Heard About Town

By Vic Parker

Dumbed down? Probably. Take warning labels, for instance. I occasionally find myself in need of melatonin in an effort to get to sleep. For the first time, I glanced at the label and noticed it said, "Chew completely before swallowing." Really? In most packages that contain a nitrogen pack that you immediately toss it's written, "Do not eat." Good thing they told me. I found a few more ... On a baby carriage: "Caution. Remove child before folding." On a scooter: "Warning. This product moves when used." On a wheelbarrow: "Caution. Not intended for highway use." (You have to buy the high-end model to get the wheelbarrow up to 65mph.) One of my favorites ... "Warning. Once used rectally this thermometer should not be used orally." Warning label on a takeout coffee cup: "Caution. avoid pouring on crotch area." And on a jet ski: "Warning. Never use a lit match or open flame to check fuel level." Warning label on this kitchen appliance: "Notice. Do not allow children to play in the dishwasher." And yet another: Warning label on a box of rat poison: "Has been found to cause cancer in lab mice." Occurs to me that we could completely drain the shallow end of the gene pool if we didn't have some of these warnings.

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Just a thought from Teddy Roosevelt ..."Opportunity is missed by most because it's wearing overalls and looks like work.

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Since I've made my living using words, there's this: The fact that some people can't distinguish between etymology and entomology bugs me in ways I can't put into words.

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I've put up with significant pain in my right shoulder and arm for a couple of weeks. My orthopedist - after an X-ray - said that the problem was in my neck, not my shoulder. He scheduled me for an MRI 10 days after that visit, and my trip to Longview Regional was last Thursday. One thing I discovered was that, once upon a time, one of the hardest things you had to do in a hospital was pee in a cup. These days it's finding a parking space. After initially going to the wrong building I made it to the correct one only to have to fill out those stupid forms that I filled out at the same facility three years ago. You know the ones ... Each page requires your name and the date. They should have pages for men and women, however, so I don't have to check the box that asks if I'm pregnant or planning on being pregnant or if I've had a hysterectomy. I didn't mind the MRI itself; I'm not claustrophobic and the noise doesn't bother me. They could, though, put a little TV screen you can see as you lay there looking up. Remember I had a hard time finding a parking space? I also had a hard time finding my car when it was time to leave. I suppose that's why they mark the spaces so someone of normal intelligence and who knows how to count, can find their ride. Deliver me from hospitals.

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Menu oddities. I notice them more now since restaurant prices are skyrocketing. I know that the cost of everything associated with that industry has gone up by double digits ... despite what that doddering old fool in the White House says. Sometimes I wonder, though. If, by some miracle, prices begin to decline, will menu prices decline as well? Same goes for grocery store prices. Will bread drop from nearly $4 a loaf if things turn around? Anyway, back to those restaurant prices. I was looking over the menu of a restaurant I won't name - but it is Australian-themed - when I saw the price of a full rack of ribs was $29.99. Reading a bit further I saw that a half-rack of ribs was $21.99. Does that make sense? If the full is about $30, shouldn't the half be about $15. I make no claims to being an expert on restaurant operation, but it seems to me that, in many instances, common sense has gone out the window.

American Hamas

By Jim "Pappy" Moore



Violent, hate-filled college students in America's most prestigious universities are spearheading the anti-Israel, antisemitic campaign in support of the terrorist group Hamas. Recall that six months ago Hamas carried out a brutal terrorist attack in Israel, committing rapes, murders, tortures and kidnappings. They seized hostages and are still holding them. Among those hostages are American citizens.

As usual, Joe Biden has been worse than useless. Because Democrats count among their constituencies foreign born Hamas supporters and academia's most leftist professors and students, our government has been tepid in response to Hamas's terror.

The Ivy League is rampant with the hateful colonies growing up there, defying orders to disperse, setting up camps which are clearly being funded by a source with plenty of money to spend on the hate-filled encampments. Right down to the common look of the tents suddenly appearing, this Hamas juggernaut is well-funded. The stench of Jew-hating permeates the air and the dialogue of these traitors.

