

Resident shares talent for crochet

By Amanda Miller
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Saint Francis is filled with interesting personalities, people with many different talents and skills, and very interesting stories. Today, we are going to tell the story of Florence Peacock.

Florence was born Oct. 2, 1933, in St. Francis. She celebrated her 80th birthday this month. She now lives at the Good Samaritan Village.

The first story Florence began telling was that of a blind date. When she was a teenager, she decided to go on a double date with a friend. She got the surprise of a lifetime. That is when she met her future husband, Neil. After the date, the courtship moved along quickly. She said they were married only three months later.

Neil and Florence moved out to the family farm about 12 miles south of Bird City where they raised wheat, cattle and other crops. We "kept busy," she said. A lot of men were drafted at that time for the Korean War, but because Neil was the only son on a working farm, he got deferred. She said she was thankful.

Florence worked on the farm and helped any way she could.

She said she also helped her mother-in-law, who owned the Dairy King in Bird City, whenever she needed it. However, she spent most of her time on the farm.

Neil and Florence had two children, Kathryn and Gary. When I arrived, a bright bouquet of roses for her birthday sat on her dresser that held a note from her son, Gary.

Florence proudly showed pictures of her family. She now has several great-grandchildren that she talked about.

The Peacocks were married for nearly 50 years when Neil died. After her husband's death, she sold the farm. With the children gone from home, she had spare time on her hands.

It was at this time that Florence said she picked up crocheting again. She had always enjoyed crocheting, but there were always so many other things to do.

When she was 11, Florence said, her grandmother taught her to crochet. She was named after her, and her grandmother was determined to make Florence as much like her as possible! She said she was slow to get started, but learned to really enjoy it.



FLORENCE PEACOCK recalls growing up in St. Francis.

She would crochet once in awhile when she was younger. She found that crocheting baby afghans was useful after having her children. Because her babies were so large, she couldn't find a big enough baby blanket for them.

When she moved into the Village in 2005, she seriously took up the hobby. She said she just loves to crochet. She now crochets afghans for people to purchase. Her niece, Tracy Neitzel, puts ads in from time to time once she has accumulated quite a few.

Florence said she has made big

afghans for a wedding gift before. "I warned the bride it would be very heavy," she said. But she made it, and the couple just loved it.

So it would seem that Florence's grandmother did accomplish her goal. She crochets daily to keep busy and to make a little extra money, but also because she just really enjoys it.

Look for ads in The Saint Francis Herald to purchase one of Mrs. Peacock's afghans, or call ahead to order specific sizes and colors!

Program payments ready following shutdown delay

Farmers waiting for their Conservation Security or Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) payments should receive them in the coming days. The shutdown of the federal government delayed some of the \$907 million in payments from United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service to program participants who have enrolled millions of acres to improve the overall conservation performance of their operations.

"Farmers and ranchers are stewards of our natural resources, and their efforts show the value of conservation - working farms, ranches, and forests can provide food and fiber as well as clean water and valuable wildlife habitat," Conservation Service chief Jason Weller said. "We're happy to have our staff back in the field where they can continue working with farmers and ranchers to put conservation practices on the ground."

The payments are part of a fi-

ancial assistance program for producers who are already established conservation stewards and are implementing additional conservation activities for higher, farm-level benefits on their property. This work leads to cleaner water and air, healthier soil and enhanced wildlife habitat, while also supporting rural economies.

The Conservation Stewardship Program, now in its fifth year, replaced the former Conservation Security Program. To date, farmers, ranchers and forestland owners have enrolled about 60 million acres into the programs. Funding for other Farm Bill programs expired Sept. 30, including the Conservation Reserve Program, Grassland Reserve Program, Wetland Reserve Program, Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative and Healthy Forests Reserve Program. Natural Farm Service is not accepting applications for these programs at this time.

For more information, visit the local Farm Service Agency.

Conserve America

Native plants provide abundant benefits for farms and yards

When it comes to sprucing up the farm or yard, native plants are a great option. These plants are indigenous to a particular area and provide advantages when used in the right place.

Native plants are typically low maintenance and resistant to pests if planted in a place similar to their natural surroundings. They also provide food and habitat for native wildlife. Natives boost these advantages because they are adapted to their local surroundings, including the soil and climate and have mastered surviving and thriving there.

