

Sugar Grove subdivision plan moves ahead

6-2004 Chronicle
Stillwater project proposal includes a golf course

By KELLEY CASINO
Kane County Chronicle

SUGAR GROVE — A much-debated golf course community moved a step forward Tuesday during a discussion between Committee of the Whole members.

Attorney James White presented changes to the preliminary plan for the Stillwater subdivision that were made since the committee's last discussion of the project on April 6. Village President Sean Michels said some progress has been made.

The proposed Stillwater project is a 200-acre residential subdivision and golf course on Route 30, west of Municipal Drive.

The issue causing the most upset among board members remains whether to rezone the land from commercial to residential to allow for the subdivision.

Michels and Trustees Joseph Wolf and Mari Johnson, who are against the rezoning of the property, were in the minority of board members as of Tuesday night.

Johnson suggested a different location might be better, while Wolf said he was uncomfortable with age-restricted housing and the noise and light that would come from the Aurora Municipal Airport.

The issues regarding the airport also were brought up in a presentation by airport Director Bob Rieser.

"(The lights) are going to shine into the houses of Stillwater, and they're going to light up the sky," he said. "It's going to be a nuisance and a problem, and, no, they're not going to be able to be turned off."

Rieser also spoke of liability issues and problems of

birds from the golf course striking planes taking off and landing.

"It's been a controversial project, but even though a majority of the board members were in favor of changing the land use from commercial to residential, they still were not in favor of the plan and wanted to see less multifamily and more single-family residences," Michels said.

The views of the board members led to several significant changes to the plan, which include:

- Reducing the number of units from 326 to 271 — fewer multifamily and more single-family units.

- Changing the road network to accommodate additional single-family units east of Municipal Drive.

- Eliminating the park site along Municipal Drive and expanding the central park site.

- Increasing the commercial site from 2.01 to 2.68 acres.

- Reducing the library site from 4.09 to 3.65 acres.

With the changes made, a few trustees lauded the developer, The Windham Group, and land planner, Gary R. Weber Associates Inc., for their willingness to work with the board.

"With the changes that have been recommended and the adjustments that have been made, I am even more comfortable with the land use," Trustee Thomas Renk said after Trustee Kevin Geary said the developer has more than met what the board has asked of him.

A revised plan will be resubmitted to the committee for review and approval before it is recommended for viewing by the village board.

6-3-04 Chicago Tribune **St. Charles backs LaFox's efforts to incorporate**

of La Fox, is concerned. "We expect a compromise plan in the next four to six weeks,"

Under the plan, the county is divided into three north-south corridors. LaFox is in the middle section, which acknowledges growth is going to happen but not without a generous amount of open space.

The compromise plan CLAR and developers are working on "is going to come in at the middle range of what would be allowable under 2020," Frazz said. He said what is being plotted for the Settlements are each with its own distinct home designs to avoid the "big subdivision" look.

"We call this quality in creativity, which is what this is all about," he said.

La Fox, is concerned. "We expect a compromise plan in the next four to six weeks," Frazz said. "We're still negotiating the number of homes but don't want to announce it until we're done. But it is substantially less than the original [2,000 homes] planned with the county."

Density, layout and the original name chosen by developers (Wyndham Deepoint Homes and Town and Country Homes) were among the biggest sticking points with local residents, Frazz said.

"Our group has used the 2020 plan [the county's comprehensive plan] as a guide through this whole process," he added. "All the previous proposals for LaFox have ex-

League, whose powerful influence in Springfield is seen as key to gaining incorporation status. Once the issue clears Kane's approval process, it can be presented to the state, Frazz said. When that will happen is uncertain, but he is hopeful it will be soon.

With new tracks and train stations in LaFox and Elburn under construction, Metra and Union Pacific are expanding the area's commuter and freight-traffic capabilities. "This [railroad development] was to be completed in 2005 and the good weather has put it ahead of schedule, I think," Frazz said.

As far as the development, he added. "All the previous proposals for LaFox have ex-

tion since January 2003. The group's bid to incorporate died a year ago in Illinois House committee because it lacked support of other communities and was up against a heavy lobbying campaign by developers.

For the last three years, the town's 650 residents have faced the threat of being annexed into St. Charles and losing their identity as part of a proposed 1,200-acre project called Grand Prairie. St. Charles has balked at annexation because of the pressures it would put on the city's services and infrastructure.

The St. Charles City Council recently voted to support the goals of Concerned LaFox Area Residents (CLAR), an activist group representing the town's 185 households that has been striving for incorporation.

Small town seeks to control its fate

By Warren Moulds
Special to the Tribune

Hopes are running high in the tiny Kane County hamlet of LaFox that, with the recent approval of neighboring St. Charles, it will soon be able to incorporate and chart its own destiny in dealing with ambitious developers. The St. Charles City Council recently voted to support the goals of Concerned LaFox Area Residents (CLAR), an activist group representing the town's 185 households that has been striving for incorporation.

6-3-09 Chronicle

N. Aurora ponders affordable housing act

Village currently exempt from act

By ERIC SCHELKOPF
Kane County Chronicle

NORTH AURORA — The village currently is exempt from the state affordable housing act because it provides enough affordable housing.

But officials wonder whether that will change if more houses that sell for \$300,000 and up are built within its limits.

Village attorney Kevin Drendel said the village is exempt from the state's affordable housing act because at least 10 percent of its

housing units are defined as affordable, as defined by the Illinois Housing Development Authority.

The median gross income in Kane County, according to the 2000 Federal Census, is \$59,351.

That figure is the benchmark to determine what is affordable housing.

To qualify as affordable, a unit owned or rented must not cost its owner or renter more than 30 percent of his or her annual income.

To be exempt from the housing act, the village must have at least 10 percent of its housing fall below that mark.

Drendel said about 25 percent of the village's housing falls into the category of low- and moderate income.

He said the village, based on the 2000 Census, had 545 owner-

occupied houses with monthly mortgages below \$1,000, and 462 renter-occupied units with a gross rent of less than \$750 a month.

The village would comply with the minimum standards of affordable housing in the present case scenario, but we may fall below that at some point, especially as we attract more upscale housing," Drendel said.

The state has set a July 1 deadline for municipalities to adopt such plans.

Drendel said officials might want to adopt a housing plan anyway so that the village controls its own destiny.

Drendel said by the next federal census in 2010, the village might no longer be exempt.

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Housing

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"Without a plan in place, if the village becomes nonexempt, any developer that provides low-income housing would have the authority to appeal an adverse village decision to the Illinois Housing Development Authority," Drendel said.

With a plan, Drendel said the village could designate the best location for affordable housing rather than having a developer make that determination. But Trustee John Hansen said the village is filling its boundaries.

"How can they say we have to have affordable housing when there is no more land to develop?" Hansen asked.

Trustees said they wanted to see what communities such as Hinsdale and Wheaton are doing.

Most speeders caught on S-curve are not local

Police look for ways to educate Randall Road drivers

By TOM SCHUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA. — Most motorists cited for moving violations on the Randall Road S-curve, during a program of heightened enforcement do not live in the area.

With so many violators from outside the area, law enforcement officials wonder how best to get the word to people to drive within the posted speed limit.

"When they don't live in the area, how do we reach out and educate them?" Kane

County Sheriff's Capt. Rick McKinney asked.

During a sheriff's office campaign of directed enforcement on Randall Road between Dean Street and Silver Glen Road from April 28 to May 6, deputies wrote 143 tickets and 34 warnings.

Of the 177 drivers pulled over, 149 did not live in St. Charles or Elgin townships.

McKinney, on Tuesday, gave a report to members of the Public Safety Committee

about the program of traffic

enforcement on the stretch of highway near St. Charles that has drawn intense scrutiny after a high school girl was killed last fall when her car drifted across the center lane during a downpour.

McKinney said the sheriff's office did not categorize the hometowns of those ticketed, but he said they came from Batavia, Aurora, DuPage County, McHenry County, and elsewhere.

The average age of the drivers who were pulled over

was 33, and the average speed they were over the limit was 17 mph.

I found it interesting the average age of the drivers was 30 to 35. I personally would have thought it would be in the 25-year-old range," said Ken Griffin, D'Aurora.

Previous heightened enforcement efforts have yielded similar results.

During a program of directed enforcement from Jan. 23 to Feb. 2, 116 tickets and 15 warnings were issued.

See SPEEDING, page 2.

McKinney: S-curve speeders caught on S-curve are not local

The average age during the winter week of enforcement was 32, and the average speed over the limit was 14 mph.

I found it interesting the average age of the drivers was 30 to 35. I personally would have thought it would be in the 25-year-old range," said

Ken Griffin, D'Aurora.

From Jan. 1 to May 24, 2004, the sheriff's office is-

sued 685 citations and 164 warnings.

During the same period in 2003, 85 tickets were issued.

See SPEEDING, page 2.

Speeding: Number of tickets countywide declined

Continued from page 1

The speed limit was reduced earlier this year to 50 mph, down from 55 mph. The speed limit likely will be reduced to 45 mph once the median is installed. McKinney said drivers will slow down when they see a deputy running radar but will continue to speed once the officer leaves or is out of sight.

"The only time people slow down is when we're there," McKinney said. "It's the people's responsibility to slow down. This is not something we can arrest our way

out of." Although the number of traffic stops on the stretch of Randall Road is 10 times greater than in the same period last year, McKinney said the number of tickets written countywide has shown a decline.

In other words, with so much attention being paid to Randall Road, other areas of the county are not seeing such intense enforcement.

"When we're deploying in one area, that means we're not deploying in another," he said.

The Illinois State Police were scheduled to conduct the first aerial enforcement of Randall Road last week, but bad weather kept the planes grounded, he said.

The county board has authorized structural changes on Randall Road, including installing a 9-foot-wide median with 9-inch-high curbs. The county also will install traffic signals on Randall Road at Crane and Bolcum roads.

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Gorecki back after serving suspension

b-a-04 Chronicle

*Office ran smoothly
during her absence,
officials say*

By OWEN R. BRUGH
Shaw News Service

GENEVA — Kane County State's Attorney Meg Gorecki rejoined the ranks of those legally allowed to practice law Tuesday after serving a four-month suspension.

County officials and prosecutors said they hardly noticed that she was gone.

Gorecki took a four-month leave of absence Feb. 1 after her law license was suspended for violating attorney conduct rules. She is the only sitting state's attorney in Illinois history to have her license suspended.

Although the state's attorney acts mostly as an administrative chief in large counties such as Kane, the position legally requires a valid law license.

"It's been business as usual. Everyone continued to do their job while she was gone, and everyone will continue to do their job now that she is back," First Assistant State's Attorney Robert Berlin said. "As long as everybody is doing their job and things are running smoothly, the office kind of runs itself."

Gorecki's license was suspended after she violated the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct for suggesting three times on an answering machine that a friend could procure a county job for another friend by donating to Kane County Board Chairman Mike McCoy's campaign fund.



Gorecki

Gorecki

Continued from page 1

The tapes, made in 1998, surfaced during the 2000 Republican primary.

McCoy was cleared of involvement, and Gorecki was cleared of criminal charges after a federal investigation determined that the jobs-for-donations scam did not exist.

However, the Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission still found that Gorecki violated rules governing lawyers.

After the disciplinary commission issued the suspension, Gorecki tried to have it delayed until she left office. In her request for the delay, Gorecki stated that the suspension would disrupt office operations.

However, McCoy said the office appeared to run flawlessly while Gorecki was suspended.

"She was gone four months, and I don't think anyone really noticed," McCoy said. "I mean that in a good way. It's a credit to how she ran the office."

Gorecki, through an administrative assistant, declined to answer questions but sent a four-sentence statement thanking her staff for their professionalism.

"I look forward to continuing the fight against crime and helping victims seek justice," Gorecki said at the conclusion of her statement.

Employees of her office said Gorecki spent most of the day in meetings and writing the statement.

While Gorecki served the suspension, civil division chief Katherine Moran was in charge of the office. Moran also had little to say Tuesday.

"It's fine (that Gorecki is back)," Moran said. "I really have no comment."

Gorecki's statement

This is the full statement released Tuesday by Meg Gorecki upon her return to the Kane County State's Attorney's Office after a four-month law license suspension.

Gorecki declined to answer questions.

"It is with gratitude and appreciation that I offer thanks to Katherine Moran and the entire Kane County State's Attorney's Office. Their dedication and professionalism provided Kane County with the highest quality of legal services during the last four months.

"Also, I wish to thank the judiciary and Chief Judge Philip DiMarzio for their assistance in maintaining the integrity of the court system. I look forward to continuing the fight against crime and helping victims seek justice."

McCoy said he already has put the scandal behind him, and the situation did not affect his working relationship with Gorecki. The county board determines the state's attorney's budget.

The board could have declared Gorecki's elected position vacant because of the suspension, although it decided in February to allow her the leave of absence.

Voters will elect a new state's attorney in November, and the successor will take over Dec. 1. Gorecki is not running for re-election.

"When the board acted to decide there was not a vacancy, that's when the whole thing ended for me," McCoy said. "She took her four month leave, and she has six months left (in office)."



The razing of the 186-year-old county-owned building at 427 Campbell St. on Tuesday ends a nearly 10-year dispute between Kane County and the City of Geneva. *6-2-04*

Chicago Tribune

Wrecking ball puts end to Geneva property tiff

By William Presecky
Tribune staff reporter

A nearly decade-long battle between Kane County and the City of Geneva over a 186-year-old county-owned building came to an end Tuesday as the building was torn down.

About half of the decrepit, two-story building at 427 Campbell St. in the city's historic district remained by midday as demolition crews worked to the clear site, which will be used to expand the county's Child Advocacy Center. The advocacy center, operated by the county state's attorney's office, houses attorneys and staff who specialize in investigating and prosecuting sexual and severe abuse cases involving children.

The county owned the building—once a single-family home—for decades but had not used it for more than 10

'It's kind of a sad thing [the building] couldn't have been kept.'

—Merritt King, neighbor and a former Geneva alderman

ue," said Merritt King, 85, who lives near the building and watched its demolition Tuesday.

A former longtime Geneva alderman, King said he was a friend to many of the home's former inhabitants.

As he reminisced about families that once lived in the building, King photographed the remnants of several of the building's interior rooms.

"Hoddy Hunter. That was his bedroom right up there," King said.

"Once in that basement, one of the brothers used to have a chemistry lab and it exploded and caused a pretty bad fire," he said.

The Kellys were servants who lived for a time in the rear of the home," King said. "They were the first black family to live in the city. It's kind of a sad thing [the building] couldn't have been kept."

Police to go airborne to curb Randall speeding

By William Plescecky

In June staff reporter William Plescecky reported that drivers continue to flout the 30 mph speed limit in Kane County. Sheriff's Police Captain Rick Mckinney was frustrated by speeding on a deadly stretch of Randall Road, which leads the patrol division through east-central Kane County despite heavy police presence, sheriff's deputies and state police. This month will begin enforcement from the air. The county also plans to install an estimated \$800,000 in safety enhancements in the high volume area to force drivers to slow down.

Despite a major increase in the number of traffic citations issued by sheriff's deputies on Randall Road between Dean Street and Silver Glen Road,

the average age of the alleged speeders was about 34 and their average speed when stopped was 18 m.p.h. over the posted limit, said McKinney. "It basically comes down to this: It is the people's responsibility to slow down," McKinney said. "We could go up there and write tickets all day long. This is not something we can arrest our way out of."

Concern over the dangers of the S-curve intensified after a senior at St. Charles North High School was killed in November 2003. On May 24, 2003, deputies issued 85 citations in areas around Abington, Abingon's Silver Glen Road, during a month-long enforcement concentrated on the road's dangers and were issued. Of the 34 people stopped, 47 lived out of the area. During the same period this year, even after news coverage, 24 42 tickets and 12 warnings were issued. Of the 34 people stopped, 47 lived out of the area. Even in winter between Jan. 23 and Feb. 2, a combined 150 tickets and warnings were issued in the same area.

Huck

6-2-04 *Daily Herald*

Gorecki back at the helm with little fanfare

Kane County state's attorney returns after 4-month suspension of law license

Meg Gorecki

BY TONA KUNZ AND PATRICK WALDRON
Daily Herald Staff Writers

Meg Gorecki resumed control of the Kane County state's attorney's office Tuesday with little fanfare or answers about how she will serve out her term. It was a sharp contrast from the whirlwind of public criticism and judicial ethics hearings that surrounded her departure four

months ago when she became Illinois' first sitting state's attorney to have a law license suspended.

The Illinois Supreme Court in November ruled she should have her license suspended for unethical conduct after reports that she left a phone message on a friend's answering machine promising a county job in exchange for campaign contributions to Kane County Board members contacted about Gorecki's

Chairman Mike McCoy.

The exchange never took place, McCoy was connected to any wrongdoing.

Meg Gorecki

Supreme Court still ruled Gorecki's lapse in judgment hurt the public's confidence in government and needed atonement. She returned Tuesday looking rested and fit, adding fuel to speculations about where she had been, from vacations to volunteer work overseas.

"I had no contact with her in the four months since she left," said Michael Coglian, deputy assistant state's attorney. "We just basically did our jobs." Gorecki wasn't providing much more insight on her return than she offered during her suspension.

But the Supreme Court still ruled Gorecki's lapse in judgment hurt the public's confidence in government and needed atonement. She returned Tuesday looking rested and fit, adding fuel to speculations about where she had been, from vacations to volunteer work overseas.

return said they'd heard nothing from the woman whose picture once appeared in the newspaper almost weekly. She declined to talk with the media Tuesday to outline plans for the rest of her term, which ends in December.

She did resume control of the day-to-day operations of the office from Kathy Moran, who had been appointed special states attorney in her stead. But other than the thank you was "I look forward to continuing to fight against crime and helping victims seek justice." She leaves office in December and has said she will not seek a second term.

"I think the policies and pro-

GORZECKI BACK TO HER DUTIES

4-MONTH LICENSE SUSPENSION ENDS WITH NO FANFARE

Other state's attorneys can
relinquish added workload

By Nathaniel Zimmer 6-2-04
STAFF WRITER *Beacon news*

ST. CHARLES — Meg Gorecki resumed office as Kane County state's attorney on Tuesday when a four-month suspension of her law license expired, bringing an end to one of the strangest chapters in the county's political history.

Gorecki, elected the county's top prosecutor in 2000, was forced to temporarily leave her post as a result of a 1998 phone call to an acquaintance, during which she suggested that a county job could be had in exchange for campaign contributions to Kane County Board Chairman Mike McCoy. McCoy was cleared of any involvement or wrongdoing in the matter.

In a brief statement issued Monday, Gorecki singled out for thanks Katherine Moran, who served as her replacement during the suspension, and Philip DiMarzio, chief judge of the 16th Judicial Circuit Court.

"I look forward to continuing the fight against crime and helping victims seek justice," Gorecki said.

A tape of the phone call came to light in early 2000, prior to Gorecki's Republican primary election defeat of incumbent David Akemann. After Gorecki went on to narrowly defeat Elgin Democrat Robert Steffen in November of that year, the Illinois Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission charged her in 2001 with violating the state's ethics standards for lawyers.

The case eventually made its way to the Illinois Supreme Court, which issued an opinion in November calling for a four-month suspension of Gorecki's law license. The day after the suspension took effect, the Kane County Board voted not to declare Gorecki's office vacant, clearing the way for her to serve the remainder of her term after the suspension.

First Assistant State's Attorney Robert Berlin said he did not expect Gorecki's return to result in any major changes, though he said it would provide some relief to the attorneys who have had to shoulder an increased



Meg Gorecki expressed thanks to Katherine Moran who served as her replacement.

GORZECKI

From Page A1

workload as a result of her absence. "I don't think there'll be anything drastically new in the next six months," he said. "She's going to continue the policies and programs she had in place before she left."

Michael Coghlan, deputy chief of the office's civil and criminal divisions, said Gorecki's responsibilities had been distributed among eight members of the state's attorney's office.

"She had quite a workload that

we had to divide," Coghlan said. "She was involved in all aspects of the office."

Nevertheless, once Gorecki's suspension began, Coghlan said, he did not have any contact with the county's first female state's attorney.

"I did not talk to her during that period," he said.

McCoy said the state's attorney's office appeared to run smoothly during Gorecki's absence and that he expected it would continue to do so.

"It seems to me from where I sit that the office ran fine when she was gone," he said.

♦ Turn to GORECKI, A2

There's hope for St. Charles youth center

BY SARA HOOKER
Daily Herald Staff Writer

SPRINGFIELD — Despite Gov. Rod Blagojevich's early insistence on closing the St. Charles youth center, the facility is funded in his proposed budget that passed out of the Senate just before midnight Monday. A Blagojevich spokeswoman

said the center has Senate President Emil Jones Jr. to thank for its inclusion, because the Chicago Democrat went to bat for it during budget negotiations. Jones argued closing the center would only harm kids if they were sent downstate or to adult facilities.

Budget plan includes facility, despite earlier call to close it

President Jones feels very strongly that the center provides vital services to kids who are trying to turn their lives around," said Cindy Davidsmeyer, Jones' spokeswoman. "To close the center would have basically put them in a variety of adult facilities,

both the Blagojevich-Jones budget and the House's backup budget that would allow the state to continue operating the center's labor union, was pleased lawmakers recognized the facility's importance. "We're just very happy that

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and that's not a good environment," Davidsmeyer said. The support for keeping St. Charles open had less to do with money and more to do with not wanting to take a facility out of an area where it is needed.

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The youth center is funded in

workers have fought for their facilities since Blagojevich singled them out for closure in January to address the state's \$2 billion budget deficit.

Jan Bradley, president of the center's labor union, was pleased lawmakers recognized the facility's importance. "We're just very happy that

See CENTER on PAGE 11

Center: Inclusion does not guarantee survival

Continued from Page 1

St. Charles' inclusion in the budget plans does not guarantee it will remain open, as lawmakers and the governor have been unable to compromise on a final budget. Having already blown past a midnight May 31 constitutional deadline, lawmakers left Springfield Tuesday but were told they could be called back at any minute if an agreement is reached.

"Basically, I think everybody's holding their breath still, but I have faith that they'll work it out, and we'll be in the budget," Bradley said.

Maple Park residents back their mayor, chief

6-2-04 *Beacon News*

By Brian Shields
Special to the Beacon News

MAPLE PARK — The meeting room where the Village Board sits once a month was filled to capacity Tuesday night, with many people standing and a line heading out the door.

The reason was simple: Many of the almost 100 people who showed up came in support of Village President Mark Delaney and Police Chief Chester Morris, who were connected in different ways to a state attorney general gambling probe of a local bar.

Delaney and eight others have been charged with conspiracy to commit gambling after the Illinois State Police raided DJ's Tavern West, 221 Main St., on Friday night. Morris was questioned by state police but was not charged.

Delaney said after the meeting he could not comment on the allegations and had yet to talk to an attorney about them. He had to play the part of a referee earlier in the evening, when various residents wanted more answers about the gambling raid and clapped loudly when others gave testimonials about Delaney or Morris.

The board was poised to consider a motion to ask the state police to either take over temporary patrol duties in the town or to ask troopers to recommend another solution. But it was tabled, and Delaney said there was no concrete plan to put it back on a future agenda.

Presumably, out-of-town officers would be needed only in the event Morris or his sole police officer, Charles Slater, could not do the job. And Morris said after the meeting the pair isn't planning on going anywhere.

"I do a lot for and with the people of this community," said Morris, who thanked the community for supporting himself and the police department so strongly. "I think everything is going to work out fine for the village of Maple Park, and I'm going to be here with my officer trying to work within the community."

Morris said he and Slater were asked by the state police to be interviewed, but were not arrested. The chief maintained that a proper investigation by the state would include police officials being questioned.

The attorney general's office erroneously said Friday Morris had been criminally charged, but corrected itself Saturday. Though the office said further charges could come from its year-long investigation, there is no word on who is considered a target.

Since the meeting with police, Morris has given a letter to each of the three establishments in town which serve alcohol, including DJ's, asking them to comply with the state law against gambling.

"I have personally talked to all three owners, and gave them the letters to sign," Morris said. "This is the only warning. If they're caught gambling, then they're done."

Speeding tickets soar tenfold along Randall Road s-curve

BY PATRICK WALDRON

Daily Herald Staff Writer

he Kane County Sheriff's Office deputies have issued nearly 10 times the number of speeding tickets to Randall Road drivers during the first five months of 2004 compared to the same period a year ago. But despite the increased patrols along Randall Road between Silver Glen Road and Dean Street in St. Charles Township, speeding remains a problem, with the average person ticketed going 17 mph

over the speed limit.

"This is not something we can arrest our way out of," said sheriff's Capt. Rick McKinney. "The only time people slow down is when we are there."

The stepped up enforcement — which later this month will include aerial patrols with the Illinois State Police — dates back to late last year when county board members and township residents called for safety improvements along the so-called Randall Road s-curve. Those calls were prompted by the November 2003 traffic death

of St. Charles North High School senior Samantha Jocs. In the months after that crash, the county has lowered the speed limit along the stretch, approved the construction of a center median and increased patrols.

A summary of the patrol results was presented to the county board's public safety committee Thursday, and it showed that speed hasn't slowed. During a coordinated patrol

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See TICKETS on PAGE 11

Tickets: Locals driving slower

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and ticket all day long."

The good news is that most local drivers appear to be slowing down, McKinney said. During the two most recent major patrols, the percentage of local drivers ticketed dropped considerably, McKinney said.

But drivers from outside St. Charles and Elgin townships make up most of the violators.

From a countywide perspective, the sheriff's office's number of total tickets issued so far this year has remained consistent compared to previous years and the increase in tickets given along Randall Road illustrates how calls for stepped up enforcement there have been met, McKinney said.

carried out between April 28 and May 6, deputies stopped 149 drivers and issued tickets to 143 of them. The average violation came in at 17 mph over the speed limit with the offenders an average age of 33.

Overall between Jan. 1 and May 24, during 849 total stops along the stretch of Randall Road, the office issued 685 tickets and 165 warnings. By comparison, only 85 tickets were issued along that stretch during the same time last year. "The law enforcement has been intense," McKinney said. "But it comes down to this: It's the people's responsibility to slow down. We can go out there said.

6-2-04 Beacon news

State invites input on area transportation

YORKVILLE — As an outgrowth of the Prairie Parkway proposal, the Illinois Department of Transportation is seeking public input on transportation improvements in northeastern Illinois.

The state has scheduled public workshops for 3 to 5 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m. June 16 at the Beecher Community Center at 908 Game Farm Road in Yorkville to obtain suggestions on ways to upgrade the area's transportation system.

DOT plans to define a wide range of potential alternatives, such as widening existing routes, new arterial streets and new freeways and transit improvements. This effort follows the recent release of a summary on the purpose and need for a Prairie Parkway preliminary engineering study.

The Prairie Parkway is a proposed highway linking Interstate 88 in central Kane County with Interstate 80 near Minooka in Grundy County. During the workshops, the public can offer suggestions for alternative

transportation improvements that were projected in the state's Transportation System Performance Report, released in March.

The Prairie Parkway preliminary engineering study identified a number of existing and projected transportation deficiencies in Kendall County and portions of Kane, DeKalb, Grundy, LaSalle and Will counties.

"IDOT is committed to evaluating transportation solutions by working with the public to develop, build and maintain cost-effective transportation facilities that fit into and reflect the project's surroundings," said John Kos, IDOT District 3 engineer.

After the workshops, IDOT will compile the alternatives and evaluate them based on how well they address the purpose and need of the study. The alternatives will then be evaluated based on meeting additional criteria and a final list of alternatives will be drafted.

The entire Transportation System Performance Report is available for viewing at www.prairie-parkway.com.

6-2-04 Chicago Tribune

current congregation, not to recruit new members. He also argued the fee was not properly calculated because churches are not included in any category the county uses, and the county had to compare it to a business.

The impact fee, designed to make developers pay for the increased traffic a project causes, went into effect April 1. The church's appeal was the first heard by the committee.

Dwyer also argued the county was violating the Constitution's equal protection and due process protections. After the hearing, he said it's not fair for public schools to be exempt from the fee when private or parochial schools have to pay it. The church operates a preschool, he said.

Bob Frederickson, project manager for the church, said church leaders are expected to discuss whether to appeal the decision. The church has 14 days to appeal to the Kane County Board. If the church is again denied, it can ask a circuit judge to review the decision.

Victoria A.F. Cameron

KANE COUNTY Church traffic fee of \$34,000 upheld

The Kane County Transportation Committee has unanimously upheld a traffic impact fee the county wants to impose on a growing church in LaFox.

Timothy Dwyer, an attorney representing the Lord of Life Church at Illinois Highway 38 and LaFox Road, said the \$34,000 fee upheld last week was not appropriate because the church is expanding to accommodate its

6-2-04 Beacon
news

Get to know me

I want to take the time to thank all those who contributed to the Wyatt for Mayor fund-raiser on May 26 at Murphy's. It was another success.

Any time we can meet and mix with regional business leaders, local business leaders, political leaders, city workers and citizens of Aurora, our campaign moves forward.

As The Beacon News had just released its findings on the People's Platform, the conversation was centered on issues of importance to us all: crime and safety, current budget problems and their impact on city services, taxes, and infrastructure needs for the future.

The point is: Campaign fund-raisers are much more than opportunities to raise money. They are, and should be, opportunities to meet and discuss the issues that drive our city.

The best campaigns are about people, not money.

Please visit our Web site: www.billwyatt.net to set up a meeting so we may discuss the issues that most concern you, the citizens of Aurora.

Bill Wyatt

Aurora Mayoral candidate

6-2-04 Chicago Tribune

Gorecki back on the job in Kane

Kane County State's Atty. Meg Gorecki returned to work Tuesday unannounced and without fanfare after serving a four-month suspension of her law license for professional misconduct.

The court-ordered suspension that kept her from practicing law expired at midnight Monday. It began Feb. 1.

The state Supreme Court ordered Gorecki's suspension because of an incident of unethical conduct in 1998, when she suggested falsely to a friend that a county official could be bribed in exchange for a county job.

HOW TO CONTACT US

Maple Park residents show support for Delaney

By PAUL ROCK
Kane County Chronicle

MAPLE PARK — Four days after their village president was arrested in a gambling sting at a local bar, many residents gave him their support at Tuesday's village board meeting.

"I want to see you stay where you're at," resident Brian Tefft told Village President Mark Delaney, who was charged Friday night with conspiracy to commit gambling.

More than 60 people packed the village hall for the meeting.

Delaney, D.J.'s Tavern owner David Weeks and seven employees were arrested in a gambling raid at the popular bar.

Village trustees met in executive session for about 30 minutes Tuesday to discuss several actions in response to the arrests, including asking for temporary assistance from the Illinois State Police and placing some employees on administrative leave with compensation.

But both of those proposals were voted down by trustees, Trustee Dan Humme said.

"If the board doesn't want to pursue it, we won't," said Humme, who had placed the two items on the agenda Sunday. "It's a dead issue."

Police Chief Chester Morris said the proposal did not bother him. He was arrested Friday but was not charged.

See MAPLE PARK, page 2

6-20-94 Chronicle

Maple Park

Continued from page 1

"I'm not bothered about anything," Morris said. "Why should I be?"

Delaney said he still supports Morris and does not plan to resign from his post despite the felony charge, which carries a penalty of up to five years in prison. Delaney said he has received several calls from family members, friends and Maple Park residents since the arrest.

"I'd like to thank all the people who supported me," he said.

Tefft said the gambling raid, headed by Attorney General Lisa Madigan, Illinois State Police and the Illinois Department of Revenue, was much ado about nothing.

"They came in here like the gestapo and bust people for nothing," Tefft said. "It's chump

change. I think everything will ride out, and it'll be all right."

Resident Kathy Curtis said people should reserve their judgment about the arrests.

"I think Friday's actions should not be considered without the facts," Curtis said. "Let's not hastily make assumptions about the patrons of that bar."

Several trustees also showed support for Delaney.

"I don't think our mayor is a criminal," Trustee Nick Moisa said. "I think he's doing a great job for the community."

"It's an extremely sad situation," added Trustee Terry Borg. "I'm sure many of you feel the same way."

Morris said he believes that Delaney and the town will recover from Friday's incident.

"I think everything will work out fine," Morris said. "This town is going to pull together. Everything will work out for the village of Maple Park."

Kane will notify those who missed tax break

Thousands to get second chance

By William Presecky
Tribune staff reporter

Taxpayers who neglected to return a homestead exemption application sent by the county must be reminded of the oversight by postcard within the next few weeks, the Kane County Executive Committee ordered.

Thousands of Kane County homeowners who may be eligible for a property tax break but missed it this year were given a chance Thursday to recoup the loss.

Taxpayers who neglected to return a homestead exemption application sent by the county must be reminded of the oversight by postcard within the next few weeks, the Kane County Executive Committee ordered.

Thousands of Kane County homeowners who may be eligible for a property tax break but missed it this year were given a chance Thursday to recoup the loss.

State law allows an eligible homeowner who missed getting the tax exemption to apply with the county assessment office for a certificate of error. State law allows an eligible homeowner who missed getting the tax exemption to apply with the county assessment office for a certificate of error.

Four County Board members said committee member Rob McConaughay (R-Geneva), who called for the notices to be mailed, "Let's do it and see what response we get," said McConaughay. Committee member Karen McConaughay (R-St. Charles) said many taxpayers who would qualify failed to return the application and who did not receive the exemption, however, included County Board Chairman Mike McCoy (R-Aurora) and at least

four County Board members that were being managed or leased.

Taxpayers can claim only one homestead exemption, on their primary residence. "A high percentage [who failed to return the application] would not qualify," Huber said. Taxpayers who would qualify applications to taxpayers but only about 92,000 were completed and returned. Huber attributed much of the decline to ineligibility for homestead exemption.

Since tax bills were mailed May 14, Huber said her office has received and processed more than 2,000 certificates of error.

A refund may be issued or the amount of the tax break can be deducted from the second installment of the tax bill.

Since tax bills were mailed May 14, Huber said her office has received and processed more than 2,000 certificates of error.

News

The Beacon News Thursday, June 17, 2004 A5

3-04 Beacon News County set for Lake Run project KE THE GRADE

By Steve Lord

STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — The Kane County Board is set to approve spending \$763,000 for the Lake Run Habitat Restoration Project on Aurora's far West Side.

The project will improve water quality, create more flood storage area and improve habitat along the Lake Run through the Aurora West Forest Preserve, county officials said.

It will repair streambank erosion and use bioengineering techniques for the habitat repair. The Aurora West Forest Preserve is part of a green area be-

tween Aurora and Sugar Grove which are governmental units went about creating after the flood of 1996 in the Blackberry Creek watershed.

For the Lake Run project, half of the cost will be paid for by an Illinois Environmental Protection Agency grant, awarded in March.

Kane County and the Kane County Forest Preserve will split the rest of the cost.

The County Board is expected

to approve the arrangement June 8.

The Aurora West Forest Preserve

is part of a green area be-



KE NIGHT OUT



Hit-and-run driver gets 30 months

6-3-04 Chronicle

Deputy: Wise went to McDonald's, called friends after hitting Karsch

Elgin man will serve 15 months

By PAUL ROCK
Kane County Chronicle

WHEATON — Moments after striking Fox Valley eccentric Sebastian Karsch with his Chevrolet Blazer on the night of Nov. 11, 2003, Matthew Wise went to McDonald's for french fries and a drink.

Wise checked the damage before getting back into his sport utility vehicle and driving away, and returned to the scene 20 minutes later. But in part because he did not call authorities to report the accident, a DuPage County judge sentenced him Wednesday to 30 months in prison.

Karsch, who was 70, died from injuries to his head, chest and neck later that night.

Wise, 25, of Elgin, will serve 15 months.

During testimony at the hearing, a DuPage County Sheriff's deputy said Wise drove to the nearby McDonald's on Route 59, called some friends and ordered some food. By the time he returned to the scene of the accident, emergency crews already had arrived.

"It is particularly aggravating that the defendant stopped, got out of the car, drove away and made calls," Judge Michael Burke said. "I don't know if anything would have saved Mr. Karsch, but it might have helped. I find the defendant's actions showed a conscious

disregard for the life of Mr. Karsch."

Wise could have received probation or up to 12 years in prison. Prosecutors recommended a four-year sentence.

In April, Wise pleaded guilty to aggravated driving after his sport utility vehicle struck a bicycle and trailer being ridden by Karsch, a St. Charles junk collector. The collision occurred on Route 64 near West Chicago.

Wise's blood-alcohol content measured .126, according to the DuPage County Sheriff's Office, above the Illinois legal limit of .08.

Burke said the case was unusual because the collision occurred on a narrow stretch of Route 64 in which the shoulder was only 18 inches wide, and Wise did not appear to be speeding or driving erratically.

The junk that filled Karsch's bicycle trailer, which was designed to carry two children with a maximum weight of 100 pounds and according to police testimony likely was more than that, further complicated the sentence.

See WISE, page 2



Wise

Wise

Continued from page 1

Karsch was something of a local celebrity for his frequent run-ins with the law for gathering trash, junk vehicles and other items on properties that he owned in St. Charles and Batavia.

Karsch's ex-wife, Elfriede Karsch, of Geneva, said her ex-husband's junk-collecting expeditions usually were in service of his art as a sculptor and environmentalist.

"Collecting was a lifelong thing for him," Elfriede Karsch said. "He would collect metals because that was one way he could make some money. He looked for anything that was valuable. He would see a piece of wood and say, 'That would make a good sculpture.' But a lot of the time he didn't take the time or make the time to follow through. A lot of artists are like that, dreamers to an extent."

The two met in November 1953, the day after Sebastian

Karsch arrived in America from Germany. They married in 1956, after he served two years in the Naval Reserves.

Karsch's widow divorced him in 1995 after a lengthy separation, but she continued to keep in touch with him, and he always was willing to help her out with household projects.

"Sebastian was what I would call a mechanical genius," Elfriede Karsch said during a victim impact statement. "There were very few household items he could not fix. I rarely had to call a serviceman for anything because he was certainly a Mr. Fix-It."

Elfriede Karsch said the sentence that Burke gave Wise was fair.

"A person's dead, and you can't resurrect him no matter how long the sentence is," she said. "We believe it was a fair way to do it."

And she said Wise, a paint store manager who had a clean criminal record before the drunken driving charges, will learn a valuable lesson from the incident.

"He's still young," Elfriede Karsch said. "You can't erase this, and he's going to have the memory of this for the rest of his life. Hopefully, that will guide him during his incarceration."



Karsch

Committee: Onyx application OK

Batavia City Council to consider waste transfer station on June 7

By DAN CHANZIT
Kane County Chronicle

BATAVIA — Onyx Waste Service meets the legal requirements to operate a waste transfer station in Batavia, a city committee agreed Wednesday.

The city's Pollution Control Facility Committee voted 6-1 in favor of the recommendation, which is expected to be considered June 7 by the city council.

The nonbinding vote does not mean the city will approve Onyx's application. It means the company's application meets all of the legal requirements.

The recommendation stipulates a host of conditions under which the it will keep odors, litter pests and rodent

to comment on why she voted against the recommendation. "It will give Onyx the incentive to run a clean show," she said. Among the most demanding of the conditions, Onyx must ensure that the city is considering the application to build a station to haul away garbage because Settler's Hill landfill in Geneva is slated to close in 2006. Onyx wants to build a 34,800-square-foot transitor station at 766 Hunter Drive. It will be a destination for garbage trucks six days a week because it will keep odors, litter pests and rodent

station, must operate. Those conditions were developed in part after a series of public hearings attended by residents, business owners and city officials.

First Ward Alderman Jodie Wollmle said, "This puts some real teeth into a major concern," said Alf Ward, Alderman James Volk, the committee's

See ONYX, page 2

Onyx

Continued from page 1

The station would collect about 1,000 tons of garbage a day, Onyx officials said. The city would collect about \$500,000 in annual fees.

The city optioned a property on the city's northwest side in June 2000 so it could build a transfer station to deal with garbage. The city formed a citizen's advisory committee to consider the options.

In June 2002, Onyx asked the city to drop plans to build its own station and allow Onyx to operate a site in exchange for user fees. The operation would be outlined by a formal host agreement.

In December 2003, Mayor Jeff Schieke appointed the seven-member Pollution Control Facilities Commission to make findings and recommendations to the full city council.

The process included public hearings and an opportunity for residents and business owners to submit written comments.

Wade Weinzil, vice president of Aldi Inc., said his company is very concerned about traffic safety, litter, odors and rodents. Aldi's corporate headquarters are in the industrial park near the proposed transfer station.

"Aldi has experienced large

Conditional approval

The Pollution Control Facility Committee agreed Wednesday that Onyx Waste Services meets the legal requirements to operate a waste transfer station in Batavia. The committee made its recommendation contingent upon several conditions, some of which came from concerns expressed by residents and business owners during public hearings.

Among the conditions:

- The site must have an odor-containing system. If the system does not work, the city has the right to hire an engineer to fix the problem at Onyx's expense.

- Onyx must patrol Kirk Road from Fabyan Parkway to Butterfield Road for litter on a quarterly basis or when requested by the city.

- Onyx must provide pest control at least once every two weeks or as requested by the city.

- All waste materials must be discharged inside the building.

- Transfer vehicles must be covered, and covers must be in good repair.

- The transfer station's building must have a concrete floor, which must be kept in good repair to prevent seepage.

- The concrete floor must be swept every night with a street sweeper.

are concerned litter and offensive odors will find their way onto Fermilab.

"Fermilab plays host to thousands of visiting scientists, students and dignitaries every year," Brown wrote. "Residential housing units are also located throughout the laboratory campus, including grounds rodent-free," Weinzil wrote. "We demand that the city council vote no to the proposed Onyx Waste Transfer Station."

Gerald Brown, associate

director for operations supervisor for Fermilab National Accelerator Laboratory in Batavia, urged the city to consider odors and rodents.

The research laboratory's

"downwind" of the transfer station, and Fermi officials

Thousands to receive tax exemption notices

6-3-04 Chronicle

Five county board members to get notices

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Kane County will send notices to more than 20,000 property owners whose property tax homestead exemptions did not show up on this year's tax bills.

Five of those who will receive the notices are members of the county board, including chairman Mike McCoy.

"You're going to get a letter or post card saying you may have the right to a homestead exemption, here's how to check and here's how to rectify it," McCoy said.

McCoy, Jack Cook, R-Elgin, Jan Carlson, R-Elburn, Robert McConaughay, R-Geneva, and Gerald Jones, D-Aurora, are five of some 27,000 property owners who were granted the standard

\$3,500 homestead exemption last year but had it removed from their tax bills this year.

The exemption was removed during a county computer system change.

The exemption reduces a property's assessed valuation by \$3,500. The amount reduced on an individual's tax bill varies according to the value of the home, but it could save the average taxpayer from \$250 to \$300, McConaughay said.

See EXEMPTION, page 2

Exemption

Continued from page 1

Typically, homeowners apply for the exemption once, and it is applied to every annual tax bill. Only owner-occupied properties are eligible.

Supervisor of Assessments Sallie Huber said she purged her records because of a computer system change and because of a number of property owners who were claiming more than one exemption.

Last year she sent notices to 122,000 property owners requiring them to re-apply for the exemption. She said she received about 90,000 applications in return.

She speculated that many

property owners simply ignored the notices. However, she believes that most of the 27,000 are property owners who were claiming exemptions on more than one property.

"Many ended up being people who were managing residential properties for income," Huber said.

Although property owners must pay the amount listed on the first installment of their tax bills, they can apply for a certificate of error and the amount of the second installment will be reduced.

"We want to send notification to those 27,000 people," McCoy said.

The homestead exemption shows up at the bottom of the tax bill.

Kane may oppose Plainfield hospital

■ Demographics:

Chairman McCoy says County Board must support Aurora facilities

By Steve Lord

STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — The Kane County Board will vote on a resolution next week opposing building of a new hospital in Will County. Board members will vote on the resolution pushed by Chairman Mike McCoy, R-Aurora, to oppose the new, 146-bed hospital and three-story medical office facility proposed by Naperville's Edward Hospital for 60 acres in Plainfield.

McCoy Wednesday said Kane County should protect the market already served by Aurora's two hospitals, Rush-Copley Medical Center and Provena Mercy Center.

"The intent of this is to protect our Aurora hospitals," McCoy told the board's Executive Committee. "This hurts them."

Edward Hospital proposed the new hospital near 127th Street and Van Dyke Road in Plainfield, saying the area needs new beds in addition to those Rush-Copley and Provena Mercy provide. The state's Health Facilities Planning Board, however, turned down Edward's application in April.

Still, the board gave Edward a chance to come back in June, and the Aurora hospitals have been rallying opposition to Edward's proposal.

Some of that opposition includes State Rep. Linda Chapala-Via, D-Aurora, the city of Aurora, the Aurora Economic Development Commission and DuPage County Board Chairman Robert Schillerstrom. The DuPage County Board as a whole has taken no stand on the issue.

"So we're not alone in this," McCoy said.

When Rush-Copley first located its new hospital on the southwestern edge of Aurora, it looked also to serve portions of Kendall and Will counties. At one time, Rush-Copley had a plan for a hospital more in the DuPage County section of Aurora, which Edward opposed. That plan, too, was turned down by the Health Facilities Planning Board.

"Kane County Board officials said this is a matter of demographics. Hospitals survive on a mixture of patients who are fully insured, uninsured and any mixture in between. Without the Will and Kendall demographics, the Aurora hospitals might not get enough fully insured patients," McCoy said.

"Copley moved to the very edge of our community to serve this area (Will and Kendall)," said board member Gerry Jones, D-Aurora, chairman of the board's Public Health Committee. "Copley had made a financial investment in the area."

6-3-04
Daily Herald

representative of only about 50 square miles, or a circle with a radius of four miles. That hardly encompasses all of downtown Elgin. The Sierra Club rightly concluded that downtown Elgin doesn't represent all of Kane County. The tremendous growth of population deserves more representation. The additional monitoring stations would give the county baseline data from which to measure future change. Illinois intends to build several coal-fired power plants downstate, which will emit particulate and mercury, and this baseline data would provide information about how these plants are affecting the county's air quality. I hope this plan goes forward because the citizens of the county deserve the best information they can get about the quality of the air they breathe every day.

According to the article, a single monitoring station is rep-

resentative of only about 50 square miles, or a circle with a radius of four miles. That hardly encompasses all of downtown Elgin. The Sierra Club rightly concluded that downtown Elgin doesn't represent all of Kane County. The tremendous growth of population deserves more representation. The additional monitoring stations would give the county baseline data from which to measure future change. Illinois intends to build several coal-fired power plants downstate, which will emit particulate and mercury, and this baseline data would provide information about how these plants are affecting the county's air quality. I hope this plan goes forward because the citizens of the county deserve the best information they can get about the quality of the air they breathe every day.

Mary Fran Twain
Aurora

6-3-04 Daily Herald Law's change puts power in village president's vote

BY AMES BOYKIN

Daily Herald Staff Writer

Sugar Grove's village president will be more than just the tiebreaker for future items the plan commission rejects.

Village President Sean Michels said the change in village law made this week will give him a say in future developments — something he says people elected him to do.

The previous ordinance required a majority of four trustees for a decision on items that village planners opposed. Under the change, Michels' vote would count and a majority of five would be needed.

The change was prompted by the Stillwater residential and commercial development proposed for 200 acres south of Route 30 and west of Municipal Drive. The plan commission

rejected the project last February, but the proposed golf course community is moving forward. It still requires the board's final approval.

Michels opposes the project because he believes the property should stay commercial, not be rezoned for homes. Two other trustees oppose Stillwater.

"If I were to vote, then there would not be five members in favor of it," Michels said. "Therefore, we'd be able to defeat the change in the land use."

But Michels won't use his new power on the Stillwater project because he feels it would be unfair since a majority of trustees wanted to see the area rezoned to residential.

Trustee Kevin M. Geary was

the lone dissenter, saying he

didn't see a need to change the law. Trustee Marie Williams was absent.

▼▼▼▼▼▼▼▼▼▼

6-24 Daily Herald Kane board opposes hospital's expansion

BY TONA KUNZ

Daily Herald Staff Writer

Edward Hospital's proposed expansion into Plainfield is drawing fire from Kane County officials, who say Kane hospitals will pick up an even greater burden of caring for uninsured patients.

Kane County Board members Wednesday voiced their opposition to the Naperville hospital's plans to build a 146-bed hospital in Plainfield. The Illinois Health Facilities Planning Board is expected to rule on the plan

Chairman Mike McCoy said Edward's expansion would eat into the market area of Rush-Copley Hospital in south Aurora and Provena Mercy Hospital on the edge of North Aurora. It would take many of the insurance-carrying customers in the south and leave the Aurora hospitals with the uninsured patients.

McCoy said, "Right now our hospitals take a high proportion of uninsured in our area, and, therefore, they are on a financial razor's edge,"

said board member Gerald

Jones, a Democrat from Aurora.

Dwindling revenues could

force the Kane County hospitals to offer fewer services, officials said.

DuPage County Board Chairman Robert Schillerstrom, a board member at Rush-Copley Medical Center in Aurora, echoed that sentiment during public hearings on the expansion last year. He wrote in a letter to state officials that the

Edward Plainfield Hospital would drive up health care costs in the region. "The growth in this region is pretty unprecedented," he said. "Everyone will continue to grow."

"To make a claim that it is their market is absolutely not accurate," he said.

The area the new hospital would serve — parts of Plainfield, Yorkville, Oswego, Minooka, Romeoville, Bolingbrook and Naperville — accounts for 3 percent of Mercy's in-patient discharges and 8.5 percent of Copley's, Davis said.

Davis said,

"Everyone will continue to grow even with the new Plainfield hospital."

6-3-04 Chronicle
**Judge proposes closing
Old Kirk Road crossing**

***Township vows
to fight closing***

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — A year after the Illinois Commerce Commission ruled to keep open the railroad crossing at Old Kirk Road, a hearing officer wants the ICC to close it.

An administrative law judge's proposed order dated May 26 calls for the commission to close the at-grade crossing despite the protests of Geneva Township officials.

"I'm absolutely shocked," Geneva Township Road Commissioner John Carlson. "The facts didn't seem to justify a switch in the judge's ruling."

If the commission orders the crossing closed, it could mean as many as 100 employees of eight businesses off Old Kirk would have to enter Route 38 at a nonsignaled intersection.

Last month, the ICC ruled against a Union Pacific Railroad petition to close Brundige and Pouley roads in Blackberry Township.

ICC spokeswoman Beth Bosch said the five-member

commission will meet in July, when it is expected to consider the judge's ruling.

The employees now are able to drive south across the tracks to Cherry Lane, where there is signal at Kirk Road, Carlson said.

Kane County board member Robert McConaughay, R-Geneva, said the Forest Preserve Commission voted last year in support of keeping Old Kirk open.

The issue is important for the district because of the Kane County Cougars games at Elfstrom Stadium at Kirk Road and Cherry Lane. The games often draw 10,000 fans.

The railroad argued in its testimony that the Old Kirk crossing is redundant because of the Kirk Road bridge over the tracks 600 feet to the west.

The forest preserve wants to keep Old Kirk Road open because of the possibility of the Kirk bridge being closed.

"There's no other way to get out of there," McConaughay said.

Bosch said the commission does not have to follow the judge's proposed order.

However, if it does, Carlson and township Supervisor Patrick Jaeger said they would appeal.

"We could be forced into circuit court," Carlson said.

6-3-04 Beacon news

Officials want Homestead Exemption notices sent

■ Reminders to residents:

Board officials said expense is worth reminding taxpayers

By Steve Lord

STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — County Board officials want to make sure all property owners entitled to the homestead exemption know about it.

Members of the Executive Committee Wednesday, including board Chairman Mike McCoy, R-Aurora, told Supervisor of Assessments Sallie Huber to send out 27,000 cards to all property taxpayers who did not take the homestead exemption.

It does not matter that Huber believes most of those 27,000 are not entitled to the exemption, which is for single-family, owner-occupied properties.

"I think they have to be notified," said board member Robert McConaughay, R-Geneva. "I don't think we can rely on the newspapers."

The concern of the board members is that some taxpayers have slipped through the cracks of a quadrennial reassessment of properties and a purging of the computer system of duplicate properties, both done in this year's tax cycle.

The result could be that many homeowners did not get their homestead exemption because, if they were accidentally purged, they would have had to reapply for it, McConaughay said.

The homestead exemption is available to all single-family homeowners. It is \$3,500 taken off the assessed value of the home, which is applied to the tax rate for taxing purposes.

Huber said she purged the system of duplicates, old properties which have changed hands and situations where people own five properties and were taking the homestead exemption on all five properties. That would be improper, because the property must be owner-occupied, and the owner of multiple properties can only live in one of those properties.

Huber said she suspects a large percentage of the 27,000 that have not taken the exemption are rental properties.

She said last year, she had 112,000 homestead exemptions on file, and this year, there are about 92,000 on file. Huber said the printing and mailing of notecards could cost as much as \$8,000, and the cost would be much higher to handle any processing of new exemptions the reminders would bring in.

If she sent out full exemption applications, it could cost as much as \$54,000, she said.

Still, board members said it would better to be safe and send out the reminder cards. Karen McConaughay, R-St. Charles, pointed out that homeowners are only supposed to have to apply for the exemption once, so, if they were accidentally purged, they would not likely have noticed it.

McCoy said the cards should tell taxpayers of the situation, tell them where to look on their tax bill to find the exemption and what to do if they do not have it. There also is information on the exemption on the county's Web site, www.co.kane.il.us/.

6-3-04
Chronicle



Bill
Page

Cuffing the competition

Last week, agents from the Illinois State Police, the attorney general's office and the Illinois Department of Revenue raided a small bar in Maple Park, arrested nine people and seized a number of video gambling machines.

The raid, carried out with all the flair of an "Untouchables" episode, has shocked and surprised a lot of area residents who apparently thought this sort of thing didn't go on in the rural reaches of our bucolic, picture-postcard county. Guess again.

If there's any surprise to last Friday's raid it's that anybody bothered. Gambling in small town bars is no great secret, and not necessarily frowned on by the residents. For as long as I can remember, the local tavern was the place you went to if you wanted a "square" for the Bear's game, or for the Friday night poker and pinochle games. Now, many are home to the same type of video poker and video slot machines seized in Maple Park.

The machines are legal as long as they are just played for "entertainment," but are illegal if there is a cash payout made to winners. I'm going to go out on a limb here, but I seriously doubt many people would feed dollar after dollar into a video poker machine just to be "entertained." My guess is the folks who play the machines at roadhouses in the country do it for the same reason their city cousins go to the casinos: They want to gamble. The raid on Maple Park points up both the commonness of the desire to gamble, and the state's schizophrenic approach to that desire.

The same model machines as those carted off as contraband last Friday can be found in any of our casinos. There they are perfectly legal, and the state of Illinois encourages you to shove dollar after hard earned dollar into their gaping metallic maws. Of course they would, seeing as how they get a bite out of every cent you spend in a casino. Officials say the money from the machines in Maple Park wasn't being shared with our fearless leaders, and that oversight is part of what spurred the state into action.

Indeed, the Department of Revenue made it very clear that was one of the reasons behind the raid in Maple Park. A statement they released read in part, "We will not tolerate this tax evasion." Notice it didn't say, "We won't tolerate gambling in Illinois," because of course, we do. No, the raid had nothing to do with the morals or dangers of gambling, but everything to do with who gets a cut of the action.

Illinois long ago gave up any moral high ground on gambling when it opened the doors to casinos. The state sees gambling not as something inherently damaging, but as just another way to make a buck. Raids like last Friday's aren't designed to end gambling; just shift it from unregulated taverns to the casinos where the state gets their slice.

The way I see it, the state is acting the same way a gang boss acts when he finds out there's someone running a card game or bookie operation on his turf without his permission. Both want to get rid of the competition, and the only difference is one uses cement overshoes, the other uses handcuffs.

This Sunday, dozens of area law enforcement officers will be participating in the Torch Run for Special Olympics. Throughout the state, similar runs will be held, all part of the single biggest fund-raising event to benefit this important organization.

This is the last event of the year before the start of the Special Olympics Summer Games on June 11 at Illinois State University in Normal.

This year the organizers are offering one of the best caps I've seen for only a \$10 donation; \$15 gets you a colorful, comfortable T-shirt. To order, call St. Charles Police Cmdr. Dave Jannusch at (630) 377-4435. And come on out Sunday morning and cheer the runners.

• Bill Page lives in St. Charles and writes about local issues on Tuesday and Thursday. Calls and e-mails answered at (630) 584-0809 or wpage@mediawerks.org.

6-3-04 Daily Herald

Panel recommends Batavia waste station

BY GALA M. PIERCE
Daily Herald Staff Writer

After reviewing hundreds of pages of testimony and public comment, Batavia officials agreed that Onyx met all the criteria to operate a waste transfer station.

The full city council will consider the pollution control facilities committee's vote of 7 to 6, a nonbinding recommendation made Wednesday, at Monday's 7:30 p.m. meeting.

City councilwoman Nancy Vance pointed out that the committee was given the task to determine whether the Milwaukee-based company satisfied all nine criteria set forth by the Illinois Environmental Protection

Agency in its application.

