

DAILY GRIND



NEWS FROM THE MILL

Shaun Sayres

The first month of 2025 is already behind us and much has changed. We spent most of January rearranging parts of the gift shop and making room for the merchandise that arrived off our container. We encourage everyone to come in and see the changes for themselves, including a few surprises that were debuted at our annual meeting.

We held our annual meeting, rebranded as the Windmill Expo to encourage non-member attendance, on January 27. Of the attendees not obligated to be there, 17 people joined us for the evening to learn more about our organization, how 2024 went for us, and plans for next year. Shaun presented an overview of 2024 including the initial outcomes of the ongoing capital

campaign. Finally, attendees were left with the critical message that the windmill is poised to generate a surplus for the first time in 25 years, but it will not be possible without continued community support.

Anyone who could not make the annual meeting, but wishes to see the published annual report and our annual financial statements may pick up a physical copy at the windmill or download it off our website.

Of the ongoing projects we are working on, we are particularly excited to share our new partnership with Thames & Kosmos, a children’s toy company that specializes in educational games and toys. We have already acquired a line of related products for the gift shop including toys that focus on renewable energy, gears, and engineering. We aim to integrate this new line into the windmill tour, providing children physical ways to engage with the core ideas of how a windmill is built and operated.

DVIO Community Update

Klare Chapman

As we step into a new year, the Danish Villages Improvement Organization (DVIO) is excited to share updates on our recent activities and upcoming projects that continue to enhance our community.

We ended last year on a festive note with our annual Holiday Lights Contest! The community came together to admire beautifully decorated homes, and the competition was fierce. After voting, we were thrilled to announce our winners: 1st Place: Laura & Troy Smith, 2nd Place: The Christensen Family, 3rd Place: Courtney & Chris Davis. Each winner received Dane Dollars, a special community-focused reward that supports local businesses.

If you haven’t heard of Dane Dollars, think of them as community gift certificates that can be used at a variety of businesses throughout the Danish Villages. Instead of being limited to one store, they provide flexibility for shoppers while ensuring that funds stay within our community to support local businesses.

Shelby County State Bank in Elk Horn administers Dane Dollars, making it easy for anyone to purchase them. They’re perfect for gifts, customer appreciation, and thank-you gestures. If you’re looking for a way to shop local and give meaningful gifts, consider stopping by

the bank to pick up some Dane Dollars!

As we plan for 2025, DVIO is excited to focus on an important new project: wayfinding signs and informational kiosks throughout the Danish Villages. Wayfinding signs will help guide visitors to key attractions and historic sites, making it easier to explore and appreciate all that our community has to offer. In a second phase, we aim to install informational kiosks in strategic locations to provide visitors with deeper details about these attractions.

We’re currently in the process of applying for grant funding to make this project a reality, and we’ll be sharing more details in the coming months. We believe these improvements will enhance the visitor experience and bring more awareness to the unique charm of the Danish Villages.

Spring will be here before we know it, and that means it’s time for one of our favorite community traditions – the Easter Egg Hunt! This year’s event will take place on Saturday, April 19th in Kimballton. It’s always a fun-filled day for families, and we can’t wait to see the excitement of the children as they search for colorful eggs.

Stay tuned for more details by following our Facebook page, where we’ll share updates as we get closer to the event and have volunteer opportunities to stuff eggs ahead of time and helpers for the event.

ELK HORN LIBRARY LANTERN

Shining the light on what is going on at your library!



The Elk Horn Public Library is encouraging knowledge of our past presidents. February is President’s month with memorabilia around the library. February 12th is our Lincoln Dinner with President Lincoln’s favorite foods. Stop in to the library to get your ticket for \$15. The meal will be at the Kimballton Townhall starting at 6:00 pm with appetizers.

February 13th we will be at the Norse Horse with a President’s Trivia night. Bring two or more people for a team and enter that night for \$20 per team. Awards will be given out for top score and best decorated table. Have a great meal and some fun!

Have you ever thought about writing your own book? Anna Redsand will be helping us to get started with this process on February 20th at 6:30 pm. Please sign-up by February 17th, so we know how many to expect. This is a preview to a full day of writing and planning on a Saturday in April. We will determine that date that night.

