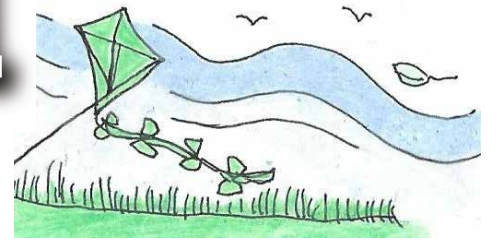


Ferguson

NEIGHBORHOOD

SINCE NEWS 2021



Serving Ferguson and Surrounding Communities

NASA Selects Local Team

Far too often, when youth are mentioned, it is in bad light. I was blessed recently to meet with what I hope is our future. Five young students from Gina Pereda's 8th grade science class at the Ferguson Florissant School District STEAM Academy Middle School completely wowed me with not only their smarts, but eagerness to work as a team to accomplish a common goal: success.

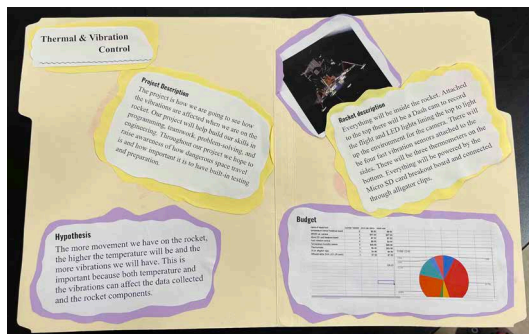
The team was selected as winners of NASA's TechRise Student Challenge which is a national science competition by NASA to receive a \$1500 grant. They will work directly with NASA mentors to complete their project which will be launched on a future NASA rocket powered lander test flight on a test field designed to simulate the moon's surface.

Their project centers around detecting vibrations of a rocket as it rises in altitude and the temperature changes that occur as a result. They hope to build a sensor that will give astronauts advanced notice of these changes which will allow them to deploy early safety measures.

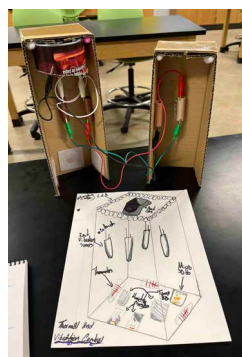
They explained to me the constraints and parameters they are faced with. The project has size and weight concerns as it has to fit in an area the size of a Velveeta box. By working on this project they hope to learn new skills that will give them experience and hopefully open doors in their future.

With a spring deadline looming, they meet weekly with NASA to assure their project is on schedule and within budget. Impressive? Even more so when I learned this was the schools first time entering the contest.

- Papa Deau



Project Description



Project Mock-up



The Team (left to right): Olivia Ramspott (budget) Thomas Chapman (Designer), Henry Bowes (Recorder), Miyauna Bryant (Project Manager), Garek Bonkowski (budget)



Want to grow your own food, but aren't sure where to start?

EarthDance Organic Farm School is here to help! Spring Training for Gardeners is a 5-week quick-start course designed to help you start, or up your gardening game!

When? Spring Training for Gardeners takes place from March 13th - April 13th!

How much does it cost? The full course (5 live-online classes + 3 hands-on sessions) is \$299. The online course (5 live-online classes) is \$99.

We are committed to making our programs accessible to all - discounts are available!

Where? In person at our 14-acre teaching farm in Ferguson, Live-Online for 5 consecutive Wednesday evenings.

Are you a Ferg-Flor Schools teacher or administrator? You can take Spring Training this year as PAID professional development! Sign up now using the "FFSD Registration" button on our website.

Scan the QR code to register or visit www.earthdancefarms.org to learn more! Or call 314-521-1006.



Registration now open!



March News and Events at the Ferguson Public Library

For more information, please call us at 314-521-4820 or visit us online at fergusonlibrary.net

Children and Teen Events

Stories and Songs for Little Ones

Join us for storytime! Ages 0-5.
Wednesdays at 10 am
Saturday, Mar. 2 at 10 am

Eclipse Exploration

Learn all about the upcoming eclipse!
Register at bit.ly/fmpeclipse24.
Wednesday, Mar. 13 at 6 pm

Lego Club

Drop in and build a masterpiece with our Lego bricks! Ages 6-11.
Saturday, Mar. 16 at 2 pm

Spring Welcome

Celebrate the return of spring with some crafts! Ages 6-17.
Tuesday, Mar. 26 from 1-4 pm

Adult Events

Readings on Race Book Club

We will discuss chapters 1-6 of *The Righteous Mind* by Jonathan Haidt.
Monday, Mar. 11 at 6 pm

Conversations and Coffee

Enjoy a discussion of all the latest news over refreshments!
Tuesday, Mar. 12 at 6 pm

Better Nutrition Makes a Better (and Healthier) You

Good nutrition is the foundation of good health!
Thursday, Mar. 14 at 6 pm

Topics in Health: Staying Active for Seniors

We'll discuss ways to stay physically active as we grow older.
Tuesday, Mar. 19 at 6 pm

Native Gardening

Get tips and tricks on the benefits of planting native plants.
Wednesday, Mar. 27 at 6 pm

Exquisite Eggs

Up your egg decorating game at this program! Adults and teens.
Friday, Mar. 29 at 3 pm

All Ages Events

African Dance with Karol Ababa

Hear the Djembe drums and feel the rhythms of the ancient Mali empire!
Register at bit.ly/fmpldance24.
Saturday, Mar. 9 at 1 pm

Cultural Cuisine

This month, we head to Cuba with Tamara Landeiro of Havana's Cuisine! Register at bit.ly/fmplcultural23.
Wednesday, Mar. 20 at 6 pm

March Craft Kits

- March 4-9:** Whirlybirds
- March 18-23:** Bumblebee Magnet

Pick up a free kit while supplies last!

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If You Have Items of Interest, Contact - asroc873@charter.net

March Celebration Shout-outs



- 7 Happy Birthday Sandy Tricamo
 - 8 Happy Birthday Frank Fujarski
 - 11 Happy 11th Birthday Aaron Young
 - 14 Happy Birthday Jack Bowes
 - 14 Happy Birthday LaTonya Neely
 - 20 Happy Birthday Richard Bowes
 - 24 Happy Birthday Jody Schneider
 - 25 Happy 4th Birthday Beck Schmermund
 - 28 Happy Birthday Luke Nadeau
- God has blessed again, congratulations Dr. Deb Curry D.O.C. -
We're proud of you, Jesus loves you, we love you - Your family



Email Shout-outs to asroc873@charter.net - deadline is the 15th of each month

March at a Glance



- 1 Opening Day Trout Season
- 2 Jeske Park Kite Give-away 9-Noon
(children 12 and under accompanied by parent or guardian)
- 4 Neighborhood League (bi-monthly) 7pm
- 5 Forestwood Neighborhood Meeting 7pm
- 10 Daylight savings Time - Spring Ahead
- 11 First Night of Ramadan
- 12 Jeske Park Neighborhood Meeting 7PM
- 12 North Elizabeth Neighborhood Meeting 7PM
- 16 NorthHills Neighborhood Meeting 10AM
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 19 Spring Begins
- 21 West Neighborhood Meeting 6PM
- 24 Palm Sunday
- 25 Holi
- 25 South West Neighborhood Meeting 6PM
- 28 South Central Neighborhood Meeting 6PM
- 28 Ferguson Woods Neighborhood Meeting 7PM
- 29 Good Friday
- 31 Easter

FERGUSON EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE AT JANUARY-WABASH MEMORIAL PARK

The annual 2024 Ecumenical Easter Sunrise Service will be held Sunday, March 31 at 6:30 AM at January-Wabash Memorial Park, located at January Avenue and North Florissant Road. The service will be held outside on the west side of the lake. Bring your own chair, if desired. Sharing a brief meditation for the informal service will be The Rev. Aaron Rogers, Pastor of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church which has served the Ferguson area in many capacities, including hosting the Winter Farmer's Market. Clergy from various churches and ministries in Ferguson will also participate. Ahren Stock, instrumental music teacher at Hawken School in Lyndhurst, Ohio will return to St. Louis to play trumpet during the service. What a great way to begin the celebration of resurrection and new life!