Let it be known throughout that the American Jew haters are not Republicans, but are Democrats and assorted leftists who hate America. Let it be known that it is not Christians who hate Jews. It is the academics and their trained lackeys they call students. It appears that actual Hamas members are also present.

We have seen all this before in the 1960s. Funded by foreign interests, the enemies of America find university students and faculty easy pickings. Rebels without a clue, they love to live out the theater of activists railing against the state of Israel and against Israel's strongest ally, the United States of America.

Remember who these people are. They side with actual terrorists who launched a wicked attack on Israel in October 2023, raping, killing, torturing. They took hostages and they still have them. Once they did their dirty deeds, they cried out for a cease-fire after Israel had begun to attack back. Oh, the wailing among the pseudo intelligentsia of big city universities in big Democratic states. From coast-to-coast we see it.

These are universities which charge upwards of $100,000 per year for students to attend their campus. They are a mix of Jew-hating fake intellectuals who despise all things American, who embrace socialism and communism, who hate capitalism, and who embrace America's enemies.

In 1968, similar university trash protested against the Vietnam war, taking over university administration buildings, clashing with police, terrorizing veterans, and running amok. Chicago turned into a battleground, as Democrats held their convention to nominate Hubert Humphrey as their presidential nominee. This is all eerily familiar to those of us who lived through it.

Face up to American Hamas. Call them out for their wretched ways. Let them know we see them for who they are: fellow travelers with terrorists from the Mideast. We have the high ground. Let them know we will not forsake Israel.

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Pritchett/Big Sandy News

By Linda Glenn 903-571-5136

Rain is coming to East Texas is what the weathermen say. They say we may even get a chance of rain every day this week. I've never been a middle of the road kind of person. I like sunshine and I like rain.

My issue is with the cloudy, when-it-feels-like rain days. I just pray God protects this land from the horrible storms we have seen across this country over the weekend and are present this time of year.

I need first to correct a mistake I made in last week's column and offer Myra Watts my sincere apology. I had given credit for the Pritchett history books to another Myra.

Yes, I know two ladies named Myra and my auto correct may have put in the wrong one's name thinking I made a mistake. No matter how it happened I should have caught this when I proof read but didn't.

Myra Johnson Watts is the local historian who gathered the information from multiple sources more than 10 years ago. When we recently received a finished copy of her work the community reached an agreement with Myra to use the books to fund raise off of the sales.

It is the hope of the Pritchett Community officers to preserve the history of this community for future generations and provide a place to gather for events, but we need finances to continue the mission.

Our wonderful volunteer who prints the books for us is busy making copies again of this book. If you haven't gotten one yet you can call me or the Pritchett Community number at 903-576-1729 to order your copy.

This past Saturday was the very first time I went to the semi-annual Upshur County free dump day. I'm not sure what I was expecting but it was such an easy thing to do. The experience was so well- organized and the number of volunteers out there helping unload at various stations was many more than I expected.

I pulled in and was greeted by Upshur County Commissioners Michael Ashley and Gene Dolle to point me where I needed to drop off.

These two were men who help organize this service twice a year for the citizens of our county. Ashley told me after the day was over that "a total of 126 cars, trucks and trailers were unloaded that day."

It was a perfect day weather- wise to burn all the items brought in that could be disposed of in that way. Many thanks to the commissioners and to Sheriff Larry Webb for providing trustys from the Upshur County Jail to help, Judge Wayone Manes for sending two men on probation, the maintenance crew at Road and Bridge and Phil Stegall for providing two experienced operators to work that day.

If you missed it please be ready for the next free Upshur County Dump Day in October. The date is to be announced, but you can be gathering the items that will not go in your regular trash pick-up to be prepared. To all those involved on behalf of the grateful citizens of Upshur County "Thank you for a job well done." If I left anyone out I sincerely apologize but you know the role you played.

