

Jerry McKeiv's
SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Vol. 11 – No. 7

sandman43@att.net

July, 2012

THE OLDEST MARKED GRAVE IN NEVADA COUNTY

It's hard to say who was the first person buried in Nevada County because so many of the early settlers did not purchase a grave marker. They sometimes used a rock to mark the graves, probably intending to purchase a grave marker later on. And of course, some large mounds in certain locations may have been burial grounds for the Indians who lived here first.

Since my wife and I surveyed all the known cemeteries in Nevada County a few years ago, I thought it might be interesting to try and figure out which is the oldest marked grave in the county. Surprisingly, there are less than 25 marked graves in the county with death dates prior to 1860 and many of those are children. Most of the area we know as Nevada County was settled in the 1850s. The early settlers were busy getting their homes established, clearing land, etc., but soon established churches and cemeteries. Some of the earliest burials probably took place on the family farms and many of those graves are now lost.

Listed below are the Nevada County cemeteries which have marked graves with death dates before 1860.

Christopher Cemetery is a small abandoned cemetery on County Rd. 157 just off Hwy. 278 near the Ouachita County line.

Edward B. Christopher (died 9-9-1856)—age 22

Corinth Cemetery is located between Willisville and Bodcaw.

Isaac E. Sandifer (died 4-7-1854)—age 6

Ebenezer Cemetery is located about four miles southwest of Bluff City on Hwy. 299.

William M. Hackette (died 11-1-1859)—age 2

Lebanon Cemetery is located off Hwy. 76 near Waterloo.

John M. Young (died 9-10-1859)—age 4

Mt. Olive Cemetery is located on Hwy. 76 near Waterloo.

Basden Infant (died 10-10-1856)

Catherine Satterwhite (died 4-9-1855)—age 13

Pleasant Hill Cemetery (South) is located south of Willisville.

W. H. Lollar (died 7-1-1851)—age 16

Isaac Lollar (died 1-31-1859)—age 51

Tick Hill Cemetery is in the extreme southeast part of the county.

Emma Askew (died 3-26-1857)—age 4 months

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Watts Cemetery is on County Rd. 8 southeast of Willisville. It has several graves dating back to the 1850s. Some of the graves are surrounded by ornamental iron fences and it has some interesting old grave markers.

Susan Q. A. J. Crank (died 7-7-1851)—wife of J. W. Crank
Lucy Fitzgerald (died 3-26-1857)—age 64
Mathew H. Edwards (died 9-29-1856)—age 59
William H. H. Haynes (died 1-21-1857)—age 15
Mary Johnson Thompson (died 11-21-1856)
Mary Alice Walker (died 12-23-1856)—age 3 months
William O. Walker (died 12-4-1858)—age 5 months
May Watts (died 8-12-1854)—age 2
Rachel A. Watts (died 8-17-1854)—age 4
Estelle Robinson Williams (died Aug., 1857)—age 2
William A. Dean (died 3-18-1851)—age 39

White Church Cemetery is in a remote area on County Rd. 46 on eastern edge of Nevada County.

Elizabeth M. Blake (died 7-24-1859)—wife of Jones Blake
Jones Blake (died 7-24-1859)—age 48
Mary Royston (died 1-11-1859)—age 80

All of the cemeteries mentioned above are located in the eastern or southeastern part of the county, so I think we can conclude those areas of Nevada County were probably the first areas to be settled. That area was in Ouachita County until 1871 when Nevada County was formed.

Well, after my attempt to discover the earliest marked grave in the county, there is still some question as to which grave is the oldest. One of the markers is broken and barely readable.



This is the marker for Mary Thompson, relict of James Thompson in Watts Cemetery. As you can see, the year of death is hard to read. The early cemetery records done in 1970 showed the date as Nov. 21, 1856. That is also what we recorded in our survey of 1997. Later surveyors have recorded it as Nov. 21, 1850.

If the 1850 date is correct, this would be the oldest marked grave in Nevada County, but I tend to dispute that since the earlier records had 1856.

This marker is a bit unusual. It is the only marker in the county that has the word “relict” on it. It states that she was the relict of James Thompson. I looked that word up in the dictionary and found it means “widow”. We are never too old to learn something new, so if anyone ever asks you what the word means, you will have an answer for them. You can also see in the lower left corner of the stone that it was made by Mr. Jennings of Camden, Ark.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE



This is the grave marker for William A. Dean, also at Watts Cemetery. His death date is clearly marked March 18, 1851. The stone is old but still in good shape.

