

Fredonia deals with water issues

By John Carpenter
Gazette Staff

The heavy rains we are experiencing this summer has brought back an issue in Fredonia that was last seen in the flood of 1993. According to councilman Rob Bright, a number of drainage districts north of Fredonia drain towards the city's direction. In normal years the city is able to absorb this drainage, but when it is unusually wet, it creates severe problems.

"Unlike a flood where the river water comes to us, our problem is getting the water to the river," said Bright. The majority of the water drains to a low area adjacent to the railroad tracks on the east side of Fredonia, creating a catch-all pond. As more water drains, the pond then

threatens to flood homes in its area.

Presently the city has dug a drainage ditch from the pond to the highway. They are then pumping the water over the highway into another ditch that drains into the Iowa River. "We need to come up with a permanent solution to this problem," said Bright, "and we intend on discussing this with the Board of Supervisors to see if a solution can be found. Our town can't continue to be final source for this water." The Gazette will follow this story and report new developments in this matter as they become available.

Pictured is the catch-all pond that is formed on the east side of Fredonia during rainy seasons.



Our Library wouldn't be what it is today

By John Carpenter
Gazette Staff

When Ardee Ostrem agreed to become a member of the Library Board in 1976, little did she realize that this was to grow into a thirty-three year career of dedication to not only the Columbus Junction Library, but to the thousands of patrons who have come to view the Library as an important part of their lives. When Ardee came on board, Adeline Crawford was the librarian, and the library was only open ten hours a week.

In those days it was the responsibility of the Library Board to handle all of the administrative details. "Most of the other Board members had full-time jobs," said Ardee, "and since I was a stay at home Mom with somewhat flexible hours, I volunteered to handle these tasks." Ardee continued in this role until 1978, when Adeline Crawford retired. The Board offered the job to Ardee, and thus began her long role of service.

"I really didn't know what to do in the job," Ardee said, "but with the help of the Southeast Iowa Area Regional Library System I slowly learned. I took every class that was offered, and obtained a good understanding of the cataloging system." During that time Ardee was able to convince the city to allow the library to be open more hours, and in 1983 Ardee was instrumental in forming *The Friends of the Library*. "I needed help for various projects and thought we could do some fundraising for these items, but I knew that the city budget just didn't have additional funds for us to hire people. We then came up with the idea for the *Friends* group, and from there we were able to accomplish so much more." In the early 1980's the city gave the west room of the former library building to the library. With

the help of the *Friends* and other volunteers, this room was remodeled into a children's library, a meeting room, and eventually also served as the city's ICN room.

In 1983 the library received a \$23,000 grant from the Kenny Lindstrom Foundation, and with an additional \$2,000 from the city, a major remodeling to the library was completed. This included new furniture and carpeting. "When we were in the early stages of planning for the new library, our architect, Charles Kurtz, was in the library and he commented that this was one of the nicest small libraries he had ever seen," said Ardee.

In 1990 Iowa was promoting the ICN network, and they were especially interested in placing sites in local libraries. A lot of librarians were hesitant to become involved, but Ardee was insistent that the local library become a part, "I was just convinced that this would become a valuable resource, and since the school did not have space at that time for the room, I was determined to have this service offered in town. I knew it would be used, but I had no idea of the extent. Today we have the opportunity to have ICN classes nearly every day."

But in 1990 another event happened that truly changed the library's plans. At a library board meeting in early 1990 Ardee announced that the library had become the beneficiary of a \$238,000 bequest from the estate of Marie Spaeth for the purpose of building a new library. "I just couldn't believe it at first," said Ardee, "and I didn't know what steps to take." But through the persistence of Ardee and members of the Columbus Community Civic Center Foundation, in 2005 a new building housing the library and other city offices was opened. "I truly loved the old library," said Ardee, "but I knew that



there was so much we weren't able to offer. We had just outgrown the facility. But now we are a modern facility with services available that I would never had dreamed of when I began my career."

In summing up her tenure, Ardee said, "I never really felt like I had a job, this was always a place where I wanted to be. I've made so many friends, and have so many memories. I recall the excitement of opening the children's library, the remodeling, and the struggle of raising funds for the new library. Throughout the fundraising period I never became discouraged, I always knew this would happen. Although the period from the groundbreaking through the move is kind of a blur to me, I am so proud to have been able to be a part of all of this. This is a wonderful community, and I'll never be able to express my appreciation to everyone who has helped me in providing the best library services to the community that we were able to give."

Although Ardee plans to spend more time with her family, she isn't completely retiring. She will continue to work part-time at the library,

and serve in an advisory role.

