

AMISH COOK

Continued from A2

over, how much children thrive on routine and being needed, especially to think how difficult it can be to get them into that groove. Saturday and Sunday are always a welcome break for all of us from the norm and helps get our batteries charged to dig in the next week.

Hosanna and Austin are the team to keep us in baked goods or whatever extras we need in the kitchen. Last week I was tickled to have them make homemade mayo and salad dressings. I gave an extra heads-up of this dressing being super greasy and it taking more to clean up afterward. Well, after I had returned back from the shop to check on one of the boys, I found a youngster on his knees cleaning up pools of dressing from the floor and inside the fridge. Someone with the greatest intentions had offered to place it in the fridge, and lo and behold, it toppled back out with a good amount of it landing in pools. Another set of hands willingly took the container and proceeded to wash it off at the sink when the lid again popped off with the bulk of the remains dumping right into the sink. I assured them it's okay and told 'em it's all cleanable. Memories are in the making, that day we got more memories than dressing.

To a boy of 11 it can be a stretch to be assigned to kitchen work, but I remind him that in order for us to reach our goal of having each child be able to run a household until they're 14, we're gonna have to dig in and learn. Besides that, my mom used to say it makes good men when boys learn to work in the house throughout their growing up years. From experience I can readily say it is a true blessing if boys were taught to not be skittish about housework. It is no shame for boys to be found in the kitchen. And who eats the most cookies, anyhow?! I love watching them eat and grow up.

Last week one night as the children were getting ready for bed Austin apologetically told me he's hungry again. Bedtime snacks don't happen every night at our house, but to me it is important to keep plenty in growing boys. I assured him it's fine. While I tucked the younger ones to bed he made himself an egg sandwich and went to bed feeling better. Besides learning to do household chores well, it is of great importance to me to see the boys spend an ample amount of time on outdoor activities and guy jobs.

Elijah and Joshua are my laundry boys. After breakfast they scramble for the dirty wash and fill the washers for me. Little feet can save lots of efforts and many steps for Mom!

Jesse and Julia are my 'tidy team'. Each morning they go throughout the main

floor of the house to tidy up where needed. Sometimes I wonder why we need to do it every day. Should it be needful if we all were to put everything in its proper place every time? If you were to pop in the middle of the day you could see that our home is where we live and make the most memories, some things just get messy in the meantime!

After each set of children has completed their morning task, they get some play time. If we're having a sunny day we often end up outdoors for an hour or two before lunch time to do mowing, haul manure, or work with the chestnut trees. Now that school is out the children enjoy interaction with church families and neighbors. Last Saturday night we were invited to join Cousin Josh's family for a fajita supper. Mmm. It was a smashing hit for all of us. Be sure to try it, it is made in the oven and is a more simple version. Enjoy!

Sheet Pan Fajitas

Servings: 4

Ingredients

2 pounds of protein (chicken breasts, strip steak and/or shrimp)

3 bell peppers – yellow, red and green, cut into strips

1 large onion, cut into strips

4 tablespoons olive oil

Fajita Seasoning:

2 teaspoons chili powder

1 tablespoon salt

1 tablespoon paprika

1 tablespoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon onion oregano
1/2 teaspoon onion powder
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Directions

Preheat oven to 425°F. Place sheet pan lined with aluminum foil or parchment paper in oven. Cut chicken and/or steak into strips. Toss protein in 2 tablespoons olive oil. Sprinkle protein evenly with fajita seasoning. Toss vegetables in remaining oil. Place steak or chicken and vegetables on hot sheet pan and cook for 20–25 minutes or until protein is fully cooked. If using shrimp, add after vegetables have cooked 15 minutes. Serve with warm tortillas and toppings such as shredded lettuce, diced tomatoes, sliced jalapeños, salsa, guacamole and sour cream.

EDITOR'S NOTE: After thirty years of writing about Amish life, Kevin Williams — The Amish Cook's editor — has finally written a book readers have been asking for. Not So Simple: My Adventures Among the Amish, Mennonites, Shakers and Other Plain People is the story behind the stories — funny, self-deprecating, and raw. Order on Amazon at amish365.com/notsosimple (\$23.99), or mailing a check to Oasis Newsfeatures, PO BOX 157 Middletown, Ohio 45327. Allow two weeks for delivery.

KANSAS PROFILE

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The fiber processors he contacted were all backed up.

"I started calling mills and they were saying, 'Ship it to us and in a year or two we'll get it back to you,'" Minniear said.

