

NEW-HARMONY, (IND.) December 2022

REFLECTIONS ON A DECEMBER MORNING!

By: Dan Barton

Thursday morning, early, December 1, 2022; just when you thought it was safe to give a parade, wouldn't you know it, a water-pipe breaks in the street.

I was up early that Thursday morning to escort a contractor's rep. around the outside of 505 Main Street, getting an estimate on some work that needed to be done on the Gazette Building. Out front, I noticed the town maintenance crew and Council President Alvin Blaylock hustling around out on Main Street. I waved to Alvin and went on about my business.

Things began to develop quickly. The next thing you know the sound of a saw could be heard cutting asphalt. Dust was swirling in the street, and I could see one of the town's workmen busily ripping a rectangular hole in the pavement. Uh, Oh!

This problem, frozen pipes, is normal around our small town of New Harmony whenever the temperature drops below 32 degrees. Pipes freeze, then crack, then burst. Our Council president and our very efficient town work crew is used to this and they've become very good at removing and repairing the problem pipes. I've often wondered, over the past couple of years or so, just how many miles of water-line they've replaced; something to ask Alvin one of these days.

I was back and forth all day on December 1st. As I traveled here and there in town from 505 Main Street and then back again, I kept a casual eye on what was going on. That weekend was to be New Harmony's annual Christmas Festival, called "Christmas in New Harmony", and the Christmas parade was planned to go right down Main Street over the very spot where the leaking pipe problem was attempted at being resolved. By now there was a gigantic hole being excavated. The town's back-hoe was awaiting orders. Alvin Blaylock and Street Department Supervisor Bobby Grider were on hand to keep a close watch on the project. The clock was ticking!

By dusk that day, around 4:30, I could see two exhausted workers in the hole throwing dirt. They had reached pay-dirt, you might say. Wouldn't be long, they'd at least be on top of the problem pipe. That was Thursday evening. According to Bobby Grider, they were able to fix the broken pipe by the end of that first day. The refilling of the hole would just have to wait until Friday, everybody was frazzled. They would be back to the next morning, early on the 2nd. Tired, cold, wet and hungry, they went home to rest.

Friday proved to be another tough work-day for the street crew, but the pipe project was coming along nicely. There were some concerned faces and much direction from arm-chair bystanders who were standing around the hole, but the crew kept on working

and filling the gaping cavity in the street. The crew was on schedule. Work was fully finished in the afternoon of Friday, December 2nd. Water was sprayed, dirt was washed and broomed down the gutters; away from the businesses, the sidewalks and the newly completed pipe and street work. What an extraordinary job these fellas did! Now the much anticipated parade could go on as scheduled on Saturday morning December 3rd. Marchers and floats would roll right over the finished product without even noticing the well packed entrenchment that held the new water pipes and the promise of a merry christmas march in small Town New Harmony.

We are lucky in New Harmony to have such qualified professionals looking after our streets and water/sewer lines. While I sat warmly in my building and my car watching the progress of this public works project going on outside, I couldn't help but admire these workers who were working on that wet, cold, long day, just so our town could enjoy a Saturday morning filled with laughing, smiling, people, children and adults, watching a parade. Most had no idea what had made this celebration possible over the previous two days of stringent labor.

Good work fellas! And a Merry Christmas to you all!

The New Harmony Town Crew who worked on this street-pipe miracle were Bobby Grider, Brian Strader and Jon Gates.

Bobby Grider said, the crew was digging in solid cinders, not just packed dirt. Making the job even more difficult than they had initially anticipated.

Brian Strader, said, it reminded him of the old saying, "Don't rain on my parade!" They were determined not to let a little water stop them.

Jon Gates said, that he felt like he was still recovering from the work when I interviewed him on Monday, December 5th. Hard work, and they all have a sense of humor about it. This work helped the merchants of New Harmony to have a successful weekend and for the people who attended the event to have a happy visit. What more could we ask for on Christmas.

TIMBER!

By: Dan Barton

Eagle Tree Service began the job of taking down dangerous trees in New Harmony, as was expected, the first week in December. It seems that when I did my count of the ribbons that Roger Wade placed on the town trees, that there were about eleven trees that the Town Council agreed to take down; they had to go. Around a half a dozen others had to be trimmed. The total cost of this work, according to Town Council Minutes, should be about \$19,665.