"It's not an issue whether or not we want the transfer station in Batavia," she said.

About 20 residents attended the meeting. That number dwindled to 11 by the end of the 2½-hour meeting.

The city's independent review team placed 36 conditions on Onyx, stipulating it could not process more than a 1,000 tons a day; the trucks and trailers must follow a direct route to I-88 after dropping off garbage; and contract services must be in place for hazardous materials and pest control.

Jodie Wollnik was the only city council member who did not

See WASTE on PAGE 15

Waste: Residents not appeased

Continued from Page 1

feel Onyx met the burden of proof to operate such a facility. Acting as a watchdog for residents, she imposed some of her own conditions, one of which would permit the city to review the effectiveness of odor control.

"This puts some real teeth in one of the major concerns heard during the public comment period," committee chairman Jim Volk said of her suggestion.

On Dec. 19, Onyx filed an application to approve a siting permit for a station at 766 Hunter Drive near Hubbard Avenue, in the industrial park. Such a facility would temporary store and consolidate garbage before it's taken to landfills farther away.

Batavia resident Anthony Cvek had initial concerns, especially of the traffic issues. However, he thought city officials kept the best interests of residents in mind while deliberating.

Carolyn Miller and Steven Lowe, both east-side residents, were not appeased by the conditions.

Yvonne Dinwiddie felt the city made up its mind even before forming the residents advisory group, which she participated in from 2001 to 2002.

"I really think it was a bunch of lies and false pretenses, and I don't appreciate being used," she said.

6-3-04 Beacon News

Kane County transfers grant to Visiting Nurses Association

the Visiting Nurses Association.

The \$300,000 was granted from the county's riverboat fund to the city for the GAR Memorial Hall renovation project. But with that project dead, the city said it would not oppose the county transferring the money to the VNA for part of its \$7.25 million project to find a new site and build a new Aurora facility, which would include its medical clinic for uninsured and underserved clients.

County Board Chairman Mike McCoy, R-Aurora, pointed out that McCoy said.

Aurora agrees:

Money that once was earmarked for the GAR Hall will go to nurses

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Kane County will transfer a \$300,000 grant originally intended for the city of Aurora to

the VNA medical clinic handles about half of the 36,000 encounters medical clinics in the county have with low-income clients.

"So they really are by far the largest health care provider for the uninsured and uninsured in the county," McCoy said.

The money will go toward the VNA's 40,000 square-foot building, VNA officials do not have a site for the new building, and are unsure where they will put it. The new building would consolidate all VNA operations, said Linnea

Windel, VNA president and chief executive officer. "The need is very great, as you can see," Windel told the committee. "Our space needs are very great."

Before 1995, all VNA services were headquartered in one site. But with Aurora's growth, the number of home care programs increased, and VNA officials needed to find a second site to house them. The new building would hold the Home Health, Hospice, Community Health and

Windel, VNA president and chief executive officer. "The need is very great, as you can see," Windel told the committee. "Our space needs are very great."

When the project began about a year ago, VNA officials were looking for a new downtown Aurora site. But with Aunt Martha's health clinic taking over a new location downtown, about a block from the current VNA clinic, VNA officials have said they will look for a building somewhere else in or near the main service area of Aurora's East Side.

Board is all ears about loud noise complaints

6-3-04 Daily Herald
By TONA KUNZ Herald
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Blaring boom boxes, revving ATVs and cruising cars have made Kane County loud, and some say less livable.

Noise complaints from all corners of the county have officials thinking maybe it's time to re-tune rules on how the county measures and controls noise.

"Noise is an issue with almost every complaint we get," said Kane County Board member Lee Barrett, a Republican from East Dundee.

Lately, Barrett has been getting an earful from residents complaining about noise near a skate park near Tyrrell Road on the edge of Gilberts.

"Music went on until about 11 p.m. Their windows would vibrate," said Robert Sandner, an assistant state's attorney who investigated complaints.

"And the next morning there was litter. It's mostly beer cans and soda bottles and fast-food wrappers."

Sandner said it also was nearly impossible to get a family car through the nearby street let alone an emergency vehicle.

Just about every board member has a noisy problem in their area.

For Barbara Wojnicki, a Republican from Campton Township, it's homeowners with three to five acres perfect for impromptu all-terrain vehicle racing.

"They are on their own property, but they are really, really noisy, and people are calling me complaining," she said.

Suggestions of how to tailor rules to fix problems specific to certain areas drew complaints and a fear of lawsuits Wednesday during the county's executive committee meeting. But the talk did generate a consensus that it's time to find an all-encompassing solution.

"Just look at the existing laws we have on the books and see what we can do to improve them," Wojnicki suggested.

Currently, the county can ticket residents for nuisance violations for noise heard more than 100 feet away.

Other communities have similar ordinances of varying distances or focus on sound decibel levels.

Construction of animal control facility could begin this year

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — County officials will seek bids on its \$1.3 million animal control building by the end of the month.

The animal shelter project has moved slowly through channels as officials searched for a site, but now it appears that construction could begin this summer.

Animal control Director Joseph Busch told members of the county's Public Safety Committee on Tuesday that he should receive construction documents from the architect on June 15.

"I think our entire project is going together very well," Busch said.

A building's construction documents are what contractors use to submit their bids.

Busch said the budget for the building was set at \$1.3 million, but the cost could go up or down. "We don't really know what it will cost until we get the bids," he said.

The county plans to build on 40 acres it owns on the southwest corner of Peck and Keslinger roads.

Setting on the site was not easy. Some county board members argued that the facility should be built on the north end of the county because Elgin made a preliminary offer to supply the land in return for animal control services. Elgin and county officials could not reach an agreement, and so the county settled on the Peck Road site.

"I just hope we don't have any more delays on this project," said Dorothy Sanchez, D-Aurora.

Geneva is buying a portion of the land to construct a drinking water treatment plant.

As part of its agreement with the county, the city has agreed to annex the property and supply it with utilities.

The city's treatment plant project is scheduled to go before the plan commission on June 10.

"We'll go out for bid at the end of the month, then it's a matter of getting approval from the county board," Busch said.

Busch proposed a new facility four years ago. Currently, the office is run out of an old house behind the government center on Route 31. Three years ago, the county board increased tag fees for cats and dogs to help pay for the shelter.

You might be entitled to tax refund

BY TONA KUNZ
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Doing the right thing doesn't have a price tag when it comes to politics and taxes.

Even when faced with five-figure bill, Kane County Board executive committee members refused to back down from demands Wednesday to personally notify taxpayers who may have overpaid.

"Obviously, that is money. It means a lot to people," said board member Jim Mitchell, a Republican from North Aurora. He said numerous people have called to complain of a missing \$3,500-homestead exemption on their June tax bill.

The discount is worth more than a few pennies. For example, a taxpayer with a \$250,000 home in St. Charles saves \$233 on his tax bill with the exemption.

Board members Wednesday demanded the county assessor come up with a postcard by next week for the board's approval that would explain to people that their exemption may have been dropped and how to fix it. The postcard likely wouldn't go in the mail until July 1. Taxpayers would have a September deadline to return it and get a refund.

Sallie Huber, the county's chief supervisor of assessments, said sending a mailing and processing responses from the 27,000 people dropped from the exemption list would cost \$58,000. She doubted that many of those people would even qualify for a refund because it's not their main residence or is rental property.

Board members said they are willing to take that chance, especially because five of the 27 members had the exemption dropped on their main homes.

Officials also scoffed at how much it would cost to fix the mix-up since printing and stamps would cost only \$8,000.

"I think the overall cost is grossly exaggerated," said board Chairman Mike McCoy.

The tax bill mix-up came when the county tried to weed out people claiming the exemption on multiple properties.

6-3-04 Daily Herald

Sugar Grove plans for its future water needs

BY AMES BOYKIN
Daily Herald Staff Writer

and a hunt for a new water source are among the recommendations in a study by Engineering Enterprises Inc. As it tries to accommodate a population overflow, Sugar Grove is studying the best way to boost its water capacity. With estimates showing Sugar Grove will see its population balloon from about 8,000 to more than 60,000 by 2030, village officials are studying what will need to be done to keep the water flowing.

New water storage tanks, the majority of the water

improvements in phases over the next few decades and it will rely heavily on developers — through impact fees — to fund improvements. Village President

Sean Michels said.

Currently, Sugar Grove has nearly 1 million gallons of water in storage. By 2030, the town will need to store an additional 10.6 million gallons.

With one new deep well in

place and another new well set to be online this summer, the town already has moved toward serving its burgeoning community.

Now that the village has a

final draft of the study, staff

"So, we're ahead of the curve

right now," Trustee Kevin M.

Geary said. "We've identified

recommendations as they try to

prioritize projects," Michels said.

in the future, which gives us some time to do some engineering," Sean Michels said. Engineering Enterprises Inc. released this week. The price tag for what engineers have proposed the village have by 2030 totals \$23.8 million.

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Sean Michels said. "Currently, Sugar Grove officials had some time to do some engineering," Sean Michels said. Engineering Enterprises Inc. released this week. The price tag for what engineers have proposed the village have by 2030 totals \$23.8 million.

The first move will be to work with the developer of the Settler's Ridge project to build an elevated water storage tank for its residents, Michels said. Kimball Hill Flornes' development would include housing, offices and a supermarket on nearly 1,300 acres south of Route 56 and east of Route 47. It could add as many as 6,000 residents. The \$3 million tank would hold 2 million gallons of water, according to the study. Engineering Enterprises is calling for the village to diversify its water sources.

Sugar Grove officials had thought they would rely more on deep water wells, which would require removing radium. Engineers are recommending also incorporating more shallow wells. Iron has to be removed from shallow well water.

Village officials this week also discussed offering a financial incentive to residents using their own well water that would encourage them to connect to the village's system.

30-month sentence in Karsch crash

6-3-04
Daily Herald

BY CHRISTY GUTOWSKI

Daily Herald Legal Affairs Writer

Growing up in war-torn Germany, Sebastian Karsch often gathered metal scraps for cash and ate tree bark to survive.

Those humble habits stayed with the eccentric St. Charles man, killed on a bustling street while riding a bicycle and hauling a trailer overloaded with discarded goods he had collected.



Sebastian Karsch



Matthew Wise

Wise was sentenced to 30 months in prison on aggravated DUI charges for the Nov. 11, 2003, fatal crash near West Chicago. The judge rejected the defense's plea for probation.

Wise declined to make a statement before sentencing. The 25-year-old Elgin man faced probation or one to 12 years in prison.

His lawyer, Bob Kleeman, argued Wise had led a law-abiding, productive life worthy of leniency. Prosecutor Helen Kapas sought a four-year prison term to deter others from driving drunk.

Although some questioned whether the crash was avoidable, DuPage Circuit Judge Michael Burke told Wise his decision to drive under the influence of alcohol caused Karsch's death.

He chastised the defendant for leaving the crash scene, instead waiting at a nearby fast-food restaurant for a friend while eating fries and sipping on a soda, before returning 20 minutes later.

"I don't know if anything would have saved Mr. Karsch," Burke said. "But, I find the

See DRUNK on PAGE 15

Drunk: Family had hoped to hear apology

Continued from Page 1

defendant's actions in leaving the scene to be a conscious disregard for his "well-being."

Karsch died of traumatic injuries after being struck at 8:36 p.m. while biking along North Avenue west of Prince Crossing near West Chicago.

At first, Wise faced only misdemeanor drunken driving charges. Prosecutors later upgraded the charges to felony aggravated DUI after they said tests showed he had a .126 blood-alcohol level — above the legal threshold of .08 — while the eldest of his three children, Erick, died in a head-on collision near Dwight the day after Christmas 1985. They said he was never recovered from the occupation as a sculptor/engraver/die maker which in that period of time was all manually executed.

The area in Europe that he came from was known worldwide for the skilled craftsmen they produced and the fact that skills were handed down from generation to generation, thus producing top-notch craftsmen in the jewelry industry.

After the sentencing hearing, Karsch's ex-wife, Elfiende, and son, Roland, said they supported a prison sentence. Each said they were disappointed Wise hadn't apologized.

The night of the fatal crash was particularly foggy, officials said, and Karsch biked on the road because there wasn't a shoulder. His bike's trailer hid some reflectors and there wasn't an indication that Wise had been speeding or driving recklessly.

Karsch often collected boxcar loads of discarded goods. His penchant for junk sparked legal battles because of large piles of it on his properties. He lost his St. Charles home, and new charges were brought against good behavior.

him for the junk piling up around his property off Route 25 in Batavia.

His family, though, described in court a man who overcame a childhood of adversity and grew into an accomplished craftsman, war veteran, artist and loving father.

As a child in Germany, he buried his mother and a young brother after a bomb hit their home near Pforzheim. He emigrated to the United States in November 1953 with hopes of a better life.

His family remembered that Karsch was devastated when the eldest of his three children, Erick, died in a head-on collision near Dwight the day after Christmas 1985. They said he was never recovered from the tragedy.

Anyone who knew my father knew that he was tough and had survived many illnesses and setbacks, his daughter, Michelle Byman, said.

"I'm sure he had every expectation of living many more years."

After the sentencing hearing, Karsch's ex-wife, Elfiende, and son, Roland, said they supported a prison sentence. Each said they were disappointed Wise hadn't apologized.

Wise's family, though, said he is very remorseful. Tearful family members said, "We love you," as sheriff's deputies led him off to jail.

Wise likely will serve half of

Ex-wife tells of an extraordinary life lost

Editor's note: This is an edited transcript of Elfiende Karsch's court statement about the death of her ex-husband, Sebastian, killed Nov. 11, 2003, by a drunk-en driver.

I feel that his death is a loss in the Navy and performed many services for those around him. He volunteered to perform with the underwater demolition team to search for mines that were still floating loose in the Pacific after WWII and putting his life in jeopardy until those mines were disengaged, and donated the money that was earned with each dive to family members of Navy personnel who had not survived.

I met Sebastian as a very young man on the second day of his arrival in the United States in November 1953. He was hired in Germany by a jewelry-making firm in Indianapolis, Ind., to work for them and one of the few applicants that qualified to perform the extremely difficult and skilled occupation as a sculptor/engraver/die maker which in that period of time was all manually executed.

The area in Europe that he came from was known worldwide for the skilled craftsmen they produced and the fact that skills were handed down from generation to generation, thus producing top-notch craftsmen in the jewelry industry.

I became friendly with Sebastian, finding him a great conversationalist, extremely intelligent and widely experienced in his chosen line of occupation and was much impressed by him — so much so that we became engaged in October 1954.

Not only did Sebastian serve in the Tri-Cities and to read up on as many art books as he could. He was an avid reader. His thirst for knowledge was insatiable, and his love of art and enthusiasm in this field was never-ending.

Our plans of marriage were interrupted by "Uncle Sam" who had sent him a draft notice to serve in the U.S. military and for two years. He willingly served his time with the challenges of life.

I feel that his death is a loss in his service to the community in seeing that our young children grow up responsibly. At Sebastian's funeral, they were many, many friends who expressed their grief and memories of how he helped their children to grow up.

Sebastian certainly tried to live by the Golden Rule, which is "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

I have come to the conclusion that the defendant did not consider living the Golden Rule and chose to, instead, "be cool" by drinking and driving.

Even though Sebastian's

family has suffered greatly, not only by his death, but also had to face financial burdens as a result of this senseless accident, we find that the only things left of him are memories.

I wish and pray that God

should not punish the defendant in the way that he took the life of Sebastian, but rather let him bear the thought and memory which will haunt him every day the rest of his life of that event he was cause of and that he took a human life — that which is so precious and cannot be replaced ever.

Orchard Road between Indian Trail and Prairie Street, as lane closures and changes will be a common occurrence during the widening project. Motorists should use alternate routes whenever possible, both for their convenience and to help contractors during construction. Avoiding the area will help us complete this complicated job on time.

Large trucks will be using the area frequently, so the bike path along the east side of Orchard Road will be closed to pedestrians.

Be careful in construction
Please use extreme caution while traveling

and bicyclists until June 2005, when the project is expected to be completed. Parents, please tell your children to avoid this area. The best way to access the Gilman Trail will be at the Prairie Street entrance west of Orchard Road.

On another note, on Jan. 5 of this year, Frank Miller of Aurora was honored in a ceremony at the Orchard Road Bridge for his efforts in initializing the entire Orchard Road project. Mr. Miller saw the need and potential

of the Orchard Road Corridor. His vision led to what we see today: a beautiful pedestrian bridge that links the Gilman Trail to the west, and an underpass that allows 60 trains per day to pass through without impacting motorists.

As you enjoy the Gilman Trail, look for the monument on the east side of the pedestrian bridge which recognizes Mr. Miller and his efforts. While Mr. Miller left the board in 1992, the fruits of his labor live on every day at the Orchard Road Bridge, and for that we are very thankful.

Bill Wyatt
District 5 Representative, Kane County Board
Whitney Peters
5th Ward Alderman, City of Aurora

6-9-04 Beacon news

Groups want to know how C'ville spends taxes

Residents say roads need repairs

By BRIAN SLUPSKI
Shaw News Service

CARPENTERSVILLE — Michael Williams can tell you where every pothole is on Elm Avenue.

Like many streets in Carpentersville, Elm is crumbling. Williams' father built a home on the street 57 years ago, and few improvements have occurred since then.

"When am I going to get some curb and gutters?"

Calgary Penn, president of Citizens for Fiscal Reform, said the village receives about \$65,000 a month, but streets have fallen into disrepair. Penn said as much as \$4.2 million in motor fuel tax money has accumulated in village accounts. Worse, hundreds of thousands of dollars in motor fuel tax money is unaccounted for, he added.

The criticism regarding the motor fuel tax money is the latest in an ongoing struggle by Carpentersville officials to keep track of taxpayer money. "If it was used, it was not reported to the state," Penn said, adding that the Illinois Department of Transportation has been contacted and plans to conduct an audit this summer.

Penn said Carpentersville fuel tax fund.

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Committee vote favors waste-transfer station

By Jan Ramming
SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

BATAVIA — After one vote of support this week, the City Council is expected to make a final decision Monday on siting of a proposed waste-transfer station.

The city's Pollution Facility Control Committee voted this week in favor of Onyx Waste Services' proposed waste-transfer station, where garbage would be compacted before being shipped to other landfills. The Onyx site is 766 Hunter Drive on Batavia's east side.

The committee's 6-1 vote came after an intensive review of nine criteria established by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. The criteria relate directly to health and safety issues, as well as the facility's compatibility with the surrounding area.

In its deliberations, the committee considered whether Onyx submitted enough evidence to satisfy each of the requirements.

"This has been a long process, and it's far from over," said Alderman Jim Volk, 4th Ward.

A total of 27 conditions were recommended by city staff and approved. The conditions placed on Onyx include mandatory tarping on all waste collection/delivery vehicles, an odor neutralizing system within the facility building and litter patrol of the surrounding area and along Kirk Road.

Pest-control inspections will take place every two weeks, and analytical testing will be required on any substance unintentionally leaching from the facility. A fence, to be at least 8 feet high, will surround the facility, and the exposed property will be landscaped and maintained by Onyx.

All vehicles will enter the facility at the western-most facility entrance at Hubbard Avenue.

Loaded transfer trailers leaving the facility will only be allowed to exit the facility westbound on Hubbard to Kirk Road, then south on Kirk Road to Interstate 88 at the Farnsworth interchange in Aurora. Fines of \$1,000 per occurrence will be issued by the city for any waste vehicles in violation of the predetermined routes to and from the facility.

Onyx originally proposed the Batavia waste-transfer station site after the county announced the closing of Settlers Hill landfill by December, 2006.

A siting ordinance was developed by the city, and a Citizens Advisory Committee formed to study the issue for six months. The citizens committee issued a report in May 2002 outlining conditions under which a waste-transfer station would be acceptable in Batavia.

Onyx filed an application with the city for a waste-transfer station on December 19, 2003.

Public hearings were held during April this year. Public comment was taken for a one month period from April 16 until May 17.

Monday, the full council will review the committee's findings and cast the final vote at the City Council meeting at 7 p.m. at City Hall.

Although no public comment was allowed at Wednesday night's meeting, several frustrated residents were in attendance.

"I'm very concerned about 1,000 tons of garbage coming into Batavia, most of it coming from outside our community, and some of it could be inadvertent hazardous or toxic waste," said resident Carol Barrett.

"Most people, by the time they realized what was going on, found out that it was too late for their input," said resident Kris Voreis.

"We don't want it," said Nancy Kreis, an east side Batavia resident. "Nobody wants a dump in their back yard."

6-4-04 Daily Herald

Suburbs focus on hunger war

By AMES BOYKIN
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Suburban legislators, church leaders, business executives, volunteers and others sat together at one table Thursday on National Hunger Awareness Day to discuss ways to feed the hungry.

The problem of hunger drew about 300 people together for the Northern Illinois Food Banks One Big Table luncheon event held at locations in DuPage, Kane, Kankakee, Lake, Will and Winnebago counties. They all had one thing in common, Northern Illinois Food Bank board president Sheila Davidson said.

"We want to be part of the war on hunger," she said.

America's Second Harvest, Northern Illinois Food Banks' national affiliate, held similar events nationwide Thursday to help more than 34 million Americans — including 13 million children — who go to bed hungry.

In northern Illinois, one in 12 people live with hunger. The food bank serves 168,000 in the Chicago area every month.

At each event in northern Illinois, people ate a bag lunch and discussed ways to end

hunger.

In Kane County, about 50 people talked about what causes people to need help putting food on the table. Fire and police officials from St. Charles, Elgin, Geneva, Batavia and others transported donated food to the farm bureau.

Watching workers load a truck with green barrels and boxes stuffed with food donations outside the Kane County Farm Bureau in St. Charles, tarist singing "Lean on Me."

Once inside, attendees heard from state Rep. John J. Millner of Carol Stream. Millner first volunteered with the food bank about 10 years ago when he joined his daughter for a service project, and has helped out since that time.

Sue Ericson of Northern Illinois Food Bank said the event Thursday aimed to get people aware of the problem in their own communities and rally them to want to help.

A proposal before lawmakers in Washington would offer more tax incentives for restaurants and manufacturers to donate food to the needy, said Robin Collier, of the Chicago branch of America's Second Harvest.



JOE BAYER/DAILY HERALD
Assistant Aurora Fire Chief Hal Carlson helped bring food donations Thursday to the Kane County Farm Bureau in St. Charles.

Sugar Grove moves Stillwater along despite airport cautions

By **Erin Erickson**
SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

SUGAR GROVE — Despite concerns from airport officials, village trustees this week accepted changes to a proposed housing development along Route 30.

The Stillwater development is proposed for the southwest corner of Municipal Drive and Route 30. The revised plan calls for 221 single-family homes, 50 age-restricted vil-

las, about 10 acres of commercial developments and a golf course. Some townhomes were eliminated, and commercial areas were increased.

Aurora Municipal Airport Director Bob Kieser was on hand at a Committee of the Whole meeting to give a presentation on how the development is not what he described as a "compatible land use," citing airport runway lights as a major concern.

"It's going to be a nuisance and a

problem; and no, they can't be turned off," said Kieser.

He also mentioned the current noise problems and situations where the increased bird populations would be a safety hazard for the aircraft.

James White, an attorney for the developers of Stillwater, responded that the airport was capable of shielding the lighting.

Trustee Thomas Rank addressed the concerns, as well, by stating that

many communities have built golf courses next to airports. He also was concerned about the existing neighborhood directly to the east of the proposed Stillwater.

"These residents deserve to have compatible developments next to the existing neighborhood," Rank said, adding that three major industrial users have looked at the property and chosen to build elsewhere.

Trustee Kevin Geary was also in favor of the project. "I think it cre-

ates a nice backdrop for what we envision farther west," he said.

Opinions were split among the trustees. Trustee Mari Johnson said she feels Sugar Grove could find a better location for the development and that Municipal Drive would make a nice western boundary.

Trustee Joseph Wolf is also opposed, as he feels commercial developments would be more appropriate because it would provide jobs.

"I want to protect the zoning and

tax base for the residents of the village," he said, adding that he doesn't feel Sugar Grove needs a golf course, and the proposed library site is too small for any future expansion needs.

Village Administrator Brent Eichleberger reminded the board that they were only voting on the changes made to the plan.

"The changes that have been made," he said, "are a better project."

Driver gets two years in hit-run death of bicyclist

6-4-04

By **Dan Rozek**
CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

WHEATON — A drunken driver who sped off after fatally striking a 70-year-old man riding his bicycle along a busy, six-lane DuPage County highway last November has been sentenced to 2 1/2 years in prison.

Matthew Wise, 25, of Elgin, faced up to 12 years behind bars for the Nov. 11, 2003, crash that killed Sebastian Karsch, a well-known local eccentric who for years baited Kane County officials trying to clean up the mounds of junk he stored in and around his home near St. Charles.

Karsch's ex-wife and son said they were satisfied with the prison term imposed on Wise, who was taken into custody immediately after the hearing. He is expected to serve about a year behind bars.

"We were all raised that when you do something wrong, you get punished," said Elfiende Karsch, the victim's former wife. Tests showed Wise's blood alcohol level after the 8:20 p.m. crash was 0.126 percent — above the 0.08 legal limit.

Before imposing the prison term, DuPage County Judge Michael Burke chastised Wise for stopping only briefly after the crash on North Avenue, then driving to a nearby fast-food restaurant. There, prosecutors said, Wise called a friend and asked him to drive by the crash site.

Wise ate french fries and drank a beverage while he waited at the restaurant, authorities said, then returned to the scene about 20 minutes after the crash and surrendered to authorities. Those actions, Burke said, "showed a conscious disregard for the well-being of Mr. Karsch."

A German-born refugee who came to the United States after World War II, Karsch was a familiar sight in the western suburbs, frequently riding his bicycle at night along heavily traveled roads in all types of weather, despite police warnings that his behavior was dangerous.

He often collected junk from the roadside during the trips, carrying it in a trailer like the one he was towing behind his bike when he was killed. Trying to force Karsch to clean up the debris on his property on Route 31 north of St. Charles, Kane County authorities fought a decade-long legal battle that ended with Karsch's home being demolished in 2002 after a judge declared it unsound.

Wise's attorney sought probation in the hit-run death, noting that Wise, a paint store manager with no criminal record, pleaded guilty earlier this year to felony aggravated drunken driving.

"Mr. Wise stood up here and admitted his responsibility," attorney Robert Kleeman said. "There's no question Mr. Wise made some horrible choices back in November 2003."

6-4-04 Daily Herald

Traffic mess forecast for Randall corridor

By TOM O'KONOWITZ
Daily Herald Staff Writer

If you think traffic on Randall Road through Elgin is annoying now, just picture how much worse it could be within the next few years after some 12,000 planned houses are built in the far-west area.

Not a pretty image, huh?

If major improvements aren't made to the system of roads around Elgin's expanding western end before all the houses arrive, you could find yourself stuck at stoplights for nearly 10 minutes at some Randall intersections, according to a transportation study commissioned by the city and Kane County officials.

"Even when you make the improvements... you're still going to have problems on Randall where you have to wait more than one cycle" at stoplights, said Heidi Files, planning and programming manager for the Kane County Department of Transportation.

Files has been working with other county, city and state officials to examine just how much of an impact 12,000 new houses expected to be built west of Randall Road will have on traffic flow.

The impact will be sizable, she said, because just one additional household creates about 10 extra trips a day. Given that, the study found that by 2020, Randall's intersections with Highland Avenue, near Route 20 and at Bowers Road, all will get falling grades because of their inability to keep traffic moving.

And Kane County's 2030 transportation study predicts "extreme congestion" for most of the major roadways in Elgin.

No definitive solution to the potential traffic mess has been identified, but Kane County and Elgin officials have pledged to continue working with each other and surrounding towns to pursue projects that will help keep cars moving.

Files says the key will be adding "collector roads" that can pick up some of the extra vehicles expected to come with all the new houses and keep the main roads from being overloaded.

"Without a collector road system, you're going to have some serious congestion problems," she said.

Tom Armstrong, Elgin's principal planner, said another key will be requiring developers to put in through streets that link to each other rather than a bunch of cul-de-sacs, which traditionally have contributed to traffic problems.

"The bottom line is we need to stop developing like we have been for 30 years and start building connected streets," Armstrong said. "We're the victim of our own desires."

But Armstrong did say Elgin's traffic system is better connected than those in some towns that face much worse traffic futures. The study indicates that Gilberts, Sugar Grove and Aurora are among the municipalities that will face the most new congestion by 2030.

Elgin City Manager David Dorgan says the city will continue looking for ways to ease congestion stemming from west of Randall.

"It's a pretty high priority," Dorgan said. "There will be more and more traffic on Randall, but I think as we grow we will add more roads to help keep things going."

Most important, he said, will be adding more north-south roads, including a major corridor between Randall and Route 47. He also said signal changes at the Route 20 intersections with Plank and Nesler roads should help, and that new roads will all be built with a focus on linking the entire system.

The county's 2030 transportation plan wish list suggests other options to solve traffic woes. No money has been set aside for them — and they may never be built — but Files said they could help.

They include extending Corron Road to Route 72, realigning Route 20 near Pingree Grove, widening Randall to six lanes through Elgin, widening Route 20 to six lanes from the county's eastern edge to Coombs Road, widening the Northwest Tollway to eight lanes from the eastern county line to Route 31 and widening it to six lanes from McLean Boulevard west.

"There are so many people who need food. We don't think about it, but it's true."

State Rep. John Millner

64 Beacon news

Drive aims to fill food bank

Emergency vehicles parade to collect foodstuffs for the event



PHOTOS BY DONNELL COLLINS / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Police and fire departments from throughout Kane County drop off parcels of food for the Northern Illinois Food Bank at the Kane County Farm Bureau in St. Charles Thursday.

Aurora Fire Department Assistant Chief Hal Carlson unloads a firetruck filled with food. Several police and fire departments were part of a parade-promoting food donations.



By Nathaniel Zinman
STAFF WRITER

SOUTH ELGIN — Firetrucks, ambulances and police cruisers rolled with their lights blazing into the parking lot of the Kane County Farm Bureau on Thursday.

And while the vehicles weren't bearing their usual cargo, their drivers were doing something in character: trying to help those in need.

As the parade came to a halt, officers and firefighters from around Kane County helped upload thousands of cans of food intended for the poor and hungry.

The event, part of National Hunger Awareness Day, was organized by the St. Charles-based Northern Illinois Food Bank, which distributes food donated by corporations, individuals and community groups to an estimated 168,000 people each month in 18 northern Illinois counties.

In Kane County, the food bank sends soup kitchens and social-service providers about a million pounds of food each year.

"There are so many people who need food," said state Rep. John Millner, whose district includes portions of South Elgin and St. Charles. "We don't think about it, but it's true."

Not for the first time, the Carol Stream Republican made use of his commercial driver's license to pilot an NIFB 18-wheeler — although this time he was heading up a procession, rather than delivering food throughout the region, as he used to do while a member of the Elmhurst police department.

Like others present for the event, he emphasized that the food bank's beneficiaries include "a wide range of people," many of whom are employed but find it difficult to make ends meet.

Nearly half those served by the NIFB are children, according to the organization, which operates out of a 147,000-square-foot facility.

"In the land of plenty, that should not be allowed," said Sheila Davidson, president of the food bank's board.

But while children are among those in need, they also can help feed the hungry.

About two-thirds of the 3,000 or so cans of food the Elgin Fire Department delivered Thursday came from a food drive held at Clinton Elementary School in South Elgin, according to Fire Chief Mike Falese.

The school was thrilled the department was able to transport the food, which filled a reserve ambulance, while fire officials were really happy to accept the donation, Falese said.

By the time all 19 police and fire departments had deposited their respective hauls Thursday, Carpentersville Fire Chief John Schudt was pretty pleased as well.

"I know by far this is more than we had at

million pounds of food, in twice the amount it handled years ago.

Much of that comes from manufacturers, such as

Foods Inc.

Howard Wurster, who ConAgra's warehouse on the eastern United States monitors the company's stocks and donates to the when supplies outstrip de

FOOD

From Page A1

this time last year," he said, gazing down at pallets stacked high with canned goods.

The increase is in keeping with the organization's growing distribution levels. Last year, the NIFB passed out in excess of 15

♦ Turn to FOOD, A2

6-4-04 Daily Herald

North Aurora masseuse pressing village for permit

BY JOHN JOHNSTON
Daily Herald Correspondent

USA Arlette's hands have been tied over her plan to open a massage business in her North Aurora home. Now she's appealing the village board to let her work.

Arlette has been denied a permit from the village but she contends she meets the massage therapist ordinance's requirements. Arlette communicated several times with village administrators and other staff members and was informed in a May 12 memo that the staff had rejected her application. The memo encouraged Arlette to take her request to the village board, which she did last week.

"I would not be here or as persistent as I have been if I did not believe I was within the ordinance," Arlette said. Arlette said she has been married for 10 years. She said she would run the business out of her house and estimates she would have fewer than five clients per week. "I think it will help take people out of a hectic atmosphere," Arlette said. "It's a relaxing surrounding."

The village's staff said in its

memo that Arlette had neither only one of five requirements reached the minimum, or 100 hours of class time required by class time. She admits she does not meet that requirement, but says there is another requirement that says therapists must be active or certified within a professional organization with standards similar to the American Massage

Association says that therapists meet a requires that therapists meet.

Arlette said her training has reached a level that allows her to practice, which meets that requirement. Trustee Mark Herring said, "I'm not supposed to be on." Arlette said she has 225 hours of class time and that by the time the ordinance can be approved she should have over 300 hours. She said she is finished with and has CPR training. Trustees asked her to present message classes and needs only

her request at their next committee meeting of the whole meeting Monday night.

"I really believe this is the path to find supplementary courses in topics such as nutrition and graduate.

Trustee Mark Herring said, "I'm not supposed to be on," Arlette said.

If the village grants Arlette a permit, she faces a zoning question regarding whether her home can be used for her business.

Trustees asked her to present

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Food bank donations fill fire engines

By DANNY CHANZI
Kane County Chronicle

Kane firefighters, police collected for Northern Illinois Food Bank

By DANNY CHANZI
Kane County Chronicle

To help

Page 4

ST. CHARLES — Genaro Elizalde broke a sweat as he piled boxes of Corn Flakes, tubes of Pringles and cans of stewed tomatoes. "It's really amazing," said Elizalde, warehouse supervisor for the Northern Illinois Food Bank in St. Charles. He started down a row of pallets piled high with nonperishable food.

"This is twice as much as we collected last year. Maybe more," he said.

"I'm an old truck driver," he said. The food was collected in area places to donate or to volunteer.

Local fire and police departments drove their donations to the Kane County Farm Bureau in St. Charles. There, they formed a procession led by a semi-truck driven by state Rep. John Miller, R-Carol Stream. "It is

"still have my CDL," Miller said, stepping out of the truck.

"I'm an old truck driver," he said.

Firetrucks, ambulances and

squad cars formed a line, and

fire bank workers emptied food from each.

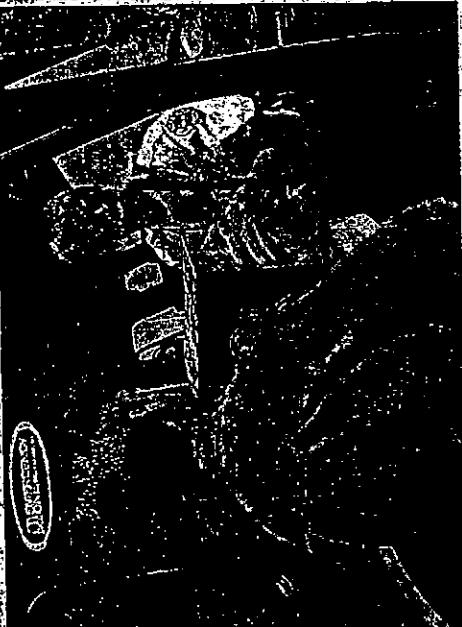
Squad cars carried their pay-loads in the back seat as though the canned goods were under arrest. Boxes filled the back of each ambulance.

See FOOD, page 4

Procession of emergency vehicles

Aurora Fire Department Assistant Chief Hal Carlson hands boxes of non-perishable food to Genaro Elizalde of the Northern Illinois Food Bank during 2004 National Hunger Awareness Day activities at the Kane County Fair Bureau on Thursday in St. Charles.

Ben Jardins — Chronicle photo staff



local food banks.

Representatives from various

departments drove their donations to the Kane County Farm

Bureau in St. Charles. There, they

formed a procession led by a

semi-truck driven by state Rep.

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See FOOD, page 4

11

Volunteers, donations needed

Places to donate or volunteer:

- **Northern Illinois Food Bank**
600 Industrial Drive,
St. Charles
(630) 443-6910
- **Elburn Food Pantry**
525 N. Main St., Elburn
(630) 365-6655
- **Hesed House**
659 S. River St., Aurora
(630) 897-2127
- **Interfaith Food Pantry**
256 E. Chicago St., Elgin
(847) 741-2329
- **Interfaith Food Pantry**
100 Flinn Drive, Batavia
(630) 879-3784
- **Salvation Army**
1710 S. 7th Ave., St. Charles
(630) 377-2769
- **St. Peter Catholic Church**
1891 Kaneville Road, Geneva

Food

Continued from page 1

Compartment of fire engines held cans and boxes stuffed wherever they would fit.

Participants included police departments from Batavia, Elburn, Elgin, Geneva, Kane County Sheriff's Office, North Aurora, St. Charles, Sleepy Hollow, Wayne, and West Dundee; and fire departments from Batavia, Aurora, Carpentersville, Elgin, Hampshire, Rutland and Dundee, North Aurora, West Dundee and Geneva.

Carpentersville Fire Chief John Schulte addressed the volunteers and those who gathered outside the farm bureau for a rally.

"You people know what it is all about," Schulte said. "We have to get the word out. The people of our county need to

realize they can donate food all year."

In 2003, the Northern Illinois Food Bank served 15.5 million pounds of food, up from 12.2 million pounds in 2002.

The organization serves 55 agencies in 13 counties including Boone, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kankakee, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, Ogle, Stephenson, Will and Winnebago.

Donations come from supermarkets and food drives. Volunteers help paid staff members distribute food to the agencies every day.

The organization also buys food at deep discounts with cash donations. Seven boxes of cereal cost \$20 at a grocery store. The food bank can get all seven for about a dollar.

Local food pantries purchase items from the food bank in addition to donations they receive.

'The biggest thing is attitude'

Sugar Grove man recalls battle against leukemia

By DAN CHANZI

Kane County Chronicle

SUGAR GROVE — In summer 2000, Kris Fauske was tired all the time, but he chalked that up to stress at work.

"His vision was a little blurry, so he started to wear his glasses again,"

"I was a typical guy, or as Fauske recalled, 'I had an excuse for everything.'

Then,

the 36-year-old former college tennis athlete overheated while playing a match against a friend.

"It was a nice day, and I was playing against a guy I usually beat," Fauske said. "I went back to the health club and showered. I felt like crap."

Fauske sought treatment at an urgent care center for what felt like the flu. Some routine tests revealed a dangerously low blood count.

After three weeks of testing, doctors discovered that Fauske had a rare form of leukemia.

"Leukemia is a blood cancer that affects marrow and attacks healthy blood cells. It impairs the body's ability to protect itself and fight infections."

"That was the bad news," he said. "The good news was that it was very treatable."

Today, Fauske is a healthy, 39-year-old man. After intensive chemotherapy and radiation treatments, he shakes his head when he thinks about how close he came to dying of cancer.

The diagnosis came in August 2000. By that December, doctors appeared to have the

**RELAY
FOR LIFE**

American
Cancer
Society



Wayne Ratzlaff — Chronicle photo staff

Kris Fauske, left, with his son, Jake, 5, and wife, AnnMarie, is a leukemia survivor.

blood cancer under control.

In February 2001, Fauske returned from a family reunion in Mexico and complained of an earache. The cancer had returned in his ear.

"My first question was 'Why me?'" he said. "I wondered what I did to deserve this. I've always been a very competitive person. It was tough."

He vowed to fight his cancer and he relied on the support of his friends and family. He received a bone marrow transplant. Doctors said he had little chance of survival without one.

His son, Jake, who was 2 years old at the time, turned out to be the best medicine.

"He'd say something like, 'I hope you feel better someday, Daddy.' It just breaks your heart," Fauske said. "And thank God for

a loving wife like (AnnMarie)."

At one point, Fauske was taking 87 pills per day. He was sent home from the hospital with 19 prescriptions.

"It was rough," he said. "My wife had a crash course in being a nurse."

It has been more than two months since a chemo treatment, and Fauske said he looks forward to the results of a bone marrow biopsy next week.

"The biggest thing is attitude," he said. "If you want to beat this, you're going to have a good chance. If you are going to sit around and feel sorry for yourself, you aren't."

Fauske said he looks forward to attending this year's Kane County Relay For Life, the annual fundraiser for the local chapter of the American

Cancer Society. This year's event is June 25.

The event is an all-night walk around the track at Elfstrom Stadium in Geneva.

Teams of about 15 people raise money and pledge to keep at least one teammate on the track at all times.

The first lap is called the Survivor's Lap. Cancer survivors are invited to take to the track to celebrate defeating their tumor.

Fauske walked the lap last year with his mother, Judith, who is a thyroid cancer survivor. "It's like a conclusion, the ultimate conclusion," he said.

You are walking this lap in memory of what you've been going through. There were thousands of strangers all clapping for us. It's just so incredible."

Orchard Road between Indian Trail and Prairie Street, as lane closures and changes will be a common occurrence during the widening project. Motorists should use alternate routes whenever possible, both for their convenience and to help contractors during construction. Avoiding the area will help us complete this complicated job on time.

Large trucks will be using the area frequently, so the bike path along the east side of Orchard Road will be closed to pedestrians.

Be careful in construction

Please use extreme caution while traveling

and bicyclists until June 2005, when the project is expected to be completed. Parents, please tell your children to avoid this area. The best way to access the Gilman Trail will be at the Prairie Street entrance west of Orchard Road.

On another note, on Jan. 5 of this year, Frank Miller of Aurora was honored in a ceremony at the Orchard Road Bridge for his efforts in initializing the entire Orchard Road project. Mr. Miller saw the need and potential

of the Orchard Road Corridor. His vision led to what we see today: a beautiful pedestrian bridge that links the Gilman Trail to the west, and an underpass that allows 60 trains per day to pass through without impacting motorists.

As you enjoy the Gilman Trail, look for the monument on the east side of the pedestrian bridge which recognizes Mr. Miller and his efforts. While Mr. Miller left the board in 1992, the fruits of his labor live on every day at the Orchard Road Bridge, and for that we are very thankful.

Bill Wyatt

District 5 Representative, Kane County Board

Whitney Peters

5th Ward Alderman, City of Aurora

6-9-04 Beaconnews

Groups want to know how C'ville spends taxes

Residents say roads need repairs

By BRIAN SLUPSKI
Shaw News Service

CARPENTERSVILLE — Michael Williams can tell you where every pothole is on Elm Avenue.

Like many streets in Carpentersville, Elm is crumbling. Williams' father built a home on the street 57 years ago, and few improvements have occurred since then. "When am I going to get some curb and gutters?"

Calgarey Penn, president of Citizens for Fiscal Reform, said the village receives about \$65,000 a month, but streets have fallen into disrepair.

Penn said as much as \$4.2 million in motor fuel tax money has accumulated in village accounts. Worse, hundreds of thousands of dollars in motor fuel tax money is unaccounted for, he added.

Both groups asked for investigations into how Carpentersville has spent motor fuel taxes. The money comes from the state and must be used for road improvements and maintenance.

"This is not a staff issue," said Penn, a former village board candidate. "The board is ultimately responsible, and they need to be held accountable."

The criticism regarding the motor fuel tax money is the latest in an ongoing struggle by Carpentersville officials to keep track of taxpayer money. "If it was used, it was not reported to the state," Penn said, adding that the Illinois Department of Transportation has been contacted and plans to conduct an audit this summer.

Penn said Carpentersville

is suffering from a failure of leadership.

"The board is ultimately responsible, and they need to be held accountable."

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Penn said Carpentersville

6-4-04 Beacon news

Committee vote favors waste-transfer station

By Jan Ramming
SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

BATAVIA — After one vote of support this week, the City Council is expected to make a final decision Monday on siting of a proposed waste-transfer station.

The city's Pollution Facility Control Committee voted this week in favor of Onyx Waste Services' proposed waste-transfer station, where garbage would be compacted before being shipped to other landfills. The Onyx site is 766 Hunter Drive on Batavia's east side.

The committee's 6-1 vote came after an intensive review of nine criteria established by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. The criteria relate directly to health and safety issues, as well as the facility's compatibility with the surrounding area.

In its deliberations, the committee considered whether Onyx submitted enough evidence to satisfy each of the requirements.

"This has been a long process, and it's far from over," said Alderman Jim Volk, 4th Ward.

A total of 27 conditions were recommended by city staff and approved. The conditions placed on Onyx include mandatory tarping on all waste collection/delivery vehicles, an odor neutralizing system within the facility building and litter patrol of the surrounding area and along Kirk Road.

Pest-control inspections will take place every two weeks, and analytical testing will be required on any substance unintentionally leaching from the facility. A fence, to be at least 8 feet high, will surround the facility, and the exposed property will be landscaped and maintained by Onyx.

All vehicles will enter the facility at the western-most facility entrance at Hubbard Avenue.

Loaded transfer trailers leaving the facility will only be allowed to exit the facility westbound on Hubbard to Kirk Road, then south on Kirk Road to Interstate 88 at the Farnsworth interchange in Aurora. Fines of \$1,000 per occurrence will be issued by the city for any waste vehicles in violation of the predetermined routes to and from the facility.

Onyx originally proposed the Batavia waste-transfer station site after the county announced the closing of Settlers Hill landfill by December, 2006.

A siting ordinance was developed by the city, and a Citizens Advisory Committee formed to study the issue for six months. The citizens committee issued a report in May 2002 outlining conditions under which a waste-transfer station would be acceptable in Batavia.

Onyx filed an application with the city for a waste-transfer station on December 19, 2003.

Public hearings were held during April this year. Public comment was taken for a one month period from April 16 until May 17.

Monday, the full council will review the committee's findings and cast the final vote at the City Council meeting at 7 p.m. at City Hall.

Although no public comment was allowed at Wednesday night's meeting, several frustrated residents were in attendance.

"I'm very concerned about 1,000 tons of garbage coming into Batavia, most of it coming from outside our community, and some of it could be inadvertent hazardous or toxic waste," said resident Carol Barrett.

"Most people, by the time they realized what was going on, found out that it was too late for their input," said resident Kris Voreis.

"We don't want it," said Nancy Kreis, an east side Batavia resident. "Nobody wants a dump in their back yard."

6-4-04 Daily Herald

Suburbs focus on hunger war

BY AMES BOYKIN
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Suburban legislators, church leaders, business executives, volunteers and others sat together at one table Thursday on National Hunger Awareness Day to discuss ways to feed the hungry.

The problem of hunger drew about 300 people together for the Northern Illinois Food Banks One Big Table luncheon event held at locations in DuPage, Kane, Kankakee, Lake, Will and Winnebago counties.

They all had one thing in common, Northern Illinois Food Bank board president Sheila Davidson said.

"We want to be part of the war on hunger," she said.

America's Second Harvest, Northern Illinois Food Banks' national affiliate, held similar events nationwide Thursday to help more than 34 million Americans — including 13 million children — who go to bed hungry.

In northern Illinois, one in 12 people live with hunger. The food bank serves 168,000 in the Chicago area every month.

At each event in northern Illinois, people ate a bag lunch and discussed ways to end

hunger.

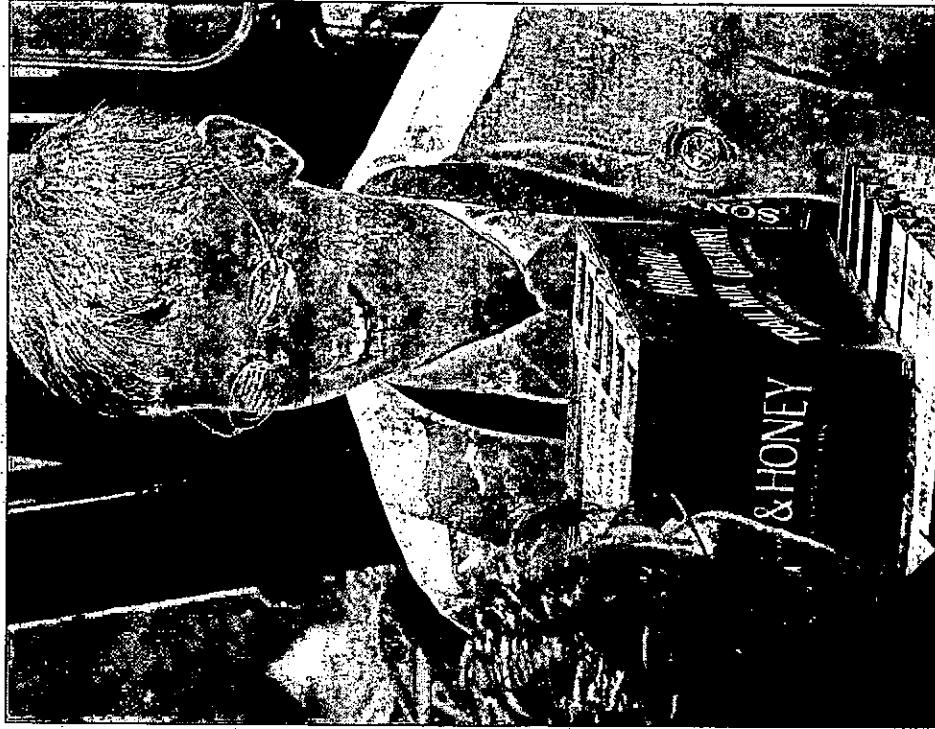
In Kane County, about 50 people talked about what causes people to need help putting food on the table. Fire and police officials from St. Charles, Elgin, Geneva, Batavia and others transported donated food to the farm bureau.

Watching workers load a truck with green barrels and boxes stuffed with food donations outside the Kane County Farm Bureau in St. Charles, people clapped along to a guitarist singing "Lean on Me."

Once inside, attendees heard from state Rep. John J. Millner of Carol Stream. Millner first volunteered with the food bank about 10 years ago, when he joined his daughter for a service project, and has helped out since that time.

Sue Ericson of Northern Illinois Food Bank said the event Thursday aimed to get people aware of the problem in their own communities and rally them to want to help.

A proposal before lawmakers in Washington would offer more tax incentives for restaurants and manufacturers to donate food to the needy, said Robin Collier, of the Chicago branch of America's Second Harvest.



JOE BRIER/DAILY HERALD
Assistant Aurora Fire Chief Hal Carlson helped bring food donations Thursday to the Kane County Farm Bureau in St. Charles.

6-4-04 Beacon News

Sugar Grove moves Stillwater along despite airport cautions

By Erin Erickson
SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

SUGAR GROVE — Despite concerns from airport officials, village trustees this week accepted changes to a proposed housing development along Route 30.

The Stillwater development is proposed for the southwest corner of Municipal Drive and Route 30. The revised plan calls for 221 single-family homes, 50 age-restricted vil-

las, about 10 acres of commercial developments and a golf course. Some townhomes were eliminated, and commercial areas were increased.

Aurora Municipal Airport Director Bob Rieser was on hand at a Committee of the Whole meeting to give a presentation on how the development is not what he described as "compatible land use," citing airport runway lights as a major concern.

"It's going to be a nuisance and a

problem; and no, they can't be turned off," said Rieser.

He also mentioned the current noise problems and situations where the increased bird populations would be a safety hazard for the aircraft.

James White, an attorney for the developers of Stillwater, responded that the airport was capable of shielding the lighting.

Trustee Thomas Rank addressed the concerns, as well, by stating that

many communities have built golf courses next to airports. He also was concerned about the existing neighborhood directly to the east of the proposed Stillwater.

"These residents deserve to have compatible developments next to the existing neighborhood," Rank said, adding that three major industrial users have looked at the property and chosen to build elsewhere.

"It's a nice boondock for what we envision farther west," he said.

Opinions were split among the trustees. Trustee Mari Johnson said she feels Sugar Grove could find a better location for the development and that Municipal Drive would make a nice western boundary.

Trustee Joseph Wolf is also opposed, as he feels commercial developments would be more appropriate because it would provide jobs.

"I want to protect the zoning and

tax base for the residents of the village," he said, adding that he doesn't feel Sugar Grove needs a golf course, and the proposed library site is too small for any future expansion needs.

Village Administrator Brent Eichleberger reminded the board that they were only voting on the changes made to the plan. "The changes that have been made," he said, "are a better project."

Driver gets two years in hit-run death of bicyclist

6-4-04

By Dan Rozek
Beacon
CHICAGO SUN-TIMES news

WHEATON — A drunken driver who sped off after fatally striking a 70-year-old man riding his bicycle along a busy, six-lane DuPage County highway last November has been sentenced to 2 1/2 years in prison.

Matthew Wise, 25, of Elgin, faced up to 12 years behind bars for the Nov. 11, 2003, crash that killed Sebastian Karsch, well-known local eccentric who for years battled Kane County officials trying to clean up the mounds of junk he stored in and around his home near St. Charles.

Karsch's ex-wife and son said they were satisfied with the prison term imposed on Wise, who was taken into custody immediately after the hearing. He is expected to serve about a year behind bars.

"We were all raised that when you do something wrong, you get punished," said Elfriede Karsch, the victim's former wife. Tests showed Wise's blood alcohol level after the 8:20 p.m. crash was 0.126 percent — above the 0.08 legal limit.

Before imposing the prison term, DuPage County Judge Michael Burke chastised Wise for stopping only briefly after the crash on North Avenue, then driving to a nearby fast-food restaurant. There, prosecutors said, Wise called a friend and asked him to drive by the crash site.

Wise ate french fries and drank a beverage while he waited at the restaurant, authorities said, then returned to the scene about 20 minutes after the crash and surrendered to authorities. Those actions, Burke said, "showed a conscious disregard for the well-being of Mr. Karsch."

A German-born refugee who came to the United States after World War II, Karsch was a familiar sight in the western suburbs, frequently riding his bicycle at night along heavily traveled roads in all types of weather, despite police warnings that his behavior was dangerous.

He often collected junk from the roadside during the trips, carrying it in a trailer like the one he was towing behind his bike when he was killed. Trying to force Karsch to clean up the debris on his property on Route 31 north of St. Charles, Kane County authorities fought a decade-long legal battle that ended with Karsch's home being demolished in 2002 after a judge declared it unsound.

Wise's attorney sought probation in the hit-run death, noting that Wise, a paint store manager with no criminal record, pleaded guilty earlier this year to felony aggravated drunken driving.

"Mr. Wise stood up here and admitted his responsibility," attorney Robert Kleeman said. "There's no question Mr. Wise made some horrible choices back in November 2003."

6-4-04 Daily Herald

Traffic mess forecast for Randall corridor

BY TOM O'KONOWITZ
Daily Herald Staff Writer

If you think traffic on Randall Road through Elgin is annoying now, just picture how much worse it could be within the next few years after some 12,000 planned houses are built in the far-west area.

Not a pretty image, huh?

If major improvements aren't made to the system of roads around Elgin's expanding western end before all the houses arrive, you could find yourself stuck at stoplights for nearly 10 minutes at some Randall intersections, according to a transportation study commissioned by the city and Kane County officials.

"Even when you make the improvements ... you're still going to have problems on Randall where you have to wait more than one cycle" at stoplights, said Heidi Files, planning and programming manager for the Kane County Department of Transportation.

Files has been working with other county, city and state officials to examine just how much of an impact 12,000 new houses expected to be built west of Randall Road will have on traffic flow.

The impact will be sizable, she said, because just one additional household creates about 10 extra trips a day. Given that, the study found that by 2020, Randall's intersections with Highland Avenue, near Route 20 and at Bowes Road, all will get "failing grades" because of their inability to keep traffic moving.

And Kane County's 2030 transportation study predicts "extreme congestion" for most of the major roadways in Elgin.

No definitive solution to the potential traffic mess has been identified, but Kane County and Elgin officials have pledged to continue working with each other and surrounding towns to pursue projects that will help keep cars moving.

Files says the key will be adding "collector roads" that can pick up some of the extra vehicles expected to come with all the new houses and keep the main roads from being over-loaded.

"Without a collector road system, you're going to have some serious congestion problems," she said.

Tom Armstrong, Elgin's principal planner, said another key will be requiring developers to put in through-streets that link to each other rather than a bunch of cul-de-sacs, which traditionally have contributed to traffic problems.

"The bottom line is we need to stop developing like we have been for 30 years and start building connected streets," Armstrong said. "We're the victims of our own desires."

But Armstrong did say Elgin's traffic system is better connected than those in some towns that face much worse traffic futures. The study indicates that Gilberts, Sugar Grove and Aurora are among the municipalities that will face the most new congestion by 2030.

Elgin City Manager David Dorgan says the city will continue looking for ways to ease congestion stemming from west of Randall.

