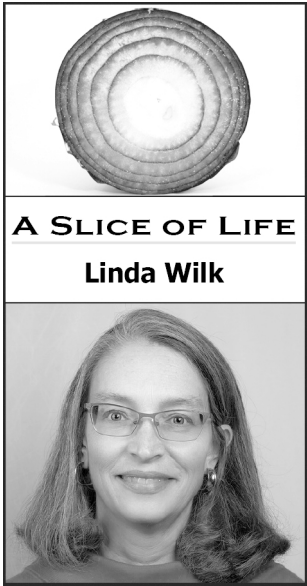


A 2020 memory worth tucking away

By Linda Wilk

Just like when the girls were little, the day after Thanksgiving we loaded into Larry’s pick up and headed to a tree farm. The tradition of cutting down our main Christmas tree began when Larry and I started dating. While my family had a real tree for a few years, that tradition quickly ended and was replaced with a boxed fake tree. (I do not ever remember going to a tree farm growing up. I think my dad just cut one down from his parent’s pasture.)

So, when Larry and I first visited a tree farm to pick a tree, it was a new experience for me. For Larry, a fake tree was not even a consideration. (Of course, over the years and as we have added more and more ornaments, fake trees have found their way into our house.) We now have three fake trees in addition to our main real tree which has our most precious ornaments on it. The tree in our dining room is filled with just Larry’s childhood and sport ornaments, the second one in the living room has our overflow ornaments, as well as the third family tree in our upstairs hallway. Each of the girls also have a 4-foot Christmas tree that when they still



lived at home, they each decorated in their bedrooms.

Another reason for so many trees is another tradition from Larry’s family of giving each child a new ornament each year. Some ornaments would be from places visited during the year, others were given by grandparents or parents, while others the girls picked out themselves.

The thinking behind the tradition, is when the children started their own Christmas decorating, they had at least 18-21 or so ornaments to adorn their individual tree.

Back to our annual tree picking adventure though.

It was festive for Larry and I go to the local tree farm those pre-children



The Wilk girls pose with the 2020 Chirstmas tree..
Photo by Linda Wilk

years. When Laura was born and became old enough to know what was going on, the true adventure began.

For years we went to Helt’s Tree Farm where the grandpa of the Helt family would drive his tractor pulling a hay wagon, taking families out to various parts of the tree farm. We were given a hand saw and told he would check on us from time to time to take us and the tree back once we found our perfect tree.

Then began the looking.

We have traditionally gotten a Scotch Pine tree. Back in Michigan Larry had his choice between Blue Spruce, Scotch Pine and Furs, although he is happy as long as it is real and green.

When it was just Laura, Larry and I finding that perfect tree was not as complicated as when we added Andrea and Marissa.

Some years there were three trees picked and then the negotiating began, with determining which one had the straightest trunk, best branches to hang ornaments

on and straightest branch to put the tree topper on.

Once the perfect tree was found and Grandpa Helt returned, before we loaded up into the wagon, a polaroid photo was taken by Grandpa Helt. A true priceless memory and token take away.

It was a sad reality when Grandpa Helt was no longer assisting with the tree farm or driving the hay wagon.

However, as the girls got older it made as much sense to just walk to the tree picking area and drag the tree back to the pay station.

For a couple years that tradition even ended, as Helt’s Tree Farm was sold, and closed and we had to try and find a new tree farm.

That proved to be difficult a few times, resulting in us buying a pre-cut tree, something I did not think we would ever do.

Other years recently, Larry even ended up buying a tree himself.

Not this year though. After some internet research Larry found a new tree farm

to try, about 45 minutes from here in Yorktown.

So, while Covid 19 has stolen much from all of us, this tradition, thankfully was not one of them.

In fact, once again this year all five of us assisted in picking our tree. As we walked down the multiple rows of trees, Marissa pulled the metal tree holder, doing her best not to run over any new saplings.

It did not take us long to find that perfect tree. And once we did, after a quick pose beside the tree by Laura, Andrea and Marissa, Larry expertly cut it down and we were off to have the tree shaken to dislodge all loose pine needles. The tree farm staff then wrapped the tree, tossed it gently in the bed of the truck and off we went.

The day was one of those small moments that years past were taken for granted and this year, due to Covid 19 was one of those moments I will tuck away for years to come.

Deaths — continued from Page 1

Grant Memorial Park.

Robert M. Pilkin
1947-2020

Funeral services were held at Needham-Storey-Wampner, North Chapel, on Tuesday, December 1 at 11:30 am. Burial followed at Marion National Cemetery.

Stewart K. Kapp
1955-2020

Funeral services were held at Needham-Storey-Wampner, North Chapel, on Saturday, November 28 at 1 pm.

Peggy Lou Tyree
1941-2020

Funeral services were held at Needham-Storey-Wampner, Rybolt Chapel, on Saturday, November 28 at 11 am. Burial followed at Park Cemetery, Fairmount.

Ruth Evelyn Moser
1939-2020

Funeral services were at Somerset Church of Christ, Somerset, on Wednesday, December 2

at 11 am. Burial followed at Mississinewa Memorial Cemetery.

Larry L. Conner
1938-2020

Funeral services were held at Armes-Hunt Funeral Home, Marion, on Saturday, November 28 at 2 pm. Burial followed at Grant Memorial Park.

Richard “Dick” A. Morris
1943-2020

Funeral services were held at Center Chapel United Methodist Church, Marion, on Saturday, November 28 at 11:30 am. Burial will follow at Marion National Cemetery at a later date.

Terri L. Moorman
1955-2020

Visitation will be held from 11 am to 1 pm on Friday, December 4 at Center Chapel United Methodist Church, Marion. The funeral service will begin at 1 pm at the church with Pastor Mark Sanders officiating. Burial will follow in

Matthews Cemetery.

Dorothy A. Robertson-Rodmaker
1943-2020

Private family services were held at Gardens of Memory, Marion.

Betty J. Jones
1931-2020

Funeral services were held at Grant Memorial Park, Marion, on Wednesday, November 25 at 2:30 pm.

Christin Wright
1966-2020

Funeral services were held at Raven-Choate Funeral Home, Marion, on Friday, November 27 at 11 am. Burial followed at Grant Memorial Park.

Robert E. Messersmith
1934-2020

Funeral services were held at Raven-Choate Funeral Home, Marion, on Saturday, November 28 at 1 pm. Burial followed at Gardens of Memory.

Indiana History Answers

1. Evan Bayh
2. Joshua Bell
3. Larry Bird
4. Randall Shepard

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