On Monday morning the Fifth of December, I watched from the safety of my car parked at Church and Brewery, about a block away, as the tree service outfit began to assemble for the removal of an old diseased tree at the corner Brewery and Granary. Safety first seemed to be their motto, as they slowly got things together

for the work. It struck me that this company was very well equipped both in machinery, equipment and men. The lumberjacks, or whatever their called today in Posey County, Indiana, seemed to be veteran tree removal specialists. You could just tell by the way they handled their equipment and worked around the tree that had been designated to be removed. Carefully and efficiently!

There were two big trucks, one was used for the wood grinder/chipper and the other for hauling away the trunk and the large limbs. The fellow with the big chain saw cut up the limbs and the trunk like they were butter.

When the work was started they used a large, and I do mean large, crane, that looked like a metal praying mantis. The boom must have reached a hundred feet into the sky, and from it was suspended a steel cable with what looked like a large steel ball and a mechanical apparatus attached at the end, which they used to connect to the tree trunk that the chainsaw man was cutting through into pieces for removal. One, two, three, and they were done with this big tree. One could see that the old tree had rotted all the way through in its middle. It couldn't have taken this work crew more than an hour from start to finish. An outstanding operation. And, fun to watch. Especially watching the guy who got to ride the steel ball down on the cable when they were finishing up. What fun!

But seriously, tree removal is a tricky business, and one can easily get seriously injured or killed doing this job. That's why preparation, in this case, appeared to be of such importance. Arboricultural operations are still among the

leading industrial activities for fatal and nonfatal injuries. Compared to all industries, tree workers have at least 15 times the fatality rate (Bureau of Labor Statistics) and three times the nonfatal rate. While, you might take some comfort in the nonfatal rate being "only" three times that of all industries; consider its meaning - many of these incidents are so severe that the tree worker will die. Falls are the most common fatal accident. Contact with objects and equipment is second, but only marginally. The third is electricity.

Once, when I was living on North Mountain in Rockbridge County, Virginia, I got invited to a tree felling. The man in charge, who was going to do the actual cutting, was not nearly as well equipped as Eagle Tree Service. He was a sort of do-it-yourself tree service. In fact he even taught tree removal and care at a local community college.

This particular removal did not quite go as planned. It seems that unless you are properly equipped, a tree can decide, and go, its own way. I was watching at some distance from this mountain operation, maybe a couple of hundred feet away. There was the tree-saw lumber jack and also two local people involved. The two local folks were assigned to pull on a cable which was supposed to cause the tree to fall away from the house it stood next to and was very close to. It was also where I was standing for protection. When the sawing was done and the tree decided to fall, it decided to fall toward the house, directly at where I was standing. It didn't matter to that tree if there were ten people on that rope, it was going its own way. TIMBER! And here she came. I quickly, and I do mean quickly, stepped along the far away side of the house expecting to

hear the crush of roofing any second. I just kept walking, fast. But no, the tree missed the house, but by no more than a foot. It would have certainly taken me out if I hadn't hot-footed it out of the way.

So, if you're looking for a full scale tree service, look carefully. Make sure they've got the equipment and their own crew. Make sure their bonded, licensed, insured, and whatever else is required to operate such a dangerous operation. Trees have a habit of going their own way. **TIMBER!**

THE BATTLE AND THE GLORY OF ...TENNIS?

By: Richard Moss

It was not a sport I grew up with, being well beyond the finances of my struggling family back in the Bronx. And there were not many tennis courts anyway in those crowded neighborhoods. I accommodated myself early to the three working-class sports that we could afford — baseball, basketball, and football — and so knew nothing of tennis.

The first inkling of my abiding ignorance occurred watching my son on the Junior Varsity team at the Jasper High School. The system and language of keeping score and determining winners were, I thought, inscrutable, and I spent the first couple of years bridging the chasms in my grasp of the sport. I soon learned of singles, doubles, ones, twos, and the bizarre scoring method: "love" (for zero), fifteen, thirty, and forty (points one through three), "deuce," "set point," tie-breaker, and so on — all quite alien to someone who grew up knowing only of the New York Yankees and the peculiar traditions

of our national pastime.

There were also tennis lessons, which seemed interminable. In baseball, football, or basketball, one didn't have "lessons"; rather, one just played. Not so tennis. In this sport, lessons apparently are required if one wants to be "good." With the year-round lessons and tournament, the time requirements were not insubstantial. My weekends no longer belonged to me, nor my summers. And if one's children were also involved in marching band, well then there was no such thing as a free weekend or summer — ever.

There was the "tennis family": the other boys, the coaches, parents, and their families. This, too, was novel. Overnight, I grew a much larger family. We saw each other regularly, especially during the season. This became the family of my son, too. He swore fealty and allegiance to them.