"It's a pretty high priority," Dorgan said. "There will be more and more traffic on Randall, but I think as we grow we will add more roads to help keep things going."

Most important, he said, will be adding more north-south roads, including a major corridor between Randall and Route 47. He also said signal changes at the Route 20 intersections with Plank and Nesler roads should help, and that new roads will all be built with a focus on linking the entire system.

The county's 2030 transportation plan wish list suggests other options to solve traffic worries. No money has been set aside for them — and they may never be built — but Files said they could help.

They include extending Corron Road to Route 72, realigning Route 20 near Pingree Grove, widening Randall to six lanes through Elgin, widening Route 20 to six lanes from the county's eastern edge to Coombs Road, widening the Northwest Tollway to eight lanes from the eastern county line to Route 31 and widening it to six lanes from McLean Boulevard west.

"There are so many people who need food. We don't think about it, but it's true."

State Rep. John Millner

6-04 Beacon news

Drive aims to fill food bank

Emergency vehicles parade to collect foodstuffs for the event



PHOTOS BY DONNELL COLLINS / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Police and fire departments from throughout Kane County drop off parcels of food for the Northern Illinois Food Bank at the Kane County Farm Bureau in St. Charles Thursday.

Aurora Fire Department Assistant Chief Hal Carlson unloads a firetruck filled with food. Several police and fire departments were part of a parade promoting food donations.



By Nathaniel Zimmer
STAFF WRITER

SOUTH ELGIN — Firetrucks, ambulances and police cruisers rolled with their lights blazing into the parking lot of the Kane County Farm Bureau on Thursday.

And while the vehicles weren't bearing their usual cargo, their drivers were doing something in character: trying to help those in need.

As the parade came to a halt, officers and firefighters from around Kane County helped unload thousands of cans of food intended for the poor and hungry.

The event, part of National Hunger Awareness Day, was organized by the St. Charles-based Northern Illinois Food Bank, which distributes food donated by corporations, individuals and community groups to an estimated 168,000 people each month in 13 northern Illinois counties.

In Kane County, the food bank sends soup kitchens and social-service providers about a million pounds of food each year.

"There are so many people who need food," said state Rep. John Millner, whose district includes portions of South Elgin and St. Charles. "We don't think about it, but it's true."

Not for the first time, the Carol Stream Republican made use of his commercial driver's license to pilot an NIFB 18-wheeler — although this time he was heading up a procession, rather than delivering food throughout the region, as he used to do while a member of the Elmhurst police department.

Like others present for the event, he emphasized that the food bank's beneficiaries include "a wide range of people," many of whom are employed but find it difficult to make ends meet.

Nearly half those served by the NIFB are children, according to the organization, which operates out of a 147,000-square-foot facility.

"In the land of plenty, that should not be allowed," said Sheila Davidson, president of the food bank's board.

But while children are among those in need, they also can help feed the hungry.

About two-thirds of the 3,000 or so cans of food the Elgin Fire Department delivered Thursday came from a food drive held at Clinton Elementary School in South Elgin, according to Fire Chief Mike Falese.

The school was thrilled the department was able to transport the food, which filled a reserve ambulance, while fire officials were really happy to accept the donation, Falese said.

By the time all 19 police and fire departments had deposited their respective hauls Thursday, Carpentersville Fire Chief John Schudt was pretty pleased as well.

"I know by far this is more than we had at

million pounds of food, in twice the amount it handled years ago.

Much of that comes from manufacturers, such as Foods Inc.

Howard Wurster, who ConAgra's warehouse operates in the eastern United States, monitors the company's stocks and donates to the when supplies outstrip demand.

FOOD

From Page A1

this time last year," he said, gazing down at palettes stacked high with canned goods.

The increase is in keeping with the organization's growing distribution levels. Last year, the NIFB passed out in excess of 15

♦ Turn to FOOD, A2

6-4-04 Daily Herald

North Aurora masseuse pressing village for permit

By JOHN JOHNSTON
Daily Herald Correspondent

Lea Arlette's hands have been tied over her plan to open a massage business in her North Aurora home. Now she's hoping the village board will let her work.

Arlette has been denied a permit from the village but she contends she meets the massage therapist ordinances requirements. Arlette communicated several times with village administrators and other staff members and was informed in a May 12 memo that the staff had rejected her application. The memo encouraged Arlette to take her request to the village board, which she did last week.

"I would do it here or as per-
sist as I have been if I did not
believe I was within the ordinance," Arlette said.

Arlette said she lives in North Aurora and has been married for 10 years. She said she would run the business out of her home and estimates she would have fewer than five clients per week.

"I think it will help take people out of a hectic atmosphere," Arlette said. "It's a relaxing sur-
rounding."

The village's staff said in its

memo that Arlette had neither reached the minimum of 500 hours of class time required by the American Massage Therapy Association nor been approved by the Illinois State Board of Education, which is needed under the ordinance.

Arlette says the ordinance requires that therapists meet a minimum of five requirements, only one of which is the 500 hours of class time. She admits she does not meet that requirement, but meets another requirement that says therapists must be active or certified within a professional organization with standard similar to the American Massage

Therapy Association.

Arlette said her training has reached a level that allows her to practice, which meets that requirement. She said she has 225 hours of class time and that by the time the ordinance can be approved she should have over 300 hours. She said she is finished with massage classes and needs only

to finish supplementary courses in topics such as nutrition to graduate.

"I really believe this is the path I'm supposed to be on," Arlette said.

"I'm troubled as to why we haven't issued a permit."

He said Arlette, obviously

meets the code's requirements

and has CPR training.

Trustees asked her to present

her request at the next commit-

tee of the whole meeting Monday night.

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Food bank donations fill procession of emergency vehicles

Kane firefighters, police collected for Northern Illinois Food Bank

By DAN CHANZI

Kane County Chronicle

ST. CHARLES — Genaro

Elizalde broke a sweat as he piled

boxes of Corn Flakes, tubes of

Pringles and cans of stewed

tomatoes.

"It's really amazing," said

Elizalde, warehouse supervisor

for the Northern Illinois Food

Bank in St. Charles.

He stared down a row of pal-

lers piled high with nonperish-

able food.

local food banks.

Representatives from various

departments drove their dona-

tions to the Kane County Farm

Bureau in St. Charles. There they

formed a procession led by a

semi-truck driven by state Rep.

John Millner, R-Carol Stream.

"I still have my CDL," Millner

said, stepping out of the truck.

"I'm an old truck driver."

Firetrucks, ambulances and

squad cars formed a line and

food bank workers emptied food

from each.

Squad cars carried their pay-

loads in the back seat as though

the canned goods were under ar-

rest. Boxes filled the back of each

ambulance.

See FOOD, page 4

To help

the food

was collected

May 15

by

local fire and

police depart-

m. e. n. t. s.

Communities around the coun-

try united Thursday for National

Hunger Awareness Day and

"One Big Table," a national

hunger awareness initiative lead

by America's Second Harvest and



Food bank donations fill procession of emergency vehicles

Aurora Fire Department

Assistant Chief

Hal Carlson hands boxes of non-perishable food to Genaro Elizalde of the Northern Illinois Food Bank during

2004 National Hunger Awareness

Day activities at the Kane County Farm Bureau on Thursday in St. Charles.

Ben Jenkins — Chronicle photo staff

Volunteers, donations needed

Places to donate or volunteer:

- **Northern Illinois Food Bank**

600 Industrial Drive,
St. Charles

(630) 443-6910

- **Interfaith Food Pantry**
256 E. Chicago St., Elgin
(847) 741-2329

- **Interfaith Food Pantry**
100 Flinn Drive, Batavia
(630) 879-3784

- **Elburn Food Pantry**
525 N. Main St., Elburn
(630) 365-6655

- **Hesed House**
659 S. River St., Aurora
(630) 897-2127

- **Salvation Army**
1710 S. 7th Ave., St. Charles
(630) 377-2769

- **St. Peter Catholic Church**
1891 Kaneville Road, Geneva

Food

Continued from page 1

Compartments of fire engines held cans and boxes stuffed wherever they would fit.

Participants included police departments from Batavia, Elburn, Elgin, Geneva, Kane County Sheriff's Office, North Aurora, St. Charles, Sleepy Hollow, Wayne, and West Dundee; and fire departments from Batavia, Aurora, Carpentersville, Elgin, Hampshire, Rutland and Dundee, North Aurora, West Dundee and Geneva.

Carpentersville Fire Chief John Schultd addressed the volunteers and those who gathered outside the farm bureau for a rally.

"You people know what it is all about," Schultd said. "We have to get the word out. The people of our county need to

realize they can donate food all year."

In 2003, the Northern Illinois Food Bank served 15.5 million pounds of food, up from 12.2 million pounds in 2002.

The organization serves 55 agencies in 13 counties including Boone, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kankakee, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, Ogle, Stephenson, Will and Winnebago.

Donations come from supermarkets and food drives. Volunteers help paid staff members distribute food to the agencies every day.

The organization also buys food at deep discounts with cash donations. Seven boxes of cereal cost \$20 at a grocery store. The food bank can get all seven for about a dollar.

Local food pantries purchase items from the food bank in addition to donations they receive.

'The biggest thing is attitude'

Sugar Grove man recalls battle against leukemia

By DAN CHANZIT
Kane County Chronicle

SUGAR GROVE — In summer 2000, Kris Fauske was tired all the time, but he chalked that up to stress at work.

His vision was a little blurry, so he started to wear his glasses again.

"I was a typical guy," Fauske recalled. "I had an excuse for everything."

Then, the 36-year-old former college tennis athlete overheated while playing a match against a friend.

"It was a nice day, and I was playing against a guy I usually beat," Fauske said. "I went back to the health club and showered. I felt like crap."

Fauske sought treatment at an urgent-care center for what felt like the flu. Some routine tests revealed a dangerously low blood count.

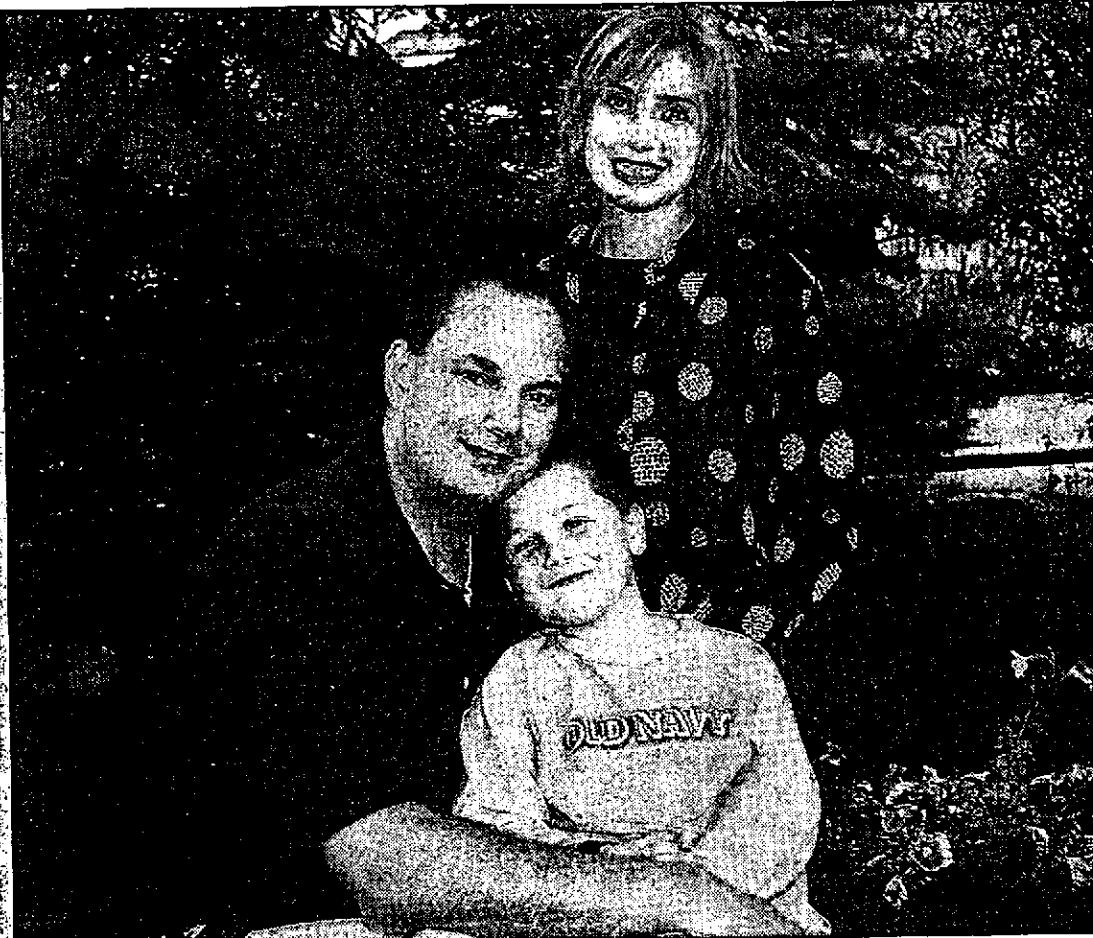
After three weeks of testing, doctors discovered that Fauske had a rare form of leukemia.

Leukemia is a blood cancer that affects marrow and attacks healthy blood cells. It impairs the body's ability to protect itself and fight infections.

"That was the bad news," he said. "The good news was that it was very treatable."

Today, Fauske is a healthy 39-year-old man. After intensive chemotherapy and radiation treatments, he shakes his head when he thinks about how close he came to dying of cancer.

The diagnosis came in August 2000. By that December, doctors appeared to have the



Wayne Ratzlaff — Chronicle photo staff

Kris Fauske, left, with his son, Jake, 5, and wife, AnnMarie, is a leukemia survivor.

blood cancer under control.

In February 2001, Fauske returned from a family reunion in Mexico and complained of an earache. The cancer had returned in his ear.

"My first question was 'Why me?'" he said. "I wondered what I did to deserve this. I've always been a very competitive person. It was tough."

He vowed to fight his cancer and he relied on the support of his friends and family. He received a bone marrow transplant. Doctors said he had little chance of survival without one.

His son Jake, who was 2 years old at the time, turned out to be the best medicine.

"He'd say something like 'I hope you feel better someday, Daddy.' It just breaks your heart," Fauske said. "And thank God for

a loving wife like (AnnMarie)."

At one point, Fauske was taking 87 pills per day. He was sent home from the hospital with 19 prescriptions.

"It was rough," he said. "My wife had a crash course in being a nurse."

It has been more than two months since a chemo treatment, and Fauske said he looks forward to the results of a bone marrow biopsy next week.

"The biggest thing is attitude," he said. "If you want to beat this, you're going to have a good chance. If you are going to sit around and feel sorry for yourself, you aren't."

Fauske said he looks forward to attending this year's Kane County Relay For Life, the annual fund-raiser for the local chapter of the American

Cancer Society. This year's event is June 25.

The event is an all-night walk around the track at Elfstrom Stadium in Geneva.

Teams of about 15 people raise money and pledge to keep at least one teammate on the track at all times.

The first lap is called the Survivor's Lap. Cancer survivors are invited to take to the track to celebrate defeating their tumor.

Fauske walked the lap last year with his mother, Judith, who is a thyroid cancer survivor.

"It's like a conclusion, the ultimate conclusion," he said. "You are walking this lap in memory of what you've been going through. There were thousands of strangers all clapping for us. It's just so incredible."

Bird infected with West Nile found in Kane

By KRISTEN SCHMIDT
Shaw News Service

GENEVA — State officials confirmed that a West Nile-positive blue jay was found in Wayne in Kane County.

A blue jay found in Marengo also tested positive for the virus.

They are the first positive-testing birds in Kane and McHenry counties in 2004.

McHenry County health officials characterized the find as a "cause for concern" and issued a renewed call for vigilance in preventing mosquito bites.

No human cases are suspected. The risk for human infection will be higher now that an infected bird has been found. Still, the overall risk for infection is slim, and it is even less likely that an infected person will experience serious symptoms or illness.

The bird was among three from McHenry County that have been sent so far this year to the state Department of Public Health for inspection. Last year, six Kane and 10 McHenry birds tested positive for the virus.

Also last year, two batches of mosquitoes collected in Kane County tested positive for the virus. There were no human cases last year in Kane County.

"There have been other birds found in other counties nearby, so we are not surprised to find one here," said Joe Gugle, manager for planning personnel and administration for the McHenry County Health Department.

Scientists say the infection is more likely to spread

West Nile in Illinois 2004, as of Monday

- Eight birds have tested positive.
- No people have tested positive.
- If you find a dead crow or blue jay, call the Kane County Health Department at (630) 208-3801. Time is important; a dead bird cannot be tested reliably if it has decomposed.
- Tips on protecting against bites and mosquito breeding on your property:

Kane County Health Department

www.kanehealth.com

Illinois Department of Public Health

<http://www.idph.state.il.us/> or call, (866) 369-9710

to humans four to six weeks after the virus is found in birds or horses.

Health officials continued to emphasize common-sense tips to prevent mosquito bites and, more importantly, to prevent mosquitoes from breeding around your home.

The breed of mosquitoes that carries West Nile virus is likely to breed in stagnant water, which often can be found around homes. The mosquito also does not travel long distances, so it is likely to be born and feed in the same place.

Fran Stanwood, McHenry County's director of nursing, advised homeowners to turn over wading pools not in use, frequently change water out of bird baths and drill holes in the bottoms of garbage cans and outdoor planters to stop the mosquitoes from breeding.

6-8-04 Daily Herald Batavia approves transfer station

By GAIL M. PIERCE
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Despite residents' concerns, Batavia leaders approved the siting proposal and permit for Onyx to operate a waste transfer station.

By a vote of 12-2, the city council gave the Milwaukee company permission to open the station at 766 Hunter Drive in the east-side industrial park, which is expected to open in about a year. "As for myself, after reading the record and thinking very carefully about this, I have come to the conclusion that the proposed waste transfer station is necessary, and if properly man-

aged, will be an asset to the city," Alderman Jim Volk said at Monday's city council meeting.

Volk headed the pollution control facility commission, which gave the recommendation last week by a 6-1 vote to approve the contractor's application.

With Settler's Hill landfill closing in 2006, garbage disposal fees are expected to increase, Volk said. "What this will do is hold the cost to the minimum for everyone in Batavia," he said.

Kane County, instead, plans to use transfer stations, which temporarily store trash and then

See WASTE on PAGE 8

to questions," Hart said. "This really put us at a disadvantage ... God knows we've been through a lot of controversial issues in Batavia, but we've always been able to discuss it, but this really had our hands tied."

A group of about 20 to 25 residents, who mostly live in Woodland Hills, plan to complain to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency about the decision, Carolyn Miller said.

"One of the things we feel is flawed is the study of traffic patterns. The city is,"

Residents also have cited concerns to noise, odor and property values.

Carl Dinwiddie, whose wife, Yvonne, served on the citizen advisory committee appointed to look at the issue in 2002, wore a sticker that said, "Dump all eyes voters."

"The citizens aren't willing to sell out the quality of life for \$500,000 a year," he said, referring to what the city expects to make from the waste transfer

Continued from Page 1

take it to landfills farther away to handle its garbage.

Richard Hart and Jodie Wollnik, both 1st Ward city council members, voted against the siting and permit.

Hart criticized the state statute for dictating the council act as a judicial body during the process, which prevented the city's 14 aldermen and women from talking to their constituents.

"We could not even respond

Waste: Decision upsets some residents

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Impact fees 6-8-04 *Beacon news*

I was reading in the paper a couple of days ago about how Kane County is putting impact fee charges on the Tri-Cities, Batavia, Geneva and St. Charles, because of all the building. What about Montgomery and Aurora? Look at all the building that those two towns are doing on the far West side. There is so much building going on, on the far West Side almost to 47 and almost to Sugar Grove, why aren't they putting the same impact fees on the village of Montgomery and the city of Aurora?

News and politics

Blue jays test positive for West Nile

Three dead blue jays found in Kane, Madison and McHenry Counties have tested positive for the West Nile virus, the Illinois Department of Public Health reported Monday.

A total of eight birds in the state and two DuPage County mosquito pools have been identified as being infected with the mosquito-borne disease since local health departments began testing May 1. No human cases

have been reported.

During summer 2002, above-normal temperatures resulted in 884 human cases, including 66 deaths. A cooler summer last year brought human cases down to 54, with one death.

Public health officials recommend that people combat mosquitoes by covering up when outdoors and applying insect repellent that includes DEET, according to a news release.

6-8-04 Chicago Tribune

6-8-04 Daily Herald Businesses, employees cited after liquor sale sting

BY GALA M. PIERCE
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Four businesses in central Kane County failed alcohol compliance checks last Thursday.

The sheriff's office said it rounded up the first-time offenders — Country Winners Circle in Maple Park, Fox View Grocery & Liquor in St. Charles, and Silverado Grill and Light- house Liquors in Wasco — during a liquor sting.

Four employees of those businesses were charged with unlawful sale of alcoholic liquor to a minor.

Those charged with misconduct were Antoinette M. Castellano of 305 Maplewood Ave., DeKalb, employee of Country Winners Circle; Elmira M. Dotdot of 526 Franklin Ave., South Elgin, employee of Fox Valley Grocery; Andrew A. Jungwirth of 2125 Forest Ridge Road, St. Charles, employee of Silverado Grill; and Nicholas J.

Seyller of 41W573 Lenz Road, Elgin, employee of Lighthouse Liquors.

Although the employees must face a judge in a court appearance for their charges, the businesses are subject to the liquor control commission. County Board Chairman Mike McCoy, who serves as the liquor commission, will have an informal meeting with the liquor license holders.

Typically, first offenders receive warnings, McCoy said.

6-8-04 *Beacon news*

Kane sheriff issues liquor-sale citations

Beacon News Staff

GENEVA — The Kane County sheriff's office recently accused four Kane County liquor establishments of selling alcohol to minors.

Employees were charged with one count each of misdemeanor unlawful sale of alcohol to minors at: Country Winners Circle, 50W226 Old State Road, Maple Park; Lighthouse Liquors, 40W099 Route 64, Wasco; Silverado Grill, 41W379 Route 64, Wasco; and Fox View Grocery, 6N559 Route 25, St. Charles.

The sheriff's office said deputies conducted an "alcohol compliance check" June 3 at which minors are

sent into the stores to try to buy alcohol. The checks were conducted at eight establishments holding Kane County liquor licenses, with four of them being cited.

The four which passed the compliance check were Li'l Jim's Tavern, 47W739 Route 64, Virgil; Marathon Gas, 44W322 Route 64, Lily Lake; Blackjack's Gentle-

man's Club, 7N657 Route 25, St. Charles; and the Sugar Bomb Gentleman's Club, 33W491 Route 38, West Chicago, just east of Geneva.

All eight of the establishments are in unincorporated Kane Coun-

6-8-04 Beacon news Dead bird found in Kane tests positive for West Nile virus

SPRINGFIELD — A dead blue jay found in Kane County earlier this month tested positive for the West Nile virus, the state's Public Health Department reported Monday.

Statewide, eight birds have tested positive for the virus since state and local health departments began surveillance for the mosquito-to-borne disease last month. No human cases have been reported. The blue jay was collected on June 2 in Wayne and tested at the Illinois Department of Agriculture laboratory in Galesburg.

Birds found in DuPage, Adams, Champaign, Madison, McHenry, Stephenson and Winnebago counties have tested positive to date. In addition, two mosquito pools in DuPage County have been confirmed positive for West Nile, according to the Health Department.

In 2003, 75 of the state's 102 counties had at least one case where a bird, mosquito, horse or human tested positive for West Nile. Some 54 human cases, including one fatality, were reported last year in Illinois, down from 884 cases and 66 deaths in 2002.

West Nile virus is transmitted through the bite of a mosquito that has picked up the virus by feeding on an infected bird, according to the Health Department. Most people with the virus have no clinical symptoms, but some may become ill three to 14 days after the bite of an infected mosquito.

Infections can be mild and in-

clude fever, headache and body

aches or severe and marked by

headache, high fever, neck stiff-

ness, stupor, convulsions, muscle

weakness, paralysis or, rarely,

death.

Elburn, county finalize impact fee agreement

*Fees must be
paid to county
before permit
6-8-04 Chronicle*

Elburn fees

- For a single-family house: \$297
- For small business: About \$1,100 for every 1,000 square feet of development

By MICHAEL LOOMIS
Shaw News Service

ELBURN — Elburn officials on Monday finalized their agreement with Kane County over the collection of road impact fees. The village board approved a measure requiring that builders pay the fees to the county before applying for a permit from Elburn.

The plan affects both residential and commercial developments. The impact fee for a single-family house in Elburn is \$297. For a small business, the fee is about \$1,100 for every 1,000 square feet of the development.

"No permits will be issued unless they show proof from the Kane County Department of Transportation they've paid their impact fee," village President James Willey said just before the ordinance passed unanimously. "The money generated in Elburn county" the ordinance states,

will be spent there, Willey said. Potential projects include improvements at the intersection of Main Street and Beith Road.

Willey has said the impact fee issue has been called too high in some parts of the Tri-Cities. But the fees are an unavoidable step if Kane County's growth is to pay for itself and maintain an adequate road system, he says. The Kane County Board started implementing the fee back in April.

"The treatment of Elburn is very fair," he said Monday from around the county who studied the issue.

Fees for Elburn schools, police, the library district and others village departments are paid at the permitting step in the process. The road impact fees "pertain to new development within all areas of the

Maple Park police chief indicted

6-8-04
Daily
Herald

BY TONA KUNZ
Daily Herald Staff Writer

The state's probe into gambling in Maple Park has netted four more people, including the village's police chief.

And officials won't say whether they are done casting about in the town of 765.

A Kane County grand jury Friday declared there was enough evidence to charge 13 people with gambling in the rural town about 10 miles west of Elburn. The indictments included the nine people arrested and charged May 28 as well as three more bartenders and Police Chief Chester Morris.

All face felony charges carrying possible prison sentences of more than two years. Officials estimate the gambling operation raised more than \$700,000 a year in profits.

Morris, 51, was questioned and released during the Illinois State Police and Illinois Attorney General's office's raid May 28 at D.J.'s Tavern at 221 Main St. in Maple Park.

At the time, Morris said it was all a misunderstanding and that although he knew there were nine video poker machines in the tavern, he did not know they paid out cash. He has denied knowing that a spinning wheel also was used for gambling at the tavern or that sports bets were taken there.

But Morris was arrested Friday and charged with one count of conspiracy to commit gambling, one count of conspiracy to commit keeping a gambling place and three counts of official misconduct. The indictment alleges that on

See CHIEF on PAGE 7

Chief: Gambling allegedly involved village president

Continued from Page 1

four occasions between July 2003 and March 2004 Morris was in the tavern when gambling was occurring and did nothing to stop it.

"I'm shocked," Morris said when reached at his Elburn home.

Morris, who is out on \$5,000 bail, declined to comment further until he got a lawyer. But he did praise the town's support of himself and village President Mark Delaney, who also was arrested. Many residents showed up at the village board's meeting last week to tell the men they would stand

by them.

The indictment alleges Village President Mark T. Delaney, 51 of 507 Maple Ave. in Maple Park gambled seven times and won six of those times, as well as watched others gamble two other times between July 2003 and March 2004. He also is charged with four counts of official misconduct.

Six bartenders were picked up in the raid May 28 at the bar. Warrants were issued for another three Friday following the indictments. All are charged with paying out money off the video poker machines, dice game or spinning wheel game.

Bartenders indicted on one count of conspiracy to commit gambling and one count of conspiracy to commit keeping a gambling place are the following: Amy Davies, of 2408 Juniper St. in Cortland; Susan Duewel, of 204 Green St. in Maple Park; Kelly N. Ferdinand, of 19552 Airport Road in Maple Park; Keith Nickels, of 107 Main St. in Maple Park; Reed T. Overhaug, of 215 Center St. in Maple Park; Mary E. Richardson, of 507 Maple Ave. in Maple Park; Hope Baker, of 1037 N. 13th St. in DeKalb; Sheila Bode, of 314 Moody St. in St. Charles; and Jennifer Roelfsema, of 714 Willow St. in Maple Park.

Also indicted were tavern manager Michael J. Faber, of 613 E. Main St. in Maple Park and tavern owner David L. Weeks, of 612 Victoria Lane in Yorkville. Both are charged with an additional count each of syndicated gambling.

The attorney general's office has been investigating Maple Park for 15 months, said Attorney General Lisa Madigan. She declined to comment on whether the investigation was continuing or if more people or businesses would be looked at.

"Obviously we can't comment about what we are investigating and what we are not," she said.

13 indicted in Kane gambling

■ **'Unbelievable':** Police chief is accused of knowing about crimes, doing nothing about them

By Ed Fanselow
STAFF WRITER

MAPLE PARK — A year-long undercover probe that ended late last month with the arrests of Mayor Mark Delaney and eight others on gambling conspiracy charges has now broadened to include the indictment of Police Chief

Chester Morris.

Morris was taken into custody by Illinois State Police during the May 28 raid on D.J.'s Tavern West, but was released without being charged after several hours of questioning.

On Friday, however, Morris, Delaney and 11 others were formally indicted by a Kane County grand jury in connection with what investigators have called "pervasive illegal gambling" at the tiny local bar.

Morris is charged with two counts of gambling conspiracy and three counts of official misconduct — all felonies. He is not accused of actually gambling himself,

but with knowing about the illegal conduct and doing nothing to stop it.

Charging documents allege that he was in the bar on at least four separate occasions while gambling was taking place and took no police action.

He said Monday that the charges are "unbelievable."

"I'm just surprised that this is happening and that's all I can say," he told The Associated Press. "I'm going to try to find an attorney and let him deal with it."

He was released from custody Friday after posting \$5,000 bail.

Delaney, who has served as mayor in

this town of 800 people since 2001, is charged with two counts of gambling conspiracy and four counts of official misconduct.

According to the indictment, he took part in illegal gambling at the bar on at least seven occasions, accepting payouts on video slot machines and for a spin-the-wheel lottery.

Village Board members said last week that Delaney will continue to serve as mayor unless he is proven to be guilty of the charges.

Under state law, Morris can also continue to serve as police chief while

♦ Turn to GAMBLING, A2

GAMBLING

From Page A1

Park, Kelly Ferdinand of Maple Park, Keith Nickels of Maple Park, Reed Overhaug of Maple Park and Mary E. Richardson of Maple Park, bar manager Michael J. Faber of Maple Park, and bar owner David L. Weeks of Yorkville.

Each of the 11 are charged with two counts of gambling conspiracy, a felony. Weeks and Faber were also indicted on charges of syndicated gambling, also a felony. Faber is alleged to have run a sports bookmaking operation, accepting bets on more than 50 sporting events.

All of the illegal activity at the bar is alleged to have occurred between May 2003 and April 2004.

Batavia gives OK to garbage transfer site

Process is criticized:

Council was not permitted to hear comments; final decision rests with IEPA

By Jan Rammig
SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

BATAVIA — The City Council voted its approval last night, and now Onyx Waste Services must convince the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency that it has met the requirements for a waste transfer facility to be located in the city of Batavia.

The IEPA decision is expected within 90 days.

In a 12-2 vote, Batavia City Council approved Onyx Waste Services' application for a waste transfer facility to be built on the east side of the city. The facility would handle and compact garbage to be shipped to landfills.

The facility was proposed by Onyx after the county announced the closing of Settler's Hill Landfill by December 2006. Onyx's facility would be located at 766 Hunter Drive.

The city's Pollution Control Committee, a team of seven City Council members, reviewed Onyx's application for a waste transfer site. It was up to the committee to decide if Onyx met the requirements of the city's pollution control ordinance.

The committee and the rest of the council were not allowed to take public comments during the process. After the vote, some council members said that they were uncomfortable with their judicial role.

"The question to us was whether Onyx met their burden of proof and not whether we wanted a waste transfer station in Batavia," said Nancy Vance, 7th Ward.

"There have been a lot of bad feelings from a lot of people, and, unfortunately, we couldn't

♦ Turn to **BATAVIA, A6**

BATAVIA

From page A1

even respond," said Richard Hart, 1st Ward. "I really feel that the Illinois Legislature should not have required a judicial process.

"We couldn't even respond to our constituent's questions," he said. "It looked very suspicious to a lot of people, and I don't blame them."

Mayor Jeff Schielke added his agreement.

"It just goes against my grain as to how a democracy should operate," he said.

Some residents who attended Monday's meeting said they would keep fighting Onyx and the city.

"I don't believe it's over yet," said Carolyn Miller. "We're going to keep e-mailing everyone on City Council and

expect their feedback."

Miller said that she would also be contacting the IEPA with her comments.

Resident Yvonne Dinwiddie was a member of the city's Citizens Advisory Committee that was formed to decide conditions under which the city would accept a waste transfer station. Dinwiddie said that she was upset with council's action.

"I didn't know that this was a done deal as of 2000, and I'm furious about it," she said. "It was set up in such a way that people wouldn't know about it."

In a memo to the mayor and City Council, City Administrator Bill McGrath promised aggressive management and oversight of the facility.

"We will develop specific oversight practices and work with Onyx to make certain they are understood and in place from the very start," he said.

Maple Park police chief charged

By DAN CHANZIT
Kane County Chronicle

Attorney general's office said Morris knew about alleged gambling ring

By DAN CHANZIT
Kane County Chronicle

MAPLE PARK — Police Chief Chester Morris is the latest to be charged in connection with an illegal

the illegal activity that involved \$700,000 each year. Among the participating gamblers was Village President Mark Delaney, investigators allege.

"I'm as confused as you and many other people," Morris said about his arrest. "I don't know what to say."

The charges stem from a May 28 undercover investigation by the attorney general's office, the Illinois State Police and the Department of Revenue.

gambling operation at DJ's Tavern. Investigators with the Illinois Attorney General's office on Monday said that the chief knew about gambling on video poker machines at the popular tavern but did nothing to stop

the illegal activity that involved \$700,000 each year. Among the participating gamblers was Village President Mark Delaney, investigators allege.

"I'm as confused as you and many other people," Morris said about his arrest. "I don't know what to say."

The charges stem from a May 28 undercover investigation by the attorney general's office, the Illinois State Police and the Department of Revenue.

Investigators say the gambling operation included video poker machines rigged to provide cash payouts, a bookmaking operation, a spin-the-wheel lottery and other forms of illegal gambling. Indictments returned by a Kane County grand jury replace the original charges against Delaney, bar owner David L. Weeks of Yorkville, bar manager Michael J. Faber of Maple Park and

See ARRESTED, page 2

could be sentenced to up to five years in prison.

Although the charged include the village president and police chief, residents last week rallied to their defense. Village trustees rejected a move to suspend Morris and decided not to ask an outside police agency to provide law enforcement to the village's 800 residents.

13 arrested in Maple Park

- Chester A. Morris, Maple Park police chief
- Mark T. Delaney, Maple Park village president
- Michael J. Faber, Maple Park, bar manager
- David L. Weeks, Yorkville, bar owner
- Hope Baker, DeKalb, bartender
- Sheila Bode, St. Charles, bartender
- Amy Davies, Cortland, bartender
- Susan Duewel, Maple Park, bartender
- Kelly N. Ferdinand, Maple Park, bartender
- Keith Nickels, Maple Park, bartender
- Reed T. Overhaug, Maple Park, bartender
- Mary E. Richardson, Maple Park, bartender
- Jennifer Roelfsema, Maple Park, bartender

All 13 are charged with conspiracy to commit gambling and conspiracy to commit keeping a gambling place.

Delaney also is charged with four counts of official misconduct.

Morris also is charged with three counts of official misconduct.

Weeks and Faber also are charged with one count of syndicated gambling.

Source: Illinois Attorney General

Arrested

Continued from page 1

"My guess is they will be visiting that now that circumstances have changed," Attorney General Lisa Madigan said Monday during a visit with *Chronicle* editors.

Village attorney Bob Britz declined to comment on Delaney's and Morris' future with the village.

"That would be up to the (village) board," Britz said. "(Delaney) is still the president until he's convicted or he chooses to resign or if he moves out of Maple Park."

If Morris and Delaney are convicted, they would be forced to resign from their posts. Village presidents and police chiefs cannot serve if they have been convicted of a felony. Nothing prevents either from serving while the investigation continues because both are presumed innocent.

Morris is charged with three counts of official misconduct, one count of conspiracy to commit gambling and one count of conspiracy to commit keeping a gambling place. Morris surrendered to Kane County Sheriff's deputies on Friday. He posted \$5,000 cash and was released. Sheriff's deputies did not take a mug shot of the police chief, as they did with the others arrested in the raid.

Delaney is charged with four counts of official misconduct, as well as conspiracy to commit gambling and conspiracy to commit keeping a gambling place.

Owner Weeks and manager Faber also are charged with syndicated gambling. The two

also allegedly ran a bookmaking operation.

The nine bartenders are charged with conspiracy to commit gambling and conspiracy to commit keeping a gambling place.

All 13 are scheduled to appear in Kane County court on Thursday. Court action will be held in Kane County, although the prosecution will be from the attorney general's office, Madigan said.

After two dozen investigators served a search warrant at the Main Street tavern during a Friday night steak fry on May 28, officials did release Morris' name as among those arrested and charged. However, the next day the attorney general's office retracted the statement, saying the police chief only had been questioned in connection with the gambling.

At that time, Morris told the *Chronicle* that he was aware of possible illegal gambling at the tavern, but he said he could not prove it.

Delaney declined to comment about the charges and said he is in the process of hiring an attorney.

Delaney was elected in 2001, and his term expires in 2005. Morris was appointed police chief in April 2003.

During the raid, a simultaneous warrant was served at Weeks' Yorkville home. Officials have not said how much money they believe was involved in the alleged bookmaking operation. However, investigators said they seized about \$40,000 from Weeks' home and \$15,000 from another residence, officials with the attorney general's office said.

Batavia

OKs Onyx

application

6-8-04 Chronicle

Waste transfer station could open in 2 years

By DAN CHANZIT
Kane County Chronicle

BATAVIA — The city on Monday approved plans for a waste transfer station, but several aldermen rejected the state's process to do so.

City council members voted 12-2 in favor of the facility, which will be built at 766 Hunter Drive on the city's east side. Aldermen Jodi Wollnik and Richard Hart voted no.

Onyx officials said the city's waste transfer station, which will cost between \$5 million and \$8 million to build, could be in operation in about a year or two.

"We are glad the process is over," said James Maher, a regional vice president.

The city considered the company's application to build a station to haul away garbage because Settler's Hill landfill in Geneva is slated to close in 2006.

The 34,600-square-foot transfer station will be a destination for garbage trucks six days a week. Onyx officials said the station is expected to collect about 1,000 tons of garbage a day, and waste collected will be sent to disposal sites.

See BATAVIA, page 2



Hart

Batavia

Continued from page 1

The city will collect about \$500,000 in annual fees.

Yvonne Dinwiddie was among several vocal residents who attended Monday's meeting. She and others accused city officials of selling out property values and safety in exchange for the annual fees.

She also accused council members of having already made up their minds about the waste transfer station before casting their final vote.

"I'm sick and tired of the city selling a bill of goods (to

the residents)," she said.

Hart and several other aldermen blasted the state's process for reviewing applications for pollution control facilities, which required council members to serve in a judicial manner rather than an administrative one.

That prevented aldermen from discussing the matter with their constituents. About a dozen residents attended Monday's city council meeting.

"We could not even respond to questions," Hart said. "This really put us at a disadvantage. It looks very suspicious (to residents). I don't blame them for seeing it that way."

be given priority, edit calls and to use them in any publication, digital form or other service we offer.

6-9-04 Beacon News

came. Memorial Day we mourn and say thanks. Independence Day we celebrate. There is a big difference. I'd like to know how other vets feel about this.

Meg Gorecki's return

It is amazing how our state's attorney can get her job back, like nothing happened, but anyone else has to struggle to find a job when they get out after they have served their time. What kind of system do we have?

Too much of Oprah

In The Beacon News, June 2 Openline someone called in protecting Oprah Winfrey, that whoever called in once before was picking on Oprah because of some of her recent activities. I'm sorry, but the more I see of Oprah Winfrey in later years, she's becoming more and more like a Barbra Streisand. To tell you the truth I'm expecting any day for Oprah to come right out in the open and say, "Holy moly, I'm supporting John Kerry and I'm going to start having fund-raisers for him."

Losing a vote

My Aurora representative, Linda Chapa LaVia, voted for the new horse slaughter house in DeKalb. Now we can feed the Europeans gourmet food. If you don't care if the horses suffer, I do. You just lost my vote for any elections in the future.

6-9-04 Beacon News

Kane bridges will be repaired one at a time

By Jan Ramming
SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

BATAVIA — The bridges of central Kane County are overloaded, according to the county's Department of Transportation, prompting a delay in expected upgrades this year.

Because of the overloaded conditions, work on the Fabyan Parkway bridge will be delayed until spring 2005, after completion of work on the Route 25-Route 56 intersection in North Aurora.

Batavia Mayor Jeff Schielke, who hosted the Kane County Council of Mayors meeting in May, said that the state and county transportation departments had intense discussions on the potential impact of bridge closings.

The intersection enhancements at Routes 56 and 25 in North Aurora will limit traffic on the Route 56 bridge over the river in downtown

North Aurora.

The detour for the Route 56 bridge traffic is projected by the county to be the Fabyan Parkway bridge to the north, between Batavia and Geneva. Therefore, work on the Fabyan bridge, which was scheduled to begin this fall, will be pushed back until next spring.

The Fabyan bridge will be completely shut down for two five-day periods while it is being resurfaced, so construction of the new Wilson Street Bridge in downtown Batavia will be held off until the work on Fabyan is completed. Work on the Wilson Street Bridge has been scheduled to begin in 2006.

The Fabyan Parkway bridge handles about 40,000 cars per day, according to Schielke. He said the Wilson Street Bridge handles about 25,000 cars per day.

County seat moving?

I was reading in another newspaper about them tearing down this building in downtown Geneva. And they were saying about the judicial center in St. Charles. No one is going to tell me that the county of Kane is not slowly turning all our county government into St. Charles. They're not going to pull the wool over my eyes and say that they're not moving the county seat into St. Charles. They have the County Clerk's office in St. Charles, they have the brand new courthouse in St. Charles.

Bad North Aurora intersection

I'm pretty sick and tired with North Aurora. They can run these bogus safety checks, but they can never do anything about that intersection at routes 56 and 25. When you're in the turn lane and the people are coming around on the right, I've darn near gotten hit three or four different times.

Go after real criminals

I'm calling about Lisa Madigan's raid on the bar in Maple Park. I'm really getting tired of seeing the simple people get raided, taxed, and berated. Why don't they go after the real problem. If she wants to get tax money, start investigating all these churches that get away for tax free. I know at times they sell land — they pay no tax. They just inherit money from people. That should all

6-9-04 Beacon News

Kane opposes Edward Hospital Plainfield plan

By Steve Lord

STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — The Kane County Board Tuesday approved a resolution opposing building of a new hospital in Will County.

The board on a 20-4 vote went on record opposing a plan by Edward Hospital in Naperville to build a 146-bed hospital and three-story medical office facility on 60 acres in Plainfield.

Board members said the new hospital would hurt Aurora's two hospitals, Rush-Copley Medical Center and Provena Mercy Center.

"They have asked us to support this," said County Board Chairman Mike McCoy, R-Aurora.

Edward proposed the new hospital near 127th Street and Van Dyke Road in Plainfield, saying the area needs new beds in addition to those Rush-Copley and Provena Mercy provide. The state's Health Facilities Planning Board, however, turned down Edward's application in April.

The board gave Edward a chance to come back June 16, and the Aurora hospitals have been rallying opposition to Edward's proposal.

Board member Gerry Jones, D-Aurora, said when Rush-Copley located its new hospital on the southwestern edge of Aurora, it looked also to serve portions of Kendall and Will counties. At one time, Rush-Copley had a plan for a hospital more in the DuPage

County section of Aurora, which Edward opposed. Jones said Rush-Copley voluntarily relocated "because of Edward's objection."

"To have Edward build their hospital in the same service area as Aurora's hospitals is a potential crisis," Jones said.

Board officials said this is a matter of demographics. Hospitals survive on a mixture of patients who are fully insured, uninsured and any mixture in between. Without the Will and Kendall demographics, the Aurora hospitals might not get enough fully insured patients, Jones said.

The resolution says the new facility "will put low-income county residents at risk of losing access to health care" because the two Aurora hospitals "will suffer a serious financial impact."

"The issue is an important mix of clients the hospital needs to survive," Jones said.

Board member Don Wolfe, R-Elgin, voted against the resolution because he said board members are "fairly ill-informed" about the issue.

"We don't know the other side," he said. "We're sticking our nose into something where we don't know very much."

McCoy said the Health Facilities Planning Board is "an appointed political board."

"So it is a political process," he said. "I think it's appropriate for us to weigh in."

Fact Friend...

Batavia OKs trash transfer station

*b-9-04
Chicago
Tribune*

By Amy Fischer Roth
Special to the Tribune

The Batavia City Council approved a plan Monday for Onyx Waste Services Inc. to build a waste-transfer station on the city's east side, but the issue still raised a stink among several aldermen and residents.

Ald. Richard Hart (1st), who opposed the station, where waste would be stored temporarily before taken to landfills, said, "With any garbage, especially in the summertime, when you open the lid, the odor is overwhelming."

"When [trucks] dump garbage initially on the [tipping] floor, it's going to have an odor," Hart said. "They may not smell it in the community, but rodents will, and they will attract rodents whether they like it or not. There's no way they can prevent the odors from attracting vermin and rodents."

That's true, said Ald. James Volk (4th), who is head of the Pollution Control Committee. "There are always animals around that have to be controlled and can be controlled effectively," Volk said.

Volk said the issue must go before the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and "go through the whole permitting process again." State hearings could take as many as 180 days.

If the state approves Onyx's plan to put the station at 766 Hunter Drive, the company would have to go before the city with its building renovation plans, Volk said.

Several residents who live near the site were dismayed about the Onyx proposal.

Pat Rosauer and his wife, Jan, who live in the Woodland Hills subdivision near the station's proposed site, said they did not know anything about the waste-transfer station until about a month ago.

6-9-04 *Beacon news*

Well-respected, well-liked cop Dan Schindlbeck dies

■ Professionalism and humor: Served Aurora police for 28 years, as undersheriff for decade

By Steve Lord
and Mike Cetera
STAFF WRITERS

GENEVA — Kane County Undersheriff Dan Schindlbeck, one of the most well-known law-enforcement officers in the county, died Tuesday morning of complications from esophageal cancer.

Sheriff Ken Ramsey, Aurora Police Chief William Lawler and others remembered the affable Schindlbeck, 60, as a professional law-enforcement officer, a solid manager, a diplomat, a good friend and a man with a fun sense of humor.

"The Thin Blue Line got a little weaker when Dan Schindlbeck died," said Ramsey, a friend of Schindlbeck for 40 years and a partner in law enforcement almost as long. "Danny was a believer in the power of laughter. He used humor as his foil to deal with the tougher aspects of his job."

About six months ago, Schindlbeck was diagnosed with esophageal cancer.

At the time, the humor was too large for an operation, so he took chemotherapy treatments to shrink it. He then decided to have the surgery. "He wanted the surgery," Ramsey said. "He knew the risks."

May 21, he had the operation, and it was considered so successful that he planned on recovering through the summer and possibly coming back to work at the Sheriff's Department before the end of the year.

But Ramsey said, Schindlbeck developed pneumonia, then double pneumonia, then adult respiratory distress.

"Those things combined just

overwhelmed him," the sheriff said. Schindlbeck died at about 10 a.m. Tuesday. About 20 minutes after that, two sheriff's deputies heard the news as they sat in the Kane County Board meeting. They announced it to the board.

Board members held a moment of silence for Schindlbeck.

"He wanted the surgery," Ramsey

said. "He knew the risks."

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Tax bill snafu has Huber in spotlight

■ Opinions divided:
Fellow assessors defend her, but Kane chairman is critical

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Kane County Supervisor of Assessments Sallie Huber got a vote of confidence Tuesday from assessors throughout the county — but not from the Kane County Board chairman.

Aurora Township Assessor Davis Offutt told the Kane County Board that Huber's performance has been questioned "unjustly" in the past month in regard to a tax bill snafu in which some taxpayers were accidentally denied the federal homestead exemption.

Last week, members of the board's Executive Committee told Huber to send out 27,000 cards to all property taxpayers who did not take the homestead exemption. The exemption is available on all single-family, owner-occupied homes. It is \$3,500 taken off the assessed value of the home, which is applied to the tax rate for taxing purposes.

During 2003, for taxes due this year, Huber purged the assessor's system of duplicates, old properties which have changed hands and situations where people own several properties and were taking the homestead exemption on all of them. Huber said last week she suspects a large percentage of the 27,000 that have not taken the exemption are rental properties.

Offutt, who is head of the Kane County Assessor's Association, said Tuesday he expects that as many 21,000 of those properties were correctly purged from the system. He estimated that would mean about \$5.1 million more in property tax collections for the county.

"That is a substantial savings to the taxing districts of Kane County taxpayers," Offutt said. "All this is due to the initiative of Sallie Huber."

Criticizing performance

But County Board Chairman Mike McCoy, R-Aurora, did not share that view. Although there has been no specific criticism leveled at Huber in the past few weeks, McCoy Tuesday said he "would never reappoint" her as supervisor of assessments. Moreover, he said assessors have changed their tune

HUBER

From Page A1

from as recently as two years ago, when they sent letters urging him to appoint someone new as supervisor. He added that Offutt signed one of those letters.

"That's not true," Offutt said during the meeting.

Semantically, they could both be right. After the meeting, McCoy produced two letters from the Kane County Assessor's Association, one in 1998 and another in 2002, that seem to question Huber's performance. But neither of the letters actually calls for her resignation outright.

The 1998 letter is the most vitriolic. The letter was written after an appearance Huber made at a state educational workshop held by the Illinois Property Assessment Institute in Peoria. Kane assessors said Huber told people at the workshop "that she would like to get rid of the township assessors because, according to her, the assessors do nothing and the Supervisor of Assessments has to do all the assessors' work," according to the letter.

"Sallie Huber's lack of professional judgment has embarrassed both Kane County and the townships, and we feel that this type of behavior should

not be tolerated," the letter says.

No appointment

Huber was unavailable for comment Tuesday afternoon.

Huber's term as supervisor of assessments ran out in 2002. McCoy did not reappoint her, but he did not appoint anyone new either, which means she continues to serve. McCoy said he did not appoint someone else because of changes being made in tax cycle coordination between the supervisor of assessments, the county clerk and the treasurer. He said officials wanted continuity in those changes.

Still, McCoy said he would not reappoint Huber because he said the office is inefficient, and has trouble dealing with the public. He also said she has problems dealing with her employees.

He said he would not make any new appointment with only about five months left in his own term of office.

"I'm not going to put forward any appointments," he said. "I will leave that to the next chairman."

Huber has been supervisor of assessments since 1990, when she was appointed to take over for the retiring A. Corilla Rowcliff. That means Huber has been appointed three times, in 1990, 1994 and 1998. Huber had been Rowcliff's assistant since 1977.

♦ Turn to HUBER, A2

Maple Park trustee calls for officials to resign

6-9-04 Chronicle

Charges against Morris, Delaney divide village

By DAN CHANZIT
Kane County Chronicle

MAPLE PARK — At least one village trustee seeks resignations from the village president and police chief amid allegations of illegal gambling at a popular downtown tavern.

Trustee Dan Humme said the gambling raid that nabbed Village President Mark Delaney and Police Chief Chester Morris is an embarrassment to the village. Both should resign immediately, regardless of their innocence or guilt, to help repair the village's damaged reputation, Humme said.

"I've talked to people in this town and outside this town," Humme said. "They wonder what kind of people we have here in town. I'm embarrassed."

Delaney, Morris and 11 others face gambling conspiracy charges in connection with the May 28 raid on D.J.'s Tavern. If convicted of the felonies, each could be sentenced to up to five years in prison. Delaney and Morris also have been charged with official misconduct.

Village presidents and police chiefs cannot serve if they have been convicted of a felony, but nothing requires the leaders to surrender their positions while the investigation continues because they are innocent until proven guilty.

Delaney, who was elected in 2001, declined to comment until he hires an attorney.

Morris declined comment on whether he plans to resign.

Not all trustees agree that the men should step down, and residents packed the village hall last week to show their support for Delaney and Morris.

See RESIGN, page 2

Resign

Continued from page 1

Trustee Nick Moisa said both should continue working for the village.

"(Delaney) is a fine mayor. For once, we have a mayor with some vision," Moisa said. "And I've always supported (Morris) 100 percent."

Moisa said Delaney has guided the village toward prosperity despite a sharply divided board. Votes almost always are 3-3, and Delaney casts the tie-breaker.

Trustee Terry Borg said he would not support calling for anyone's resignation without reviewing the facts.

"Until we know all the details, there is no action to take," he said. "We do not act on hearsay; we do not act on what we read in the newspaper."

Trustee Ray McAdams, who served as village president from 1993 to 2001, said Delaney should remain as village president.

However, he said Morris should resign immediately.

"I don't support the man, and I never did," McAdams said.

Morris was appointed last year to take over the department. Delaney cast the tie-breaking vote.

According to minutes of the March 15, 2003, village board meeting, several trustees questioned whether Morris was the right person for the job.

"Many of the answers to the questions in the interview were always answered by 'I am glad you brought that up.' It was almost like they were rehearsed answers," Humme said. "We don't need a politician as a police chief."

McAdams said he knew about alleged illegal gambling at the bar when he was village president, but he said he could never prove what was going on.

Still, Morris should have been able to stop it, McAdams said.

"Maple Park has been known as a gambling town," McAdams said. "I tried to stop it when I was mayor, but I could-

not get it done."

Village Trustees Lauri Heyob and Susan Olsen did not immediately return telephone calls Tuesday seeking comment.

Borg and Olsen voted in favor of Morris' appointment; Heyob voted against.

The bar's owner, manager and nine bartenders also face conspiracy charges in connection with the May 28 raid.

The owner and manager also face syndicated gambling charges. Investigators allege that the two ran a bookmaking operation.

Morris is charged with three counts of official misconduct, one count of conspiracy to commit gambling and one count of conspiracy to commit keeping a gambling place.

Delaney is charged with four counts of official misconduct, as well as conspiracy to commit gambling and conspiracy to commit keeping a gambling place.

All 13 arrested are scheduled to appear in Kane County court on Thursday.

Fellow cops remember Schindlbeck

6-9-04 Chronicle
Undersheriff died of cancer on Tuesday

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Law enforcement officials from around Kane County on Tuesday recalled Undersheriff Daniel Schindlbeck as someone who relied on humor to be a good cop.



Schindlbeck
He was a huge believer in laughter," Sheriff Ken Ramsey said. "He used humor as a way to deal with the tougher aspects of our job."

Schindlbeck, of Aurora, died Tuesday at Provena Mercy Hospital in Aurora.

He was 60.

He was diagnosed six months ago with esophageal cancer.

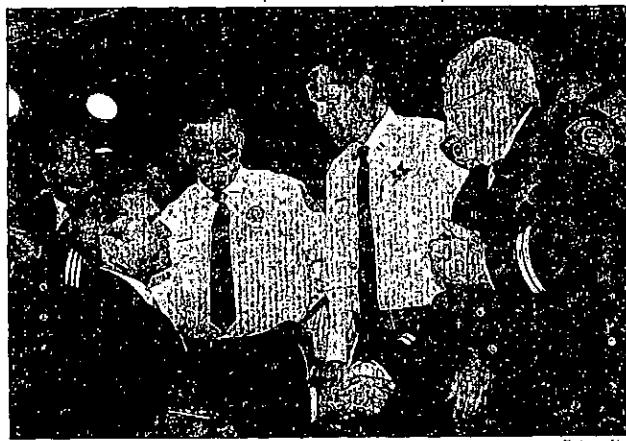
Ramsey spoke hours after hearing of the death of his second-in-command and close friend.

After undergoing surgery May 21, Schindlbeck developed pneumonia and adult respiratory distress, Ramsey said.

"I talked to him moments before he died. I don't know if he heard me. I said 'Goodbye dear friend,'" Ramsey said.

Schindlbeck had served under Ramsey since Ramsey's election in 1994.

See SCHINDLBECK, page 2



Kane County Undersheriff Dan Schindlbeck; right, greets George W. Bush during a campaign stop in 2000. Sheriff Ken Ramsey is at left. Schindlbeck died of cancer on Tuesday.

Schindlbeck: Visitation is Friday

Continued from page 1

Before that, Schindlbeck served with the Aurora Police Department for 28 years. He left Aurora as a lieutenant.

"I will miss him. He was one of a kind," Aurora Police Chief William Lawler said. "He used humor to effectively communicate with people. It was impossible not to like him."

Lawler said Schindlbeck was an innovator in police tactics. He started community crime prevention programs in Aurora before they became popular across the county.

Lawler, who served under Schindlbeck, said his former boss had officers pour through burglary reports to look for similar patterns, times and methods in an effort to solve them. "We made a lot of important arrests by studying those reports," Lawler said.