Thursday, May 2, is designated as A National Day of Prayer.

The Big Sandy Ministerial Alliance will observe this day at the Heritage Center at 162 Gilmer Street in Big Sandy beginning at noon. Last year's event was very well-attended. The hope is many people of all denominations will meet there to gather in prayer for our community and our nation. Several church leaders from various denominations will lead the prayers and your attendance would be greatly appreciated. I'll be there in the "amen corner" and I will report on this next week.

The Big Sandy school board and City Council election will be this coming Saturday, May 4, from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. Those of you who may not have made it to cast your vote early still have time to make your choices known.

If you've never gotten together with the Big Sandy senior group you have a chance to remedy that Monday, May 6, from 6-8 p.m. This is a potluck and open to anyone wishing to attend who is over 55 years old.

Why not come over to The Heritage House that night get to know the group and make some new friends? Watch for the seniors upcoming bake sale on Friday, May 10 by the Austin Bank during lunch hours.

If, like me, you didn't get the message there was not a car show at Big Sandy this past weekend I've got the scoop. The show was postponed due to a booking issue. That was the bad news, but I have good news for you.

The car show, sponsored by the Big Sandy Band Boosters, has been rescheduled to May 18 in the school parking lot between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. The entry fee is $20 and you still have time to call East Texas Roadshow Productions. They can be reached at 903-387-0784 to make arrangements to have your vehicle in the show. There will be food and drinks available.

I have been telling you about all the new business ventures opening in Big Sandy for the past few weeks. This week I want to tell you about a new enterprise at the corner of Texas 155 South and FM1404. This is Flower Market & More brought to you by Two Wild Yamz.

I recently got the chance to visit there. The enterprise is a result of brain storming locals Angela Parham and Angie Hewitt who met on another project.

I remember Horsefly telling me about listening to the Grand Ole Opry on a radio hooked up to a car battery on their front porch in the summer time.

I just happened to stumble on a WSM online broadcast of a repeat performance of the opry today. Just for fun I took my phone to the porch and tried to picture myself back in the 40s. I know grown women should not pretend but for a moment pretend with me. What if you had no television, computer, phone, or maybe electricity was new to your home?

There wasn't a television in the home even though it was invented in 1927. It took until 1946 for households to start buying them because times were hard and according to my research only about 8,000 households had one by that year.

When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on Sunday, Dec. 7, 1941, many people heard about it on a radio. People were glued to their radios each evening to hear news of the war.

Beginning during the Great Depression in 1933 then President Roosevelt used the radio to communicate with the American people. This president was elected to serve four terms, dying in office in 1945 and continued his "fireside chats" on the radio with the United States citizens and many around the world.

Sitting on my porch swinging and listening to Reba singing on the Opry I enjoyed myself pretending I was in a simplistic time. Then my phone rang and I was back in 2024.

Clean-up called success

By Phillip Williams

The "countywide clean-up" sponsored by the Upshur County Commissioners Court on Saturday was termed a success with 126 residents participating, said Precinct 3 Commissioner Michael Ashley.

He and Precinct 1 Commissioner Gene Dolle hosted the free dumping at the county's pug mill site in the Pritchett area, verifying that participants were county residents. The county holds two such events annually, one in spring and one in the fall.

The East Texas Council of Governments in Kilgore funded Saturday's event. Ashley said ETCOG employee Lisa Smith, an Upshur County resident, was instrumental in procuring the funding.

All but 21 of those who came to dump Saturday at 1426 Cottonwood Road did so by noon, said Ashley. County residents were invited to dispose of such no-longer-useable items as appliances, furniture and computers.

The next cleanup day will be sometime in late October, and the date will be posted soon on the county's official website, Ashley added.

Ashley also recognized several county employees and officials for providing "much needed assistance" Saturday of such tasks as unloading the various items and putting them in dumpsters.