So, until proven otherwise, I think this is the oldest store-bought grave marker in Nevada County that can still be read. There could be others already too far gone to be read.

We found a total of 23 markers dated before 1860. I know of several others who died before 1860 according to information supplied by families, but those graves do not have markers.

I think it would be worth your time to visit Watts Cemetery if you are in the area. It is about six miles from Willisville on County Rd. 8 which is paved. This small cemetery contains more of the early settlers than any other in the county. Some of the markers have been overturned and many could use some repair work. The cemetery is only mowed once or twice each year. An African-American section

joins the white section separated by a fence and it is still frequently used for burials.



While visiting these cemeteries, I couldn't resist taking a picture of this grave marker. It is at the foot of a new grave in Pleasant Hill Cemetery near Willisville. Evidently, the person buried there was an avid deer hunter and also a Razorback fan since there was a red Razorback flag at the head of the grave.

WHY DO WE KISS?

I like reading old newspapers because I can learn a lot about the local history of the area. These old papers are full of interesting articles used mostly as "fillers" to fill up space in the paper. The very old papers have very small print as if they were trying to get as much information as possible in each paper. They are very difficult to read unless your eyesight is very good.

The Nevada County newspapers from the late 1800s usually had one page devoted to local news and the rest of the paper was filled with national news, advertisements, and articles on all kinds of subjects which were passed along from other newspapers or magazines from all over the country. Some of these articles are interesting to read and some are pretty boring.

Sometimes a headline catches my eye such as an article in the *Nevada County Picayune* about

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

women wearing trousers written in 1887. Somehow, I don't visualize very many women wearing trousers in those days, but I can see where women back then who wore long dresses and petticoats might think wearing trousers might not be such a bad idea. I have read several stories about women who died as a result of their long dresses catching fire while doing their household chores. By the time the fire was noticed, it was usually too late.

Another article that caught my eye recently was one entitled "Why Do We Kiss?" I had never given it much thought, but after reading the article, I got to thinking that it was an interesting question. When did humans first start kissing each other? Is it a learned behavior or is it something we do by instinct?

The writer of the article quoted an unnamed famous philosopher who said, "Kissing is a very stupid act, and sensible people ought to be ashamed to indulge in it". Then the writer says "we must remember that a philosopher, as a general thing, is bald headed and as sour as a pickled persimmon and a poor authority in such matters".

The writer states that in ancient Rome, if a man kissed his sweetheart before marriage, and died before the wedding, one half of his property would go to his intended bride and if she died, it went to her heirs. Customs do change over time and are different in other parts of the world.

Well, the article didn't really answer the question of why people kiss, so I decided to do a little research on the subject and see what the modern-day "experts" have to say about it. I'm not going to bore you with all the details, but I learned that there are different opinions on why people kiss each other and that there are different types of kisses. The following information comes from one particular web site.

Kissing is a way of expressing love, passion, affection, respect, greeting, and friendship depending on the situation and the culture. The experts say kissing was unknown in ancient Egypt, but was well established in ancient Greece, Assyria, and India. They say it was unknown in Japan before the twentieth century and that about 10% of the world's population today does not practice kissing. Some "experts" think kissing is part of the evolutionary process and might have started because at one time mothers would chew up food and then pass it by mouth to their offspring. They also mention that some animals seem to practice a form of kissing, especially dogs, cats, and bears.

Types of kisses (according to one web site):

1. Adolescent kissing--part of growing up; the next stage after holding hands; involves kissing games at parties such as Spin the Bottle, Post Office, etc. They say 85% of 15 and 16 year-olds have kissed.
2. Romantic or sexual kisses--the kind we see in movies and on television
3. Kiss of affection--used in grave and solemn situations as a comforting gesture, like a mother kissing a child on the forehead after an injury.
4. Ritual kisses--sign of devotion, respect, or greeting. Greeting takes many forms depending on the culture. Some shake hands, some hug, some bow, and some rub noses. Some practice cheek kissing. In some places, people kiss three times on each cheek, some two times, and some once on each cheek. In Oman, men kiss on the nose after a handshake.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

5. Kissing in a religious context--the first kiss mentioned in the Bible is in Gen. 27: 26 where Jacob kissed his father. Kissing is only mentioned about 20 times in the Bible. Jesus was betrayed by a kiss from Judas Iscariot.
6. Kiss of peace-- Paul told the early Christians to "Greet one another with a holy kiss".
7. Kiss of respect--such as kissing the feet of a king or maybe an astronaut kissing the earth after returning safely from a space trip
8. Kiss of friendship--such as a brief kiss between friends when first meeting after a period of absence.