After Ramsey lured Schindlbeck away from Aurora, the undersheriff often became Ramsey's point man when dealing with the county board on financial and administrative issues.

"He was well-respected around the county," said county board Chairman Mike McCoy, who served on the Public Safety and Corrections and Rehabilitation committees. "I worked with Dan on a lot of issues. He will be sorely missed."

Ramsey recalled when he met Schindlbeck at a restaurant to ask him to be his undersheriff. Ramsey said Schindlbeck in typical fashion "had to talk to 15 people" before sitting down.

Schindlbeck did not know the purpose of the meeting, Ramsey said. After he was told, "For once Daany Schindlbeck was speechless."

Schindlbeck also was popular with central Kane County police officials.

"I'm truly saddened," Batavia Police Chief Dennis Anderson said. "We saw each other quite frequently. He was one of the most respected law enforcement officers I've ever known."

St. Charles Police James Lamkin said he dealt with Schindlbeck a great deal, especially when Lamkin was

deputy chief in Elgin.

"When I needed something from the sheriff's office, I knew I would get a call back. That speaks to the kind of person Dan was," Lamkin said.

"It was great to be around him professionally and socially," Geneva Police Lt. Joseph Frega said. "It's a very sad day for the county. He's going to be greatly missed in the community."

Ramsey said Schindlbeck made it a point to know the workings of the sheriff's office, which also includes running the jail.

"He made it a point to be well-versed in everything. Without a doubt, Danny is going to be missed by everybody," Ramsey said. "He was one of the staunchest allies and biggest cheerleaders. He was always just a very good friend. The thin blue line just got a little weaker when Danny Schindlbeck died."

Visitation will be from 1 to 8 p.m. Friday at Dieterle Memorial Home in Montgomery. Funeral arrangements are pending.



Ben Jenkins — Chronicle photo staff

Eric Carlson of the Kane County Health Department pours mosquito bait into a Gravid trap in St. Charles. The health department is placing these traps throughout the county and collecting mosquitoes in an attempt to identify where West Nile has entered Kane County.

Kane continues West Nile work

Bird found in Wayne tests positive for virus

By PAUL ROCK
Kane County Chronicle

The threat of the West Nile virus might cause some people to shrug with indifference.

But not John Skow.

The Sugar Grove man uses mosquito repellent every time he takes a bicycle ride, just in case he encounters the culex mosquito known to transmit the potentially deadly virus to humans.

No human cases have been reported this year.

Skow realizes that even though he is not as susceptible to the virus as the elderly or infants, precau-

tion is the best course of action. And for good reason. Skow's father, Oakley Skow, was the only Kane County casualty of West Nile during the potent outbreak in 2002 that killed 66 people and led to 884 human cases statewide.

"I am a lot more aware of it than I was," Skow said. "I do a lot of bike riding on the bike paths, and last summer I did use bug spray every single time. Because it hits home. To me it's a big deal."

State, county and local officials consider the West Nile epidemic a big deal, too. That is despite the fact that last summer's relatively cool and dry weather, along with further preventative measures in the form of mosquito abatement and monitoring, limited the spread of the virus.

In 2003, there were 54 cases statewide and one fatality.

Illinois health officials said Monday that a blue jay found last Wednesday in Wayne tested positive for

West Nile virus. Eight birds have tested positive for the virus in Illinois since surveillance began May 1.

Preparations under way

Kane County Health Department workers have been setting traps at potential mosquito breeding grounds so they can test mosquitoes for West Nile.

They also have spent the spring treating the areas where mosquitoes breed best: catch basins, detention ponds, culverts and detention ponds.

"It's a major environmental health program," said Fred Carlson, director of the Kane County Health Department. "It's had to take an important spot in our summer programs."

The culex mosquito that spreads West Nile differs from the more common, and more aggressive, nuisance mosquito.

See MOSQUITO, page 2

Mosquito: Theories try to predict what we can expect

Continued from page 1

While the nuisance mosquito breeds in roadside ditches, swampland and detention ponds, the culex breeds in areas with still water, such as storm sewers, discarded tires and gutters.

Because of the culex's preference for standing water, residents are urged to eliminate those areas around the house.

Carlson said that despite the low impact West Nile had on Kane County last year, the virus will continue to cause problems for the foreseeable future.

"I think it's here to stay," Carlson said. "Hopefully, the severity of it will wane with time. It's very weather dependent."

But if more severe outbreaks like the one in 2002 are repeated, he predicts that people will begin to take more precautions.

"The public will become much more educated on it and will be able to protect families, and will eliminate breeding grounds around the house," Carlson said.

The West Nile threat keeps busy area mosquito abatement companies such as Clarke Mosquito Control.

The company serves 12 Kane County communities and already has begun dropping larvacide tablets in trouble spots and setting traps to keep a watch on mosquito pools, spokeswoman Laura McGowan said.

She said the warm, wet weather that Kane County has experienced this spring does not bode well for those who hope for a repeat of last year's mild West Nile outbreak, nor does the crow that tested positive for the virus in DuPage County earlier this month or the blue jay that was found last Wednesday in Kane County.

"This is very nice mosquito weather," McGowan said. "The crows dying demonstrates the virus is active in the area. There's enough mosquitoes in the area to cause concern."

Hard to predict

Some theories suggest that the most serious local threat of West Nile ended in 2002.

According to one theory, the serious

outbreak that struck Colorado in 2003 implies that the mosquitoes carrying the virus are heading west and might strike the West Coast this year rather than attacking the Midwest again, said Tom Schafer, spokesman for the Illinois Department of Public Health.

Another theory suggests that the 2002 outbreak killed so many crows and blue jays that the spread of West Nile in 2003 was limited.

Under still another theory, West Nile might have the staying power of St. Louis encephalitis, which hit Illinois hard in the mid-1970s with about 200 cases but came back in subsequent years in smaller and smaller doses, Schafer said.

It is too early to tell if West Nile will follow suit, and health officials do not fully understand the virus.

"The fact (West Nile) fell off last year seems to suggest that," Schafer said. "Usually we like to see five years of data before we can make any guesses. This is so new to us there really isn't a pattern yet. West Nile prior to 1999 wasn't identified in the U.S. at all."

With so many theories bouncing around, predicting West Nile's potency this year is nearly impossible.

"Any kind of mosquito epidemic could be cyclical," McGowan said.

"It's hard to predict where these outbreaks will occur. That's why you should always do a proactive mosquito program, because you never know what will crop up."

Schafer said only time and experience will give local, state and national health officials the understanding they need to fight West Nile.

"There's a host of circumstances that come into play," Schafer said.

"We do not fully understand the biology of this virus. Weather seems to have an effect on how mosquitoes breed... but there have been outbreaks elsewhere in the country where weather wasn't the same but they still had big outbreaks."

"We'll look much smarter after this year, and we can point to another year of experience. I don't think anyone will be saying we fully understand it this year."

Avoiding West Nile virus

- Dispose of discarded tires, cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots or other unused water-holding containers.
- At least once a week, empty standing water from containers such as tire swings or birdbaths.
- Fill in tree-rot holes and hollow stumps that can hold water.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers that are left outdoors.
- Clean clogged roof gutters.
- Turn over plastic wading pools when not in use. Change water in bird baths and wading pools weekly.
- Aerate ornamental pools or stock them with fish.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools that are not being used.
- Keep drains, ditches and culverts free of grass clippings, weeds and trash so that water will drain properly.
- Fill in low areas on your property to eliminate standing water.
- Report possible mosquito breeding sites to local mosquito control agencies.
- Minimize time spent outdoors between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Be sure that door and window screens are tight-fitting and in good condition.
- Wear shoes, socks, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt when outdoors for long periods or when mosquitoes are most active. Clothing should be light colored and made of tightly woven material to keep mosquitoes away from the skin.
- Mosquito repellents that contain 25 percent to 35 percent DEET work best for adults. Use lower concentrations of DEET for children. Do not use products containing DEET on infants.
- Bug zappers and sound devices do little to reduce biting mosquitoes.
- Outdoor insecticidal fogs or mists are effective only for short times.

Source: Illinois Department of Public Health

6-10-04 Chicago Tribune
Kane assessors back purge of erroneous tax breaks

By William Presecky
Tribune staff reporter

Offutt said. "This is after reinstatement of those that are qualified," he said.

Kane County's township assessors are defending a decision made last year to "clean up" property assessment rolls so only homeowners eligible for a popular tax break would receive it this year, saving the county millions.

The 16 assessors, who evaluate property in their jurisdictions for tax purposes, told the County Board this week that Supervisor of Assessments Sallie Huber was the target of "undeserved attacks."

Speaking on behalf of his colleagues, Aurora Township Assessor Davis Offutt said Huber's decision to purge the exemption list will eliminate millions of dollars in erroneous tax breaks. "By the time the dust settles, [former exemptions worth about \$5.1 million in taxes] will be correctly purged,"

The exemption can represent an annual tax savings of \$200 to \$300, depending on the tax rate. Taxpayers routinely are able to collect the savings by applying for a certificate of error with the supervisor of assessments, after which a downward tax adjustment is made or a refund is issued.

Because many homeowners did not reapply, the County Board has insisted that Huber send out notices to remind them of the oversight and advise them about the adjustment process.

6-10-04 Chicago
Kane's
tax bill
system
criticized

By William Presecky

Tribune staff reporter

Kane County property tax bills could be extremely late—a month or longer—and the potential financial consequences dire next year unless the County Board acts quickly to update the system's computer technology. County Treasurer David Rickert warned Wednesday.

A roughly two-week delay in issuing bills this year will pale by comparison in 2005 if the board does not act within the next few weeks to set in motion an estimated \$300,000 to \$400,000 upgrade of the county's tax system technology, Rickert said.

"We've got a serious problem with our tax system, and we need to fix the problem, or next year it will be worse," Rickert told the County Board's Finance Committee. "The current tax system is breaking down."

As an example, Rickert said about 4,000 tax bills, of the roughly 155,000 he mailed last month, were returned because they contained an inaccurate address.

Without an initiative to consolidate property-tax data among the county's supervisor

SYSTEM: Treasurer pushes for tech upgrade

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of assessments, clerk and treasurer—each office has a separate role in calculating and processing tax bills—next year's bills could be mailed in July or August, Rickert predicted.

Typically, property-tax bills are mailed around May 1 and are payable in equal installments

June 1 and Sept. 1.

Kane's bills were mailed around May 14 this year.

Any delay in the collection and redistribution of property tax revenue denies units of local government, such as school and park districts, at a minimum, access to cash and, at worse, forces many to undertake costly, short-term borrowing to tide them over while they wait for the money.

"The taxing districts are in serious jeopardy," Rickert said.

The politically charged issue could come before the County Board's Executive Committee as soon as Thursday.

Despite more than two years of on-again, off-again talks by tax officials over how to solve the

computer-related woes, "we're at somewhat of an impasse over what needs to be done," Rickert said.

"We're at the point where the board has to force this tax group to fix this problem," he said. "They would have to implement it now to have it in place for next year."

Rodger Fahnstock, director of the county's Information Technologies Department, said, "The biggest issue is there is no continuum of the database."

"You have disjointed processes, which means you don't know what the other part is doing. That's where your problem is, consistency of work product from office to office. You need to have the same database."

PLEASE SEE SYSTEM, PAGE 7

6-36-04 BEACON NEEDS

Kane to build radio cell tower

By Steve Lord

STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Kane County Transportation officials plan to build a new cell tower at the department headquarters on Burlington Road.

Transportation officials will use the tower for a pair of two-way radio antennas for voice communications. Officials also will put a new microwave dish there for a countywide computer network.

Currently, the radio antennas are on the water tower at the complex. But officials plan significant repair of the water tower in the coming year, which

would require removing the antennas.

Officials said moving the antennas and wires to a new location would cost \$35,000. For \$55,000, officials told the County Board's Transportation Committee Friday, they could build the new 160-foot tower and put three platforms on it.

One platform would take care of the county's needs, and the county could rent the other two for money-making ventures. County officials could rent to private cell or Internet providers, said Paul Rogowski, transportation director.

The tower is planned to be built next to Building E, which is the new maintenance building.

6-36-04 Delays herald Rains delay Orchard Road work

By PATRICK WALDRON

Daily Herald Staff Writer

This month's string of heavy rain caused significant flooding along Orchard Road in Aurora and put the road's reconstruction project three weeks behind schedule, county transportation officials said Friday.

In one of the storms, 3.5 inches of rain dropped on the area in about five hours June 12 causing the lanes and a detention pond still being excavated to flood.

Despite the setback, the contractors have told county officials they intend to bring in extra work crews to get things back on schedule. "I don't think there is anything to get nervous about," said Paul Rogowski, director of the county's transportation division.

Work on Orchard Road between Prairie Street and Indian Trail represents the county's largest construction areas.

project this year. At a cost of \$13.5 million, one lane in each direction is being added to the 2.2-mile stretch of road.

The job includes a complete resurfacing, additional turn lanes, intersection improvements and three new traffic lights.

Work started this spring and is scheduled to finish by the end of next summer. Rogowski said if no additional delays occur, the overall schedule should hold, including the goal of having the lanes built before this winter.

Part of the construction project includes building additional storm water retention ponds to collect rainwater running off the new road. Even though the retention pond, located south of Galena Boulevard, was not fully constructed when the storms hit, the area did hold millions of gallons of water that county transportation officials say prevented flooding in nearby residential areas.

BURNING ORDINANCES

Smell the air

To the person who lives in Bristol where burning is still allowed, I really sympathize with them. I live in Kane County where burning is no longer allowed, and you don't know what a difference it has made. Our windows can be open now and we can smell fresh air. Yes, it sure made a difference.

Florence Vanduser, Aurora

Filled with smoke

This is for the landscaping company in Bristol on Cannonball Trail who insists upon burning their rubbish from who knows where, that fills my house with smoke and pesticide residue. The next call I make will be to the EPA. I am sick and tired of having my house filled with smoke. I can't open my windows on a beautiful summer day.

6-26-04 Beacon News

Panel recommends keeping Kane jail medical service

By Steve Lord

STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Despite concerns Kane County has been overcharged, a Kane County Board committee Thursday recommended staying with the company that has been providing medical services to the Kane County jail.

The Correction and Rehabilitation Committee recommended staying with the company Wexford through November, but committee members also endorsed looking at the situation again to see if they would stay with Wexford through November 2005.

The recommendation came after representatives from the Kane County sheriff's office negotiated with Wexford to lower its costs.

"I felt, after sitting in on several of the meetings, that the level of cooperation was there with Wexford," said Corrections Chairman Karen McConaughay, R-St. Charles. She added that, although county officials have had questions about their prices, Wexford has been "a good provider" of medical services.

The motion to retain Wexford, at least for the next 5-1/2 months, came from board member Jan Carlson, R-Elburn, even though

he has been outspoken about the costs.

"It's obvious we've been grossly overcharged," he said.

The board has been looking into the possibility of a new medical service provider to cut down on the about \$1.3 million contract it has with Wexford. Commander of Administration James McCurry said the county already has run about \$120,000 over that contract price this fiscal year.

Committee members were more inclined to consider keeping Wexford after McCurry said he was able to negotiate lower increases that are contained in the contract.

He said he was able to get a planned increase of 7.5 percent for the rest of this year down to 6 percent, and a proposed 6 percent increase for the 2005 fiscal year knocked down to 4.5 percent.

He also got Wexford to agree to other items county officials asked about, including more accountability with the hours it spends at the jail.

McCurry added that, when officials get an audit of costs from Wexford at the end of the fiscal year, he will go over the items with the state's attorney's office to see if there are areas the county can recover some costs from Wexford.

6-26-01 Beacon News

Kane County highway plans: no new money, no new projects

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — The 2005 Kane County Transportation Department budget can be summed up simply: no new money, no new projects. Transportation officials still are working on the budget, and will be presenting a draft of it to the County Board's Transportation Committee in August.

But Tom Rickett, of KDOT, told

committee members Friday that 2005 will feature the continuation of projects already under way, with money already accounted for.

"We're at the point where we have no money for capital projects, except for impact fees," Rickett said.

Impact fees are the one new source of revenue to the department. They were enacted earlier this year after about two years of study and preparation. Impact fees

charge developers a sliding scale for the cost of transportation projects their developments will impact.

Still, officials have said impact fees will cover only about 8 percent of the cost of road projects. Rickett said Friday the committee and department will discuss how they want to handle impact fee money. The total budget projected for 2005 in transportation is about \$19.8 million. That matches an estimated

\$19.8 million expected to come into the department in revenue from the department's eight budgets, including the County Highway Fund, the County Bridge Fund, the County Matching Fund, the Motor Fuel Tax Fund, the Local Option Motor Fuel Tax Fund, the Bond Construction Fund, the Transportation Capital Fund and the Impact Fee Fund.

Rickett said there are no new projects planned for 2005. The major

continues in 2005 include:

- Orchard Road widening from Prairie Street to Indian Trail in Aurora.
- The extension of the Metra West Line from Geneva to Elgin.
- Fox River bridges.
- The intersection of Dunham and Stearns roads with Route 25 near South Elgin.
- The intersection of Kirk Road and Route 56 in Batavia and Aurora.
- The intersection of Kirk Road and Route 38 in Geneva.
- The intersection of Randall Road

and Route 64 in St. Charles.

■ The McLean Boulevard widening in Elgin.

■ The extension of the Metra West Line from Geneva to LaFox and Elgin.

■ The intersection of Dunham and Stearns roads with Route 25 near South Elgin.

■ Also included are various small bridge replacements and maintenance and safety improvements.

Rickett said the budget includes no increase in the number of employees for the year.

5

6-26-04 Daily Herald

East-West road idea includes bridge

Kane County makes plans for burgeoning traffic

By PATRICK WALDRON
Daily Herald Staff Writer

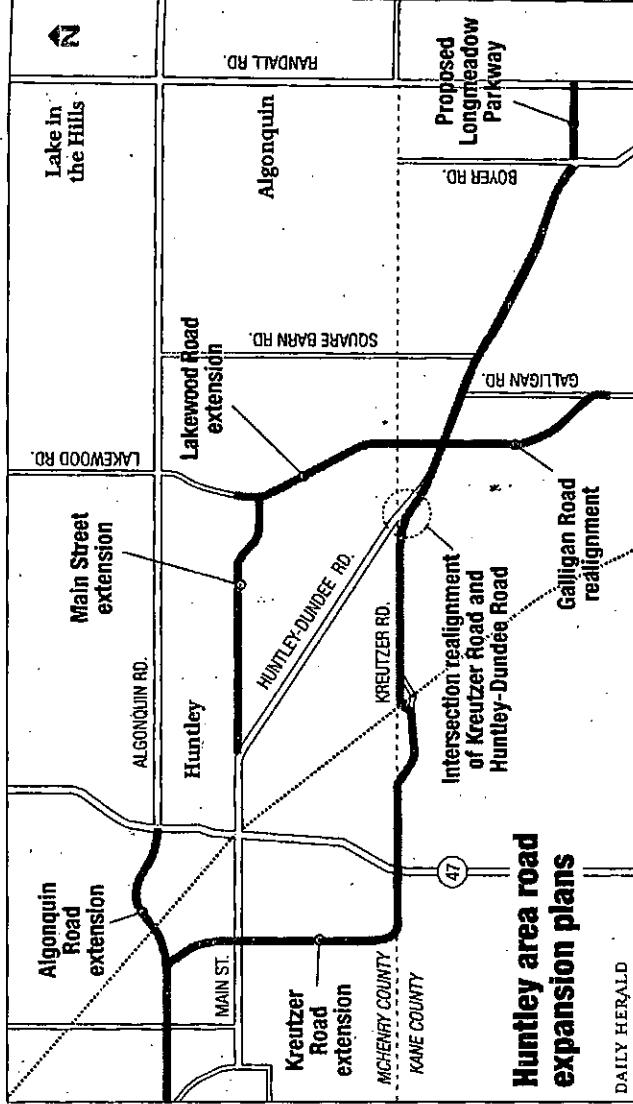
Today Dundee and Huntley roads near the county line remain small — though heavily traveled — rural roads connecting four of Kane and McHenry counties' fastest growing towns. But in 20 years, those roads will grow into a vital east-west thoroughfare and possibly become the natural western leg of the Longmeadow Parkway bridge corridor.

Transportation and planning officials from Algonquin, Huntley, Gilberts and Carpentersville, along with both counties, have come up with a master plan for the roads that will carry some of the estimated 250,000 new residents expected to move into the region by 2030.

"It's an effort to make sure this is done correctly and to lock it in place when development comes," said Tom Rickert, assistant director of Kane County's transportation division.

An overview of the concept developed by the municipalities was presented to the Kane County Board's transportation committee Friday.

Expanding the now two-lane stretches of Huntley, Dundee and



Huntley area road expansion plans

between Carpentersville, Huntley, Gilberts and Algonquin fill in with new homes, the Huntley-Dundee Road stretch is seen as a new retail corridor.

Put it all together and Huntley Road west of Galligan Road — which carried an average of 6,717 cars a day according to 2000 statistics — should see its traffic easily quadruple.

"We need this with or without a bridge," Rickert said.

"Looks good," he said. But even without a Bolz Road bridge, a long-term regional transportation project that

doesn't have the money to become a reality, Kane County officials see road improvements that must be done.

"It's all going to happen with development," said Kane County Engineer Carl Schoedel.

As the thousands of acres

and Kreutzer roads west of Randall Road to four lanes are considered central to the entire vision.

That expansion into a regional arterial road becomes more important when it is tied into Longmeadow Parkway, now about a mile-long stretch of residential road but proposed as centerline for a future Fox River bridge.

Under this plan, Huntley Road connects at Boyer Road just west of Randall Road with an expanded Longmeadow Parkway. Move the plans to the Kane County Board's transportation committee Friday, the way to the Fox River in the form of a new bridge that connects to Bolz Road in

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6-27-04 Chronicle

Thanks to all who helped Schindlbeck

To the Editor:

For all you did in our time of grief, I would like to express our deepest gratification and appreciation on behalf of the family of Daniel Schindlbeck and the men and women of the Kane County Sheriff's Office.

We want to extend a special thank you to the highly skilled professionals at Provena Mercy Hospital in Aurora. From the directors, nurses and technicians, to everyone we had contact with, we were dealt with with sincerity and professionalism of the highest degree and for this, we will always be grateful.

A special thanks to the law enforcement community for their outpouring of support, as well as to the media for their caring coverage. Especially to the *Kane County Chronicle* and the Daily Herald for showing their respect and courtesy of requesting permission to cover the funeral even though they didn't have to.

The magnificent response from area fire departments especially Batavia, North Aurora and the Aurora Fire Department is greatly appreciated.

We want to extend an extra special expression of appreciation for the exceptionally high level of professionalism shown by the members of the Kane County Sheriff's Office.

Our deepest gratitude to all the wonderful people at Dieterle's Funeral Home for the love and care expressed.

An extra statement of gratitude to retired Kane County Sgt. John

Stoffa for his Herculean efforts in planning and executing such a singular funeral.

Kenneth R. Ramsey
Kane County Sheriff

6-26-04 Daily Herald

Randall S-curve project scheduled to begin July 6

BY PATRICK WALDRON

Daily Herald Staff Writer

The latest set of lane closures along Randall Road could start in less than two weeks with the construction of a new center median along the road's so-called S-curve in St. Charles Township.

Work is scheduled to begin July 6 and county transportation officials said drivers should expect to see periodic day-long lane closures throughout the project, expected to last four to six weeks.

"It's going to impact traffic, there is no doubt," said Paul Rogowski, director of the county's transportation division.

Crews will install a 1,400-foot-long median on Randall Road, roughly between the Ferson Creek bridge and Red Haw Lane, designed to stop

vehicles from crossing over into oncoming traffic.

The project was pitched as a major safety improvement in the S-curve that has been the scene of several accidents including one head-on crash in November that killed a St. Charles North High School senior.

Following that incident, several residents and North students began pressuring county officials to improve safety along that stretch of Randall Road. Stepped-up traffic enforcement from the Kane County Sheriff's Office, a lower speed limit and the new median are the highlights of the county safety improvements.

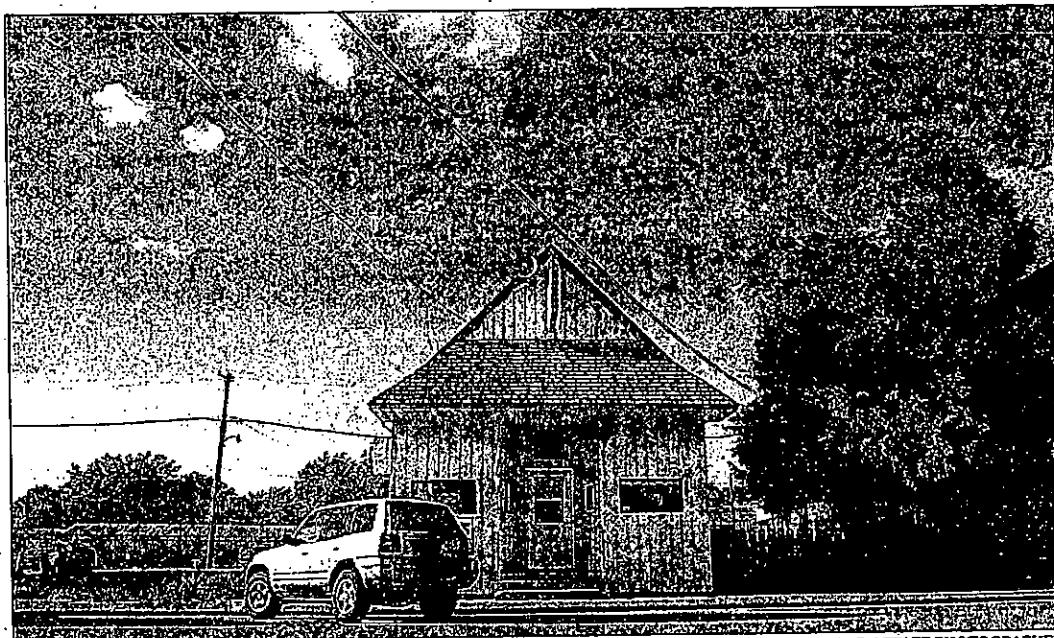
The median will be 9 feet wide and 9 inches tall. Its construction will reduce the lanes on that part of Randall from 12 feet to 11 feet. It will cost \$186,000.

6-27-04
Beacon news

A BEACON NEWS SPECIAL REPORT: GAMBLING IN MAPLE PARK

THE POINT OF CONTROVERSY

GAMBLING ARRESTS IN BAR ONLY FUEL DIVISION IN SMALL TOWN



STEVE ROSENBERG / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Authorities say D.J.'s Tavern West in Maple Park was frequent site of illegal gambling, ranging from video slots to bookmaking. Thirteen people, including the village's mayor and police chief, have been indicted in connection with gambling charges.

Officials: Illegal activity blatant

By Mike Cetera
STAFF WRITER

MAPLE PARK — The gamblers inside a tavern frequented by village leaders bet no one would interfere with their scheme, flouting before strangers the games of chance inside, new court documents show.

A highly organized gambling operation that extended beyond coin-operated video slots to more lucrative pursuits such as bookmaking was set up inside D.J.'s Tavern West in this tiny village, according to records associated with last month's raid of the bar. The tavern had established payout rules, a separate cash register to handle bets and a disregard for concealing illegal activity.

Thirteen people, including the village's mayor and police chief, have been indicted on charges related to the Illinois State Police investigation.

Authorities allege the gambling

❖ Turn to CONTROVERSY, A7

The partyers against the nonpartyers'

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

MAPLE PARK — For most of its life, Maple Park has been easy to bypass.

The village on the border of Kane and DeKalb counties was a blip along Route 38, hardly noticeable to a car racing past the intersection

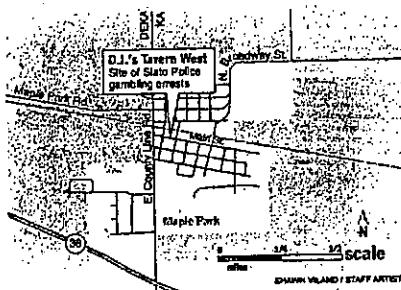
with County Line Road at 65 mph. And folks there liked it that way.

"It was always the fight of the old against the new," says Ruth Caine, a resident for more than 40 years, and a two-term member of the Village Board in the 1970s. "The divided feelings were always here, to a certain extent. But not in the same way now that it was then."

Yes, Maple Park is a town divided — literally, by County Line Road north and south, which puts almost half of the village in DeKalb County, and the other half in Kane; and by the Union Pacific Railroad tracks east and west.

But those geographic boundaries

❖ Turn to MAPLE, A7



SHAWN VILAND / STAFF ARTIST

CONTROVERSY

From Page A1

bravado extended to Maple Park Mayor Mark Delaney's frequent visits, who bragged to undercover investigators that village police would do nothing to stop the activities.

When the undercover officers asked about the police presence in D.J.'s, the mayor told them, "they had nothing to worry about," according to a State Police account of the investigation. He told the undercover officers that the Maple Park officer was just walking through the bar, doing a community policing thing, and insisted that no action would be taken against any of the gamblers.

Delaney declined comment on this charge, or any other, because of the pending case against him.

Past and current village officials and two federal lawsuits allege that village police would do nothing because those who tried in the past had been fired. Delaney has denied the allegations in the civil lawsuits, and most of the defendants in the gambling raids have pleaded not guilty.

Much of the new information about the gambling investigation is contained in an affidavit requesting a search warrant of the bar manager's cell phone. A judge authorized that search as well as searches of the tavern and the Yorkville home of bar owner David L. Weeks.

The documents contain specific allegations about the gambling activity at the bar and the roles played by several of those charged in the investigation. The documents detail the frequent gambling activity of the mayor, who was observed on numerous occasions collecting winnings and paying off debts incurred on the tavern's nine video poker machines.

What the records don't explain is how the investigation began. A spokesman for the State Police declined to elaborate.

Some suggest earlier inquiries by village police officers set the probe in motion. A spokesman for Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan said, "only that the investigation was spurred by a citizen complaint."

"That village has been out of control for more than three years now," said Lenny Stover, a former police officer and interim chief. Stover left the force after the Village Board hired current Chief Chester Morris instead of him in 2003.

Stover said Delaney knew several years ago about the officers' investigations of him and several members of the Village Board.

"That's why they got rid of them," Stover said.

Pervasive gambling

During the State Police investigation, undercover officers visited the tavern three dozen times over 10 months, observing and participating in a variety of games. The bar offered video slot machines, football and NASCAR pools and a \$1 dice game with payouts ranging from a free drink or six pack of beer to cash depending upon the roll.

Authorities also allege D.J.'s was home to a bookmaking operation that was run by the bar's manager, Michael J. Faber. State Police said they collected more than \$4,000 in winnings from at least 20 bets during the investigation.

The bets were made either in person or over the phone, and gamblers were required to pay losses to Faber on subsequent Thursdays, documents allege. Winnings were available at a different time.

Slot machine winnings were monitored by the bartenders, who verified the gamblers' credits from a tally box located behind the bar, court records allege. Credits won on the machines were calculated for cash payouts.

Police allege they saw Delaney take payouts on at least five dates. On July 11, 2003, the mayor collected a \$210 payout from machine No. 6, police said.

The mayor then commented that he had placed \$10 in the machine and was paid \$210, and said that it was not a bad investment, under-

cover officers said in court records.

Prior allegations

The village's reputation for supporting illegal gambling is nothing new. One village official recently characterized it as a poorly kept secret.

And gambling allegations play a role in at least one of two pending federal lawsuits against the village. Both lawsuits argue that former Maple Park police officers were fired or placed on administrative leave in part because they were investigating gambling at village taverns and illegal conduct by Delaney.

Former officer John Mittwick said during an interview that he approached the State Police several years ago about illegal gambling at D.J.'s because the department



STEVE ROSENBERG/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Playing near a giant old maple tree, Maple Park residents watch as their children play baseball against a team from Elburn. Some Maple Park residents say the recent gambling arrests at D.J.'s Tavern have accentuated the deep divisions within the village.

Where Delaney's money went

July 1: Maple Park Mayor Mark Delaney wins \$210 from the slot machine.
July 4: Delaney wins one or more payouts from the slot machine.
July 30: Delaney plays and wins at spin-the-wheel lottery.
Aug. 30: Delaney wins one or more payouts from the slot machine.
Oct. 5: Delaney wins one or more payouts from the slot machine.
Jan. 24: Delaney wins \$150 payout from the slot machine.

didn't have the clandestine means to conduct the investigation itself.

Mittwick and former officer John Cotter allege they were fired from their part-time village jobs in retaliation for their investigations of Delaney.

Both men initially looked into a complaint made by Ray McAdams, a former village president and current board member of a misappropriation of village funds. McAdams

today says no funds ever were missing, although he considers the fund transfer improper.

In his lawsuit, Cotter notes that

"illegal gambling, narcotics and underage drinking in bars" was investigated and reported to the State Police.

Cotter said officers also investigated complaints that Village Board Member Susan Olsen threatened a

Maple Park resident during a traffic

incident and false claims by Morris

before he was hired that he was a

deputy coroner with the Kane County

coroner's office.

Cotter and Mittwick said Delaney

knew of the investigations for

which they were fired.

"I think justice has been served in

one sense that we have identified

these are morally corruptible people," Mittwick said of the pending

gambling charges.

Even so, an attorney representing the village said there's no connection between the officers' termination and the gambling investigation. Attorney William Kurnik said Delaney wasn't aware of any investigation of the village by the Police Department and suggested the allegations were "conveniently generated after the fact."

Kurnik, of the Des Plaines law firm Knight, Hoppe, Kurnik and Knight, said Mittwick was fired and Cotter placed on administrative leave for unethical behavior. Allegations in the lawsuit contend Mittwick illegally represented himself as a DeKalb County sheriff's deputy and disobeyed orders of a superior police officer.

Cotter sought "to obtain personal advantage for himself" at a St. Charles store by claiming to be an undercover police officer and for displaying license plates on his personal vehicle registered to the village.

Mittwick denied the allegations. At trial, the village plans to argue the men were at-will employees and the Village Board was not bound by any personnel rules.

Kurnik said the village took no action against the men for "any whistleblower activities."

MAPLE

From Page A1

are only symbolic of the division in this village's soul these days. Political feelings have become personal, and the events of the past several years involving the village's police department, and the goings on at a downtown tavern where the State Police recently arrested 13 people on gambling charges — including Village President Mark Delaney and Police Chief Chester Morris — have polarized Maple Park residents more so than perhaps ever before.

"This is the worst thing I've ever seen, and I've been here a long time," says Trustee Ray McAdam, a former village president. "I moved into town in 1958, and I was raised about a mile out of town. The town is so divided, and the board is right down the middle."

The most visible sign of the town's division has been the Village Board, which almost always ends up voting 3-3 on every item that doesn't require a rubber stamp, with Delaney breaking the tie. Trustees Nick Moisa and Terry Borg recently suggested the division is so inviolate that perhaps all trustees should resign and an entire new six-person board should be appointed.

"It's been divided before, but not this bad," Moisa says.

Running the town

Moisa, however, says the staunch division on the Village Board might not translate to the town's population as a whole. He himself became a board member more than three years ago, when he was appointed because the spot was vacant and no one else would do it. He said many Maple Park residents lead busy lives and do not concern themselves with the town government.

"Maple Park is pretty much a bedroom community," he says. "People are not that involved."

But they are at least talking about the recent arrests of the 13 people at D.J.'s Tavern West on Main Street downtown. The arrests are only the most public manifestation of a feud that has simmered for the past few years.

It actually goes back to when McAdam was village president, and he assigned two part-time Maple Park police officers to look into what he thought was a questionable money transfer. That led the officers to look into gambling going on at D.J.'s Tavern West.

Both those officers are suing Maple Park now in federal court, saying that after Delaney was elected village president in 2001, he had the officers fired for investigating the bar. Eventually, the board ended up in a heated debate in 2003 surrounding the hiring of Morris as police chief. He was hired on a 3-3 vote, with Delaney breaking the tie.

Some village residents say the police chief fight, and now the gambling charges, show that the division in town all centers around the downtown bar. One resident, who wished to remain anonymous, said the division is known as "the partyers against the nonpartyers."

"If there's something at City Hall about that bar, or something about the police, all those people come down there and pack the place and yell and scream," the person says. "But if it's something about a sewer project or something, nobody comes down. Basically, the gamblers are running the town. I think the amazing fact is that it was done so openly. You could see it happening all the time."

Peg Yeagen, owner of Peg's on Main, a hair salon across Main Street from D.J.'s, said she has not seen a division in town so much, but admitted, it is the topic of conversation.

"I have a lot of clients who live on farms out of town, or in other towns around here," she says. "They come in and ask, 'What the heck's going on?' It's not that everyone's ignoring it. I just don't think most people care there's machines in there. If it's illegal, it's illegal. I guess what they were doing was wrong."

A budding gem?

Yeagen pointed out that in a town like Maple Park, everyone knows everyone else — and she knows Delaney and Morris well.

"I know most of those people (who were arrested)," she says. "They're all nice people."

"It's put a lot of strain on some decent people's lives, I know that," Moisa says.

Andrew Anderson, a resident of Heritage Hills, the new subdivision on the DeKalb County side of town, said what most people hear so far is "a lot of opinions, rumors, a lot of he said, she said."

He has been upset about the division on the Village Board, and some of the meetings he attended where police issues were discussed.

"There just a lot of yelling," he says. "That is not a town meeting, in my eyes."

Still, he considers the 13 arrests at the tavern "the biggest setup anyone has ever seen."

"Is it that big of a deal, in the middle of nowhere?" says Anderson. "Yeah, they turned over some coin, no doubt. But aren't there bigger fish to fry? Nobody got hurt by this."

Other residents disagreed. Although they would not be specific, some talked about arca people losing household money gambling at the bar, some even losing significant amounts.

Caine said a friend of hers put it best when he said, "There'll be a few more groceries on people's tables if that place closes."

"There were a lot of people who spent that money there," she says. "I don't think the arrests are a black mark on the town. The black mark is that people believe it doesn't matter. I tell my neighbors, illegal is illegal."

Despite divisive opinions, Maple Park residents still have faith in their village. Almost to a person, people end their comments on a positive note. Caine says Maple Park is "a good place"; Anderson calls it "a nice little town."

"If people show the interest, and spend the time," says Moisa, "I've always said we have an opportunity to make this village the gem of Kane County."

\$10,000 gift to buy emergency shelter trucks

By Jim Berndt
Berndt@journaltimes.com
11:00 a.m. Friday, July 13, 2012

The Fox River Chapter of the American Red Cross has received a \$10,000 grant from the Alfred Bersted Foundation to expand the agency's sheltering capacity.

The grant will enable the agency to finish a project it started two years ago to develop off-site shelters.

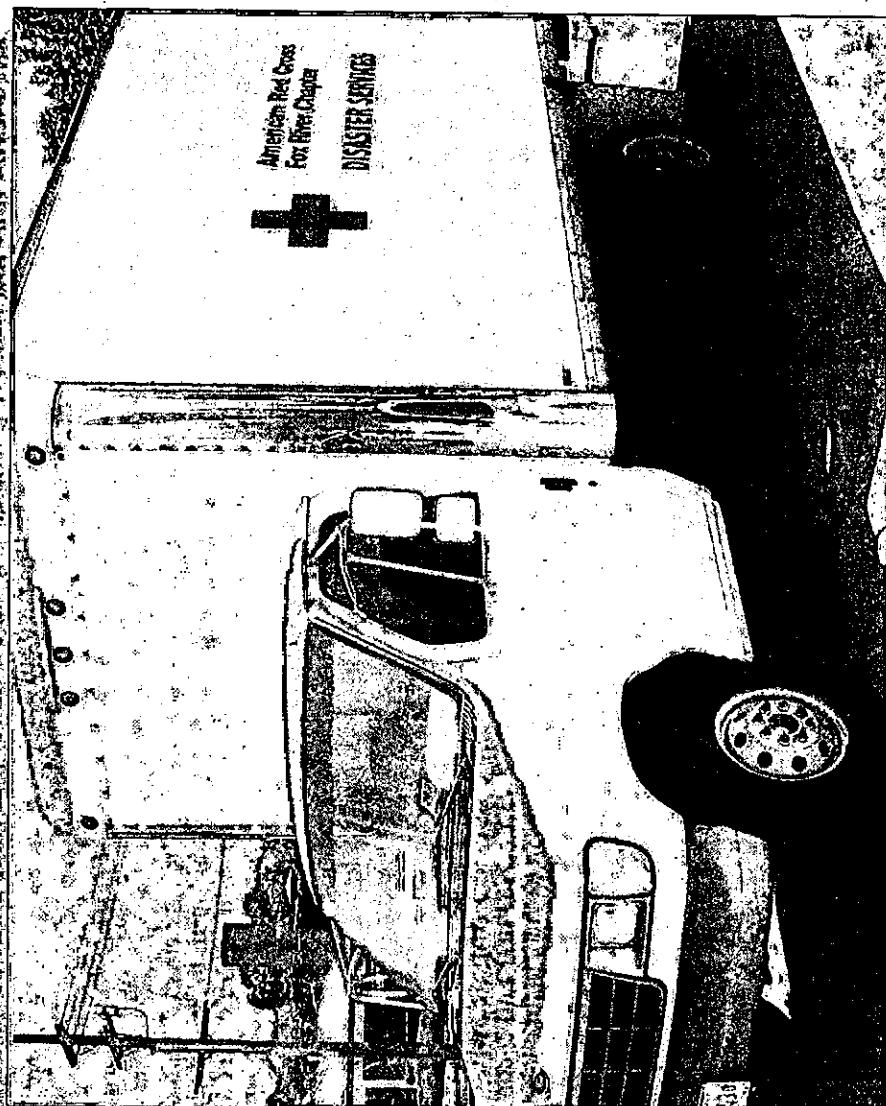
The chapter purchased two shelter trucks in 2002 using funds donated by the Kane County Board and a former board member. One of the trucks was equipped with 200 cots, blankets, comfort kits and other supplies needed to set up a complete shelter for use as emergency housing following a disaster.

The chapter needed another truck to be adequately prepared in case of emergency, but didn't have enough money. The Bersted funds will provide for the second truck. The Fox River Chapter shelter trucks will be available for use throughout DeKalb, DuPage and McHenry counties if needed.

The Fox River Chapter of the American Red Cross was founded in 1917 to help people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. For details, call (630) 443-8844 or visit www.redcross.org/1/foxriver.

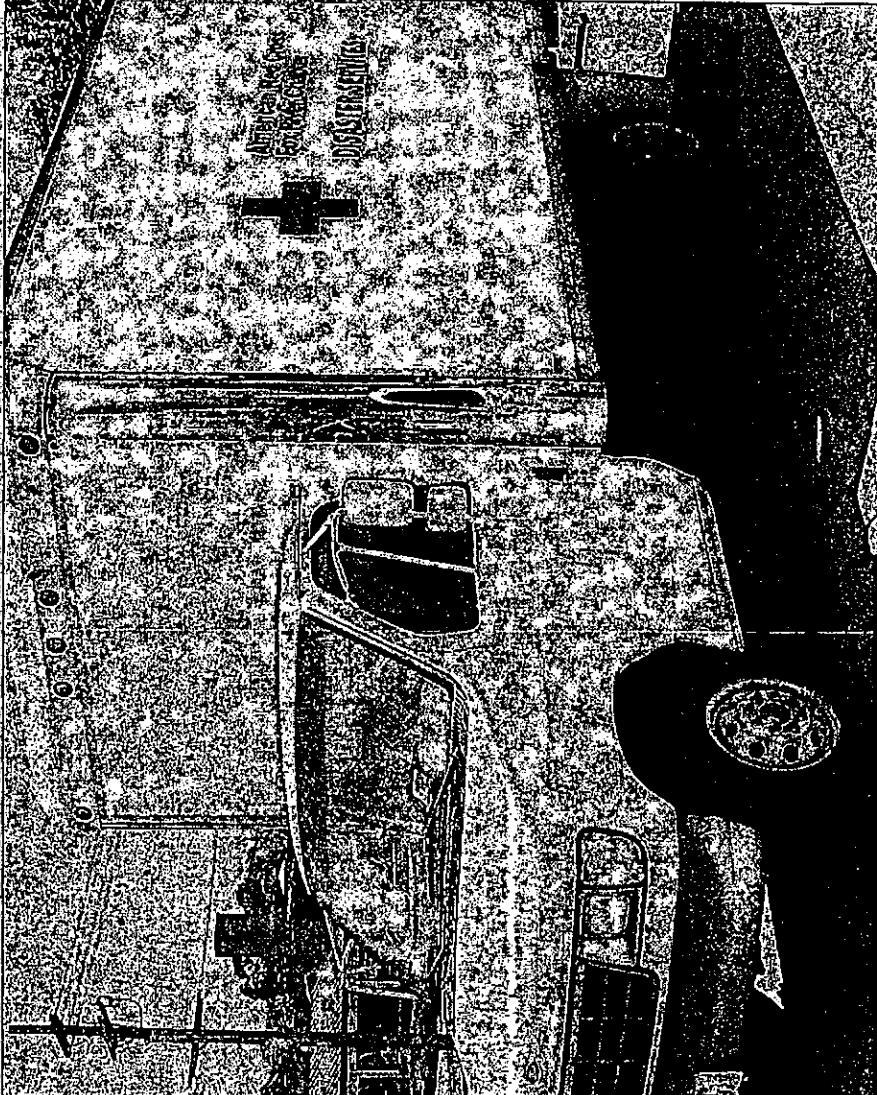
The Alfred Bersted Foundation provided a \$10,000 grant to the Fox River Chapter of the American Red Cross for the purchase of a second truck equipped to develop off-site shelters in case of emergency.

The trucks are equipped with cots, blankets, comfort kits and other supplies.



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Alfred Bersted Day \$10,000 gift to buy emergency shelter trucks



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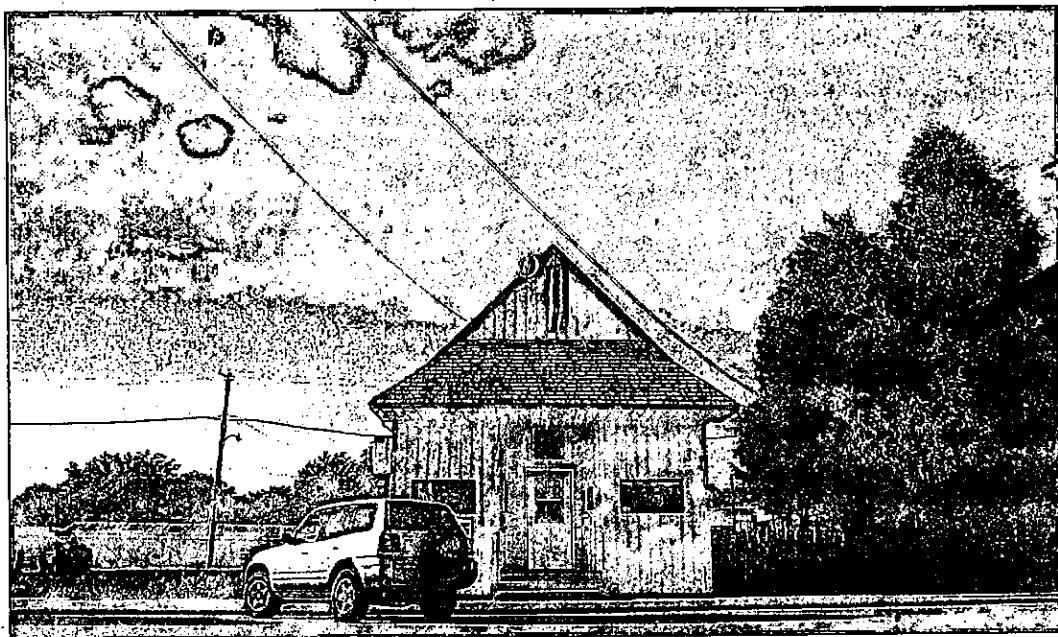
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6-27-04
Beacon news

A BEACON NEWS SPECIAL REPORT: GAMBLING IN MAPLE PARK

THE POINT OF CONTROVERSY

GAMBLING ARRESTS IN BAR ONLY FUEL DIVISION IN SMALL TOWN



STEVE ROSENBERG / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Authorities say D.J.'s Tavern West in Maple Park was frequent site of illegal gambling, ranging from video slots to bookmaking. Thirteen people, including the village's mayor and police chief, have been indicted in connection with gambling charges.

Officials: Illegal activity blatant

By Mike Cetera
STAFF WRITER

MAPLE PARK — The gamblers inside a tavern frequented by village leaders bet no one would interfere with their scheme, flouting before strangers the games of chance inside, new court documents show.

A highly organized gambling operation that extended beyond coin-operated video slots to more lucrative pursuits such as bookmaking was set up inside D.J.'s Tavern West in this tiny village, according to records associated with last month's raid of the bar. The tavern had established payout rules, a separate cash register to handle bets and a disregard for concealing illegal activity.

Thirteen people, including the village's mayor and police chief, have been indicted on charges related to the Illinois State Police investigation.

Authorities allege the gambling

◆ Turn to CONTROVERSY, A7

The partyers against the nonpartyers'

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

MAPLE PARK — For most of its life, Maple Park has been easy to bypass.

The village on the border of Kane and DeKalb counties was a blip along Route 38, hardly noticeable to a car racing past the intersection

with County Line Road at 65 mph.

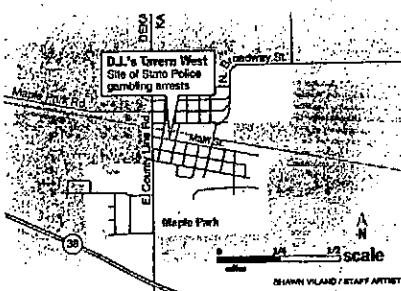
And folks there liked it that way.

"It was always the fight of the old against the new," says Ruth Caine, a resident for more than 40 years, and a two-term member of the Village Board in the 1970s. "The divided feelings were always here, to a certain extent. But not in the same way now that it was then."

Yes, Maple Park is a town divided — literally, by County Line Road north and south, which puts almost half of the village in DeKalb County, and the other half in Kane; and by the Union Pacific Railroad tracks east and west.

But those geographic boundaries

◆ Turn to MAPLE, A7



DEANN VILAND / STAFF ARTIST

CONTROVERSY

From Page A1

bravado extended to Maple Park Mayor Mark Delaney, a frequent bettor who bragged to undercover investigators that village police would do nothing to stop the activities.

"When the undercover officers asked about the police presence in DJ's Tavern, the mayor told them they had nothing to worry about," according to a State Police account of the investigation. "He told the undercover officers that the Maple Park officer was just walking through the bar, doing a community policing thing, and insisted that no action would be taken against any of the gamblers."

Delaney declined comment on this charge, or any other, because of the pending case against him.

Past and current village officials and two federal lawsuits allege that village police would do nothing because those who tried in the past had been fired. Delaney has denied the allegations in the civil lawsuits, and most of the defectors in the gambling raids have pleaded not guilty.

Much of the new information about the gambling investigation is contained in an affidavit requesting a search warrant of the bar manager's cell phone. A judge authorized that search as well as searches of the tavern and the Yorkville home of bar owner David L. Weeks.

The documents contain specific allegations about the gambling activity at the bar, and the roles played by several of those charged in the investigation. The documents detail the frequent gambling activity of the mayor, who was observed on numerous occasions collecting winnings and paying off debts incurred on the tavern's nine video poker machines.

What the records don't explain is how the investigation began. A spokesman for the State Police declined to elaborate.

Some suggest earlier inquiries by village police officers set the probe in motion. A spokesman for Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan said only that the investigation was spurred by a citizen complaint that village has been out of control for more than three years now," said Lenny Stover, a former police officer and interim chief. Stover left the force after the Village Board hired current Chief Chester Morris instead of him in 2003.

Stover said Delaney knew several years ago about the officers' investigations of him and several members of the Village Board.

"That's why they got rid of them," Stover said.

Pervasive gambling

During the State Police investigation, undercover officers visited the tavern three dozen times over 13 months, observing and participating in a variety of games. The bar offered video slot machines, football and NASCAR pools and a \$1 dice game with payouts ranging from a free drink or six-pack of beer to cash depending upon the roll.

Authorities also allege DJ's was home to a bookmaking operation that was run by the bar's manager, Michael J. Faber. State Police said they collected more than \$4,000 in winnings from at least 20 bets during the investigation.

The bets were made either in person or over the phone, and gamblers were required to pay losses to Faber on subsequent Thursdays, documents allege. Winnings were available at a different time.

Slot machine winnings were monitored by the bartenders, who verified the gamblers' credits from a tally box located behind the bar, court records show. Credits won on the machines were calculated for cash payouts.

Police allege they saw Delaney take payouts on at least five dates. On July 11, 2003, the mayor collected a \$210 payout from machine No. 6, police said.

The mayor then commented that he had placed \$10 in the machine and was paid \$210, and said that it was not a bad investment, undercover officers said in court records.

Prior allegations

The village's reputation for supporting illegal gambling is nothing new. One village official recently characterized it as a poorly kept secret.

And gambling allegations play a role in at least one of two pending federal lawsuits against the village.

Both lawsuits argue that former Maple Park police officers were fired or placed on administrative leave in part because they were investigating gambling at village taverns and "illegal conduct" by Delaney.

Former officer John Mittwick said during an interview that he approached the State Police several years ago about illegal gambling at DJ's because the department



STEVE ROSENBERG/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Playing near a giant old maple tree, Maple Park residents watch as their children play baseball against a team from Elburn. Some Maple Park residents say the recent gambling arrests at DJ's Tavern have accentuated the deep divisions within the village.

Where Delaney's money went

July 11: Delaney wins \$210 from the slot machine.

July 24: Delaney wins one or more payouts from the slot machine.

July 30: Delaney plays and wins at spin-the-wheel lottery.

Aug. 30: Delaney wins one or more payouts from the slot machine.

Oct. 5: Delaney wins one or more payouts from the slot machine.

Jan. 13: Delaney wins \$160 payout from the slot machine.

"I didn't have the clandestine means to conduct the investigation itself,"

Mittwick and former officer John Cotter allege they were fired from their part-time village jobs in retaliation for their investigations of Delaney.

Both men initially looked into a complaint made by Ray McAdams, a former village president and current board member, of a misappropriation of village funds. McAdams today says no funds ever were missing, although he considers the fund transfer improper.

In his lawsuit, Cotter notes that "illegal gambling, narcotics and underage drinking in bars" was investigated and reported to the State Police.

Cotter said officers also investigated complaints that Village Board Member Susan Olsen threatened a Maple Park resident during a traffic incident and false claims by Morris before he was hired that he was a deputy coroner with the Kane County coroner's office.

Cotter and Mittwick said Delaney knew of the investigations for which they were fired.

"I think justice has been served in one sense that we have identified these are morally corruptible people," Mittwick said of the pending

gambling charges.

Even so, an attorney representing the village said there's no connection between the officers' termination and the gambling investigation. Attorney William Kurnik said Delaney wasn't aware of any investigation of the village by the Police Department and suggested the allegations were "conveniently generated after the fact."

Kurnik — of the Des Plaines law firm Knight, Hoppe, Kurnik and Knight — said Mittwick was fired and Cotter placed on administrative leave for unethical behavior. Allegations in the lawsuit contend Mittwick illegally represented himself as a DeKalb County sheriff's deputy and disobeyed orders of a superior while Cotter sought "to obtain personal advantage for himself" at a St. Charles store by claiming to be an undercover police officer and for displaying license plates on his personal vehicle registered to the village.

Mittwick denied the allegations.

At trial, the village plans to argue the men were at-will employees and the Village Board was not bound by any personnel rules.

Kurnik said the village took no action against the men for "any whistleblower activities."

MAPLE

From Page A1

are only symbolic of the division in this village's soul these days. Political feelings have become personal, and the events of the past several years involving the village's police department, and the goings on at a downtown tavern where the State Police recently arrested 13 people on gambling charges — including Village President Mark Delaney and Police Chief Chester Morris — have polarized Maple Park residents more so than perhaps ever before.

"This is the worst thing I've ever seen, and I've been here a long time," says Trustee Ray McAdam, a former village president. "I moved into town in 1958, and I was raised about a mile out of town. The town is so divided, and the board is right down the middle."

The most visible sign of the town's division has been the Village Board, which almost always ends up voting 3-3 on every item that doesn't require a rubber stamp, with Delaney breaking the tie. Trustees Nick Moisa and Terry Borg recently suggested the division is so inviolate that perhaps all trustees should resign and an entire new six-person board should be appointed.

"It's been divided before, but not this bad," Moisa says.

Running the town

Moisa, however, says the staunch division on the Village Board might not translate to the town's population as a whole. He himself became a board member more than three years ago, when he was appointed because the spot was vacant and no one else would do it. He said many Maple Park residents lead busy lives and do not concern themselves with the town government.

"Maple Park is pretty much a bedroom community," he says. "People are not that involved."