County Road Administrator Phil Stegall provided two experienced equipment operators, Kerry Haynes and Scott Perry.

Sheriff Larry Webb and the county jail's chief deputy, James Grunden, provided four trustees from the jail, who were supervised by county maintenance supervisor Gene Crutsinger and maintenance employee Kevin Crutsinger.

Precinct 1 Justice of the Peace Wyone Manes also provided two men who worked as part of their terms of probation.

Ashley, whose wife Reggenia also assisted, said they and Dolle expressed gratitude to "all that helped in any way."

Rear Vision Mirror

TEN YEARS AGO

Early voting had begun for Gilmer's local option alcohol election . . . GHS student Louren Thompson was pictured putting her welding skills to work, while a virtual welder sponsored by Tulsa Welding School and Lincoln Electric graded her performance . . . GHS Stars officers Lacie Roberts, Cara Davidson, Kirsten Davis and Emily Buettner were pictured with trophies they had won at recent competition at Duncanville . . . Gilmer Fire Chief Jerry Taylor had been named "Firefighter of the Year" for 2013 by the Northeast Texas District of the State Firemen's and Fire Marshals' Association . . . Brian Porter and Michael Rich, with a stringer of 23.2 pounds and biggest bass at 7.95 pounds, won the Bettie VFD Bass Tournament . . . Dahlia Garden Club Yard of the Month for April was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jerry McCoy at 805 Buffalo St. . . . A few of the many popular local musicians performing at the Pritchett Hoedown included B.F. Waldron, Mike Tucker, Julie Tucker and Sonny Edwards; Ed Williams was emcee of the event at the Pritchett Community Center and about 125 attended.

TWENTY YEARS AGO

Matthew Thompson, 2000 graduate of GHS, was seriously wounded on April 14 in Iraq . . . Three men were arrested and charged in connection with decapitation homicide on Cherokee Trace . . . New Diana High School hosted a Renaissance Festival . . . Students at Montie Morris Kindergarten held Trike-a-Thon to raise funds for St. Jude's Children's Hospital . . . Pete Harrison was reelected and Lindley Hagler elected to board of directors at Etex . . . Donna Baber presented Dahlia Garden Club program at meeting hosted by Jean Oliver . . . College of the State Bar of Texas recognized Robert D. Bennett, O.W. Loyd II and Michael D. Martin at awards luncheon in Dallas . . . GHS golfer Brady Jones was District 11-3A medalist . . . Yamboree Airshow was canceled . . . Tony Douglas and The Shrimpers performed at Gilmer Civic Center . . . District Judge Lauren Parish recused herself from the land vacancy cases . . . DA Mike Fetter described how his office had benefited the county in speech to the Taxpayers Association of Upshur County . . . Beta Sigma Phi honored Sue Williams as First Lady of the Year.

THIRTY YEARS AGO

Upshur population had grown from 31,370 in 1990 to an estimated 32,403 in July 1992 . . . GJHS problem solvers Carrie Bassham, Carissa Little, Matt Mason and Amber Tucker competed in Austin . . . Paul Williams and Clayton Venn were pictured at site of proposed new Masonic Lodge, a lot formerly the homesite of Mrs. P.K. Williams . . . Gregg Williams signed letter of intent to play baseball for Southwest Texas State . . . Joy Richmond and Melanie Sullivan received awards at Kilgore College honors convocation . . . Deaths included Gladys Kay, 82; Judy Steelman, 75; Emmett Stegall, 86; Mrs. Eva Langford, 81; Mrs. Corine Lambert, 90 . . . Bill Crone and friends engaged in old-fashioned pea-planting at Simpsonville using old Kelly planter and mules or horses . . . Kari Spence and Abbie Lester participated in state UIL contests.

FORTY YEARS AGO

J. Bob Smith, 38, of Spring was named superintendent of Gilmer schools . . . Lone gunman

(See **Rear Vision**, Page 5)