additional men will be placed at work. These men have been notified to be here on that date and as they will come from New Martinville, this means that many more families for Fostoria, as most of the men are married.

This is the best Christmas gift Fostoria could expect and will mean the circulation of hundreds of dollars more among the Fostoria merchants. The Fostoria Glass Novelty Co. now employs 75 and doubling that number means a big thing for the city.

Mr. Edmonds stated this morning that the company is handicapped in one way by the inability to get boys to learn the work and said that many more boys could be employed than apply. Many of them could learn the trade, which pays big money as they become more proficient.

It may be a proposition for the new residents to find suitable houses in which to live. Every effort will be made to find houses and leads people to regret that a Building and Loan Association was not in operation here long before.

By selling \$15,000 additional stock, to install a continuous tank, at a cost of \$5,000, and have more working capital, the Fostoria Glass Novelty Co. will be enabled to make ware that is being demanded by the trade and increase the business of the company from \$125,000 to \$150,000 annually, without any more overhead expenses. This would enable the company to double the earnings and greatly increase the annual dividend.

J. H. Jones, president of the company, was a caller at the Review office this morning and went over the contemplated improvement in detail

BEHIND THE BARN

Persimmons and mulberries worth a shot in this area

Dear Farmer John, I have a few questions that I have been considering for two years. Will persimmons and figs grow around my area? Also are mulberries a good tree to grow and how do they taste? Thank you so much. We find so many interesting topics in your column. We pass your column on to my sister and daughter-in-law. They love it and wish you would put it in their paper. TR in Fostoria

Dear TR, Mulberries should do well in your area. Persimmons fruit may have fruit spoiled by early frosts in your area, but I would give them a try because some years you they would do fine and they are well worth the effort. They are so good when ripe as are the mulberries, which are very sweet and leftovers will be appreciated by the birds. Figs would be a struggle that far north, not saying its impossible, but not probably worth the trouble unless you put in a large tub and move indoors before frosts. Now, southern Ohio would work for the figs, but they still need winter protection, either protected by wrapping with burlap, or to be trained with just lower branches that can be winter protected by bending the branches down and covering with a foot or more of soil and soil mounded over center of plant. They are really good but not easy to enjoy or plentiful in Ohio.

DPB of Fostoria writes and wonders if kerosene will kill the crab grass between cracks in her concrete driveway.

Dear DPB, I would not use kerosene. For wet weeds/crab grass, remove all you can, blow any soil or dirt from cracks, and have cracks repaired with concrete or the concrete in tubes as cracks, grass, etc. will keep damaging the driveway and widening the cracks. A professional may be the best way to go, but if money is a problem right now as it is with 99 percent of us, you can do repairs. The idea is to do it as soon and as good as possible so weeds won't do more damage and winter freezing won't damage or widen cracks anymore. Good luck. FJ

For Your Better Health

Research at Ohio State University has shown that consuming a half pound of berries a day may prevent cancer and/or shrink cancerous tumors. I think the tests were done on mice and looked very promising. These could be red or black raspberries, strawberries, blackberries, and blue berries. Mixed with ice, they would make a refresh-

FARMER JOHN

ing summer drink and it sounds like a healthy summer or winter treat. From my estimates, you can drink one slushy fruit drink a day for about 30 cents or less if you raise them, and about a dollar if you buy them. I think it will be found adding apples to your fruit and ice, or bananas, or grapes would also help, as would eating watermelon and cantaloupes. Let's face it, we really need a diet with fruits and veggies to be and stay healthy. Gardens, fruit trees and berry patches are just a great investment in our future and our children's future. And at this time, I want to mention what one reader from Fostoria wrote me this week...

"I cannot guarantee it, but I truly feel all these diets and surgeries for losing weight are not necessary if a person just has enough control to eat only veggies and fruit till they lose what they need. I understand people need protein and that can be from soy or peanuts or other sources."

I basically agree with this reader and thank them for writing, but I still feel you should talk to your doctor and let him/her help you set up an exercise program and diet good for you. Here is a verse sent given to me by a person living in Columbus, a quote of Helen Keller, read it and please think about how true it is. "What we have once enjoyed, we can never lose, All that we love becomes a part of us."

And, this is the result from a recent poll of married spouses: When asked whether they would marry the same person again, 40 percent said no, 30 percent refused to answer and 30 percent said yes. Make sure your marriage never falls in the 40 percent category by treating your wife or husband special every day, remembering them in little ways to show your love, whether with flowers, a little gift, a kiss on the cheek for no reason, or even a little love note. Show them everyday how much you love them and how much they mean to you. A kiss, hugs, thoughtfulness, kindness, consideration, and love are six steps to a happier spouse and a lasting happier marriage. Take the steps, not the elevator.