But they are at least talking about the recent arrests of the 13 people at D.J.'s Tavern West on Main Street downtown. The arrests are only the most public manifestation of a feud that has simmered for the past few years.

It actually goes back to when McAdam was village president, and he assigned two part-time Maple Park police officers to look into what he thought was a questionable money transfer. That led the officers to look into gambling going on at D.J.'s Tavern West.

Both those officers are suing Maple Park now in federal court, saying that after Delaney was elected village president in 2001, he had the officers fired for investigating the bar. Eventually, the board ended up in a heated debate in 2003 surrounding the hiring of Morris as police chief. He was hired on a 3-3 vote, with Delaney breaking the tie.

Some village residents say the police chief fight, and now the gambling charges, show that the division in town all centers around the downtown bar. One resident, who wished to remain anonymous, said the division is known as "the partyers against the nonpartyers."

"If there's something at City Hall about that bar, or something about the police, all those people come down there and pack the place and yell and scream," the person says. "But if it's something about a sewer project or something, nobody comes down. Basically, the gamblers are running the town. I think the amazing fact is that it was done so openly. You could see it happening all the time."

Peg Yeagen, owner of Peg's on Main, a hair salon across Main Street from D.J.'s, said she has not seen a division in town so much, but admitted, it is the topic of conversation.

"I have a lot of clients who live on farms out of town, or in other towns around here," she says. "They come in and ask, 'What the heck's going on?' It's not that everyone's ignoring it. I just don't think most people care there's machines in there. If it's illegal, it's illegal. I guess what they were doing was wrong."

A budding gem?

Yeagen pointed out that in a town like Maple Park, everyone knows everyone else — and she knows Delaney and Morris well.

"I know most of those people (who were arrested)," she says. "They're all nice people."

"It's put a lot of strain on some decent people's lives, I know that," Moisa says.

Andrew Anderson, a resident of Heritage Hills, the new subdivision on the DeKalb County side of town, said what most people hear so far is "a lot of opinions, rumors, a lot of he said, she said."

He has been upset about the division on the Village Board, and some of the meetings he attended where police issues were discussed.

"There just a lot of yelling," he says. "That is not a town meeting, in my eyes."

Still, he considers the 13 arrests at the tavern "the biggest setup anyone has ever seen."

"Is it that big of a deal in the middle of nowhere?" says Anderson. "Yeah, they turned over some coin, no doubt. But aren't there bigger fish to fry? Nobody got hurt by this."

Other residents disagreed. Although they would not be specific, some talked about area people losing household money gambling at the bar, some even losing significant amounts.

Caine said a friend of hers put it best when he said, "There'll be a few more groceries on people's tables if that place closes."

"There were a lot of people who spent that money there," she says. "I don't think the arrests are a black mark on the town. The black mark is that people believe it doesn't matter. I tell my neighbors, illegal is illegal."

Despite divisive opinions, Maple Park residents still have faith in their village. Almost to a person, people end their comments on a positive note. Caine says Maple Park is "a good place"; Anderson calls it "a nice little town."

"If people show the interest, and spend the time," says Moisa, "I've always said we have an opportunity to make this village the gem of Kane County."



The scenic Fox River appears calm and still near Ferson Creek Fen in St. Charles.

PHOTOS BY LAURA STOECKER/DAILY HERALD

6-28-04 Daily Herald

A treasure in our back yard

Fox River teems with life, but its health is under threat from man

It winds its way from southeastern Wisconsin through five counties in Illinois. It once meandered through floodplain forests, freshwater marshes and tallgrass prairies. This 115-mile long ribbon of water is the Fox River, the third largest tributary of the Illinois River.

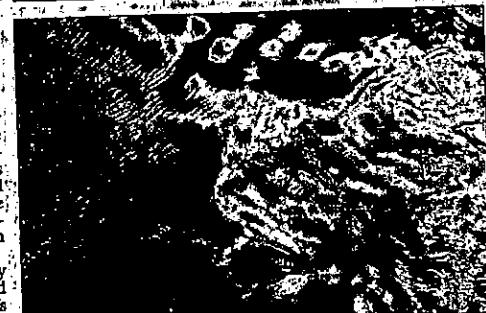
The Fox River is a fixture in the lives of hundreds of thousands of people who live in its watershed, or drainage basin. Like many fixtures in our lives, the river is easily taken for granted. June has been designated Illinois

Rivers Appreciation Month, and Illinoisans up and down the length of the state are encouraged to appreciate the rivers in their communities.

There is more than one way to view the Fox River, and appreciation is inspired by one's experience and point of view. Traffic jams on area bridges engender more frustration than appreciation of the river.

The current debate over dams underscores different perspectives of what a river should be. Recent flooding along the swollen river banks has many homeowners wringing their hands—and mops—over the more-menacing aspects of the Fox River.

One sure-fire way to appre-



A great blue heron takes flight from an inlet of water along the Fox River at Fabyan Forest Preserve in Geneva. At left, a bright blue summer sky reflects on the normally brownish-colored Fox River.

“We’ve been monitoring the streams of the Fox River for 15 years,” Swick said, “and we’re still finding creatures we’ve never seen before.”

“The diversity of wildlife in the Fox River Watershed is indeed impressive. Approximately 96 species of fish live in the Fox River, including state endangered species such as the pugnose and blacknose shiners and the greater redhorse.”

“The Fox River has wide range of habitats overall,” said Steve Pescatelli, stream specialist with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources’ Division of Fisheries.

“These habitats support a tremendous variety of fish species, which the IDNR and

the Fox River, however, to get acquainted with the river on its own terms.

An Elgin resident who has devoted a good portion of his life to doing just that is Gary Swick, director of Friends of the Fox River’s Watershed Monitoring Network. Swick is passionate about getting people into the creeks and streams feeding the Fox River.

the Illinois Natural History Survey monitor as part of their fisheries management program.

Approximately 248 species of birds can be seen in Fox River Watershed. This month, a dizzying array of swallows, swifts, nighthawks and other insect-eating birds perform aerial acrobatics over the river. Great blue herons stalk fish in the shallows. Egrets fly the backwaters. Kingfishers hover, then plunge into the river for their sushi snacks.

In late summer and fall, many species of shorebirds congregate in large flocks to feed in the mudflats. Hundreds of warblers and other songbirds fill the tree-tops in the floodplain forests during migration.

Kane County Audubon President Bob Andriani stresses the importance of good-quality habitat for bird diversity in the Fox River Watershed. Free-flowing water, mudflats, gravel bars, and natural shorelines are paramount.

“The Fox River Valley has been attracting more diverse waterfowl and sandpipers over the years,” he said. “There are more birders, and therefore more eyes, as Andriani points out, but the birds wouldn’t be there without good habitat.”

Not only do fish and birds thrive in a healthy watershed, but mammals as well. Close to 75 percent of Illinois’ mammals may be found in the Fox River Watershed, including the pygmy shrew, one of the rarest shrews in Illinois, according to the IDNR’s 1997 inventory of the Fox River’s resources.

The river otter, once an endangered species in Illinois, is making a comeback throughout the state. There have been confirmed reports of otter sightings in the Fox River in the past year. Sleek mink live in burrows in river banks and hunt prey in

See DEPREZ on PAGE 2

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DePrez: Development poses problems for river watershed

Continued from Page 1

and out of the water. Muskrat and beaver also frequent the waters of the Fox.

The less-glamorous wildlife in the Fox River contribute significantly to the watershed's biodiversity. Naturalist Pam Otto of the Fox Valley Park District champions the region's unsung heroes, from amphibians and reptiles to mussels and crayfish.

She has spotted a northern water snake swimming offshore from Red Oak Nature Center in North Aurora, as well as snapping turtles, painted turtles and spiny softshell turtles basking on logs in the water. Otto explains that one group of unobtrusive aquatic animals, the freshwater mussels, have the dubious distinction of being the most endangered group of animals in North America. Their presence in the Fox River is therefore a sign of water quality.

"Last summer we rescued a mussel called the white heel-splitter that had been marooned in mud just north of Red Oak," Otto enthusiastically recalls. "Several other species survived there as well, including pimplebacks and plain pocketbooks, in the area south of the South Batavia Dam."

The diversity of fish, birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and myriad invertebrates are ample reasons to appreciate the Fox River during Illinois' River Appreciation Month.

The watershed has been altered dramatically in the past 100 years, however, and critical habitat has been lost. Floodplain forests have given way to farm fields, prairies have succumbed to parking lots, and marshes have morphed into malls.

Urbanization is the greatest challenge to the health of the Fox River, according to David Horn, president of Friends of the Fox River.

"The population of Kane County is predicted to grow from 404,119 in 2000 to 692,346 in 2030, an increase of 71 percent," explains Horn. "With the rapid rate of human population growth and urban development have come several threats to the Fox River watershed that degrade aquatic habitat and reduce water quality."

Paving for parking lots, roads, and buildings creates impermeable surfaces, increases water runoff and exacerbates flooding. Flooding in turn destabilizes stream banks and causes siltation of the water. More people also means more traffic, which means that more oil, gasoline and road salt find



LAURA STOECKER/DAILY HERALD

Kane County Forest Preserve Interns Bob Kanwischer and Jenni Kempf see what creatures are along the Fox River shore at Tekakwitha Woods in St. Charles. The recent flooding drastically affected their findings, which normally would be plentiful with a wide range of creatures.

Learn about the Fox

Activity

- Creek walk: What a better way to spend a summer morning than exploring a creek in a shaded forest! Families are welcome to explore Tyler Creek in Elgin with Kane County Forest Preserve District naturalists from 10 to 11 a.m. Aug. 19. Look for aquatic creatures and learn how they live in their wet habitat. The program is free. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Register by calling (847) 741-8350, ext. 10.

Volunteering

- Friends of the Fox River has programs, volunteer opportunities, and information on its Web site www.friendsofthefoxriver.org. The Friends' Fox River Watershed Monitoring Network trains and equips citizens to get in streams and monitor the health of the river. Call (815) 356-6605.
- Illinois RiverWatch provides another avenue for monitoring river quality. Visit <http://dnr.state.il.us/orep/ecowatch/>, or call (888) 428-0362.
- The Kane County Forest Preserve District's Habitat Stewardship Network welcomes volunteers to assist with habitat restoration in woodlands, wetlands, and prairies. Many sites include tributaries in the watershed of the Fox River. Contact volunteer coordinator Shelly Brown at (847) 741-9798 or fpdkaneco_vc@yahoo.com.
- Valley of the Fox Sierra Club invites citizens to join in environmental action campaigns involving the Fox River and its tributaries. Visit www.sierraclub.org/chapters/il/vof, or e-mail vf-chair@illinoissierraclub.org.

their way into the river and streams.

And last but not least, urbanization brings an increase in sewage wastewater, elevated nutrient levels, lower oxygen levels in the water, and subsequent loss of aquatic life.

IDNR stream specialist Bob Rung adds that "the diversity of aquatic species has slowly declined by 36.8 percent since 1960." And, Rung says, the Fox River's diversity is lowest in Kane County due to the presence of dams and the habitat fragmentation caused by these man-made structures. Efforts to preserve clear, free-running stretches of the river and its tributaries will encourage the diversity of different species of fish and the invertebrate animals they depend on for food.

People's attitudes toward the river have changed along with the changing landscape. The river has been a force to contend with. It has also been a source of inspiration. It was once a transportation corridor. It's now an impediment to traffic. Its waters have been dammed. Its current is unleashed. Its issues are divisive. Its presence is unifying.

The vagaries of human viewpoints come and go with the flotsam and jetsam of progress. But the Fox still flows and the fish still spawn and waters foul still bob on choppy water.

And that's worth appreciating!

- Valerie DePrez is the nature programs supervisor for the Kane County Forest Preserve District.

Water treatment plant, county projects a go

b28-04 Chronicle
Geneva commission recommends zoning changes, annexation

By BRENDA SCHORY
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Plan commissioners approved special zoning requests for the city to build a water treatment plant and for the county to proceed on two projects.

The commissioners issued findings of fact and recommendations last week to annex 33 acres at the southwest corner of Peck and Keslinger roads from county farming to low density residential, and to allow a water treatment plant and a Kane County animal control facility to be built there.

They also voted to rezone four buildings on a block owned by the county in the city's historic district. The property, bounded by Fourth, James, Third and Campbell streets, was rezoned from residential to planned business development, City Planner Dick Untch said.

"It's a specialized zoning

district in the city and actually about three fourths of that is already zoned that," Untch said. "This is unifying by drawing in the other parcels on west edge of the block. What this is doing, we are amending planned unit development for the site to incorporate ... the whole block."

The county already has razed an old building that housed its Child Advocacy Center. Untch said the Historic Preservation Commission approved the new building's design, which fits in with the architecture and character of the area.

By changing the zoning, county officials could seek special use and get relief from some of the city's requirements, such as on-site parking and street setback, he explained.

Untch said they met their parking requirement by having clients use the courthouse lot. The city traded the setback for enhanced landscaping, which the city's codes allow.

"They are making some fairly major changes to landscaping with new plants and trees added throughout the site," Untch said.

The county also will correct some awkward curbs on the north and south entrances to the parking lot that confuse drivers, he said.

The new \$25.6 million water treatment plant will take up 10 acres of the Peck and Keslinger property. It will share the parcel with a new animal control facility. The new treatment plant is expected to go on line in 2007-08.

It required a zoning change from light industrial to residential.

"The rezoning ... affords more protection to abutting property owners because planned unit development buttons down the allowable uses to prescribed by the site plan," Untch said. These include utilities, such as the water treatment plant.

The commission's action will go to the Committee of the Whole next month, with final action to be taken by the city council after that.

6-28-04 Chronicle
Records
sought in
defamation
civil lawsuit

By PAUL ROCK
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Illinois' Supreme Court justices have been served subpoenas by *Kane County Chronicle* attorneys requesting records about deliberations during last year's misconduct case against Kane County State's Attorney Meg Gorecki.

The subpoenas are part of a lawsuit filed against the *Chronicle* in January by Justice Robert R. Thomas.

In addition to the request for notes about the deliberations, Thomas' colleagues were subpoenaed for documents relating to two columns written by *Chronicle* columnist Bill Page that were published in the newspaper in 2003 and centered on Gorecki's misconduct case.

Chronicle attorney Steven Mandell sent subpoenas to Chief Justice Mary Ann G. McMorrow and justices Thomas R. Fitzgerald, Charles E. Freeman, Rita B. Garman, Thomas L. Kilbride and Philip J. Rarick.

Thomas filed a civil lawsuit Jan. 9 against Page, *Chronicle* Managing Editor Greg Rivara and Shaw Suburban Media Group Inc., which owns the *Chronicle*.

In the lawsuit, Thomas says he was defamed and portrayed in a false light in two columns written by Page that appeared in 2003 on the newspaper's editorial page.

Both columns focused on Kane County State's Attorney Meg Gorecki's misconduct case, which was argued before the state Supreme Court on Nov. 20, the court imposed a four-month suspension of her law license.

The two columns ran on the newspaper's editorial page May 20 and Nov. 25, 2003.

"The deliberations are definitely extremely relevant to the issues of this case," Mandell said.

Thomas' attorney, Joseph Power of Chicago, said the justice filed the 20-page civil suit after repeated attempts to have the columns retracted were denied and after Page sent an e-mail to the court's press offices threatening "a nightmare of bad publicity" if Thomas influenced the Gorecki decision.

The next court date in the case will be Tuesday, when a judge will decide on a request by *Chronicle* attorneys to dismiss the suit.

6-28-04 Beacon News

Rain delays Orchard Road project

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — The heavy rain that flooded Orchard Road on Aurora's West Side on June 11 has set the widening and repaving project back about three weeks. But Paul Rogowski, Kane County transportation director, said officials plan to get the project's timeline back on track, maybe even by the first mile.

But Paul Rogowski, Kane County transportation director, said officials plan to get the project's timeline back on track, maybe even by the first mile.

by July.

"(The contractor) will put on extra crews to make up the difference," Rogowski said Friday to the County Board Transportation Committee.

Rogowski warned committee members that the catchup work will add to the cost of the project.

But Paul Rogowski, Kane County transportation director, said officials plan to get the project's timeline back on track, maybe even by the first mile.

Orchard was flooded from about Galena Boulevard to Ashby Street. A portion of the existing road was covered by about 3 feet

of water. Kuhn workers, along with workers from KDOT and the city of Aurora, worked to get the road open by 4 p.m. that Saturday, thanks in part to the new

Aurora Lake.

Aurora Lake is what KDOT officials call a new detention basin except the about 3.5 inches of rain dumped on Orchard Road in caved out along that section of the road.

The project includes detention basins to accommodate runoff that

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Aurora Lake is what KDOT officials call a new detention basin except the about 3.5 inches of rain dumped on Orchard Road in caved out along that section of the road.

The project includes detention basins to accommodate runoff that

the new highway will cause.

The road is being widened to

four lanes from two lanes, which

will increase storm runoff.

Rogowski repeated what offi-

cials said two weeks ago: Without

Aurora Lake, homeowners in

Cherry Hill and Lakeside Sans Souci who had water in their

yards probably would have had

water in their houses.

"It worked," he said.

The Orchard Road project,

which started in March, is due to

be finished in June 2005.

Water treatment plant, county projects a go

6-28-04 Chronicle

Geneva commission recommends zoning changes, annexation

By BRENDA SCHORY
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Plan commissioners approved special zoning requests for the city to build a water treatment plant and for the county to proceed on two projects.

The commissioners issued findings of fact and recommendations last week to annex 33 acres at the southwest corner of Peck and Keslinger roads from county farming to low density residential, and to allow a water treatment plant and a Kane County animal control facility to be built there.

They also voted to rezone four buildings on a block owned by the county in the city's historic district. The property, bounded by Fourth, James, Third and Campbell streets, was rezoned from residential to planned business development, City Planner Dick Untch said.

"It's a specialized zoning

district in the city and actually about three fourths of that is already zoned that," Untch said. "This is unifying by drawing in the other parcels on west edge of the block. What this is doing, we are amending planned unit development for the site to incorporate ... the whole block."

The county already has razed an old building that housed its Child Advocacy Center. Untch said the Historic Preservation Commission approved the new building's design, which fits in with the architecture and character of the area.

By changing the zoning, county officials could seek special use and get relief from some of the city's requirements, such as on-site parking and street setback, he explained.

Untch said they met their parking requirement by having clients use the courthouse lot. The city traded the setback for enhanced landscap-

ing, which the city's codes allow.

"They are making some fairly major changes to landscaping with new plants and trees added throughout the site," Untch said.

The county also will correct some awkward curbs on the north and south entrances to the parking lot that confuse drivers, he said.

The new \$25.6 million water treatment plant will take up 10 acres of the Peck and Keslinger property. It will share the parcel with a new animal control facility. The new treatment plant is expected to go on line in 2007-08.

It required a zoning change from light industrial to residential.

"The rezoning ... affords more protection to abutting property owners because planned unit development buttons down the allowable uses to prescribed by the site plan," Untch said. These include utilities, such as the water treatment plant.

The commission's action will go to the Committee of the Whole next month, with final action to be taken by the city council after that.



The scenic Fox River appears calm and still near Person Creek Fen in St. Charles.

PHOTOS BY LAURA STOPECK/NAILY/MAX

6/28/04 Daily Herald

6/28/04 Daily Herald

A treasure in our back yard

Fox River teems with life, but its health is under threat from man

It winds its way from southeastern Wisconsin through five counties in Illinois. It once meandered through floodplain forests, freshwater marshes and tallgrass prairies. This 115-mile long ribbon of water is the Fox River, the third largest tributary of the Illinois River.

The Fox River is a fixture in

the lives of hundreds of thousands of people who live in its watershed, or drainage basin. Like many fixtures in our lives, the river is easily taken for granted. June has been designated Illinois Rivers Appreciation Month, and Illinoisans up and down the length of the state are encouraged to appreciate the rivers in their communities.

There is more than one way to view the Fox River, and appreciation is inspired by one's experience and point of view. Traffic jams on area bridges engender more frustration than appreciation of the river.

The current debate over dams underscores different perspectives of what a river should be. Recent flooding along the swollen river banks has many homeowners wringing their hands—and mops—over the more menacing aspects of the Fox River.

One sure-fire way to appreci-



A great blue heron takes flight from an inlet of water along the Fox River at Fabian Forest Preserve in Geneva. At left: a bright blue summer sky reflects on the normally brownish-colored Fox River.

the Illinois Natural History Survey monitor as part of their fisheries management program.

Approximately 248 species of birds can be seen in Fox River Watershed. This month, a dizzying array of swallows, swifts, nighthawks and other insect-eating birds perform aerial acrobatics over the river. Great blue herons stalk fish in the shallows. Egrets fly the backwaters. Kingfishers hover, then plunge into the river for their sushi snacks.

In late summer and fall, many species of shorebirds congregate in large flocks to feed in the mudflats. Hundreds of warblers and other songbirds fill the rooftops in the floodplain forests during migration.

Kane County Audubon President Bob Andrin stresses the importance of good-quality habitat for bird diversity in the Fox River Watershed. Free-flowing water, mudflats, gravel bars and natural shorelines are paramount.

"The Fox River Valley has been attracting more diverse waterfowl and sandpipers over the years," he said. "There are more birds, and therefore more eyes, as Andrin points out, but the birds wouldn't be there without good habitat."

Not only do fish and birds thrive in a healthy watershed, but mammals as well. Close to 75 percent of Illinois' mammals may be found in the Fox River Watershed, including the pygmy shrew, one of the rarest shrews in Illinois, according to the IDNR's 1997 inventory of the Fox River's resources.

The river otter, once an endangered species in Illinois, is making a comeback throughout the state. There have been confirmed reports of otter sightings in the Fox River in the past year. Sleek mink live in burrows in river banks and hunt prey in

See DEPREL on PAGE 2

ate the Fox River, however, is to get acquainted with the river on its own terms.

An Elgin resident who has devoted a good portion of his life to doing just that is Gary Swick, director of Friends of the Fox River Watershed Monitoring Network. Swick is passionate about getting people into the creeks and streams feeding the Fox River.

"Most people are unaware of the amount of life in the watershed," he said. "They see the streams as benign and void of

rock in the water and see it teeming with life, they will never view the stream the same again."

"Getting ones feet wet, quite literally, is a great way to discover the profusion of life in and

around the greater red fox."

The Fox River has wide range of habitats overall, said Steve Pescatelli, stream specialist with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Division of Fisheries.

These habitats support a tremendous variety of fish species, which the IDNR and

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DePrez: Development poses problems for river watershed

Continued from Page 1

and out of the water. Muskrat and beaver also frequent the waters of the Fox.

The less-glamorous wildlife in the Fox River contribute significantly to the watershed's biodiversity. Naturalist Pam Otto of the Fox Valley Park District champions the region's unsung heroes, from amphibians and reptiles to mussels and crayfish.

She has spotted a northern water snake swimming offshore from Red Oak Nature Center in North Aurora, as well as snapping turtles, painted turtles and spiny softshell turtles basking on logs in the water. Otto explains that one group of unobtrusive aquatic animals, the freshwater mussels, have the dubious distinction of being the most endangered group of animals in North America. Their presence in the Fox River is therefore a sign of water quality.

"Last summer we rescued a mussel called the white heel-splitter that had been marooned in mud just north of Red Oak," Otto enthusiastically recalls. "Several other species survived there as well, including pimplebacks and plain pocketbooks, in the area south of the South Batavia Dam."

The diversity of fish, birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and myriad invertebrates are ample reasons to appreciate the Fox River during Illinois' River Appreciation Month.

The watershed has been altered dramatically in the past 100 years, however, and critical habitat has been lost. Floodplain forests have given way to farm fields, prairies have succumbed to parking lots, and marshes have morphed into malls.

Urbanization is the greatest challenge to the health of the Fox River, according to David Horn, president of Friends of the Fox River.

"The population of Kane County is predicted to grow from 404,119 in 2000 to 692,346 in 2030, an increase of 71 percent," explains Horn. "With the rapid rate of human population growth and urban development have come several threats to the Fox River watershed that degrade aquatic habitat and reduce water quality."

Paving for parking lots, roads, and buildings creates impermeable surfaces, increases water runoff and exacerbates flooding. Flooding in turn destabilizes stream banks and causes siltation of the water. More people also means more traffic, which means that more oil, gasoline and road salt find



LAURA STOECKER/DAILY HERALD

Kane County Forest Preserve interns Bob Kanwischer and Jenni Kempf see what creatures are along the Fox River shore at Tekakwitha Woods in St. Charles. The recent flooding drastically affected their findings, which normally would be plentiful with a wide range of creatures.

Learn about the Fox

Activity

- Creek walk: What a better way to spend a summer morning than exploring a creek in a shaded forest! Families are welcome to explore Tyler Creek in Elgin with Kane County Forest Preserve District naturalists from 10 to 11 a.m. Aug. 19. Look for aquatic creatures and learn how they live in their wet habitat. The program is free. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Register by calling (847) 741-8350, ext. 10.

Volunteering

- Friends of the Fox River has programs, volunteer opportunities, and information on its Web site www.friendsofthefoxriver.org. The Friends' Fox River Watershed Monitoring Network trains and equips citizens to get in streams and monitor the health of the river. Call (815) 356-6605.
- Illinois RiverWatch provides another avenue for monitoring river quality. Visit <http://dnr.state.il.us/orep/ecowatch/>, or call (888) 428-0362.
- The Kane County Forest Preserve District's Habitat Stewardship Network welcomes volunteers to assist with habitat restoration in woodlands, wetlands, and prairies. Many sites include tributaries in the watershed of the Fox River. Contact volunteer coordinator Shelly Brown at (847) 741-9798 or fpdkaneco_vc@yahoo.com.
- Valley of the Fox Sierra Club invites citizens to join in environmental action campaigns involving the Fox River and its tributaries. Visit www.sierraclub.org/chapters/il/vof, or e-mail vf-chair@illinoissierraclub.org.

their way into the river and streams.

And last but not least, urbanization brings an increase in sewage wastewater, elevated nutrient levels, lower oxygen levels in the water, and subsequent loss of aquatic life.

IDNR stream specialist Bob Rung adds that "the diversity of aquatic species has slowly declined by 36.8 percent since 1960." And, Rung says, the Fox River's diversity is lowest in Kane County due to the presence of dams and the habitat fragmentation caused by these man-made structures. Efforts to preserve clear, free-running stretches of the river and its tributaries will encourage the diversity of different species of fish and the invertebrate animals they depend on for food.

People's attitudes toward the river have changed along with the changing landscape. The river has been a force to contend with. It has also been a source of inspiration. It was once a transportation corridor. It's now an impediment to traffic. Its waters have been dammed. Its current is unleashed. Its issues are divisive. Its presence is unifying.

The vagaries of human viewpoints come and go with the flotsam and jetsam of progress. But the Fox still flows and the fish still spawn and waterfowl still bob on choppy water.

And that's worth appreciating!

• Valerie DePrez is the nature programs supervisor for the Kane County Forest Preserve District.

~~6-29-04 Beacons~~

Kane to get new system for alerts

■ Satellite communications: Homeland Security Department paying for EMnet setup

By Peter Krupa
STAFF WRITER

Amber alerts, severe weather warnings and terrorism advisories soon will be only a satellite transmission away for many Kane County municipalities, thanks to a new communication system and a federal grant.

Called the Emergency Manager Network, or EMnet, the system will have nodes in police stations and hospitals throughout the county and the state. The nodes — a computer terminal and a roof-based satellite dish — can send and receive instant, around-the-clock crime, security and weather alerts via satellite.

Illinois first tested EMnet at the county level two years ago. Then a month ago, Kane County received a \$221,000 federal grant from the Department of Homeland Security to expand the system and make it available to all county municipalities.

The grant allows cities and villages to get the hardware and one year of service free. After that, service will cost \$480 a year. The county will fund up to 38 nodes.

Municipalities taking advantage of the offer so far include Aurora, Batavia, Elgin, South Elgin, Hampshire and Huntley. All five hospitals in the county immediately jumped on the offer as well, said Don Bryant, director of the Kane County Office of Emergency Management.

"This (system) will be the first of its kind within the state of Illinois," Bryant said. "It's wonderful. It gives us a centralized platform that we've never had before."

Although it will take several weeks before the system gets up and running locally, it already has been tested in Illinois during a statewide terrorism response drill in May 2003.

In that drill, Illinois counties were able to send information to each other instantly during a simulated bioterrorism attack in Chicago.

Bryant explained that one of the reasons EMnet is so effective is that it doesn't rely on phone lines — as current systems do — for transmitting information. Bad weather or terrorist attacks that could disrupt phone, fax and Internet traffic won't bother a satellite link.

Although EMnet may overlap with current communication systems, Huntley Police Chief Randy Walters said redundancy is one of the benefits, in case one system goes down.

"I don't see how we could not get" EMnet, Walters said. "We're very fortunate that Kane County has elected to give us this option."

DuPage and Will counties are deploying EMnet as well, Bryant said. Grundy County also is getting on board.

Later this summer, Bryant said the Kane County Office of Emergency Management will deploy a standardized, encrypted radio network to all county municipalities. The network will allow everyone on it to talk to each other in encrypted mode.

6-29-04 Daily Herald

Board tables housing plan

BY JOHN JOHNSTON

Daily Herald Correspondent

The North Aurora village board decided the best way to develop an affordable housing plan is to wait.

Trustees had concerns about labeling parts of North Aurora as affordable or low-income because of the effects the label may have on property value and tabled discussion of the plan.

"The draft was a little premature, and I did not see anyplace where (the state) spells out the penalties (for not passing a plan)," trustee Dale Berman said.

The proposed draft would have drawn lines around older developments in North Aurora that would be deemed affordable or low-income. A trustee said that most of the homes in the areas are one-level single family homes.

Trustee Max Herwig said the language of the draft might remove a homeowner's ability to put additions on their house because the addition would increase the density and value of the house. Herwig also had a problem labeling an area low-income.

"There would be a stigma on these properties that could reduce how much they go up in value," he said.

After the plan had been tabled, trustee Mark Herlihy destroyed his copy of the plan's map, which clearly labeled parts of North Aurora as the proposed low-income areas so that it would not reach the public.

The Affordable Housing Planning and Appeal Act, which became effective on January 1, 2004, requires municipalities in Illinois to have at least 10 percent of its housing deemed affordable

to people who make less than 80 percent of the county gross medium income.

North Aurora has almost 20 percent affordable housing.

The act requires municipalities to have a plan for affordable housing by July 1.

Municipalities without plans may be subject to decisions from a state board about where developers can locate low income housing if the municipality falls below 10 percent affordable housing.

The short timeline for the plan development has led legislators to request an amendment that would push the July date to April 2005.

Trustee Mark Guethle said, "it's prudent for the board to table this draft."

"I feel comfortable with the action we took," Mayor Mark Ruby said.

6-29-04
Chronicle

Kane drug court seeks volunteers

KANE COUNTY

Volunteers are needed to assist

The Kane County Rehabilitation Drug Court from 4 to 8 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays

and Fridays at the drug testing

centers at the Judicial Center

and in Elgin and Aurora.

Volunteers also are needed

to help with administrative tasks

and filing at the Judicial Center.

To assist at the Judicial

Center or at one of the drug

testing centers, call Sue Lane at

(630) 896-7869.

Red Gate bridge funding nears

By HEATH HIXSON
Kane County Chronicle

ST. CHARLES — Preliminary engineering work for a bridge across the Fox River at Red Gate Road soon might be funded and could begin this year.

General Services Committee members on Monday voted 9-0 to approve a plan to spend more than \$1.2 million for the engineering work. The funding could receive final approval by aldermen July 19.

The city would front the cash needed for the work and the Illinois Department of Transportation would refund the city as work is completed. The state has received some federal funds for the project, said Larry Maholland, St. Charles city administrator.

The engineering work, considered the project's first phase, is expected to be completed within the next two years. The work includes surveying, traffic and environmental analysis, bridge studies and other reports.

Maholland said the city already has purchased land needed for the bridge from funds provided through a 5-cent property tax levy. He said the city still must secure funding for construction of the actual bridge.

The proposed bridge would link Red Gate Road on the west side of the river with Route 25 on the river's east side. Plans call for the bridge to be 3,400 feet long and include a 2-lane road with a sidewalk that connects to existing bike paths. The bridge would be the city's fourth roadway across the river.

6/29/04 ho-ho-ho

~~6/29/04 Chronicle~~ N. Aurora releases details of contract

By ERIC SCHELKOPF
Kane County Chronicle

NORTH AURORA — Susan McLaughlin will make \$72,000 a year in her job as the village's new administrator.

Village President Mark Ruby on Monday released a copy of her contract in response to a Freedom of Information request filed by the *Kane County Chronicle*. McLaughlin will start Thursday.

She is North Aurora's second village administrator. The position had been vacant since August 2003, when Rob

Nelis Sr. was fired.

The two-year contract runs through Dec. 31, 2005. The annual base salary will remain in effect throughout the term of the agreement.

The contract also provides McLaughlin with the use of a village automobile while she is on village business. If she chooses to use her own car, the village will reimburse McLaughlin for her costs.

McLaughlin also will get three weeks vacation a year, along with sick leave.

See CONTRACT, page 2.

Contract

Continued from page 1

She also will receive health insurance, and the village will make payments on her behalf to the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund.

The contract calls for the village to review and evaluate McLaughlin's performance. In addition, the village board and McLaughlin at least once a year will determine goals and objectives that they feel are necessary to attain the village's policy objectives.

McLaughlin recently resigned from her post in Byron, where she had been the city administrator for 1½ years.

She also worked for Rockford in its legal department and served as Winne-

bago County's planning and zoning director.

McLaughlin grew up on the west side of Aurora and is a 1983 graduate of West Aurora High School.

She said she will work to make sure North Aurora has the right mix of development and that land is being appropriately developed.

North Aurora officials have concentrated on commercial growth. Several major retailers have plans to build in the village, including Woodman's Food Market, Walgreens, Kohl's and Target.

Nelis was criticized for not doing enough to attract commercial growth.

McLaughlin said she hopes to move to North Aurora within a year.

N. Aurora tables affordable housing plan

decided not to approve a proposed plan.

Trustees hoping state gives them more time

for an extension," Trustee Dale Berman said.

Berman said the extension would give communities until April 1, 2005, to have an afford-

able housing plan.

NORTH AURORA — Village trustees are banking on the state to give them more time to adopt an affordable housing plan.

The state has set a Thursday deadline for municipalities to adopt such plans. However, trustees on Monday

approve an affordable housing plan so that the village controls its own destiny.

He said that if the village ever became nonexempt,

a developer that provides

low-income

housing could appeal an adverse

development authority decision to the Illinois Housing

Development Authority.

"I expect changes (to the act) are going to be made, one

to give us more time," Drendel

said after the board's decision

to table the plan.

Drendel said about 25 percent of the village's housing falls into the category of low- and moderate-income.

Based on the 2000 census,

the village had 545 owner-oc-

cupied houses with monthly

mortgages below \$1,000, and

462 renter-occupied units with

a gross rent of less than \$750 a

month.

The median gross income in Kane County, according to the 2000 Federal Census, is

\$59,351.

To qualify as affordable, a

unit owned or rented must not

cost its owner or renter more

than 30 percent of his or her

annual income.



By ERIC SCHELKOPF
Kane County Chronicle

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Chronicle



Bill
Page

Backyard politics

The late Tip O'Neil often said, "All politics is local." What he meant was not that nothing of consequence happened on the national plane, but rather what truly motivates us, what gets us to the polls, are those matters that affect us on a neighborhood level. Such an issue is brewing in Campton Township, and how it's resolved will have a lasting impact on many of its residents.

It's a generalization, but probably a fair one, to say that most people choose to live in Campton Township because they love the country setting and don't want or need the trappings and services that come with living in town. Many of the township's neighborhoods are somewhat isolated and most do not have streetlights or highway noise. Out there, it's still possible to look up on a July night and see the stars, and the only sound you'll hear are the crickets chirping or the sound of kids playing summer night games. However, if a proposal currently in front of the township's trustees becomes reality, those idyllic evenings are numbered.

At issue is a 125-acre complex made up of sports fields slated to be built near Empire and Swanberg roads. This is no small neighborhood park; one plan calls for four football fields, four soccer fields, nine baseball and softball diamonds, and assorted parking lots, playgrounds and open space. And one more thing: ten of the playing fields are designated as "lighted."

Obviously, the people whose homes border the complex are upset. The fields will put hundreds of cars and thousands of young athletes on the edge of their property, and the glare from the clusters of 100-foot tall light towers will eliminate the starry country skies. Predictably, this threat has alarmed residents, and they have pulled together a grass-roots movement to protect their neighborhood. Now, they have started playing catch-up on their political involvement.

Local issues have a way of doing that. Until it affected them personally, these folks were fairly unconcerned with the day-to-day decisions of township trustees. That makes them pretty normal citizens, because most of us really don't pay attention to what's going on in politics unless or until it intrudes into our lives. Then, and only then, do we shake off our complacency and get involved.

Regardless of how they felt in the past

about politics, this group is now involved, and they're proving to be a quick study on how to get their voices heard in the political arena. What's different is they're going about it in a way that is measured and thoughtful, and should be a model for other citizens' groups.

At a neighborhood meeting held this past Sunday, those in attendance acknowledged the land was going to be developed for what is euphemistically called "active recreation," and they were not trying to stop that from happening. What they did quarrel with was the size and scope of the project, the planned uses, and the need for the lights. In other words, a group that could use the phrase "Not in my back yard," without a trace of irony, is instead saying, "If it's going to be in our back yard, then we want to have a say."

It's important to note that no plan has been approved by township trustees; all that exists is a rough proposal. However, rough proposals have a way of becoming harsh reality if citizens don't speak up. By acting now, the affected residents can have their voices heard and their ideas incorporated into a compromise agreement. In the end, that willingness to compromise is what gives these people strength and credibility: they know a solution that favors only one group is no solution at all.

To be sure, there are bigger issues facing this country than whether a small country neighborhood has its way of life upended. But bigger doesn't necessarily mean more important, especially if it's your world that's being affected. The sports complex debate is a perfect example of how a local issue can politicize and energize a group of people.

In a perfect world, it wouldn't take a crisis to get citizens involved in their government, but the world isn't perfect and neither are we. Most of us will stay unconnected and politically complacent, so long as our part of the world runs smoothly. And we won't budge until the day someone, somewhere tries to put something in our back yard. Then, by golly, we'll want answers.

• Bill Page lives in St. Charles and writes about local issues on Tuesday and Thursday. Calls and e-mails answered at (630) 584-0809 or wpage@mediawerks.org.

6-30-04 Daily Herald

County unveils land-use plan

BY LISA BALDE
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Kane County residents and village officials had their first look Tuesday night at the regional plan that could change the way their neighborhoods look in the next 20 years.

During the first of three public hearings, Kane county's regional planning board introduced a 275-page document called the 2030 Land Resource Management Plan, a land-use strategy that takes into consideration population growths trends in the area.

The focus of the plan, an extension of a similar plan adopted by the county board in 1996, is to create a balance between maintaining existing open space in the area and restructuring transportation and water systems to accommodate new growth.

"The plan is a managed growth plan," said Sam Santell, director of the planning division for the Kane County Development Department.

Kane County wants to manage

the growth that area villages have been feeling for some time now through a proposal called the 50/50/50 land-use plan.

According to the proposal, 50 percent of the county could remain open space, if the residential and commercial growth gravitated toward areas along the Fox River.

The theme of Tuesday night's meeting at Dundee Middle School was resounding: Kane County is reaching a critical growth period, and some sort of plan needs to be agreed upon.

Although some residents and village representatives seemed overwhelmed by the 275-page plan, they voiced a list of concerns about how the plan would affect individual villages.

They wanted to know how the plan would address growth in already crowded schools, as well as its effect on high tax rates and roadway expansions.

"Who pays for it," one resident said. "The developers? I can't work my job."

County officials told the audience that they want to work with individual municipalities to

incorporate their comprehensive plans and transportation strategies into the master plan.

The plan seeks to create neighborhoods, Santell said, that focus on responsible growth, ample use of open space and affordable housing for diverse communities.

Santell stressed during the meeting that Kane County's Development Commission wants public feedback and that it needs cooperation from village

government.

Two more public meetings will be held regarding the plan, at Geneva High School on July 13 and at Waubonsee Community College in Sugar Grove on July 14.

Kane County will accept written feedback from residents until July 28.

Based on public comments and meetings with village trustees, the county board could adopt the plan as early as October.

Chicago on list for dirty air

Region ranks 14th for soot pollution

By Michael Hawthorne
Tribune staff reporter

The federal government on Tuesday named the Chicago area one of the dirtiest regions in the nation for harmful soot and gave the state five years to clean it up.

Pollution controls have

come slowly for soot, a microscopic form of air pollution that studies show can trigger a variety of health problems and take years off lives.

To comply, the region—

stretching from Kenosha to Naperville to Michigan City, Ind.—will have to clean up

air already is getting cleaner.

But six northeastern Illinois counties—Cook,

DuPage, and

and engines and clean up coal-

SOOT: Particles are linked to lung ailments

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

30th the diameter of a human hair. Most of the other dirty areas are in California or the eastern third of the country. Iowa and Minnesota are the only states in the Midwest where all counties meet the standard.

National rules requiring cleaner diesel engines and fuel and more dramatic reductions in power plant pollution should help states meet the soot standard by 2010, Mathur said.

Citing the EPA's estimates, state officials said those requirements are expected to provide significant benefits for at least another decade.

"If you take their deadline seriously, there is nothing rosy about this situation," said Dave Kolaz, chief of the Illinois EPA's air bureau.

Federal EPA officials said they won't officially designate the counties to be in violation of the soot standard until November. Governors in Indiana, Wisconsin, Michigan and other states already are lobbying to ex-

fired power plants through better emission controls. Chicago is the 14th dirtiest region in the country for annual soot pollution, according to an analysis of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency data by the American Lung Association.

Data for the area show the air already is getting cleaner. But six northeastern Illinois counties—Cook, DuPage,

Kane, Lake, McHenry and Will—still violate the U.S. EPA's standard. Two fast-growing townships in Grundy County and one in Kendall County were added to the list because in the EPA's Chicago office.

Nationwide, nearly 100 million people live in areas that fail to meet federal limits for pollution particles smaller than 2.5 microns, or about 1/

PLEASE SEE SOOT, PAGE 9

The most polluted

Metropolitan areas most polluted by year-round particle pollution:

1. Los Angeles	2. Visalia, Calif.
3. Bakersfield, Calif.	4. Fresno, Calif.
5. Pittsburgh	6. Detroit
7. Atlanta	8. Cleveland
9. Hanford, Calif.	10. Birmingham, Ala.
11. Cincinnati	12. Knoxville, Tenn.
13. Weirton, W. Va.	14. Chicago
15. Canton, Ohio	16. Charleston, W. Va.
17. Modesto, Calif.	18. New York
19. Merced, Calif.	20. St. Louis

Source: American Lung Association

years by legal challenges that came from business groups and a handful of states. Among other things, opponents claimed the health risks were unproven and the costs to comply with the standard would far outweigh any benefits.

The EPA estimates that soot pollution annually causes 15,000 premature deaths, 55,000 cases of chronic bronchitis and hundreds of thousands of asthma attacks.

One of the most significant recent studies of fine-particle pollution found that years of exposure can increase a person's risk of getting lung cancer and heart disease to levels comparable to living with a smoker.

"We need to rapidly bring polluted areas into compliance with the new air quality standards if we are to adequately protect the U.S. public health," one of the study's authors, George Thurston of New York University, recently told a U.S. Senate subcommittee.

In an interview, Thurston said the most effective solution is stringent pollution controls at aging coal-fired power plants in the Midwest, which are major sources of gases that form particles in the atmosphere.

While acknowledging their power plants are a source, utility executives say their research shows that soot from vehicle exhaust is a bigger problem.

"One of the reasons it is so important to do something about fine particle pollution is there are so many different sources involved," said Jonathan Samet, an epidemiologist at Johns Hopkins University, who chaired the panel.

South Elgin residents enter fray over proposed townhomes

By PAUL ROCK
Kane County Chronicle

Development planned on Route 31

residents who said the plan would add more congestion and mean that several hundred trees would have to be cut down to make room for it.

damage the demonstration railroad that runs behind Cambridge Bluffs.

"The proposed storm drainage system is inadequate and doesn't meet the stormwater management standards in its design," Taylor said.

Representatives of the Fox River Trolley Museum jumped into the discussion Tuesday about Cambridge Homes' proposed 73-unit townhouse development.

Ralph Taylor, chief engineer for the museum, told a panel of village officials at a public hearing that Cambridge's plans for stormwater detention could

spark protest from nearby Cambridge Bluffs. The village was ordered to zone the property for up to 12 units per acre.

• October 2002: Cambridge Homes brings a proposal to the village Planning and Zoning Commission to build five townhouses on the property. The proposal is withdrawn after commission members request less density.

• May 2003: Cambridge representative Dan

Ungerleider returns to the plan commission with a concept plan for a 75-unit townhouse project. The commission recommends approval despite concerns about density, stormwater management and tree preservation. The village board later

See CAMBRIDGE, page 2

Development timeline

- Cambridge Homes' townhouse development, Cambridge Bluffs, has its roots in a 1996 lawsuit that property owner Deno Malchiorre won against South Elgin over the 12-acre piece of land on Route 31, south of the Fox River Trolley Museum. The village was ordered to zone the property for up to 12 units per acre.
- July 2003: During a public hearing, neighbors protest the development because of its potential effect on trees and the environment.
- September 2003: The continuation of the public hearing is delayed after Ungerleider requests his project be considered under village ordinances that existed when the 1996 lawsuit was settled.
- October 2003: The plan commission recommends against village board approval of the project.

- December 2003: Ungerleider makes changes to the proposal before a village board meeting, including changing the number of units to 73, but Village President Jim Hansen blasts the developer, saying the changes are not substantial enough. The project is approved after village attorney Derke Price suggests that turning it down might invite another lawsuit.
- May 2003: Cambridge representative Dan Ungerleider returns to the plan commission with a concept plan for a 75-unit townhouse project. The commission recommends approval despite concerns about density, stormwater management and tree preservation. The village board later

Cambridge

Continued from page 1

"Cambridge will provide (a detention area), but we have come up with an alternative to save trees," said Dave Cook of Cambridge. "The system is designed so stormwater will leave the site at the same rate it enters."

But trolley museum volunteer Edward Konecki said that because part of the pipe system would run under the trolley museum track that takes visitors to the Blackhawk Forest Preserve, the track might be damaged during construction.

"Granting this should occur only if the petitioner ensures there will be no damage to Fox River Trolley Museum property," Konecki said.

Drew Ullberg, director of planning and development for the Kane County Forest Preserve, said he does not object to the development but believes that the stormwater alternative might cause more flooding in his agency's nearby land.

Museum land engineer Jack Bajor said the museum would be willing to work with Cambridge on changes to the sewer system.

Residents can submit written comment about the stormwater management plans until 5 p.m. July 13.

The village's community development department then will have 45 days to write a report and make a recommendation to the village board.

Village attorney Derke Price said the public hearing process became necessary because Cambridge does not want to follow the county's stormwater management ordinance.

Otherwise, the ordinance would require a 2.5-acre detention pond on the property.

b-30-04 Daily Herald

North Aurora board approves lights for dam

By JOHN JOHNSTON
Daily Herald Correspondent

between \$5,000 and \$9,000 for the new lights, but the cost will not be known until the contract goes out for bids next week. The board decided this week to brighten up the town by approving the beautification committee's recommendation to re-light the dam. The village expects to pay

relatively inexpensive way to make the town more appealing. The board heard a presentation from Lighting Solutions 20 years ago, but according to representative Scott Johnson at last week's committee of the whole meeting, Johnson said the lights could be arranged so that the lights are a

problem and the village will not have complaints from people upriver. The board approved the project completed by the village lit the dam about 20 years ago, but according to village engineer Jim Bibby, but that no timeline has been set. Johnson said the lights shined a much farther than needed

The village turned the lights off because of complaints. Bibby said he hopes to have the project completed by the end of the summer or early fall, but that no timeline has been set.

Once started, Johnson said the dam needs four 1,000-watt light units on the bridge and days to complete.

Johnson said he thinks the

dam needs four 1,000-watt

light units on the bridge and

days to complete.

Orce, started, Johnson said

the project will take about five

days to complete.

Gorecki loses appeal on firings

Ex-employees' lawsuit is sent back for trial

By William Presecky
Tribune staff reporter

A federal appeals court Tuesday affirmed a lower court decision that Kane County State's Atty. Meg Gorecki is not immune from accusations she violated the free speech rights of two former investigators when she fired them after she took office in December 2000.

Former special investigators Phillip Carlson and Thomas Smith, who were hired by Gorecki's predecessor David Akemann, sued her in U.S. District Court in Chicago in December 2001, alleging they were fired in retaliation for political support they gave their former boss.

Gorecki defeated Akemann, a longtime incumbent, in a three-way Republican primary in March 2000 and went on to win election in November 2000.

She blamed Carlson for exposing information regarding her fictitious claim in 1998 of a kickback scheme that eventually led to the recent four-month suspension of her law license. The suspension ended June 1.

She also blamed Smith for authoring and circulating a letter criticizing her during the two investigators occupied pol- [2000] election."

Gorecki asked for a summary judgment at the U.S. District Court level on grounds that at the pleasure of Akemann, Carlson and Smith had occupied sensitive policy-making or confidential positions and, as a result, she was entitled to qualified immunity in not "reappointing" them.

Gorecki had argued that the former

"The non-essential quality of these jobs is underscored by the fact that [Meg] Gorecki saw no need to fill the vacancies created."

—Federal appellate court opinion on the firings of two Kane County state's attorney's office employees

ly denied her motion for summary judgment in March 2003.

The appellate judges concluded Gorecki had presented no evidence that the positions held by Carlson and Smith "rose to a level requiring political sensitivity."

"The non-essential quality of these jobs is underscored by the fact that Gorecki saw no need to fill the vacancies created," the federal appellate court opinion stated.

"According to Gorecki, despite the fact that she shared the same party affiliation as Carlson and Smith, they were her 'political enemies,'" the opinion noted.

Efforts to reach Gorecki or her attorneys for comment were unsuccessful.

The case goes back to U.S.

District Court, where the un-

derlying issue of whether the

two firings were legal is to be decided.

6-30-04 Daily Herald

Counties on soot alert:

The EPA said a preliminary analysis showed that 243 counties in 22 states — including Cook, Will, DuPage, Kane, Lake and McHenry counties — may have to take additional measures to curb pollution to meet the standards by 2010. EPA Administrator Mike Leavitt called the need to reduce air-borne microscopic soot "the single most important action we can take to make our air healthier." He said soot-filled air annually causes 15,000 premature deaths, 95,000 cases of chronic or acute bronchitis, and thousands of hospital admissions because of respiratory or cardiovascular illnesses.

6-30-04
Beacon news

Electionwatch

There will be a "Blues 'n' BBQ with Bonnie" fund-raiser for **Bonnie Lee Kunkel**, candidate for Kane County Board on Aurora's West Side, from 3 to 6 p.m. July 10 at Aurora Cocktails, 29 W. New York St., Aurora.

The event will include entertainment by the Screaming Blue Dogs, a barbecue, and Fantasy Auctions.

Advance tickets are \$20 per person, \$35 per couple and \$45 per family. Add \$5 after July 4. For tickets or information, call (630) 892-1277.

Seeing the village

in a better light

6-30-04 Chronicle

N. Aurora likely to approve lights for dam next week

By ERIC SCHELKOPF
Kane County Chronicle

NORTH AURORA — The village's dam soon could be put in a better light.

Village trustees this week approved a plan to light the dam, just north of the State Street bridge. Next week, the village is expected to put the project out to bid.

Members of the village's Beautification Committee suggested the idea as a way to beautify the area. The project will be funded through the committee's budget.

"It will make something that we have in our village unique. We have a real good-looking dam," committee Chairman Harry Patterson said.

Scott Johnson, of Wheaton-based Lighting Solutions Inc.,

has assured trustees that the four 1,000-watt bulbs could be focused to prevent any glare from going upriver.

The dam had lights in the 1980s, but those lights were removed because the glare could be seen upriver and was bothering nearby residents.

Both Patterson and Village President Mark Ruby said they were happy that the lights will be controlled to prevent any glare upstream.

"If I lived upriver, I wouldn't want it in my house, either," Patterson said.

Village engineer Jim Bibby said lighting the dam "would create a significant visual impact for a very negligible cost."

Lighting Solutions had submitted a quote that the project would cost \$9,978.

Fox Valley in 60 seconds

6-30-04
Daily Herald

Contract details revealed:

The new North Aurora administrator will receive an annual salary of \$72,000, with the same benefits as other village employees and three weeks of vacation time, village officials said Tuesday. Sue McLaughlin, 39, will begin July 1 with the village. The village board voted on her appointment earlier this month. She leaves a village administrator position in Byron. She replaces Rob Nelis, who was fired in August. He received a \$92,500 annual salary.

Gorecki suit continues:

A federal appeals court Thursday denied Kane County State's Attorney Meg Gorecki's request to dismiss a lawsuit against her.

Justices in the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the lower court's refusal to dismiss the lawsuit filed by former state's attorney investigators Phil Carlson and T. R. Smith in 2001. The two men are seeking damages of \$1 million each. The men claim they were fired because they supported her election opponent and made allegations that she participated in jobs-for-favors. Gorecki claimed in court papers that she had the right to fire the men for political reasons because their jobs were politically based. The federal appellate justices in their opinion said Gorecki failed to prove that party affiliation was an appropriate requirement to perform their duties in the office. The lawsuit

will return to the lower federal courts for litigation.

Fares to increase:

Dial-A-Ride mini-bus fares in St. Charles, Geneva and Geneva Township will increase 25 cents a year for the next three years beginning Sept. 1. In-town fares will increase from \$1.50 per trip to \$1.75. Rides between cities will increase from \$1.75 to \$2. St. Charles Township dropped Dial-A-Ride service Jan. 1 due to budget cuts, but officials there promised to review the decision on an annual basis. The door-to-door service is available from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday for senior citizens and people with disabilities. For a ride, call (630) 584-5353.

b30-04 Chronicle

Judge denies *Chronicle*'s request to dismiss lawsuit

By HEATH HIXSON
Kane County Chronicle

A Cook County judge on Tuesday rejected a request by the *Kane County Chronicle* to dismiss a defamation lawsuit filed by Illinois Supreme Court Justice Robert R. Thomas.

But Cook County Circuit Court Judge Donald O'Brien also refused a request by Thomas' attorney to quash subpoenas for information served upon the six other Supreme Court justices by *Chronicle* attorneys regarding

deliberations during last year's state misconduct case against Kane County State's Attorney Meg Gorecki.

O'Brien effectively ruled that Thomas' lawsuit could move forward, and he ruled that the justices must file any legal objections to the subpoenas by July 30 and responses to the subpoenas by Aug. 2.

"While noting that Justice

Thomas' suit was 'not a model

complaint,' the court found

that Justice Thomas made suf-

cient allegations at this early

stage of the proceeding to allow

the suit to go forward," appeared in the newspaper's editorial page.

Thomas' attorney, Joseph Power, of Chicago, said "I remain confident of our ability to defend the *Kane County Chronicle*."

Thomas filed a civil lawsuit Jan. 9 against Shaw Suburban Media Group Inc., which owns the *Chronicle*, Managing Editor Greg Rivara and columnist Bill Page. The columns referred to not open season on elected officials, including judges, when someone is going to lie about them. And that is basically what the judge said," Power said.

Thomas' attorney Mark M. Sweetwood said in a statement,

"I remain confident of our ability to turn over any documents related to the case not involving other justices. He lauded the judge's ruling to allow Thomas' lawsuit to move forward.

"The bottom line is that it is not open season on elected officials, including judges, when someone is going to lie about them. And that is basically what the judge said," Power said.

Kane County tests new online signup system for jury duty

■ Easing process: Potential jurors can select the best date to serve

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — It used to be when it came to serving on a jury in Kane County, you kept your mouth shut and did what you were told.

If you got a summons for jury duty, you went where and when the letter said.

But a new system being tested allows for some negotiation in that process.

"With the old system, it was sort of like a draft notice," Doug Naughton, 16th Circuit Court administrator, said Wednesday. "It was, 'Greetings ...'"

But now, people getting notice from the Kane County Jury Commission have a chance to pick when they will serve.

And they have a choice of filling out the Juror Qualification Questionnaire they get in the mail and mailing it back, or just going online to take care of it.

Naughton told the County Board Judiciary Committee giving people a chance to pick their month to be called addresses 80 percent of the problems his office runs into in scheduling juries.

"In the past, people called and said they couldn't serve this day because they would be out of town, or on vacation," he said. "They tried to renegotiate."

Under the new system, a person chooses a month that is most convenient. When actually called for jury duty, they can call the jury commission, or they can go online, and pick another day.

"It is very user-friendly," Naughton said.

Rather than take his word for it, Naughton passed out the Jury Qualification Questionnaires pulled for each committee member, and even for members of the press who cover the meetings.

The "homework assignment" was to go online

and fill out the form.

