Still swinging at 95... despite a brush with the Dillinger Gang.

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By Mark Miller

It was in 1955 when he hit his first golf ball. He was serving in the U.S. Air Force.

“We didn’t have much to do,” he says. “So my (commanding officer) suggested I take up golf. Some other guy gave me an old set of mis-matched clubs. I went out to the first tee and hit one right down the middle. ‘Well,’ I thought to myself, ‘that’s not very hard.’”

He’s now 95 years old and continues to play remarkably well, although not quite as often. You will find him almost every Tuesday at Bluffton’s Green Valley Golf Course, playing in their Senior League.

“I’m the oldest one in the group and still have one of the lowest handicaps,” he shares with a chuckle and without a hint of a brag. It’s just the way it is.

“Oh yes, I think it just came naturally to him,” his wife Jane chimes in.

— — —

Dr. Lou Schroeder has been retired for more than 30 years. He and Dr. Harry Walko had the Bluffton Veterinary Clinic. He will tell you how glad he was to sell the practice in 1989, sharing any number of stories about being awakened at 2 a.m.

“There were times I’d come back home and start to get undressed, and Jane would roll over and tell me to ‘Keep your clothes on, you’ve got another call,’” Lou recalls. “But you have to go, or the animals will die.”

After working his way through Ohio State University’s veterinarian program, he began to work at a clinic in Hartford City. One of his sources of income during college was the Reserve Officer Training Corps — “$24 a month,” he says. He was called up for active duty in 1955 and served on an Air Force base near Boston.

“It was like a two-year vacation,” he recalls. “I inspected places that provided food for the base.” He shares a story that a Master Sergeant was assigned to

Lou’s ‘not-so famous’ close encounter with the famous Dillinger Gang

Lou and Jane Schroeder both grew up just outside Leipsic, Ohio. His home was near a crossroads where five homes were relatively close together.

“I grew up down the road a bit,” Jane says.

“It was quite a neighborhood,” Lou adds with a chuckle. “Two of those neighbors were bootleggers.”

This was the early 1930s. Although near its end, prohibition was still in full swing, which meant home-made stills and raids by the government. One of his neighbors was the Kuhlman family — John and Maggie. Lou has some stories.

Kuhlman’s still was underneath his chicken coop and he often hid a batch of his products in the Schroeder corn field. He can recall a specific day when that stash was found
be his assistant. They would inspect a business in the morning and take in a Red Sox game in the afternoon.

“He was worried we’d get in trouble,” Schroeder continues, “He said he’d never had such a job where you get to go to a ball game.”

After his release from active duty, he stopped in Bluffton to visit Walko, who was one of his Ohio State classmates.

“I just stopped by to say ‘hi,’ but he wanted me to go on a couple calls with him and before I left he asked me to join his practice,” Schroeder shares.

“We hadn’t really liked Hartford City, but we liked Bluffton,” Jane, 91, adds. That was in 1957. More than six decades, four children, 20 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren later, they still live in their two-story ranch on Bluffton’s south side. Their bedroom is still upstairs, as is Lou’s “man cave.” He figures that walking up and down those stairs keeps them both nimble.

———

There just wasn’t much time to play golf during his career.

“I’d try once in a while, but every time, I’d see someone from the pro shop driving out on a cart,” he says. “I knew they’d have a message (from a client) and I’d have to go.” That all changed after he retired.

Someone introduced him to the Indiana Seniors Golf Association. The group played at a different course each week around the state and had a season-ending tournament. “We played some really nice courses but that meant we did a lot of driving, too,” he says. After “coming close” a few times in the tournament, “I set myself a goal of winning it. I really wanted to win that first-place trophy.”

He accomplished that, winning Low Gross in the Class A division in 2001. The tournament was held at the Tippecanoe Country Club in Monticello. “After I did that, I dropped out,” he says. “It became too much traveling.”

He’s also played a number of nice courses around the country on trips with Bluffton friends, but that began to take a toll as well. “The guy I roomed with snored a lot,” he says and then adds with a chuckle, “so now I just put up with my wife’s snoring.”

He’s won some local championships, including the club title at what was then Parlor City Country Club, which is where he once shot his best round— an 8-under-par round of 64.

Two years ago, Lou cut off the ends of his first two fingers on his right hand using a table saw.

