

by Gaille Renee Pike



Up to my thighs in a bad idea

Dear Readers,
A few days ago my neighbor informed me he was going to drain his pond. The reason being he wants to make the pond bigger than its existing 1.3 acres and in order to do that he needs to move a lot of dirt and trees and that pesky multi-million gallons of water was just getting in the way. He also said that if we knew any anglers who'd like to fish that pond (which had not been fished in years) they'd be welcome.

And boy do I know an angler. His name is Chris and he's from Wichita and we call him Kingfish 'cause the man is a fishing fool. He drives up to fish my own pond every few weeks and unlike myself, whose idea of fishing is sitting in a chair in the sun on the dock with a beverage and waiting for a bobber to submerge, Chris is a lure-switching, bank-walking dawn to dusk killer of largemouth bass.

So the day before the pond was to be drained he came out and verily emptied it of all viable bass, which we quickly transported over to my pond for safe-keeping and future harvesting. I told him he may have got them all and he assured me he didn't.

The next day the pumper came and in no time at all we could see the water level dropping by the minute. And even when it was down to just a foot of water there were no more fish to be seen. But I knew there had to be and was

prepared with a net and bucket to haul out as many remaining fish as I could and do it my way—meaning the lazy way.

When the pond was down to a mere puddle of its former self the turtles were all headed to higher ground as I ventured out into the mire. I knew it would be a bit muddy so I went in barefoot and rolled my jeans up to my knees. I had fifty feet of downward slope to get to that puddle filled with flipping fishes.

About three feet in I was ankle deep in good old Kansas mud. At six feet I was up to my knees in the stuff and by 15 feet I was sucked down to my thighs. I wasn't even halfway to my quarry when I realized I was on a fool's errand. Mission aborted, I turned to leave and realized I was stuck.

This wasn't just mud. This was primordial pea soup. And, just like quicksand, the more I struggled the deeper I sank. The pond pumpers, my neighbor and Kingfish thoroughly enjoyed my frantic attempts to extricate myself, even offering to throw me a rope and pull me out with a tractor. Mortified, yet determined, using my bucket and net like crutches I managed to crawl out of there like a crippled crab. Scratch one pair of jeans and one's self-esteem. And note to self—stick to your dock and your lawn chair.

Keep your eyes on the stars and your back to the wind.

THE AMISH COOK

School is out for summer

By Gloria Yoder

As mentioned last week, school is out for the summer. Yay! That means more time as a family.

As you may recall, summer looked like a mountain with having the sole responsibility of navigating the assignment of keeping a houseful of children occupied with valuable endeavors.

God in His mercy is providing in amazing ways. As we step into the fifth summer minus Daddy,

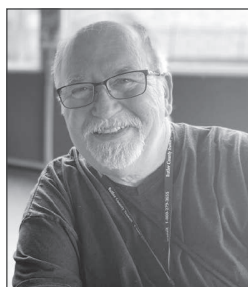
God is giving much joy that no set of circumstances could generate on their own. There is no doubt that no one can just fix all that life has brought, yet the One who knows it all has a way of providing and coming closer than ever.

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Obituaries

MICHAEL VOELZKE

Dec 10, 1950 - May 10, 2026



Michael Lynn Voelzke went to heaven on Mother's Day, May 10th, 2026 after a short battle with stage four cancer. Mike was born on December 10th, 1950 in Benton Harbor, MI to Edward and Marion (Lewis) Voelzke. He lived in St. Joseph, MI the first 17 years of his life before moving to Belleville, KS in 1968 after his father's death. Mike graduated from Belleville High School in 1969, and then attended Cloud County Community College. He lived in Salina and Minneapolis, Kansas most of his adult life. He retired from Exide Battery Corporation, then moved to Augusta, KS to be near family. Mike was an avid musician and had played guitar and steel guitar for 60 years. Music was very important to him, as well as the people he played in bands with.

Left to mourn his death is his twin sister, Melanie Tennyson, nephew, Travis Tennyson, niece, Tricia Brown (Eric), niece, Tracie Tennyson (Ashlie Krieger), great nephews, Easton, Ericson, and Emmett Brown, Vaughn Tennyson, and great niece, Vivian Tennyson. Also, numerous friends, including many at Brookside Cottages and the Andover Senior Center.