The physical training requirements of tennis were significant. Cardiovascular fitness was a must if one were to endure those long, grueling matches. Especially singles. Tennis was demanding not just in terms of skill, nuance, and artistry, but equally in stamina, quickness, and power. And so I observed a pudgy kid become lean, swift, and very strong.

There was also the crucial element of will. In all of sports, there was, I thought, nothing as punishing as singles tennis; facing one another across that vast, green expanse, the two young gladiators thrashing one another remorselessly, each swing a titanic effort, pouring their full measure into the return, struggling savagely even for a single point. Here I watched an often distracted child become focused, intense, and able

to muster great force of will and determination.

It was not my choice, tennis. I had preferred baseball. My sport. And he had earlier shown much promise. Furthermore, he was a switch hitter, like Mickey Mantle, my boyhood idol, whom I had watched as a boy at Yankee Stadium. Baseball to me was life itself, and so it seemed for him. But in the end, he chose tennis. At the time, I was disappointed, but on this, it turned out, his instincts were correct.

The early-morning matches in late summer and early fall were spectacular. There were the warm-ups, announcements, introductions, and anthem, which were stirring. Before us, then, appeared the broad savannah of sparkling, emerald courts, marked off in white, the braided nets rimmed in ivory, the black and red score cards, which we watched breathlessly to determine who was ahead — so splendid a meadow, as I had never beheld, all residing beneath a canopy of blue and an ascending sun, radiant like a medallion. Here young men battled, with honor and mastery — the pride of their families and schools, the best of their year. Yes, these were sublime moments.

Then came the sectionals, regionals, semi-state, and state, in Indianapolis. There was a separate track for One Singles and One Doubles, and my young ward and his neighbor represented our school and community with passion and flair, falling in the end only to mighty Carmel, finishing at number two in the state. Yes, a regret for them, but for me an accomplishment that ranks among my most cherished memories.

Tennis is an elite sport, a bracing yet

gentlemanly form of competition that, perhaps more than an other, is won or lost as much in the minds of the players as on the field. It requires fanatical focus, intensity, and drive, and on the court, particularly for singles, it is based squarely on the individual. It is competition at its most elevated, sport at its most ideal, transcendent and exacting, equally athletic and cerebral.

Like any great endeavor, it stands on a platform of strong families, personal responsibility, discipline, and initiative. It is a microcosm of what is good in our fair city, of its strong values and local institutions.

I salute our school, its students, coaches, and faculty, its traditions and history, and the many opportunities it provides for our sons and daughters to mature, succeed, and become leaders.

Dr. Richard Moss is a board-certified head and neck cancer surgeon practicing in Jasper, Indiana for more than 30 years. He was a candidate for Congress in 2016 and 2018. He has written *A Surgeon's Odyssey* and *Matilda's Triumph*, available at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) Find more of his essays at [richardmossmd.com](https://www.richardmossmd.com) Visit Richard Moss, M.D. on Facebook, Twitter, Parler, GAB, Gettr, Truth Social, and Instagram.

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**DECEMBER
GAZETTE RECIPE 2022**

By: Denise Rapp

Swedish Meatballs

I stumbled on this recipe a few months ago while looking for something new to serve for my Carryout meals. Wasn't quite sure if it would be a winner, but my research excited me, so I said "why not..?"
Wow...am I glad I did, these Swedish meatballs are delicious!
The warm spices in this dish are sure to comfort you on a cold winters day. I can't wait for you to try them.

Swedish Meatballs

1 med. onion
2 cloves garlic
2 tbs olive oil
Sauté & set aside
2 lbs ground beef
3 eggs
2 tbs soy sauce
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp pepper
1/2 tsp garlic
1 1/2 c seasoned bread crumbs

Sauce:

1/2 c butter
1/2 c flour
4 c beef broth
1 tsp salt
1/4 tsp pepper
1 tbs lemon juice
1/4 tsp all spice
1/4 tsp nutmeg
1 c heavy cream

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350
Sauté onions & garlic in oil, set aside (season w/ S&P)
In a large bowl add hamburger, eggs, soy sauce, spices and bread crumbs & cooked onions and garlic

Mix this all together and portion out into equal size meatballs
Brown meatballs in a skillet on all sides

(They do not have to be cooked all the way through)

Place in a large baking dish

Sauce:

Melt butter in a medium sauce pan, then add flour and cook stirring constantly for a few minutes

Add the beef broth, spices and cream
Adjust seasoning to taste if need be

Pour sauce over meatballs, cover in foil and bake for 1.5 hour

(This step makes them extra tender & delicious)

Serve with mashed potatoes, noodles or rice.

Enjoy!



**Merry
Christmas**
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR

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