

Jerry McKeiv's
SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

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sandman43@att.net

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THE OLD PORCH SWING

The front porch swing is just about a thing of the past. In fact, the front porch itself has almost disappeared in many home designs. It seems most people these days prefer a backyard deck or a garden area with maybe a free-standing swing. Swings are still popular but we don't see too many front porch swings these days.

In the old days before electricity came to the rural areas, almost everyone had a big front porch with a porch swing and maybe a rocking chair or two. The front porch was a special place for relaxing after a meal or to visit with neighbors. The house was usually very hot in the summer months with no air conditioning and as soon as the inside chores were done, it was common to retire to the front porch swing hoping to catch a nice gentle breeze. The porch was a good place to sit following a nice rain shower when everything was refreshed and the air was cool.

Sometimes the whole family would sit on the porch late in the evening after supper. The kids might play in the yard while the grown-ups relaxed and discussed important things. They watched as the cars went by and in most cases knew who the people were and where they were going. If the house was close enough to the road, the driver and the people on the porch would exchange a friendly wave. The family dog would usually be playing with the young kids or maybe just lying on the porch with the family. Sometimes the family stayed on the porch until

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darkness came and the mosquitoes forced them to go inside. Sometimes they sat on the porch after dark and watched the fire-flies until it was time to go to bed.

Many good memories were made on the old front porch swing. I can remember sitting with my grandmother in her porch swing and listening to her singing or humming some of the old church hymns.

I think the radio and television played a big part in the demise of the front porch swing. People could then stay inside and listen to a radio program or watch TV with the fans blowing to keep them cool. The quality family time once enjoyed on the front porch was now relegated to the living room, but it was not the same type of quality time spent on the front porch. The sounds of gunfire from a western TV show or the laughter from a comedy show took the place of the peace and quiet of the late afternoons and evenings on the front porch.

Eddy Arnold once had a song entitled "The Old Porch Swing". It's been a long time since I heard it, but here are the lyrics from that song:

OLD PORCH SWING Writers Joe Allen, Charlie Williams

It's hung there on the front porch
Since this old house was built
It's where the old men whittle
And the women fleece their quilts
It's held four generations
Through whatever life could bring
That ol' swing
That ol' porch swing

It held a grieving widow
When my daddy's daddy died
And now it rocks my children
When they close their sleepy eyes
It's where I popped the question
With a quarter karat ring
That ol' swing
That ol' porch swing

Chorus:
It's been there through the sunshine
It's had its share of rain
Been a witness to some good times
And a like amount of pain
If it could tell its story

What a ballad it could sing
That ol' swing
That ol' porch swing

It's where brother read the letter
That sent him off to war
We knew he had to go and fight
But we didn't know what for
When he came home he just sat there
And never said a thing
In that swing
That ol' porch swing

Chorus:
It's been there through the sunshine
It's had its share of rain
Been a witness to some good times
And a like amount of pain
If it could tell its story
What a ballad it could sing
That ol' swing
That ol' porch swing
That ol' swing
That ol' porch swing...

You can listen to Eddy Arnold sing "The Old Porch Swing" on You Tube. I would love to hear your memories of the front porch swing or times spent on the front porch as you were growing up.

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WHAT IS IT?

This piece of equipment was found around the farm in the old days. The wooden part is about three feet high and two feet wide. It is operated by turning the handle on the side. Send me your answers by June 15th.

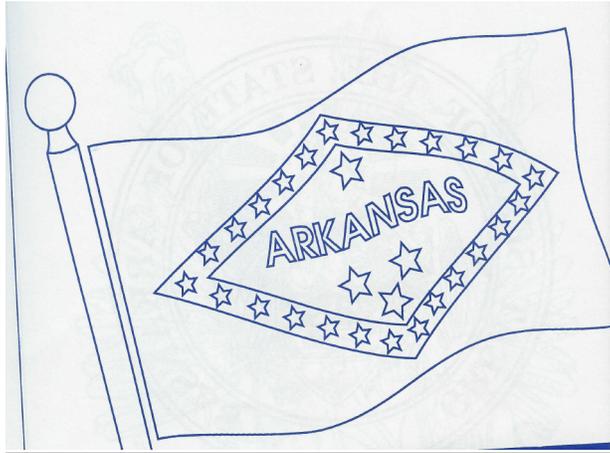
ARKANSAS QUIZ

1. The nickname for Arkansas is “The Natural State” which was adopted in 1995. The previous nickname was _____ adopted in 1947.
2. The state motto which is on the Great Seal is “Regnant Populus” which means _____.
3. The state gem is A. quartz B. ruby C. diamond D. emerald
4. The state tree is A. oak B. pine C. holly D. maple
5. The state bird is A. cardinal B. hawk C. eagle D. mockingbird
6. The state flower is A. rose B. daffodil C. apple blossom D. tulip
7. The state insect is A. honey bee B. grasshopper C. lady bug D. butterfly
8. The state fruit and vegetable is A. purple hull pea B. cucumber C. eggplant C. pink tomato