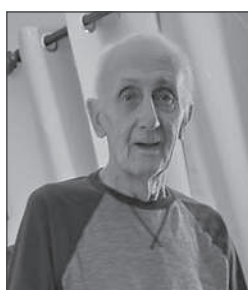
Michael had chosen cremation, with his ashes being buried next to his father in Michigan, where a private service will take place at a later date.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Andover Senior Center: 410 Lioba Drive, Andover, KS 67002, where he was a member for many years.

Mike will be remembered for his infectious smile, love for friends and family, and his positive attitude.

ARTHUR WILLIAM COGGINS

Jun 25, 1940 - May 3, 2026



Arthur's life began on June 25, 1940 in Buffalo, OK; the son of Forrest and Dorothy (Johnson) Coggins. Arthur worked hard for his family as an automotive and truck mechanic until he retired from Meridian Technology of Stillwater, OK. Arthur was united in marriage to Vicki Crawford in 2011. He enjoyed Oklahoma State University Sports and had season football and baseball tickets for many years. When he wasn't spending time with his family, Arthur enjoyed playing cards, watching Westerns and science fiction movies and spoiling his dog "kids" Bo and Bebe. One of Arthur's greatest passions was doing woodworking projects and having Vicki help complete the final steps. Together, they made countless clocks, crosses, Post-It note holders and even constructed a shuffleboard table, a true piece of art. Arthur loved to give his creations to family and friends. He had a great sense of humor and loved to tease his family and give them a hard time, all the while getting it back from his family. Arthur was kind and generous and would do anything for anyone. He was special to anyone who knew him.

Arthur's loving family includes his wife, Vicki (Crawford) Coggins; daughters, Christina (Mark) Allen, Machel Schomaker; brother and sister-in-law, Danny and Gail Coggins; sister-in-law, Marilyn Mix; grandchildren, Seth Starkey, Shalinn Starkey, Matthew Allen, Neil (Kenzie) Allen, Sierra Schomaker, Brody Schomaker; great-grandchildren, Weston Allen and Miles Allen; nieces and nephews, Eric Mix, Misti (Jason) Linville, Shanna (Travis) Jennings, Charlotte (Josh) Golka as well as a host of cousins, great nieces, great nephews and extended family and friends that will miss Arthur dearly.

Arthur passed away on May 3, 2026 in El Dorado. He is preceded in death by his first wife, Michelene (Cox) Coggins; his parents, Forrest and Dorothy Coggins; brother-in-law, Hal Mix; and his in-laws, Helen and Wayne Mix.

Cremation has taken place and no services will be held. Please sign his online guestbook and leave a memory of Arthur at www.carlsonkirbymorris.com

GERALD LEROY SNYDER

May 9, 1938 - May 2, 2026



Gerald L. Snyder, 87, passed away May 2, 2026, at his winter home in Benson, AZ. Gerald was born May 9, 1938, in El Dorado Kansas and grew up in rural El Dorado.

Gerald attended grade school, middle school, and high school in El Dorado, KS. Gerald graduated from Butler County Community College, Wichita College (currently known as WSU), and Emporia State Teachers College.

Gerald and his wife Joan were married on May 29, 1960, and were married for 61 years. They lived in Eureka from 1961 to 1976 where Gerald taught middle school math. Jerry and Joan moved to Augusta in 1976, where Gerald taught math for three years. Jerry and Joan owned and operated a number of local businesses including Snyder Floral and Garden, Cooley Statuary and a restaurant.

Gerald was a very active community member. He was an active member of the Eureka Lions Club and, later, the Augusta Lions Club. He was the District Governor of 17 KW Lions in 1983-84 and 1991-92. Gerald served on the Augusta City Council for a number of years.

Gerald was an avid reader and supported his community's library in Arizona. Gerald also enjoyed wood working and wood carving. He was a lifelong bridge player. He enjoyed bridge and other card games in retirement.