This special service is sponsored by the Ferguson Ministries Alliance. A free-will offering will be received for PAKT which benefits the Ferguson Community. For more information, please contact Rev. Ellie Stock (314) 521-8418 or elliestock@aol.com

PRAY FOR PEACE

The Ferguson Newspaper Group may be reached

text/voice: 314 249-6323
 email: asroc873@charter.net
 Like us on Facebook @fergusonneighborhoodnews
 On-line edition fergusonsmallbusinessdistrict.com/

This paper is made possible through volunteers and advertisers

Advertise with the paper

Copy for ads for the paper must be received by the 15th of the month for inclusion in the following month's paper.
 Please send all ads to Gary: asroc873@charter.net

Volunteer with the paper

- Info Gathering
- City Meetings - attend and summarize City Council Meetings
- Other Meetings - assure all city-wide events summaries gathered
- Neighborhood groups
- Diversity Meetings
- Business Spotlight

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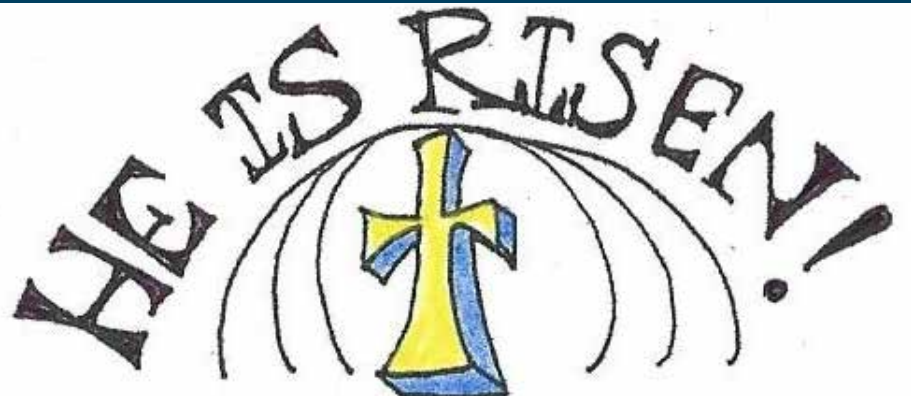


FERGUSON INDOOR WINTER FARMERS MARKET

March 16, 9am-12pm

Produce, baked goods, meat, eggs, hot food, free coffee, live music!


Every third Saturday through April at St. Stephen's Church, 33 N. Clay



ARTFUL CONSIDERATIONS

We are seeking anyone interested in the arts to take over as author of Artful Considerations.

If you would like to pick up this column, please contact the Ferguson Newspaper Group either by email or phone.




VOTE for Naquittia Noah

April 2nd 2024


Worked with the Ferguson Council to responsibly allocate the \$4 million (ARPA) dollars towards the demolition of vacant derelict homes, street and infrastructure repairs, an exterior home grant program and efficient street lighting in our neighborhoods.

Advocate for Ward 3 Neighborhood Associations (North Hills, Southwest, South Central, Southeast, Forestwood and Nesbit Newton) revitalization and community events.

Advocating for increased traffic calming implementations on Ferguson streets. (Stops Signs and Speed Humps)

Ferguson Business Community Supporter and Promoter.

Advocate for UNITY that makes Ferguson stronger.



STAY THE COURSE

VOTE APRIL 2 TO RETAIN CITY COUNCILMAN BLAKE ASHBY FOR WARD 2

As your Council representative, I will:

- Work with the Council and the City to help satisfy and exit the Consent Decree
- Continue building our police staff and giving them additional tools to fight lawlessness
- Continue the focus on improving neighborhoods by tearing down derelict homes, repairing roads, and adding speed humps
- Continue to encourage new business growth and inclusivity

Now is not the time to change directions, or to risk bringing conflict or inexperience to the Council

Retaining Councilman Blake Ashby is the right choice. Help Ferguson Stay the Course!

For more information, contact Blake Ashby at (314) 246-0233 or blake@blakeashby.org

Paid for by the Committee to Elect Blake Ashby, Rob Chabot, Treasurer



Re-Elect Naquittia Noah

Serving and Representing Ward 3 Ferguson

Noah

Ferguson City Council Ward 3

Our Hometown Choice

Paid for by Committee To Elect Naquittia Noah, Waleeta Hall-Hines, Treasurer

CROSSWORD

The Cradle Will Rock

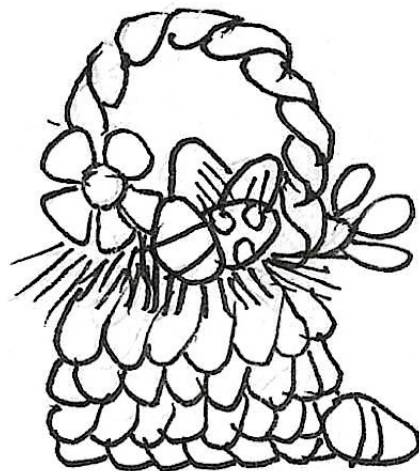
By Robin Shively

ACROSS

1. Utter
5. Ferret
9. Literary Dorothy's surname
13. Inner Hebrides island
14. 1941 title character
15. Word to follow end or drug
16. Test sites for 2. Down?
19. Four before X
20. King of English theater
21. Non-imperial
23. Edwin Starr's No. 1 in 1970
25. Mill
28. Golden calf, for example
30. Mongrel
31. Swoon
35. Postulant
38. Where to see a 59. Down
39. S. Pellegrino rival
40. Adjoin
42. Supply for a w.c.
43. Olden days
45. Largest U.S. water reservoir
46. 'The Bell Jar' author
48. Rack purchase
50. Toy whose name means "come-come" in Filipino
51. Homonym of 44. Down
53. Smallest st.
54. Word after golden or new
57. The windy city
60. First half of a Bond transport
63. Missile containers
65. Poutine consumer
66. And others, in brief
67. Gillette product
68. Short word for a long sandwich
70. "___ that barge..."
71. Reigning British royal house
72. Opposite of NW

DOWN

1. Canine Command
2. Land of Oz transport?
3. Santa ___; also called "devil wind"
4. Word before road and after mono
5. Former Whalers
6. Ref's counterpart
7. Org. for Hawks, but not Falcons
8. The 'Velvet Frog'
9. Blast of air
10. '___ You Like It'
11. Strauss with rivets
12. Roberts or Clapton
14. Salutation for a letter
17. Part of a journey
18. Slit from a saw
22. Scold
23. 1967 Association hit
24. Mobile space robot
26. Dry hard fruit with a single seed
27. Apprehension
29. Largest gland in the body
32. Appropriately
33. Fashionable
34. Tropical cyclone in Northwest Pacific
36. Seventh on a scale
37. Poetic meter
41. One direction
44. Paddle
47. Ascending, Descending, & Arch
49. Greek goddess of the rainbow
51. First appearance
52. Brilliant performance
54. Storch role
55. Testis or ovary
56. Wolfman Jack's medium
58. Void
59. Where to find the very first scene
61. Acapulco affirmative
62. Duty
64. Member of a dancing group on The Tonight Show
67. Word often preceding "shucks"
69. To do it or not to do it is the question



Solution on page 13

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Ferguson is on Track to Comply with and Exit the Consent Decree

By Blake Ashby



Ferguson has operated under a Consent Decree for eight years. The city has made substantial progress in satisfying the requirements of the Decree and is on track to be able to ask the judge overseeing the case to determine that Ferguson has achieved compliance with the Decree. If Ferguson then maintains compliance for two years, the City will have satisfied the terms of the Consent Decree, and the Consent Decree will end.

Ferguson entered the Consent Decree with the Department of Justice April 19, 2016, in response to the DOJ's 2015 report on Ferguson's police and courts. The City voluntarily agreed to make changes to its court and police policies and practices to address the DOJ's concerns. The Consent Decree was filed in Federal Court, with Judge Catherine D. Perry assigned to the case.

Under the Decree, Ferguson was obligated to hire a third-party monitor to oversee the City's progress. The initial monitor, Clark Ervin, a partner in a very large international law firm, stepped down in late 2017. The current monitor is Natasha Tidwell, an attorney who specializes in white collar defense and government investigations. She is assisted by a range of subject matter experts in court reforms and policing. The monitoring cost, approximately \$400,000 annually, is paid by Ferguson.

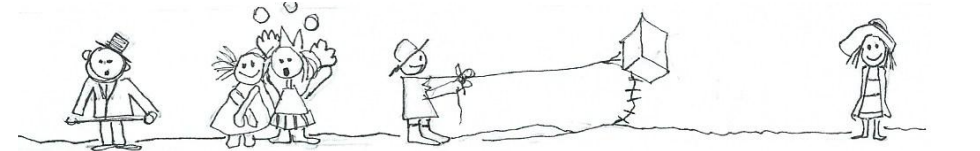
The Decree obligated the city to implement significant changes in its police training and practices, municipal court and municipal code. The Police Department has changed its procedures for tracking and addressing police use of force, ensuring protection of first amendment rights, how it conducts voluntary contacts, stops, searches, citations, and arrests, and how officers are supervised. The Department also implemented body-worn cameras, a new focus on crisis intervention, de-escalation, and a commitment to community policing and engagement. Ferguson also modified the policies and procedures of its municipal court to better address people's inability to pay fines and costs.

The Municipal Court reforms were completed after several years. Implementation of body worn cameras began even before the Decree was signed. While the Police Department made progress in many areas, fully implementing the Decree was slowed by the lack of officers. The Police Department was able to prepare draft policies covering most of the required areas, however lacked the expertise to fully complete the policies, and also lacked the officers needed to implement them.

In early 2023, Ferguson hired Troy Doyle as its Chief of Police, a thirty year veteran who held numerous senior positions with the St. Louis County Police. The Police Department was able to stop the attrition and begin adding officers. When he was hired, the Department was at 49% of approved staffing levels; it is now at 77%, and has three more officers in the hiring process. Critically, Chief Doyle was also able to identify and hire an extremely qualified training coordinator.

With the new training coordinator and increased staffing, the Police Department should finally be able to satisfy the remainder of the Decree, completing the necessary policies and training material and begin implementing the training and community engagement. The City should be in a position to ask the Judge to rule that Ferguson is "Substantially Compliant" with the terms of the Consent Decree. This ruling by the Judge would start a two year clock – if Ferguson can maintain compliance, the Decree would end in two years.