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9. The state instrument is A. piano B. fiddle C. drum D. bugle
10. The state beverage is A. tea B. milk C. coffee D. Coca-Cola
11. The state mammal is A. white-tail deer B. black bear C. beaver D. armadillo
12. The state rock is A. bauxite B. quartz C. gravel D. diamond
13. The state mineral is A. iron ore B. coal C. lignite D. quartz crystal
14. The state American folk dance is A. polka B. the twist C. square dance D. fox trot
15. How many counties are in the state? A. 50 B. 75 C. 82 D. 100
16. Arkansas is bounded on the north by _____ and on the south by _____.
17. The highest mountain in Arkansas is A. Mt. Nebo B. Mt. Magazine C. Pinnacle Mountain D. Rich Mountain

The following questions are about the Arkansas state flag



18. The area outside the diamond is A. red B. blue C. white D. green
19. The 25 stars in the diamond border are A. red B. blue C. white D. yellow
20. Why does the flag have 25 stars? _____
21. The four stars in the center are A. red B. blue C. black D. white
22. The word Arkansas is A. blue B. black C. red D. green
23. The inside of the diamond is A. white B. blue C. yellow D. green

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24. The large star above ARKANSAS symbolizes _____.

25. The three stars below ARKANSAS stand for _____.

If you were back in school taking this test, each question would be worth four points. I hope you made a passing grade. *Answers are on page 11.*

DEFINITIONS

Arbitrator (ar'-bi-tray-ter): A cook that leaves Arby's to work at McDonalds

Avoidable (uh-voy'duh-buhl): What a bullfighter tries to do

Baloney (buh-lo'-nee): Where some hemlines fall

Bernadette (burn'-a-det): The act of torching a mortgage

Burglarize (bur'-gler-ize): What a crook sees with

Control (kon-trol'): A short, ugly inmate

Counterfeiters (kown-ter-fit-ers): Workers who put together kitchen cabinets

Eclipse (i-klips'): What an English barber does for a living

Eyedropper (i'drop-ur): A clumsy ophthalmologist

Heroes (hee'-rhos): What a guy in a boat does

Left Bank (left' bangk): What the robber did when his bag was full of loot

Paradox (par'-u-doks): Two physicians

Parasites (par'-uh-sites): What you see from the top of the Eiffel Tower

Pharmacist (farm'-uh-sist): A helper on the farm

Polarize (po'-lur-ize): What penguins see with

Primate (pri'-mat): Removing your spouse from in front of the TV

Relief (ree-leef'): What trees do in the spring

Rubberneck (rub'-er-nek): What you do to relax your wife

Seamstress (seem'-stres): Describes 250 pounds in a size six

Selfish (sel'-fish): What the owner of a seafood store does

Subdued (sub-dood'): Like, a guy, like, works on one of those, like, submarines, man

Sudafed (sood'-a-fed): Bringing litigation against a government official

TOYS AND GAMES

I asked readers to list toys and games they played as children. Instead of trying to compile a list from your emails, I decided to just include what was sent to me. I had forgotten about some of those mentioned and there are some that I never heard of. Thanks to all who responded to my request. I have too many for this issue so look for the rest of them in the next issue.

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From Barbara Woelzlein---

Jacks

Hop Scotch

Jump Rope (single and double ropes)

"Cowboys and Indians"---complete with outfits---I got cowgirl outfit for Christmas gift but I really wanted to be the Indian

Marbles---had some really beautiful ones

Swings, teeter totters, and Merry-go-rounds at school

Parcheesi

Sorry

Old Maid

Go Fish

War (Card game)

Monopoly

Red Rover

Tag

Chinese Checkers

Canasta

Solitaire

Ginny Doll and clothes my Mom made for her

Storybook doll collections

Lots of outdoor activities with other neighborhood children and when at school during recess time---lots of exercise

Collecting "Movie Star" trading cards

Autograph books and "Autograph Hound" too

Being a girl there came the inevitable Diary with a lock and key---the "secrets" the Diary became guardian of were many

Reading all the Nancy Drew books along with books about horses and dogs. Loved to read, period.