Dear Farmer John, I wanted to write and tell you that so far you are correct. My garden and fruit have been great this year. My white peach trees have given

me an abundance of fruit, and this year contrary to past years, there is very little insect damage. They are so good. Also, I have picked my best harvest of early green beans and mowed them as you told us for a second crop. We have enjoyed early tomatoes and the vines of the later and larger ones are loaded. If this is how it is after a hard winter as you said, I hope we have another hard winter. Thank you for all the good tips. ES, Cambridge

Dear ES, Yes, I got other letters from readers in Sugar-creek, Winesburg, Barnesville, Cleveland and Alliance this week saying the same thing. The best garden and fruit year for years. I suggest canning for two years, freezing for one, because it is not likely we will get two bad winters in a row, and for me to suggest it would probably result in a lot of angry readers who don't like the cold, ice and snow, ha. But, thankfully we don't control the weather so we must make the most of what we get. So enjoy this year's great harvest.

Dear Farmer John, This year I have I have started a new small garden area (12x8) for my tomato plants. We have some planted and they are doing so-so. I am planning after the growing season on getting some peat moss and tilling it in. And in the spring adding a bag of manure. Also, I assume I should add some lime. I had my soil tested some years back and only put lime on once. Does this game plan sound okay to you for getting the garden area built up? BM of Shreve

Dear BM, Usually plowing up a new area for tomatoes or potatoes is a great idea and they do really well so you should have good luck this year with the tomatoes. Yes, your plan sound good except for the lime — tomatoes do not like too sweet of soil, so you must be careful that wherever they are going next year you do not get too much lime in that area. The only thing I would add to your new area is some sand to till in, if the soil is not already sandy or loamy, this fall. Otherwise you have a good game plan, good luck.

To W of Newcomerstown from LAY of Baltic, Organic whole food nutrition is your best buy.

If you have a recipe to share, a tip or hint or have a question to make your life easier or better, write me at Farmer John, P.O. Box 234, Groveport, Ohio 43125.

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Looking for your family tree? Go to Salt Lake City

National Archives, Washington, also good stop

By JENNIFER DOBNER
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

SALT LAKE CITY — When Jan Gow makes her annual pilgrimage from New Zealand to Salt Lake City, it's not to enjoy Utah's ski resorts, red rock canyons or five national parks. It's for the ribbons of microfilm and endless volumes of maps, cemetery and property records tucked inside the Family History Library.

The library, owned and operated by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints since 1894, is visited by some 700,000 people annually and is widely considered the world's largest repository of genealogy records. It's a favorite destination for "genealogy tourists" — a devoted breed of traveler bent on tracing family trees.

"A woman once asked me to give her four words to explain why she should come to Salt Lake City and not just research it all from home online," said Gow, 70, of Auckland, who first came here in 1981 and has returned more than 25 times.

"I could think of one: Immediacy," Gow said. "When we're here we can immediately pull out a film, or pull out a book, look at a computer, because it's all here. There's nowhere else, just nowhere else."

The Family History Library's catalog of resources — free for use by church members and non-members alike — includes more than 2 billion names of deceased persons, 2.2 million rolls of microfilm, 300,000 books and 4,500 periodicals.

These resources make the library a "must visit" destination for anyone who does genealogical work, said Jan Alpert, who heads the board of the 10,000-member National Genealogical Society. In April, NGS held its annual convention here and drew a record attendance of more than 2,600, she said.

But it's also far from the only

place to go, Alpert said.

"In addition to the National Archives in Washington D.C. and its regional archives across the United States, there are a number of exceptional genealogical collections across the country including the Library of Michigan in Lansing," said Alpert.

Also on Alpert's list is the Allen County Public Library of Fort Wayne, Ind., where the collection of some 10,000 digital volumes includes extensive military history records, along with Native American and African American records. The library markets extensively to historical societies and other genealogy groups.

"We're always featured in the convention and visitors bureau guide," said Curt Witcher, the library's senior manager of special collections. "About 90 percent of our patrons are from out of our county."

And visitors tend to return. "People have fun here, and they are successful," Witcher said.

That Fort Wayne and Salt Lake City are not exotic destinations isn't important, said Carla Santos, an assistant professor of tourism at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, whose study of genealogy tourists at the Allen County library was published in the Journal of Travel Research. The study found genealogy tourists considered travel destinations secondary to their trip's goal of collecting information.

