



Farmers & Merchants
State Bank of Bushnell

Member
FDIC

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Just Thinking?

I am a fan of technology. It makes us more efficient, we can communicate almost instantly with anyone anywhere, and a wealth of information is at our fingertips.

Here is one area where I think technology is hurting all of us. When Congress passes 3,000, 6,000, or 8,000 page laws, it is only because the use of computers and technology allow that to happen. The fact that these massive bills can be put together last minute, and then distributed and printed in minutes or hours is a huge problem.

Here's a modest proposal; how about a new law that requires all proposed bills first be put in hand-writing at least once before they can ever be passed?

Our founding fathers did a wonderful job with the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights, and nary a computer was in sight.

I am not a "Luddite" (opposed to human scientific advancement), however, if our politicians had to actually write a bill that they and their fellow politicians and citizens would actually take the time to read and understand, I think our system would work a whole lot better.

On a totally unrelated matter, but something that still rankles me on game days, let me suggest this.

When I was just a kid playing sandlot football on a regular basis in our backyard, we played serious football. Everyone played their heart out on every play. When you did well, you simply put your head down, trotted back to the huddle and started thinking about your next play. Never did we dance in the end zone or come up with all kinds of catchy moves every time we caught a pass or made a tackle.

Today in football, it amazes me that even if a team is losing, if one of the players makes a tackle or catches a pass, they celebrate and make a big deal out of what is supposed to be their job. Perhaps its different when you are a paid professional, and a play can affect your compensation. Granted, we never got paid for playing sandlot football, but it was a matter of self-respect, team spirit, and I think, more truly professional than the "paid professionals" that are playing the game today. In my humble opinion, it makes it less of a game if every play on the field is celebrated.

By Michael G. Steelman

Friends in Motion

Some anniversaries recently celebrated include: **Keith and Doris Ferris** (59 years), **Tom and Peggy Norris** (64 years), all of Bushnell. Happy anniversary to all!



Recent birthday celebrations include:

Robert "Bob" Hudson (88), and **Linda Spangler**, both of Bushnell, **Susie Bucher** (78), and **Gordon Weber** (94), both of Macomb, **Sharon Butler** (72), of Greenbush, **Charlene Heady** (77), of Peoria, **Dwight Morrow** (72), of Good Hope, and **Sharon Walter**

(73), of Prairie City. Happy birthday to all!



UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

Jan. 3 & Feb. 7 - VFW breakfast, 7 to 10 am

Mar. 6 - Free blood pressure, pulse/oxygen, cholesterol and blood sugar checks at F&M Main Bank Lobby, 9 to 10 am

Jul. 20 - 27, 2015 - Hall of Fame Trip. If you are interested in the London & Paris vacation, please contact Kathy Lynn at 309-772-2171, to assure you are on our mailing list for up-to-date information. Reservations are due in January.

Happy New Year!

CREAMY BLT DIP WITH HERBED BAGEL CHIPS

Kathy Danner

1 lb. bacon, crisply cooked and crumbled
1 cup mayonnaise
1 cup sour cream
2 tomatoes, chopped
chopped fresh chives (optional)

Blend together bacon, mayonnaise and sour cream; chill. Stir in tomatoes just before serving; sprinkle with chives, if desired. Makes 2-1/2 cups.

Bagel Chips:

butter-flavored non-stick vegetable spray
9 frozen mini bagels, thawed
1-1/2 tsp. Italian seasoning
1/4 tsp. onion powder
1/4 tsp. garlic powder
1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper

Spray a baking sheet lightly with vegetable spray; set aside. Slice each bagel horizontally into 4 slices; place in a single layer on baking sheet. Spray bagel slices lightly with vegetable spray. Combine spices in a jar with a shaker lid; sprinkle over chips. Bake at 375 degrees for 12 minutes, or until crisp. Makes 3 dozen.



CREAMY SOUTHWESTERN TACO SOUP

Krystal Lillie

1 lb. ground beef
1/2 cup onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tbsp. cumin
1 tsp. chili powder
8 oz. cream cheese, softened
2- 10 oz. cans Ro-tel tomatoes, undrained
2- 14.5 oz. cans beef broth
1/2 cup heavy cream
2 tsp. salt

In a large soup pot, brown the ground beef with the onion and garlic; drain. Add the spices and cook a couple of minutes. Drop the cream cheese in bits into the meat. With the back of a big spoon, smash it into the meat until no bits of white remain. Stir in remaining ingredients and heat through.

ITALIAN CHICKEN AND PASTA BAKE

Kathy Lynn

1/4 cup butter
1 cup onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup milk
2- 14.5 oz. can s diced tomatoes with basil, garlic, and oregano
1- 15 oz. can tomato sauce
3 cups chopped chicken, cooked
4 cups shredded mozzarella cheese, divided
1-1/2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. black pepper
1/2 tsp. sugar
1-16 oz. package bow tie pasta, cooked according to directions and kept warm
Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a 13x9 inch baking dish with non-stick cooking spray.

In a very large skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic; cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 to 6 minutes, or until onion is tender. Add flour, and cook, stirring constantly for 2 minutes. Stir in milk, diced tomatoes, and tomato sauce; cook for 5 to 6 minutes or until slightly thickened. Stir in chicken, 3 cups cheese, salt, pepper, and sugar. Stir in pasta. Spoon mixture into prepared baking dish; sprinkle with remaining 1 cup cheese. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes.

What's a STRONG password?

Quite simply, password strength is a measure of how easily a password can be guessed, by either humans or computers. A “strong” password contains a combination of letters, numbers, and characters that are difficult to predict.

According to Wikipedia, "password strength" is a measure of the effectiveness of a password in resisting guessing and brute-force [i.e., computer-generated] attacks. In its usual form, it estimates how many trials an attacker who does not have direct access to the password would need, on average, to guess it correctly. The strength of a password is a function of length, complexity, and unpredictability.

Websites and software packages define their own specific password requirements in a policy. Though the minimum number of characters acceptable is typically eight, Webopedia defines a "strong" password as one that consists of at least six characters (and the more characters, the stronger the password) that are a combination of letters, numbers and symbols (@, #, \$, %, etc.) if allowed. Passwords are typically case-sensitive, so a strong password contains letters in both uppercase and lowercase. Strong passwords also do not contain words that can be found in a dictionary or parts

of the user's own name.

Guidelines for strong passwords:

Guidelines for choosing good passwords are typically designed to make passwords less easily discovered by intelligent guessing. Common guidelines advocated by proponents of software system security include:

Use a minimum password length of 12 to 14 characters if permitted.

Include lowercase and uppercase alphabetic characters, numbers and symbols if permitted.

Generate passwords randomly where feasible.

Avoid using the same password twice (e.g., across multiple user accounts and/or software systems).

Avoid character repetition, keyboard patterns, dictionary words, letter or number sequences, usernames, relative or pet names, romantic links (current or past), and biographical information (e.g., ID numbers, ancestors' names, or dates).

Avoid using information that is or might become publicly associated with the user or the account.

Avoid using information that the user's colleagues and/or acquaintances might know to be associated with the user.