



Farmers & Merchants
State Bank of Bushnell

Member
FDIC

February 2016

“ . . . A Poem Lovely as a Tree ”*

When you are driving into a small city in the Midwest, like Bushnell, what is the first thing you notice when you see the town from several miles away? It's the trees. The trees make our small Midwest communities look like an oasis on the plains.

Poet Joyce Kilmer wrote:

I think that I
will never see
a poem lovely
as a tree.

We are fortunate to have some beautiful trees in Bushnell. There is a pine tree at the old Hazel Smith house, across from the West Park in Bushnell, and I've often wondered if it is the tallest tree in town. It's an old tree that towers above all the other trees, and if it could talk, would tell some interesting tales about our city.

When I was growing up in Bushnell, I remember streets lined with Elm trees, but those

are nearly all gone now. Our Elm trees were the victims of the “Dutch Elm Disease” that came to the United States in the 20's, and eventually spread westward reaching our area around the 1960's. It has been said that of the seventy-seven million elm trees in north America in 1930, over 75% had been lost by 1989.

It is a pleasure when I am walking my dog through the West Park to enjoy the shaded sidewalks and let my dog sniff amongst the leaves and trees. We recently lost a pear tree that was planted in front of our bank many years ago, and I miss seeing the squirrels and birds through the various seasons enjoying a temporary home in our tree.

The ancient Egyptians recognized the sanctity of trees, and an inscription on an Egyptian tomb about 1400 BC says:

Friends in Motion



Some anniversaries recently celebrated include: **Gordon and Dorothy Melvin** (40 years) of Macomb, **Bud and Deb Hobbs** (53 years) of Good Hope, and **Larry and Judy McLouth** (53 years), of Bushnell, Happy anniversary to all!

Recent birthday celebrations include:



Mary Lou Allen (82) and **Gordon Melvin** (91), both of Macomb, **John Butler** (76) of Greenbush, **Bud Hobbs** (72) of Good Hope, **Edwin "Butch" Link** (77) of Prairie City, **Jane Brown**, and **Nelda Vandiver**, of Bushnell, **Ordelta Baker** (101), **Harold Camp** (87), **Anne Haynes** (82), **Kathy Hollis** (74), **Murrel Hollis** (75), **Larry Kugler** (76), and **George Pensinger** (80), all of Bushnell. Happy birthday to all!

Happy
Valentine's
Day

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

Feb. 6 & Mar. 5 - VFW breakfast, 7 to 10 am

Mar. 4 - Free blood pressure, pulse/oxygen, cholesterol and blood sugar checks at F&M Main Bank Lobby, 9 to 10 am

February 15th



Trying To Stay Warm - Try One of These Recipes

EASY CROCK POT TORTELLINI SOUP

Don Swartzbaugh

- 1 bag frozen Tortellini
- 1 small bag fresh spinach
- 2 cans of Italian style diced tomatoes
- 1 box (4 cups) veggie broth
- 1 block cream cheese, chunked

Combine all ingredients in crock pot and cook on low 5-6 hours.



SCALLOPED CHICKEN

Monica Lafary

- 2 chicken breasts
- poultry seasoning
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 box Stove Top stuffing
- 1 can cream of celery soup
- Chex cereal

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Cook chicken using poultry seasoning to taste. Cool and dice. Make stuffing according to box directions. Put diced chicken in pan and layer cream of mushroom soup on top. Layer prepared stuffing on top of cream of mushroom soup. Layer cream of celery soup on top of stuffing.

Stir together thoroughly. Bake for 25 minutes. Remove from oven and add Chex cereal on top as desired. Bake an additional 5 minutes.

HAM & CHEESE POTATO CASSEROLE

Jessie Havens

- 2 cans (10 3/4 oz.) cream of celery soup
- 2 cups (16 oz.) sour cream
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 tsp. pepper
- 2 pkgs (28 oz.) frozen O'Brien potatoes
- 1 pkg. (16 oz.) Velveeta, cubed
- 2 1/2 cups cubed fully cooked ham

In a large bowl, combine soup, sour cream, water and pepper. Stir in potatoes, cheese and ham. Transfer to two greased 11 x 7 inch baking dishes. Cover



and bake at 375 degrees for 40 minutes. Uncover and bake an additional 10-15 minutes, or until bubbly. To freeze: Cover and freeze uncooked casserole. To cook, unthaw in refrigerator overnight. Remove from refrigerator 30 minutes before baking, and bake as directed above.

“... A Poem Lovely as a Tree”*

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“That each day I may walk unceasingly on the banks of my water, that my soul might repose on the branches of the trees, which I planted, that I may refresh myself under the shadow of my Sycamore.”

Of course, the Bible reflects trees in many instances, starting with Genesis, which states that “And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.” In Jeremiah, it states: “For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreads out her roots by the river . . .”

The tradition of using trees as a reference in literature has continued through the ages. Abe Lincoln said “Give me six hours to chop down a tree, and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.” A very practical Abe Lincoln. Albert Einstein said “All religions, arts and sciences are branches

of the same tree.” In 1749, Lord Orrery said “Trees are the best monuments that a man can erect to his own memory. They speak his praises without flattery, and they are blessings to children yet unborn.”

Perhaps we simply take the silent trees for granted. Dr. Seuss said “. . . I speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues.” Trees are like silent friends that give us comfort and shade, that give us constant seasonal beauty.

So join me in appreciating our beautiful trees, and plant another when you have the time.

By Michael G. Steelman

*“Trees” by Joyce Kilmer

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