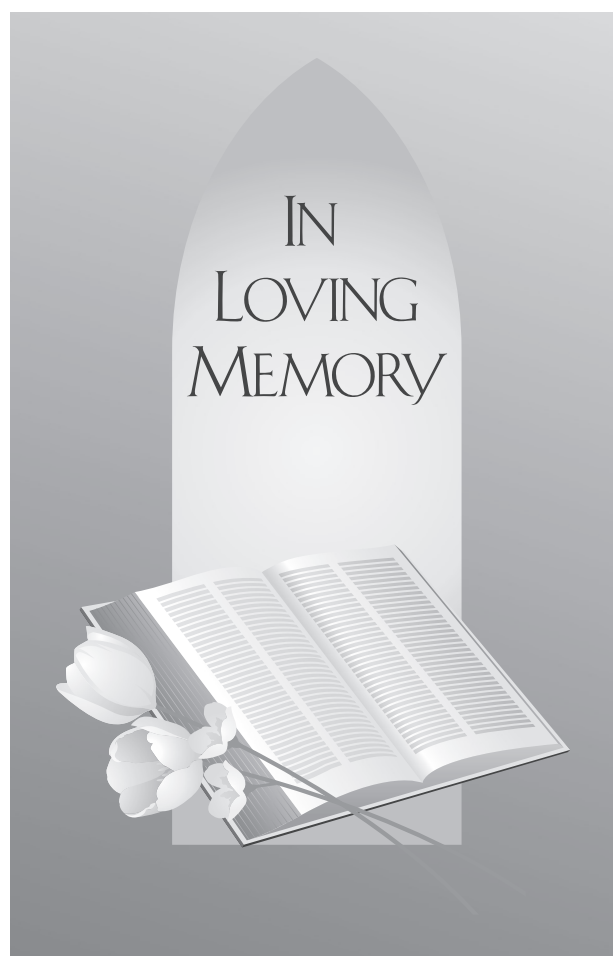
Gerald was loved by friends and family. Gerald will be remembered as a hardworking, dependable and kind man who deeply loved his family and took pride in caring for those around him. He adored Joan and was proud of his children and grandson. Gerald passed peacefully at hospice soon after a diagnosis of cancer.

Gerald leaves his daughter Cynthia Snyder of Topeka; grandson Michael Snyder of Park City; and nieces and nephews.

Gerald was preceded in death by his wife, Joan Snyder; son, Kenneth Snyder; his parents Harold and Alice Marie (Wimberly) Snyder; brother David Snyder; and sister, Norma Jean (Jeanie) Clay.

A remembrance gathering will be held at the Augusta Senior Center on Saturday, May 23rd from 12-3.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial fund will be set up at the Augusta Senior Center.



By Gloria Yoder

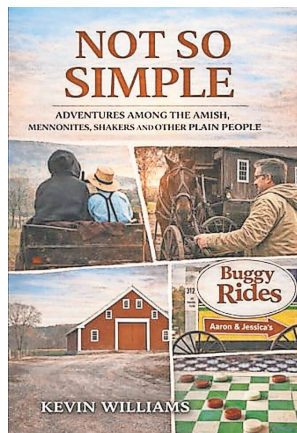
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I think of summer 2026 is simply living a day at a time, using each one to achieve our goals of learning to flow in our relationships and life in general. Whether it's stopping our work or play to learn a life lesson or simply getting

into the groove of taking personal responsibility for our actions or even putting away ones' toys and clothes.

Now that there are no morning deadlines, I let the younger children sleep later than they used to, to give me time with the Lord or whatever needs to be tackled in the stillness of the morning (or sleep in at times!).

Everyone's morning jobs are simple, with the greater goal to learn to work well with others. I divided the children in groups of two with the same job each morning. I have been amazed many times

SEE AMISH COOK, A9

KANSAS PROFILE

Roger Minniear, MM Fiber Mill

This is quite a yarn. In fact, it is all about yarn.

This is the story of a fiber mill that spins various kinds of natural fibers into yarn, and ships it across the nation.

Roger and Penny Minniear are the founders, owners and operators of MM Fiber Mill near Louisburg. Roger grew up in Kansas City, Kansas. Penny grew up in Bucyrus. They met at a friend's wedding.

Roger and Penny married, lived in Bucyrus and then moved to Louisburg. "I happily followed her out here," Minniear said. "We bought a couple of goats as pets and wanted to do something more with the land we had," Minniear said. "We were at a fair in Topeka and the Pygora goat association had these tiny fiber goats."



Roger Minniear is one of the founders, owners and operators of MM Fiber Mill near Louisburg.

[Courtesy Image]

The Minniears bought some goats and then needed to shear them. "We started shearing twice a year," Minniear said.

The next question was, what to do with the fiber?

SEE KANSAS PROFILE, A9

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