“It was my own fault,” he says. “You’re a woodworker, too?” his visitor asks. It turns out he was a finish carpenter in college, one of several other jobs that paid his way through school. There was the ROTC, and “I also did some greenhouse work, cleaned some hog pens and milked cows” on a farm close to the Ohio State campus. He begins to share a story from those days.

“If you’re going to tell all your stories,” Jane asks and then turns to their visitor, “What would you like for dinner tonight?”

The couple will be celebrating their 70th anniversary June 13 of this year. “It was a Friday the 13th,” Jane says with a chuckle.

Do you have a story to tell or know someone who does? seniorliving@adamsells.com

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by law enforcement, who destroyed it and much of the cornfield, after which John Kuhlman was led away in handcuffs.

“I think he served 30 days,” Lou says, after which he fired his still back up.

For a time, several members of the John Dillinger Gang was “holed up” at one of the other homes. One of the gang members, Harry Pierpont, had grown up in the area and one of the first banks Dillinger had robbed was in nearby Bluffton, Ohio.

The Kuhlman’s oldest daughter, Mildred, was dating one of the group. She would later write an account of “her life in the Dillinger gang” that would be published in a national magazine — “True Story” magazine as Lou recalls. He does not believe Dillinger himself was ever there, but several men came and went for a period of time.

“My oldest brother, Virgil, dated the youngest (Kuhlman) daughter,” Lou continues. It seems that after a date to a big band concert in town, they went to a house where Virgil noticed every guy there had a holstered gun underneath their jackets. “He couldn’t wait to get out of there,” he laughs.

Lou was about seven years old at the time so he admits he really didn’t fully understand what was going on. He recalls hanging around a group of men one summer afternoon while they were throwing coal chunks up in the air and taking target practice at them.

“But my mom knew what was going on,” he continues his stories. They had a telephone in the house, but it was a “party line” shared by those neighboring homes. “It would ring at 3 o’clock in the morning and she’d pick it up and listen in.” Once the neighbors fully understood who was hanging around, “someone had the bright idea that they’d get their own guns and go chase them away. Thankfully, when they did, the gang was already gone. Probably saved their lives.”

—mfm

Lou Schroeder only recently began riding a cart in the Senior League at Bluffton’s Green Valley Golf Course. “Everybody else rides and I just can’t walk as fast as I used to,” he says. He is hoping to continue playing “for oh, hopefully another 10 years,” he says.
Summer travel will be a bit different this year. Here’s what to expect ...

By Christopher Elliott

I probably don’t have to tell you that summer travel will be a little different in 2021. But here it goes, anyway.

If you want a by-the-numbers-explanation, you can consult the Deloitte State of the Consumer Tracker, which offers a monthly read of travel sentiment. It suggests travelers remain reluctant to travel and waiting for the pandemic to subside. Generally speaking, more than half the country wants to stay home – or at least that’s what they say.

You can also look for yourself. Airport terminals and hotel lobbies continue to look like hospitals, with all those masks and latex gloves. And that will continue, according to experts like Rudy Dunlap.

“Even in destinations where vaccination is relatively widespread, mask-wearing, social distancing, and frequent sanitizing will continue to be the norm,” says Dunlap, a tourism expert and associate professor at Middle Tennessee State University.

What should you expect when you hit the road this summer? Travel will feel different. Americans will be visiting the same places, but for different reasons. Safety and reliable travel advice are more important than ever. And, for at least the next few weeks, the travel scene will still be relatively quiet.

People are thinking of travel differently. It’s shifted from a short-term activity to a lifestyle during the pandemic. Nancy Charles-Parker, a retired diplomat from Denver, visited the Big Island of Hawaii during the pandemic and decided to stay. She’s been on the island for the last seven months. Instead of attending cultural events and exploring new places, she’s led a quieter life. “My friends have been sea turtles, colorful birds, and bright-colored fish while I’m snorkeling, and occasional wild goats,” she says.

We’re going longer.

Travelers are making plans to leave longer and go farther this summer. “I’ve had requests for longer stays – even months – to fulfill bucket lists,” says Silvana Frappier, owner of North Star Destinations, a travel agency in Boston. Private rental homes are in high demand. Travelers use them as their headquarters and then explore an entire region or country.