Kissing varies depending on the culture. In some countries, any public display of affection is considered a crime. In 2007, two people were fined and jailed for a month for kissing and hugging in Dublai. In India, any public display of affection is a criminal offence.

Kissing has been known to spread diseases, especially mononucleosis often called "the kissing disease" and even more serious diseases, especially if someone has a mouth sore where one might be exposed to blood. There has been one confirmed case of AIDS being transmitted by kissing, but one of the partners in that case had a gum disease.

There are some health benefits of kissing according to the experts. It reduces stress and has been shown to reduce cholesterol in studies. It can cause an adrenaline rush which helps the cardiovascular system and makes the heart pump faster. It can even burn up two to three calories per minute according to studies.

Another thing I learned is that July 6 is National Kissing Day. I didn't know there was such a thing. The Guinness Book of World Records reports that the longest continuous kiss on record was 32 hours, 7 minutes, and 14 seconds set in 2009 by a couple in Germany.

This is probably more than you ever wanted to know on the subject of kissing. Even after all my research, I don't really have a good answer as to why humans kiss, but I don't expect kissing to cease anytime soon.

A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS GIFT

I live in Cypress, Texas, just west of Houston. One day last fall I noticed an ad in the paper about the availability of arranging to take a ride on a B-17 Flying Fortress, one of the famous bombers of World War II. For a price, anyone could sign up for such a flight from The Lone Star Flight Museum in Galveston.

I showed the ad to my daughter and mentioned that I thought it would be exciting to actually fly in one of these old war planes. It was just a wish-I-could-do it, and then I forgot about it. On Christmas Day 2011, you guessed it, I unwrapped a blue folder with a certificate entitling me to "serve as a crewman aboard the Lone Star Flight Museum's Award Winning Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress."

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Surprised and a bit shocked, I realized my wish was about to come true. I contacted all my friends who had shared the war years with me (I was a freshman in Prescott High School, Prescott, Arkansas, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor) to exult a bit and to see if any of them wanted to go with me. There were no takers, and I expect there was a bit of pity for an 84-year-old woman who was crazy enough to embark on such a trip, however brief (35 minutes). My family knew my aversion to flying and that I had not taken any sort of flight since 9/11. I would always say: "Only in an emergency."

The date was set for April 28, 2012, and my family drove me to Galveston. We toured the Flight Museum which has an outstanding collection of flight memorabilia, books, models, slides, etc. as well as hangars holding real planes of all types. We had toured it before, but never on such an important occasion as this, to my way of thinking.

About 10 of us potential crewmen were gathered in the huge flight hangar for a final briefing about the plane and what was expected. Naturally, we were assured that this ancient craft was completely and lovingly restored and very flight-worthy. Someone asked about parachutes. No, there wouldn't be any of those. The instructor told us that this four-engine plane could fly a long way with only one of its engines. Since we were going out over the ocean, I suppose they could have rescued us quickly if we had had to ditch. We were told that this plane had been flown by 10 twenty-year-olds, so it wasn't all that roomy.

A few facts from the Museum's brochure: This particular plane rolled off Lockheed's Vega assembly line in Burbank, CA on 8 May 1945, the day the European war ended. It was declared surplus by the Army in 1947 and sold to a French company with whom she flew as a high-altitude mapping platform until 1984. The Museum purchased the bomber in June 1987 and began a 4-year in-house restoration culminating in top honors at the EAA Airshow in Oshkosh, WI in 1992 and 1993. The aircraft is in the colors of Thunderbird, a B-17 that flew 112 missions with the 303rd Bomb Group of the 8th Air Force. The B-17 was the first Boeing military aircraft with a flight deck instead of an open cockpit and was armed with bombs and five .30-caliber machine guns mounted in clear "blisters." Boeing built a total of 6,981 B-17s in various models, and another 5,745 were built under a collaborative effort by Douglas and Lockheed (Vega). Only a few B-17s survive today; most were scrapped at the end of the war. Wing Span: 103'9"; Length: 74'4"; Height: 19'2"; Max Speed: 287 mph; Gross Weight 65,500 lbs. Fuel capacity: 3,630 gallons. Normal bomb load 6,000 lbs.

We walked outside the hangar and watched the plane taxi up. We were given earplugs, a bottle of water, and ushered into the entrance (actually an exit on this plane) with a high step-up. We had to crouch down a bit to get into the cabin. Inside it was quite warm, but became drafty and cool when we were in flight. It was also very noisy.