March will be Artist’s Month with painting opportunities with Deb King on March 20th at 6:30 pm, a Fortnite contest for teens, and a speaker on the book *The People Are Kind: A Religious History of Iowa* on March 31 at 6 pm.

We want to thank Julia Hawks for her amazing contributions to our library. We are now looking for a new Children’s Librarian. Stop in to the library or check on the City Website to apply!

We still have our regular programming for our youth. All are listed below. If there is a program you would like to see us do, please let us know so we can add it to our plans. We are adding to reasons to come to the library!

Here is our February schedule:

February 3 – Nature Nook with Nocturnal Animals K-3

February 5 – Bee a Valentine and Crafts Grades 3 - 6

February 5 – BrainFreeze for Teens

February 8 – Enchanted Bookworms (Toddlers and Preschoolers 10 – 10:45 am)

February 10 – Nature Nook with Maple Sugaring Grades K-3

February 12-Reading Rainbow– all ages

February 12 – Lincoln Dinner at Kimballton Townhall-\$15 each

February 13 – President’s Trivia Night at the Norse Horse starting at 6:00 pm

February 17 – Wii Bowling and Tennis

February 17 – Outlook Study Club with Irelynd McCarthy Presenting

February 19- Bee a President and Nutritious Snacks Grades 3 – 6

February 20 – Your Life As Story Preview for a Writing Retreat with Anna Redsand 6:30 pm

February 22 – Enchanted Bookworms (Toddlers and Preschoolers 10 – 10:45 am)

February 24 – Nature Nook with Moss and Lichen K-3

February 26 – Coffee Time 9 am

February 26-Reading Rainbow– all ages

February 27-Homeschool Book Club and STEM 2-4

Throwback Thor’s Day

Thursday, February 20

Featuring:
A frikadeller meal with potatoes, red cabbage, and cucumber salad at Norse Horse Tavern

Other local businesses in Elk Horn will be open late for the evening as well

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PRAIRIE ROOTS RUN DEEP , Pt. 5
Warren Watson

Major General Grenville M. Dodge traveled through Clay Township in 1853. He was surveying a route for the Mississippi and Missouri Railroad Company across Iowa. After crossing the East Nishnabotna above present Exira, he headed down Little Indian Creek. Little Indian Creek is today’s Elk Horn Creek. It has also been referred to as East Indian Creek. Early settlers throughout Shelby County originally referred to Danes in the Elk Horn area as the Indian Creek settlement. A researcher must always be cognizant of the fact that names CHANGE! Not only names of rivers and creeks but groves. Grove names changed according to ownership. One can easily become ‘lost’ vainly seeking a previously owned grove. Add to this confusion that of the newly arrived Danes. Many changed their Danish name to a more Americanized version. Sometimes part of the family changed, and others did not.

Dodge made camp where Elk Horn Creek entered Indian Creek. This was to be one night stay. The next morning the crew moved on and a government supply wagon from Iowa City discovered their abandoned camp. Riding with the survey crew’s supply wagon was a young tenderfoot lawyer from Connecticut. He was one of the famous Bacon’s from that state. Bacon became detached from the supply wagon and lost for three days. Dodge’s crew found him fifteen miles south on Indian Creek in poor shape. Survival in Clay Township and surrounding areas in the 1850’s was not a sure thing.

After the recovery of Bacon, the surveying crew headed west from Indian Creek on a line parallel to today’s county road F58. Dodge was out ahead hunting for deer. As he neared a huge grove, he observed rambling in some hazelnut bushes. This grove is known as Cuppy’s Grove. It is five west of Indian Creek. Adam (Add) Cuppy was the first white settler in southern Shelby County. He was out hunting deer too. Dodge was about to shoot what he thought was a deer when Cuppy cried out. Cuppy thus avoided being supper for the crew. Cuppy would help guide the crew through the area. Years later Dodge and Cuppy would almost perish surveying together on the Boyer River. In my researching experience multiple times I’ve run across a lone, old white man or a single white family living a recluse life in the wilderness. I’m not quite sure of the historical significance of lone, old, white men or a single white family living alone in the wilderness, but they were there! On a tragic footnote, Cuppy was later murdered by fellow settlers in 1865. There may have been a good reason old Add preferred an isolated life.

