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Baseball and grandkids

All my life I have loved the game of baseball. When we were kids living in northwest Indiana, we would watch the Cubs on Channel 9 whenever we could. My brothers and I would try and squeeze in a couple innings watching their afternoon games on TV around the farm work if we could. Almost every evening we would go out in the backyard and reenact the game. One of us would play



By **SCOTT CERNEK**
Columnist

in the field and the other one would toss the ball in the air and hit it. It was really a blessing that they used to play all their home games in the afternoon because then

we had the evenings to play our own games. We would also play three-on-three games in the evening and make it so that if we hit the ball to the opposite field we were automatically out. That way each team was made up of a pitcher, an infielder and an outfielder and it was pretty competitive. Sometimes we had to invoke the invisible runner rule if the bases were loaded so that there would be a

batter. Man, did we love the game. I was the youngest boy at the time, so I was always frustrated because I grounded out to the pitcher a lot. Those games drove me to work very hard at getting better and eventually I became a very good player and went on to become a starting catcher on my college team. I also played 20 years of amateur baseball in the Home Talent League in Wisconsin. Along with

that, I was a high school head baseball coach for 26 years. The Cubs are still one of my passions and I check their scores daily.

These days it's sure been having fun teaching my grandkids to play. None of them are in a T-ball league or anything, but they sure love to play the game with grandpa. I picked up a couple soft baseballs and we seem to play whenever we all get together. For some of them it takes several swings to make contact, but I keep pitching until they do. Even my two-year-old grandson takes his turn swinging the bat. It is so much fun to play with them and cheer loudly when they hit the ball or run from base to base.

This past weekend I came out of retirement at age 61 and played in a co-ed softball tournament in Rewey, Wis. We battled hard, but lost our first two games and our championship run was thwarted. In this tournament the men have to bat opposite handed and only get one strike, so it's pretty tough. It

can be pretty embarrassing for a big strong guy to awkwardly swing opposite handed and strike out or hit a weak grounder or pop up. Luckily, I was a switch hitter in college and so my opposite hand is still pretty solid. The trouble is I was so scared to swing and miss that I didn't put much power into my swings my first couple times up. Later, as my confidence grew, I swung harder and got some base hits. It was fun to still be able to play shortstop too at my age and throw a few people out. There were some very tough girls who played and in fact the lady second baseman made a couple really nice plays on a couple of liners I hit. The major accomplishment on the day was to play and not get injured, as last year I pulled a quad muscle and was pretty much shut down. I think all the biking that I wrote about last week really helped my legs.

I feel so blessed to have 12 grandkids to share

See WEEKLY, Page 6

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GUNS & OUTDOOR SPORTSMAN ITEMS: Mossberg 160 ATR long gun 270 cal. Scope, stabilizer stand, camo, Knights Muzzle Loader, 50 cal, with scope bolt action, Mossberg 12 ga., 2 3/4" – 3.0" shells, smooth & rifled barrel, New Haven model 285 20 ga., Lefever Nitro Special side by side double barrel 12 ga., Wall Hangers Richards open hammer side by side Nonfunctional, Remington 12c 22 short Hex barrel broken firing pin, Hand guns Ruger Super Red Hawk 44 mag. Ported Barrel, Ruger Model GP 100 38/ 357, Ruger P85 9 mm. Barret Quad 400 crossbow with accessories including hard shell carrier, Rods & reels, fishing tackle some older vintage lures and related items. Large quantity of Ammo.

LAWN & GARDEN & OUTDOOR: Murray 24" 2 stage snow blower, like new, Agri Fab lawn sweeper & 25-gal poly tank yard sprayer, 1000 lb. single axle trailer 5' x 4', Stihl gas blower, Chainsaws: Echo CS 130 14", Stihl 250 C 16", Craftsman 20", Echo HC 150 hedge trimmer, Echo SRM 225 Gas weed eater, Honda GCV 160 power washer 2400 psi, Coleman Power Mate, **ITEMS OF SPECIAL INTEREST:** Juki TL 2200 OVP Quilters sewing machine digital read with foot control; Nustep low impact exerciser digital monitors; items too numerous to mention.

TERMS: Cash, good check, credit or debit cards. Must have proper photo ID to register. All items sell to best and highest bidder. No property removed until settled for. Not responsible for items or accidents. **NO BUYER'S PREMIUM. LIVE AUCTION ONLY.** Must be present to bid. **MUST HAVE FOID CARD TO PURCHASE GUNS**, guns will be held & processed by Rick Winner of Yorkville, IL, an authorized gun dealer for a per buyer fee of \$25.