The ceiling of the plane was low and we were cautioned not to stand up in some areas and not to touch any overhead wires or cables. I found a seat in what had been the radio room - four seats with two desks. We were strapped in with some old-type seatbelts made of heavy metal with big iron latches.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

We taxied off slowly, and gradually took to the air. I was only able to see the back of the right wing on my side. Later the gentleman in front of me swapped seats so that I could see out a small window. The City of Galveston quickly appeared below as we made several turns over it. Then it disappeared, and then it was all waves. The Gulf was rather turbulent that day and it made for some interesting white caps.

While in flight, we were allowed to stand up and explore the front part of the cabin. To get to the front bubble, one had to crawl on hands and knees. That was an experience I decided to skip. The others roamed around to see the bomb bay and take pictures. We only went up 1200' and the trip lasted only 35 minutes. On our return, the landing was so smooth I hardly realized we were on the ground. Our pilot, Skip, was an expert!

It was a short flight but long enough to enjoy the motion and also to think about those brave young men who had actually flown missions from over Germany and to the South Pacific on bombing raids. It was a sobering thought to remember those who did not come back. It was a peaceful joy ride for me, but a life-ending trip for some of them, of course.

Growing up during World War II, I had so many memories of that period in our history. We were permitted to knit in math class to make squares for blankets for soldiers. There was rationing of sugar, tires, rubber, and metals. We participated in War Bond drives. We wrote letters to all our friends in service. I was working after school and on Saturday in Guthrie's Drug Store, so I had access to cartons of cigarettes which I purchased and sent to my friends in the service. That was another luxury in short supply. In those days, the movies were always preceded by newsreels of the current battles and stories and commentary about bombings in Britain and then Germany and Italy. Later the war in The Pacific was prevalent in the news. Certainly, it was a bonding time for our little town and all the little towns and cities across the U.S. The War Effort was on everyone's mind and a uniting force for our country.



My ride in that old plane was an exciting adventure for me and, in some small way, connected me to those troubling years. I am grateful that my family understood what it would mean to me and gave me this gift. I would recommend it to any of my *Sandyland Chronicle* friends.--
Irma Hamby Evans (you can email Irma at ievans@hal-pc.org)

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

SANTA, PLEASE BRING ME AN IRISH MAIL

I was looking through a Nevada County newspaper from 1906 when I came to the Letters to Santa section. It's always interesting to read some of the letters from kids written over a hundred years ago and see what kinds of toys, etc they ask Santa to bring them.

I noticed that some of the kids asked Santa to bring them an Irish Mail. I wondered what that might be. When I got home I did a little research and discovered an Irish Mail was a four wheel toy vehicle with a stick-like handlebar. The rider placed his feet on the front axle and used his feet to steer while moving the handlebar back and forth to make the machine go. It was a popular children's toy in the early 1900s.

Here is a picture of what an Irish Mail might have looked like at that time.



Photo from <http://www.mth.msu.edu~drachman/cycle/irishmail.html>



Advertisement from 1908

<http://vintagepedalcars.blogspot.com>

One web site made an attempt to explain how the term Irish Mail came about. Railroads sometimes used a similar vehicle to inspect the rails--sort of like a hand car. The idea for the Irish Mail may have come from these railroad hand cars. Many of the Irish immigrants took jobs working on the railroads. The web site mentioned that early mail men sometimes used these vehicles to deliver the mail. Maybe all this had something to do with why these pedal cars were called Irish Mails.

A more modern wooden version from <http://www.metalwebnews.com/>



SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

You can find many examples of Irish Mails on the Internet. Many people still use them for exercise. They are excellent for an upper body workout. This might be an option if gas prices continue to rise.

All of the kids mentioned in their letters about their stockings they would hang to be filled with apples, oranges, candy, and nuts. One thing I found a bit unusual was that several kids asked for raisins to be placed in their stockings. Maybe raisins were not as common in 1906 as they are today.

Another thing I noticed was that many of the boys asked for things like drums and bugles. That could be explained by the fact that many of the small communities in Nevada County had formed local bands at that time. Most of the girls seemed to want dolls, story books, and miniature household things like sets of dishes, tables, etc.

Fireworks seemed to be a big thing in 1906. Both boys and girls asked for firecrackers and Roman candles.

