



Slices of Life

By: Jill Pertler

Squeezing the Last Bit from the Bottle

Most of us enjoy ketchup on our burgers and fries. I know I do. But I never realized ketchup might be a metaphor for a life well lived.

I never wanted to grow older. I avoided it at all costs. I disliked turning 30 and then 40 and so on.

Now I realize that was all pretty silly.

You can't stop time. The years move on, and with them so does the number that defines your age.

You can spend your 36th year wishing you were still 35, but that accomplishes nothing.

Why aspire to something that can never be again? Better put, why waste time on such things, when time is so very, very precious?

If you are 36, the only thing you can realistically aspire to is being the best 36 and possibly the best 37 you can be. Nothing more. Nothing less.

And that is enough.

It is brilliant and realistic and perfect.

If only we'd recognize these truths at 29, or 39 or even 49.

Instead, we all want to be young. Forever. At least I did.

I aspired to the whole youngness theory for decades. I believed my numerical age defined me, and I attempted to run from it.

I've never been a good runner.

Then I moved to a community dominated by retirees and I witnessed their strength and resilience and vigor and vitality. It doesn't matter if you are 55 or 85, everyone in my neighborhood seems to subscribe to the same philosophy: live life to the fullest.

It has been eye-opening.

These people who remember a life filled with the realities of the Viet Nam War, moon landings, and the black and white versions of Leave it to Beaver, I Love Lucy and Alfred Hitchcock movies are still living out a joyful and action-packed life every hour of every day, and I couldn't be more inspired.

But back to ketchup.

Most of us have experienced a ketchup bottle that is no longer full, in fact, by most standards, it might be described as nearly empty. But, empty or full is irrelevant because those last bits of ketchup taste just as rich and just as satisfying as the first ones out of the bottle.

Maybe even more so, because when you understand your

ketchup bottle no longer holds an unlimited amount of the good red sauce, you savor what is left. You appreciate every drop and you make sure none of it goes to waste. You become intent on squeezing every last bit of ketchup from the bottle.

And that perfectly describes so many people I've recently had the pleasure of calling friends. They may not have a lifetime ahead of them, but they are enjoying and savoring every moment, every day.

They are playing sports. They are playing cards. They are volunteering at the food shelf. They are sitting beside the pool. They are swimming laps. They are writing poetry. They are fostering abandoned pets. They are creating art. They are acting with the local theater group. They are pursuing life-long hobbies. They are finding new life passions. They are living and they are loving it.

They are incredible.

Age is only a number. We've all heard this time and time again. Still, we tend to battle against that number. I've learned the hard way that numbers are inconsequential.

My husband died at 56. It was his number.

I play sports with people who are 85 and they are still going strong. They haven't yet come upon their number.

My takeaway from all of this? Quit worrying about the numbers. We all are like a bottle of ketchup. We don't know when our tomato saucy sauce will run out, but we might as well have fun during the run.

I am honored to know quite a few people who are living this out loud, and I love that I am able to see it up close and personal.

I never wanted to get older. I didn't think there was anything good to be said about it.

Now I know I was wrong. Living in maturity is awesome, as long as you keep on living - really living - every day, understanding the importance of squeezing every last bit of ketchup out of your bottle.

Which I now do. Most certainly. Every single day. Until I can't anymore.

We should all be so fortunate. *Jill Pertler is an award-winning syndicated columnist, published playwright and author. Don't miss a slice; follow the Slices of Life page on Facebook.*

A Look at the Past

Week of June 10

70 years

J.W. Fay purchased the A.B. Swenson grocery store in Columbus and took possession June 1. Mr. Fay added a large meat cooler and carries a complete line of groceries.

Forty-seven votes were cast in the city school election. Lloyd Johnson with 46 and Andy Christiansen with 45 were re-elected as members of the board of education.

The one-mill tax levy received 41 votes in favor and 8 against.

The Bowbells baseball club won their first league game of the season at Noonan 11-3.

60 years

Charlotte Brodal of Larson and Jay Moody of Battleview were selected to take part in the state public speaking contest held in Fargo.