Ferguson will need the Judge to give us a little grace as we continue to build our Police staff and expand neighborhood engagement. The Judge's perception of Ferguson as a community will impact her ruling. If the Judge believes Ferguson is a city divided along racial lines, or our City Council is split between an African American faction and white faction, she is unlikely to rule the City compliant. It is critical that the City Council continues to push for consensus. A Council divided will likely cause the Judge to leave the Consent Decree in place. A Council that continues to push for consensus, and to find common ground and achieve unanimous votes on important issues, is our best chance of demonstrating to the Judge that the Consent Decree has achieved its purpose – a Ferguson with a unified vision of the future and a commitment to Constitutional Policing for all its residents.

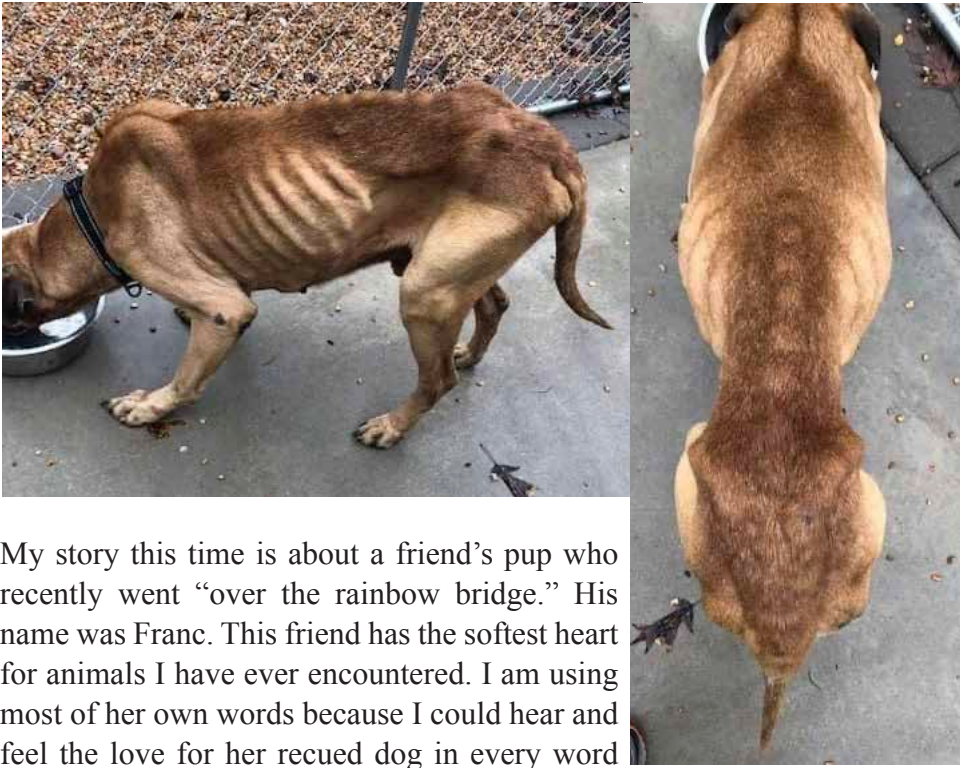




Hello Ferguson!

by Marian Linck

I have written about dogs and the need for fostering and adoption in the past. I am going to write about that again.



My story this time is about a friend’s pup who recently went “over the rainbow bridge.” His name was Franc. This friend has the softest heart for animals I have ever encountered. I am using most of her own words because I could hear and feel the love for her rescued dog in every word she uttered.

Franc was found walking along the highway in Texas by the Texas Rangers. He was a full-grown Bull Mastiff but only weighed forty-three pounds. She described his appearance as nothing but skin, bones, and sadness. He had a bone obstruction in his abdomen, heartworms, entropion and two tumors the size of a grapefruit on his neck and his hip. Entropion is a medical condition in which the eyelid, usually the lower lid folds inward. Eyelashes continue to rub against the cornea causing pain and irritation. (Wikipedia). Franc had not been neutered so most believed he was a breeding dog for a “puppy mill.” He had outlived his usefulness for the breeder and was dumped on the side of the road. Just let me interject here. Anyone that dumps a dog like that needs to suffer in hell. Sorry. Not sorry. The Texas Rangers took Franc to a veterinary clinic where they determined he should be euthanized. Some dear soul at the veterinary clinic saw a dog worth saving and sought help from the ABARAS (the American BullMastiff Association Recue Service). A rescue fundraising group called Killuminati also became involved and raised the funds to pay for his lifesaving surgeries and the heartworm treatment.

Franc was being fostered by a couple in the Springfield, Missouri area. The sister of Franc’s future family saw his face pop up as a promoted post in her Facebook feed.



They immediately contacted the rescue group, and they told them they believed he was about eight years old, which is positively ancient for a bull mastiff. They asked to adopt him and promised to let him live out his last six months eating doggy bonbons on their couch. Five years later, looking back at pictures and videos they had taken, they determined that Franc was about two years old when they adopted him.

From the beginning Franc was the sweetest snuggle dog. He loved the other dog in the household from the first moment. He was interested in and respectful of the household cat as well. He liked other dogs and all humans. During Covid he tolerated and sometimes even played with the four litters of puppies his family fostered. I told you Franc’s family were hardcore animal lovers!

The youngest members, nieces, and nephews of the adoptive family nicknamed Franc “The Love Barge.” This was a fitting name because the only thing he cared about was being close to his people...preferably laying his head on a lap getting his ears scratched. “He was the best dog.”

When I asked my friend to share Franc’s story, I had no idea how her words and his story would touch me. I tear up a bit every time.



There are many such love stories out there. If you have room in your heart and room within your family never hesitate to foster and adopt a homeless animal. The love of an animal is unconditional.

Here are a few pictures of Franc.

Rescuing an animal is a selfless act of kindness and love. I respect and admire anyone who takes in an animal with health or behavior issues. Adopting or fostering is never easy or should be taken for granted. Your new family member will be grateful for your sacrifice and will offer you love and companionship their entire lives, be that life long or cut short because of health issues.

One of my guilty pleasures when I have free time is looking at available dogs at Gateway Pet Guardians. I want them all.

If there is a space in your heart that needs to be filled, please visit <https://gatewaypets.org>.

Thank you once again for reading my story. Every month I struggle to decide what to write about. This article was the easiest.

Please feel free to share your adoption or foster story with me. My email is manhattanmarian@gmail.com.



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Youth Education at EarthDance Farm

Why do bees and chickens need each other? How many miles of fungus are beneath our feet at the farm, and why do we care? What is your favorite vegetable, and what are some fun ways you can play with your food? What role do farms play in our everyday lives? How are they connected to our food, clothes, homes and things we use daily without even thinking about it?

Young learners who join us at EarthDance Organic Farm School in 2024 will find the answers to these and many more questions as they dig into learning on the farm with us.

“We are so excited to cultivate wonder and engage students in ways that really get them excited about food and farming,” said Farm to School Educator Joia Walker. “We want to get this good food to them, and we want to help them draw connections with how these things impact their lives.”



Farm to School Educator Joia Walker teaches students about fresh food at the Pay What You Can Farm Stand at EarthDance Organic Farm School.

EarthDance is a 14-acre organic farm school that provides farm and garden-based education for people of all ages. Youth programs at EarthDance welcome the local school district, clubs, camps, home schooled families, church groups, educators and students of life to learn about growing and selling fresh food, nutrition, and food justice. Our Farm to School programming also includes educational visits to the Ferguson-Florissant School District (FFSD) for school garden consultations, What’s Fresh nutrition and cooking demonstrations, and more for district students, families, faculty, and staff.

New to the EarthDance Farm to School program this year, EarthDance will provide farm-based enrichment for Ferguson area youth in collaboration with Unleashing Potential’s after-school program, funded through a grant from the Dana Brown Charitable Trust. This grant will also support summer programming with long-time partner of the farm, Strength & Honor (SAH) Summer Camp.

Unleashing Potential (UP) provides curriculum-based before- and after-school programs in St. Louis City and County at 9 locations, including 4 Ferguson-area schools. The program provides enrichment in math, literature, character education, fitness and nutrition. This year, some of these lessons will come to UP students by way of EarthDance!

Tiffany Brewer, EarthDance Director of Impact, was instrumental in establishing the partnership. “One of my favorite parts of my role at EarthDance is building partnerships with organizations like Unleashing

Potential. When groups reach out for support and we can teach young people about healthy eating to add value to their program, we do what we can to make it happen.”

The SAH Summer Camp aims to engage youth in community service projects and fun team-building activities, with a focus on building character and confidence. The campers visit various enriching destinations throughout the summer. EarthDance will be one of these, where campers will participate in weekly programming at the farm throughout the summer.

Joia has found much wonder and joy herself this year, along with a practical guidance, through professional development activities sure to enhance the experience of Farm to School programming participants. Among these were a trip to educational Shelburne Farms in Vermont and her current work toward becoming a Certified School Garden Educator through Life Lab. “I have learned so much this past year and am still learning! We’re getting produce into schools, we’re inviting wonder at the farm! Students will be eating whatever food they learn to prepare; older students will be exploring the business aspects of working with food; we will be making value added products together. We’ll be painting with vegetables, and giving new life to “seconds” [unmarketable] produce. Returning students will help co-lead some of the activities.”



