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Contest
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Horn’s Tivoli Fest. “I don’t know, I just decided this makes sense, and I want to do this,” he said.
He started pitching the idea - to the Shelby County Chamber of Commerce, to the Tivoli Committee, to the Iowa Department of Tourism and the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, “And they loved the idea,” he said.

He started looking for grants to help put on the event, which he admits comes with a high price tag, and is planning a series of fund-raisers to help raise the money needed. The first is a Dad’s Belgian Waffles meal, offering all you can eat waffles, sausage, toppings and drinks - \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids ages 6-12. Kids 5 and under are free. Advanced tickets for the waffle feed are available at the Shelby County State Bank and at METC. Carry outs will be available, and the meal will be offered from 8 a.m. to noon on Sunday, Feb. 26.

Another fund-raiser is

a planned raffle. Tickets will be \$100, and only 250 will be sold, the winner will have the choice of one of four items - a 2016 Honda Pioneer 500 UTV, a 2016 Yamaha Drive Golf Cart - loaded, a 2017 Bad Boy Maverick 60 inch deck zero-turn radius mower or or \$5,000 in cash.

“We started doing fund-raising, and by golly we are going to get it done: We’re going to have a world championship,” Logan said.

The competition will feature two rounds - one for amateurs and one for professional eaters, who will try to eat the most aebleskivers in the allotted time. The winner will get a cash prize and be named the World Champion, and an official world’s record holder.

Major League Eating will put on the event, and will bring in about 10 professional eaters - which ones sign up will be announced later, but Logan said that there will also be a way for locals to sign up to compete.

The event is planned to be held on Saturday afternoon, at 2 p.m. after the parade and the community aebleskiver breakfast.

The contest will require

a lot of aebleskiver - Logan has enlisted the help of James Uren of the Village Cafe to make about 2,500 aebleskiver. James said he would start making and freezing them in order to have enough ready for the contest.

James isn’t Danish, but he’s a big supporter of Elk Horn, and goes out of his way to promote Elk Horn in different ways, including talking about Tivoli Fest when he’s selling Danish Kringle at different events in Iowa and even Nebraska. Logan hopes adding the event brings in people who are interested in competitive eating events, a chance to share Elk Horn and Danish culture.

“My dream would be that this draws a whole bunch of people from all over the country to come in and be part of the Danish culture, that cultural awareness and then on top of that, it is a chance to help commerce in and around the area of Elk Horn, Audubon County, down in Atlantic, over in Harlan,” he said. “Iowa is a neat state that has lots of fun things, I want to celebrate that and get people to come and see what it’s all about.”



Photo by Laura Bacon

Logan Veath and James Uren looked over the “History of Aebleskiver” while talking about plans for the World Championship Aebleskiver eating contest.



Author with Audubon ties pens first novel

By Jill Christensen

Stuart M. Harris, the great grandson of Captain Charles S. Stuart, one of Audubon’s founding fathers, has written his first novel entitled, “The Northeast Quarter.”

The book is set in the fictional town of Winfield, IA, in 1918. It begins with Colonel Wallace Carson, the ruler of a vast agricultural empire, asking his 10 year old granddaughter and eventual heir, Ann, to safeguard the Northeast Quarter, the choice piece of land from which the empire was founded. Young Ann readily agrees, not knowing what she just signed on for, as Carson dies unexpectedly that very afternoon.

The book tells the story of Ann’s struggle to keep her promise no matter what; as she watches her grandmother remarry a local banker and the empire begin to crumble around her.

Some could say the story shows some parallels to Harris’ own family history, as Stuart was one of the largest landowners in the county and his wife; Lois Gray Stuart was a banker. However, that’s where the similarities stop, as the fictional banker, Chamberlain, was hell bent on wreaking havoc and paving the way for corruption throughout the town of Winfield, while Stuart was a prominent and well-respected businesswoman in Audubon.

While he’s known as one of Audubon’s founders; Captain Charles S. Stuart spent relatively little time in the western Iowa town, at least while he was alive. Stuart was born in West Barnet, Vt. in 1826, and died in 1889. He was married to Lois Gray, who was born in Ryegate, Vt. in 1829 and died in 1913. Three children were born to them: William Gray Stuart, Belle Jane Stuart (Ashby) and Elizabeth Cameron Stuart (Beattie).

Captain Stuart served in the Civil War from June 17, 1861 to July 15, 1862 when due to illness he was forced to go on leave. He was mustered into service by Caption Pitcher at Chicago, Ill. and was instrumental in raising company of 125 volunteers. The 19th Illinois Infantry Veteran’s Club awarded him the Civil War medal in 1884. It was presented to Stuart on Sept. 9, 1884 in Osceola, Ill.

Stuart came to Iowa with Mr. Thomas S. Musson, who settled in Audubon County, and Mr. Grinnell, who founded Grinnell College. The three men were lifelong friends. William McClaren, another Stuart family friend came to Iowa and settled in Audubon County. At one time, Stuart owned over 10,000 acres of Audubon County farmland. While that number has dwindled, significantly, the Stuart family still owns one parcel of land in northeast Audubon County.

Captain Stuart died at his home near Osceola, Ill. On June 9, 1889. His funeral and burial services, in accordance with his wishes, were conducted in Audubon, where a special train carried his family and friends from Illinois and Iowa. He is buried in the Maple Grove cemetery, along with his wife Lois and son, William.

William G. Stuart managed the family’s business interests in Audubon until his untimely death in 1890, at the age of 34. At that time, the Captain’s widow, Lois Gray Stuart, took charge, becoming quite the businesswoman.

Between 1893 and 1894, Lois founded the Corn Exchange Bank, which continued in Audubon with various cashiers until 1907 when it was bought and merged into the Van Gorder First National Bank in Audubon, which would eventually become Audubon State Bank. Lois built the Stuart Mansion, which sits on the corner of East Division and Chicago Streets in Audubon and provided much of the financial support for the building of Audubon’s Presbyterian Church.

The Stuart family’s memorabilia, including Captain Stuart’s Civil War uniform, is on display with the Audubon County Historical Society. Harris recently gifted the society with more family history, including Captain Stuart’s Civil War medal, bank books from the early days of the Corn Exchange Bank and a host of other items which are currently on display at the Audubon Public Library.

Harris’ novel, The Northeast Quarter is currently available on Amazon and at other retailers. Those interested in the Stuart family history and the founding of Audubon are encouraged to visit the displays at the Audubon Public Library and at Nathaniel Hamlin Park museum.