(Editor's Note: I had the opportunity to serve on the Library Board for twelve years with Ardee. Two things that I noticed during this time have always impressed me about Ardee. The first was her vision. I never was excited about the ICN network as I thought it wouldn't be used very much. But Ardee had the foresight to see what it would become, and she stuck to her guns in making the ICN room in the old library, and insisting that the cable also be run to the new site for future hookup. The other item that I will always admire in Ardee is her flexibility. She would have an idea, argue for it, but if it became apparent that the rest of the group was not for it, she would move on with no grudges. This is a capacity that not many people have. Ardee, I have enjoyed working with you throughout all of these years, and have come to sincerely respect your dedication and work ethic. Our library would not be what it is today without you. And also, I never really minded the early Saturday morning phone calls telling me of a board meeting.)

Briefly -

Empowerment Board to meet

The Des Moines/Louisa County Caring CommUNITY Empowerment Board will be meeting at the First Presbyterian Church, 801 Middle Street, Mediapolis, IA, today, Wednesday, July 1, 2009 at 10:00 a.m.

Fair Books Available

The fair books are in for the Louisa County Fair, July 27-August 1. Locations in Columbus Junction to be picked up are: Columbus Junction State Bank, Community Bank, Plants and Things, Special Effects, Columbus Gazette and City Hall.

Great Beginnings Registration

Great Beginnings Preschool is now accepting student applications for the 2009 - 2010 school year. Great Beginnings offers quality care and education for children ages 3, 4 and 5. The school also provides transportation to and from the preschool. For more info please contact the preschool at 728-2669 or Beth Hills at 728-3157.

Honor Tour donations continue

The American Legion Post # 100 of Columbus Junction and Wapello VFW Post # 5166 are very proud to announce that donations to the WWII Honor Tour in Louisa County are approaching \$21,000.00. Any individual who wants to make a donation to the tour, are encouraged to do so by July 15th. At that point in time, we will publish a formal thank you, and a complete list of contributors. The next scheduled trip to Washington DC is September 28th, and any WWII veteran who wants to become part of the tour should contact Sam Bell at Post 100 in Columbus Junction.

Lions Breakfast Cancelled

Due to water damage to the Columbus Community Senior Center after the rain and flood this past weekend (June 21), the Columbus Junction Lions Sausage Gravy/Biscuit Breakfast fundraiser set for July 4th and 5th, has been cancelled. The extent of the interior damage and resulting repairs will prevent the Center's use for the event. Sorry for any inconvenience this cancellation may cause. Come see us at our annual Fall Sausage/Pancakes/Egg Breakfast on Labor Day weekend.

Street Dance in Morning Sun

Morning Sun - The Morning Sun Fourth of July celebration will include a Teen Street Dance set for Friday, July 3, Teens, grades 6-12, can kick off the holiday celebration on July 3 from 8 p.m. - 12 midnight on the street in uptown Morning Sun. Music will be provided by Humphrey's Sound. There is a \$3.00 cover charge. Invite your friends from neighboring towns and have a great time.

Post Office to close early on Friday

The Columbus Junction Post Office will observe special holiday hours for the July 4th holiday. Friday, July 3rd, the retail window will close at 12:00 Noon. There will be normal mail delivery and pickup from the parking lot collection boxes on Friday, July 3rd. Saturday, July 4th, all operations are closed. Regular hours resume on Monday, July 6th.

Red Cross Swimming Lessons

Red Cross Swimming lessons begin Monday, July 6th at the Columbus Pool. Lessons run from 10-11 a.m., Monday-Friday for two weeks. The cost is \$30, payable upon registration. Every child should learn to swim and Red Cross lessons are an economical way to get them started. Register at the pool before July 6th.

Fair Queen contestants sought

Seeking contestants for the 2009 Louisa County Fair Queen and Princess Contests. Contestant packets and information can be found on our website at www.louisacountyfairqueen.com. The contest date is Monday July 27th. Paperwork **DEADLINE: Must be POST-MARKED by July 3rd**. Fair Queen contestants must be at least 16 years of age and no older than 21 by August 1st. Winner receives a \$500 scholarship and a \$250 cash award along with many gifts from local sponsors and goes on to compete in the Iowa State Fair Queen Contest in August. Awards will also be given to runner(s)-up and Miss Leadership and Miss Personality. All contestants will also receive t-shirts and certificates. *There is no entry fee for the Fair Queen contest.* Fair Princess contestants must be at least 4 and no older than 8 by the contest date. All contestants receive tiaras, sashes and certificates. Entry fee is \$25. Winner receives a savings bond, crown and sash. Please contact me with any questions about the contests **and** to confirm participation. Michelle Hunt, Director, Louisa County Fair Queen & Princess Programs, P.O. Box 269, Columbus Junction, IA 52738, Cell: 563.260.0864, Fax: 319.728.2940 Email: michelle@centraliowakfc.com Website: www.louisacountyfairqueen.com

Cooking Class at Farmers' Market

The Columbus Junction farmers' market offers a wide variety of fresh, local foods. Stop by Friday, July 3 at 5 pm for a one-hour cooking class that will prepare you to make healthy gourmet meals for your family and friends. Esther Estudillo, Program Assistant for Family Nutrition Program with Louisa County Extension, will share recipes, demonstrate cooking techniques and offer samples. The event is free, please bring a lawn chair. For more information call Louisa County Extension at 319-523-2371.