Many farmers recognize the benefits of native plants and are incorporating them into working lands, a practice commonly called "farmscaping." Farmers incorporate natives into field borders, hedgerows and buffer strips - all conservation activities that help agricultural production and the environment. On farms, native trees, shrubs and plants help:

- Reduce the need for pesticides because native plants attract beneficial insects and birds that eat agricultural pests and also help pollinate
- Protect farmsteads, crops and livestock from wind and dust and provide shade
- Keep soil in place, enabling it to become healthier and not wash into and pollute waterways;
- Provide wildlife habitat
- Increase the beauty of the farm landscape

By native plants attracting native birds and bats, it can be an effective way to control insect pests. Birds feed on aphids, snails and codling moths and other insect pests that cause problems for farmers. For example, research from San Jose State University shows how birds like

woodpeckers and chickadees eat 84 percent of codling moth larvae during one winter in California apple orchards. Some insects, such as ladybugs and spidermites, also provide biological pest control and native plants are an efficient way to lure the beneficial bugs to the farm.

Native plants attract native pollinators, which are often considered more efficient pollinators, according to the Xerxes Society for Invertebrate Conservation. By attracting good insects, birds and bats, they serve as pollinators for many of the plants that provide the food we eat.

When native trees and shrubs are used, they provide a buffer against wind and dust that protects crops, farm buildings and machinery from damage. These buffers play a valuable role in preventing the loss of soil by wind and water, as plants' roots hold the ground in place. Plants, including natives, keep fertile soil on the farm and out of the air and water. Finally, natives can increase the aesthetic value of the landscape, with seasonal, colorful flowers and leaves. Our community has a variety of wildflowers, such as cardinal flower, purple coneflowers, and purple poppy mallows.

Since the settlement of the U.S., there has been a rapid decline of both native plant and animal species. Some introduced plants have become invasive, taking over where wild native plants once thrived. The NRCS encourages growers to use native plants in their farmscaping for all of the advantages and services that these plants provide. Farmers are playing an important role in allowing natives to thrive.

But natives aren't just for

farmers. They're also perfect for your home, especially if you want to lure birds and butterflies to your yard or add some additional beauty. Natives are perfect for spiking curb appeal. Arrange similar plants in clusters for a more formal look. Mix grasses and shrubs for a more natural look. Natives come in a vast array of colors, blooming and adding interest to your landscape throughout the year. Many have colorful, decorative leaves in a variety of

shapes.

Native species can be found at most nurseries. Keep in mind that natives do not grow universally well in a particular area; they must be planted in an area similar to their natural environment with the right amount of sun and water.

So the next time you get a green thumb, be sure to explore your local native options when it comes to plants.

By Bernadette Luncsford



District Conservationist



Thank you!

Thanks to all who donated to my percent of sales at the Pizza Hut. It really will help me get to - and be in - The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. - Aly Schlepp



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Idalia News

By Chuck Wright



Community news

Saturday, Nov. 16, 6:30 p.m. - The Idalia Cub's Den Child Care Center will hold a Cajun Boil at the Grainery restaurant. Proceeds from this event will support the work of the Cub's Den. Tickets are available from any Cubs Den Board member.

St. John news

Sunday, Nov. 3, 10:30 a.m. - Worship will include Holy Communion and the Act of Remembrance for loved ones who have died in the past year. The Story, Chapter 8: The Book of Judges.

Sunday, Nov. 10, 10:30 a.m. - Mission Fest at St. John. Miss Taylor Reiser will be our guest speaker during the worship service. Taylor has recently

returned from one year of service on a medical assistance team in Ghana, Africa. Following the worship service there will be a potluck lunch and opportunity for discussion with Miss Reiser. Everyone in the Idalia community is invited to attend.

Wednesday, Nov 13, 1 p.m. - The St. John Women's Fellowship will meet for a brief program and fellowship. All Idalia women are invited to attend.

Idalia School news

Friday, Nov. 1. - No School. Professional In-service Day
Monday, Nov. 11. - Idalia FFA fruit sales will begin.

School Essay

This Is Me

Danielle
It means strength, passion, loyalty
It is 6
It is like running through a field of glamorous flowers
It is friend's and family's support
It is the memory of Daddy Joe
Who taught me strength and determination

Whenever I was struggling with life
My name is Danielle,
It means being strong no matter what life throws at me

Danielle Frink
St. Francis freshman




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