TOWNSHIP OFFICERS-ELECT **From the 9-22-1886 issue of The Nevada County Picayune**

The following is a list of Justices of the Peace and Constables for each township in Nevada County, elected on the 6th inst:

Albany--Justices: E. Bullock, J. W. Jones; Constable: Bryant Stokes
Boughton--Justices: Len Wilson, J. C. Kelly; Constable: W. G. Cornelius
Caney--Justices: W. P. Thompson, J. W. Duke; Constable: E. T. Haynie
Emmet--Justices: J. W. Neill, W. A. Snell; Constable: Joe Hood
Georgia--Justices: J. J. Hirst, H. C. Kennedy; Constable: A. H. Hicks
Jackson--Justices: W. C. Thompson, Ed Hartsfield; Constable: B. C. Purifoy
Leake--Justices: B. G. Bryant, A. L. Lindsey; Constable: W. Bolen
Missouri--Justices: D. J. Montgomery, J. B'Shers, B. F. Amonette; Constable: A. T. Ross
Parker--Justices: L. G. Parker, J. W. Lightsey; Constable: J. T. C. Butler
Redland--Justices: H. G. Barham, B. B. Moores; Constable: L. D. Cox
Taylor--Justices: J. G. Alder, L. M. Cook; Constable: R. W. Johnson
Union--Justices: E. S. Carter, J. W. Moores; Constable: N. J. T. Carter

PET PICS



This is Lexi, the Wonder Cat—
Duncan McKelvey, Georgia

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Enjoyed your June issue of SLC. My father owned and operated Bryson Truck and Tractor Co. in Prescott from about 1944 to 1951 when he passed suddenly at age 43. He sold International trucks and International Harvester (IH) farm equipment, including Farmall Tractors. The recognizable color of IH farm equipment was red, however, the promotional first "Cub" provided to dealers was white. This little white tractor was popular and Daddy enjoyed driving it through Prescott, home for lunch with me sitting in his lap steering and eventually learning to work the clutch and shift gears. Within a few months, I was proudly driving the white Cub myself. This is how I learned to drive. Don't know, but your family's Farmall Cub may have been purchased from my father.

Ed Bryson



Thanks, Ed. I didn't know about the white demonstrator model. Our first Cub was red and the later one was yellow and white, similar to these photos. I think they started

painting them yellow in 1960. I wish I still had one of them. They are the perfect tractor for small gardens. Check out this web site for more information—<http://www.farmallcub.com/>

In the last issue, I asked if anyone knew what this plant was. Only two people came up with the correct answer. The dried leaves of the mullein plant were used to make a tea that was good for bronchitis, cough, and other respiratory ailments. I understand it can be purchased today in health food stores. When the plant is mature, it has a long stem with yellow flowers.



I think the plant you showed is a mullein plant. When we were kids and the plants had that long tall stem we would turn them down and the old wives tale was if they made a crook and turned back up and kept growing it meant our boyfriend loved us. If they just died and eventually fell off it meant he didn't. Funny how you remember such silly stuff.—Yvonne Munn—Arkansas

Is it a Mullen plant? Looks like some that I have growing at my house. I got the seeds from my aunts at White Oak Lake.—Paulette Weaver—

Texarkana

The dictionary spells the word mullein, but we always called it "mullen".



Sandy says we need more rain!

RAINFALL RECORD FOR 2012 (at my house)

Jan.-----3.3	Apr. -----3.8
Feb.-----4.1	May -----Not enough to register
Mar.-----10.0	

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

THE MAIL ORDER BRIDE

By Jerry McKelvy

Note: All characters in this work are fictional. Any resemblance to any person, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

Preacher Jones always read every page of the weekly newspaper. It was the only way to learn what was going on in other parts of the country. He especially enjoyed the articles about the happenings in the larger cities. Nothing much ever happened here in the little town of Brightview, Arkansas.

He had been born in 1876 in a little town in northern Louisiana. He had been preaching for the last ten years in various small towns in northeast Louisiana and southwest Arkansas. He came to Brightview two years ago. The congregation was very small and most of those who attended were over the age of fifty. One member, Mrs. Johnson, would be celebrating her 80th birthday next week.

Preacher Jones was thirty years old and a single man. He never stayed in one place long enough to find a suitable mate. Almost all the young ladies in Brightview over the age of twenty-five were already married and there were none in his congregation anywhere near his age.

As he read the latest newspaper, he noticed on the last page some ads from women who were advertising for husbands. He had heard about some men using this method to get a wife. Mail order brides were a common thing in the old West, but this was the first time he had seen an ad from a woman advertising for a husband.