CCHS Class of 1994 plans reunion

The CCHS Class of 1994 will be having their 15-year class reunion on Saturday, August 29 at 3:00 PM at the Mary Marr Lodge in Marr Park, Ainsworth, Iowa. The meal will take place at 6:00 PM. Bring the family. There will be a golfing at Cedar Crest at 10:00 AM for those interested. Please contact Vanessa (Van Auken) Proehl at 712-250-2250 or spirtedchic@hotmail.com to sign up to golf. For further details contact Vanessa or Shannon (Story) Hampson at shannonhampson@uiowa.edu or 319-360-8256.

CCHS Class of 1999 plans reunion

The class of 1999 will be holding their 10-year reunion this summer. The dates for the reunion will be July 31st and August 1st. There will be chances to get together on both days. Plans for the reunion will be sent to classmates through their email or phone. Class of 1999 members can send their email addresses to kasey_keltner@hotmail.com or phone numbers to 319-728-3032. Otherwise, we will try to contact you. If there are any questions you can send them to the same email address or phone number.

Since many of our news sources will be closed, the Gazette Office will close at noon on Friday to give our staff an extended 4th of July holiday weekend.

Remembering a 4th of July, sixty-two years ago

Ride with Me

By Lorie Hauenstein

The 29 second ride remains fresh in his memory as if it were yesterday. It's nostalgic to read of one young man's dream, one shared by many All-American boys. A dream of taking a ride in a homemade engineless soap box derby on one's tree-lined hometown main street, cheered on by local friends, family and fans is one from days gone by. That dream is the memory of lifetime Louisa County, Jim Morrison of the warm morning of July 4, 1947 in front of a huge crowd. "It was quite an experience", states the 1947 local winner of the All-American Soap Box Derby.

Announced in the local newspaper, "a Soap Box Derby open to any boy in Louisa County between ages of 11 to 15 inclusive will be held at Columbus Junction on July 4th at 10:00 o'clock in the morning" was the draw. The "winner would be eligible for the State Contest and expenses to that contest would be paid by Pine Brothers Auto Company, Entrance blanks for the local 4th of July contest could be secured at the insurance office of Duncan and Howell." The few remaining sets of wheels could be secured at the same location. Local derby efforts were

sponsored by the American Legion and the Chevrolet Motor Company dealers.

Employees of Hull Garage, mechanics Moe Ogier and Ted Morrison and painter, Harold Drinkall, were drawn to the competitive contest and drew on their own qualifications to design and build the soap box derby. Bill Hull, owner of the business seemingly supported the after-hours antics of his employees and sponsored Morrison's soap box derby. Jim doesn't remember if there were required specs or even assisting in the building project, rather just remembers being told he was going to be the driver! At the age of 14, he met the age category and at the weight of 117 lbs. could be quite competitive.

The original design of the soap box derby had a hand brake, but was later revised to a foot-operated paddle brake. Jim's father, Ted perfected a method of balancing the wheels and treating them with graphite for lubricating purposes.

Rolling off a starting platform placed at the then Community Building corner (now Historical Society Library/Museum) two competitors at a time would coast down the inclined brick Main Street of Columbus Junction to cross the finish line at the south edge of the viaduct. Seventeen en-



Jim Morrison and his soap box derby car. (The car is currently on display at the Columbus Junction Historical Museum)

tries competed through time trial runs and numerous heats culminating with the finals. Quoting from the local newspaper, "there were some rough spots on the paving and four of the cars entered lost tires and wheels."

Class A - Boys 13 to 15 included Jim Morrison (Hull's Garage), Jack Pugh (Eliason's), Pearl Call (Doudna Dress Shop), Clayton Cline (Bob's Firestone), Bobby Wheeler (Ross Dry Goods), Warren McConahay (Corner Café), Dickie Simmons

(Louisa County National Bank) and Ronnie Hills (Phillips 66).

Class B - Boys 10 to 12 included Glen Newton (Duncan's Walgreen Drug), Dewey Newton (Eclipse Lumber Company), Jack Lord (McFarland Coal and Gravel), David Pine (Pine Brothers Auto Company), Billy Orr (Richie & Orr), Dannie Pine (G.S. Newnam Insurance), Howard Smith, Jr. (West Side Billiard Hall),

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