The process was quick and easy, taking about 10 minutes. (It would have taken less time, but this reporter answered two questions wrong and had to go back and answer them again.)

The Web site is www.ijuror.co.kane.il.us. The first page is a greeting from Chief Judge Philip DiMarzio, who points out that fulfilling jury duty is "a tradition established under the United States Constitution over 200 years ago."

"Indeed, the right to a trial by an impartial jury of one's peers is an integral part of the foundation of American democracy," the greeting points out.

On the second page is a short explanation of Kane County's system. The county uses a one-day, one-trial system, which means a person called to jury duty serves for the duration of one trial if selected to hear a case. But if the person has not been selected to hear a case by the end of one day, he is discharged from jury duty.

Names of potential jurors are drawn randomly from computerized voter registration lists, along with driver's license lists, on a weekly basis.

At the third page, a person has to type in their juror ID number, and their electronic signature. Both are provided on the questionnaire that is mailed to the potential juror's home.

By the sixth page, it is time to fill out the questionnaire. The questions are not too difficult — not much tougher than filling in your name.

The final part of the questionnaire asks which month you want to serve, and then asks some personal questions, such as race and occupation, that the questionnaire says are kept confidential.

People are advised not to try out the online form yet. Naughton said court officials are planning to have the system up and running for real by August.

That's barring any problems, which could happen.

Naughton told committee members Wednesday officials were testing the system for two weeks.

"It was flawless," he said. "So I went online this morning, and it didn't work."

You've got jury duty

Kane County testing out online jury scheduling

BY PATRICK WALDRON

Daily Herald Staff Writer

6-24-04

Daily
Herald

It's as close to jury duty on demand that the system might ever get.

Kane County court officials are in the final stages of launching an online jury scheduling program that could someday eliminate the old days of getting a summons in the mail and having to rearrange everything to do your civic duty.

Basically, it allows a resident to fill out a juror qualification questionnaire — sent to his or her home — through a county Web site. As part of that online submission, the person can ask for an exemption from jury duty or select a month when he or she can serve.

"Just by asking you when it's best for you, that removes 80 percent of our phone calls," said Doug Naughton, the county's court administrator.

To test the new setup, Naughton handed out the printed questionnaires, which would normally be mailed, to members of the county board's judiciary committee Wednesday so they could go to the county Web site and submit the information.

"Is it user friendly?" Naughton asked the committee.

To complete the process, a potential juror can start at the county's Web site at www.co.kane.il.us and click on the i-Juror link or go directly to the jury home page at www.ijuror.co.kane.il.us.

The jury site greets visitors with a message from 16th Circuit Chief Judge Philip DiMarzio. The note is brief and provides some basic historical context and instructions.

Next is another page from the county's jury commission explaining how the county's jury system works and a little bit about what a juror can expect.

On the next page, the online qualification process begins. It starts with submission of the juror identification number, plus the electronic signature that can be found on the printed questionnaire sent to individual

Jury County plans to have system set by Aug. 1

Continued from Page 1

residents.

After submitting that information, the system should recognize your name as a person that has been sent a questionnaire. It will ask you to proceed and fill it out online.

After you have filled out Naughton said jury commis-

answers to all the questions. The system will allow you to review the questionnaire for mistakes. Once the rechecked information is submitted the process ends with instructions to check back with the Web site to see your juror status.

Naughton said jury commis-

tion staff members would then contact the potential juror with an exact date for jury duty. That could come by e-mail or regular mail.

The new system has been under development for months, and Naughton said the plan is to have it up and running by Aug. 1.

See JURY on PAGE 12

New jury selection process will use online technology

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — A new computerized jury selection system should help potential jurors to complete and submit responses or reschedule service.

Court administrator Douglas Naughton said jury summons still will be mailed, but a potential juror will be able to fill out and submit the qualification questionnaire online.

"We'll still be mailing things out to the public, but this gives them the opportunity to respond by e-mail, save a stamp, save a trip to the post office," Naughton said.

The iJuror program, installed by Judicial Systems Inc. of Tyler, Texas, is scheduled to be active by Aug. 1.

In addition to the ability to respond to a summons, a potential juror can reschedule his appearance by e-mail.

"You will get to pick a new date; then you're stuck with that date," he said.

The ability to request a different date will cut down on the number of calls coming into the chief judge's office.

"By asking what date can work for you, that eliminates 80 percent of the calls,"

On the Net

- The jury selection Web site www.ijuror.co.kane.il.us.
- The site also can be accessed from the county's home page at www.co.kane.il.us.

Naughton said.

To test the new system, Naughton passed out phony jury summonses to Judiciary Committee members Wednesday. Each summons carried a juror identification number and electronic signature to be used in a trial run.

"We want to know, is it user friendly?" Naughton said.

County board members whose names already were being considered for jury duty were assigned fake names.

Names of those selected for jury duty come from voter registration roles and the Illinois Secretary of State's driver's license rolls.

The county clerk often purges names of voters who have moved, which at the same time removes the names from the jury selection rolls. The secretary of state keeps the names of driver's license holders for four years after the license expires, Naughton said.

Village hears ideas for Bolz Road parcel

By NAOMI DILLON
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Centrum Properties Inc. is still far from delivering a solid plan to Carpentersville officials on what it wants to do with a 20-acre parcel just south of Bolz Road.

The Chicago-based developer envisions homes that fold into the surrounding woods, requiring a creative eye in design and a lenient hand on zoning laws.

"We just want to see if we're moving in the right direction," said representative John Green, who on Tuesday presented a proposal to the board that was so preliminary it hasn't even been filed with the village yet.

Centrum Properties is sounding a lot like Kimball Hill Management Co., which is in the midst of trying to figure out what it wants to do with Fox View Apartments — a government-subsidized housing project just to the south and west of Centrum's vacant lot.

The Rolling Meadows-based Kimball Hill issued a letter to its roughly 12,000 tenants last fall, telling the community it did not intend to renew its Section 8 contract with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development when it expires Sept. 30.

Some residents were worried, others weren't, having received similar notices in years prior.

Indeed, the company recently told village officials it will extend its government contract for another year, buying more time to decide the fate of the 373-unit apartment compound that, fairly or unfairly, is considered the black eye of Carpentersville.

"We haven't determined what we're going to do yet," said Tracy Hill, president of Kimball Hill Management and one of reportedly 40 people who partnered to build Fox View sometime in the 1970s.

"We go on a year-by-year renewal based on what makes best sense for the partners," Hill said.

With Centrum Properties proposing a 33-unit housing community that will not only fit the surrounding landscape but the village's long range plans, Trustee Nancy Moore wondered if such ingenuity couldn't rub off on neighbors.

"I think this development can be a positive step with Fox View," Moore said. "This might be an enticement to Kimball Hill."

6/24/04 Chronicle N. Aurora trustees criticize proposed townhouse plans

Number of units draws objections

By ERIC SCHELKOPF
Kane County Chronicle

NORTH AURORA — Village Trustee Mike Herlihy does not object to townhouses being built along the Fox River.

But he thinks 51 townhouses are too many for a 4.9-acre site.

"I don't disagree with townhouses occupying the property. I just think it is still too dense," Herlihy said during Wednesday's Committee of the Whole meeting.

Herlihy and other trustees objected to plans of North Aurora-based Wyndham Deerpoint and R.A. Faganal Builders of Batavia to demolish the D.R. Sperry buildings along the Fox River north of village hall and build 51 upscale townhouse units.

The townhouses in the proposed Riverwoods on the Fox development would start at \$225,000.

The developers plan to build 46 units now, and would hold off on the other five units until a decision is made on what to do with village hall.

Plan commissioners had recommended approval of preliminary plans for the project.

However, several trustees objected to the number of townhouse units being proposed.

"To me, they are packing something into an area that doesn't deserve to be packed in," Trustee Dale Berman said.

Berman has said he would like the land to be preserved as open space.

Trustee Max Herwig said he had mixed feelings about the project.

"I feel that this type of project is probably the right thing for the property, but it seems a little tight," Herwig said.

Wyndham Deerpoint partner Richard Guerard said a considerable amount of money has been spent to clean up the site.

"This wasn't going to be a park or a commercial building. This is downtown. This will be a high-end project where you should have some density," Guerard said.

Village trustees this year approved a tax-increment-financing district to spur redevelopment of the industrial complex.

The TIF district is not tied to the townhouse project.

The area qualifies as a TIF district based on several criteria, including age, dilapidation, obsolescence and environmental cleanup, said Mike Hoffman of Evanston-based Teska Associates.

Total projected sales from the development are expected to be \$12.4 million, resulting in an expected real estate increment of about \$280,000 annually.

The TIF district would be in place for 10 years. The developers will attempt to market and sell out the property by the end of 2006.



Bill
Page

6-24-04
Chronicle

Jack Ryan's problems hit Kane, too

It's not often I write about state or national issues, but I make an exception when something or someone on that level has a direct impact on the local political scene. The Jack Ryan mess certainly qualifies, and the fallout could have a lasting effect on Kane County politics.

Unless you just emerged from a cave in Lower Slobovia, you are no doubt aware of the troubles facing Ryan, the Republican nominee for U.S. Senate. Claims made by his then-wife in their divorce proceedings have been the staple of the newspapers, talk shows and water cooler gossip for a few days, and there's no need to repeat the lurid details here. Ryan claims that the stories are untrue, but that hasn't stopped their repetition, or the damage to his candidacy and his party.

Local GOP leaders are on record as supporting Ryan, but that support is tepid at best. More than one would sleep better if Ryan would pull the plug on his candidacy and spare them the discomfort of publicly endorsing a man who's accused of, shall we say, non-traditional marital behavior. The problem for these GOP honchos is, despite their brave "What a husband and wife do in their marriage is no one's business," statements, the truth is that neither they nor the local GOP can be seen as supporting someone the general public is beginning to regard as strange. This is, after all, the party that has marched to the drumbeat of family values for years. It just wouldn't do if the leader of the band played a different tune.

If Ryan does drop out of the Senate race, the GOP will have to pick a new candidate, and Kane County figures heavily in that process. The two candidates who finished second and third to Ryan, Jim Oberweis and Steve Rauschenberger, are both Kane GOP heavyweights. Logic and vote totals say one of them should get the nod, but I wouldn't hold my breath that either factor would sway the boys in the backrooms.

They will be looking for a candidate who, if they can't win, will at least not embarrass them in defeat. My assumption is they'll pick some party-faithful political warhorse with solid name recognition. Such a move might make sense on paper, but it's sure to anger the voters who supported Oberweis or Rauschenberger and likely will create serious rifts in the state and Kane County GOP organizations.

As I mentioned, Ryan has denied most of the allegations, and he can stay in the race as long as he wants. True or not, the

divorce details have seriously hurt his campaign, and I predict that he drops out by the Fourth of July. Then the fireworks really will begin.

I have a little question for Kane County Treasurer Dave Rickert: Dave, last year when you were a candidate for chairman of the county board, you used around \$6,000 in county funds to pay for little yellow sticky notes to be attached to newspapers. The notes were reminders to property owners that taxes were due, and featured your name in nice bold letters.

At the time, you claimed that you weren't using the notes for any political purpose — such as getting your name out to the electorate — but simply a public service.

Well, Dave, here it is a year later. You're no longer a candidate, but taxes are again due. So where are the little yellow sticky notes? Just asking.

My column item Tuesday on the selection process for Kane County undersheriff had some unintentional omissions. I left the impression that East Dundee Police Chief Joe Pena was the only one being considered for the job, but that isn't the whole story. While it's true that Pena is the most visible and politically connected of the aspirants for the position, there are several other strong candidates, and they come from within the sheriff's office.

In fact, the mood among the rank and file is they would prefer the next undersheriff to come from within the department, rather than an outsider. They point out that the job requires an intimate knowledge of the workings of both the department and of county politics; attributes they're not sure Pena can bring to the job.

They might be right, but the selection could end up being more of a political choice than a deserved reward to a loyal officer. Whatever choice Sheriff Ken Ramsey makes will cause him some problems. If he picks Pena, he risks alienating his own officers; if he stays inside, he's got problems with those political forces who back Pena.

The safest thing for Ramsey might be to ignore politics and remember the wisdom in an old saying. It's the one that goes, "You dance with the one that brought you."

• Bill Page lives in St. Charles and writes about local issues on Tuesday and Thursday. Calls and e-mails answered at (630) 584-0809 upage@mediawerks.org

County needs flood gauge sites

6-24-04 Chronicle

Algonquin floodgates changed readings used to determine flood stages on Fox River

By ALLISON L. SMITH
Shaw News Service

Kane County officials said they cannot go through another flood without coming up with new flood gauge sites in the far lower Fox River basin.

Don Bryant, county director for the Office of Emergency Management, said he will work with the National Weather Service later this summer to establish the official sites, likely in South Elgin and Montgomery.

During the May flood and in past

years, Bryant checked an Algonquin gauge when deciding whether to ask the state Department of Natural Resources to close the Fox River in Kane County to boats.

But with this the first year that new floodgates were used at Algonquin and McHenry, the gauge readings changed dramatically when the gates were in use, making it hard to tell if the area was at flood stage, Bryant said.

See FLOOD, page 2

Craig Hanson, St. Charles' emergency coordinator, also said he would support the gauges.

The far lower river — south of Algonquin — was closed to boating May 24 and re-opened June 7 without restrictions, he said. It was the third time that segment of the river had been shut down in a decade.

The Chain O'Lakes and upper river — north of the McHenry dam — remained under a no-wake restriction Wednesday. The lower river, between the McHenry and Algonquin dams, was closed.

On the Chain and the river south to the Algonquin dam, the IDNR has the FoxWaterway Agency to implement no-wake rules for boaters when water levels warrant.

But the Fox Waterway Agency has no authority in Kane County. Boaters, residents and businesses in Kane County look to Bryant's staff for word on boating restrictions and flooding issues.

The IDNR counts on Bryant's office to alert state officials of potential flooding in Kane County. Emergency management staff may initiate the request for boating restrictions, or they may funnel requests from municipal fire and police officials.

The IDNR then combs its data, deciding whether to ask the U.S. Coast Guard to concern for a no-wake rule or a complete shut down of the far lower river.

Contributing: Heath Hixson, Paul Rock, Brenda Schory

Flood

Continued from page 1

"The IDNR opening those gates artificially dropped the water level, so now our numbers from that site are not always reliable," Bryant said. Other local officials said the Algonquin dam reports are not reliable in central Kane County.

Jeff Glaser, director of Batavia's Emergency Management Agency, said he does not rely on Algonquin river reports.

Instead, he uses two reference points in Batavia to measure flooding on the Fox. Glaser said he would support adding several official points in central Kane County to gauge water levels in each community.

"I think it would be really nice if the Department of Natural Resources would come and give each community a spot where there is a sea level measurement," Glaser said. "Having one official point at Algonquin doesn't really tell me anything."

Tom Talsma, Geneva's director of public works said more information is good, but that high river levels typically do not affect Geneva.

"It hasn't been a particular problem for Geneva because we have our own observation and gauging," Talsma said. "We typically don't have any river flooding problems. My understanding is those problems are up in South Elgin and north of South Elgin."

6-24-04 Daily Herald

Elgin approves terms of garbage transfer station

BY TOM O'KONOWITZ

Daily Herald Staff Writer

Elgin's city council again has cleared the way for a garbage transfer station to be built on the southeast side, much to the dismay of at least one council member.

In a 4-2 vote Wednesday night, with Juan Figueroa and Tom Sandor dissenting, the city council approved an agreement setting the terms for Waste Management of Illinois Inc. to run a transfer station south of Bluff City Boulevard and east of Gifford Road.

The city council still must hold public hearings on the matter before giving the project clearance, which is subject to state approval. Waste Management wants to build a garbage transfer station on 15 acres in an area that is very industrial, with gravel mining operations and a massive auto salvage yard.

Two weeks ago, the Elgin council tabled the matter for 90 days after Figueroa said it wasn't fair to allow Waste Management to proceed with plans for a transfer station after Midwest Compost Inc. had already gotten such clearance to build one in the same area. But Mayor Ed Schock argued the marketplace should decide which company gets the upper hand — not the city council — as that's the American way.

Wednesday night, however, Councilman John Walters removed the issue from the table to be reconsidered, and Figueroa resumed his arguments.

"This is not the American way, Mr. Mayor," Figueroa said. "This is the Waste Management way."

The council agreed to reconsider the issue after talk that Waste Management might decide to pursue building a transfer station just 500 feet south of the proposed site to fall within the village of Bartlett's city limits.

Waste Management also sweetened the deal, if its transfer station gets final approval, by agreeing to cover the cost of a "spring cleanup" in which the company would pick up for free unlimited garbage from Elgin residents. The program this year cost taxpayers \$60,000.

Waste Management also agreed it would pay for the garbage containers residents put outside their houses.

Waste Management officials didn't address the council Wednesday night, but previously told the council they'd take their project elsewhere if the council didn't back them.

Midwest Compost will have a public hearing on its transfer station proposal Aug. 30, and another for Waste Management will be scheduled for some time after Sept. 15.

6-24-94 Daily Herald

North Aurora board members insist plan for 51 townhomes is too big

BY JOHN JOHNSTON

Daily Herald Correspondent

The Sperry property development plans for North Aurora may be too much for the property, according to several members of the village board. The project would put 51 high-end townhouses on five acres along the river, just north of village hall.

"I said this a year ago and I'll say it again: there's too much here," Trustee Michael Herlihy said.

Herlihy took issue with the net density of the development. He said that when only usable land is taken into consideration, the plans could come close to 15 units per acre. Herlihy said he would like to see the economic situation that may justify the tight fit because he thinks the high density could reduce the long term

"I said this a year ago and I'll say it again: there's too much here."

Trustee Michael Herlihy

price.

Guerard said his company has already spent over \$600,000 cleaning up the property, which used to be an factory. The money involved in cleaning the property was a factor in keeping the area from being a green space. The Forrest Preserve and Park District both declined to take the property.

Trustee Max Herwig said, "For the state the property is in and lack of anyone willing to do anything about it for 15 years, this project is probably right for the property. My only concern is it is a little tight."

Mayor Mark Ruby said, "I'm in favor of doing what is possible on the site. Green space is not an option." He said the board will take a closer look at the plans and review plan commission notes on the project before the village board discusses Sperry again.

Richard Guerard, of Wyndham Deepoint, the developers of the Sperry property, said they have whittled their proposal from over 70 units to 51 in the last year to meet requests of the village staff and committeees.

Guerard said the units will have stone bases and siding on top that resembles a Cape Cod house. He said the townhouse, as planned, will sell from \$230,000 to \$275,000, but he could not say if the suggested lower density would affect the

6-24-04 Daily Herald Batavia residents get details of new water main project

BY GAIL M. PIERCE
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Batavia officials realized how installation of a new water main project across town will affect garbage pickup and school buses, but not on the Holy Cross barn sale in September until a resident brought it up at Wednesday's open house.

After the Fourth of July, the city will begin gutting several major roadways including Main and Pine streets, Wenmoth and Hart roads as well as Nagele Boulevard to install a new 12-inch water main pipes. More than 30 Batavia residents turned up to hear about the six-month project, which is an essential component to reduce the radium levels in the water by next January.

The \$6 million plus construc-

tion will begin in three areas at once, handled by separate contractors.

Residents learned if they get a hanger on their door, their street will get work the following week. Contractors, too, will knock on front doors the day of construction to give people a chance to pull out of their driveway before it's torn up. Water Superintendent John Dillon said.

With construction about 20 feet at a time, water could be shut down 4 to 5 hours on a given day between 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Dillon said. The crews will work, however, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays to speed up the construction process, Public Works Director Gary Larsen said.

Dillon and Larsen ensured that the city is committed to preserving all the trees in the mains

path. "We might have to do some tree trimming, but that's about it," Dillon said.

The routes around the schools will be finished by Aug. 23 to make way for buses, and garbage trucks will have access to all roads on pickup days.

Terry Todd, who lives on Wenmoth Road, attended the open house because he lives on the construction route.

"It's the only way to get rid of the radium problem, I guess," he said.

Georgene Kauth, who lives on First Street, credited the city staff for a thorough job on planning the construction.

"I think you guys have done a great job," she said. "It looks like you have done your homework."

The city will update its

Web site, www.cityofbatavia.net,

on a weekly basis to inform resi-

dents of construction.

6-24-04 Beacon News

New mosquito disease possible threat

By Daniel Yee

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ATLANTA — As if West Nile virus wasn't bad enough, now U.S. health officials are on the lookout for another mosquito-borne disease, fearing it could become a permanent part of the American landscape if it entered the country.

Rift Valley fever, which originated in Africa, is the only disease at the top of both human health and agriculture lists of dangerous diseases.

The virus can kill people, with a near 1 percent mortality rate, making it deadlier than West Nile, but Rift Valley poses a greater threat to cattle and sheep.

It kills up to 30 percent of the live-

stock it infects, and, if it were found in animals here, it probably would prompt livestock bans by other countries.

"This is not a disease that occurs here now, but we want to make sure people are aware of the signs and symptoms," said Dr. Thomas Ksiazek, chief of the special pathogens branch

of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Most people get a flu-like illness when infected. Some may develop serious symptoms, including liver or kidney disease, Ksiazek said.

About 14 percent of those seriously ill with Rift Valley fever in previous outbreaks died. West Nile kills about 10 percent of those with serious complications, such as brain inflammation.

The virus is worrisome because at least 30 species of mosquitoes are capable of carrying it from cattle or sheep to humans, far more than the kind of mosquitoes that can carry West Nile. People also can catch it by handling the blood or fluids of an infected animal.

The disease could appear here as mysteriously as West Nile, which first showed up as the culprit in the unexplained deaths of birds in New York in 1999.

The virus was first identified in a 1930 sheep outbreak in Kenya's Rift Valley in eastern Africa. For the next 70 years, it remained on the continent, emerging for the first time outside of Africa in outbreaks in Saudi Arabia and Yemen in 2000.

6-24-04 Chronicle

Randall Road widening set to begin in Algonquin

SHAW NEWS SERVICE

Developers will begin a privately financed project in early July to widen Randall Road from four to six lanes on the southern edge of Algonquin.

Crews will widen the road from near Longmeadow Parkway north to beyond Wal-Mart.

The construction includes dual left-turn lanes and right-turn deceleration lanes at every intersection along the way.

The construction was re-

quired by Kane County and Algonquin to better handle the traffic generated by two huge shopping centers expected to add up to 1.6 million square feet of retail space there.

The Algonquin Commons shopping center is scheduled to open in October, and developers hope to be finished with the road project by then.

The developers of The Galleria, a megamall planned across the street, also will foot part of the \$4.3 million construction bill.

6-24-04 Beacon
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Say no to Edward

The Illinois Facilities Planning Board will issue decisions by August on the viability of numerous hospital proposals. I want to express my opposition to the Edward Plainfield Hospital proposal.

Opposing the Edward proposal was not an easy decision. The idea of having a new hospital located directly in Plainfield sounded like a good idea initially; however, there are two sides to every coin. As an elected official, I must look beneath the surface and weigh all sides of an issue before making any decisions.

In this instance, careful review indicates this facility should not be approved. A new hospital would unduly stress our scarce healthcare resources and disrupt the balance of service currently provided to residents in Kane, Kendall and Will counties.

There are many long-standing hospitals that have provided quality service for all area residents. While it is accurate that our communities are experiencing an increase in population, many of the existing hospitals already have approved plans that will allow them to grow to meet future needs. Making improvements to existing facilities is far more cost efficient than the more than \$200 million that Edward is proposing to spend.

Healthcare dollars are in short supply. Consequently, there is a need for fiscal responsibility and careful planning. I do not believe that our region will benefit from another full service hospital in an area that is more than adequately served by quality institutions. I urge you to oppose the proposed Edward Plainfield Hospital.

Patricia Reid Lindner
State Rep., 50th District
Sugar Grove

6-24-04 *Daily Herald*

Genevans can help shape park plan

BY GARRETT ORDOWER
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Open space. Natural areas. Swimming pools. A new fitness center. Better swimming lessons.

A survey conducted for the Geneva Park District indicates these are some of the things Geneva residents want to see, but the district and its consultants hope a community meeting next week will give them a more complete picture as they plan for the next five to 10 years.

The district's master plan has been in the works since last fall, guided by an 11-member steering committee and Chicago-based consultants URS/TPAP who also developed the city's strategic plan.

The district's previous long-range plan dates to 1993, and it has completed 90 percent of the projects outlined in it, Executive Director Steve Persinger said.

"It gives us focus and direction," Persinger said.

The meeting comes about midway through a seven-step process to define the district's goals for the next five to 10 years, depending on growth, Persinger

said. A survey conducted by Western Illinois University as part of the process indicates residents still value open space and natural areas as their No. 1 priority and want to see the new fitness and recreation center planned for Peck Farm Park come to fruition, Persinger said.

It also sheds light on how

people in the city use parks and other park district offering. Nine out of 10 households within the

district have had someone visit a park in the last year, it found. Residents also think Esping, Dryden, Moore and South Street parks could use a little more attention, as could the Western Avenue School gym.

But it also suggests residents want to see the development of a golf course considered, which the park district does not believe to be the case, Persinger said.

At the Wednesday meeting Geneva, IL, 60134. For more information call (830) 232-4542.

BUSTING

AT

GUTTER CENTER

Carpentersville road repairs on hold

Cost of work could reach \$38M

By AMY R. MACK
Shaw News Service

CARPENTERSVILLE — Already facing financial woes, the village learned Tuesday night that it will cost almost \$38 million over a decade to repair its crumbling road network. A lot of those potholes might have to wait as the village wrestles with limited funds and escalating needs.

Continued concerns about finances as village officials await their latest audit results could color what funding options are available. And, as has consistently been the case, trustees do not agree on the best way to proceed.

“The board needs to understand that with four no-opinion audits, that would have a direct

impact on our ability to obtain bonds,” Trustee Nancy Moore said after Village President Mark Boettiger suggested that the board consider bonds as a funding source. “To go with a private funder would cost a lot of money,” Moore said at the special board meeting.

Her remarks drew objection from Trustee Karen Roeckner, who noted that the board still does not have the latest audit results.

“You have been in the press telling people that, but we still don’t even have that report. Do you have that report?” Roeckner asked Moore, who did not respond.

Carpentersville has had three no-opinion audits but recently was advised at an Audit

Committee meeting with audit firm Selden Fox J.C. that the next report likely will be more positive.

If so, that might permit the village to finance the roads program. Despite Moore’s contention, Village Manager Craig Anderson said the village’s current bond rating might allow such funding.

At the board’s request, Anderson and staff now will gather more information. Boettiger previously indicated that he would like to see a capitol improvement program that uses bonds to finance a massive road program.

Rapid population growth has led to increased traffic and additional roads for the village to maintain, consultant Baxter & Woodman said in its extensive report.

The biggest needs are in the older, eastern portion of the village, but each new subdivision adds roads, sewers, sidewalks, curbs, gutters and water mains that must be maintained by the village.

Carpentersville has 96.1 miles of roads, 88 miles of which are maintained by the village.

Of those, Baxter & Woodman ranked almost 60 miles as needing some type of work. Only 28 miles are considered good.

If action is taken now to establish a 10-year repair program, costs would be \$37,824,492.

If nothing is done, those costs could top \$68 million, Baxter & Woodman’s Louis Haussmann told the board. “If we look at existing programs, the cost will be \$37 to 38 million? In 10 years, if we do nothing, it will be \$68 million?” Roeckner asked.

Waiting is not an option, said Trustee Jim Frost, who said he fields calls almost daily about roads in the older section of town.

“This is a catastrophe,” Frost said.

Board members study committee structure

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Kane County Board members will examine ways to make its committee structure more efficient.

For example, a newly formed panel whose goal is to reduce jail crowding will gather statistics from the criminal justice system, which is the purview of the Judiciary Committee.

Some believe there would be a duplication of efforts.

"I see exciting things coming out of that committee," said Judiciary Committee Chairman James Mitchell, R-North Aurora.

"That" committee to which Mitchell was referring is the Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee.

Any realignment of committee structure will take a vote of the full board to change the county code.

The Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee has been charged with putting together "a system of management information that will tie all this together," said Jan Carlson, R-Elburn.

The state's attorney, courts, public defender and circuit clerk report to the Judiciary Committee. Representatives from those offices also sit on the coordinating committee.

Talk of restructuring the county board committee structure might be premature, said Thomas Meadath, Democratic candidate for county board chairman.

"It seems a little presump-

tive," Meadath said.

Meadath faces Karen McConaughay, R-St. Charles, for the post in the November election. Carlson is McConaughay's campaign manager.

Meadath said talk to restructure the county board rules should wait until after the election.

"I think it may be a little premature because Karen has not been elected yet," he said.

Over the years there have been informal talks of cutting back on the number of committees and the committee to which offices and department report.

For example, the sheriff's office reports to the Public Safety Committee about its police functions and the Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee for jail operations.

"I think there's a need to reorganize and reduce the number of committees, generally," Carlson said.

Mitchell has appointed Carlson and Caryl VanOvermeiren, R-St. Charles, also a member of the Judiciary Committee, to study the functions of the committee and to make a recommendation on what should be and should not be under its jurisdiction.

"This is not coming from a negative vein. Hopefully, we can help with that transition," VanOvermeiren said.



Mitchell

Panel favors St. Charles project

Mixed-use plan for western gateway

By Warren Moulds

Special to the Tribune

A breakthrough in the expansion of St. Charles' western gateway could soon happen if the city supports a mixed-use, tax-incentive-driven development being proposed for 60 vacant acres known as the Petkus Property. Developer Greg Nutt of St. Charles-based Pine Ridge Water Management and wetland goals the city wants for the area. Bob Hupp, city development director, added that a

plan Tuesday night for a plan calling for 27.1 acres of commercial development, 13.5 acres for townhouses, 14.3 acres for open space and storm-water detention, and wetlands for the remaining acreage.

Plan Commission Chairman Mark Armstrong said the plan accomplishes most of the economic, traffic and storm water management and wetland goals the city wants for the area. Bob Hupp, city development director, added that a

plan Tuesday night for a plan calling for 27.1 acres of commercial development, 13.5 acres for townhouses, 14.3 acres for open space and storm-water detention, and wetlands for the remaining acreage.

Plan Commission Chairman Mark Armstrong said the plan accomplishes most of the economic, traffic and storm water management and wetland goals the city wants for the area. Bob Hupp, city development director, added that a

over five years. The commercial area would include Illinois 64 and Randall Road frontages along with a newly created east-west road through the heart of the property.

As presented, the development would have 58 three-bedroom townhouses ranging from \$450,000 to \$550,000. The property, a mixture of landfill, wetland, ponds and hilly woods, lies a half-mile west of Randall Road on the north side of Illinois Highway 64. Owner Barbara Petkus, whose father farmed the land he bought in the 1940s, has had no closing on the property is scheduled, said real estate

agent Marvin Vestuto, who is handling the marketing of Petkus' property.

"They're trying to put together a closing," Nutt said, "but I do not own the property and it is premature [to talk about a deal]."

Petkus said Nutt has a contract to buy the property.

"All I want to do is find a

buyer for it as it is and sell it,"

she said. "I just think he's do-

ing his due diligence," to de-

termine the city's willingness

to create TIF incentives to

clean up the landfill and wet-

lands.

The commercial area would include Illinois 64 and Randall Road frontages along with a newly created east-west road through the heart of the property.

Terry Heffron, land planner for the developer, said Nutt may request tax incremental finance incentives to clean up parts of the landfill and wetlands. Road debris was dumped on about 20 acres of the property.

No sale has taken place and

no closing on the property is

scheduled, said real estate

nol-gasoline mixture that will cut down on vehicle emissions and boost domestic ethanol production.

Joseph Hopp, director of fleet operations for the city, applied for a regional alternative fuel infrastructure grant more than two years ago. The Chicago Area Clean Cities Coalition approved Aurora's application, along with requests from Chicago, Downers Grove, Northbrook, Park Ridge, Winnetka, and the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Aurora's grant is for \$39,717 and will allow the city to install an above-ground, 2,500-gallon fueling station at the central garage on North Broadway Avenue.

The city will pay \$5,000 for installation and for Hopp's hours as project manager. The Gas Technology Institute also will cover about \$5,000.

"It's great to see this come through," Hopp said. "We'll be burning 85 percent domestic product that's a cleaner-burning fuel and a renewable resource."

Amy Fischer Roth

AURORA TRIBUNE
Village to use $6/25/04$
ethanol vehicles

About 50 of Aurora's city vehicles soon will be using an etha-

Beacon 6-25-04

Health officials urge West Nile precautions

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Although four dead birds found in Kane County have tested positive for the West Nile virus, public health officials said it is hard to gauge what kind of year it will be for the disease.

"The bottom line is we're in the fourth year of the virus, the third year in Illinois, and people are unsure what to expect," said Michael Isaacson, of the Kane County Health Department.

Health Department officials this week told members of the County Board Public Health Committee that a total of four birds with the disease were confirmed in Kane so far this month. The first was collected June 2 in Wayne. The other three were discovered about a week ago in Geneva, Batavia and Aurora.

Still, no human cases of the disease have been reported. And Fred Carlson, environmental health director, said the rainy season this spring has made it difficult to check the mosquito traps.

"We're not having the dry periods, which is interfering with our ability to collect mosquito counts," he said.

It is ironic that those hot dry periods which normally follow heavy rains in the spring and summer are what help breed the mosquitoes that carry West Nile. So, the heavy rains which are keeping of

ficials from checking traps, coupled with the sometimes cooler weather this year, might actually keep mosquito breeding down.

But officials warned that, with the heavy rains, people still need to watch for standing water. At some point, the rain will stop, and the standing water will be left.

"Regardless of what the weather is, people should resume what they've been doing. Get rid of standing water; limit going outside; when you do, wear bug repellent with Deet."

Cindy Gross
Health Department epidemiologist

So far, 27 West Nile cases have been confirmed in birds in Illinois, 13 mosquito pools have tested positive for the virus, and 17 of the state's 102 counties are affected, said Tom Schafer, a spokesman for the Department of Public Health.

No humans in Illinois have been infected so far this year, Schafer said Thursday. There were 54 human cases and one death last year.

Elgin has 2nd bid for waste facility

TRIBUNE 6-25-04

By Amanda Marrazzo
Special to the Tribune

Elgin trustees will vote next month on the initial step in considering a second application for a solid-waste transfer station in the city.

At a committee of the whole meeting Wednesday, trustees agreed to vote July 14 on whether to enter into an agreement with Waste Management.

The agreement does not approve the station but allows the company, which already collects garbage in the city, to apply for site approval for a solid-waste transfer station along Bluff City Boulevard.

The city already has one proposal for a transfer station. A public hearing is scheduled for Aug. 30 on an application by Midwest Compost for 5 acres at 1820 Spaulding Rd.

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency must give its approval before a station can open.

Waste transfer stations are sites where garbage trucks transfer their loads to larger trucks for shipment to landfills. Hundreds of trucks typically come and go at the sites each day.

The Waste Management agreement was tabled two weeks ago, but Councilman John Walters resumed the discussion, insisting that a decision be made.

Walters said officials were "tinkering with the market" when they decided that Waste Management should wait 90 days to apply.

He said it was possible that if Waste Management had to wait, the company could take its plan to another community. Then, if Midwest Compost failed to get approval, the city would lose the estimated \$800,000 in annual fees a transfer station is expected to generate.

"We have to vote on this," Walters said. "We are closing a door when we shouldn't be closing a door."

But Councilman Juan Figueroa said Waste Management was setting the deadline on a decision rather than the city. "I do not like feeling pressured," he said.

Councilman Thomas Sandor agreed.

"Now we've gotten into a bidding war," Sandor said. "And we are not on a level playing field."

Along with the fees from the station, Waste Management has offered free spring clean-up service, which cost the city \$60,000 this year.

Batavians seek answers on water main project

Robert Guy Mullen, president of Landmark Carwash on Main Street, was more concerned. "We'll put up some signs to let people know that we're open, because they'll see all the equipment in the road," Mullen said.

879-1424.

Residents will be given 48 hours notice in case of a shut-off. Any water shut-offs will happen between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

All roads will remain open to traffic during construction. Garbage collection and mail delivery will remain as scheduled. Kathleen Glenney, a resident on Pitz Lane, was thinking of having 30 friends over for a party at the end of July. She found out that her street might be under construction around that same time.

"Well, that will save me some money," said her husband,

Property owners will be notified one week in advance of work on their street. Water Superintendent John Dillon said.

"The construction people will knock on your door to let you know they will be working at the end of your driveway, in case you need to move your car to get out," he said.

The water will remain on during construction. For anyone being switched over to the new system,

water might be turned off for as long as 6 hours while the new main is flushed and the water is tested.

One of several major water improvement projects that the city has planned for this year. Other projects include a new central water treatment plant, two new water wells and a new west-side elevated water tank.

Three contractors have been hired to do the work in the east, central and west sections of the city simultaneously. They are expected to begin just after July 4, and finish within 6 months.

The contractors will be digging 3-foot wide trenches in the street

to install the new water main.

BATAVIA — Dozens of people showed up for the City Hall open house with questions on the upcoming cross-town water main project.

While one resident came to find out whether she could host a party on her street at the end of July, a local carwash owner came with concerns over how much his business might be disrupted during construction.

Installation of the new main is

By Jan Rammeling
SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

Aurora growth is 14th fastest

■ **New estimates:** Joliet and Naperville also make list for most rapid population gain

By Dave Paro
STAFF WRITER

Beacon 6/25/04

AURORA — New U.S. Census Bureau estimates released Thursday show that Aurora continues to be one of the fastest-growing cities in the country, outpacing even its own special census conducted last year.

From April 1, 2000, to July 1, 2003, Aurora's population increased 13.3 percent to 162,184, making it the 14th fastest-growing large municipality in the United States. The city was ranked 13th last year for the two-year period since the last census and 18th in 2000.

An estimate from July 1, 2002, and July 1, 2003, shows that Aurora added 5,704 people in one year, a 3.6 percent increase from the 2002 estimate. That makes Aurora the 17th fastest-growing municipality for that period.

A special census conducted last year officially put Aurora's population at 157,267, the number the city now can use to collect revenue from the state. The larger estimate released this week includes the entire city, while the special census only included tracts in DuPage, Kendall and Will counties.

Aurora Mayor David Stover said he wasn't surprised that the special census number is already outdated because the city continues to annex land and issue housing permits at a rapid pace. Since Stover took office seven years ago, the city has added 40,000 people and grown from 27 to 40 square miles.

"That doesn't surprise me," Stover said of the new estimate. "I think it's higher than that. I think we're actually closer to 170,000."

"There's no doubt you miss people doing a special census."

All the cities in the Top 10 are in the western United States or Florida. Joliet was listed as No.

Growth spurt

Here are the fastest growing U.S. cities with populations of more than 100,000 and the rankings of some Illinois cities. The rankings show population increase between April 1, 2000, and July 1, 2003:

1. Gilbert, Ariz. — 32.1 percent
2. North Las Vegas, Nev. — 25.1 percent
3. Henderson, Nev. — 22.5 percent
4. Chandler, Ariz. — 19.6 percent
5. Irvine, Calif. — 19.2 percent

6. Port St. Lucie, Fla. — 18.8 percent

7. Rancho Cucamonga, Calif. — 18.7 percent

8. Fontana, Calif. — 17.8 percent

9. Peoria, Ariz. — 17.4 percent

10. Cape Coral, Fla. — 16.1 percent

11. Joliet — 15.9 percent

14. Aurora — 13.3 percent

38. Naperville — 7.4 percent

125. Springfield — 1.8 percent

149. Rockford — 0.9 percent

174. Peoria — 0.1 percent

200. Chicago — 0.9 percent

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

GROWTH

From Page A1

10 last year but slipped one spot in the latest figures with a growth rate of almost 16 percent. Naperville is ranked at No. 38.

Aurora continues to keep a strong hold on the title of second-largest city in Illinois behind Chicago. Rockford, the No. 2 only four years ago, grew less than 1 percent to 151,725 people.

The rankings reflect cities with a population of more than 100,000.

Since the 2000 census, Aurora has added more than 19,000 people. Joliet has added almost 17,000 people during that period to bring its total to 123,570.

"There are people coming from everywhere to live here — Chicago and all other points," said Joliet Mayor Art Schultz. "We have good services, and our taxes are low."

According to experts, the number of people in Joliet and Aurora should continue to swell during the first half

of the century. By 2030, the population in Aurora is expected to top 190,000, and Joliet is expected to surpass 140,000.

"What they both have available to them is land that they can annex and develop," said Marc Thomas, senior planning analyst with the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission. "As long as they have the desire to annex more land and develop it, then they will continue to grow."

Chicago, meanwhile, continues to shrink. The new estimates show Chicago has lost about 27,000 people in three years. The city's population is now estimated to be 2,869,121.

Houston, on the other hand, is threatening to take Chicago's spot as the third-largest city in the country. The numbers show Houston added 56,057 residents in three years, a jump of about 3 percent. That city's total population now stands at 2,009,690.

New York continued to be the nation's most populous city, with 8.1 million residents. Los Angeles is second most populous at 3.8 million.

♦ Turn to GROWTH, A2

Issues from the past make comeback in Batavia

Beacon 6-25-04

Debates over a second bridge and Tri-City broadband resurface

By Jan Rammeling
SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

BATAVIA. — Two very controversial topics from the past were given new life recently, and local citizens may be asked to take sides again soon.

In Batavia, Mayor Jeff Schielke has asked the City Council to consider adding another bridge over the Fox River. "I think it's about time to reconsider it," Schielke said. "It's just

good leadership on the part of the City Council to get people involved and make the decision."

Schielke said that he would like a citizens group to be appointed to determine if another bridge might be a good long-term solution for Batavia's traffic-bogged downtown.

Traffic issues might be coming to a head soon as repairs are scheduled for the Fabian Parkway Bridge in 2005, and reconstruction of the Wilson Street Bridge will take place in 2006. Traffic during both projects will be rerouted, although the Wilson Street Bridge will remain partially open during construction.

Batavia voters rejected the idea of

a second bridge before, voting against a November 2000 referendum. Many residents opposed the idea from the time city officials first raised the subject in an attempt to relieve traffic congestion during the Wilson Street Bridge project.

Schielke would not say where a second bridge might be located in the city. In the past, proposals were made for Main Street to Laurel, Webster to First Street and Adams to Main Street, although there was no general consensus on location at that time.

The opposition group Save Our

Streets was concerned about the additional traffic a second bridge could generate. Every proposed location had some opposition in 2000,

especially from residents living in the area of each site.

Spokesperson Sharon Stran said recently that she would weigh the need for a new bridge against the effectiveness of the location and whether traffic flow would be improved.

In a 2000 community survey, nearly three quarters of those who use the bridge on a daily basis favored a second bridge.

Broadband returns

The Tri-City broadband concept failed on the ballot in April 2003 with voters from Batavia, Geneva and St. Charles. Voters were unwilling to gamble their tax dollars on a munic-

ipally run system to supply telephone, cable television and internet service.

Now, the citizens' broadband support group, Fiber For Our Future, said that the project will be funded by users and private investors — no tax dollars will be necessary. The group is busy collecting signatures in each city to get the issue back on the ballots this November.

"If anything, the need has grown," he said. "The proposal has been improved to include private financing and no tax backing, which I see as a plus."

For more information on the Tri-City broadband effort, contact Annie Collins at (630) 938-7630, or log on to www.tricitybroadband.com.

their full support of the new project as yet.

In Batavia, the Chamber of Commerce is putting together a resolution in support of Tri-City broadband to present to the City Council. The Chamber's legislative chairman, Anthony Cvek, said that the need for the service has not changed.

"If anything, the need has grown,"

he said. "The proposal has been improved to include private financing and no tax backing, which I see as a plus."

For more information on the Tri-City broadband effort, contact Annie Collins at (630) 938-7630, or log on to www.tricitybroadband.com.

6-26-04 BEACON NEWS

Kane to build radio cell tower

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Kane County Transportation officials plan to build a new cell tower at the department headquarters on Burlington Road.

Transportation officials will use the tower for a pair of two-way radio antennas for voice communications. Officials also will put a new microwave dish there for a countywide computer network.

Currently, the radio antennas are on the water tower at the complex. But officials plan significant repair of the water tower in the coming year, which

would require removing the antennas.

Officials said moving the antennas and wires to a new location would cost \$35,000. For \$55,000, officials told the County Board's Transportation Committee Friday, they could build the new 160-foot tower and put three platforms on it.

One platform would take care of the county's needs, and the county could rent the other two for money-making ventures. County officials could rent to private cell or Internet providers, said Paul Rogowski, transportation director.

The tower is planned to be built next to Building E, which is the new maintenance building.

6-26-04 Beacon News Rains delay Orchard Road work

By PATRICK WALDRON
Daily Herald Staff Writer

This month's string of heavy rain caused significant flooding along Orchard Road in Aurora and put the road's reconstruction project three weeks behind schedule, county transportation officials said Friday.

In one of the storms, 3.5 inches of rain dropped on the area in about five hours June 12 causing the lanes and a detention pond still being excavated to flood.

Despite the setback, the contractors have told county officials they intend to bring in extra work crews to get things back on schedule. "I don't think there is anything to get nervous about," said Paul Rogowski, director of the county's transportation division.

Work on Orchard Road between Prairie Street and Indian Trail represents the county's largest construction

project this year. At a cost of \$13.5 million, one lane in each direction is being added to the 2.2-mile stretch of road.

The job includes a complete resurfacing, additional turn lanes, intersection improvements and three new traffic lights.

Work started this spring and is scheduled to finish by the end of next summer. Rogowski said if no additional delays occur, the overall schedule should hold, including the goal of having the lanes built before this winter.

Part of the construction project includes building additional storm water retention ponds to collect rainwater running off the new road. Even though the retention pond, located south of Galena Boulevard, was not fully constructed when the storms hit, the area did hold millions of gallons of water that county transportation officials say prevented flooding in nearby residential areas.

6-26-09 Daily Herald
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Daily Herald Staff Writer

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Randall Road construction to cause delays

6-26-04 Chronicle

S-curve work planned at same time as repairs to Mill Creek bridge

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Work on the Randall Road S-curve safety median is expected to begin July 6.

Drivers can expect traffic delays and periodic lane closures.

"It's going to impact traffic, no doubt," Transportation Director Paul Rogowski said.

Repairs to the Randall Road bridge over Mill Creek south of Batavia will begin at the same time, a project that also will require the closure of one lane in each direction.

The bridge work is scheduled to end Sept. 1.

The bridge requires drain replacements, pavement patching and guard rail painting.

The median is being installed on the S-curve north of St. Charles as part of a safety plan to prevent crossover accidents.

The median will be 9 feet wide and 9 inches tall. It will begin about a quarter-mile north of Red Haw Lane and extend 1,400 feet to the bridge over Person Creek.

To fit the median within the existing right of way, the

road's 12-foot-wide lanes will be reduced to 11 feet.

Rogowski said the 9-inch-tall curbs will have 2-foot-wide bases, or "flags," extending out from the median, which will make the inside lane a total of 13 feet wide.

The outside lane has the shoulder," Rogowski said.

The county is installing the median and other safety improvements on the S-curve at the urging of the public in the wake of several accidents. Traffic studies have shown that as many as 70 percent of the drivers exceed the speed limit in the area.

The S-curve is on a hill, a situation that traffic engineers call "combining geometry."

A 17-year-old girl was killed last year while traveling through the section of road during a rainstorm.

The speed limit has been lowered to 50 mph from 55 mph, and warning signs have been placed in the approaches to the S-curve.

Plans call for the speed limit to drop to 45 mph after the median is installed.

The sheriff's office has raised its enforcement of the speed limit, including using Illinois State Police planes.

Local

'Aurora Lake' saves homes *6-26-04 Chronicle* Basin prevents houses from flooding

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — A June 12 storm dumped 3.5 inches of rain in five hours on a section of Aurora that was swamped during the July 1998 flood.

Coincidentally, a detention basin just completed as part of the Orchard Road widening project might have saved some of the same homes from being flooded again.

Aurora storms

Without that, the houses probably would have taken a lot of water," said Kane County Transportation Director Paul Rogowski.

Workers at the Kane County Division of Transportation have dubbed the 10-acre basin "Aurora Lake."

"The construction probably saved a lot of homes," he said.

Rogowski said the June storm left the ground saturated and put the project three weeks behind schedule. However, the contractor, Harry S. Kuhn, told KDOT that extra crews would be put to work to bring the project back on schedule.

Rogowski said the four-lane section of the highway still is scheduled to be open for traffic by the end of the year.

Neighbors on the west side of Aurora were hit especially hard.

Northern Kane braces for growth

6-26-04 Chronicle

250,000 more residents expected in area by 2030

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Officials from Kane County have been working with four north-end municipalities to develop a transportation plan to accommodate growth for the next 30 years.

Assistant transportation director Thomas Rickert said an additional 250,000 people will live in northern Kane and southern McHenry counties by 2030 and traffic counts on existing roads could quadruple.

The villages of Algonquin, Huntley, Carpentersville and Gilberts developed the plan that calls for developers to pay the lion-share of the improvements.

"They're trying to get ahead of the game, ahead of the developers," Rickert said. "This area likely is one of the fastest growing areas in the country."

Rickert said the improvements would be driven by the developments, and he could not provide a timetable nor a cost estimate.

Those details will be available "as development occurs," he said.

The plans came about as a result of an intergovernmental agreement between the four

villages. Kane County is expected to become a party to the agreement in August.

The plan calls for Longmeadow Parkway, the proposed four-lane extension of the Bolz Road bridge, to meet Huntley Road at Boyer Road; the alignment of Galagan Road in Kane to connect with an extension of Lakewood Road in McHenry County; and the alignment of Kreutzer Road with Huntley.

The plan envisions a minimum of seven new signal intersections on Huntley and Kreutzer roads.

Although the Longmeadow regional bridge would provide a way across the Fox River, the expected influx of so many people will require the improvements even if no bridge was planned.

Traffic counts on Huntley now are at about 15,000 vehicles a day. In 30 years, that number is expected to climb to 45,000 to 60,000 vehicles a day.

"You're going to need this with or without a bridge," Rickert said.



Rickert

6-27-04 Chronicle
Thanks to all who
helped Schindlbeck

To the Editor:

For all you did in our time of grief, I would like to express our deepest gratification and appreciation on behalf of the family of Daniel Schindlbeck and the men and women of the Kane County Sheriff's Office.

We want to extend a special thank you to the highly skilled professionals at Provena Mercy Hospital in Aurora. From the directors, nurses and technicians, to everyone we had contact with, we were dealt with with sincerity and professionalism of the highest degree and for this, we will always be grateful.

A special thanks to the law enforcement community for their outpouring of support, as well as to the media for their caring coverage. Especially to the *Kane County Chronicle* and the Daily Herald for showing their respect and courtesy of requesting permission to cover the funeral even though they didn't have to.

The magnificent response from area fire departments especially Batavia, North Aurora and the Aurora Fire Department is greatly appreciated.

We want to extend an extra special expression of appreciation for the exceptionally high level of professionalism shown by the members of the Kane County Sheriff's Office.

Our deepest gratitude to all the wonderful people at Dieterle's Funeral Home for the love and care expressed.

An extra statement of gratitude to retired Kane County Sgt. John

Stoffa for his Herculean efforts in planning and executing such a singular funeral.

Kenneth R. Ramsey
Kane County Sheriff

6-26-04 Deich, Herald Randall S-curve project scheduled to begin July 6

BY PATRICK WALDRON

Daily Herald Staff Writer

The latest set of lane closures along Randall Road could start in less than two weeks with the construction of a new center median along the road's so-called S-curve in St. Charles Township.

Work is scheduled to begin July 6 and county transportation officials said drivers should expect to see periodic day-long lane closures throughout the project, expected to last four to six weeks.

"It's going to impact traffic, there is no doubt," said Paul Rogowski, director of the county's transportation division.

Crews will install a 1,400-foot-long median on Randall Road, roughly between the Ferson Creek bridge and Red Haw Lane, designed to stop

vehicles from crossing over into oncoming traffic.

The project was pitched as a major safety improvement in the S-curve that has been the scene of several accidents including one head-on crash in November that killed a St. Charles North High School senior.

Following that incident, several residents and North students began pressuring county officials to improve safety along that stretch of Randall Road. Stepped-up traffic enforcement from the Kane County Sheriff's Office, a lower speed limit and the new median are the highlights of the county safety improvements.

The median will be 9 feet wide and 9 inches tall. Its construction will reduce the lanes on that part of Randall from 12 feet to 11 feet. It will cost \$186,000.

638-04 Chronicle
Records
sought in
defamation
civil lawsuit

By PAUL ROCK
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Illinois' Supreme Court justices have been served subpoenas by *Kane County Chronicle* attorneys requesting records about deliberations during last year's misconduct case against Kane County State's Attorney Meg Gorecki.

The subpoenas are part of a lawsuit filed against the *Chronicle* in January by Justice Robert R. Thomas.

In addition to the request for notes about the deliberations, Thomas' colleagues were subpoenaed for documents relating to two columns written by *Chronicle* columnist Bill Page that were published in the newspaper in 2003 and centered on Gorecki's misconduct case.

Chronicle attorney Steven Mandell sent subpoenas to Chief Justice Mary Ann G. McMorrow and justices Thomas R. Fitzgerald, Charles E. Freeman, Rita B. Garman, Thomas L. Kilbride and Philip J. Rarick.

Thomas filed a civil lawsuit Jan. 9 against Page, *Chronicle* Managing Editor Greg Rivara and Shaw Suburban Media Group Inc., which owns the *Chronicle*.

In the lawsuit, Thomas says he was defamed and portrayed in a false light in two columns written by Page that appeared in 2003 on the newspaper's editorial page.

Both columns focused on Kane County State's Attorney Meg Gorecki's misconduct case, which was argued before the state Supreme Court. On Nov. 20, the court imposed a four-month suspension of her law license.

The two columns ran on the newspaper's editorial page May 20 and Nov. 25, 2003.

"The deliberations are definitely extremely relevant to the issues of this case," Mandell said.

Thomas' attorney, Joseph Power of Chicago, said the justice filed the 20-page civil suit after repeated attempts to have the columns retracted were denied and after Page sent an e-mail to the court's press offices threatening "a nightmare of bad publicity" if Thomas influenced the Gorecki decision.

The next court date in the case will be Tuesday, when a judge will decide on a request by *Chronicle* attorneys to dismiss the suit.

638-04 Chronicle
Rain delays Orchard Road project

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — The heavy rain that flooded Orchard Road on Aurora's West Side on June 11 has set the widening and repaving project back about three weeks.

But Paul Rogowski, Kane County transportation director, said officials plan to get the project back on track, maybe even by the first milestone, which is to have temporary traffic signals and a northbound roadway embankment finished

by July.

"(The contractor) will put on extra crews to make up the difference," Rogowski said Friday to the County Board Transportation Committee.

Rogowski warned committee members that the catchup work will add to the cost of the project.

Contractor Harry W. Kuhn, a

ready used extra workers to deal with the about 3.5 inches of rain dumped on Orchard Road in about five hours on that June 11

Friday night, and the next Saturday morning.

Orchard was flooded from

about Galena Boulevard to Ashby

Street. A portion of the existing

road was covered by about 3 feet

of water. Kuhn workers, along

with workers from KDOT and

the city of Aurora, worked to get

the road open by 4 p.m. that Sat-

urday, thanks in part to the new

Aurora Lake.

Aurora Lake is what KDOT off-

icials call a new detention basin

excavated along that section of the

road.

The project includes deten-

tion basins to accommodate runoff that

the new highway will cause.

The road is being widened to

four lanes from two lanes, which

will increase storm runoff.

Rogowski repeated what offi-

cials said two weeks ago: Without

Aurora Lake, homeowners in

Cherry Hill and Lakeside San-

Souci who had water in their

yards probably would have had

water in their houses.

"It worked," he said.

The Orchard Road project,

which started in March, is due to

be finished in June 2005.

Smell the air

To the person who lives in Bristol where burning is still allowed, I really sympathize with them. I live in Kane County where burning is no longer allowed, and you don't know what a difference it has made. Our windows can be open now and we can smell fresh air. Yes, it sure made a difference.

Florence Vanduser, Aurora

Filled with smoke

This is for the landscaping company in Bristol on Cannonball Trail who insists upon burning their rubbish, from who knows where, that fills my house with smoke and pesticide residue. The next call I make will be to the EPA. I am sick and tired of having my house filled with smoke. I can't open my windows on a beautiful summer day.

6-26-04 Beacon News

Panel recommends keeping Kane jail medical service

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Despite concerns Kane County has been overcharged, a Kane County Board committee Thursday recommended staying with the company that has been providing medical services to the Kane County jail.

The Correction and Rehabilitation Committee recommended staying with the company Wexford through November, but committee members also endorsed looking at the situation again to see if they would stay with Wexford through November 2005.

The recommendation came after representatives from the Kane County sheriff's office negotiated with Wexford to lower its costs.

