

LIFESTYLE

LITTLE BALKANS CHRONICLES

Keeping history alive



J.T. KNOLL

Morning Sun Columnist

My sister Penny and her sidekick, Barry, made the pilgrimage from K.C. (as many do on Christmas) to Pallucca's in the Republic last Saturday.

They came early so they could spend some time in the new library and Heritage Hall Museum, which, like Pallucca's, is sure to become a touchstone for both present and past Frontenacers.

It already has for me. Penny asked Linda and me to meet them there and be their guides, which we gladly did.

We started off talking about Eagle's Hall, the

lodge that stood where the library and museum is now located. The Hall, and the Fraternal Order that built it, will not be forgotten, as it was the site of meetings, dances, card parties, receptions, etc. for many, many years.

"Grandpa played pitch about over there on Sunday afternoons. There was a stage about

there." "My band played here in 1969." "I played poker about here."

As we walked through, Penny, Linda and I shared stories at every display — the funeral home, the bakery, the churches, the grocery stores, the schools, the sports, the gas stations, and more.

It brought an instant a sense of community and place for us. And for Barry, a narrative education about our collective heritage, an experiential walk through not just Frontenac but The Little Balkans in general.

Much on display goes back to before I was

born, but there's plenty that brought movieola scenes enacted with the 'characters' I grew up with.

All through the week I've been having flashbacks to the 1950s and '60s. Visions of spindly, pine Christmas trees with fat-bulbed lights and drooping tinsel, midnight Mass, grandma at her sewing machine, rotary telephones and party lines, big televisions in cabinets with doors, milk gravy in cast iron frying pans, Raymond Pallucca hollering at Dickie to pick up the phone in the butcher shop, playing bingo at church socials,

Arma-Frontenac football games, drinking cherry phosphates at Fedell's, soaking in a bathtub with feet, swinging on the front porch, listening to Sam Cicero's soliloquies at his corner gas station, sitting in the cheater chair at Prete's barber shop, running free with my dog all over town, and reading big, fat newspapers.

Especially newspapers. Just about my favorite thing to do at the new museum is read one of the full pages of the old Frontenac News — everything from who's been in town visiting relatives to: births and deaths, mining news, obituaries, ads for groceries, and gatherings, i.e. "Mr. and Mrs. Jess Graves, D.J. Saia, Vincent Saia and Jess Hall spoke Sunday

at a meeting of Young Democrats at the home of Mrs. W.W. Caldwell."

Indeed, newspapers have long been the primary source historians rely on to gather and preserve information about the past. Another reason we need to keep The Morning Sun alive.

So, if you're stumped on what to get someone (whether they live here or away) for a last-minute Christmas gift (or birthday present in the coming year) consider a subscription to this newspaper. Just call 620-231-2600 or go to <https://checkout.themorningsun.com/>

And if you're a subscriber already, thank you for keeping history alive.

If you have a story or photo for LBC, contact me at 620-704-1309 or jtknoll@swbell.net

From our HISTORY Sponsored by

School's out for 3,900 Pittsburg students

Compiled by
Brady Cloud

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Excerpted stories in
Crawford County newspaper archives

100 Years Ago

December 24, 1925

About 3,900 grade school pupils and high school students of Pittsburg's public schools left the nine school buildings at noon today, happy in the thought of Santa Claus and a week's vacation after four months of hard work. Appropriate Christmas programs were given this morning in all of the schools. Only in one instance is the thought of a week's vacation marred. Pupils of the Lincoln school will be obliged to return to the school routine Monday morning while other children play with their Christmas toys.

Pittsburg stores will

remain open tonight for the convenience of late shoppers until 9 o'clock. This arrangement includes all stores of all varieties. No stores, excepting drug stores, confectioneries and cigar stands will be open tomorrow. With the exception of grocery stores and butcher shops, the stores have been open evenings since Wednesday night. Tonight butcher shops and grocery shops will join the merchants in keeping late hours.

Two children, playmates, were burned to death and the mother of one was probably fatally burned in a fire which followed the explosion of kerosene in a coal oil can at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Kelley, 105 West Madison Avenue, shortly before 2 o'clock this afternoon. Robert Kelley, 5-year old son of Mr. and Mrs. Kelley, and Anna

Ray Atkins, 7-year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Mason W. Atkins, 104 West Madison, were the victims. Mrs. Frank Kelley, mother of the boy, was probably fatally burned and was rushed to Mt. Carmel hospital in a Smith-Porter ambulance.

50 years ago

December 24, 1975

It is giving rather than gifts that make a worthwhile Christmas at the home of the Rev. and Mrs. Michael Trinklein, 711 N. Catalpa. "I like a Christmas with meaning," Janice Trinklein expresses her philosophy of the season, and for Janice that means many things, such as baking six huge lasagna and six pecan pies to be served to the 28 guests she was expecting at the Trinklein home for the annual dinner of the church council of Zion Lutheran Church

where Michael Trinklein is pastor.

Burke and Sons Oil Co. of Pittsburg was awarded the contract for the city's regular and unleaded gasoline requirements for 1976 at the Pittsburg City Commission meeting Tuesday. The contract for 1976 ethyl requirements for the city will be rebid and Jan. 6 has been set aside by the commission as the date those bids are to be received. The gasoline bids were first accepted on Dec. 2 but action to award the contract had been deferred for three weeks until the octane ratings of the different types of gasoline could be reviewed.

WICHITA, Kan. (AP) - The joy of a church Christmas celebration turned to mourning Tuesday in the wake of an accident that left one caroler dead and

34 others injured. The tragedy occurred as about 65 members of the Bethel Assembly of God Church choir were thrown to the ground from a 35-foot "living" Christmas tree built of wood on the church parking lot. "We do not know what happened to the structure or why it collapsed," said the Rev. Vyrl Pember, church pastor. "One moment it was standing; the next it was falling."

25 years ago

December 24, 2000

The Kansas infant mortality rate, the ratio of infant deaths to live births, edged up to 7.3 infant deaths per 1,000 births - 0.73 percent - according to the 1999 Kansas Annual Summary of Vital Statistics published by the Kansas Department of Health Environment in December. And "We recorded 281 resident infant deaths during a year in which 38,748 resident live births occurred," reported State Registrar Dr. Lorne Phillips, who heads KDHE's Center for Health and Environmental Statistics. "The rate change (0.4) from 6.9 in 1998 to 7.3 in 1999 represents at 5.8 percent and increase and is cause for con-

cern."

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) - The taps are wide open as natural gas and heating oil providers do their part to keep fuel flowing across the Midwest during the extended cold spell. Winter is just a few days old and the National Weather Service says there is little relief in sight. "We are moving all of the gas we can possibly move," said Dan Considine, a spokesman for Williams Gas Pipeline Co. Propane suppliers have a similar tale to tell. "The system is taxed, but so far so good," said Kelly Swan, a spokesman for Mid-America Pipeline Co.

At its annual Christmas Party, the Pittsburg Board of Realtors named Cindy Loy the 2000 Realtor of the Year. Loy has been with Century 21 Cobb Realty since February of 1996. She is licensed in Kansas and Missouri. Loy has been a member of the Century 21 Masters Club for the past two years and achieved the Ruby level last year. She is a past preside president of the Pittsburg Board of Realtors, and has served on the budget, by-laws and Christmas Party committees for the board.

FAMILY CIRCUS



MODERATELY CONFUSED



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