

In Soldiers Grove

Library roof leaking

By CHARLEY PREUSSER

The Soldiers Grove Village Board worked through an interesting agenda last Thursday night that included a brief tour of the adjacent public library with library director Cele Wolf.

Wolf wanted the board to see damage being caused to the ceilings and wall by the massive load of melting snow and ice on the roof.

The librarian told the board despite efforts of others to get snow and ice off the roof, a solid core of ice remained. Buckets and sheets of plastic were strategically placed in the new section of the library to catch dripping water and protect bookcases.

The worst of the problem seemed to be occurring where the roof of the original library joined the roof of the addition (the former pharmacy building).

Shayne Chapman, acting as the chairperson of the meeting in the absence of village president Steve George, told Wolf that she would have to wait for everything to melt and then contact the insurance company.

"It's probably a June thing," Chapman said of the needed repairs. Wolf agreed to keep the board informed of the situation.

During the fire department report, Soldiers Grove Fire Chief Roger Olson informed the board that Forkash Electric had completed some needed electrical work at the fire department.

Olson also informed the board that the fire department responded to a tractor fire call at the Hartley farm recently. The fire chief also indicated

that piling snow in front of the fire department was causing a problem maneuvering in and out of the building and needs to be avoided in the future.

Olson told the board that it was time to replace Pumper #2. The truck is a 1981 model. The chief explained the department was willing to look for a used truck on auction sites, but he feared if they found one it would be gone before the board could approve its purchase.

The board told Olson they would convene a special meeting if that were the case to get the expenditure approved quickly.

In answer to a question from village trustee Vicki Campbell, Olson said the department had \$52,000 in a fund that could be used toward the purchase of a pumper truck.

Village clerk Tammy Kepler told the board that despite advertising, the village had not received any bids for the needed repair work from flood damage in the park. Those damages would include paving in the parking lot adjacent to the shelter, concrete work on sidewalks and curb, as well as electrical work at the campsites and on the ball field. The board agreed to re-advertise the work for bids and to personally reach out to potential contractors to make them aware of the available work.

The director of public works, Brian Copus, reported that an engineering firm had to be summoned for an emergency at the sewer plant. Three workers worked two days on pumps and the plant continued to function without having to bypass any sewer water.

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'PAINTED HOUSE' is the title of this Jamie Heiden original. It is representative of much of her work that will be on exhibit at VIVA's First Thursday artist reception on April 4 in Viroqua.

Art Fest Award Winner

Heiden featured at VIVA Gallery

VIVA Gallery's monthly First Thursday artist reception will be held on April 4, with Jamie Heiden returning as featured guest artist.

Jamie was the winner of the Driftless Area Art Festival's People's Choice Award at last September's festival, an award sponsored by VIVA Gallery. Jamie also won this award in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2015, which speaks to the admiration people have of her vision and her beautifully textured and layered photography.

Jamie lives in the northern part of the Driftless area near LaCrosse. For as long as she can remember, she has been a collector of images. She stores them in her mind; she captures them with her camera. For her, a picture really does tell a story—one of beauty or despair, hope or loneliness, laughter or fear. It can be magnificent, or it can show the brilliance and magic lying dormant within the ordinary.

Life's simplicity is her inspiration and conveying that story is her goal. Jamie's titles are an integral part of her images, as she also loves the journey words allow us to travel. She claims not to be a writer (one could dispute) and so chooses not take us on a journey with words alone. Her pictures are her stories.

Jamie received her degree in photography and printing technology from Northern Arizona University and has been a full-time photographer for the past 10 years. Polaroid transfers along with hand-tinted black-and-white fiber prints once served to satisfy her cravings for texture and color.

In her work today, she incorporates the digital sequel to those techniques, by combining multiple photographic layers. Recently, she began working in photo-encast, a natural fit with her already atmospheric images. Jamie shows her work at a number

of galleries in the Midwest as well as internationally. She has contributed images to multiple publications and has a growing number of book covers to her credit, working with publishers such as Random House, Harper-Collins, and Simon and Schuster.

Jamie's photographs and the works of VIVA's 24 member artists will be featured at VIVA's First Thursday reception on April 4 from 5 to 7 p.m. and will be on display throughout the month. The gallery is located at 217 South Main Street in Viroqua. For more information about this and future First Thursday events, contact the gallery at 608-637-6918 or info@vivagallery.net.

The First Thursday event will be followed by a 7 p.m. dinner next door at Rooted Spoon. Email rootedspoon@gmail.com or call 608-632-2120 for reservations. The Rooted Spoon bar will be open during the reception.



Melt floods Main Street

Floodwater blocked Main Street in Gays Mills at the bridge over the Kickapoo River on Thursday, Friday and Saturday of last week.

In Viroqua

'Fair Maps' resolution discussed

By GILLIAN POMPLUN

Vernon County Friends of Fair Maps held a forum at the American Legion Taphouse #138 in Viroqua on Tuesday, March 12. The discussion focused on the effects of gerrymandering on Wisconsin congressional elections. The event was co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters, and the Fair Maps Coalition.

Almost 25 citizens gathered to listen to Joe Heim, Professor of Political Science/Public Administration at UW-LaCrosse, and Jay Heck, Executive Director of Common Cause in Wisconsin, discuss gerrymandering and the upcoming vote on a Fair Maps resolution in Vernon County. This vote will take place in the spring election to be held on Tuesday, April 2.