Then there was the Hula Hoop rage at which I failed miserably but my Mom would "embarrass" us in front of friends as she was really pretty good at it

Don't think there were as many actual "toys" but rather activities---even if it was just getting out Mom's button box and going through all the beautiful buttons she had collected over the years and then-n-n-n the real fun came when we would get out the photo album and she would tell us who everyone was and stories about when picture was taken---remember this was in the days of black and white photos, some of which were from the late 1800's and early 1900's---all this info came in handy later when I got into Genealogy.

Then Mom taught us to knit and crochet and then came the day I was allowed to use her electric sewing machine---I think I was about 12 or 13---previously I could only sew doll clothes on an old treadle machine she had.

Ice skating and sledding in the winter, and roller skating, swimming and bike riding in the summer.

My list of "toys and games" from when I was growing up may have strayed from what you wanted but I think what hit me as I was remembering all that I did to occupy my time when growing up was that we had such a variety of activities and much of it took place outdoors (only

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when our chores were done though) and I think that it was a good thing but some of the children today don't know how to make their own entertainment but rely on it being done for them either with "unending" TV exposure and/or electronic games. How sad!!!

From Yvonne Munn---

This is a list of some of the games we played when I was a kid. Most of them didn't require much to play. Sometimes a rock, piece of glass or a crumpled can.

Red Rover
Hop Scotch
Jumping Rope
Flying Jenny
Kick the Can
Mother, May I?
Hide and Go Seek
Jumping Boards
Annie Over
Little White House over the Hill
Tag
Leap Frog
Ring Around the Rosie
Drop the Handkerchief
Blind Man's Bluff
Marbles
Jacks
Mumbly Peg
Red light-Green Light
Hide the Thimble
Piggie in the Pen Needs a Motion

There were many more we played but this list is probably long enough. If we tired of games or didn't have enough kids together, we rode over saplings or rode home-made wagons down the wagon hills where we had cleared us a path. Sometimes we would dam up a stream in the pasture and make us a little swimming hole. This was our only swimming place until we got old enough for our parents to let us go across the woods to Barham's Lake . What great times we had growing up

Now you can see why the word BORED was not in our vocabulary.

I feel sorry for the kids growing up now that have to be entertained with video games,etc.

From Paulette Weaver---

Jacks, Jump Rope, Imaginary games, such as Fort with Pioneers and Indians, Castles with princesses and knights, and Tea parties. Jigsaw puzzle, Go Fish and Old Maid Cards. My Tony

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Doll (which I still have). Board games such as Checkers, Life, Clue, Chinese Checkers and another marble game, but I cannot remember what it was called.

From Peter and Barbara Masterson---

Stick ball, marbles, kick the can, roller skates, snow sledding, touch football, cowboys and Indians from Peter. I remember, jacks, red rover come over, mother may I? Hide and seek, catching lightening bugs. Will be fun to learn what others remember. How come I can remember all these, but forget to transfer the wash to the dryer?????

From Teresa Harris---

An outdoor game called "Red Rover, Red Rover", "Mother May I", "Pin the Tail on the Donkey" was played at most birthday parties, "Blind Man's Bluff", "Hide and Seek", girls like to jump rope, we also played checkers, dominos, Chinese checkers, and Monopoly. We played baseball in the lot down the street. I played with dolls, doll furniture and kid's ironing board, brooms and other small sized household tools. Girl's toys were most often miniatures of what our mothers used. Craft items like pot holder looms taught us how to make more kitchen items. Toy cars and trucks and cap guns were my brother's toys of the day. My brother had a wood burning set that I particularly wanted to play with but never got the chance. After he burned the family name into my grandmother's front door the wood burning set went missing. Both boys & girls in our neighborhood played war by digging into the banks of hillsides and throwing dirt clods at each other. Like real wars, there were never any winners. We all often played in the wooded area near our home, the boys often caught crawdads and we all enjoyed jumping across the creek, from bank to bank. We all built lean-to shelters from pine boughs as a cool place to escape the summer heat. Sometimes we would break down big cardboard boxes flat and slide down the big pine straw covered hill in the woods and we used the same kind of cardboard box sled when it snowed to do the same thing.

From Barbara Ray---

I am having trouble remembering games we played as children, maybe we were teenagers by then, but I do remember Clue (the box was worn out we played it so much), Monopoly, Scrabble and the card game Battle. My sister and I spent a whole summer playing Battle. We had many dolls, including Barbie dolls, and also cowboy gear such as plastic pistols, cowboy hats and boots. I was a great admirer of Davy Crockett and had a coonskin cap. We had bicycles that we rode all over Chidester and out to Red Hill. We roller skated on the sidewalks and streets, and we played softball after school in the big side yard of our house in Chidester.

