

Way Back When: Quilts

By Jo Ann Butts
joannbutts@yahoo.com

WAY back when I was a child growing up in the mid 1900s, quilts to me had a whole new meaning.

This born and raised Elliott County girl knew too well about the old folks saying, "Better throw an extra quilt on the bed tonight, 'cause it's going to be a cold one."

Quilts back then weren't for prettiness, or from the finest material set up in a beautiful pattern. Like many of the great quilters here in our county make. They are skilled quilters.

But way back when, we made quilts to help us survive through the cold winter nights. It was just as important as raising a big garden so you didn't starve to death.

Although we did have a few quilts passed down to us from Grandma Myrtle, they had some age on them. But we didn't care, because these quilts were for warmth, and to keep us from freezing to death in the middle of the night, when the fire in the stoves went out while we slept.

Our house – like many others of that day – didn't have any insulation in the walls. Only cardboard tacked to the rough sawed boards, then layered in multiple layers of old timey thick wallpaper. I think we peeled back and counted 14 layers of paper one time.

My two younger sisters and

I slept in the bedroom off the back of the kitchen. It was so cold some nights, if you talked you could see your own breath. That was funny to us; we'd say something and then laugh.

We usually covered up our heads and made a little tunnel in the covers to breathe out of. It's a wonder we never suffocated. Some nights it was so cold the pot underneath our bed would freeze solid.

Yes we did have an outside toilet, but no child in its right mind would undertake to going out in the freezing cold to the outhouse. Especially in the middle of the night. We would all just hold it in until morning came, then made a beeline out there. And yes, Daddy built a three-seater in our last outhouse.

I'm so glad for family siblings. My two sisters helped keep our bed toasty warm, until one of us would feel a cold draft, and yell out, "Who's fanning the covers?"

All those quilts stacked on top of us were heavy, kind of like a weighted blanket that parents buy for their children to calm them down. I'd say it had that effect on us too. We all slept like a rock.

Being the oldest girl I helped Mommy make a couple of the "warm quilts," as she called them. She gathered and collected our old coats, and whoever else's she could get a hold of.

We cut them up into a crazy

quilt big piece pattern. I remember a army green, a rust color and a huge tweed one. She sewed them together and used an old blanket sandwiched in the middle, spread the layers on the clean living room floor, and then I got to help tack it. The big needle did a good job of pulling the twine through so I could cut and tie. Mommy said I did a good job.

I loved how the clipped ties all stood up nice in rows. It was a heavy quilt for sure. Heavy to me as a kid, anyway. Once that quilt was on you in the bed, you were sealed in there for the night. Those quilts were a true blessing on a cold winter night. They made us feel so secure, safe and warm.

Quilts are a big part of my heritage. They can tell a lot about the person who makes them, and why they made them. I read somewhere that if you are given a quilt from a person who made it, it's like they are giving you a "forever hug." I think that's true. If you are gifted a treasure like that, please cherish it. Don't drag it out on the back porch for your dog to sleep on. Quilts are a treasure, and so are the ones who make them.

Sometimes actions speaks louder than words. As Mommy spread the extra warm quilt on our bed and tucked us in for the night, she showed us her love through that extra quilt. This was how she did it, Way Back When.

Death ...

(Continued From Page Two)

time." Morgan County Coroner Shawn Vancleave pronounced Mitchell dead at the scene.

Sheriff Motley said no foul play is suspected, though the death is being investigated by Deputy Scott Adkins of the Morgan County Sheriff's Office.

Both Sheriff Motley and Deputy Adkins responded to the scene.

Other responders included Kentucky State Police Trooper Brian Evans and Morgan County Deputy Coroners Sammy Vancleave and Robbie Bradley.

DID YOU KNOW?

The February birthstone amethyst is believed to quicken intelligence and dispel evil thoughts. "Amethystos" means "not drunk" in ancient Greek. Because of its wine-like color, early Greek legends associated amethyst with Bacchus, the god of wine. It was believed that wearing amethyst, a quartz, prevented drunkenness. Other legends reflected beliefs that amethyst kept its wearer clear-headed and quick-witted in battle and in business affairs. Fine amethysts have been set in religious jewelry and royal crown jewels for ages. It's no wonder that fine amethyst adorns the fingers of bishops as well as the coronation regalia of British royalty.

McConnell introduces bill to insure propagation of White Oak trees

White Oak trees vital to America's lustrative bourbon industry

By Killian Baarlaer
Louisville Courier Journal

U.S. Sens. Mitch McConnell, of Kentucky, and Mark Warner, of Virginia, introduced a bill that would direct resources to strengthening White Oak tree populations. White Oaks are used to make barrels for aging bourbon and are crucial to the industry. U.S. senators from both sides of the aisle have introduced a bill aimed at conserving and bolstering America's White Oak tree population — a vital resource to Kentucky's bourbon industry. U.S. Sens. Mitch McConnell, of Kentucky, and Mark Warner, of Virginia, introduced the White Oak Resilience Act of 2025 on Feb. 13, according to a news release from McConnell's office. If passed, the bill would allocate federal resources to assess and strengthen White Oak populations and fund research to determine best practices for forwarding the species. "I'm proud to introduce bipartisan legislation that will help protect this species and preserve Kentucky's iconic bourbon industry that bolsters our economy and supports thousands of jobs across the Commonwealth. This is commonsense conservation at its best," McConnell said in a statement.

On top of their ecological role as a source of food and shelter for organisms in the eastern U.S., White Oaks are key to industries like bourbon and furniture production. The possibility of a shortage of seedlings worries industry leaders and environmental stewards about the future of the species and the economic consequences of its potential

downfall, according to the news release.