"I felt, after sitting in on several of the meetings, that the level of cooperation was there with Wexford," said Corrections Chairman Karen McConaughay, R-St. Charles. She added that, although county officials have had questions about their prices, Wexford has been "a good provider" of medical services.

The motion to retain Wexford, at least for the next 5-1/2 months, came from board member Jan Carlson, R-Elburn, even though

he has been outspoken about the costs.

"It's obvious we've been grossly overcharged," he said.

The board has been looking into the possibility of a new medical service provider to cut down on the about \$1.3 million contract it has with Wexford. Commander of Administration James McCurry said the county already has run about \$120,000 over that contract price this fiscal year.

Committee members were more inclined to consider keeping Wexford after McCurry said he was able to negotiate lower increases that are contained in the contract.

He said he was able to get a planned increase of 7.5 percent for the rest of this year down to 6 percent, and a proposed 6 percent increase for the 2005 fiscal year knocked down to 4.5 percent.

He also got Wexford to agree to other items county officials asked about, including more accountability with the hours it spends at the jail.

McCurry added that, when officials get an audit of costs from Wexford at the end of the fiscal year, he will go over the items with the state's attorney's office to see if there are areas the county can recover some costs from Wexford.

6-26-01 Beacon News

Kane County highway plans: no new money, no new projects

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — The 2005 Kane County Transportation Department budget can be summed up simply: no new money, no new projects.

Transportation officials still are working on the budget, and will be presenting a draft of it to the County Board's Transportation Committee this year after about two years of study and preparation. Impact fees are the one new source of revenue to the department. They were enacted earlier this year, after two years of study and preparation. Impact fees

charge developers a sliding scale for the cost of transportation projects their developments will impact.

Still, officials have said impact fees will cover only about 8 percent of the cost of road projects. Rickett said Friday the committee and department will discuss how they want to handle impact fee money. The total budget projected for 2005 in transportation is about \$19.8 million. That matches an estimated

\$19.3 million expected to come into the department in revenue from the department's eight budgets, including the County Highway Fund, the County Bridge Fund, the County Matching Fund, the Motor Fuel Tax Fund, the Local Option Motor Fuel Tax Fund, the Bond Construction Fund, the Transportation Capital Fund and the Impact Fee Fund.

Rickett said there are no new projects planned for 2005. The major 2004 projects under way that will

continue in 2005 include:

- Orchard Road widening from Prairie Street to Indian Trail in Aurora.
- The extension of the Metra West Line from Geneva to LaFox and Elburn.
- The intersection of Durham and Stearns roads with Route 25 near South Elgin.
- The intersection of Kirk Road and Route 56 in Batavia and Aurora.
- The intersection of Kirk Road and Route 38 in Geneva.
- The intersection of Randall Road and Route 64 in St. Charles.
- The McLean Boulevard widening in Elgin.

Also included are various small bridge replacements and maintenance and safety improvements.

Rickett said the budget includes no increase in the number of employees for the year.

6-26-04 Daily Herald

East-West road idea includes bridge

Kane County makes plans for burgeoning traffic

By PATRICK WALDRON
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Today Dundee and Huntley roads near the county line remain small — though heavily traveled — rural roads connecting four of Kane and McHenry counties' fastest growing towns.

But in 20 years, those roads will grow into a vital east-west thoroughfare and possibly become the natural western leg of the Longmeadow Parkway bridge corridor.

Transportation and planning officials from Algonquin, Huntley, Gilberts and Carpenterville, along with both counties, have come up with a master plan for the roads that will carry some of the estimated 250,000 new residents expected to move into the region by 2030.

"It's an effort to make sure this is done correctly and to lock it in place when development comes," said Tom Rickett, assistant director of Kane County's transportation division.

An overview of the concept developed by the municipalities was presented to the Kane County Board's transportation committee Friday.

Expanding the now two-lane stretches of Huntley, Dundee

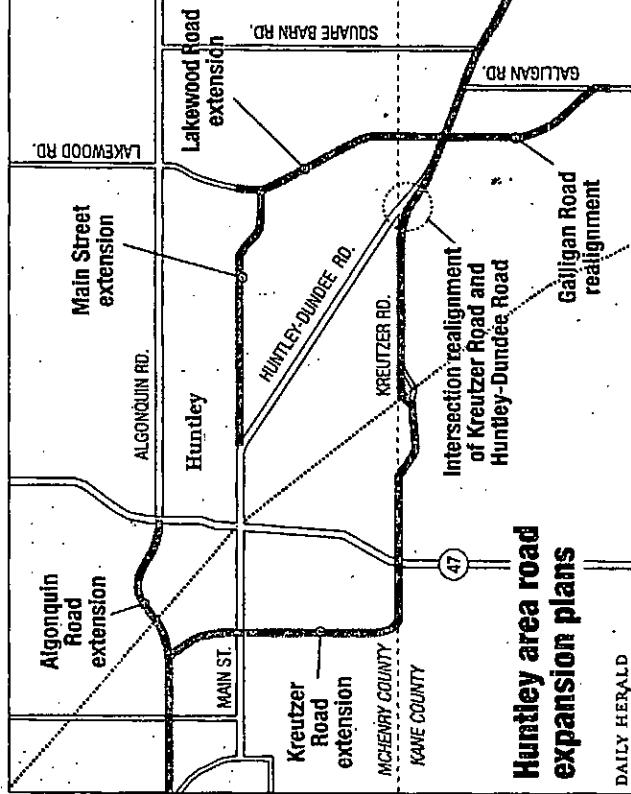
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between Carpenterville, Huntley, Gilberts and Algonquin fill in with new homes, the Huntley-Dundee Road stretch is seen as a new retail corridor.

Put it all together and Huntley Road west of Galligan Road — which carried an average of 6,717 cars a day according to 2000 statistics — should see its traffic easily quadruple.

"We need this with or without a bridge," Rickett said. "Looks good," he said.

But even without a Bolz Road bridge, a long-term regional transportation project that

doesn't have the money to become a reality, Kane County officials see road improvements that must be done.

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As the thousands of acres

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Northern Kane braces for growth

6-26-04 Chronicle

*250,000 more residents
expected in area by 2030*

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

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Rickert

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Drivers can expect traffic delays and periodic lane closures.

"It's going to impact traffic, no doubt," Transportation Director Paul Rogowski said.

Repairs to the Randall Road bridge over Mill Creek south of Batavia will begin at the same time, a project that also will require the closure of one lane in each direction.

The bridge work is scheduled to end Sept. 1.

The bridge requires drain replacements, pavement patching and guard rail painting.

The median is being installed on the S-curve north of St. Charles as part of a safety plan to prevent crossover accidents.

The median will be 9 feet wide and 9 inches tall. It will begin about a quarter-mile north of Red Haw Lane and extend 1,400 feet to the bridge over Person Creek.

To fit the median within the existing right of way, the

road's 12-foot-wide lanes will be reduced to 11 feet.

Rogowski said the 9-inch-tall curbs will have 2-foot-wide bases, or "flags," extending out from the median, which will make the inside lane a total of 13 feet wide.

"The outside lane has the shoulder," Rogowski said.

The county is installing the median and other safety improvements on the S-curve at the urging of the public in the wake of several accidents. Traffic studies have shown that as many as 70 percent of the drivers exceed the speed limit in the area.

The S-curve is on a hill, a situation that traffic engineers call "combining geometry."

A 17-year-old girl was killed last year while traveling through the section of road during a rainstorm.

The speed limit has been lowered to 50 mph from 55 mph, and warning signs have been placed in the approaches to the S-curve.

Plans call for the speed limit to drop to 45 mph after the median is installed.

The sheriff's office has raised its enforcement of the speed limit, including using Illinois State Police planes.

KANE COUNTY CHRONICLE

Local

'Aurora Lake' saves homes

6-26-04 Chronicle

"Without that, the houses probably would have taken a lot of water," said Kane County Transportation Director Paul Rogowski. Workers at the Kane County Division of Transportation have dubbed the 10-acre basin "Aurora Lake."

"The construction probably saved a lot of homes," he said.

Orchard Road, which serves as the main north-south artery in southern Kane, is being widened from two to four lanes from Prairie Street to Indian Trail.

On July 16, 1996, a record 16 inches of rain fell in Aurora in 24 hours. One rain gauge at the Aurora water treatment plant officially registered 21 inches. Neighborhoods on the west side of Aurora were hit especially hard.

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — A June 12 storm dumped 3.5 inches of rain in five hours on a section of Aurora that was swamped during the July 1996 flood.

Coincidentally a detention basin just completed as part of the Orchard Road widening project might have saved some of the same homes from being flooded again.

On July 16, 1996, storm dumped between 16 inches to 21 inches of rain in 24 hours to flood houses.

• June 12 storm dumped 3 1/2 inches in five hours. Detention basin prevents flooding repeat.

Rogowski said the June storm left the ground saturated and put the project three weeks behind schedule.

However, the contractor, Harry S. Kuhn, told KDOT that extra crews would be put to work to bring the project back on schedule.

Rogowski said the four-lane section still is scheduled to be open for traffic by the end of the year.

6-26-04 Daily Herald
Rains delay Orchard Road work

BY PATRICK WALDRON
Daily Herald Staff Writer

This month's string of heavy rain caused significant flooding along Orchard Road in Aurora and put the road's reconstruction project three weeks behind schedule, county transportation officials said Friday.

In one of the storms, 3.5 inches of rain dropped on the area in about five hours June 12 causing the lanes and a detention pond still being excavated to flood.

Despite the setback, the contractors have told county officials they intend to bring in extra work crews to get things back on schedule.

"I don't think there is anything to get nervous about," said Paul Rogowski, director of the county's transportation division.

Work on Orchard Road between Prairie Street and Indian Trail represents the county's largest construction

project this year. At a cost of \$13.5 million, one lane in each direction is being added to the 2.2-mile stretch of road.

The job includes a complete resurfacing, additional turn lanes, intersection improvements and three new traffic lights.

Work started this spring and is scheduled to finish by the end of next summer. Rogowski said if no additional delays occur, the overall schedule should hold, including the goal of having the lanes built before this winter.

Part of the construction project includes building additional storm water retention ponds to collect rainwater running off the new road. Even though the retention pond, located south of Galena Boulevard, was not fully constructed when the storms hit, the area did hold millions of gallons of water that county transportation officials say prevented flooding in nearby residential areas.

would require removing the antennas. Officials said moving the antennas and wires to a new location would cost \$35,000. For \$55,000, officials told the County Board's Transportation Committee Friday, they could build the new 160-foot tower and put three platforms on it.

One platform would take care of the county's needs, and the county could rent the other two for money-making ventures. County officials could rent to private cell or Internet providers, said Paul Rogowski, transportation director.

The tower is planned to be built next to Building E, which is the new maintenance building.

6-26-04 Beacon news
Kane to build radio cell tower

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Kane County Transportation officials plan to build a new cell tower at the department headquarters on Burlington Road.

Transportation officials will use the tower for a pair of two-way radio antennas for voice communications. Officials also will put a new microwave dish there for a countywide computer network.

Currently, the radio antennas are on the water tower at the complex. But officials plan significant repair of the water tower in the coming year, which

6/18/04 Chronicle

Dog club wants to host classes on forest preserve property

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — When Emily Schweitzer bequeathed her property to the Kane County Forest Preserve, a condition was that part of the property be used for dogs.

The bequest was two years ago, and its fulfillment has not been easy. The 160-acre property on Route 72 in Dundee Township contained a home, kennels and barn that the district did not want to maintain.

What was needed was a group to take responsibility for the buildings at no cost to the taxpayers. It now appears the search might be over.

Representatives of the CarDunAl Obedience Dog Training Club on Thursday told members of the district's Utilization Committee that they wanted a long-term lease to operate their classes out of the Schweitzer barn.

"We'll see what we can work out," said Barbara

Lepke of Wayne, one of the club's board members.

Committee Chairman Jan Carlson said district staff members must negotiate an agreement with the club before commissioners can formally approve of the use.

"We need to sit down with staff to come up with specific recommendations to bring back to the committee and commission," Carlson said.

Dotting the "Is" and crossing the "Ts" seem to be all that is standing in the way. Committee members were enthusiastic with the idea.

"This is exactly what we've been looking for," said Commissioner Daniel Walter, R-South Elgin. "It makes appropriate use of that property. CarDunAl has a great reputation."

Schweitzer raised prize-winning Irish setters, but she had no heirs to take the property. She wanted the land to remain as open space, but she also wanted

her legacy to benefit the canine community.

In a report issued earlier this year, the district's Operations Director Mike Holan recommended that the buildings on the Schweitzer property be demolished.

The committee rejected Holan's plan in the hopes that some organization would come along and take over.

"We're ecstatic. We've been looking for someone who would pursue this area," said Barbara Wojnicki, R-St. Charles.

The club began in 1963 and currently operates out of the Simpson Electric Building, a factory on the north side of Elgin.

Club member Kathy Reiland said they were hoping for a 30-year lease. The club's plan is to renovate the barn, and it is willing to invest "\$100,000-plus."

"We have the funds, so it would be at no cost to the taxpayers," Reiland said.

Six counties in 60 seconds

6-18-04 Daily Herald

Oasis gas station open:

The Lincoln Oasis now has gasoline available for north- and southbound motorists using the Tri-State Tollway (I-80/294) near South Holland, but its over-the-road restaurants must wait till next year. The Illinois State Toll Highway system's seven oases are being rebuilt in a \$94 million project that is part of a 25-year partnership with Wilton Partners and ExxonMobil. Information on the construction schedules and availability of services is listed in the "Oases" page on the Tollway's Web site, www.illinoistollway.com. The seven Illinois Tollway Oases include Belvidere and Des Plaines on the Northwest Tollway (I-90); Hinsdale, Lake Forest and O'Hare on the Tri-State (I-294); and DeKalb on the East-West Tollway (I-88).

No human West Nile cases:

The number of confirmed cases of West Nile virus in Illinois

birds has increased more than fivefold since June 1, but it's difficult to predict whether the state will see a major outbreak of the mosquito-borne illness this summer, state health officials said Thursday. So far, 27 West Nile cases have been confirmed in birds in Illinois, 13 mosquito pools have tested positive for the virus, and 17 of the state's 102 counties are affected, said Tom Schafer, a spokesman for the Department of Public Health. No humans in Illinois have been infected so far this year, Schafer said. There were 54 human cases and one death from West Nile last year.

Chief Illiniwek remains:

Chief Illiniwek will continue to perform at University of Illinois football and basketball games — for now. The school's board of trustees on Thursday rebuffed an attempt to retire the mascot and instead adopted a resolution seeking a "consensus conclusion" to the long debate

over whether the Chief honors American Indians or is a racist, degrading stereotype. The resolution does not define the term "consensus conclusion."

Man gets another 13 years:

A man already serving a 13-year sentence in Illinois for hiding bottles of cyanide in Chicago train tunnels was sentenced in Wisconsin Thursday to nearly 21 years for also vandalizing utility equipment and causing dozens of power outages there. U.S. District Judge Lynn Adelman sentenced Joseph Konopka, 27, formerly of Hobart, Wis., in Brown County, for six federal crimes, including arson, software piracy, destruction of property and vandalism. He is to serve the first nearly 11 years of the new sentence at the same time he finishes his 13-year prison term from Illinois. In all, he is to serve about 23 years in prison along with five years of supervised release in Illinois.

Forest district barn may get tenant

Dog trainers may use estate building

By William Presecky
Tribune staff reporter

Less than two weeks after Kane County Forest Preserve District officials acted to stave off demolition of a cluster of buildings on the former Schweitzer estate in Dundee Township, they are hopeful that a potential tenant has surfaced to save at least one main structure.

In keeping with Emily Schweitzer's wishes that her 160-acre estate remain open space and a portion be used for dogs, district officials opened talks Thursday with Car-Dun-Al Obedience Dog Training Club Inc. over a possible lease for the main barn.

Schweitzer, 89, died in 2001, 11 years after donating her estate, which included a main house, a caretaker's house, kennels, barns and assorted sheds.

Schweitzer, a breeder of Irish setters, bred more than 23 championship dogs.

In addition to the 22-acre homestead, where the buildings are clustered, the Schweitzer es-

'This is exactly what we've been looking for and an appropriate use of that property.'

—Dan Walter, Kane County Forest Preserve District Board member

tate, at Illinois Highway 72 east of Randall Road, has oak forests, cropland, hay meadows and marshes.

Representatives of Car-Dun-Al, which stands for Carpentersville, Dundee, Algonquin, told the Forest Preserve Commission's Utilization Committee that recent news reports of the buildings' possible demolition and the district's unsuccessful search for a tenant had

prompted the inquiry.

The non-profit club, founded in 1963, trains about 500 dogs and dog owners a year through an assortment of courses, according to 20-year trainer Penny Kurz of Schaumburg. The group is using rented space in a former industrial building in Elgin, said Car-Dun-Al board member Kathy Reiland.

Jan Carlson (R-Elburn), chairman of the Utilization Committee, authorized district staff to work with the group to draft a formal proposal for use and expansion of the barn.

Considering the district had nearly given up hope of finding any suitable, well-financed tenant for the Schweitzer homestead, the surprise emergence of the training club was roundly heralded by officials.

"I welcome this enthusiastically. This club has a great reputation," said committee member Dan Walter (R-South Elgin). "This is exactly what we've been looking for and an appropriate use of that property."

County wants your thoughts on new land use plan

6-18-04 Daily Herald



Patrick Waldron
Kane County

The guide to keeping garages to the east and farm fields to the west in Kane County went public this week, and the people who wrote it want to know what everyone thinks.

Officially, it's called the 2030

Land Resource Management Plan and is filled with company phrases like "critical growth area" and "urban corridor."

Inside the 275-page book you'll

find a collection of maps and words breaking down the county's farms, water supplies, subdivisions, roads, landmarks and municipal boundaries.

But at its core, the 2030 plan as most call it, seeks to outline the best way to keep half the county's land as neighborhoods and homes, while keeping the other half open space — be it farms, forest preserves or parks.

This 2030 plan is the sequel to the celebrated 2020 Land Resource Management Plan which was approved by the Kane County Board in 1996.

From here the new version becomes the subject of "an intense public review process," said Sam Santell, the county's planning director.

Three public meetings have been scheduled for residents to view and ask questions about the latest draft.

The first is set for 7 p.m. June 29 at Dundee Middle School, 37W450 Route 72 in Dundee Township. The second is at 7 p.m. July 13 at Geneva High School, 416 McKinley Ave., Geneva, followed by the final meeting at 7 p.m. July 14 in Room 147 of Bodie Hall at Waubonsee Community College in Sugar Grove.

For information, call the Kane County development

No short cuts: The 2030 plan's public hearings won't be the end of the line for discussion on the matter.

County development officials want to be sure the 26 members of the county board get a good education in the plan as well. That notion left them requesting a special meeting of the board's development committee.

At that moment earlier this week, board member Jan Carlson, an Elburn Republican, chimed in with a suggestion that no doubt many others were thinking — can we just have one meeting on this for a change?

It was a lighthearted jab at what is typical of county board policy.

Most of the time, if not all of the time, an issue first goes to a seven-member committee for debate, then on to the executive committee for another debate and then to the full board for more debate and ultimately approval or rejection.

"I hear the same arguments raised at committee, at executive and at the final county board," Carlson said.

He was simply trying to streamline the process and looking for another way to explore the 2030 plan without having the same talk three times, he said.

A valiant idea, perhaps, but can it happen?

"I don't think there is another way," said Cathy Hurlbut, the development committee chairman.

In other words, the system is what it is.

• *Patrick Waldron covers Kane County government and politics. To contact him, call (630) 587-8632 or send e-mail to pwaldron@dailyherald.com.*

A life or death decision

There was nothing officer Yates could have done that would have avoided the deadly circumstances late on the night of May 15 ...

6-18-04
Chronicle

Meg Gorecki made the right decision not to pursue criminal charges against a Geneva police officer involved in a fatal shooting last month.

Gorecki, the Kane County state's attorney, decided that police officer Daniel Yates acted properly when he raised his service revolver and fired two shots into Dimas Santiago.

The 63-year-old attacker wielded a 10-inch butcher knife and refused repeated demands to halt when Yates shot the Rockford man twice.

The fatal shooting by the hands of a police officer shook the community. Such violence does not haunt central Kane County, and the notion that a man would attack a police officer with a knife after a simple traffic stop is difficult to fathom.

Gorecki's decision, however, was not difficult.

There was nothing officer Yates could have done that would have avoided the deadly circumstances late on the night of May 15, when an intoxicated Santiago pulled into the Citgo gas station on East Main Street after police witnessed the man dangerously pass two other autos waiting on Route 25 to turn left so he could negotiate his own left turn.

Clearly, a traffic stop was warranted.

Critics immediately questioned whether deadly force actually was needed to subdue a man nearing retirement

age. But police training is very clear: an officer in a defensive position must create space between himself and any attacker, and an officer must not attempt to disarm a knife-threatening attacker with, for example, a baton or night stick. Doing so will get the officer killed.

At the point the officer made the critical decision, it did not matter that Santiago had a long criminal history. Yates had no time to consider such a past.

It did not matter that Santiago had been convicted of manslaughter in Cook County in 1963. Nor did it matter that he later would be imprisoned for violating his probation that stemmed from that conviction.

It did not matter that Santiago was convicted of involuntary manslaughter, aggravated battery and attempted murder in DuPage County in 1978.

And it did not matter that Santiago, drunk, a license in limbo after a March drunken driving arrest, and a history of traffic and criminal violations, knew he again would sleep many nights behind bars if Yates completed his duties to serve and protect Geneva citizens.

Yates had a simple choice: live or die.

He made the right decision. He followed police protocol and training. He followed the law.

6-18-04

KANE COUNTY CHRONICLE

Whooping cough outbreak spreads in McHenry County

By KRISTEN SCHMIDT
Shaw News Service

WOODSTOCK—McHenry County's whooping cough outbreak continues to spread, and it has taken a turn toward new population groups in recent days.

McHenry County Health Department officials have confirmed 38 cases of whooping cough, or pertussis, in the outbreak that began in the Barrington area in December. Most of the cases have been in middle school-aged children, though recent cases are in children and adolescents who are younger than 10 and older than 15.

Initial cases in McHenry County appeared in Cary, Crystal Lake, McHenry and Wonder Lake. New cases are popping up in Huntley, Lake in the Hills and Algonquin.

One of the newly diagnosed is Crystal Lake resident Steve Sonneman's 10-year-old daughter. Once her test came back positive, her doctor gave antibiotics to the entire family as a protective measure.

"She's doing all right, but they say the coughing will last another month," Sonneman said.

His daughter has the illness' signature cough, low-grade fever and cold-like symptoms. She is run-down and tired, too, he said.

Local health officials say it is imperative that people who have a persistent cough for more than a few days ask to be tested for whooping cough by their doctor. And doctors are urged to report confirmed cases quickly to their local health departments.

"It's so communicable. It's still out there spreading," said Fran Stanwood, director of nursing at the McHenry County Health Department.

Bill Mays, director of community health in Lake County, said childhood vaccines

Whooping cough facts

- Whooping cough is especially dangerous to children under 2, who are less well-equipped to fight the bacteria and who have not completed the full course of vaccine, which is given over a few years.
- Older children who catch whooping cough will have a persistent cough and other cold-like symptoms.
- The illness' name comes from the "whooping" sound made when a victim breathes between coughs.

might lose their staying power over several years, leaving kids around middle-school age susceptible to whooping cough. Mays stressed that this idea is only a theory, but that local and state health officials are tracking the outbreak to better understand it.

Lake County confirmed its 29th case of whooping cough on Thursday.

"This is a persistent outbreak, and it is a concern," Mays said.

A child from the area near Barrington was the first case of this outbreak. Lake County officials have been unable to track the outbreak before that case, and Mays said it is not as important to look back as it is to look forward.

Sonneman said he is unsure how his daughter caught whooping cough. A friend who recently was sick tested negative, but she had talked about a lot of kids at school in the spring who were coughing a lot.

Mays and Stanwood said most of the kids who have gotten sick are properly vaccinated. Vaccine is not available for teenagers and adults, Mays said.

This outbreak also has affected children in Cook and Kane counties and southeastern Wisconsin.

CDC: High school smoking rate down

6/18/04 Chronicle
Rate lowest
in a generation

By DANIEL YEE
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Smoking among U.S. high school students has fallen to about one in five — the lowest level in at least a generation — in a drop-off the government attributes to anti-smoking campaigns and higher cigarette taxes.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported Thursday that nearly 22 percent of high school students said they were smokers in 2003. That is down from more than 36 percent in 1997, and the lowest level since the CDC began keeping track in 1975.

The drop was so dramatic that for the first time in more than two decades, the percentage of high school smokers is lower than the percentage of adult smokers. That was seen as an especially encouraging sign by the government. In fact, the CDC study found that anti-tobacco efforts have been successful across the board, from curbing the number of first-time smokers to reducing the ranks of the heaviest smokers.

"We are reaching all the youth. If we can stop youth from becoming addicted smokers, eventually, we can stop this epidemic," said Terry Pechanak, associate director for the Office on Smoking and Health.

The CDC said that anti-tobacco efforts such as TV ads and school campaigns have been highly successful. Some of the programs were funded by the \$206 billion settlement that tobacco companies and states reached in 1998.

Another big reason fewer teenagers are lighting up is the cost of a pack of cigarettes, the CDC said. The agency said cigarette prices went up 90 percent from 1997 to 2003, mostly because of tax increases. Students were classified as current smokers if they had lit up in the preceding 30 days.

The study found that the percentage of heavy smokers fell to 9.7 percent from 16.8 percent in 1999. Also, fewer students are trying



AP file photo

Smoking losing appeal among students

Lawrence High School students smoke cigarettes in Lawrence, Kan. According to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study released Thursday, smoking among teens has dropped to about one in five.

Smoking rates among high school students

Year	Percentage
1991	35%
1997	22%
2003	19%

Year	Percentage
1999	70%
2003	58%

Year	Percentage
1999	53%
2003	58%

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

AP

6-18-04 Beacon News

Police shooting held justified

■ Fatal Geneva incident:

State's attorney lauds officer who shot knife wielder as 'heroic'

By Ed Fanselow

STAFF WRITER
GENEVA — Kane County State's Attorney Meg Gorecki Thursday praised a Geneva police officer who shot and killed a man during a traffic stop as "heroic" and said

her office will not pursue charges against the officer.

Gorecki's ruling that the shooting was "legally justified" effectively closes the book on the May 15 incident, which left 63-year-old Dimas Santiago of Rockford dead from gunshot wounds to the chest.

Gorecki's written statement to the media also marked the first time officials have released the name of the officer — 29-year-old Patrolman Daniel Yates.

Gorecki said that Yates was "forced to fire two shots" at Santiago after he attacked the officer with a 10-inch butcher knife during a

traffic stop outside a gas station on Route 38. Yates retreated more than 60 feet into the middle of the road before finally firing his weapon, investigators said. He was not injured.

"Officer Yates put himself in jeopardy when he retreated onto a busy state highway in the dark hoping to get away from the attacker," Gorecki wrote. "The actions of Officer Yates saved not only his own life but quite possibly the lives of innocent bystanders."

In Geneva, police Lt. Joe Frega said Gorecki's ruling was far from surprising, but

the department is glad to be able to start putting what he called "a very tragic event" behind it.

He said that Yates returned to active duty on May 30 after a psychological evaluation and is "doing well" back on the job. "He's strong — a good man and a good officer," Frega said of Yates. "He understands that he did the best he could to avoid shooting but knows that, in the end, he had no choice.

"This was a very clear-cut case, and we knew that from the beginning, but no matter

By Ed Fanselow

Turn to SHOOTING, A2

SHOOTING

From Page A1

what the circumstances, using deadly force is the most difficult, traumatic thing a police officer can ever experience, and that's something I think, that he'll always carry with him."

Gorecki said results of a state police investigation which found that Yates used justifiable force and a Kane County coroner's jury's ruling on Wednesday that the shooting was "justifiable homicide" were the key factors in her decision.

Court records show that Santiago was convicted of killing a co-worker and wounding two others during a shooting spree outside a West Chicago factory in 1977. At a subsequent trial, defense lawyers argued that Santiago was insane by reason of insanity, but he was convicted and sentenced to 16 years in prison.

He was paroled in 1984 and steered clear of trouble until a conviction for drunken driving in DeKalb County in 2003 and an arrest for DUI and marijuana possession there this March.

At the time of the shooting, he was free on bail in that case, and investigators have theorized that his fear of returning to jail may have been weighing on his mind when he decided to pull the knife.

"All of that stuff — his record, his blood-alcohol level — are somewhat irrelevant though," Frega said. "(Yates) didn't know any of that at the time, he just knew that a guy was backing him into the street with a knife."

Frega said that Geneva police will now conduct their own "administrative review" of the case, although the focus will be less on Yates and more on department protocol.

"We'll be looking at, for example, if there are any policies we need to change or maybe if we need to have more training," he said.

The shooting was the first time in at least 40 years that a Geneva police officer has used deadly force in the line of duty.



PHOTOS BY LAURA STOECKER/DAILY HERALD

Prestbury Citizens Association President Herb Steinmetz is meeting with village officials to discuss annexing the subdivision into Sugar Grove.

The annexation dance

Sugar Grove, Prestbury are both courting annexation to see if their relationship would make a good marriage

BY ROBERT SANCHEZ
Daily Herald Staff Writer

It was the subdivision that almost became a village.

Now some residents living in the unincorporated Prestbury subdivision just want the chance to decide if their homes should be part of the neighboring village of Sugar Grove.

Last fall, they petitioned Prestbury's main homeowners association to re-examine the issue of Sugar Grove annexing the roughly 700-residential-unit subdivision.

So, Prestbury Citizens Association President Herb Steinmetz said he's been meeting with Sugar Grove officials. Both sides are planning to do an economic study to determine the costs of the proposal.

"Sugar Grove doesn't want to do it if it's going to be costly, and we need to know the ramifications for the Prestbury residents," Steinmetz said.

If costs are reasonable, the issue might be decided by Prestbury resi-



dents through a ballot measure.

While no one is making predictions about the results of a possible referendum, everyone agrees it would help put the long-running annexation debate to rest.

"We've been having this discussion for as long as I've been here," Sugar Grove Village Administrator

Brent Eichelberger said. "It comes up all the time. My impression is that it won't go away until they actually are annexed."

Pleasant community

Prestbury was born in 1967 when a developer transformed a 680-acre asparagus farm in Sugar Grove Township into a community named after an English village.

Today, Prestbury has roughly 450 houses and 250 townhouses with two lakes, woodlands and designated open areas, according to Sandy Andry, a real estate agent who has lived and sold homes in Prestbury since 1987.

"Prestbury is a community of custom homes," Andry said. "It was never a pick-your-model subdivision."

As a result, she said, it's a very diverse community — both in terms of its residents and housing stock.

"It's a pleasant community,"

See ANNEX on PAGE 9

"I think if we gave the people of Prestbury a vote on whether to go into Sugar Grove or not, it would be close. But it would be a fair vote."

Herb Steinmetz, Prestbury Citizens Association president

Annex: Bringing roads up to village standards an issue

Continued from Page 1

Steinmetz said, "It's got a lot of open space. It's got a lot of nice amenities. The lakes are very nice. We have large park areas. The whole area is quite attractive."

Steinmetz said surrounding subdivisions are attractive as well — subdivisions that happen to be in Sugar Grove.

The big question

Andry says all of her neighbors have an opinion about whether Sugar Grove should annex Prestbury. "And their opinions are all different," she said. "That's why we have such trouble."

Andry said part of the reason for the debate is because many residents associate themselves with Aurora. "Prestbury is made up of many longtime Aurora people who would be very upset to be out of Aurora," she said.

There are other residents who believe Prestbury is doing fine on its own, so why risk paying higher taxes or becoming part of a municipality's financial problems?

Steinmetz says it's about getting a voice in local government. "We would have a vote in the decisions of a body that affects us because it surrounds us," he said.

Prestbury residents would pay the same water and sewer rates as Sugar Grove residents. Now, Prestbury residents pay Sugar Grove more for those services.

The subdivision is patrolled by the Kane County sheriff's police and a private security force.

If Prestbury became part of Sugar Grove, village police would patrol the area.

"They (Sugar Grove police) are closer," Steinmetz said. "We are very happy right now with Kane County, but they are a little more distant."

Aurora would never annex Prestbury because it's outside the city's planning district. "So, we either incorporate or we become part of Sugar Grove or we stay the same," Steinmetz said.

Those three propositions were posed to Prestbury residents during the April 1999 elections. The ballot question could have resulted in Prestbury becoming a village, but instead, the three choices each garnered a third of the votes, "so it was totally inconclusive," Steinmetz said.

People opposed to annexation say the 1999 vote proves that only a third of Prestbury's residents want to become part of Sugar Grove. The way Steinmetz sees it, the vote showed there wasn't a majority willing to do any single thing.

With three choices, you are

Sugar Grove's view

Of course Sugar Grove officials get a say on whether Prestbury becomes part of their community.

Eichelberger, the village administrator, said board members have enacted a policy that new subdivisions in Prestbury must annex or agree to annex in the future if they want Sugar Grove water and sewer service.

The problem with annexing older portions of Prestbury is that some streets don't meet village standards. For example, some streets Prestbury now owns and maintains aren't as wide as Sugar Grove requires.

Eichelberger said the road issue is significant because some Prestbury residents want Sugar Grove to own and maintain the roads if annexation occurs.

"So we would want to make sure the roads are in good condition," he said.

As for roads that don't meet village standards, the board would have to decide whether to accept them as is or rebuild them. If streets are rebuilt, the question of who pays for the work would have to be decided.

Road improvements are just some of the possible costs an outside consultant might be



Karen L. Michels and the village hall in Sugar Grove.

hired to Sugar Grove Village.

Michels.

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association president

from Page 1

roads up ards an issue

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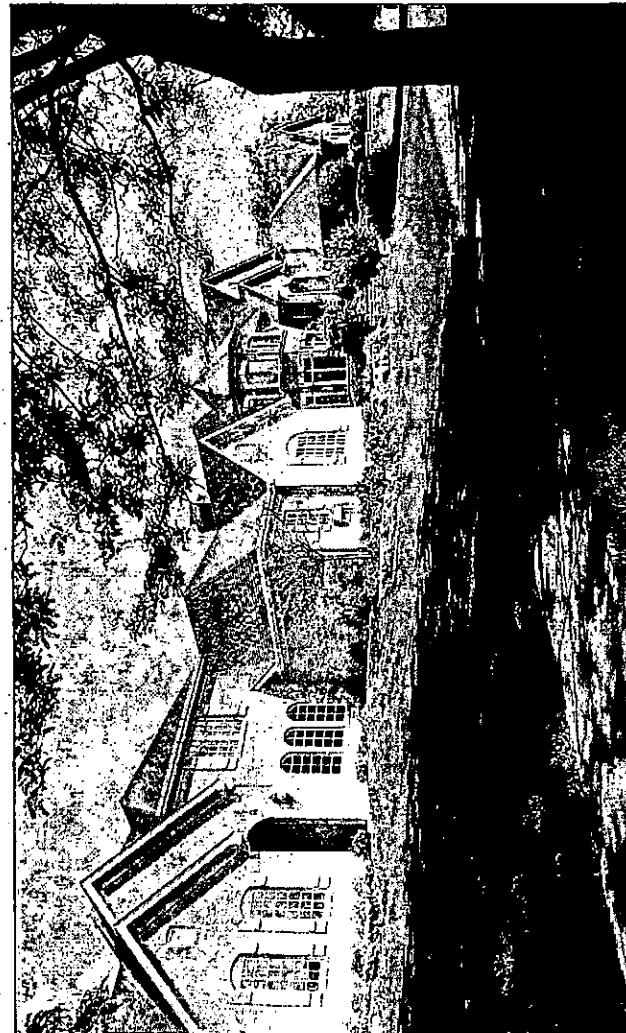
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DAILY HERALD SECTION 1 PAGE 9

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PHOTOS BY LAURA STOECKER/DAILY HERALD

Prestbury has roughly 450 houses and 250 townhouses. "Prestbury is a community of custom homes," said Sandy Andry, a real estate agent. "It was never a pick-your-model subdivision."

expense. "A neutral party will annexation-until after all the need to come up with all the associated costs."

Right now, officials are hoping to host a series of informational meetings by the end of the year about annexation. No referendum would occur until after those meetings, officials said.

"We want to make sure people realize it's in the best interest of both Sugar Grove and Prestbury," Michels said.

In meantime, Michels said, he's reserving judgment about

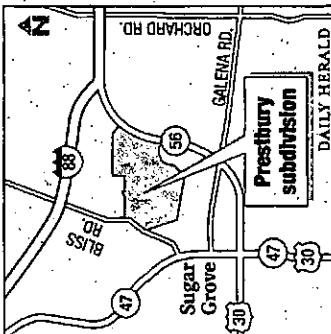
"We would need additional police officers and vehicles," Michels said, citing another



Karen Laskowski, who lives in Prestbury with her husband, Ben, and their children Max and Sam, doesn't want to lose her Aurora mailing address, which would happen if Prestbury annexes into Sugar Grove.

"They are a good community, and we are all around them," he said. "We would love to have them be a part of Sugar Grove, but they have to make sure it's worth their while. And we need to make sure it's worth our while."

Prestbury is a very nice community," Steinmetz said. "Regardless of which way we go, I think it will stay that way."



DAILY HERALD

'Regional outbreak' of whooping cough declared

By DAVE ORRICK

Daily Herald Staff Writer

A continuously spreading pair of whooping cough outbreaks among suburban youth is prompting some health officials to push for a rethinking of the way America vaccinates against the infection.

The growing tally of cases — 69 in Cook, Kane, Lake and McHenry counties — on Friday prompted state health officials to join county and local officials in declaring a "regional outbreak" and urging suburban parents and doctors to be on the lookout for symptoms.

What especially concerns some officials is that 80 percent of those affected by the highly contagious disease are between

the ages of 10 and 15. Technically, this is the first documented outbreak for that age group in the United States, said state public health spokeswoman Tammy Leonard. However, that same age group is believed to have become a reservoir for the disease and may be the reason for a steady increase in whooping cough nationwide since the 1970s. But under federal regulations, no one older than 7 can receive booster shots that could immunize them from catching and spreading it.

Samples from each local outbreak — one around the Barrington area and the other around Crystal Lake and McHenry — have been sent to the federal Centers for Disease

Control in Atlanta for genetic analysis to test the theory that both outbreaks are one and the same and began in Barrington schools before traveling up the Fox River Valley and stretching as far west as Huntley. The outbreaks may also be connected to at least several dozen cases in southeastern Wisconsin, health officials said Friday.

Locally, cases have been confirmed in Barrington, Barrington Hills, Lake Zurich, Algonquin, Cary, Huntley, Crystal Lake, McHenry, Island Lake and Wonder Lake, according to health officials in Lake and McHenry counties.

Whooping cough, formally known as pertussis, begins with cold- and flu-like symptoms but can become temporarily debili-

tating as its acoustically telltale hack develops. It can be fatal in infants and toddlers, which is why a regimen of injections is standard for children up to age 6. Because whooping cough is rarely fatal for adolescents and adults, the regimen was never extended, according to a report on the CDC's Web site.

Parents with infants and toddlers who've been immunized need not worry. If an older child or adult catches the disease, doctors can prescribe medicine to soften the symptoms, which can last for three months, and the person should stay away from others.

• *Daily Herald staff writer Charles Keeshan contributed to this report.*

6-19-04 BEACON NEWS

Colorful Bob Rose to run against Hastert

By Linda Girardi

SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

BATAVIA — Political activist Bob Rose thinks it's time for a change, and he's decided to pick a fight with one powerful opponent.

Friday, Rose said he will run against House Speaker Dennis Hastert during an announcement outside the congressman's Batavia office.

"Personally, I think Denny is super," Rose said. "(I am running because) he has not done for the people what he could and should have done."

Rose has until Monday to secure 9,408 signatures and file in Springfield as a new party candidate, according to the State Board of Elections.

An outspoken critic of Hastert, Rose for the past four years has hosted rallies in front of the speaker's office before few onlookers.

At Friday's announcement to run for his first political office, Rose had a list of complaints with what's wrong with the status quo in the nation's capitol.

"It's time for 'We, the People,' to be recognized," the 72-year-old Aurora resident said. Rose believes gasoline prices should be rolled back to \$1.25

per gallon, and that alternative fuel sources derived from soybean oil and corn should be made available on the market.

Rose wants Hastert to recall his vote and "encourage your colleagues to allow for safe prescription drugs from any place in the world (to be made available) to our citizens in the United States."

Rose, who retired in 1991 from Caterpillar after 20 years, said he has met with Hastert's press aides over the years to discuss issues ranging from education to health care.

Born on a farm in Indiana, Rose said he started working on the farm as a young boy, and later became an independent farm operator and business man.

With three grown children and six grandchildren, Rose said he's in the race to represent the people

of Illinois.

"I know I've been making an impact," he said.

Hastert, a Yorkville Republican, is serving his third term as Speaker of the House and his ninth term as congressman for Illinois' 14th Congressional District.

The general election is Nov. 2.

Bob Rose

Congressional Candidate

6-14-94 Beacon News Woman's dream for dogs could come true

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA. — When Emily Schweitzer left her land in the north end of Kane County to the Kane County Forest Preserve District in 1989, it was her dream the land be used in some way for dogs.

That dream might come true.

The Car-Dun-AI Obedience Dog Training Club wants to use some of the former Schweitzer family buildings still on the new preserve property on Route 72 in West Dundee for its training programs. Club members told the Forest Preserve's Utilization Committee Thursday the former

barn would be a perfect place to train the club's as many as 500 dogs.

"We want good dogs, responsible, reliable," said Penny Kurz, a trainer for Car-Dun-AI. "We want to be good members of the community."

Club member Kathy Reiland said the group would like to work with the Forest Preserve District to establish how much of the preserve the club would use and how many of the older buildings they could utilize.

She said the club could end up spending as much as \$100,000 of its own money to renovate the barn and might even look at the former house, although chances are the house is unusable.

She said the club could use the roughly 160 acres at the preserve for tracking and agility training, although not all the time. Emily Schweitzer had her own dog kennel where she raised dogs, and it still contains many of her awards and competition winnings.

"We would like to work with you," Reiland said. "This would be at no expense to the taxpayers, and for Mrs. Schweitzer, well, this was her dream."

The club specializes in family dog training.

Kurz herself came to the club 12 years ago with her own dog, which she said "liked to bite first and ask

"There were few places that would have dealt with that," she said. "He would have been a dead dog."

The club often handles aggressive dogs who actually have been sentenced to their training sessions by the courts.

Committee members welcomed the possible partnership with the club. They said the club must come back with a more definite proposal that can be negotiated.

"This is exactly what we've been looking for, and it's an appropriate use," said Commissioner Dan Walker, R-South Elgin. "It serves the public well."

b19-04 Beacon news

State issues warning about whooping cough

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SPRINGFIELD — The state Department of Public Health is urging parents to make sure children are immunized against whooping cough in light of a lingering outbreak of the disease in the Chicago area.

At least 69 people in Kane, Cook, Lake and McHenry counties have come down with the disease, officially called pertussis, since March, said Eric Whitaker, state public health director. No deaths have been reported.

The outbreak has hit adolescents the hardest, with 80 percent of the cases involving 10- to 15-year-olds.

The disease is highly contagious, and symptoms are similar to those of a cold, including runny nose, sneezing, low-grade fever and a

cough that gradually worsens.

Whitaker said anyone displaying symptoms of the disease should seek medical attention to be treated with antibiotics.

Despite immunizations, which schools require, the number of people with whooping cough in the United States has increased 400 percent since 1980. In Illinois, the number rose from 111 to 320 over the past decade.

A five-dose vaccine is recommended for children beginning at 2 months of age. Children should then receive more doses as they grow older.

But the vaccine's power wanes with time and can be completely gone 12 years after the final dose, which is usually given between the ages of 4 and 6.

6-20-04 Chronicle



6-20-09 Beacon news

Kane's 2030 land use plan ready for action

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Kane County development officials are ready to take the 2030 land use plan update to the streets.

Officials this week released the draft of the plan, a year in the making, in preparation for adopting it later this year. The 1,200 copies of the draft will be given to municipal officials, developers, planners, elected officials, businesses and even farm organizations.

By the end of this month, development officials will be ready to solicit public opinion on the plan.

"We want to gather as much input as possible," said Sam Santell, of the development department. Officials will set up a Web site with 2030 plan information where people can leave comments, he said. The email address will be 2030plan@co.kane.il.us.

Public forums have been set up for:

- 7 p.m. June 29 at Dundee Middle School, 37450 Route 72.
- 7 p.m. July 13 at Geneva High School, 416 McKinley St.
- 7 p.m. July 14 at Waubonsee Community College, Bodie Hall, Room 147, on Route 47 in Sugar Grove.

There also will be a public hearing in late July or early August before the County Board, Santell

said.

The 2030 plan is an update of the county's 2020 land use plan, which was praised and in some cases controversial when it was adopted about eight years ago. Like the 2020 plan, the 2030 plan lays a planning framework for future growth of the county.

The 2030 plan divides the county into three main areas: the Urban Corridor along the Fox River; the Critical Growth area in the central part of the county, roughly along Route 47, and the Agricultural area, the western part of the county.

The plan stresses the Critical Growth area, where about 50 percent of the growth between now and 2030 is expected to take place. Within that area, which includes already growing towns such as Elburn, Sugar Grove and Huntley, the county has picked out priority places where smart growth principles can be used.

The plan stresses agricultural uses and farmland preservation in the western third of the county. It has established a goal of preserving 50 percent of the farmland throughout the county by 2030.

One of the ways the county can preserve farmland and still grow is by taking advantage of places for growth and redevelopment in the urban areas.

6-20-04

Kane County Notebook Chronicle

Who's at fault in county tax process?

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

Whenever something goes wrong, people want to know who is at fault. The tax process in the county is in disarray and could get worse. How did it get that way?

The answer is that it is everybody's fault and nobody's fault. The average taxpayer really does not care how the tax bills are figured out. They just care that they are done fairly.

To get it done fairly requires a number of different people, offices and departments.

It surely is not a financial problem. Treasurer David Rickett estimated that the "fix" would cost \$400,000. Frankly, that is chump-change to a county that has spent millions in the last couple of years upgrading its computer systems. On the fault side, one official described it as "a turf war." You have two elected officials, Rickett and County Clerk John Cunningham, and Supervisor of Assessments Sadie Huber, who play the major roles in the tax cycle. Rickett and Cunningham have what are called "internal control statutes."

Huber's position, though appointed,

tional office, it does hold power not granted to your average department head.

There is the Roger Fahnestock, the head of the county's computer department. Fahnestock took over two years ago and was asked to update a system that some described as being 20 years behind the curve.

Of course, there is the county board, a group of people charged with making sure government runs smoothly.

Add to the mix the 16 township assessors, the ones who put value on properties. It is safe to say none of the above are blameless, at least to a certain degree.

Huber got a computer system that

meshed well with those of the township assessors, but not so well with the county's system. She could have waited for the county to get off the antiquated mainframe, but then the townships would have been in a different cyber realm.

Fahnestock and the rest of his department have been running around the last two years trying to bring about 30 departments and nine offices into the 21st century.

In turn, Cunningham's tax extension

office has been forced to input by hand

the certified information received from

the assessor's office into the county's computer system.

In a way, Rickett is the odd man out. He has little to do with calculating taxes other than collecting the money, yet his is the name on the tax bill.

Cunningham and Rickett and Huber have warned the county board that the problem is serious and getting worse. Perhaps the board did not take it seriously enough. Perhaps the board thought those responsible for the tax cycle would take care of it.

It's possible the three most responsible for the tax cycle — Cunningham, Rickett and Huber — did not make their cases strong enough. Maybe they did not work together well enough.

Whatever the case, Rickett said on June 9 that something needed to be done within a month or tax bills could be 60 to 90 days late next year.

With all nine school districts in the county in some type of financial distress, the potential for next year's tax bills being three months late could cost each one the equivalent of a teacher's salary in interest payments on tax anticipation warrants.

Here's hoping all the parties involved can resolve any differences that exist. If they do not, the finger pointing will be even worse next year.

Crooked a-----

Corron farm will get help from county

6-20-04 Chronicle

*Campton will match
\$28,592 to repair
caretaker's house*

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Kane County will give Campton Township \$28,592 to help preserve a building "frozen in time."

Township officials requested the use of community development block grant funds earmarked for the removal or repair of blighted properties.

Campton will match the \$28,592 to stabilize an 1870 caretaker's house on the Corron Farm.

Mark VanKerkhoff, director of community programs for the development department, said the Corron family built the colonial revival caretaker's house, but it was used for a residence for about one year. The family used it for storage since then, and consequently the house never had electricity or plumbing, nor was it remodeled.

"It's kind of like it was frozen in time," VanKerkhoff said.

The county receives federal CDBG funds, some of which must go to address spot blight. VanKerkhoff said the money going to Campton comes from the 2000 and 2002 program years.

"We haven't had many requests for spot blight funds," he said.

The entire project will focus on the roof, gutters and down spouts, chimney, foundation, exterior walls and windows.

The goal is to turn the house into a museum.

"Very seldom do you find such houses in this condition," Campton Township Supervisor Neal Anderson said.

Campton Township and the Kane County Forest Preserve combined in 2002 to buy the estimated 380 acres of the Corron Farm on both sides of Corron Road.

Robert Corron homesteaded the property in 1850.

6-30-04 Daily Herald Tips on how and when to report West Nile birds can save you time

When a couple of dead birds turned up on our property last week, we made a call to alert the Kane County Health Department.

The health department is getting plenty of calls these days about dead birds, as residents are in a caution mode for West Nile virus.

Officials appreciate the calls, but passed along this pointer when our birds didn't march requirements: You should alert them about dead birds on your property only when those birds are blue jays or crows.

And they need to be "fresh" — if that's even possible when talking about a dead bird.

This likely means you should call (630) 897-1124 within 24 hours.

Blue jays and crows are the only species that can die from West Nile. It is not fatal to other birds and animals.

Working on the railroads:

A couple of readers have asked why it seems like workers extending the Metra line to Elburn have reworked the tracks for new track lines to be 28 feet apart, as opposed to the 22 feet of the past. So some track widening is occurring.

It may seem like the work is being repeated, but basically, here's what is happening: Federal safety guidelines call for new track lines to be 28 feet apart, as opposed to the 22 feet of the past. So some track widening is occurring.

But this current rail extension also marks an initial attempt to use concrete ties, rather than traditional wooden ties.

I have been told that the concrete ties will go from Geneva all the way to DeKalb and possibly onto the Mississippi.

series moved to their location. Other than the obvious — that Elstrom Stadium is a great facility — hearts a couple more reasons the event should stay in Geneva. Despite heavy rains the night before, the field was in excellent shape for the games.

And when a fan fell ill and had to be taken to the hospital on the opening day of the tournament, it showed how quickly an ambulance can get to Elstrom from the new, east side Geneva fire station. It didn't hurt that Geneva Mayor Kevin Burns was in the announcer's booth at the time, and made the 911 call.

Poetry in motion:

Marques Morel just graduated from Northern Illinois University, but he did so without the fanfare and recognition he received as a standout golfer and basketball player four years ago at St. Charles East High School.

Morel gave up his golf scholarship at NIU and turned his attention to another passion — creative writing, poetry and English literature. A book of his poetry titled "In Turn" is on the shelves at Townhouse Books in St. Charles.

His mother, Sherry Morel, expresses her excitement at the prospect of her son being a published poet, saying, "He has been working on this book of poetry for a few years. It is his first attempt at public display.

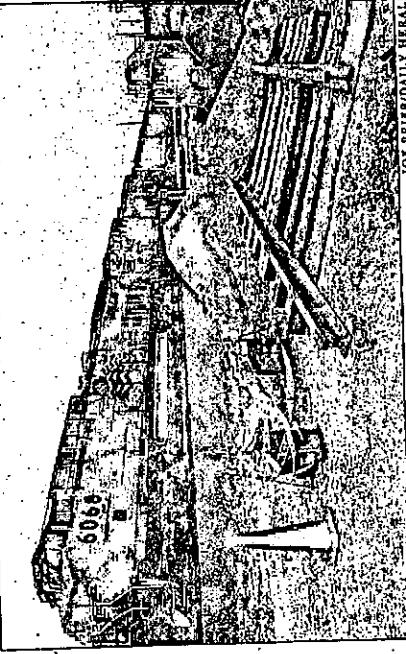
Spotted in the crowd at Elstrom Stadium were former principal Bob McBride, former athletic director Wayne DeMar and former business department head Ray Rogina.

They celebrated that fourth anniversary last weekend with some food and fun (driving and putting games) in the shop.

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A train passes through the construction site at the intersection of Peck and Kaslinger roads in Geneva Friday.



Dave Heun
Talk of the Town

Little ol' club maker:

It seems like they've been a fixture in Geneva for a decade, but it's really been only four years since Judy and Bob Kearney opened Valley Golf on West State Street.

They celebrated that fourth anniversary last weekend with some food and fun (driving and putting games) in the shop.

Bob never looks for a lot of fanfare, but it should be noted that part of the good mood going on at Valley Golf has to do with his recent selection as a Distinguished Club Maker by the Professional Club Makers' Society.

Bob's never looks for a lot of fanfare, but it should be noted that part of the good mood going on at Valley Golf has to do with his recent selection as a Distinguished Club Maker by the Professional Club Makers' Society.

It's a fitting honor, as he has helped more than a few people with his ability to create a club that gives you a chance to fix what ails your swing.

Great gathering spot:

The high school baseball state finals

appeared to be a nice hangout last

weekend for some retired St. Charles East personnel.

Spotted in the crowd at Elstrom Stadium were former principal Bob McBride, former athletic director Wayne DeMar and former business department head Ray Rogina.

They celebrated that fourth anniversary last weekend with some food and fun (driving and putting games) in the shop.

It seems like the work is being repeated, but basically, here's what is happening: Federal safety guidelines call for new track lines to be 28 feet apart, as opposed to the 22 feet of the past. So some track widening is occurring.

But this current rail extension also marks an initial attempt to use concrete ties, rather than traditional wooden ties.

I have been told that the concrete ties will go from Geneva all the way to DeKalb and possibly onto the Mississippi.

Tell me your talk

I can be reached by e-mailing dheun@earthlink.net, calling 630-561-1986, faxing 630-208-4806, or mailing Dave Heun, Daily Herald, 3805 E. Main St., Suite A, St. Charles, IL 60174.

A reporter's only as good as his sources, so be a good source, OK?

Festival rain gauge:

This would be categorized as an

Kane tax billing down, but not out

At issue: Kane County's property tax billing is in a jam.

We say: There are problems to solve, but it's not as dire as some would make it out to be.

Kane County doesn't have a problem with property tax bills. It has two problems.

The first deals with decisions made by Supervisor of Assessments Sallie Huber. She conducted a wholesale scouring of the homestead exemption for this year's billing.

Refresher course: The exemption cuts property taxes for single-family homes occupied by the owner. Huber knocked the exemption off bills in which taxpayers claimed the exemption on multiple properties, properties had changed hands from the original applicants, and duplicates.

Some taxpayers who had legitimate claims to the extensions were caught in the purge. The resulting uproar led the county board to direct Huber to send notices to all 27,000 property taxpayers who didn't take the exemption. Township assessors estimate that more than 21,000 of those don't qualify.

We think Huber intended to do something that was fiscally responsible. It perhaps should have been managed and executed more carefully. Certainly, her bosses, the county board, should have known the extent of her plans before the bills went out.

We also think everyone who is entitled to a homestead exemption deserves to get it. Thankfully, procedures are in place to correct the bills for those who were unjustly denied.

However, every taxpayer who plays by the rules ought to be grateful to Huber for getting the freeloaders out of the system.

As if the county didn't have enough to do picking up the pieces after Huber's purge, County Treasurer David Rickert came along earlier this month scaremongering about the computer systems used to generate the bills.

He says that if the county doesn't cough up between \$300,000 and \$400,000 in the next month that tax bills might not get out until July or August next year — which would unfairly cripple the schools, municipalities and other taxing districts that rely heavily on property taxes.

The problem, he says, is that the computer system used by the assessors and Huber doesn't mesh well with the computers he uses. Rickert is responsible for producing and mailing the bills.

This year, instead of getting information from Huber by April 1 to get the bills out May 1, the data came in on May 7 and the bills were out three days later.

The problem with Rickert's doomsaying is that we don't understand what is suddenly more dire this year. The same computer systems have been used for several years. Granted, Kane's tax bills are usually out later than those in surrounding counties, but always in early May.

Should Kane County have in place a computer system that ensures tax bills are processed correctly and on time? Certainly.

Does the county treasurer help an already exasperating situation by crying the sky is falling when history shows it is not? Certainly not.

6-21-04
Police Beacon
news
a priority
in Elburn
goals for
next year

By Linda Girardi
SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

ELBURN — In the coming months, village officials will be busy analyzing new business and residential developments, preparing for new growth and the return of commuter rail service.

Village department heads recently gave presentations outlining goals for the next fiscal year.