The Minniears began to think about processing their own. One day when they went to a goat show, the judge told them about a fiber mill for sale in northwest Kansas. The Minniears reached out to the sellers, spent time training with them, and bought the mill equipment in 2022.

"As I was going into the title company to finalize the deal, my realtor called and said that this historic building near us was coming up for sale," Minniear said.

The timing was perfect. The Minniears purchased the building, which became the

site of their fiber mill operation.

The building is the New Lancaster General Store, part of the historic settlement of New Lancaster in Miami County. New Lancaster itself is an unincorporated rural neighborhood of perhaps 20 people. Now, that's rural. It is located seven minutes from the Minniear's home in Louisburg.

Minniear expanded the goat herd, registered the animals, and started processing fiber for himself and others. He also added other animals, such as chickens, goats, cats, dogs and bees. "We have a menagerie out here," Minniear said.

What to name the business? "Nobody can spell Minniear Menagerie, so we decided to call it MM Fiber Mill," Minniear said.

MM Fiber Mill processes all kinds of raw fiber into yarn. "We wash it, clean it, pick it, card it, run it through the draw frame and spin it," Minniear said. "We can handle all types of fiber, from alpaca to yak."

He also blends products, sometimes

adding commercially dyed fiber.

"We can add wool to give stretchiness to the fabric," he said. He can use anything from merino to silk and bamboo. A retail section of the store offers fiber and other products, such as goat milk soap.

"I label some of the yarn by the goat (who produced it)," Minniear said. "People get a kick out of buying a skein of Josephine or Molly." That's definitely knowing the source of your product.

"I have a ton of local customers and we also ship product all over the country. We go from California to New York and Minnesota to Texas."

MM Fiber Mill occasionally offers classes on felting and crocheting. As a registered Kansas agritourism business, it also hosts tours, from 4-H and school groups to American Girl groups.

"I like to work with and handle different kinds of fiber, and I've met so many new people," Minniear said. "I come from the

livestock side, some people come at fiber from the art side. It's been a fun journey."

For more information, go to www.mmfibermill.com or search for MM Fiber Mill on Facebook.

This is quite a yarn, and today we've learned about a man whose company spins yarn from various kinds of fiber. We commend Roger and Penny Minniear for making a difference by providing a valuable service to fiber producers.

They truly put a good spin on it.

— Ron Wilson is director of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development at Kansas State University. The mission of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development is to enhance rural development by helping rural people help themselves. The Kansas Profile radio series and columns are produced with assistance from the K-State Research and Extension Department of Communications Nerus Media Services unit.

WHEAT

Continued from A1

during March and April accelerated crop development while simultaneously increasing stress on wheat stands.

"You go back to March, and it was a record-setting warm March for the nation as a whole," Rippey said. "The dryness and warmth combined to create an accelerated pace to winter wheat crop development in the lower two-thirds of the Plains."

As of May 3, USDA reported 49% of the nation's winter wheat crop had already headed, well ahead of the five-year average of 32% and last year's pace of 37%.

Development across much of the Plains is running one to three weeks ahead of normal, according to Rippey.

However, the rapid growth exposed the crop to damaging freeze events that stretched from mid-April into early May.

Those cold snaps reached into portions of the Central Plains at particularly vulnerable stages of wheat development, raising concerns about yield losses.

While some relief may still be possible for portions of the Central Plains later this month, forecasts calling for increased precipitation may come too late for southern areas already suffering severe drought stress.

"For some of those southern states like Texas and Oklahoma, it is quickly becoming too late," Rippey said. "Any rain at this point is not going to help the crop. It's just too far along."

With grain fill already underway in many southern fields, producers and analysts are now bracing for potentially high abandonment rates and reduced harvest prospects across the Southern Great Plains.

Despite the difficult outlook in southern regions, additional rainfall later in May could still stabilize conditions farther north if moisture arrives before crop stress intensifies further.

INMATE HEALTH

Continued from A1

fiscal year starting July 1, state Department of Corrections officials said. The contract could be lengthened twice under separate two-year extensions. The annual cost escalator would be 3.5% for the life of the contract — an increase of \$3 million in the second year of the deal. The pact would run through June 30, 2032, if the maximum of six years were authorized.

"I am confident that VitalCore will serve our residents and the agency well, providing medical care that addresses the needs of the incarcerated population," said Jeff Zmuda, secretary of the Department of Corrections. "I look forward to a strong, mutually beneficial relationship."