White Oaks are also used to manufacture the barrels that bourbon is aged in, and they also provide flavor and coloring to the spirit, officials from Louisville-based bourbon giant Brown-Forman said in a statement. "We are committed to the conservation of the existing hardwood forests we rely on and have undertaken several initiatives to support sustainable forestry practices. We are appreciative of the leadership from Senators McConnell and Warner, supporting this key legislation will provide critical resources for White Oak restoration," officials said.

The bill would direct the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to launch a series of programs examining the health of White Oak populations and pulling from research to implement regenerative practices and ways to address seedling shortages. It would also create a framework for the Secretary of Agriculture to work with land-grant universities, which often specialize in agriculture, to research the species. "The research this measure directs will allow us to leverage our scientific expertise, particularly in genetics and genomics, to support the health and resilience of White Oak tree populations," University of Kentucky President Eli Capilouto said. "As a land-grant institution committed to the Commonwealth's economic development, we are well-positioned to translate our findings into practical applications for the bourbon industry."

ADVERTISE IN
THE ELLIOTT
COUNTY NEWS!!!
MORE INFO:
606-743-3551

Supporting local newspapers puts community first

HB 368 will harm communities and newspapers

By Jane Ashley Pace,
2024 KPA President

Every county in Kentucky has one local business that has been there longer than any other, most more than a century – while some are even closing in on two centuries. In many of these counties, that business is their local newspaper.

I manage two of those local newspapers. The Oldham Era has been in operation for 149 years and is looking forward to celebrating our 150th next year. The Henry County Local has been publishing 168 proud years and counting. I also assist regionally with 13 other area newspapers with similar tenures.

Newspapers are the heartbeat of every community in Kentucky. We exist to inform, to raise awareness, to build community, to be the voice of those that can't always speak for themselves, to cover local government and hold local officials accountable, to help local businesses grow, to enact change, to celebrate achievements and to archive our community's history.

Our founding fathers felt so strongly about the importance of newspapers and the role we play in communities that we are the only profession explicitly named in the Constitution of the United States of America.

There are three ways in which newspapers have effectively carried out some of our most important roles – covering local government, keeping officials accountable, keeping citizens informed and helping transparency exist: public notices, open meetings and open records.

Without these three in place, knowing how your tax dollars are being spent, what bids are available and being rewarded, what decisions your elected officials are making for you, when meetings are being held and what new ordinances are being considered would not be as easily accessible.

There is currently a bill, HB368, that seeks to remove legal notices from newspapers and place them on government websites. Websites that are run by the government themselves. What could go possibly go wrong with that?

When a legal ad is placed in a newspaper, it is placed in the local newspaper, dated and cannot be changed after the fact. In addition, it is placed on a website managed by the Kentucky Press Association where all legal notices in Kentucky can be found easily – kypublicnotices.com.

HB368 seeks to have entities including county and city governments place public no-

tices on their own websites, yet many have only one employee, if any, and can't even keep their current websites updated. I found one city website in my area that hadn't been updated with meetings or ordinances since 2020. Two others had very little information, none of the council members were current and the monthly meeting time listed was listed wrong.

Officials have said they would create their own statewide website for all notices. I would argue that they are going to spend a lot more money creating a website we have already created and maintained successfully. Right now, paid legal notices are currently a very small part of county and city budgets – only 0.16%.

So why change? Is this what is really best for the community?

In counties of 80,000 or more a bill was passed in Kentucky to change the rules of public notices due to the cost of the larger newspapers. Yet, many of those counties, including Boone, Campbell, Fayette, Kenton, Madison and Warren, have decided that newspapers are still the best way to get their notices out and have continued to place them in newspapers despite the change.

Regardless of the county size, public notices should be posted by a third party, and with a newspaper in almost every county (and statewide website already in place) it just makes good, common sense.

Besides the concerns I've already addressed, while legal notices are not the only revenue that keep newspapers going – it is a part of it, and some smaller, rural counties will probably lose their local newspaper if this bill is passed. A community without a local newspaper is a community without a heartbeat, and countless studies have shown in news deserts across this country that there will be negative, long-term effects for the community.

No, it is not the job of the legislature to keep newspapers running but why are they so against doing something that maintains transparency and at the same time, would hurt some of the oldest local businesses in this state?

I'm not blind to the criticism of the media and think that cable news networks have hurt our industry as a whole. I was trained that a journalist is to cover the facts and to try and keep any biases out. I think your local newspapers do a pretty darn good job at still doing that. We have opinion/editorial pages that are open for opinions to be shared and topics to be discussed but they are clearly labeled and kept

separate from the news content.

Your local newspaper employees are not pushing an agenda. We are actively involved and serving in our communities. We live, work, play and volunteer right alongside our community members. We take our role very seriously, and that includes publishing your public notices.

Any bill that seeks to change how public notices are handled, or diminishes public meetings

or public records, is going to be harmful to the community, and your local newspaper, in the long run. I urge you to stand up with your local newspaper and help us keep these three in place.

Jane Ashley Pace is the publisher of the Oldham Era and Henry County Local, regional advertising manager for Paxton Media and the 2024 president of the Kentucky Press Association."

Subscribe To

The Elliott County News

To Subscribe, Fill Out The Information Below, Include With Check Or Money Order, And Return To The Elliott County News, P.O. Box 222, Sandy Hook, Ky. 41171 Or Call 606-743-3551 With Credit Card Information.

VISA

MasterCard

AMERICAN EXPRESS

DISCOVER NETWORK

BANK

PayPal

Please send a subscription to The Elliott County News To:

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE

SIGN GIFT CARD

RATES ARE: \$31.00 Per Year In County \$33.00 Per Year In Kentucky \$35.00 Per Year Out-Of-State