Dr. Robert Emerson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Keith Emerson, will receive his medical degree at Northwestern University in Chicago.

Births: daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Floyd; daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Lionel Locke.

50 years

Mrs. Alf Sagness was selected to serve as State President of the ND Homemakers. She had just completed her term as State Safety Chairman for the past three years.

Scott Greenup, student council representative, and Paul Pearson, advisor at Bowbells High School, are two of 1300

student council leaders and advisors selected to attend the 40th annual national conference of the National Association of Student Council in Portland, OR.

Louie Perlichik caught the largest fish ever caught in Powers Lake waters. It weighed 14.5 lbs. and was 41 inches long.

Births: daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Leelyn Hermanson; daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Tyrone Albertson; daughter to Mr. and Mrs. Terry Slotsve; son to Mr. and Mrs. Roger Johnson; son to Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Holmen.

40 years

Ernest Knutson, 64, of Tioga was slightly injured in a helicopter crash south of Portal. He was spraying road ditches and hit a powerline.

A fire at Country Crafts, Bowbells did considerable damage to the building. Bev Schultz, owner, was firing up her kiln when the ceiling caught fire. The Bowbells Fire Department had the fire under control quickly.

Myron and Gerdus Watterud will be celebrating their 40th anniversary. Ann and Charles Darras, formerly of Columbus; Frank and Irene Hanson; Milton and Dorothy Berg, are celebrating their 50th anniversaries, and Mr. and Mrs. Bill Bywater are all celebrating their 60th anniversaries.

Walster Homemakers celebrate 50 years together.

Obituaries: Ole Galgerud, 92, of Columbus; Ella Lorentzen, 86, of Powers Lake.

30 years

Bowbells Women Helping

Others initiated a fund drive to purchase new playground equipment for the Bowbells City Park in 1995. The project is nearing completion, with volunteers needed to install the equipment.

Birth: son to Randy and Shawna Froseth.

20 years

Car wash in Bowbells sponsored by the Luther League of Bethlehem Lutheran Church will be held at Knutson Auto. School elections will be held June 13. Julie Kreklau and Terry Wolkenhauer have both filed for the Old Flaxton District three-year term for the Burke Central School Board.

Haley Beeter, daughter of Tami and Brent of Bowbells, turned six years old on 6-6-2006.

McKenzie Chrest and Taylor Mahlum represented Burke County at the District 4-H Communications Art Contest. Trinity Lutheran Church of Kenmare is celebrating 110 years of worship.

Obituaries: Howard Herdt, Jr., 75, of Gillette, WY; Winnifred Heintz, 85, of Devils Lake; Harald Peterson of Powers Lake; Nuell "Bud" Herseth, 82, formerly of Battleview and Powers Lake; Marie Eggen, 85, formerly of Lignite.

Leo and Joann Christiansen are celebrating their 50th anniversary.

Bernice Larson was recognized at the Flaxton Memorial Day program for 50 years of continued service at the Flaxton American Legion Auxiliary.

Wayne and Donna Slotsve will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary.

10 years

Burke County Fair is 100 years in the making.

Pat and Kenny Essen celebrate their 64th anniversary.

A black bear sighted near the Wayne and Clara Olson farm north of Bowbells on June 1. A bear was also spotted at the Joe and Michelle Nelson farm, east of Kenmare on May 21. On May 25, a bear was killed 7½ miles east of Kenmare.

Obituary: Lois Rick, 60, of Minot.

Bowbells Students of the Month for April were Kayla Barral and Braeden Carlberg. Burke Central Reading month winners: first place winners were Ethan Bailey, Logan Heinrich, Audrey Kihle, Tanner Bailey, Kenadee Merritt and Lexi McEvers.

one year

Deputy Griffin Nelson joins the Burke County Sheriff's Department. He brings a paramedic background to the department.

Red Hat ladies celebrate 20 years: Colleen Durawrd, Shirley Christensen, Diane Skalicky, Mary Ann Michel, Dorothy Ankenbauer, Vi Bauer, Pam Skaar, Joanie Skaar, Terry Alexander, Ardelle McIntyre, Dee Haley and Wanda Rodin.