Most of the world is still closed.

With most of Europe still off-limits due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, many Americans are choosing to vacation in Caribbean destinations like Aruba and the Bahamas.

Domestic destinations are big this summer, as they were last summer. But as the rest of the world struggles to reopen, Americans’ options for international travel remain limited, says Christine Buggy, vice president of marketing at Travelex. “Most Caribbean islands have reopened to international tourists and many Americans are traveling or planning trips to Turks and Caicos, Aruba, Bahamas, and other popular island destinations,” she says.

You can’t do it alone.

People discovered that having a travel agent can help you during an uncertain time – and help you out when you run into obstacles.

Critics left travel agents for dead in the years leading up to the pandemic. Many experts had written them off as relics, their jobs replaced by more efficient websites. But COVID-19 changed that. People discovered that having a travel agent can help you during an uncertain time. “A travel adviser can listen to your fears and help you design a trip,” says Phyllis Polaner, a Fort Lauderdale, Florida-based travel adviser with Smartflyer.

Safety matters more than ever.

The summer traveler will be much more cautious, say experts. “Travelers have adopted new filters for trip planning,” says Dan Richards, CEO of Global Rescue. “Especially for international excursions. They’re selecting destinations that have robust health care infrastructure and stable pandemic protocols with reliable border management.” Richards says they’re taking extra precautions, like signing up for a month of trip protection instead of seven or 14 days, to allow for a potential quarantine.

It’s not a free-for-all – at least not yet.

Consider Katherine Stewart’s situation. She’s accustomed to traveling several times a month as a commercial litigator. But after the shutdown, her law firm in Syracuse, New York, moved most of its meetings to video-conferencing. She spent the holidays at home. She’s planning her first trip this spring to attend a friend’s bachelorette party in Charleston, South Carolina. “The thing I’m most concerned about is the testing requirements,” she says.

Earlier this year, there was talk about requiring a negative COVID-19 test for domestic flights, although the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention didn’t go through with it in the end. But people like Stewart say it’s easier to stay home, for now.

The lockdowns, quarantines and testing requirements have changed the way we travel – maybe permanently. We’ll know more in a few weeks.

Summer travel in the ‘new’ normal: here’s how to do it.

Be sustainable, responsible – and slow. Those are the three post-pandemic buzzwords worth knowing, says Ioanna Dretta, CEO of Marketing Greece, a nonprofit organization that promotes Greek tourism. “More and more travel-
ers are turning to slow tourism, having as a top priority to explore the destination in-depth, through their senses, instead of crossing off a must-visit list,” she says.

Consider travel insurance. Before 9/11, only 10% of travelers purchased travel insurance, says Bailey Foster, vice president of trip insurance Trawick International, a travel insurance company. “Today we are seeing almost 40% of travelers who are booking trips are buying travel insurance,” she says. Why? Many countries now require insurance. And more travelers are worried about getting sick on vacation.

Check your passport. If you’re planning to travel internationally, make sure your passport is ready. Mandy McKaskle, a luxury travel adviser at Embark Beyond, says yours should be valid at least through the end of the year. “Renewal time is running 10 to 12 weeks, and even expedited service is 4 to 6 weeks,” she warns. “Planning ahead is crucial.”

Christopher Elliott has authored a number of travel books. His columns appear weekly in USA Today and the Washington Post.
Are you a history lover?
Paradise is as close as Muncie

By Tanya Isch Caylor

A collection of Ancient Greek and Roman coins lured us to the David Owsley Museum of Art at Ball State University in Muncie.

But there was so much to see — 11,000 works of art from six continents over a period of 5,000 years — that by the time we left, the coins were nearly an afterthought.

We spent nearly two hours at the museum, and it was only later I realized I’d seen only one of what Wikipedia lists as the museum’s most notable works of art: The Martyrdom of Saint Lawrence, by the 17th Century Italian painter Massimo Stanzione.

I hardly felt cheated. The museum doesn’t try to dictate what guests should pay attention to, and as a history lover, I was naturally drawn to pieces that were not only visually interesting but delivered the biggest time-travel thrills.

Whatever its artistic merits, Stanzione’s painting resonated with me because of the story conveyed on the canvas, as well as the note on the placard indicating that Stanzione died in the Plague of 1656.