This may not be the type of game you are asking about, but we used to play "cow poker" on car trips, mostly to Jefferson, Texas, where my mother's parents lived. My

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sister got one side of the road and I got the other. You counted all the cows on your side of the road, if you saw a gray horse you got fifty extra points, and if you passed a graveyard you lost everything. My dad taught us that game to cut down on the "Are we there yet?" questions.

Favorite Games & Toys, etc. from my early years – Cathy Straley

Toys...

Cooty-Bug

Mr. Potato Head

Lionel train

Paint-by-Number

Yo-Yo

Wooden stick with bigger head on one end and an attached wooden chunk on a string

(objective was to flip chunk into a hole in the end of the wooden head)

Paddle with rubber ball attached

Homemade toys...

Notched Wooden Spool with wind-up string

Spinning Top

Hand Shadows – goat, man, elephant, bird in flight,

String figures – cup & saucer, basket, hand-catch, star, moth, sawing wood, etc. *(see diagrams online at <http://www.alyson.org/figures/introkids1.htm>)*

Dolls...

Chatty Cathy

Barbie, Midge & Ken

GI Joe

Paper dolls, either store-bought or “people” cut from the Sears-Roebuck catalog *(we would also fold the paper “people” dolls at the waist and drive them around sitting in shoebox-top “cars”)*

Board & Card Games...

Monopoly

Sorry

Clue

Ouija

Battleship

Trivia

Scrabble

Chess

Checkers

Rook

Old Main

Crazy 8's

Slap Jack

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Hearts

Poker

Playing Outdoors...

Red Rover

Annie Over

Tag

Marbles

Badminton

Ping Pong

Stretch (*pocket-knife thrown to stick in ground next to your opponent's stretched-out legs*)

Softball

Stilts

Frog-houses (*pat garden dirt over your foot & smooth it tightly until it is a complete enclosure, then delicately pull your foot out to leave a little dirt house/cave, which we called a frog-house*)

Trucks & cars (*we played with our little metal trucks & cars among tree roots that were above ground around a big tree and create towns there; our imaginations would keep us busy all day!!*)

Hopscotch

Bicycle riding

From Julie Lafurno---

Baby dolls (no name brands)

Bicycle

Board games: Battleship, Candy Land, Careers, Life, Mouse Trap, Monopoly, Risk

Carrom board

Coloring books and crayons (new ones every Christmas)

Colorforms (esp. Rockie & Bullwinkle)

Cootie

Croquet

Etch a Sketch

Frisbee

Halsam Play Tiles

Hoola hoop

Hopscotch

Jacks & ball

Jump rope

Lincoln Logs

Magic 8 Ball

Mr. Potato Head (with a real potato)

Old Maid card game

Password

Play doh

Playing cards

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Pick-up sticks
Record player and 45rpms
Roller skates
Scrabble
Silly Putty
Slinky
Spirograph
Tinker Toys
Troll dolls
View Master
Wiffle ball
Wooly Willy magnetic drawing toy
Yo-Yo

From Mary Anna Scheie--

With so many brothers it was nice to have something I could play with that didn't interest them. I spent quite a bit of time with paper dolls. One of the fun things about paper dolls was the freedom to let ones imagination be as whimsical as a young country girl might wish to aspire to.

Answers to Arkansas quiz—

1. Land of Opportunity; 2. The People Rule; 3. diamond; 4. pine; 5. mockingbird; 6. apple blossom; 7. honey bee; 8. pink tomato; 9. fiddle; 10. milk; 11. white-tail deer; 12. bauxite; 13. quartz crystal; 14. square dance; 15. 75; 16. Missouri/Lousiana; 17. Mt. Magazine; 18. red; 19. white; 20. 25th state to be admitted to Union; 21. blue; 22. blue; 23. white; 24. Arkansas' membership in the Confederacy; 25. The three stars have four meanings—(a) Arkansas belonged to three countries (France, Spain, and the United States before being made a state. (b) 1803 was the year of the Louisiana Purchase when the land that is now Arkansas was acquired by the United States, (c) Arkansas was the third state created from the Louisiana Purchase, (d) within the three stars, the two stars just below the word Arkansas signify that Arkansas and Michigan are “twin states”. Both were admitted to the Union about the same time.

Miss Willie Hocker's design for the flag was selected from 65 designs submitted in a contest to come up with a state flag with some minor changes made by the state legislature.

RAINFALL IN 2013

January—4.3 inches; February—2.8 inches; March—4.1 inches; April—3.7 inches; May---4.2 inches so far