

Points East

By Ike Adams



Loretta and I had decided that we didn't need to grow any cabbage in the garden this year.

She has discovered some kind of brought-on kraut that you can find in most grocery stores for about a dollar a quart and you sure can't make it for that if you believe your time is money. Plus, you can buy fresh cabbage for less than a dollar a head when it's in season but you still have to pay fifty cents apiece for transplants unless you raised your own, in which case, you can't give them away.

Then you've got all that bending and lifting and hoeing and fertilizing and fighting cut worms and leaf hoppers before you harvest the first head. But, at least, unlike zucchini, you can give cabbage to your non-gardening friends if it isn't busted open and shows no sign that a bug ever lit upon it, much less chewed a few holes here and there. And it is awful pretty growing there in the garden. So it is with a bit of reluctance that you write off growing cabbage.

Three weeks ago I wound up in the hospital because my body seemed to have stopped making blood and I was about to run dry. The choices were to get my behind checked in and get a refill or die and there wasn't any time to sit around and study about it.

Despite a host of other health problems, I'm still rather fond of living and I told Loretta not to make a big deal out of the hospital visit. But that's like telling the wind not to blow, the creeks to stop flowing and the bees to stop making honey.

The nurses hadn't even finished taking my vital signs until one old friend I hadn't seen in four years, Jeff Brenzel, passing through Berea from Connecticut and our mutual pal, Tom Miller, were sitting beside my bed there in St. Joseph's, making their own diagnosis and advising the regular medical staff as to how they would proceed with my treatment if it was left up to them. Brenzel and Miller have absolutely no medical training but they would never let something that mundane prevent them

from rendering their opinions.

When they had left, Amber Field, the RN attending to my every need, asked if those guys were really my good friends. When I nodded that, indeed they were, Nurse Amber advised the I didn't need to be making any enemies.

Later in the day, best pal, Ralph King stopped in with a potted plant because, according to Ralph, you should never visit anyone in the hospital without taking them flowers or a plant. Ralph hadn't had time to stop at the florists but somewhere along the way he had managed to find someone growing cabbage plants. He'd pulled up one with three leaves, stuck it, along with a handful of dirt, in a McDonald's styrofoam coffee cup and reverently placed it on my nightstand.

Loretta promptly named the baby cabbage Ralph. So when, a few days later, we were shopping for plants at Shell's Greenhouses there on 52 between Paint Lick and Lancaster, she allowed that I'd better get a 3-pack of cabbage plants so that Ralph wouldn't be there all alone in our garden. Of course, calling the vegetable patch "our garden" is sort of like saying that I get up in the morning and put on "our pants".

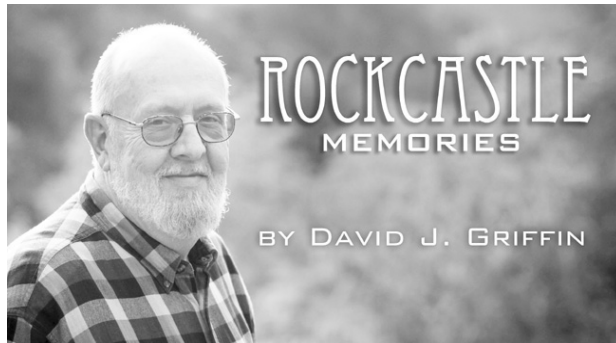
But I bought the plants and set them out. Then last weekend we were over in Casey County and I was shopping for some heirloom Mennonite tomato plants when the lady at the plant stand insisted that I take 3 more cabbage plants as a gift because nobody was buying them this late in the season.

So I set them out too. Then, last night we were sitting on the front porch and I was pointing out what I had growing where and when I got to the cabbage Loretta wanted to know which one was Ralph.

I showed her that he was the first one in the row and that he was obviously of a different variety than the other six early flat Dutch because his leaves were rounder and a much paler green.