Strength and Honor Summer Campers dig into the soil in the greenhouse at EarthDance.

Unleashing Potential students and SAH campers can look forward to hands-on lessons at the farm, in the classroom, and out in the community. “I want them to see these other aspects of farming and farmers - exploring the science of farming, starting a small business, the creative and artistic sides of things. And I want them to know farmers and that people are earning a living wage growing food, starting their own farms and gardens.”



EarthDance Director of Impact Tiffany Brewer has been instrumental in establishing youth education programs with the farm, including the partnerships with Unleashing Potential and Strength and Honor.

As part of Farm to School, EarthDance also aims to empower teachers and staff through educational programs like Spring Training for Gardeners. Spring Training is a five week online and in-person class offered March 13-April 13, and this year, it will be offered as PAID PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT for FFSD teachers & administrators. Register now with your Ferg-Flor email address to take the course for free and GET PAID FOR YOUR TIME!



Students do raised bed gardening work with Unleashing Potential.



EarthDance Farm to School Educator Joia Walker provides a hands-on workshop for teachers in the school garden at Innovation School at Cool Valley.

What's Fresh: March '24

Joia Walker - EarthDance Farm to School Educator

What's Fresh March

Farm to school is still going strong with the What's Fresh initiative! March is such an exciting time at EarthDance because the flowers are in bloom and so is Farm to School. The AgriCulinary interns will return from winter break and students will visit from all over the city to tour the farm.

As winter comes to an end, we are eating the last of our root veggies such as watermelon radish and carrots and leafy winter greens like collards. There have been so many tasty ways to enjoy these colorful, nutrient dense vegetables but I invite you to try this recipe for roasted watermelon radish. Roasted radish can be a great alternative side dish in comparison to roasted potatoes if you're looking to avoid carbs. Peel With Zeal offers a fresh and bright way to prepare this detoxing, color-rich veggie! Pick up your watermelon radish at the Ferguson Winter Market on March 16, 2024 located at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church!

Step 1- Prep the Raw Watermelon Radishes

Watermelon radish prep is easy to manage. No excessive peeling or scrubbing. A quick rinse, trim the ends, and quarter or cut in 3/4 inch wedges if you have some extra-large specimens. Do not peel the radishes.



If you have the greens attached you can wash them and saute them up just like spinach.

Step 2- Roast the Radishes

Watermelon radishes are best roasted at 375 F degrees for 30 minutes. The radishes should be spread in a single flat layer.

Be sure to toss halfway through and rotate the pan for even cooking.

In this recipe we use melted coconut oil, however, you can use ghee, olive oil, or avocado oil. We salt and pepper the radishes before roasting.

Step 3- Serve

A toss with fresh parsley and lemon zest at the end adds some additional color to the dish. While this step is optional it is an easy way to elevate your radishes.

If you don't have a fresh lemon, toss the radishes with 2 tablespoons of bottled lemon juice. We used parsley to keep the herbs simple but you can chives, basil, or any combination of the three fresh herbs

Now dig in and enjoy! But first, let us know in the comments... what is your favorite way to eat watermelon radishes? Raw, pickled, or roasted?



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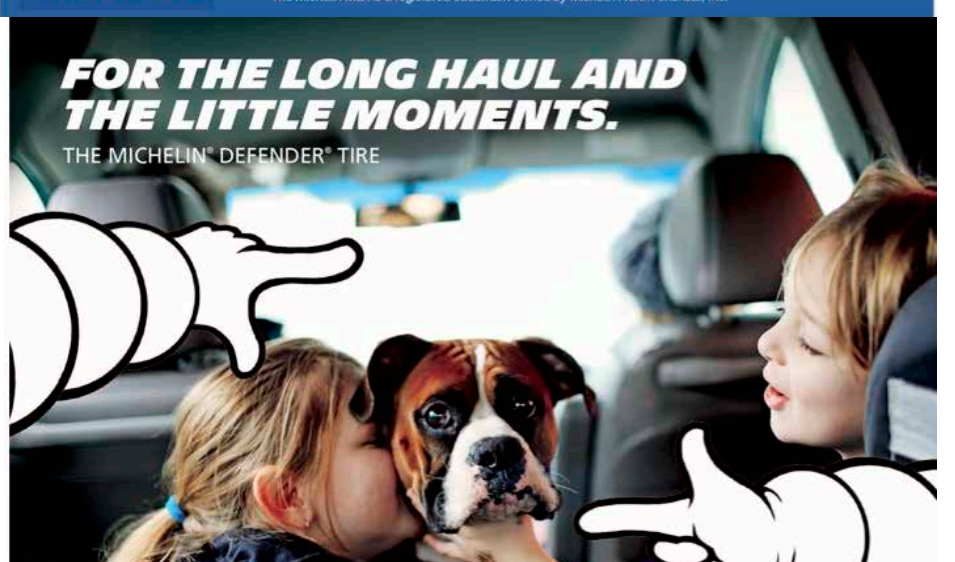


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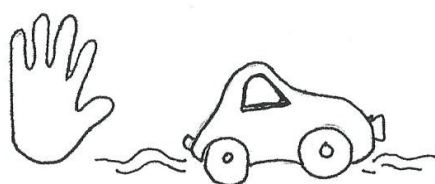
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**SLOW!
DOWN!**



Digital Ferguson - Coding for Fun and Profit

by David Pickens

One of the things I love is to watch my wife Joellen knitting or crocheting. You can see over time this beautiful thing flowing out from her as she works, appearing as if by magic straight out of her moving fingers. It's an extreme mystery to me how it all works, and when I mention that she laughs and says I can learn how to do it too, and that lots of men do. And I'm not saying I never will learn how, but it just doesn't hold much interest to me to learn how to do it. Part of that reluctance I think comes from my suspicion that some of the magic and deep mystery I feel about it will disappear once I know the secrets down below.

And for some of you similar reasons for reluctance – and many more reasons of your own choosing, might hold you back from even thinking about learning how to code, or write software for computers. But having spent the better part of one-third of my IT career writing computer programs, and another significant chunk directing teams writing programs, I can tell you there is something very satisfying about making a computer do your bidding, and hopefully accomplish something useful, perhaps even beautiful, under your command. And it's a lot easier than it used to be. It might surprise you to learn that many of the barriers to enter the world of coding are completely gone or much lowered now.

One huge barrier was cost. In the Way-back Days of Yore, you needed a million dollar mainframe computer and coding was only done by an elite group of equally expensive experts. Slightly after those days, when personal computers began to be available, you still needed pretty expensive computer hardware and also special software – called a compiler – to even get started. Then Microsoft sort of saved the day and distributed BASIC programming language for free in its PCs and one million programmer hobbyists were born.

I wrote my first commercial application software program in BASIC for a company I won't mention (AT&T Systems Engineering – formerly Western Electric.) Since this role was outside of my normal systems engineering duties the division paid me to do this on the side working from home. I made about \$5,000 for about 200 hours work. In its first year of use the program generated \$390,000 in revenue for my former employer. Since then the ratio of how much an employer makes compared to what it pays its programmers has only grown larger. Nevertheless, some of us persisted. Because, despite all our whining, it really is sort of fun.

And part of the fun (or the drudgery to some) is the design, where you decide what information to gather, and how to present that to another human being, and (hopefully) make it elegant and a pleasure to use. And this is something that is missing from a whole lot of software that is being written today. And believe it or not, every web site is a computer program also too, designed by people who code. And many – a great many - are just horrid to use, so much so they make me want to scream. And especially given that I am an electrical engineer, literally baptized into solving difficult technical problems practically from birth. (My Dad was an engineer, those of you similarly born will understand.) So if I find a web site this difficult or impossible to use, my heart goes out for all of those who don't have this technical background and experience. How frustrating this must be for them!

So part of my pitch here is that the world needs more people who understand how to design things that work well with human beings, not necessarily from a technical point of view, but from a human usability perspective. It might help to have a technical bent to get involved in coding, but it's really more important to start with understanding the human side of things. Whenever my staff were hiring staff, I always reminded them that I hired them primarily for their customer service skills, not for their technical skills. Of course they need some technical aptitude and troubleshooting skills, but given that I can train them or obtain training for them on firewalls, routers, or basically anything we might need. But if they didn't have basic customer service skills I couldn't give them that. I think that mostly comes down from excellent parenting, or an amazing teacher, or an influential mentor.

Another Olden Times barrier to learning coding which is now vanished, is basic knowledge. The resources available now for the budding coder are just unbelievable. There are books galore, and free tutorials for every programming language under the sun. And one of the best secrets to a successful mastery of a particular language are online user groups. You might run across a few that are not very welcoming but most of those have a tendency to slowly evaporate.

One of my favorite things that has disappeared is that in former times there were only a few languages, (FORTRAN, COBOL, or RPG) but now there are so many programming languages to learn you'll almost never run out of them. There is one called SCRATCH that is designed specifically for letting children learn how to code, so they can make games, art, music, or anything they can imagine. There is another most especially created for the hobbyist called Arduino, which is a combination of software and tiny hardware that lets you create all sorts of automated projects.