Obituary: Beverly Blumhagen, 81, of Bismarck.

Star Ranchers announced for Fourth Quarter: Carson Tarap, Lochlan Smith, Lily Alberts, Koen Brown, Trey Nordloef and Gage Jensen.

Burke Soil Conservation District Achievement Award winners were Steve and Susan Bratlien.

Picked Up in Passing

Sandy Raines

Excerpts from June 1925 Columbus Reporter

Leo E. Mahoney, Editor

Notes from the 1925 Census: The City of Columbus has made a 50% gain in population in the five years since 1920.

In 1920, Columbus had 332, and the latest count for 1925 is 471, a gain of 139 people.

Columbus is situated on the Flaxton-Whitetail branch of the Soo line, 105 miles northwest of Minot. It is served by two railroads, the Great Northern and the Soo.

It is situated right in the heart of the richest agricultural section in the state and is just five miles north of the largest strip of lignite coal mines in the world. The mines employ about 300 men.

Columbus was incorporated

first as a village in 1906, so Columbus is yet in its infancy.

The city boasts of three elevators, two oil companies, two lumber yards, four general stores, a real estate office, a good hotel, two banks with combined resources of nearly one million dollars, a barber, two hardware stores, two meat markets, a café and confectionary, the best billiard hall west of Minot, a radio shop, three farm implement companies, three garages, a motor company, the American Legion, a baseball club and a band. It also has two ladies' aids, a Civil Improvement League, two lodges, a dance hall, a doctor, a dentist, a newspaper, and a moving picture show.

Did you know that the census returns show that the female population of Columbus city exceeds the male population by 45. We have 177 native males and 222 females, 44 males foreign born and 28 females foreign born.

And did you know that in

Columbus there are only 17 people, both male and female that are over the age of 60 years? Out of our total population of 471 people, there are 26 that are not U.S. citizens and there are 94 families in our city.

Last Friday evening, Miss Margaret Johnson, while attending commencement exercises at the high school auditorium, was the victim of a very peculiar and distressing accident. Miss Johnson was seated on a plank balcony of the auditorium which was held up by some folding chairs. During the program the folding chair collapsed, and the plank went down on Miss Johnson, breaking her foot just below the ankle. Dr. King was able to set her foot, and she is doing fine at the present time.

On Wednesday afternoon, June 10, Miss Elsie Pasche, daughter of H.F. Pasche of

northwest of this city, became the bride of Mr. Wm. Eggert of Flaxton. The newlyweds will make their home in Flaxton where Bill is employed at the Flaxton Hardware Co.

Attorney General Shafer, in a letter to states attorneys, calls for the enforcement of the headlight dimmer law, which has lain virtually dormant since it was enacted in 1917.

The AG is asking that all officers enforce it. The headlight dimmer law of 1917 provides that it shall be unlawful to use any kind of vehicle with a lighting device of over four candle power equipped with a reflector and arranged so no portion of the beam of reflected light shall rise above 42 inches from the level surface.

Any person violating the provisions of this act shall, upon conviction thereof, be fined not less than \$10, nor more than \$25.

CAN THEY DO THAT?

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Kitchen reations

To submit a favorite recipe, mail to P.O. Box 40, Bowbells ND 58721, or e-mail to tribune@nccray.net.

POPCORN BARS OR CAKE

16 c. popped popcorn (I use 6 oz. bag of air popped Gourmet White - extra tender)
1/2 c. butter
1/2 c. oil
16 oz. marshmallows (I used mini marshmallows about 1-1/2 bags.)
16 oz. plain M&Ms
1 - 16 oz jar roasted peanuts (I use dry roasted)

Melt butter, oil and marshmallows in microwave in short intervals, stir between. When all melted together, pour over popcorn in large bowl. Add M&Ms and peanuts. Stir well. Butter a jelly roll pan, bundt pan or angel food pan. Pour in, press down. Cool and cut and enjoy!

This recipe comes from Wanda Ely of Columbus.

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