Loretta said, "Well I wouldn't have named him Ralph if he wasn't different

(Cont. to A4)



Boys And Their Pocketknives

There was a time when young boys carried pocketknives with them everywhere they went, including to school and even to church. It was just standard operating procedure to have your knife in your pocket. You simply never knew when you would need to sharpen a pencil, cut a piece of string, remove a splinter, open a box, or just play a game of mumble peg. Every boy I knew in elementary school had a knife with them in their jeans pocket.

And do you know what? I never saw anyone even threaten to use a knife to intentionally hurt someone. They were our pocket tools, and we knew how to use them effectively. Our fathers, grandfathers, and even our older brothers taught us how to handle a pocketknife in the safest way possible. And we did.

Some may think that we were obsessed with our knives, and I suppose in some ways that we were. That is, we never left home without one in our pockets. Most of us had several different knives that we used for a variety of reasons. I had one that I carried most of the time. Actually, it was not very sharp because I always used it to stick in the ground when playing our favorite game, mumble peg.

We usually played that game in my grandfather's (Pop) yard under one of his huge shade trees. I can remember countless times when Kenneth Hansel, Paul Carter, Earl Benton Cromer, Billy Ramsey, Paul Hansel, and I sat in a circle taking turns sticking our knives in the ground hoping to make the looser of the game "chew the peg."

There were other times when I took my sharpest knife with me, especially if I was going fishing in one of the local farm ponds. You could not even attempt to "gut" and clean a fish with a dull knife. In those days, we did not even subscribe to the principle of "catch and release" because our mothers were home anticipating our return with dinner in our buckets. We fished to eat our catch! My grandparents had a special place next to the smokehouse where we were supposed to do our fish cleaning. That is why we carried our sharpest knives on those days. I still remember that remarkable taste of bluegill, fried potatoes, and home-made cornbread straight from an iron skillet. Now that, my friends, is a fabulous feast!

When I think of the knives that we had back then, I immediately remember some of the specific knives that my friends and I owned and carried with us. One of my favorites was a Tree Brand Boker with stag handles. Our first knives were not stainless steel, so we had to be diligent in keeping them adequately oiled and free from dirt and dust. I had a small can of 3-in-1 oil that I kept in my dresser drawer to use on my knives in their regular maintenance.

Some of the most prized of our knives were those named after "gun companies," such as Winchester and Remington. Those brands were kept in our homes and were never used for our games. Pop taught me about some of these "collectibles" and made sure that they, too, were kept in good shape.

During the 50's, "nostalgia knives" were promoted to be sold to young boys. Some of these were named after our TV heroes, such as Roy Rogers, Hopalong Cassidy, The Lone Ranger, and even Rin Tin Tin. We purchased them from cereal

boxes and from advertisements on television. But they were merely promotional trinkets, and they lacked the precision of finely crafted brands.

Pop's favorite brand was a Schrade Walden, and he kept it for years and years. When he died many years ago, my mother gave me his knife. I had it restored to its original condition. I replaced one of the blades and even had a new stag handle attached to one side of the knife. I would not take anything for this antique pocketknife because it once belonged to Pop.

I am so glad that I was in elementary school when it was alright for a boy to carry and use a pocketknife as a normal part of our lives. I still put a pocketknife in my pocket every day before leaving home. I am never without a trusty knife in my possession. The uses that I regularly find for my knives are countless. Boys carrying

(Cont. to A4)

Strange... But True?

by: Tonya J. Cook



Superstitions: How They Have Become Commonplace In Our Lives II

In this modern era with its high-tech equipment, in this, the "information age", we yet find something very old deeply woven into the very fabric of our thinking that rears its head throwing us back to the Dark Ages of Europe. What is it? Why do we practice it? How did it begin? Why does it still exist? It is superstition, and it practiced to a degree by most, even the well-educated and informed people in all walks of life.