The 1800 William Beechey portrait of King George III in full military uniform was even more intriguing. It gave me goosebumps to think that the guy who was king of England during the American Revolution had sat a few feet away while this paint was drying.

Then there was Henry Herman’s 1892 portrait of Rain in the Face, a Lakota war chief who, according to a poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, cut out the heart of General George Custer’s brother in the infamous 1867 Battle of Little Big Horn. Luckily this canvas was displayed with other pieces of Native American-themed art; if it had been on the upper levels with the rest of the paintings, I doubt I would have noticed it.

I also lingered near the fifth century Byzantine floor mosaic fragment of a Tigress and her cub, made of stones embedded in lime mortar. It was hard to imagine stepping on something so beautiful, constructed by an unknown artist in what is now known as Syria.

One particularly well designed time machine was a turtle-shaped epitaph container from the tomb of a sixth century Chinese military figure named General Weihua. According to the intricate inscriptions on the box, he died at age 49 in Shaxi Province.

Lest you think I’m biased toward all things ancient — though there may be some truth to that — a 1950s Mukyeem male helmet mask by an unknown artist in the Democratic Republic of Congo also made it onto my short list of favorites, as did several pieces from the cur-
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rent Pop Art exhibit, including an Andy Warhol Campbell’s Soup print.

The mask, like so many objects on my personal list of favorites, was a donation from David Owsley, grandson of one of the five Ball brothers for whom Ball State is named.

Owsley is obviously a serious collector with deep pockets, but he’s more than just the spoiled scion of a wealthy family. He studied art history at both Harvard and NYU and has worked at several museums, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York, as well as a stint as the curator of antiquities at the Carnegie-Mellon Institute in Pittsburgh.

As for those Ancient Greek and Roman coins that brought us to the museum in the first place, those were from the collection of Ned H. Griner, a recently deceased BSU art professor. Griner’s 109 coins, many in impressive condition, were hung in a glass case so you could view both sides. A placard on the display invited guests to read more about each coin by either going online or asking for a free catalog. To my surprise, when I requested the catalog I was handed a book with photographs of the entire collection. “You mean I get to keep this?” I asked.

“Sure,” answered the student at the front desk. “We’ve got a whole bunch of those.”

My husband’s museum finds were almost entirely different from my own, I discovered as we compared notes afterward at the Guardian, a craft brewery not far from the BSU campus.

He’d been riveted by sculptures I hadn’t even noticed, along with totem poles and postmodern American home furnishings.

Amusingly, one of his favorite objects had less to do with its beauty than its resilience: a 2,000-year-old Roman glass jar that was still mostly intact after all these years.

You don’t have to visit the museum to view its holdings, more than 2,000 of which are catalogued online. But given the free admission, short drive and impressive holdings, why not?

The writer, a Wells County resident, can be reached at tischcaylor@gmail.com
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Moser served as a medic in the Philippines

By Kayleen Reusser

“Daily I witnessed injured soldiers airlifted in from the front lines,” said Ervin Moser of Bluffton. Moser worked as a medic in a tent hospital in the Philippines during World War II. Sadly, he often had to treat people he knew. “Three of the guys in my company were killed,” he added.

Moser graduated from Bluffton High School in 1941. He worked in his family’s restaurant with sister Goldie Moser until he was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1944. During basic training at Fort Bragg in South Carolina, Moser and other American soldiers were trained to shoot M1 carbine rifles. Having scored high on tests for medical aptitude, Moser was sent for training at Camp Grant in Illinois. He completed additional training at Fort Lewis in Washington, Camp Ellis in Illinois and Camp Stoneman in California.

Private First Class Moser shipped out via converted troop ship to New Guinea, then Leyte in the Philippines where he worked at the 312th General Hospital, a tent hospital with 300 beds.

Though most of his time that year was spent working with patients, Moser also assisted in the hospital’s kitchen since he knew how to cook. “We peeled a lot of potatoes and ate a lot of beans,” he said. Much of the military’s food was imported. “We got fresh eggs and decent meat from Australia,” he added.

One day Corporal Moser (he had been promoted) felt feverish and weak. A doctor confirmed he had contracted the dreaded disease of yellow fever. With a loss of appetite, Moser lost 30 pounds, eventually weighing only 125.