General Dodge was plotting the route of a single ‘furrow’ that would eliminate the tall grass prairie in the span of a couple decades. That single furrow was only about ten feet wide and made of eight-foot timbers and steel rails. It changed everything. Dodge’s original survey would have taken the railroad through Elk Horn and Harlan. Imagine if they had followed Dodge’s survey through Shelby County. Clay Township would have been traversed by arguably the greatest railroad system in United States history. However, a more southern route was chosen out of Des Moines through Cass County. Dodge and his associates had invested heavily in his original route. Dodge was dumbfounded by the change in plans. His route had crossed far fewer rivers and creeks. Railroad officials too late realized their error. Clay Township did get its railroad. In 1907 the Atlantic Northern Railroad was completed from Atlantic to Elk Horn and Kimballton. In the entire history of United States railroad construction, the “Aunt Norie” was the only privately farmer owned railroad. This railroad became a reality only because of the vision and investment of Danish-American farmers. In 1936 paved roads and trucks drove it out of existence.

to be continued...

SCRATCHES FROM A RUSTY QUILL
Wava Petersen

As I warm up the rusty quill it is mid-January and time-for-soup weather. That brings dumplings to mind, especially the light, feathery dumplings my Aunt Gladys used to make. Basically made like cream-puffs, the main ingredients were flour, milk and eggs. The ingredients were whipped into a thick, sticky dough, then slipped by heaping teaspoonsful into the simmering soup; The lid was put on the kettle and you were not allowed to peek for 20 minutes. When you finally were allowed to remove the lid, those dumplings resembled fluffy clouds floating atop the steaming soup. They were so delicious!

My mother-in-law, though not a Dane, always made the Danish style dumplings that my father-in-law liked so well. At age four, Gerhart came to America with his mother and baby sister to join his father who arrived earlier to earn enough money to bring his family to a land of promise.I’m sure this recipe came along on the journey across the ocean: 3 small potatoes, cooked, a lump of butter, one half cup of soup, salt, 2 eggs, one half teaspoon of sugar, nutmeg and enough flour to make a stiff dough. Maybe Grandpa Gerhart loved them but I didn’t.I thought of them as tasteless little lumps of dough.

I found that recipe while looking through

IT’S ONLY SCIENCE
Bob Mortenson

Climate change has reared its head this month. Once in a lifetime snowstorm across the southern states. Yes, this has happened before, but never to the extent that took place this time. Even the wind driven fires in California were exacerbated by our warming climate. Our own, here at home, wide temperature swings can be traced scientifically to climate change.

The Santa Ana winds have always existed in California. They are a result of the permanent local conditions with the mountains so close to the coast. But they are much stronger than in the past. In the 1950s, the normal winds speeds were around 40 MPH with gusts to 70 MPH. This year 50 to 60 MPH was not unusual with gusts reaching 100MPH. When combined with the ever more frequent patterns of high precipitation followed by extreme drought you have tinderbox conditions!

Meteorologists have been working hard to understand just how climate change can cause a divergence from the normal development of weather patterns. They have successfully created a computer program that analyzes how the warmer atmosphere effects the development and longevity of hurricanes. It can isolate how the difference in the speed of development is tied to this change. It can also determine what the

YES, THERE IS GOOD NEWS!
Bill Rollins

If something is of utmost importance and needs to be considered as such, we have a saying that it was, or should be, “written in stone”. The man Job should be credited for coining this phrase. In the book that bears his name we read in chapter 19:23 “Oh that my words were written! Oh, that they were inscribed in a book! Oh, that with an iron pen and lead they were engraved in the rock forever!”Interesting! These words were written some 3 or 4 thousand years ago (and that’s a long long time) and we read them today.

But talking about something written in stone here’s what God said to Moses, “The LORD said to Moses, ‘Cut for yourself two tablets of stone like the first, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke.’” (Exodus 34:1) We know these words written on stone by the finger of God as the Ten Commandments.