Preacher Jones gave some consideration to answering one of the ads. One particular ad caught his eye. It was from a lady in Boston who wanted a loving husband. She was willing to relocate if a marriage took place.

The house he rented was large enough for a family and Lord knows, it could use a woman's touch. He was not much of a housekeeper or a cook.

So, without giving it much more thought, Preacher Jones answered the ad. Maybe the lady would write back and they could learn more about each other. He doubted if a lady from Boston would want to come live in Arkansas, but at least it would be nice to correspond with her even if it did not result in marriage.

About two weeks later, he received his first letter from Maria Donovan. Her letter was very cordial and thanked him for responding to her ad. She suggested they continue to write to each other for a time. She said she had never been anywhere south of Pennsylvania, but was interested in learning more about life in the South. She hated the cold winters in Boston.

Thus began a letter exchange that lasted for several months. Maria said she was 24 years old, about five feet four inches tall, and had dark hair and was eager to get married to the right man. She agreed to come to Arkansas to meet Preacher Jones if he would send her the train fare which

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

was \$30. If all went well, they could be married soon.

Preacher Jones immediately sent the \$30 to Maria by return mail. He was excited that finally he might have a wife. He set about trying to clean up his house to make it more presentable. He even went to the store and bought a new suit of clothes and anxiously waited for the arrival of his bride-to-be.

Days passed with no answer from Maria. The mail service was slow sometimes. He thought maybe she might just show up at the train station and surprise him. Days turned into weeks and finally it dawned on Preacher Jones that he had been tricked.

He contacted the authorities in Boston and learned that Maria Donovan had been arrested for fraudulent use of the mails. She had corresponded with many men from several states and had received railroad fare from them all.

Thirty dollars was a cheap lesson for this lonely Arkansas preacher. It made him wonder how many other ads in that newspaper were similar tricks to get money out of the men who responded. The more he thought about it, he doubted the marriage would have worked anyway. Why should he have to go all the way to Boston to find a wife? There were many beautiful southern women who would make a suitable wife. He decided to not give up on the idea of marriage, but never again would he answer an ad in the newspaper from a woman wanting a husband.

As far as he was concerned, she was guilty of fraudulent use of both the mails and the males.



Lower White Oak Lake as it looked in June, 2012. The lake has been drained so that repairs can be made. It is scheduled to be back to normal in 2014. The photo on the left shows a solid mass of tree stumps that were under water when the lake was full.

The Upper White Oak Lake is not affected by the draw-down.

White Oak Lake was dedicated June 17, 1961 by Gov. Orval Faubus. White Oak Lake State Park was dedicated by Gov. Faubus on Dec. 7, 1966. The park is still open for business despite the lake draw-down. The park is popular with campers especially since gas prices are so high and many people are vacationing closer to home.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

HERE'S YOUR CHANCE!

I try to steer clear of controversial subjects in this paper, but a presidential election is one of the most important freedoms we have. People in many parts of the world do have this freedom to choose their leaders. This will be an important election this year which will determine the future course of our country. We have two opposing political parties with very different views. I encourage everyone to become familiar with the platforms of both parties and decide which party platform more closely agrees with your ideas.

I have decided to take a poll at this time in the process to see how readers of *The Sandyland Chronicle* feel. We pretty much know who the major candidates will be even though they will not be formally nominated until their conventions later this summer. A lot could happen between now and November and many people have not made up their minds.

Here are your choices for this poll:

Barak Obama (Democrat)
Mitt Romney (Republican)
Undecided at this time

All you need to do is let me know your choice and I will let you know the results in the next issue. There is no way to make this a secret ballot. I guess you could mail me your choice without your name or address on the envelope or you could even mail it from some place other than where you live so I couldn't identify you. All I will do is total up the votes I get and report the results. This will not be a scientific poll since the number responding will be very small and I'm sure most of my readers are over the age of fifty. I know I have readers from several different states. I know many readers will not bother with this, but I would like to have as many participate as possible. We might even do this again just before the election to see if the results have changed by that time.

I will need your vote by July 15, 2012. If you send your vote by email, put VOTE in the subject line. My mailing address is 2680 Warren Ave., Camden, AR 71701 if you prefer to use the regular mail, but be sure and mail it so I will receive it by July 15.

One other thing—All members of your household over the age of 18 who read *The Sandyland Chronicle* are eligible to vote. I trust you to be honest about this and not send in “extra votes” just to influence the results.