The resolution Vernon County residents will vote on is:

"Should the Wisconsin Legislature create a nonpartisan procedure for preparing legislative and congressional redistricting plans?"

If the resolution passes, Vernon County will be one of seven counties where such a resolution has passed. In other counties where such a resolution has passed, it has garnered up-ward of 70 percent approval.

In all, 42 of 72 of Wisconsin's county boards have passed Fair Maps resolutions, with the Crawford County Board being the most recent.

Fair and impartial

Joe Heim told participants that he is neither a Republican nor a Democrat, and that he had been involved with redistricting issues for a long time.

"There shouldn't be two sides on this issue," Heim said. "What we need is a commonsense process that is fair and impartial."

Heim said it used to be difficult to interest citizens in the dry and complicated topic of redistricting, but that has changed.

"Our democracy has become increasingly polarized along partisan lines," Heim said. "This means that candidates have become increasingly partisan and we have seen a corresponding decrease in moderation and compromise."

Heim said that increasingly voters think that it is wrong for legislators to pick their voters, versus voters picking their legislators. He said that of the 435 legislative seats in Wisconsin,

In Richland Center

Water quality event draws a crowd

By GILLIAN POMPLUN

With water quality an increasingly top-of-mind topic for citizens in Wisconsin, a 'Richland Water Quality Forum' event drew more than 50 participants to the Lighthouse Chapel in Richland Center on Saturday, March 16. Presenters at the forum included Norlene Emerson, Professor of Geology at UW-Platteville-Richland; Scott Laeser, organic farmer and Water Program Director from Clean Wisconsin; and Melissa Luck, Richland County Board of Supervisors and member of the Richland County Land and Water Committee (RCLWC).

Additional panelists included Connie Champnoise of the Richland Stewardship Project; Kriss Marion of the Lafayette County Board and Land and Water Committee; and Forest Jahnke of the Crawford Stewardship Project.

Professor Norlene Emerson took participants through an explanation of the Karst Geology, which underlies the Driftless Area. She explained that because of its fractured nature, the geology of the area means that the groundwater is highly vulnerable to contamination from pollutants on the surface. Karst areas in Wisconsin cov-

er a horseshoe-shaped area, which runs down the east side of the state from Green Bay, across the entire southern tier of the state, and then up the west side of the state to just north of LaCrosse.

Land and Water

Supervisor Luck had just returned from the State Land and Water Convention held

in Stevens Point the week before. The event gathered county conservationists, land conservation committee members, and concerned citizens to discuss land and water issues facing the State of Wisconsin.

"The conference gathered representatives from all 72 of

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MELISSA LUCK, a Richland County Supervisor, addressed the participants at the 'Richland Water Quality Forum' held last Saturday at the Lighthouse Chapel.

Need internet

Fill out survey

University of Wisconsin-River Falls has received fewer completed internet surveys from Crawford County residents than had been expected by this date. The survey, assessing residents' current internet access, and interest in improved access, was mailed to 1,157 randomly selected residents the first week of March. The survey was commissioned by 3C Co-op (Crawford County Communications Cooperative).

"Without the overwhelming support of the public to whom this survey was mailed, we cannot make it happen," said Camille Smith, the 3C Co-op Board Treasurer. "Your opinion makes a difference! Please return your survey."

"Getting 'Fiber To The Homes' (FTTH) of Crawford County residents, farms, and businesses is a project that requires community support," Smith explained. "The 3C Co-op and the FTTH infrastructure that it is committed to building will be owned by its members in our community."

A 'reminder' postcard is being mailed this week to the survey recipients that have not yet completed the survey.

The surveys were mailed in an envelope with a label reading 'RURAL CRAWFORD COUNTY INTERNET-BROADBAND SURVEY.'

The document was printed on light blue, bi-fold paper, with an introduction on the front, followed by the three-page survey.

Survey answers important

These surveys, commissioned by 3C Co-op (Crawford County Communications Cooperative), are essential to 3C Co-op obtaining the funding needed to build the FTTH infrastructure throughout the un-served areas of the County.

"The more people that respond, the more accurate the results, and a high percentage of respondents will further strengthen our position for obtaining the required funding," 3C Chairman Jay McCloskey said.

Online survey possible

The postcard references an internet link for recipients to be able to complete the survey online. Use of this link requires the **identification number** on the barcode affixed to the last page of the paper survey. If you are not able to find the original survey, you will not be able to use this web link. However, another survey will be sent in the next couple of weeks to all survey recipients that had not yet responded.

When the survey is being mailed again, it will be announced in this newspaper. Please watch for this, complete and return the survey as soon as possible.

When UW-River Falls has received enough surveys to be able to provide a statistically accurate analysis of the results, an online survey will be available for anyone in Crawford County to complete. When that is available, we will publish the internet link.

"Fiber To The Home will be incredibly important for the children of Crawford County," according to 3C Board Secretary Serina Lindsley, who has two K-12 children. "At our home, my kids are not able to access the wonderful educational resources that are available on the internet. I'm concerned that, when they graduate from high school, they may not want to continue to live here if there still isn't high speed internet. For the sake of our children and our futures here in the county, we all need to support 3C's commitment to building the FTTH infrastructure."

Email Info@3C.Coop for information about how you can contribute to the success of this project, or call 608-735-4322 (608-735-4 3C Co-op).



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