If there was anything that should be considered “of utmost importance and needs to be considered as such”, it would be these 10 Commandments.

In our previous two articles, we embarked on a study regarding the name of God and how important His name is. Considering the above statements about the Commandments of God, we see that one of these ten concerns the name of our God. Wow! Only 10 and one has instructions about the name of God.

“You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him

“Grandma Grace’s Recipe Collection,” a book of family pictures and recipes compiled by my daughter Julie. As I opened the book to the first page there was a picture of a battered old coffee pot and a poem I had written about Grandma Grace’s Coffee Pot:

It was not a thing of beauty, not an object you’d admire,
Not a treasure you would envy or wish you could acquire.
It sat on her kitchen counter, dulled and stained by years of use,
From its daily rounds of service, it had suffered much abuse.

Grandma had a lot of company and soon as they’d arrive,
She filled that pot with water; seconds later it came alive,
It took off with a flourish and began to wheeze and groan.
When the coffee finished brewing it would heave an awful moan.

We added instant coffee as Grandma poured from steaming pot.
While we sat around her table it was our lucky lot.
On bread spread with egg salad, or meat and cheese to dine,
Plus yummy fresh-baked cookies and zucchini bread so fine.

Then the coffee pot was silenced along with Grandma’s voice.
As we sorted her belongings, we had to make the choice,
Of what to keep, give to the needy, and what to throw away.
The coffee pot was destined for the garbage pile that day.

When we girls had finished cleaning and prepared to turn the key,
That coffee pot, from the garbage heap, kept looking up at me.
It seemed a part of Grandma Grace I just couldn’t throw away,
So, I placed it with my treasures and it went home with me that day.

I have many pretty vases of every shape and hue;
Though a special one I treasure has no beauty, it is true.
But on my desk it occupies a very honored spot;
There, standing filled with flowers is Grandma Grace’s coffee pot.

increased strength of the storm is caused by the warmer water and air temperature. While you may ask what does this mean to our area where we do not have hurricanes? Any time the scientists have added information that they can use it will have a positive effect on the accuracy of their forecast. And provides new methods to develop similar programs for other weather events.

Scientists are greatly concerned that we may be approaching the point were what we do to combat carbon pollution may not be effective! There are many things that have been ignored up to this point in time that could help. We have hundreds of orphan oil and gas wells that have not been properly sealed. They are leaking methane gas into our air constantly and other pollutants into our ground water. They are called orphans because many were drilled under contract and those companies are no longer in existence. The major oil companies that contracted for them have divested ownership once they were no longer producing at a profitable rate.

And of course, there are many other things that can still be done to combat this carbon fueled climate change. The question remains, do we have the will to do them? Are we going to insist that in Mother Earth’s house we have the same rule as at home? You made the mess; you will clean it up!

guiltless who takes His name in vain.” (Exodus 20:7) God’s name, as we have already seen is a sacred name, full of meaning.“God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM’”“Say to the Israelites, Yahovah (I AM) sends you...This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.” (Exodus 3:14-15) And of course this Hebrew name ‘Yahovah’ may be transliterated by the English words ‘Eternal One’.

We saw this importance before and now we see that God has a commandment about keeping it holy. God even says that “He will not hold guiltless who takes His name in vain.”

Perhaps we need to consider this word “vain” and what it means to do something in vain!! One cannot turn on the TV or watch a movie without hearing some actor use the word ‘God’ quite callously. And of course that may be considered ‘in vain’.

The word ‘vain’, from a biblical viewpoint, means ‘empty or useless’ with connotations of ‘falsehood and deceit’. These are not words we want to be associated with in the context of our relationship to our Heavenly Father – our God! And as food for thought, He will not hold us guiltless if we are taking His name in that way.

When I committed my life to God some 46 years ago I understood that I was taking upon myself and being associated with this name of my God. I must be careful to conduct my life in a manner that brings glory to God and not emptiness and deceit. Yes, I took God’s name in full truth and so strive to bring Him glory.