Under the contract, VitalCore would be responsible for all costs associated with onsite medical services, offsite hospital care, outpatient surgery, ambulatory services, dental, medical personnel, behavioral health, hepatitis C treatment and the electronic health records system. Medical services would be provided 24 hours a day, 365 days each year by a staff of 500 full-time equivalent employees.

News reports regarding VitalCore's work in Mississippi prisons raised concern about the quality of care provided by the company. Mississippi Today's series "Behind Bars, Beyond Care" reported that VitalCore denied medication to inmates with hepatitis C and HIV, an untreated broken arm resulted in an amputation, and a delayed cancer

screening led to a terminal diagnosis. There was evidence medical staff in Mississippi prisons labeled inmates as "noncompliant" so they could be sent back to cells without treatment.

Mississippi Today is a news partner with States Newsroom, the parent nonprofit of Kansas Reflector.

The Kansas Department of Corrections said the decision to hire VitalCore was the result of a competitive process that attracted six other companies to the bidding.

"Healthcare services for our population is an essential part of operations in our correctional facilities," Zmuda said. "This contract allows us to fulfill our obligations to provide healthcare services that meet the needs of our incarcerated population."

The contract with VitalCore was separate from a \$2.3 million arrangement with the University of Kansas Medical Center to provide oversight and monitoring of contractors.

Health challenges of about 9,800 Kansas adult inmates in the Lansing, Hutchinson, El Dorado, Topeka, Ellsworth, Norton, Winfield and Larned facilities were complex given the incidence of mental health issues, chronic hypertension and respiratory conditions as well as cases of hepatitis C and HIV. The state's juvenile facility in Topeka serves approximately 200 inmates.

In March, Zmuda said the current prison medical care contract was held by Centurion of Kansas, which provided services to state inmates since July 2020. The state contract was put out for bid during November in anticipation of selecting a vendor in 2026.

CLASSIFIEDS/PUBLIC NOTICES

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RENTAL

3 BEDROOM, 1 bath house for rent in El Dorado. Two car detached garage/shop, 22'X24'. Utility room with washer, dryer hookups. \$1250 per month with \$1250 deposit. Credit and background checks required. 316-772-7206

PUBLIC NOTICE

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IN THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT BUTLER COUNTY, KANSAS PROBATE DIVISION

In the Matter of the Estate of: LEROY VAUGHN, Deceased.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Case No. BU 2026 PR 000052

Pursuant To Chapter 59 Of Kansas Statutes Annotated

NOTICE OF HEARING AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED:

You are hereby notified that on April 21, 2026, a Petition was filed in this Court by Ralph A. Bayles to be appointed Administrator of the Estate of Leroy Vaughn, deceased, that he be ap-

PUBLIC NOTICE

pointed as Administrator and he be granted Letters of Administration. You are required to file your written defenses thereto on or before Friday, May 29, 2026, at 11:00 o'clock a.m. of such day, in this Court, in the City of El Dorado, Butler County, Kansas, at which time and place the cause will be heard. There will be no in-person hearing. You are required to notify the Petitioner's attorney so arrangements can be made to appear for a hearing. Should you fail, judgment

PUBLIC NOTICE

and decree will be entered in due course upon the Petition. All creditors are notified to exhibit their demands against the estate within four months from the date of first publication of this Notice, as provided by law, and if their demands are not thus exhibited, they shall be forever barred.

RALPH A. BAYLES, Petitioner
4505130

PUBLIC NOTICE

Published in the Butler County Times-Gazette May 2, 9, 16, 2026
IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF BUTLER COUNTY, KANSAS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF MELISSA A. MORTON, Deceased.
Case No. BU 2025 PR 135

NOTICE OF SALE OF REAL ESTATE

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED:

You are hereby notified

Marion CO Transfer Station is accepting applications for

Truck Driver

Must have experience in driving truck and basic maintenance. Duties include driving to Butler County landfill to unload the truck and trailer, duties also include loading trucks with solid waste using a skid loader, maintaining accurate scale tickets, performing basic maintenance and repairs on truck, trailers, and equipment, determining unacceptable wastes, and working with citizens and government entities regarding solid waste management. CDL license is required.

Applications can be picked up at the Marion County Courthouse, Marion, KS. Drug testing Required. EOE. 620-382-3318

HELP WANTED

ICT Airport is Hiring AIRCRAFT DETAILERS & SUPERVISORS. (\$16.00 - \$25.00/hr)

Apply: primeappearance.com/careers