These days there is a sort of constant fight currently between the top ten most popular languages. Javascript, Python, and Java are at the top pretty regularly, so you can't go wrong learning one or all of them if you want to start a career coding. Every year there is Some New Thing (or two, or more) that might take hold, or fall by the wayside and disappear. They can be fun to learn too. The thing is once you learn programming, picking up a new language is much easier, because it's like learning a different way of saying the same thing to a computer.

The last barrier, or course, is you. If you have no interest whatsoever in learning how to code, I get that. Today, I'm that way about knitting. But one weird thing is that I was once the same way about baking for almost all of my life. I felt I couldn't possibly ever bake bread, or make a pie, because baking seemed too mysterious and complicated. And then I read a little book a friend gave me, The Tassajara Bread Book by Edward Espé Brown and my whole world changed, and now I love baking bread. Something similar could happen to you. Sometimes you just have to get out of your own way.

David has been in Information Technology in almost every role possible for such a long time it would take a supercomputer to calculate. The first computer someone let him play with was in an F4-E. His first PC was a Timex Sinclair because he could not afford a TRS-80. He is currently running a computer consulting practice. You can contact him at david@bigpurr.com.

What to Do About two Job Offers

by Pat Mathias

No, working them both is not the answer nor wise! So, what should you do? Even though some may say go with the one that offers the highest salary that is not necessarily the one you should choose.

You should consider other factors. Here are a few you may want to think about.

1. Commute. Driving more than an hour to get to work may not be ideal. If you live in a heavily populated city like New York, you may be stuck in traffic. On the other hand, if your commute is 25 minutes, you may not mind the drive.

You also need to think about winter. . . does it snow a lot where you live? Do you have to deal with black ice? These are things to consider.

2. Work from home. You may prefer to work from home. If the company is a distance away or in another state, this may be your preference. There are many benefits to working from home, such as not waking up as early, especially if you're not an early bird. The early bird may get the worm, but you'd get extra sleep.

3. Benefits. Some companies offer benefits such as access to a fitness center, free parking, flexible work schedule, etc. These types of benefits may lead your decision.

4. Insurance. Does the company cover all or a portion of insurance, such as health, dental, or eye care? If you have children, this may be your choice.

5. Hidden money. Does the company have a 401K plan? Do they match dollar for dollar up to a certain percentage of your salary? That's a great way to grow your retirement fund.

6. Independent vs. Team Work. Do you like working independently or working on a team? If you enjoy interacting with others, you would probably fair better working on a team. However, if you like nothing better than getting to the office and focusing on paperwork with little interaction, working in an independent position may be ideal for you.

You probably can think of other things that can help you make your job offer decision. It's important to know what you want before you start your job search. It's easy to be drawn in due to salary. In some cases, your salary diminishes if you have to pay for health insurance and other things that another company may include in the job offer.

Finally, it is important to weigh them all out. The best way to do this is to create a spreadsheet listing the companies in the left column and the benefits along with the salary across the top. Mark where appropriate in each column. This will give you a clear view of the job that comes closest to your dream job.

Again, know what you want, then choose wisely.

FERGUSON TWILIGHT RUN

5K★10K 1-MILE FUN RUN

For Timely Release – Feb. 16, 2024

A sure sign of spring – Ferguson Twilight Run

Ferguson, MO – Okay...so spring officially arrives in March, but we all know that a sure sign of spring is the annual Ferguson Twilight Run. Circle the date on your calendar - Saturday, May 18. Runners and walkers of all abilities will enjoy one-mile, 5K (3.1 miles) and 10K (6.2 miles) distances on routes that are USATF-certified by Big River Running Company.

“It’s definitely a sure sign of spring in Ferguson and North County when runners and walkers line up with anticipation at the start line, and then cross the finish line with pride in their effort,” said Dwayne T. James, race director, Ferguson Twilight Run.

“We’re humbled that the community supports the race year after year, and now we’re looking at year 15. It takes a lot of effort, planning, volunteers and support from the community to make it this far,” continued James.

Register to Run, Walk

As you’re achieving your fitness goals, be sure to register for Ferguson Twilight Run at fergtwilightrun.com. You can sign up as an individual, create a team, join an existing team, or be a virtual participant.

- The race starts and finishes at Plaza at 501, located at the intersection of Florissant Road and Suburban Avenue.
- Participants will receive a T-shirt and finisher medal; age-group winners will receive customized awards.
- Baby joggers/strollers and service dogs are welcome on the course, but pets must stay at home.
- Want more details? Follow Ferguson Twilight Run on Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter) and YouTube to keep up-to-date on details and information such as course routes, street closures, packet pick up, registration promotions, announcements and more.

Donnie White Sr. Memorial Beneficiary Award

Ferguson Twilight Run donates proceeds to nonprofits in North St. Louis County through the Donnie White Sr. Memorial Beneficiary Award. Over the last 15 years, more than \$106,000 has supported a host of programs and services focused on impacting positive, healthy outcomes. In 2023, the beneficiaries included Girls on the Run St. Louis Ferguson-Florissant Schools, Strength and Honor Mentoring & Tutoring, EarthDance Farm and Emerson Family YMCA.

Become a Sponsor or Vendor

There are opportunities for area businesses, community organizations, family groups and individuals to support Ferguson Twilight Run as a sponsor or vendor.

Learn more about sponsorship levels at fergtwilightrun.com under the Sponsor and Volunteer tab.

History

Ferguson Twilight Run debuted in May 2010 as the first evening race in North St. Louis County. The run encourages a sense of community while supporting a common interest. Proceeds are donated to nonprofits in north St. Louis County that promote the healthy and sustainable benefits of fitness.

CONTACTS

Dwayne T. James, 314-325-2197 racedirector@fergtwilightrun.com
Nez Savala, 816-678-9071 miss_tv@yahoo.com



**Under The Hood
With Robinwood**
By Bob McGartland

Pros and Cons - Should I invest in an extended warranty with a new vehicle purchase?

Top of the Morning to All!

Investing in an extended warranty when purchasing a new vehicle is a decision that comes with both advantages and disadvantages. Understanding the pros and cons is crucial for prospective buyers to make an informed choice that aligns with their needs and preferences.

Pros:

1. **Extended Coverage:** One of the primary benefits of opting for an extended warranty is the extended coverage it provides beyond the standard manufacturer’s warranty. While the manufacturer’s warranty typically covers the vehicle for a limited time or mileage, an extended warranty can offer protection for a more extended period, often providing peace of mind for those who plan to keep their vehicles for an extended duration.
2. **Financial Protection:** Unforeseen repairs can be costly, and an extended warranty can act as a safeguard against unexpected expenses. With the rising complexity of modern vehicles and their intricate systems, repair costs can quickly add up. The extended warranty can cover a wide range of components, providing financial protection and potentially saving the owner money in the long run.
3. **Resale Value:** Some extended warranties are transferable, which can enhance the resale value of the vehicle. Knowing that a potential buyer will have the security of an extended warranty may make the vehicle more attractive in the used car market, potentially contributing to a higher resale value.

Cons:

1. **Upfront Cost:** One of the significant drawbacks of investing in an extended warranty is the upfront cost. Extended warranties can be expensive and can significantly increase the overall price of the vehicle. Buyers must weigh this additional expense against the potential benefits and consider whether the peace of mind and extended coverage justify the upfront investment.
2. **Limited Use:** Not all buyers may benefit from an extended warranty. Some vehicles are highly reliable and may not experience major issues during the extended warranty period. If a vehicle proves to be trouble-free, the investment in the extended warranty may not provide a substantial return on investment, leading some buyers to question its overall value.
3. **Terms and Conditions:** It’s crucial for buyers to carefully review the terms and conditions of the extended warranty. Some warranties may come with limitations, exclusions, or deductibles that could impact their overall value. Buyers should understand what is covered, the duration of coverage, and any specific conditions or requirements for filing a claim.

In conclusion, the decision to invest in an extended warranty with a new vehicle purchase is subjective and depends on individual circumstances. While the extended warranty offers extended coverage and financial protection, buyers must carefully consider the upfront cost, the reliability of the vehicle, and the terms of the warranty. Thorough research and a clear understanding of personal preferences and risk tolerance are essential for making a well-informed decision that aligns with both financial considerations and peace of mind. Here at Robinwood Automotive we have worked with a lot of different extended warranty companies. If you are considering buying an extended warranty, we would be happy to review the contract with you before you buy it.

As always, if you have any vehicle service needs, and do not have a regular automotive service provider, Robinwood Automotive would be honored to provide your automotive service needs. Visit us at robinwoodauto.com

Happy St. Pats Day!

Financial Focus – Pay Attention

By Joan Cleaveland (cleav73@gmail.com)

Lindenwood University – BA Business Administration

Last month I wrote about the growing problems with check fraud. As I learned it doesn't show signs of slowing even though check usage is down. Learning how it happens and ways to prevent it are great tools. Yet as I read stories from victims, it seemed to be futile identifying the crooks and how often they seem to get away with the crime. Like many non-violent crimes, check fraud isn't necessarily a high priority for police who are dealing with crime involving bodily harm or death. And this is more of a white collar crime because it isn't usually violent and physical harm is typically not involved. The loss of money is what really hurts and it does cost us all.