Are you surprised? Don't be. When you are dining with someone and the salt is spilled it is a common reaction that a pinch of salt is thrown over the left shoulder. Salt at one time was costly and only enjoyed by the rich, and it was thought to be bad luck if spilled. The devil lurked over the left shoulder to curse you with ill will, so the salt appeased him as a small offering. People avoid the number 13 (there were thirteen attending the Last Supper). People

will cross the street to avoid walking under a ladder (at the Crucifixion, Satan supposedly waited under a ladder leaning against Christ's cross, and still waits there). These are only a few, more common superstitions that when practiced no one even gives a second thought.

Last week, superstitions concerning death were discussed. Death omens are some of the more common superstitions since at some point it will come to us all. Death omens will continue this week.

There are many omens concerning funerals themselves. To have a funeral on Friday indicates another death in the family within a year. It's bad luck to count the cars in a funeral cartage. It's bad luck to meet a funeral head on. Thunder following a funeral indicates the deceased has reached heaven. New apparel, especially shoes, shouldn't be worn to a funeral. Pointing to a funeral cartage will cause you to die within a month. Pregnant women shouldn't attend funerals.

You may determine the character of a person by their grave. A good person will produce flowers; an evil person, weeds.

Other omens are if a mirror or picture falls and breaks, someone in the house will die soon. A white moth either inside or trying to get in a house is a death omen. If there are three people in a photo, the one in the center will be the first to die.

If thirteen people sit down to eat one of them will die within the year. To drop an umbrella in the house means there will be a murder in the house.

This will conclude this series about death omens. If nothing else, they have been interesting, and yes, even debatable and even strange...but true?

Source: Corsinet.com, trivia-unusual trivia collection

Our Readers Write

Saltpetre Cave Open House a success...

Dear Editor,

Well, another open house has come and gone. We had a little over 1,100 visitors sign our guest book and some of those signatures represent whole families.

I would like to individually thank all who made our 22nd Annual Open House possible but I know I would leave out a name or two, so, I would like to thank all in clusters. You know who you are. First, I would like to thank the Great Saltpetre Cave Preserve Management Committee for their tireless hours of work necessary to pull this event together. I would also like to thank members of the Rockcastle Karst Conservancy, the Greater Cincinnati Grotto, Bluegrass Grotto, and Dayton Underground Grotto for coming together and doing all they do to make this and other events possible. We had five past GSP Management Committee Chairmen attending and sharing their knowledge, expertise, and endless energy. We had the most "new" Grotto members I've seen in a while helping on all levels. We had one newer member who's goal was to lead a trip by the end of the weekend and a couple

of others who washed dishes for over an hour at a time plus others who asked to help wherever possible.

Thanks to the Mt. Vernon Signal for their promotion of our event and to Climax Water's generous support.

Special thanks to Roland Mullins (80+yo) for sharing his past as a child who lived and played along Crooked Creek. His stamp of approval for the way we have managed this property confirms to me that we are on the right path. He told me yesterday that one of his fears was that someday the property with his family cemetery and remains of a couple of homesteads

(Cont. to A4)

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25th Annual 2013 Dix River Festival

May 23rd, 24th and 25th, 2013

Brodhead, Kentucky

Entertainment Schedule:

Thursday, May 23rd

7 to 7:45 p.m. Jake Vanover & Jordon Leigh
8 to 10 p.m. Tony Mills Band

Friday, May 24th

5 to 6 p.m. Ruby Powell & Friends
6 to ? Bike Nite
(sponsored by Brodhead Dari Delite)
6 to 7:45 p.m. Old Town Project
Bluegrass Band
8 to 11 p.m. Medley Boys Band

Saturday, May 25th

Young Republicans Dunking Booth

8:30 a.m. Brodhead Hustle - 2 mile run/walk
10 a.m. Motorcycle Poker Run
11 to 11:45 a.m. Ky. Romp & Stomp
12 to 12:45 a.m. Mark Carpenter & Wilderness Road Band
Inflatables for Kids (Free-12 and under)
Jake Vanover
Carl Doan Band & Friends
Shaolin Do Karate
Brodhead Jail (\$5 to put someone in \$5 to get out)
Bittersweet Cloggers
PARADE
Level Green Band
Wild River Band

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