By the time he was dismissed from the hospital, it was August 1945. The war was over. Soldiers returned home, based on points earned for time in service. Moser had to stay overseas until earning his required number of points. Unable to return to the hospital because of his illness, he was given the task of guarding Japanese prisoners of war in Manila. “We assigned them daily work details of cleaning up the yard and custodial tasks,” he said.

When he had earned enough points to go home, Moser traveled on a liberty
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ship from the Philippines to Olympia, Washington. He then flew to Indianapolis where he was officially discharged on May 7, 1946.

One souvenir Moser took home was a bit unusual — a monkey. “The nurses at the hospital had given it to me,” he said. “I named it ‘Rita’ after Hollywood actress and pin-up girl Rita Hayworth.”

In 1946 Moser married Lula Fiechter, a young woman from his hometown whom he had known before the war. The two had written dozens of letters during the war. The Mosers lived in Bluffton and owned a farm machinery dealership, Moser Implement, for much of their married lives, and were married 51 years before Lula’s death in 1998.

They became parents to a daughter, Brenda. Ervin and Brenda live in Bluffton. Ervin Moser participated in Honor Flight for Northeast Indiana in May 2014.

Decades after his time of service during World War II, Moser applied for his records from the National Personnel Records Center. Unfortunately, on July 12, 1973, a fire at the center destroyed approximately 18 million official military personnel files.

Miraculously, Moser’s records were salvaged from the fire. He displays his medals and a copy of his record, burnt around the edges, in a display case in his home.

Moser has positive remembrances of his time in the Army. “We made out the best we could,” he said. “I made good friends there and we kept busy, but it was good. I don’t regret being there.”

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Kayleen Reusser, of Bluffton, is a former regular contributor to Senior Living and News-Banner Publications. She has written a series of books, sharing the stories of area veterans of World War II. This story is from “We Fought to Win: American World War II Veterans Share Their Stories.” The book is available on the internet and is also available at The News-Banner office in Bluffton.

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Warwick County in Southern Indiana has a long, rich heritage rooted in coal. Cypress Creek, Burke, Big Creek, Black Diamond, Big Four, Hill Crest, Polk Patch, Tecumseh, Swan Creek and Sunlight were some of the more than 100 mines scattered throughout the county. And, in the 1960s and 1970s, it was the largest coal producer in the state.

The former Lynnville Mine outside Lynnville, located just north of I-64 on Ind. 68, was reclaimed and transformed into the Museum of the Coal Industry in 1985 by Leland Mason. He got the idea for the museum when an abandoned Bucyrus 50B six-yard coal loader at the Loy Creek Field Mine became available. He had the huge piece of equipment, which was built in Evansville in 1926, moved to the museum property and put on display.

His vision was to create a place where the public could come to learn about the history of mining and see an example of how land can be put back to use after mining and reclamation. There is no admission fee to tour the museum, but donations are welcome.

The museum is a work in progress. A building containing both a company store and a company house has been constructed with the purpose of educating visitors about the importance of the company store, and how people lived during the 1880s to the 1930s in company-owned dwellings. It is furnished as it might have been in that period.

One of the big attractions is Tinker Bell, an EMD SW1 switcher locomotive built in 1940. The engine, which was used at the Peabody Lynnville Mine from 1968 to 1999, sat rusting on a siding track at another site until Peabody Energy donated it to the museum in 2010. It was stripped and repainted to look like it had when it was working at the mine. Volunteers are restoring the interior of the cab.

Since opening, the museum has been the recipient of hundreds of pieces of equipment and mining memorabilia. Visitors can see underground mine cars once pulled by mules, loader buckets that extracted coal by the ton, a drill used to place explosive charges and more. Several railroad coal cars are expected in the near future. The museum is operated by volunteers, most of whom are retired miners.

The main building is crammed from floor to ceiling with memorabilia and artifacts: books, ledgers, photos, lamps, pot-belly stoves, a wide array of tools, miner’s boots, belt buckles, a colorful wall of hard hats and some toys.

The museum maintains a website at www.lynnvillecoalmuseum.org. Hours now through October are Sundays noon
Inside the main building is a wall of hard hats worn by miners who worked at various mines throughout Warwick County. In the 1960s and 1970s the county was the state’s largest coal producer.
New parents may not be able to visualize that one day their largest expenditures won’t be centralized around providing necessities for their children. Adults go through many years of paying for diapers, toys, clothing, food, and education for their children. Yet, when the children have flown the coop, spending patterns change, and even more changes await come retirement.