So I wanted to understand more about the other costs of fraud. Obviously the financial loss is a big one and it makes a difference who actually incurs the loss. So how do financial frauds affect our economy? This is where it gets a bit murky. Fraud covers a lot of territory with much overlap. Identity theft, credit card fraud, computer hacking frauds, mail fraud, wire fraud and check fraud are related. In fact most frauds involve more than just one type. Last month it was interesting to note that mail fraud had much to do with the rise of check fraud.

So first when the loss is suffered an individual or a small business may be unable to pay other creditors while they are trying to re-establish things after a loss. If it involved their financial institution it is likely they will be made whole as far as the money goes. And when banks have to pay they are going to get the money somewhere, generally that means from their customers possibly thru higher fees. Just last year, Regions Bank reported check fraud losses of 53 million during its 3rd quarter. They also indicated that it typically takes 50 - 60 days for the bank to recognize a check fraud has occurred. If other banks have similar experiences the losses are astronomical, keep in mind it was just one quarter! And we all pay for this.

Not only is fraud dangerous for the banking system; the government must also deal with fraud. We've heard the complaints and reports of fraud within the assistance programs during COVID. These types of losses take a huge chunk of funding away from those who really need the help. It can also disenfranchise taxpayers causing them to believe all government programs are tainted. And in this type of fraud we usually find people who may not otherwise commit a fraud or may consider government programs free money for all. It disturbs me when I hear people discount stealing from the government as if it is okay.

Such large losses cause less money available for small business growth. Banks may find they have less money to loan out and the costs for preventing losses to businesses may be costly and not always work. Today there are fraud prevention services available everywhere not just your bank. There is usually a cost involved which adds a new expense that most businesses can't afford to be without. And this is also true for individuals, after a fraud banks will usually give their customer access to protection services at no cost for some period. Banks are also learning more about their customer's habits and possibly shutting down those that could bring risk. So reputations can be ruined causing a business to go under or create more stress to individuals impacted.

So what is being done to stop this type of criminal activity? As advances are made using the best technology and Artificial Intelligence, it seems nearly impossible to stay ahead of the crooks. Often they are very smart and consider it a challenge staying ahead. Catching and punishing these types of criminals isn't that easy. Often they are crossing borders extending their reach globally. And the people that do get caught are likely not the masterminds, but just a decoy to perform a service for the top dog and get a cut. Having worked at a bank I do recall a number of frauds that cost the bank money. One case involved a young person and the amount was around \$35,000. This was a first time criminal with remorse and a willingness to pay all of the money back. The bank was actually the victim and seeking restitution rather than sending a person to jail seemed best. As is often the case, once the person's probation ended the repayments stopped coming and it seemed there was little recourse in seeking the rest of the funds according to the signed agreement. In another case the criminal did go to jail and was ordered to repay only 10% of the actual loss, so I learned the jail time means less restitution.

Last month I suggested steps we can take to try to protect ourselves. Often we don't want to take the time to review our credit card statement or bank statement, we just trust that everything is fine and a problem will become obvious quickly. That isn't always the case and often why the criminals start small using a stolen credit card for small purchases. Once it's worked well the big one will hit and that might be the one that alerts you to trouble. It could be 60 days or more since the first small transaction leaving the customer liable for those. Today fraud is involved in nearly every part of our lives and just touching on financial fraud has caused me to run into so many other frauds. So perhaps the best advice is to pay attention! If it sounds too good to be true, it is. Don't give the crooks a chance to do harm, question and re-verify things that don't look right. If you do become a victim make sure you report it, sharing your story may help another avoid a loss.

If you have any questions or comments please contact me at cleav73@gmail.com.

Get out your colored pencils. This is the continuation of a coloring book from Phil Berwick

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Catch up with the rest of the story at www.Merferd.Com

Ferguson's Roaming Dog Problem

By Dara Ashby

A day doesn't go by when there isn't a lost dog (or dogs) found wandering our streets. Could it be yours?



There are many situations that cause this. Maybe you have a fence that isn't up to par and your dog is finding a way out. Please remember that dogs get bored too. If dogs are left outside for long periods of time, boredom strikes and they will escape, looking for stimulation and socialization. Your dog should be part of your family so please bring them inside. Dogs are pack animals by nature, and you are their pack.



If your dog just happens to be a Houdini, take time to see where they are getting out. Sometimes these are easy repairs that just might save your pup's life. If your dog gets hit by a car, emergency vet visits can cost thousands of dollars, but most fence repairs cost less than \$100.

If you have a dog that jumps over your fence, there are solutions for that too. Relatively inexpensive "fence toppers" are a great way to keep Fido in. Another idea is a trolley system, much like what a clothesline looks

like and much better than a tie out. All you need are 2 trees spaced apart or a tree and a house to attach it to. Your dog can run and burn off energy but not run away. Amazon sells these for under \$30. We can give you tips for easy installation.

There are many other reasons to keep your pup contained besides the chance of them getting hit by a car. Dog theft is at a startling high. There are some not-so-great people who prey on loose dogs, to resell and make a few bucks, or worse. Sadly, although illegal, dog fighting is alive and well. Loose dogs that are picked up by the wrong person may end up being used as a "bait" dog in these barbaric dog fighting rings. This means your dog will likely have its mouth taped shut and thrown into a ring to train a fighting dog.

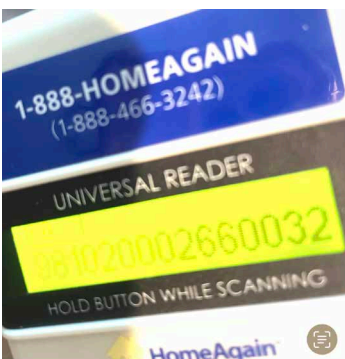
If your lost dog is lucky, they will be picked up by a Good Samaritan who will begin the search to try to find the dog's home. If dogs could talk this would be an easy task, but they cannot.

No Tag? Do this!



If you don't have a tag, in a pinch you can write your phone number on your pet's collar with a permanent marker.

This is why it is critical to always keep a collar with an ID tag on your dog. The ID tag should include 2 working phone numbers plus your address. A tag can be made on-the-spot at Petco or PetSmart. TIP: use a thicker "split ring" (versus the thin ring that is included) to attach to the collar, tightening with a pair of pliers. This helps keep the tag from falling off. SOULCRAFT here in Ferguson has kindly offered to provide dog ID "sliders" and engrave them for FREE! Go visit this great shop or call (618) 610-7930. Minimally just use a permanent marker and handwrite your phone number right on the collar.



Getting your dog microchipped is also important. Once your dog is microchipped, be sure to register your chip, keeping your current phone number on file with the microchip company. Our wonderful neighborhood veterinarians at Ferguson Animal Hospital can help you with this. Call them at (314) 524-0707. Or call the APA at (314) 645-4610 for any scheduled chip clinics happening.

Too often, a lost dog has no identification to help get them back home, so they end up being taken to a shelter, St. Louis County Animal Control, APA, or the Humane Society. Sadly, these shelters are bursting at the seams due to people not spaying & neutering, explosion of backyard breeders, dumped dogs, or poor strays that no one wants. THERE IS NO SPACE, and when lost dogs are brought in, these shelters must make room. The number of dogs coming in far surpasses the number of dogs being adopted. As sad as it is, the only way to make space is to euthanize dogs. Oftentimes these are wonderful, adoptable dogs that end up being put to sleep (forever) simply because of irresponsible pet owners.

Please don't be an irresponsible pet owner. There ARE solutions and I would love to help you find them. If you are unsure about how to keep your dog safe and off the streets, please reach out to me. Maybe together we can figure out a solution. Let's keep them safe!

And PLEASE SPAY & NEUTER YOUR PETS. It will save lives in the end. It's FREE for pets in Ferguson. Call the APA at (314) 254-3443 for an appointment. BARC's FREE PIT FIX also includes free vaccinations, microchip, nail trim, and flea prevention! Call (314) 771-PETS (7387).

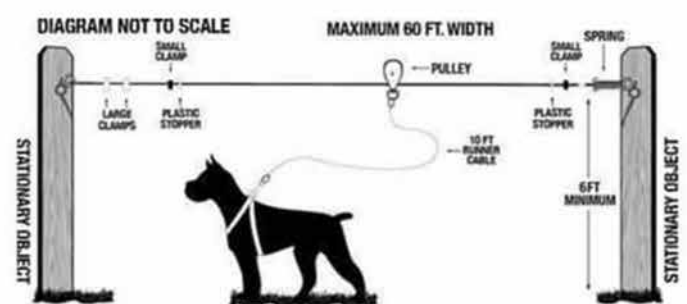
Dara Ashby, Ferguson Animal Coalition, dara@fergusonanimalcoalition.org



Keeping Dogs Contained



If you have a dog that jumps your fence, put up fence extenders. This is a cheap and easy way to keep your dog enclosed. All you need can be found at Home Depot; 1/2" x 3' rebar (HD will bend at 45 Degree angle), plastic zip ties, chicken wire. Weave half of the rebar through the fence at each 10' fence section. Weave chicken wire through extended rebar and attach with plastic zip ties.



If you don't have a fence, a dog trolley-system is best. All You need are 2 trees, or stationary posts. The kit can be ordered on Chewy.com or Amazon. Easy to install.

From Ferguson to Pakistan

By Phil Berwick

550 Trees Planted So Far

The children of the brickyards have been growing in knowledge in our Freedom School System. And now they and the fruit trees that other of our kids in various kilns are planting will be growing in leaps and bounds!