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EQUIPMENT: Case 1070 D with loader; tractor wts; gd 9' x 16' bale cage on JD gear; NH 519 spreader with endgate; JD 640 rake; JD gear; 2 3pt 7' blades; 2 bale choppers with Honda motors; for JD 1770 12 row planter - 6 fert. boxes with auger, Uneforth dry fert. sweeps, 2 dry fert. transmissions, 12 dry fert. double disc openers, 12 chip wheels, 12 Yetter coulters, 12 planting seed tab squares.

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**LobsterFest 2023
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2**

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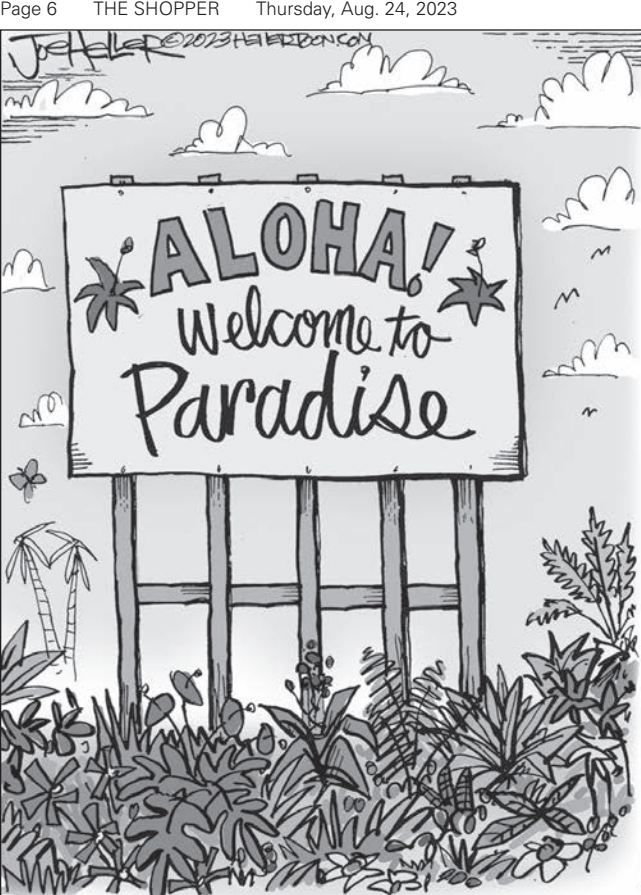
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Slices of life

Sun and shade



By **JILL PERTLER**
Columnist

I've always loved gardening. No, I'm going to take that a step further: I've always loved growing things.

Growing things—as in flowers, vegetables, friendships, babies and kids, this column, faith, my marriage, knowledge, compassion, kindness and most importantly love. And more, of course. There is always more to grow.

I've learned many insider tips and tricks about growing things over the years. Today I realized I'm still learning.

I'm in a new climate and meeting new neighbors. That's a scenario ripe for learning potential.

I was recently talking with a neighbor. She has numerous plants in her yard that are common in this region, but completely new to me. I asked her about a couple—whether they liked sun or shade, water requirements, whether they were finicky or easy to grow, and so on.

"Oh, honey," she said, "I just plant them. If they grow, they grow. If they don't, they weren't meant for my yard. They have to be happy to be here."

I thought that was insightful and wise.

In my last house I had a large garden plot filled with shade. The owners before me planted roses. Rose plants thrive on sun and temperate winters. I had neither.

However, I did have an ample supply of small children at the time, which prevented me from treating my roses with the TLC they needed to survive in my yard.

So they perished. At the time, I thought: Any plant can grow in the sun. It takes something special to grow in the shade.

I replaced the roses with hostas. Hostas are a common perennial in the cool, dark climates that favor them, but apparently they aren't as widespread as I thought. My autocorrect wants to change the word to "hostess," so apparently they haven't even made their way into some dictionaries.

For those unfamiliar, hostas are sort of leafy northern versions of large-leaved tropical plants. They typically grow in a round mound, with leaves flowing outward. They can

be as small as six inches in diameter or as large as six feet - and just as tall (or short). Cultivars have come up with hundreds (and probably thousands) of named varieties. I believe I had close to 40 or 50 different strains in my backyard.