According to a 2020 survey from the financial services firm Edward Jones, 68 percent of workers soon to retire said they had no idea how much they should be setting aside for expenses, particularly health care and long-term care. Professionals approaching retirement would be wise to analyze the Consumer Price Index - Elderly (CPI-E). It is a good reference to estimate which future expenses will cost the most after retirement. The Bureau of Labor Statistics looks at consumer spending and uses various data to determine the rate of inflation in key areas that apply to older adults starting at age 62.

Individuals may be surprised to learn about where they’ll be spending the bulk of their money when they get older. Here’s a look at some key categories.

- Housing: According to data from the Employee Benefit Research Institute, in 2019, the most recent year for which data is available, housing accounted for roughly 49 percent of all spending for seniors. Focus should be centered on lowering those costs when a fixed income is imminent. The possibilities include paying off a mortgage; down-sizing a home to have a lower rent or mortgage payment; refinancing a home to a fixed-rate loan so that costs are predictable; and taking on a tenant to offset costs.

- Food: The cost of food will not change dramatically, but it can eat into your budget. Even though food costs may decline when there’s only two mouths to feed, food and beverage spending may go up due to more leisure time and dining out. Utilize senior discounts by shopping on days when stores offer percentages off purchases. Save money on restaurant spending by eating out at lunch instead of dinner, splitting plates or skipping appetizers.

- Healthcare: Experts warn that while many expenses decline in retirement, health care spending increases. According to Fidelity, the average 65-year-old couple retiring in 2020 in the United States needed roughly $295,000 just to cover their retirement health care expenses. Those with family histories of severe illnesses or those with preexisting conditions will need even more.

It’s also important to realize that roughly half of the population will need long-term care at some point, offers The Motley Fool, and that requires advanced budgeting as well.

Many people find that Medicare supplement plans can bridge the gap in expenses that government-run plans will not cover. Saving through a health savings account (HSA) when employed also can create extra cash on hand for retirement expenses. Understanding which retirement expenses will be high can help people plan better for the future.
Can eating berries improve your memory?

Berries are a great source of antioxidants, fiber, vitamin C and several other nutrients. But did you know they may also support memory function? Here’s a look at how berries can give your brain a boost.

**The role of polyphenols**

For years, researchers around the world have been exploring whether the consumption of certain fruits can help prevent memory loss and other types of cognitive decline associated with aging. Several studies indicate that polyphenols, a micronutrient found in plant-based foods such as blueberries and grapes, might be the key. While more research is needed, it seems that polyphenols may improve long-term memory function and help delay age-related cognitive decline.

**Which fruits to favor**

In addition to being present in blueberries and grapes, polyphenols can be found in black currants, elderberries, strawberries, cranberries, blackberries and more. To reap the benefits of berries, enjoy them fresh, frozen or dried. Eat them as a snack, add them to a meal or drink them in a smoothie. Alternatively, you can opt to take a berry extract supplement, but be sure to consult your doctor beforehand.

To learn more about the health benefits of berries and other foods, book an appointment with a dietitian in your area.

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Mules were used in the late 1800s to pull mine cars like this from deep mine shafts. The EMD SW1 switcher locomotive built in 1940 (nicknamed Tinker Bell) moved coal at the Peabody Lynnville Mine from 1968 to 1999 and became a museum attraction in 2010.

Lynnville’s mining museum

Continued from page 14

to 4 p.m., Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The museum is closed Wednesdays. From October through March it is open only Fridays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

You should note that Warrick County is in the Central Time Zone.

The easiest way to get to the museum is to drive south on I-65 from Indianapolis to Clarksville and take I-265 west to I-64 and follow it to Lynnville. At Exit 39, go north to Ind. 68, then west to the museum on the right.

The writer, a Fort Wayne resident, may be reached at natrod2002@yahoo.com

Abandoned Bucyrus 50B, six-yard coal loader was the first piece of equipment put on display at the museum. It was built in Evansville in 1926.
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SALES INSTALLATION SERVICE AGREEMENTS EMERGENCY SERVICE

Mike Meade of Bluffton has owned this 1953 Ford F-100 truck since 1997. (Photos by Bob Caylor)

Meade almost completely remade the interior of his truck, including new upholstery, a customized instrument panel and a tilt steering wheel.

