



Points East

By:
Ike Adams

We had two big green Army helicopters flying low over Paint Lick last weekend and everybody was all aggravated and up in arms because they thought it was the pot busters. Folks were justifiably upset with the indignation that somebody here in the valley might be growing a marijuana patch. The purpose of my column this week is to set the record straight because we're pretty sure there's no pot growing within half a mile of Paint Lick.

The Army was not looking for pot anyway. They were looking for the Paint Lick Sportsman's Club so they could deliver fish.

I realize this news will reach some of you readers too late to get here, but the Sportsman's Club is having a huge, four hour, fish fry this coming

Saturday, July 29 from 4 til 8 p.m., on the creek bank behind our clubhouse here in town. At five bucks a head (3 for kids) it will be the best deal on gourmet seafood in the nation. And I really do apologize to you Mountain Eagle readers for not letting you know about it until after the fact. I think you'll be impressed anyway and the next time I will get notice out a bit more timely because I know you will not want to miss it.

Years ago a couple of our club members were in combat in Europe during World War II and they hooked up with a company of soldiers from St. Lawrence Island which is located in the northern part of the Bering Sea between Alaska and Russia and got to swapping fish tales. To make a long story short, after the war was

over the guys from Alaska sent a big cooler full of red perch fillets harvested from the cold and pure Arctic waters back to Paint Lick and our guys sent them a big load of Kentucky River, flathead catfish.

It's a tradition that lives on to this day and that's what the helicopters were doing last weekend. They had flown all the way from Alaska to deliver the fish that we'll be frying up this weekend. And if you saw them over at Boonesboro State Park, don't be worried. They were picking up catfish to take back to St. Lawrence Island. In the meantime we've been thawing the perch fillets all week over 500 pounds of them because they arrive so cold it takes that long to get them limber enough to fry.

The last time we had a fish fry somebody from London wanted to know where we'd bought the meal to make the hush puppies because they were, by far, the best he'd ever eaten.

I thought Smith Ledford was going to whip him on the spot. You see, the meal can't be bought. We have contacts up in Harlan County who grow a secret strain of white hickory cane corn that will not produce except in certain bottom land on the upper Cumberland River. A fellow up there has a mule powered mill and a special stone carved out of a cliff on Pine Mountain that is only used to grind our meal. Smith has just enough ground to make hush puppies for our fish fries.

We have another guy who spends the entire month of June traveling across Texas buying sweet onions that win blue ribbons at county fairs and that's another ingredient of the hush puppies. I can't tell you why these will be sliced, deep fried, close to divulging the secret recipe.

Another one of our members is in Idaho this week, also at county fairs, buying the best spuds known to man. These will be sliced, deep fried, so as not to waste a morsel and served along with cole slaw to complete the meal.

And speaking of cole slaw, do not make an idiosyncrasy out of the recipe at the big event. Only one fellow knows where the cabbage comes from, but we suspect that it is also from Alaska and shipped along with the fish. After all, there were two helicopters hovering around last weekend.

The slaw recipe is kept in a vault and no single person knows the entire combination. When it comes time to make sure the recipe is being followed correctly, six guys line up outside the room to complete the meal.

and enter, one at a time, to dial in a single number. Smith Ledford goes in last and makes sure he has the recipe committed to memory. He then calls 11 people who arrive at his house separately, each with a single ingredient for the slaw which mixes in his basement under armed guard.

Similar secrets are closely guarded for the batter recipe and the source of the special oil in which the fish and hushpuppies are fried. Custom-made brass gas burners found in the Adirondacks are used to maintain even heat on the deep fryers and only a couple of people know the precise temperature the oil must reach before a fillet can be dropped into it.

If you ever attend a Paint Lick Sportsman's Club fish fry you may think that it looks like a bunch of guys casually hunkered around a bunch of pots frying fish and stuff, but now you know the rest of the story. If you can't or didn't make this one, we hope to have another when the second crop of onions comes in this fall in Texas. I promise I'll give you longer notice.

And whether or not you believe any of the rest of the story I swear we are having a fish fry late this Saturday (July 29) afternoon and I promise that you won't be sorry if you show up because you will not leave hungry.

Our Readers Write

Dear Editor,

I am a particularly educated man. Besides my public high school education, I've taught myself most of what I know. But, I love my local library.

Just the other day, I decided to begin strengthening my pitiful background in classic literature and begin reading all those books that should be required in our public schools, but are not. One of the series of books I looked at was Great Books of the Western World. In the preface, an editor says (on the tradition of reading classic books):

"The Editors do not believe that any of the social and political changes that have taken place in the last fifty years, or any that now seem imminent, have invalidated or can invalidate the tradition or make it irrelevant for modern man—We are as concerned as anybody about the headlong plunge into the abyss that Western civilization seems to be taking."

The introduction then goes on to lament the downward spiral of discipline and academics, particularly in the classics. Sound familiar?

There are those who would blame the absence of school prayer for declining standards in education. This gives new meaning to the term "oversimplification." Besides my children are honor roll students with no discipline problems, so I don't agree. I doubt the Robert M. Hutchins, who wrote the introduction of the Great Books series, would agree either. Why? Well, most likely because school prayer was the subject when he wrote the introduction, December 1st, 1951.

Our forefathers knew something the Christian majority has apparently forgotten. It's a concept called the "tyranny of the majority" and it is the reason they drafted the Bill of Rights. It is the reason the Supreme Court is appointed for life, so that they cannot be swayed by the majority, or lobbied by anyone, to trample the rights of the smallest of minorities, the individual. And it is the reason the Supreme Court rightly ruled that public school prayer, posting the Ten Commandments, and prayer at public school activities are unconstitutional. Every American should know that.

Sincerely,
James L. Hartley
Henderson, KY

Dear Editor,
With the recent Eagle verdict against tobacco in the Florida lawsuit, many people have been voicing their concern that the verdict was too harsh against the tobacco companies. The two most voiced concerns are:

#1 The plaintiffs chose to smoke. It was their fault AND
#2 The punitive damage award of \$145 billion makes a mockery of our judicial system.

In response to #1, Leighton A. Finegan, the foreman of the six member jury said it best: "The point was not whether people had the choice to smoke, but whether the tobacco companies knew they were selling a defective product and denied that it was defective. Tobacco companies belittled or denied the health effects of smoking and addiction, and had the gall to challenge public health authorities and even used fabricated science to dispute the truth."

In response to #2, "the conduct/choices of smokers was not illegal. It was the conduct/choices of the tobacco industry that was on trial. The jury decided unanimously that the

(Cont. to A3)

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