"What that tells us is that genealogy tourism is not area-specific," Santos said. "So technically then, every community has something to offer because everyone has a family story that connects them to somewhere."

Many communities and some countries have recognized the genealogy draw. Tourism bureaus in England, Ireland and Scotland, for example, all credit genealogy research opportunities as being important stimuli for international

travel, Santos said.

Back in Salt Lake City, Richard Williams, who manages the Plaza Hotel, said genealogy tourists have been a focus of marketing efforts since the 1980s. Hotel representatives attend at least six genealogy conferences each year. At least a half-dozen genealogy tour groups return to Salt Lake City annually, he said.

Gow leads a tour to Utah each year for stays of up to three weeks before heading on to the United Kingdom. This year, the trip cost each traveler about \$8,000, she said.

"I can tell you that genealogy is a quarter of our business, maybe more," said Williams, whose 150-room property is close to the downtown library. "The down economy has hit us a little bit, but our genealogy business has been steady. Some of the groups were not as strong in numbers, but they still came."

Interest in genealogy websites is also high. Of an estimated 800 million Internet users in the U.S. and Europe, roughly 15 percent had visited a genealogy-related website, according to a 2005 report from Nielsen/NetRatings found that about 8 percent of those users, or about 56 million, were in the U.S., according to the data.

Web hits to FamilySearch.org and Ancestry.com, two of the largest online databases, are also climbing.

Ancestry's annual report showed a 26 percent increase in subscribers — to 1.2 million — between March 31, 2009 and March 31, 2010. And FamilySearch, an extension of the Mormon church and its library, now has more than a million registered users, with more than 10 million web page hits daily, according to data from Paul Nauta, spokesman for the Family History Library.

"Every time new content is added online, there is a notice-



Photos by JENNIFER DOBNER / The Associated Press

able spike in online patron traffic," Nauta said. "Consumers are hungry for records of interest to their family history."

Alpert partly credits the surge in interest to the recent television shows "Faces of America" on PBS and NBC's "Who Do You Think You Are?" — featuring celebrities discovering their family trees with the help of trained genealogists. The NBC show drew about 6.5 million viewers per episode.

"These shows are wonderful because they are hitting an emotional nerve and that's what's getting people excited about family history," said Alpert, who has been working on her family tree for 30 years and has crisscrossed the country looking for documents and other clues. "When you know what your ancestors went through, you have a much greater appreciation perhaps for why you are the person you are."

Some research can be done online from home, but Gow, who heads the New Zealand Genealogical Society, said there's no substitute for packing your suitcase and seeking out your ancestral home.

"To walk down the aisle of the church where you know your family ancestors were married, that's really something special," said Gow, who has traced her family to the 14th century and claims both Charles Darwin and William the Conqueror as distant relatives. "To walk through villages and sometimes you're able to find their homes ... just even to see their headstones in the graveyard is really something."

If You Go:
NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY: Washington, D.C., www.ngsgenealogy.org/
FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY: Salt Lake City, www.familysearch.org
ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY: Fort Wayne, Ind., www.acpl.lib.in.us/



LIBRARY OF MICHIGAN: Lansing, Mich., www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan

Other libraries recommended by the National Genealogical Society:
California State Library, Sutro Library, San Francisco, www.library.ca.gov
Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, www.cincinnati.org
Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research, Houston, www.houstonlibrary.org/clayton
Cleveland Public Library History and Geography Department, www.cpl.org
Dallas Public Library Genealogy Section, www.dallaslibrary.org/CHS/cgc.htm
Daughters of the American Revolution Library, Washington, D.C., www.dar.org/library
Denver Public Library Western History and Genealogy, www.history.denverlibrary.org
Detroit Public Library Burton Historical Collection, <http://bit.ly/aEt093>

Los Angeles Public Library History & Genealogy Department, www.lapl.org/central/history.html
Mid-Continent Public Library Midwest Genealogy Center, Independence, Mo., www.mcpl.lib.mo.us/genlh/mgc.htm
Newberry Library Genealogy & Local History Collection, Chicago, www.newberry.org/genealogy/collections.html
New England Historic Genealogical Society Library, Boston, www.newenglandancestors.org
New York Public Library, Division of U.S. History, Local History and Genealogy, New York City, <http://bit.ly/ay2vft>
St. Louis County Library Local History & Genealogy, St. Louis; www.slcl.org/branches/hq/sc
Seattle Public Library Genealogy Collection, <http://www.spl.org>
The Library of the Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, www.wrhs.org/index.php/library/genealogy

Fla. fruit stand begun by boy celebrates 50 years

His stand evolved from cucumbers to exotic fruits

By DAVID FISCHER
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

HOMESTEAD, Fla. — Robert is here, and he's been here for more than five decades.