“The most beautiful truck they ever made.”
A ‘stock Ford F-100’
(but only on the outside)

By Bob Caylor

When Mike Meade found a classic truck he really loved, he settled in for the long haul. He’s had his 1953 Ford F-100 since 1997.

He happened upon it in the car corral beside the Labor Day auction in Auburn. That temporary used-car where people brought collectible cars to sell on their own was a long tradition attached to the collector-car auctions that began in Auburn 50 years ago this year.

Meade is charmed to this day that when he finally found the F-100 that he wanted, an hour north of his home in Bluffton, it turned out to belong to Don Reiling of Ossian.

“It was bone-stock except for the paint. It had a little six-cylinder with a three-speed on the tree,” Meade remembers.

That little six the F-100 came with was good for about 105 horsepower when it was new. Compared to the pick-ups at the time, that power wasn’t bad, but it wouldn’t do for Meade. He replaced the stock engine with a Chevrolet 350. He noted that Chevrolet parts are less expensive and easier to find than stock replacement parts for a truck now 68 years old. He’s never had the truck’s new horsepower measured, but he expects it’s around 300 horsepower.

That hearty V-8 makes for a lot more weight and a lot more torque at the heart of an old F-100, so he modified its underpinnings extensively, beginning with a front-end from a 1979 Chrysler LeBaron. He converted it to an automatic transmission, added a custom instrument panel, new upholstery, a new headliner, a tilt steering wheel from a Chevy, and more.

Just as it came from a Wells County seller, updating it involved Wells County craftsmen, too. The late Mack Stewart of Bluffton did the engine work. Body work was performed by J&A Innovations in Uniondale.

He’s never tinkered much with the exterior design of the truck. The 1953 was the beginning of the F-100 truck line, and with it, Ford took a big step toward bringing the refinements of cars to trucks. The bench seat in its wider cab could seat three men comfortably.
12 practices for safe gardening

Many people take up gardening after they retire, and with good reason. In addition to being an enjoyable hobby, it provides a number of physical and mental health benefits. Here are a few tips to help you safely garden.

1. Warm up before you get started by stretching your neck, back, shoulders and other muscles.
2. Adopt a comfortable posture. Keep your back straight, work within arm’s reach and use knee pads.
3. Alternate between tasks to avoid tendinitis and other injuries caused by repetitive movements.
4. Use the right tools. Move around dirt and cumbersome equipment in a wheelbarrow.
5. Make sure to keep a water bottle nearby so you remember to stay hydrated.
6. Take breaks whenever you feel tired.
7. On hot summer days, sit in the shade or retreat to an air-conditioned space.
8. Avoid gardening between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. when the sun is strongest.
10. Apply sunscreen to any exposed skin, and wear sunglasses that protect against UVA and UVB rays.
11. Keep the rows of your garden clear and put tools away when you’re done with them to avoid tripping and falling.

Pick up the tools and plants you need at a garden center near you.
Skewered chicken goes great on the grill

Spiedini of Chicken and Zucchini with Almond Salsa Verde

Makes 6 servings

Salsa:
1 cup chopped flat parsley
2 tablespoons chopped almonds, toasted
2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives
3 tablespoons capers, chopped
1/2 teaspoon grated lemon rind
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh oregano
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 garlic clove, minced

Spiedini:
1 1/2 pounds skinless, boneless chicken breast, cut into 1-inch pieces
6 small zucchini, cut into 1-inch slices (about 11/4 pounds)

Cooking spray
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Soak 12 (10-inch) wooden skewers in water for 30 minutes to prevent burning.

Bring the grill to medium-high heat.

To prepare the salsa, combine the first 12 ingredients; set aside.

To prepare the spiedini, thread the chicken and zucchini alternately on each of the 12 skewers. Coat the spiedini with cooking spray; sprinkle evenly with 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper. Place on a grill rack; grill 6 minutes or until done, turning once. Serve with salsa.

Tip: Prepare the salsa up to a day ahead, and assemble the skewers earlier in the day. Coat with the seasonings just before grilling.

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