Showcasing Bindiya

This is Bindiya Aslam, 6-years-old, using the same grub axe she uses to stir clay and make bricks, to now dig holes and plant trees.

From the beginning of my first foray into forsaken places of families in bonded labor, I've instructed my team to record a child's dream. Bindiya's dream is to become a doctor.

There are ten varieties of shade and fruit trees our teachers and children are planting. I was perplexed by two things during my mission trips to Pakistan; how very rich the land is, and how empty of trees the majority of the nation is. Pakistan is one of the most de-forested nations on earth. Millions of trees have ended up in the massive underground brick furnaces where these children and their families live and work.



Merferd / A Freedom Brand

If you trust this to be a worthy humanitarian work, where the only 'overhead' is purifying the air these kids breath, supplying fresh fruit trees, and giving children in bonded labor a future and hope, any who wish to help this 'From Ferguson to Pakistan' cause may email

at Freedomcryinfo@gmail.com

Or call 314-568-8367

Or donate online at FreedomCry.Life



You'll receive this printed and signed Merferd as a thank you.

The Ferguson Computer Corner

by Doug Neely HAVE A BLESSED EASTER WITH YOUR LOVED ONES!

MARCH, 2024

The end of this month signals that we are 25% through this year, meaning that we have only 75% left until Christmas. (well, approximately. LOL!) Therefore, while we wait for that, let us peek at what is in store for us during THIS month, shall we?

10th---Daylight Savings begins! Set your clocks AHEAD one hour!

17th---Saint Patrick's Day. Please set your adult consumptions to a safe level.

19th---celebrate Saint Joseph, stepfather of Jesus.

20th---SPRING EQUINOX!!! yay!!!

24th---Palm Sunday...go to church today!

28th---Holy Thursday...go to church today!

29th---Good Friday...go to church today!

31st---EASTER SUNDAY! Go to church and give thanks for our Savior who saves us from our sins!

Guess What?, dept.

Did you upgrade your internet service recently?

Did you get a new modem?

Did you get a new router?

Did the speed of your internet connection go up?

No?

If your NETWORK INTERNET CARD (NIC) is more than a few years old, you should be able to replace it with a newer one which is capable of bringing you those faster speed connections you were promised. Right now, your older NIC is constricting your speed. It's like having 3 garden hoses connected together, but two are ¾ inch and one is only ½ inch.

The ½ inch is slowing you down. ALL the hardware in your system needs to have the same speed capability, or you will not get the speed you want.

Btw, this is a good time to upgrade your category 5 cables to newer cat 6 or 7 cables to ensure they are in top shape. Things can deteriorate over time.

RAM, dept.

Check your RAM (Random Access Memory) to make sure there are no errors being produced. You can check this in windows, or download an independent app for this purpose. Not only that, but this is also a good time to upgrade your RAM. Check your motherboard manual to find out how much and what kind of RAM it uses. If you have never done this, you may be running at less than optimal speed. Often when you buy a name-brand computer that is able to run more than one speed of ram, the manufacturer will use slower RAM in order to save \$\$\$.

Replacing that slower RAM with RAM that runs at faster speeds will speed things up, sometimes considerably. Of course, you can also put in the maximum amount of RAM which helps to insure you do not run out.

More Tips, dept.

Make sure the batteries in your mouse and keyboard are fresh and are fully charged. Replace batteries on a regular basis, even if they still work. I have seen batteries with bad leaks, and they still function. At the very least, open the battery compartment and check for leaks. I suggest a brand name alkaline battery in all devices.

ME GO NOW!

I'm sorry this month's column is rather short, but I have a lot to do. Also, I need to make plans for stuff for this month. Please do go to church this month; there are many reasons to go this month, especially Easter Sunday. As usual, I will be saying prayers for ALL of us; please join me in that. God's blessings to all of us, always.

IF YOU need to ask Doug for some of his

FREE puter advice, email him at the following

address....BUT make sure that you include your local phone number into the body of your missive, and put the phrase: I need puter advice into the subject line. This must be done to ensure he gets your email. Have a blessed Holiday!!!

fergusoncomputercorner@aol.com

Crossword Solution from page 4

YOU'RE AN INSTRUMENT

by Rev. Larry Brown

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13	I	O	N	A		14	D	U	M	B	O		15	U	S	E	R									
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63	S	I	L	O	S		65	C	A	N	A	D	I	A	N											
66	E	T	A	L		67	A	T	R	A		I		68	S	U	B									
70	T	O	T	E		71	W	I	N	D	S	O	R		72	S	E									

Whether you want to accept it or not, you are an instrument. What I mean is that you are a part of a multi-faceted orchestra (people with all sorts of backgrounds and skills) and you must rehearse and practice alone and with the group until you know your part clearly and when you must play with the group and when it becomes your turn to function singularly. Both roles are very important in order to produce the complete symphony well.

We, therefore, we must work to perfect ourselves and produce the best possible persons we can be so that when our turn to perform comes, and it will come, we are able to produce the kind of quality that is needed and expected and relying on us to contribute.

Won't it be shameful if you are not ready when your turn comes. Everyone will know that you let the group down at your important moment and let the job go underperformed, or not performed at all. We must look at life in this manner because it is a symphony or song involving various degrees of harmony at different times from each of us and the better we are prepared, the better is the performance of the whole group.

Likewise, if our contribution is not up to par, then the entire group is negatively affected. That is why we must always remember that many others are affected by our actions or inactions. We must strive to contribute in positive ways to situations at all times! We never know when we might be called upon to participate or act, but we must always be prepared!

Just as a wrong note is played with an instrument in a music orchestra and I am sure you can feel or even know the feeling from past experiences, how devastating the wrong notes or chords can be.

When it becomes our turn to act, contribute, or participate, we must do so with the full understanding that it is expected. In order to get good results when the time comes, we must practice to perfect our skills and our understandings so that we may be found doing the correct thing and providing the right harmonic solution or tonic.

If everyone took responsibility seriously, there would not be the kind of calamities occurring with the frequency that we currently are experiencing and certainly not with the negativity that we see happening all over the world.

We cannot assume that we can make it by ourselves without participating with others sometimes. As the song and poem say, "No man is an island, no man stands alone".

Just remember how good a complex musical piece sounds when all the notes are played and played correctly.

Do you want to be an Instrument for good or an instrument for bad. You will be one or the other. The beautiful thing about it is the fact that you have a choice once you come to the realization that you can be "part of the solution or part of the problem"

You may contact us to help you with this at www.gracechapelministries.org or at our email: gracechapeldevelopment@gmail.com.

Remember that no answer is the same as no involvement which therefore, has the tendency to make you a poor instrument.

The Certainty of Death

by John McDonald

Death is the one certainty every person must face so we should all prepare for it as best we can. That means doing two things well before there is an imminent need.

The first is to do your homework on funeral expenses. The sooner a person gets educated about funeral options and decides what he or she wants, the sooner that individual can start to budget with burial insurance, a prepayment program, a small life policy, a savings plan, etc. Obviously, unforeseen tragedies sometimes happen but expecting strangers on accounts like Go Fund Me to cover someone's funeral costs is seldom successful and relying on family or friends to dig deep into their savings has its own problems. If unsure where to begin, contact a local funeral home and/or start googling.

The second is to make a will. The stresses put on families and friends by the death of a loved one often test the best relationships. Without written instructions even the preparations you made for your funeral could become a source of confusion or bickering. Of course, the urgency for a legally valid will increases dramatically if you have children, property or finances to consider. A will provides for your dependents according to your wishes and not having one opens the door to a multi-year legal quarantine called intestacy and bitter family quarrels. Attorneys are obvious resources for making a will but many financial institutions can provide guidance and there is a wealth of information about the subject online.

We know death will eventually come to us all. Planning for it's inevitability is an extension of the responsibility we have to each other while living and will give us the satisfaction that we're not leaving a multitude of loose ends for others to tie up as best they can.



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Ferguson Has A History Museum

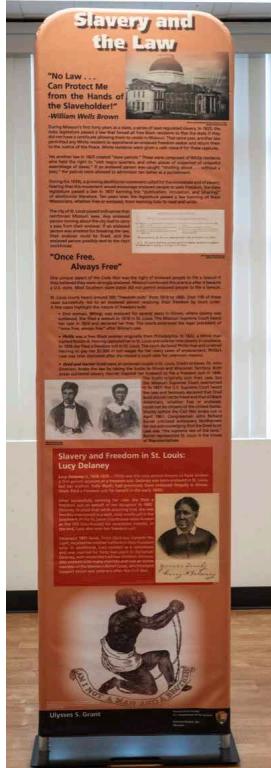
Ferguson has a Historical Society and a History Museum. We encourage any people reading this article to join in the conversation or become a member. Contact information is at the bottom of this article.



A Wonderful Week!

During February 5th through 9th the Ferguson Historical Society hosted “Slavery in St. Louis”, a traveling exhibit on loan from the Ulysses S Grant National Historic Site designed by Nick Sacco, historian/curator. Rashad Timmons, doctoral candidate from the University of California Berkeley, whose research on Thomas T. January and the Northern Missouri Railroad brought a Ferguson focus to the event. Tuesday evening, February 6th was a Round-table discussion by Sacco and Timmons to an audience of 80+ local people – A wonderful community event. This article is for those who could not attend.