Officially established in 1960, the Robert Is Here fruit stand is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Robert Moehling, who's been running the stand since he was 6 years old, can still be found behind the counter on any given day, chatting with regulars and answering questions about exotic fruits.

Robert Is Here — located in Homestead at the edge of the Everglades National Park — gets visitors from all over the world and has become a regional landmark. Moehling offers customers everything from the traditional to the unusual, including mangos, strawberries, lychees, papayas, guanabanas, tamarinds, and carambolas, also known as starfruit. Most of them he grows himself.

"We like to grow weird tropical fruit," Moehling said.

And just about all the fruits sold at Robert Is Here are offered as flavors for milkshakes and smoothies.

"It's great," said Jill Shafer, of Wooster, who was on the way to the Keys with her daughter. "The milkshakes are out of sight. ... I don't know of any other places like this."

Moehling's daughter, Victoria Valencia, said they try to create an atmosphere for customers to hang out and enjoy themselves. A petting



J. PAT CARTER / The Associated Press

zoo behind the stand features emus, donkeys, goats, parrots, chickens, geese and tortoises. Inside the animals' enclosure is a climbing structure made of several tons of natural coral rock.

"We're trying to make it more enjoyable," Valencia said. "Instead of just coming out, getting their milkshakes and getting back in their car and leaving, we want them to stay."

Rita Merlevede, who was visit-

ing from Belgium with her husband and three sons, read in a travel guide that anyone planning a trip to the Everglades had to stop at Robert Is Here.

"It's really a terrific place," Merlevede said. "It's nice that you can eat your fruit right here."

Besides offering customers fruit and entertainment, Moehling likes to help guests find other fun activities in the area. Robert Is Here is one of nine local businesses that

joined several years ago to form the Historic Redland Tropical Trail. Other members include Schnebly Redland's Winery, Everglades Alligator Farm, Monkey Jungle and the world-famous Coral Castle.

"By promoting other places, it makes my customers happy, and happy customers come back," Moehling said.

The stand got its start because Moehling's father, also named Robert, was having a hard time

unloading a harvest of cucumbers. Not wanting to throw away perfectly good cucumbers, Moehling's father set his then-6-year-old son on a rural intersection one Saturday in November 1959 and told Moehling to sell the vegetables.

"I sat here all day long," Moehling said. "Not only did I not get any customers to buy cucumbers, no one even stopped."

Moehling's father simply couldn't understand how so many people could drive by without wanting to buy cucumbers, concluding that people must not have seen the boy. Moehling's father grabbed a couple hurricane shutters and wrote "Robert Is Here" on them in big red letters. He set Moehling back on the same corner the next day with the two signs in place. Moehling sold all the cucumbers by noon and walked home.

For the next several weekends, Moehling returned to the corner — the same location where the fruit stand remains today — to sell various fruits and vegetables. When Christmas vacation arrived, Moehling spent every day at the corner. When school resumed in January, Moehling's mother, Mary, arranged for the bus to pick him up and drop him off at the fruit stand. They would set up each morning and leave a coffee can on the table, allowing customers to pay on the honor system. After the bus dropped off Moehling in the afternoon, he worked until dark.

Despite the long hours, Moehling said he never resented working the stand as a child.

"It was something that I had to do to keep the family's head above water," Moehling said. "The first

year or so it was sustaining an income we didn't have, because dad was really busted out."

The family's fortunes eventually improved, and by the time Moehling was 9, he had hired a neighbor woman to watch the stand for him while he was at school. The young entrepreneur bought his first 10 acres of property when he was 14. He planted an avocado grove on it and rented out the house. Over the years, Moehling continued to buy property in five- or 10-acre patches. Moehling, his wife and his children still farm the land and sell the produce at their stand.

After decades of running the business, Moehling said his children are handling more of the responsibilities. Three of his four kids decided to return to the fruit stand after graduating from college. The fourth is still in school.

Moehling said he's happy to have his children take over, so long as they're able to make the place their own.

"I started this to help my parents and grew it into what it is," Moehling said. "Now I'm forcing them to do something to make their mark."

If You Go...
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