It took years to build, and was one of the hardest things for me to leave when I sold my house.

But, there were other gardens to grow.

I moved from a plot of ever-present shade and ever-present winter (or so it seemed) to ever-present sun and ever-present warmth. I've looked around and there isn't a hosta to be found in my new environment.

Apparently growing hostas in my yard now would be akin to growing roses in my old plot. With that comes the realization: Not every plant likes the shade. It takes something special to grow in the sun.

Herein lies the wisdom of my new neighbor.

Not everything can grow everywhere. Plants have to be happy in their environment. You can try forcing them, like the people who planted the roses at my old house, but it's always going to be a battle against nature—against the order of things.

The same goes for people. Sometimes we find the right amount of shade and cool temperatures; other times we seek the sun. Both are good. Both can be good.

Bottom line, we all get to figure out where we grow best. When it's time to put down roots and when it's time to replant and regrow—sunshine or shade or maybe even a little of both.

I'm not sure where that will take me, but for now, right here seems right, but I'm still learning. I hope I never stop.

Jill Pertler is an award-winning syndicated columnist, published playwright and author. Don't miss a slice; follow the Slices of Life page on Facebook.

Weekly (Continued from page 2)

my passions with. Along with baseball, I love to read Bible stories and pray with them whenever we get together at the end of day. In Deuteronomy 6:5-9, we are directed by God to teach our

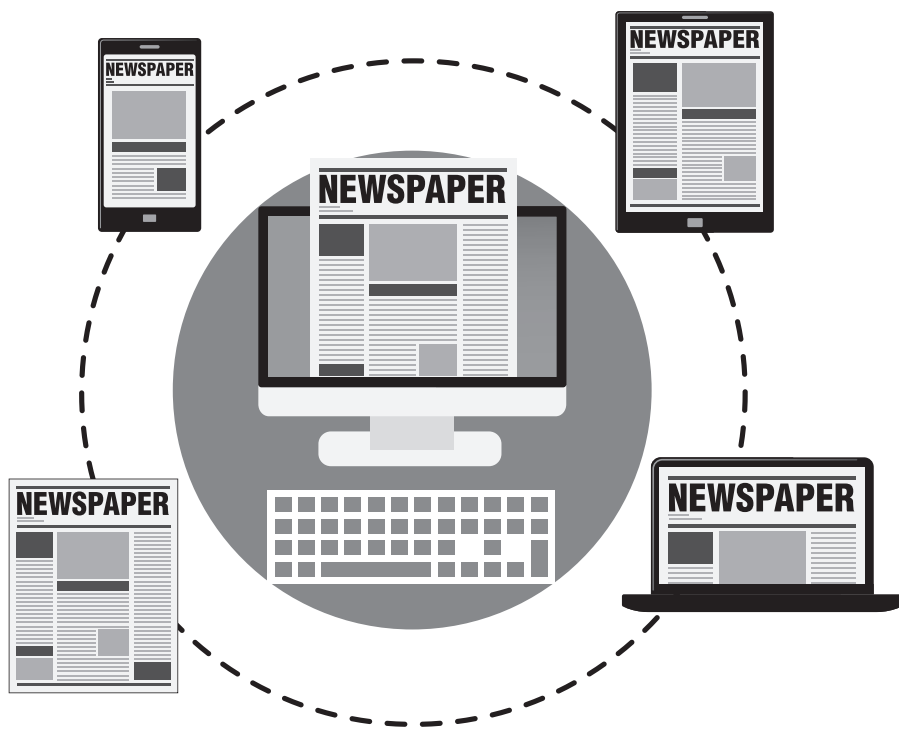
children to love Him and walk with Him. "5You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6And these words that I command you today shall be on your

heart. 7You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. 8You shall bind

them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

Until next week, God bless!

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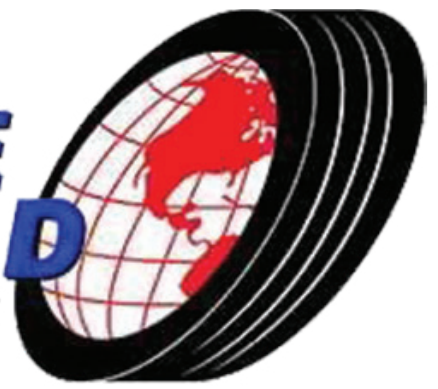
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