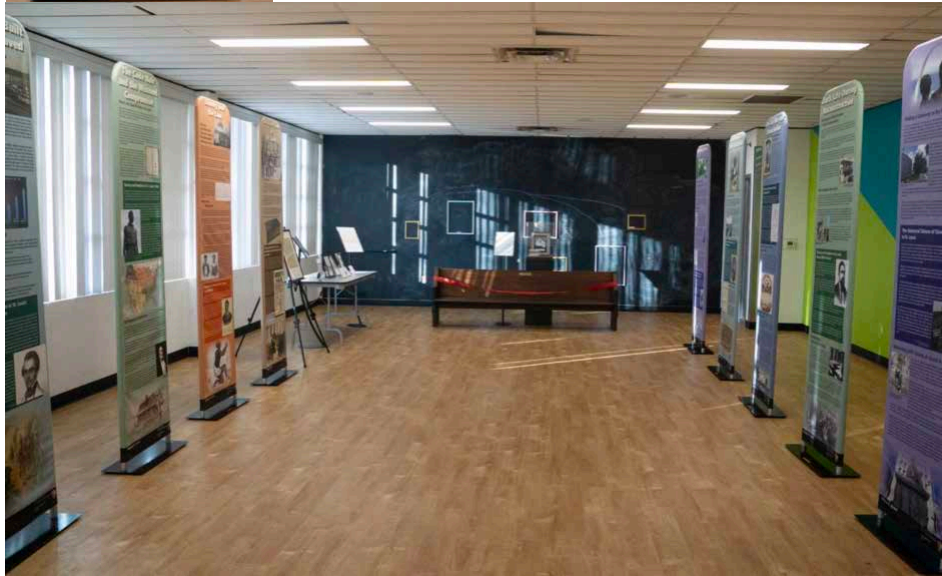
Along with the nine-panel display, there were several other items relating directly to Ferguson. An exhibit highlight was an original, hand made church bench from the African-American Mount Olive Baptist Church – a church built mainly by the freed enslaved people from the January Farm (no longer there). Other items were collected by Rashad Timmons relating to slave rolls, various papers and evidence of slavery in the Ferguson area along with maps of the St. Louis riverfront in 1832 and an 1854 St. Louis county map showing the North Missouri Railroad (later the Wabash) which currently runs through Ferguson and helped make Ferguson the important city it is.



The slavery display consisted of nine panels as seen to the left. Topics covered included:

- A Society Built Upon Enslaved Labor
- The Code Noir and the Missouri Compromise
- Slavery and the Law
- The Slave Trade in St. Louis
- Resisting Slavery
- Free People of Color in St. Louis
- The Civil War and Emancipation
- Black Life During Reconstruction
- Finding a Gateway to the East

Each panel gave detailed information relating to its topic. The image below gives you a look at the total room set up.



The Tuesday round-table discussion seemed to create a close bond between the speakers and the community present. The audience demanded a community photo at the end.



The Ferguson Historical Society wants to especially thank Sacco (left) and Timmons (right) for the study and work they have done to put this exhibit together. FHS is honored to have hosted this exhibit for our community.

If you want to access more about this exhibit, use your phone to scan the code to the right or look up the web site listed above the code.

Future issues of this Ferguson History Society report will be coming with more on Slavery in the St. Louis Metro Area – especially Ferguson.

This story came from documents in the Ferguson Historical Society archives, along with information from the Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site.)

Membership in the Ferguson Historical Society is open to anyone – membership levels range from \$20.00 to \$50.00 a year. If you are interested in joining or have any suggestions, questions, or items to donate to the Ferguson Historical Society, please contact Jerry Benner at fjbenner@mindspring.com. You are also welcome to visit the History Museum at 1064 Smith (behind the Community Center) by e-mailing the above address. Note: we will need to schedule a date for you, so ask well in advance

“The Ferguson Historical Society is dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of Ferguson Missouri. Membership is open to all sharing our interest.”

at www.nps.gov/ulsg



The Tuesday evening round-table proved to be a major Ferguson community event. 80+ people attended – from over the metro area and Illinois. The event featured discussions of Slavery in St. Louis and St. Louis County led by Nick Sacco (standing), from the Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site and Rashad Timmons (seated middle) University of California Berkeley doctoral student (who focused on Ferguson). Host for the evening is Mary Haux, President of the Ferguson Historical Society (seated right).



HESTER AND HER FRIENDS

By Michael Pierce

I'm a historian that subscribes to all sorts of history related social media pages. The photo accompanying this article recently popped up on the LJ HAYES COLORIZATION OF SOUTHERN AMERICAN HISTORY Facebook page. It's one of my favorite pages, and the owner of the page does a phenomenal job of colorizing old photos.

It was captioned as 'Hester Trott and Four of Her Friends.' Hester is seated, second from right. The image was made sometime in 1899 in Junction City, Kansas. What you see is four Gilded Age young women, in their late teens or early twenties, dressed in their finest dresses and hats. The hats themselves are quite memorable, and Mr. Hayes' colorization really causes them to stand out.



Hester Frances Trott was born January 19, 1878 in Junction City, to George and Bessie Trott. George (b. 1843) was originally from Boston. He served with the 44th Massachusetts Infantry during the Civil War, moved to California after the war, then came to Junction City. Bessie (b. 1852) was originally from Indiana. They met and were married on November 15, 1876 in Junction City.

Bessie passed away on May 31, 1879, just 1 ½ years after giving birth to Hester. George Trott never re-married. He passed away June 16, 1921. George was a wealthy businessman, which meant that Hester was a local debutante. Hester and the young ladies in her circle first begin appearing in the society pages of Johnson City newspapers around 1894. They appear there quite often, and it's very easy to get a sense of the fun and joy in their lives just by following the words written in the papers.

So I went down a rabbit hole and followed Hester and her friends through the years. I still don't know the identities of the other four young ladies photographed with Hester on that day in 1899, but there are plenty of leads to be gleaned from the papers. Hester and her friends were living their young lives, having all kinds of fun.

I scrolled through the papers with anticipation of seeing a wedding announcement at some point. And then I saw this on March 23, 1900:

Death of Miss Hester Trott

The death of Miss Hester Trott which has been expected at any moment for the past week, occurred at about 10 o'clock Thursday night. And I cried.

A longer article stated that she had surgery for stomach abscesses, seemed to be recovering, then took a turn for the worse.

I kept looking at that photograph. I hope that I'll eventually identify the other four young ladies, and I can trace their lives and see what became of them. But his photograph will haunt me for a long time, as I think of a life that ended much too soon.

Invested Faith and St. Peter's United Church of Christ Announce Six-Figure Gift

Washington, DC: St. Peter's United Church of Christ in Ferguson, Missouri has made a \$200,000 gift to the Invested Faith Fund, continuing the church's ongoing partnership with Invested Faith, a fund for faith-rooted social entrepreneurs. For the past year, St. Peter's and Invested Faith have met together regularly to worship, to learn about shared values and vision, to explore ideas for partnership, and to collaborate with Good Faith Media to produce this powerful film about the life of the congregation.

This initial monetary contribution to Invested Faith reflects St. Peter's mission and vision and their long history as a justice seeking community and signals the beginning of ongoing investment by the congregation. St. Peter's long-time presence and impact in the Ferguson community through their resource center and local partnerships now expands to include justice issues across the country.

Invested Faith founder Rev. Dr. Amy Butler values these partnerships. "While Invested Faith proudly identifies, funds, and supports faith-rooted social entrepreneurs, my goal in starting Invested Faith was to create a vehicle by which traditional faith communities could use their considerable resources to fund a future we cannot yet see. St. Peter's is leading the way, showing traditional faith communities how to live boldly into the future God imagines for us," said Butler.

Patrick Chandler, senior pastor at St. Peter's UCC, sees the gift as an expansion of the mission of this thriving congregation. "Our partnership with Invested Faith is a natural continuation of St. Peter's long history and witness. Through our ongoing relationship with Invested Faith, this initial gift from our endowed funds not only helps equip new models and understanding of what it means to be "church," it also seeks to model God's justice as an act of reparations, seeds planted in often overlooked and underserved communities. Our work together is a bold act of faith."

Invested Faith supports social innovators creating businesses that impact systems of injustice across the U.S. and this funding will provide additional resources for that work. Through this gift, made through the Invested Faith Thriving Church program, St. Peter's is proud to be able to undergird this ground-breaking model of justice seeking work through financial support.

About St. Peter's United Church of Christ, Ferguson, Missouri: *Established in 1843 in downtown St. Louis as a German Evangelical Church, St. Peter's UCC is grounded in Jesus' example of caring for and connecting with those often overlooked, oppressed, or marginalized. A presence in Ferguson since 1957, the church has continued to support justice efforts in the community and, in 2016, opened a resource center on their property, offering space for non-profit work and much needed services and programs for the community.*

About Invested Faith: *Invested Faith is a fund for faith-rooted social innovators founded by Rev. Dr. Amy Butler in 2019 in response to declining church attendance and the need for new models of philanthropy in faith circles. Invested Faith works to become a bridge between traditional churches and social innovators who are creating new expressions of faith and community.*



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