Mayor Jim Willey said it was an opportunity for members of the Village Board to hear what projects department heads are interested in pursuing and what other projects were at the forefront.

Although no monetary values were attached, the Village Board will determine what resources are available to fund department goals, such as requests to hire a full time police officer for the Police Department and install a new telephone system with voice mail options and Internet access for training and e-mail for police personnel.

"Ideally, we would like to be at eight full-time police officers," Police Chief James Linane said, adding federal grants that were once available were now non-existent.

Other goals include implementing Homeland Security measures for the village's water systems, completing a study on parking lot security for the Metra station and establishing a police bicycle patrol program for the village.

"We want to be ahead of the game of security," Linane said of the Metra station, an extension of the commuter rail line from Geneva.

Linane said they would be continuing to analyze space and need requirements for the Police Department, a joint effort with Village Hall facilities located at East North Street.

On the development front, Willey said not all of the village's progress in the next year would be residential.

"The reality is we are growing pretty modestly," he said.

The development projects include the Metra commuter station, the Welch Creek Business Park, the American Bank & Trust development and commercial growth at the northeast corner of Routes 47 and 38.

In village services, Village Administrator David Morrison said there is a great desire on the part of residents requesting mailing envelopes be provided with monthly utility bills. "People are complaining post cards are getting lost in the mail," he said.

Aside from available resources, Willey said devoting staff time for village business is an issue all municipalities and villages face nowadays.

The mayor said even for a town of 4,000 residents, there is a tremendous amount of information and work for staff to complete and properly manage its day-to-day business and growth.

"We take for granted the police department will be there and the water will turn on when we turn on our tap. There's a tremendous amount of municipal infrastructure that supports all of these operations," Willey said.

6-21-04 Beacon news Effort aims to make homes affordable

By Anne Marie Apollo

STAFF WRITER

Scott Berger, program manager of the

county's community development program, said those who attend the forums will hear an overview of two programs aimed at helping low-to-moderate-income families: the Community Development Block Grants that the county and towns have been receiving for years and the Home Investment Partnership program funds for which they are newly eligible.

Kane County gets \$1.4 million in CDBG

cash from HUD each year.

To get an additional \$750,000 each year for

the Home Investment Partnership, the county

and Elgin had to form the consortium, which

they did in May. Berger said that money can

be used for rehabilitating housing, home-buy-

ing assistance, adding affordable rental hous-

ing and rental subsidy programs.

"We can do any or all of them," he said.

"That's part of what this process is all about."

The consortium will start receiving money

from the Home Investment Partnership pro-

gram next summer.

Based on the feedback it gets at the forums, the consortium will provide a committee of 10 people guidelines for how to distribute the cash. It also will help the county decide how to distribute its Community Development Block Grant allocation.

Amy Coyne, Elgin's CDBG coordina-

tor, said the city will continue to adminis-

ter that program on its own.

For years, Elgin has put the biggest

share of its CDBG cash toward rehabili-

tating its older housing stock, a cause

of areas, housing may need to be built.

Affordable housing means rent or mortgage of no more than 30 percent of a gross income, Berger said.

Under HUD guidelines, a low-income family of two in Elgin is defined as one with an annual income of about \$30,150. A middle-income family of four would bring in about \$87,500.

The numbers mean a great many working families may qualify for the programs HUD funding will create, Berger said. For example, he said, median home value in the area is \$150,000. A nurse making \$50,000 can afford to make payments on about a \$150,000 house, if she puts the suggested 30 percent of her income toward her mortgage, he said.

In that scenario, \$10,000 stands between her and an average house.

"It's that gap we're talking about filling," Berger said.

Forums on affordable housing

■ July 6, 7 p.m. in the meeting room of Messenger Public Library, 113 Oak St., North Aurora.

■ July 7, 2 p.m. in the Carnegie Community Room of the St. Charles Public Library, 1 S. Sixth Ave., St. Charles.

■ July 7, 7 p.m. in the Heritage North Ballroom at The Centre of Elgin, 100 Symphony Way, Elgin.

Sugar Grove garbage rates to go up \$4

*Village renews
contract with
Waste Management*

By KELLEY CASINO
Kane County Chronicle

SUGAR GROVE — Residents will pay nearly \$4 more to have their garbage hauled away starting July 1.

The rate will increase to \$13.65 from \$9.75 per unit per month, village officials said last week.

The village board voted to renew its contract with Waste Management, which expires June 30.

"(Rates) went up quite a bit, but the marketplace has changed since we signed our last contract," Village Administrator Brent Eichelberger said.

The village began working with Waste Management in 1996 and extended the contract in 1999, which is when rates were set at \$9.75.

"That got us through to now, and that's why our prices were pretty good," Eichelberger said, adding that most services will remain the same, with waste removal and unlimited landscape waste pickup.

In addition, residents will see cleaner streets.

Under the current contract, Waste Management swept some of the village streets twice a year. The new contract has the company sweeping the streets villagewide eight times per year.

Trustee Mari Johnson wanted to make sure that residents know that the street cleaning is not an excuse to put waste in the streets.

"This isn't free reign to leave all your leaves in the gutter in the fall," she said. "It's street sweeping, not leaf pickup."

Board members also expressed interest in looking at new recycling cans with lids, called toters, at Tuesday's meeting.

The topic sprang from conversation about lidless cans that allow paper recycling to blow away on windy days before it is picked up.

6-21-04 Chronicle Forest preserve wants to add land

that has brought Aurora West Forest Preserve in Sugar Grove Township and Dick Young-Nelson Lake Forest Preserve in Batavia and Blackberry Township to nearly 1,000 acres each.

Several weeks ago, the district closed the sale on a \$6.01 million, 207-acre lot adjacent to 375-acre Johnson Mound Forest Preserve in Blackberry Township.

"We're going to continue to negotiate with some properties," Mitchell said. "Forces Preserve land now comprises 4 percent of Kanc's 352,800 acres. Mitchell would not reveal which properties are under consideration.

By comparison, the property adjacent to Johnson's Mound cost \$29,000 an acre.



one of the issues we will be looking at is another bond referendum," said James Mitchell, R-North Aurora, chairman of the district's Land Acquisition Committee.

A committee was formed after the successful referendum. It set three criteria for buying land, Mitchell said.

The committee first looked to add land to existing preserves, a program He said land in the center of the

**Officials consider
second referendum**

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

refinancing brought the district's holdings to 13,500 acres, up from 7,000 acres in 1999. Now only \$3 million remains.

"We're down to about three or four projects, and we don't have the money to do them," forest preserve President John Hoschelt said.

In an age when tax questions routinely fail, taxpayers approved the district's 1999 open space referendum by a 2-to-1 margin.

Recognizing the success of the referendum, forest preserve officials have contemplated a second referendum to add more land.

"After the (November) election, The 1999 \$70 million open space referendum and last year's \$30 million bond

Forest

preserve wants to add land

Officials consider second referendum

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

district nearly has doubled its holdings in the last five years, but its land acquisition program could be coming to an end.

The 1999 \$70 million open space referendum and last year's \$30 million bond

Hands-on candidate

On Saturday, those of us along Orchard Road woke to see water flowing down our streets. Orchard was flooded by the heavy rain storm, and I really want to commend Mr. Bill Wyatt for getting out there and leading the crew, walking out there in hip-deep and sometimes neck-deep water, leading the crew and getting it and making sure that our homes were not flooded. I didn't know anything about the man, but I think now I'll vote for him for mayor.

John Sargent, Aurora

6-22-04 Daily Herald

Software designer defends tax system in Kane County

BY PATRICK WALDRON

Daily Herald Staff Writer

The man who designed the computer system at the center of the quarrel among Kane County tax officials said Monday that his product has done its job without problems for six years.

"I would think if the IT department had a problem I would hope to have known about it," said Dominic Cirone, of Elgin-based Cirone Computer Consulting Inc. "As far as delays, I don't know what we are talking about."

Cirone said the Visual Property Assessment Management System has successfully "fueled the tax cycle" in Kane County since 1998.

Despite the designer's endorsement, VPAMS has been the focus of what some have called an ongoing turf war between the county's supervisor of assessments and the county treasurer and county clerk.

Treasurer David Rickert last

month said the tax system could fall apart next year if computer compatibility problems associated with VPAMS weren't fixed within a month.

Rickert and county Clerk John Cunningham argue that the VPAMS software used in the assessor's office can't efficiently transfer data to their offices.

Glitches such as missed addresses or dropped exemptions have become a serious flaw, Rickert said.

In a letter to county board members delivered Monday to the board's public service committee, Cunningham recommended hiring DeKalb-based DevNet Inc. to solve that incompatibility problem.

It's a proposed solution that has Rickert's support and means the VPAMS system used by the assessor could remain in place.

It's also the latest in a series of efforts made in the last two years to improve the efficiency of the computer systems used to bring the tax cycle from initial assessments to final bills.

The clerk and treasurer have placed the blame on VPAMS, a system for which assessor Sallie Huber has nothing but praise.

Rickert Monday said he and Cunningham have not gotten the cooperation from Cirone and his company needed to fix Kane County's problems.

Cirone said if there are issues getting the VPAMS data to the clerk and treasurer, that is a result of upgrades made on their end by the county IT department.

"It's unfair the way we are being portrayed," Cirone said.

Rickert on Monday referred specific computer problems to IT Director Roger Fahnestock. He and Cunningham were out of the state Monday and unavailable for comment.

Cunningham's proposal is expected to go before the county board's executive committee next month. Cirone said he will be there to explain how his company and its software has done the job it was put in place to do.

Elburn OKs radium removal contract

6-22-04 Chronicle

20-year lease will include Well No. 5 in Blackberry Creek after service begins

By DAN CHANZIT
Kane County Chronicle

ELBURN — Village officials agreed Monday to hire a Colorado-based firm to remove radium from the village's water supply.

Water Remediation Technology was granted a 20-year lease to install equipment that will filter radium from Well No. 3 and Well No. 4. WRT's method involves sending water through pipes and filters made of the mineral zeolite. Radium is trapped by the filters because it clings to the zeolite.

The filters then are removed and sent to a disposal site that accepts materials with low levels of radioactivity.

"We not only remove (the radium) from the water, but we also remove it from the environment," WRT President Ron Dollar told village officials. "It provides a permanent solution."

The agreement will be amended to include Well No. 5 in Blackberry Creek subdivision after the well is in service. Subdivision after the well is in service.

Village officials said the increase is minimal compared to other options the village studied to remove radium.

When WRT contacted Elburn last

year, the village was poised to move for-

ward with another filtering method that would have cost millions more to implement.

WRT officials provided documents showing they could remove the radium for less money. They offered to conduct a pilot study to show they could do the same for Elburn's water.

"We had to look at this," Village President James Willey said.

Elburn residents will see their water rates go up from \$2 per 100 cubic feet to \$2.69 per 100 cubic feet. Sewer rates will remain the same at \$2 per 100 cubic feet.

The rate increase will help the village pay for \$2.2 million in construction costs to remove radium from the water supply.

A resident who pays \$40 per quarter for water would pay \$53.80, a 34.5 percent increase. Water rates have remained the same for 18 years.

Village officials said the increase is minimal compared to other options the village studied to remove radium.

When WRT contacted Elburn last

year, the village was poised to move for-

ward with another filtering method that would have cost millions more to implement.

WRT's proprietary technology reduces radium to less than 5 picocuries per liter, which is the EPA limit.

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The rate increase will help the village pay for \$2.2 million in construction costs to remove radium from the water supply.

"(The water treatment industry) is a very conservative industry," he said. "More and more utilities are coming to us. We appreciate you guys that stepped in early and took an interest."

On Monday, WRT officials attended a groundbreaking in Oswego, where village officials also agreed to hire WRT to remove radium from their water.

Political checkup

It's been a while since we checked in on the county political scene, so now is as good a time as any to get caught up.

Although no one is talking about it publicly, the hunt for a new undersheriff is under way. The untimely death of Dan Schindlbeck created the vacancy — and left a giant pair of shoes to fill. Dan was so respected and so well-liked that the person who comes next probably will suffer by comparison, no matter how talented he or she is.

Having said that, the leading candidate for the job, Joe Pena, current police chief with East Dundee, probably is the one guy who comes closest to Dan in reputation and the regard in which fellow officers hold him.

He's also someone who has political aspirations, and if he indeed is made undersheriff, it sets up an interesting scenario for 2006.

Pena would like to be Kane County sheriff some day, and there are a lot of people who think he'd make a good one. However, the road to that goal passes directly through the office of the current sheriff, Ken Ramsey.

Ramsey, the highest vote getter in the county, has more than a year before he has to decide whether he wants to run for a fourth term. If Ramsey offers, and Pena accepts the undersheriff job, it puts Pena in a great position to run for sheriff in 2006 — but only if Ramsey declines to go again. If Ramsey wants another shot, Pena would have to wait until 2010 for his own chance to run.

It's an interesting dilemma for Pena, but smart money says he'll take the job if offered, and decide on 2006 based on what Ramsey does next year.

Although he is being very careful to not appear overconfident, the fact is John Barsanti should win his election contest with a huge plurality. Barsanti, running for Kane County state's attorney, has little more than token opposition in November, and because this all but guarantees election in the fall, it also has created a few opportunities right now.

When he takes office — and he will — Barsanti will be faced with a number of staffing decisions. He has made it clear that he doesn't want to make major changes,

but the fact is there are several high-profile posts that are in play. It's no secret that Barsanti would like Clint Hull, currently with the DeKalb state's attorney's office, on his team as first assistant. At the same, he doesn't want to lose Bob Berlin, the current first assistant who is highly thought of by his peers, as well as the defense bar.

Since he doesn't have to knock himself out worrying about the election, Barsanti can spend the time needed to retain Berlin and other key employees, get Hull and put together what amounts to a "Dream Team" of prosecutors. Now that would be something to watch, and I truly hope he can pull it off.

On a completely different subject, the gambling bust in Maple Park is causing my phone to ring more than usual. Callers seem split on the issue; some say it's high time the problem was brought to light, others say it's much ado about nothing. One thing they do agree on, however, is that the one raid didn't end gambling in their fair town.

No surprise there, gambling has been a fixture of Maple Park for years.

Then again, it's a fixture in every town in the area. I would guess you'd be hard-pressed to find any tavern in the county that doesn't sponsor some sort of gambling, and you'd also have a hard time finding any office without an illegal pool on the Super Bowl or the NCAA Tournament.

Frankly, most of us accept gambling at the neighborhood bar or at our office as a fairly harmless exercise. The state faces an uphill battle trying to convince its residents otherwise, especially because they try to make a distinction between good and bad gambling. With bad being what goes on in taverns, and good being the state-controlled lotteries and casinos, of course.

I think it's way too late for the state to get the public on their side on this issue; I know I couldn't care less if people gamble on video poker, pool, or Yahtzee, and I suspect most people feel the same. So please, no more breathless phone calls about a dice game somewhere. Find a real crime to get upset about.

• Bill Page lives in St. Charles and writes about local issues on Tuesday and Thursday. Calls and e-mails answered at (630) 584-0809 or wpage@mediawerks.org.

Sugar Grove concerned with Jewel- Osco progress

6-22-04 Beacon News

By Erin Erickson

SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

SUGAR GROVE — Trustees are raising several concerns over the development of a Jewel-Osco along Route 47 at Park Avenue.

"I would like to see businesses that are generating sales tax," said Trustee Joseph Wolf, one of the many village trustees expressing their support for community retail development while continuing to voice concerns over various points of the deal with Waterford Real Estate Development Corp.

Issues such as tax rebate incentives for Jewel-Osco, a lack of a formal commitment from Jewel-Osco, land use provisions and granting access to the adjoining Castle Bank lot are preventing the trustees from reaching an agreement.

Trustee Mari Johnson and village President P. Sean Michels pointed out that the tax rebate was discussed when Jewel-Osco had proposed starting operations by January 2005.

"We provide the incentive for them to build quicker and sooner," said Johnson, adding that Jewel-Osco so far has given "no definite, no time frame, no guarantee."

The trustees showed frustrations about the lack of time frame for the development. "I don't see any building permits here," said Bohler.

"Here we are a year later and nothing's happened," added Michels, who was concerned that offering tax incentives to Jewel-Osco would discourage a competitor from opening.

"We cannot state, for business purposes, unequivocally when we are going to build and when we are going to open," said Jewel-Osco real estate manager Jim Hornecker.

"Without the incentive, it makes it difficult to move forward."

Jewel-Osco insists that these tax incentives would help offset the cost for required improvements to public property on and around the development site.

Questions regarding the development and its proximity to residential subdivisions along Capitol Drive prompted discussion of the land use.

Trustees are concerned that plans for a self-storage facility and an auto body repair center adjacent to the Windsor Pointe subdivision would not be welcomed by the residents.

In addition to residential concerns, the board was also frustrated by Waterford and Jewel-Osco's unwillingness to compromise with existing businesses with regard to land access. In the current proposal, access to the development from Galena Boulevard through Castle Bank would only be granted if certain restrictions were met.

"Restricting one business's access to protect a larger business is wrong," Trustee Kevin Geary said. "I think we need full and open access."

"There is not a resident that is not anxious to see you guys come to town," said Trustee Robert Bohler to the representatives from Jewel-Osco. "There's room to compromise. You're setting the stage for everything else that goes in down Route 47."

County looks to firm to fix computer system

bills to be late this year.

**If action not taken,
next year's tax bills
could be late**

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Kane County officials
might hire a private company to fix
the computer system that caused tax

"We need to have a consistent
system that has all the county de-
partments in it," McCoy said.

A letter to the county board from
County Clerk John Cunningham
dated Monday recommends hiring
DevNet of DeKalb, a company that
bid on the project two years ago.

Board Chairman Mike McCoy
said DevNet might or might not be
the right company for the job, but he
agrees with Cunningham's plan to go
to an outside firm.

See COMPUTERS, page 2

Continued from page 1

At Monday's Public
Service Committee meeting,
Rickett said, "We have a seri-
ous problem. Everyone
agrees the system could
work better than it does."

Cunningham on Monday
was in Ohio to watch a
demonstration on new vot-
ing technology.

"It is now time to take ac-
tion before the next tax
cycle," Cunningham said in
the letter.

The county last year
sought bids on a computer
system to convert data from
the Supervisor of
Assessments office into
something that could be
used by the tax extension of-
fice, which is under
Cunningham's purview. But
it never bought a system.

When the lowest bid came
in at \$250,000, Roger
Fahnestock, director of the
Information Technologies
Department, said his depart-
ment could convert the system.

However, the task turned
out to be so daunting that
Fahnestock now agrees an
outside firm should handle
the project, according to
Cunningham's letter. Fahnestock on Monday was
with Cunningham and un-
available for comment.

The county board last
month approved a \$100,000
contract with Cirone
Computer Consultants of
Elgin, the firm that developed
the computer system used by
township assessors and the
county assessor's office.

McCoy said Monday that
he was prepared to rescind
the \$100,000 contract, call-
ing it a "Band-Aid."

"That was a mistake,"
McCoy said.

The county has paid
Cirone Computer Consultants
\$600,000 to develop what is
called VPAMS, which stands
for the Visual Property
Assessment Management
System used by the townships
and the county assessor's of-
fice.

The problem lies in con-
verting the VPAMS data into
information that can be used
by the tax extension office.

The \$100,000 originally
earmarked for Cirone could
be applied to a system the
county board would approve
at its July 13 meeting, McCoy
said.

Dominic Cirone, owner
of Cirone Computer
Consultants, said the county
never signed the \$100,000
contract and technically he
has not been deprived of the
money.

However, Cirone said his
company has been criticized
unfairly while being linked to
the county's problem. He
said his product does what it
is supposed to do.

VPAMS is designed for
the assessment portion of
the tax cycle, he said.

"It's not designed for the
functions of the county clerk
or the treasurer," Cirone said.
"I have nothing to do with
extension, collection or dis-
tribution. We do send over
the data electronically (to the
extension office) and we
have since 1998."

Aurora grocery to reopen

■ Passes inspection:

El Paso Grande food store is clean after salmonella outbreak

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

AURORA — The El Paso Grande grocery store here is reopening after being closed for about two weeks because of a salmonella outbreak linked to the store. Fred Carlson, environmental health director for the Kane County Health Department, said Tuesday afternoon tests cleared enough store employees so the store could reopen. All that remained was for Health Department inspectors to approve the store, which they did about 4:30 p.m.

Carlson said store officials have been working cooperatively with

the Health Department to get reopened.

"They want a clean slate," Carlson said. "They want to start with everything approved — the store, employees."

El Paso Grande, 634 E. New York St., and its sister store, El Paso Chico, 508 Grove St., have been closed since early June when a salmonella outbreak was linked to the deli in the store on New York Street. Officials said, while the store is being allowed to reopen, the deli section will remain closed for now.

While no food contamination was found at the Grove Street store, some employees there did get salmonella, which is why that store was closed. As of Tuesday afternoon, Health Department officials still were waiting to make a decision about reopening the Grove Street location.

The Health Department confirmed 20 cases of salmonella, 19 of them to county residents, and

Outbreaks rare

■ Passes inspection: officials told members of the County Board Public Health Committee the contamination appears to be contained, the number of cases involved is enough to consider the outbreak as "very large."

"We continue to investigate and try to identify cases," said Cindy Gross, a Health Department epidemiologist.

Gross said the challenge to the Health Department was identifying where the contamination came from. While the source was linked to the deli section of the store where food was prepared and sold, Gross said officials needed to find out if the contamination came into the store from the food or if it was improper food handling that caused the poisoning.

About one third of the cases confirmed were store employees; the other two-thirds were customers, Carlson said.

a total of 33 probable cases. While officials told members of the County Board Public Health Committee the contamination appears to be contained, the number of cases involved is enough to consider the outbreak as "very large."

"We continue to investigate and try to identify cases," said Cindy Gross, a Health Department epidemiologist. Gross said the challenge to the Health Department was identifying where the contamination came from. While the source was linked to the deli section of the store where food was prepared and sold, Gross said officials needed to find out if the contamination came into the store from the food or if it was improper food handling that caused the poisoning.

About one third of the cases confirmed were store employees;

customers, Carlson said.

To reopen, El Paso Grande officials had to have all employees test clean and had to pass the Health Department inspection. The store also had to have a special class for employees on proper food handling, which was conducted by an outside firm, Carlson said.

Salmonella is a bacterial disease characterized by a sudden onset of diarrhea, abdominal cramping, headache, nausea, fever and, in some cases, vomiting. The Health Department encourages people with these symptoms to call their doctors.

Because of the heavy loss of fluids connected to disease symptoms, it is important to get care, Carlson said.

Outbreaks from public contamination are rare in Kane County. While the disease can be transmitted virally, it has been unusual in the county, Carlson said. "We hadn't had an outbreak in about 10 years," he said.

Water boil prompts new calling system

6-23-04

Beacon
news

By Dave Parro

STAFF WRITER

AURORA — A new automated calling system should take care of most of the problems the city had in contacting residents during the boil order emergency earlier this year.

The new system also should cost less in the long run by providing the city a package of minutes to use each year rather than paying each time the system is activated.

The City Council gave preliminary approval Tuesday to a four-year contract with a new provider of an emergency telephone network, which local officials use to notify residents by recorded message of events like child abductions, evacuation notices and other alerts.

Aurora used a similar system the first day of the water boil order, but it fell short in several key areas.

The contract with Emergency Communications Network for its "Code Red" system gives the city a yearly package of 325,000 minutes for emergency calls and 50,000 minutes for Amber Alert calls for an annual fee of \$25,000 for the first two years and \$12,500 for the third and fourth. The previous system — provided by First Call Interactive Network — cost \$8,500 a year, but each activation racked up additional charges.

The five-year contract with First Call has expired, and the city sought proposals from five companies in awarding the new contract.

In the case of the water-boil crisis, Aurora used a total of about 50,000 minutes to call residents citywide when the boil order was issued Feb. 6 and again when it was lifted 10 days later at a total cost of almost \$34,000.

"If you had no activations whatsoever, First Call would be cheaper," said Larry Langston, Aurora's director of community safety. "But when you look at the package, Code Red is a much better value."

Dan Nelson, assistant director of the Aurora Emergency

Management Agency, said the city was sometimes hesitant to activate the system before for relatively minor events because it would cost thousands of dollars. The new contract will give Aurora enough minutes to call the entire city six times, and unused minutes roll over from year to year, Nelson said.

"We own minutes that we can use without worrying about how much we're spending at that exact moment," he said.

In addition to cost, Code Red also provides a better database of phone numbers that is updated more frequently, Langston said. It also allows the city to call specific areas in case of an isolated incident.

During the water boil order, an incomplete database led to some people not getting called about the contamination. The inability to identify specific areas also led to some Aurora Township residents getting called despite not being on city water and city water customers with Naperville postal addresses not getting called at all.

"That was something that we didn't have before that caused some confusion during the water boil," Langston said.

The new system also automatically will leave messages in English on answering machines if no one picks up the phone. Some residents reported after the water boil order was issued that the only message that was left was a prompt to push '1' for English and '2' for Spanish.

The first round of calls when the boil order was issued cost \$15,888 and tried to call 34,000 phone numbers. The entire message was delivered to 17,000 numbers, while a partial message was delivered to 10,000 numbers because of hang-ups or answering machines.

The second round of calls cost \$18,000 and used an updated database of 50,000 phone numbers, many of which were added after the first round. The entire message was delivered to 15,500 numbers, and 24,000 were hang-ups.

6-23-09 Daily Herald

Aurora stores still closed after salmonella outbreak

BY PATRICK WALDRON

Daily Herald Staff Writer

The salmonella outbreak at El Paso Grande in Aurora first reported nearly two weeks ago is now the largest salmonella incident in the county in more than a decade, county health officials said Tuesday.

There have been 20 confirmed salmonella infections with a total of 33 suspected cases and the numbers will probably grow, said Cindy Gross, an epidemiologist with the Kane County health department.

Grocery store El Paso Grande, 634 E. New York St., and a sister store, El Paso Carniceria, 508 Grove St., have been closed since June 5 by order of the health department.

A reopening date has not been

set because health officials are still testing employees and food from the store.

Salmonella is a bacterial disease characterized by sudden onset of diarrhea, abdominal cramping, headache, nausea, fever and sometimes vomiting. People suffering from those symptoms are encouraged to call their doctor.

In most instances, a person with the illness recovers quickly but in rare, severe cases the bacteria can become fatal.

The source of the outbreak has not been determined. Health officials believe either some of the items in the store's deli, such as guacamole or salsa, were contaminated when the food came in or happened when a sick employee transferred the bacteria to the products during

preparation at the store.

Health officials are taking the store, its employees and all its food through a three-step process before it can reopen its doors.

First, all employees are being put through a health education course. That session has already been held at the stores and was administered by an outside health firm.

The other two steps are ongoing.

Every employee at both stores has to be tested for salmonella, but health official have yet to get in contact with all of them.

Also, the test results of all the food at the stores has not yet been completed.

For more information, call the Kane County health department at (630) 208-3801.

'Lifestyle center' proposed for Elgin on Randall Road

By NATE LEGUE
Shaw News Service

Algonquin's giant retail centers will not be adversely affected by a competing development planned just five miles down the road in Elgin, a village official said Tuesday.

Another upscale shopping and eating center could sprout on Randall Road, this time less than a mile north of Interstate 90.

The Grove, a 30-acre retail development in Elgin, could add up to 220,000 square feet of stores, restaurants and perhaps even a new hotel in a development similar to two others, also on Randall Road, in Algonquin.

Despite the similarity of the Elgin proposal, Algonquin's Assistant Village Manager Jeff Mihelich was not concerned about competitive development less than a 10-minute drive down the road.

"With the growing population in our region, there's plenty of retail base to go around," Mihelich said.

Developer Mark Ebacher of Interstate Partnership envisions a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere, complete with sidewalks embellished with granite

brickwork, three ponds along Randall Road, fountains and al fresco dining.

"We're trying to maximize the vistas and the unmet demand for food retailing with the commuter residents and businesses of that area," Ebacher said.

In Algonquin, a 600,000-square-foot "lifestyle center" full of upscale shops and eateries will open in October on Randall Road. Dubbed Algonquin Commons, the shopping center will incorporate open air shopping, brick walkways, fancy lighting and other elements similar to The Grove proposal.

The Galleria, which could include up to 1 million square feet of retail, is planned on Randall Road in Algonquin, as well.

The proposed mall would be on the west side of Randall Road, sparingly from south of Technology Drive and north of Northwest Parkway. The spot is about halfway between Route 72 and Interstate 90.

Elgin's Planning and Zoning Commission on Monday recommended approval of the proposal to the city council.

COMPLIMENTS

A vote for Wyatt

As a Lakeside Sans Souci homeowner, I want to thank Bill Wyatt, Kane County transportation chairman, and all the manpower he assembled for their quick action to get the Orchard Road flooding under control last week. Wyatt's speedy response saved many homeowners in our area from far more serious problems. Wyatt will get our family's votes for mayor. Here is a guy who showed me he had a great sense of responsibility and duty to the people that he serves.

FOX valve,

Health officials shut Aurora grocery store

6-23-04 Chronicle

*At least 20 salmonella
cases confirmed*

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — An Aurora grocery store remained closed Tuesday after a salmonella outbreak on June 5 infected as many as 53 people.

Kane County Health Department officials closed El Paso Grande at New York and Union streets after it was determined that food served there caused customers to get sick.

"It turned out to be a rather big salmonella outbreak," director of environmental health

Fred Carlson said.

Chief epidemiologist Cindy Gross said the health department has confirmed 20 salmonella cases and another 33 remain "probable."

The store will remain closed until all employees have been found to be free of salmonella.

"We want to test all the employees to make sure who's cleared and who's not, and make sure everything is the way it's supposed to be," Gross said.

Eight of the confirmed cases are employees, she said.

The exact source of the outbreak might never be known. One of two likely scenarios took place, either an employee did not wash his or her hands after going to the bathroom or the store served meat or cheese that was already infected, she said.

The food that caused the outbreak was prepared on the premises and served in the store, she said.

Carlson said that, in addition to checking all employees to make sure they are not infected, the employees must undergo an independent education seminar and the health department must re-inspect the store before it can re-open.

Carlson said the El Paso Grande case is the largest viral salmonella outbreak in Kane County in the last 10 years.

DuPage may step up drug court

court
6-23-04 Chicago Tribune
Treatment totals fall short of goal

By Angela Rozas
Tribune staff reporter

The rejuvenated DuPage County drug court has provided treatment to about 130 people as an alternative to jail time in the last two years, a little more than half the number that county officials had set as a goal.

Still, officials say drug court is a success, with about 80 percent of the participants continuing in the two-year program, and fewer than 30 percent committing new crimes while in treatment. That compares with a 50 percent national recidivism rate for offenders not in treatment.

Some County Board members want to know if more people—and money—can be brought into the program, saying what works for a few should work for many more.

"My concern is that there's not enough people getting into it," said Commissioner Michael McMahon, part of a four-member subcommittee formed this year to review the county's drug court and new mental health court before budget hearings commence this fall.

In drug court, defendants plead guilty to non-violent crimes and admit their addiction in return for entering a specialized drug-treatment program, which includes mandatory meetings with DuPage Judge Ann Jorgensen and weekly drug screenings.

DuPage opened its first drug court in 2000 but disbanded the program at the end of 2001, citing management and money problems. Some officials have said a fatal alcohol-related crash in 2000 involving a drug court participant may have contributed to the program's suspension.

It reopened in 2002 with a new program coordinator and a goal of 200 participants. It is now one of 19 drug courts in the state.

But with a list of restrictions on who can enter the program, the number of participants has hovered at a little more than 100. About 200 applicants have been turned away over the last two years.

Robin Partin, coordinator of the drug court program, told

COURT:

Kane program has far more participants

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the subcommittee Tuesday that applicants cannot be violent offenders, live in another county or have been convicted of drug dealing or sex offenses. The program used to eliminate anyone with a DUI, but it has loosened that restriction, she said.

The state's attorney's office also has disqualified applicants who meet the requirements but are considered a "public risk," she said.

By comparison, Kane County has about 800 participants in its drug court, including DUI offenders, those convicted of drug dealing and even some violent offenders deemed by the court to not pose risks.

McMahon, a criminal defense attorney, said he wanted the subcommittee to investigate whether more defendants in DuPage could take advantage of the program.

"I support the program, but I think it needs to be fair," he said.

State's Atty. Joseph Birkett said in an interview that although he welcomed suggestions to improve drug court, the restrictions make sure the program is available to those most likely to be rehabilitated and who do not pose risks to the public.

"I'm willing to look at any proposed changes. I haven't been resistant to that," Birkett said. "But there's accountability and protection of the community to be considered as well."

To expand the program, the County Board will have to find more money, said Commissioner Jim Zay. "If it's our goal to get more people in it, it's our responsibility to get more money to provide for it."

The program's current enrollment is about 108 with 50 waiting to enter. To accommodate up to 200, at least one more probation officer, costing about \$40,000 to \$45,000 a year, would need to be hired, Partin said.

"We're going to review this through the summer," said subcommittee chairman Grant Eckhoff. "Then we'll get a better idea of what we can do by the time the budget comes."

Weather will dampen West Nile mosquitoes

6-23-04 Chronicle

Heavy rain inhibits culex's growth

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Wet weather in May and June has inhibited the growth of the mosquitoes that carry West Nile virus. While May's heavy rain left plenty of standing water to breed the nuisance floodwater mosquitoes, the cool, fresh standing water is not conducive to the

species that carries the virus, even though four birds have tested positive for the disease. Since May 1, about a foot of rain has fallen in Kane County, unlike the more aggressive floodwater variety that emerged after the heavy rains, needs the organic matter in the standing water to thrive. "You want dry weather to collect the mosquitoes," Gross said. "The wet weather has had a negative effect on the county which is why it usually emerges in late July and early August.

Wayne tested positive for the virus on June 5, three birds — a blue jay and two crows found in Aurora, Geneva and Batavia — tested positive for West Nile. No human cases have been reported in Kane County since 2002. Gross said the culex mosquito requires warm stagnant water to breed. The culex, unlike the more aggressive floodwater variety that emerged after the heavy rains, needs the organic matter in the standing water to thrive. "You want dry weather to collect the mosquitoes," Gross said. "The wet weather has had a negative effect on the county which is why it usually emerges in late July and early August.

With all the rain in May and early June, health officials warn that bird baths, old tires and clogged gutters should be cleaned to prevent the mosquito from breeding.

"Regardless of the weather, regardless of what we've seen, the message is still the same: Use insect repellent, get rid of standing water," said Michael Isaacson, the health department's emergency response coordinator. Carlson said he was able to collect a batch of mosquitoes

Monday that he would test Tuesday. The health department has set up 13 mosquito collection points around the county. In 2002, Illinois led the nation with 884 human cases and 64 deaths.

Kane County had eight cases and one death that year. McHenry County had one case and no deaths.

Last year, Illinois had 54 human cases and one fatality. So far this year, no human cases have been reported in the state.

"The weather has been so bad, we haven't gotten good counts," Carlson said. No counts.

Chief epidemiologist Cindy Gross said the culex mosquito requires warm stagnant water to breed. The culex, unlike the more aggressive floodwater variety that emerged after the heavy rains, needs the organic matter in the standing water to thrive. "You want dry weather to collect the mosquitoes," Gross said. "The wet weather has had a negative effect on the county which is why it usually emerges in late July and early August.

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STC eyes Randall, Route 64 plan

Development would include commercial space, townhomes

By HEATH FIXSON
Kane County Chronicle

ST. CHARLES — A developer wants to transform an area near the corner of Randall Road and Route 64 into commercial space and high-priced townhomes.

Developer Greg Nutt, of Pine Ridge Park, LLC, unveiled a plan

Tuesday before the plan commission to redevelop 60 acres near the northwestern corner of the intersection.

The redevelopment plan calls for more than 27 acres to be developed into commercial space, 14 acres to be left as wetlands and open space, and more than 13 acres in the northwestern portion

of the land to be developed into a high-end residential community of 58 townhome units.

The plan commission only reviewed the proposal and took no action on the concept plan, except providing opinions regarding benefits and possible problems of the plan. The commission will not formally consider the proposal until the developer files an official application with the city.

Plan commission Chairman Mark Armstrong said the proposal seemed to include "most of the

Page 3A

• St. Charles plan commission recommends Century Station use as fire station.

Development

Continued from page 1

However, Armstrong questioned whether the proposal would lead to residential development in surrounding properties.

A portion of the proposed commercial property fronts on Route 64. The eastern end of the proposed commercial area is near Randall Road, but does not front on the road.

Developers would like to

acquire an additional lot for

the Randall Road frontage.

and develop the lot into a location for a large commercial development, said Terry Heffron, a land planner involved in the project.

The proposal's townhome portion would include homes priced between \$450,000 and \$500,000, shows the concept plan application.

Plan commission Secre-

tary Jim Spear said he was

withholding comment be-

cause he has been working for

nearly 40 years on developing

the property. That is how long

Spear has been a commission

member.

6-15-04 Beacon news
Bilingual nurses teach as well as translate

■ **Patients under stress:**
Difficulties with finances,
transportation, referrals

By Marie-Anne Hogarth
STAFF WRITER

The English-speaking daughter of Mexican immigrants, Aurora Diaz was often a translator for her own family.

"My father was diagnosed with diabetes when I was 9 years old," she remembers. "I went with him to the doctor. I tried to do the best I could."

But sometimes her best wasn't enough — especially when it came to understanding medical terms.

"We left sometimes not knowing," she recalls. "He would get mad saying, 'but you speak English, you should understand!'"

Today Diaz, a bilingual nurse at Aunt Martha's Aurora Community Health Center in Aurora, is caring for patients like her father in the language they can understand. She is one of six bilingual nurses or certified nursing



JONATHAN HOUSE / STAFF PHOTOGRAPH

From left: RN Anna Garcia explains in English and Spanish the tetanus shot that Brenda Torres, 13, is about to get during her visit to Aunt Martha's Clinic.

assistants at the federally funded health-care center serving a population that is 70 percent Latino. Aurora

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JONATHAN HOUSE / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
RN Anna Garcia talks on the phone with a patient in Aunt Martha's Clinic's lab area.

3

BILINGUAL

From page B1

Martha's in the process of hiring a seventh nurse.

And for these patients, the staff's bilingual capabilities can mean quite literally the difference between life and death.

Their language and cultural understanding might help in identifying a serious domestic situation in a home, or directing the panicked mother of an infant who has turned blue and is not breathing.

But more routinely, bilingual nurses can help patients communicate about their medical problems, understand directions about when or how often to take their medicine, or what bus to take to visit a specialist.

Just how important her role was came as a surprise to Ana Iniguez, an experienced nurse who had worked as the research coordinator of the stroke team at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago.

When she took the part-time job working an evening clinic twice a week at Aunt Martha's after the birth of her first child, she realized she was in a whole different ball game.

"It isn't just the language barrier," she says. "Many of our patients come from farm towns in Mexico where education is not a priority. Suddenly, I was having to do a whole lot more teaching."

Some of the patients don't know how to read — even in Spanish. She has to ask them to repeat back what she says to make sure they really understand the instructions.

Others are new to the area. They might not have a car. They need directions about where to go, how to get there.

"It is more than 'Here's your appointment, have a nice day,'" said another bilingual nurse, Anna Garcia.

Often there is the problem of finding a specialist who will take Public Aid, uninsured or self-pay patients.

The nurses at Aunt Martha's have been working for several weeks now with the family of an

uninsured junior high school athlete who needs to see a sports medicine doctor. So far, the nurses have not been unsuccessful in locating one who will help the boy.

Other specialists, such as cardiologists and neurologists, have limited openings, and uninsured patients have to wait a long time before getting an appointment.

If the patient is undocumented, says Garcia, then payment might be required up front.

Families are making choices about whether they want to pay for health care or rent, the nurses say.

"It is overwhelming," says Diaz. "You come to a new country. You have to get food, a job. Health care is not going to be the first thing on your mind."

Patients might not remember to tell the doctor that they didn't buy their hypertension medication because it was too expensive.

"So we follow up," says Iniguez.

Sometimes, the nurses wish they could solve their patients' problems — drive them to appointments or find them a home — but there are professional limits they cannot cross.

Still there are some tragic cases. "We see a lot of foster children taken from their homes," says Garcia, "Great kids with terrible luck — sexually abused by both parents, removed into foster care and then sexually abused by foster parents; or both parents have died and then they are removed from a grandfather's home because he is too sick to care for them."

Other times, the nurses are filled with admiration for the perseverance of these patients in the face of hardship.

"I didn't realize how many needy people there were in Aurora," says Iniguez. "And I've lived here my whole life."

Aunt Martha's Aurora Community Health Center, 411 W. Galeana Blvd., Aurora, provides a full-range of primary health care services, serving infants through adults. Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Evening hours are 4:30 to 8:30 p.m. Monday and Wednesday for sick care only. Call (630) 896-7900.

6-15-04 Daily Herald

Elburn may raise water fees to get rid of radium



JEFF KNOX/DAILY HERALD
e Indigo School of Art in St.
"made the popcorn pop" by

BY DENISE PERRY.

DONAVIN

Daily Herald Correspondent

Elburn officials discussed the possibility of increasing water fees to cover the cost of radium removal at a meeting Monday night.

Village President Jim Willey proposed a 69-cent increase per 100 cubic feet of water. Sewer rates would remain at \$2 per 100 cubic feet, while water rates may rise to \$2.69. The board has not yet voted on the increase.

"Elburn has not raised water rates since 1986," said Willey. "Each cubic foot equals 7.48 gallons of water; so we have basically been paying one cent for 3.74 gallons. Average use in Elburn and throughout the U.S. is 72 gallons per day."

The increased fees would be used to fund a plan approved by the board to remove radium from the water.

"The radium removal is an unfunded mandate that we are required to pay for," Trustee Jeff Metcalf said.

The cost of the Water Treatment Technologies system of radium removal is \$1.7 million.

The method uses a giant filter system with zeolite, an earthen material used to capture radioactivity and remove radium without changing the character of the water, Willey said. The radium is then removed from the site and stored in an approved facility. Other methods such as ion exchange and lime softening cost between \$5 million to \$14 million, said Willey, and still leave the radium in the local environment.

Willey presented three pricing options to the board. A \$450,000 federal grant obtained with the help of Rep. Dennis Hastert reduces the village's costs to about \$1.25 million. If the village prepays the water treatment firm \$575,000, they can save thousands of dollars over the 20-year contract. Without the prepayment, water fees would be \$2.78 per 100 cubic feet, a 39 percent increase. With a prepayment, annual costs to the firm are \$70,000 instead of \$110,000, so the rates would be \$2.49.

Willey said that if the village looked for a recapture of the down payment to funnel \$28,500 back each year into the water and sewer maintenance projects, rates would be \$2.69.

of lawsuit

that's only if a program for 40 students with hearing difficulties are shifted out of Streamwood High to make room. And only if urel Hill students were not placed with additional Bartlett students. Bartlett High ranks as the district's most crowded high school with 2,900 students, 300 more than the building is signed to handle.

Bartlett High has space to fit all students with Bartlett ZIP codes, but that would push students from Inver Park, West Chicago and rural Streamwood out, sending them to the new high school in South Elgin, scheduled to open in 2005. "All that will get you is a lawsuit," McKibben advised.

But U-46 may get one anyway. Bartlett Elementary parents sought a letter from the Chicago-based law firm of Idrizi Associates threatening a lawsuit if board members approve the boundary map as drawn.

School board members plan to vote on the high school boundary plan June 28 in the Elgin High auditorium.

Staff report

Kane County health officials are investigating four confirmed cases of salmonella believed to be connected to food sold at an Aurora grocery store last month.

Beyond those, 17 other suspected salmonella cases are being investigated at El Paso Grande Grocer, 634 E. New York St.

Health officials warn that any food bought at the store on or after May 21 that is not canned should be thrown away.

The origin of the salmonella is unknown and the health

department is working with the Illinois Department of Public Health to complete food tests and identify a source.

El Paso Grande has closed until the all test results are returned and analyzed.

Salmonella is a bacterial disease characterized by sudden onset of diarrhea, abdominal cramping, headache, nausea, fever and sometimes vomiting. People suffering from those symptoms are encouraged to call their doctor.

For more information, call the Kane County Health Department at (630) 208-3801.

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Thursday, June 24, 2004

6-15-04 *Daily Herald*

Study predicts rapid growth in St. Charles schools

BY LISA SMITH
Daily Herald Staff Writer

The St. Charles School district is expected to grow by 32 percent over the next decade, causing a need for two more elementary schools, one middle school and additions to both high schools.

That's the conclusion of a scientific model calculated by

Northern Illinois University's Center for Governmental Studies and presented to the school board Monday night.

Researchers used historical

population trends, U.S. Census data and land use plans from several municipalities and Kane County to predict student enrollment numbers and pinpoint specific areas within the

district where the new students are expected to come from. District officials will use the information to determine where to build new schools and how to redraw school boundaries.

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That's the conclusion of a scientific model calculated by

One of the study's authors called the St. Charles district one of the most difficult school districts for which he has had to develop enrollment projections. "Our professional judgment is that these are good numbers for the next few years, but you have to continually monitor (projected residential developments) because these things change quickly," said Michael Peddle, Bardett and Bilbom.

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1

Hiring outlook good for Kane

6-15-04 Chronicle

Survey says employment forecast for area is sixth best in the nation

By ROALD HAASE
Kane County Chronicle

The third quarter hiring outlook for central and southern Kane County is the sixth best in the nation, according to Manpower Inc.

"From July to September, 53 percent

of the companies interviewed plan to hire more employees, while none intended to reduce their work force," Tom Mihelic, Manpower's area manager, said in a statement released Monday about southern and central Kane County. The area includes Batavia, Geneva, St. Charles, North Aurora, Elburn,

Sugar Grove and Aurora. Manpower Inc., the Milwaukee-based labor provider, samples U.S. employer attitudes every three months. In the surveys, employers are asked whether they expect to add employees, reduce employees or stay the same over the coming three months.

The area is buoyed by expected strong hiring in construction, durable goods manufacturing, and retail and finance, among others, according to Mihelic. Manpower said employers in the area

"are more optimistic about hiring plans than in the second quarter forecast when 47 percent of the companies interviewed predicted an increase in hiring activity, while none planned to decrease the hiring pace."

Area business people appeared to be busier, Mihelic said. "Home builder Rich Guerard of North Aurora's Wyndham Deep Lake Homes said continued strong construction activity should mean more jobs. His general contracting firm soon will start work on two more residential communities, bringing to six the number under construction between Oswego and South Elgin."

"It should translate into more job opportunities, primarily for our subcontractors, but also for us," Guerard said.

While contractors are concerned about the potential for rising home mortgage interest rates slowing building activity, Guerard said he remains positive.

"When interest rates go up, it makes it more expensive to buy a home, but that also means more people can afford to buy a home," Guerard said. "Most of the surveys I have seen say that if interest rates are not up more than 2 or 3 percent, the market will still be strong."

Area manufacturers also are nodding strength. One

who said the manufacturing economy is strong now is Jerry Purisek, human resources manager of Geneva-based Miner Enterprises. The firm produces components for railroad cars.

"Our business has kind of remained the same, and we have a constant flow of

new high school graduates, recent college graduates and experienced workers."

"It's interesting, we are having a lot of conversations with employers, and they are asking, 'How do we find good people?'" Mihelic said.

Township, 27 percent of employers expect to hire more workers, while 7 percent plan to reduce staffs. The remaining 66 percent of employers expect to maintain current staffing levels.

In the DeKalb-Sycamore area, 43 percent of firms said they would hire more employees, and 3 percent said they would lay off workers. An additional 47 percent said they expected to maintain current staff levels. Seven percent said they were not sure about future staffing plans.

See HIRING, Page 2

Hiring

Continued from page 1

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Kostel ends 32-year education career

6/15/04 Chronicle

STC school superintendent retires

By HEATH HIXSON
Kane County Chronicle

ST. CHARLES — Fran Kostel never set out to become superintendent of a school district.

Monday was his last day on

the job as the St. Charles school district superintendent, capping off an eight-year tenure in the role and 32 years as an educator. He also served seven years as St. Charles High School principal.

"It has been a tremendous opportunity, a privilege to work in an excellent school district with outstanding people," Kostel said. "Being part of the system for 15 years and having the opportunity to work as a high school principal, which is a extraordinary opportunity itself, and then to be superin-



Kostel

of the Scottsdale, Ariz., school district. She takes over July 1.

Kostel's tenure at the school

tendent, it has been a professional privilege."

Kostel, 55, officially retires June 30. His successor is Barbara Erwin, most recently superintendent

STC expects 27 percent increase in school enrollment.

Page 3A

district includes managing dramatic enrollment growth, overseeing the building of new schools and two successful referendums. And there also was the renovation of St. Charles East High School.

See KOSTEL, page 2

Kostel

Continued from page 1

School board President Mary Jo Knipp said Kostel led the school district through its toughest time and managed the district through its biggest enrollment increase.

"I think his biggest fault, if you can call it one, is that he puts others before himself," Knipp said. "He has always wanted to make sure that his colleagues and staff work toward their potential. A true gentleman."

Former school board President Steve Cole said Kostel faced difficult issues, managed growth and helped start key academic programs. Cole was board president 2001-03.

"I think that the district has been well served by Fran Kostel," Cole said. "He has added value to the school district. And we should all wish him Godspeed."

Kostel said the accomplishments were part of teamwork in the district.

But there were challenges. Kostel points to the choice to shutter St. Charles East High School to overhaul the interior after mold was found

in the building in 2001 as one of the biggest challenges he faced as superintendent.

"The greatest challenge was when we had to close East High School for over 16 months," Kostel said. "Certainly, it was a situation that no one wanted, but it had to be dealt with. In the end, we have two new high schools in a sense because East was totally rebuilt."

For Kostel, his retirement ends a career in education that started as a high school math teacher in a small all-girls private school in 1972. About two years later, he moved on to teach math at a public high school in Orland Park, where he became assistant principal in 1981.

Kostel was hired as St. Charles High School principal in 1989 and became district superintendent in 1996. He plans to begin consulting in the fall.

"I looked at my career as a journey. I am still on that journey. It has been very exciting," Kostel said. "Without a doubt, the thing that I will miss about leaving are the people. That includes staff, students and community. There are outstanding people in our community."

Geneva church preschool to host concert

New board best for Maple Park?

By Steve Lord
Beacon News
STAFF WRITER

MAPLE PARK — The divisions on the Village Board and throughout the community here might be wearing on Village Board members. Some of them who attended Monday night's Police Committee meeting suggested that an entire new board could be the best for thing for the community.

"It's no secret we've been dysfunctional for a while," said Nick Moisa, a board member who is chairman of the Police Committee. "Maybe the best thing that could happen is that we all serve out our terms, and not run again. Maybe we should get some new blood in here."

"I would be glad to resign if everyone else did," said Board member Terry Borg. "Maybe we do need to get all new people in here." Art Moisa and Borg made their comments after President Ross Dueringer, a former Village Board member, suggested the board take some kind of action in response to the recent indictment of the village's mayor and police chief in connection with what Illinois State Police investigators called "perpetrative illegal gambling" at D.J.'s Tavern West in Maple Park. Village President Mark Delaney, Chief Chester Morris and others were indicted by a Kane County grand jury June 4.

Village Board members already have said the two will continue in their jobs until after the cases are decided. The Police Committee Monday night made no formal recommendation.

MAPLE

From Page A1

change that viewpoint. But Dueringer suggested the board could put Morris on administrative leave until the case is decided. He said doing that might allow the board to move on and put aside some of its divisiveness.

"How can the village function with this hanging over our head?" Dueringer said. "All the folks on the board should stand up and make a

decision. I don't know, should somebody said I give?"

"We do stand up and give an opinion," Moisa said. "It usually comes out 3 to 3." Dueringer also suggested the board put Delaney on administrative leave, but board members pointed out he was elected, and the board has no say over his status. He would have to step down if convicted of a felony.

"There are laws protecting Mark in his current situation," Borg said. "We don't act on newspapers, we don't act on public opinion. We act on facts."

◆ Turn to MAPLE, A2

Beykirch bypasses race for mayor

■ **Family matters:** Alderman cites father's Alzheimer's as he decides to sit out in '05

6-15-04 Beacon
By Dave Parro
STAFF WRITER

AURORA — Despite having already unofficially announced his candidacy for mayor, Alderman Chris Beykirch said Monday that unforeseen family circumstances have forced him to sit out for at least another four years.

In a letter to Mayor David Stover, the City Council, and his friends and supporters, Beykirch said his potential campaign was well received throughout the city. He also said he expected to have the necessary financial backing to be competitive in what is now a four-man race.

In the past two weeks, "we had decided that a run for mayor was completely viable," wrote Beykirch, who first indicated in April that he was considering his candidacy.

Monday, however, Beykirch said has come "to the realization that now is not my time." More than anything, the 8th Ward alderman said his father's battle with Alzheimer's Disease will keep him from becoming a candidate in the 2005 city election.

"Although he had the disease when I started this assessment of my candidacy, I



Aurora Alderman Chris Beykirch says he'll consider running for mayor in 2009.

♦ Turn to BEYKIRCH, A2

BEYKIRCH

From Page A1

underestimated the steep decline he would take and the extreme pressure it places on a family," Beykirch wrote. "My parents mean everything to me, and I will not let them down."

Beykirch's father, Henry Beykirch, was an alderman in Belleville, near St. Louis, for 36 years and "my role model and inspiration," Beykirch said. Although he had already set a June 28 date to announce his candidacy, Beykirch said a family visit downstate last week changed his mind.

"For me to try and take on new and exciting challenges knowing what is going on there would be foolish and selfish," Beykirch said.

Four other candidates remain in the race. Beykirch challenged Aurora voters "to ask the current field of candidates to be more specific about how we will meet the challenges we face ... Ask how they will do it ... Ask how they plan to pay for it."

Candidates' reaction

Had Beykirch entered the race, his overwhelming support in recent city elections could have made it difficult for other candidates to win votes on the far East Side. His

absence likely throws the DuPage County vote up in the air.

Candidates Tom Weisner and Bill Wyatt are from the West Side, while Richard Irvin grew up on the near East Side and now lives on the border of old and new Aurora. Angel Hernandez lives on the near East Side.

Irvin said he doesn't believe that Beykirch had the far East Side vote locked up, but he said it will now be more difficult to get DuPage County residents involved in the mayor's race. Newer residents tend to be less aware when citywide elections are being held, he said.

"What I think he would have done on the far East Side was make people aware that a race was going on," Irvin said. "So now, I'll probably have to work a little harder to get that message out."

Wyatt said he was looking forward to hearing the issues Beykirch would have raised as an alderman, but he said Beykirch made the right decision given his family hardships.

"It's a real time-consuming effort, and if you don't have the time to pour yourself into it, it's best not to get in," Wyatt said. "So I really respect his decision."

Beykirch, 40, who was elected to the City Council in 1995, said he has not ruled out running for mayor in the future and will reconsider his options and circumstances in four years.

6/16/04 Chicago Tribune Outer-belt proposal gets more scrutiny

1 of 193 tracts has been purchased

By William Presecky
Tribune staff reporter

The state's purchase of nearly an acre near the Fox River in Kendall County does not necessarily signal that an outer-belt expressway linking Interstate Highways 88 and 80 will be built along Chicago's far western fringe, state highway planners said.

The \$177,500 "hardship" purchase in September was the only acquisition by the Illinois Department of Transportation since it moved in July 2002 to protect from development a 36-mile-long, 400-foot-wide transportation corridor through Kane and Kendall Counties.

"It was 0.9 acres out of a 4.2-acre site on the north side of the Fox River between Yorkville and Plano," said Rick Powell, IDOT project manager. "It was apparent to the owners

that they could not build on it with the corridor protection there so what they did was apply for a 'hardship acquisition,'" he said.

Talks are under way with another owner to buy land near Interstate Highway 80 and Minooka that is threatened by development, he said.

"There are 193 parcels in the protected corridor and there has been one acquisition since the order of protection was signed," Powell said. That underscores IDOT's commitment to identify every viable transportation alternative for meeting the long-term traffic needs of a 1,600-square-mile, six-county area that includes the corridor, he said.

The ongoing Prairie Parkway Preliminary Engineering Study does not presuppose that an expressway linking I-88 and I-80 is the only or best alternative for addressing the growing area's long-term traffic needs, Powell said.

"We encourage the public to

PLEASE SEE OUTER BELT, PAGE 7

OUTER BELT: Feedback from public encouraged

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

provide feedback and offer any transportation alternatives that they feel may benefit the future transportation development of this region," said IDOT District 3 Engineer John Kos, touting two public participation workshops set for Wednesday.

The IDOT workshops are scheduled from 3 to 5 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m. in Yorkville's Beecher Community Center.

Jan Strasma, a spokesman for Citizens Against the Sprawlway, which has opposed the state's corridor protection effort from the outset, said the group has been "advising our folks to attend the [workshops] and make whatever suggestions they feel are important."

State planners "seem to be listening," said Kane County Board Chairman Mike McCoy (R-Aurora), who prefers a more easterly route than the current proposed alignment.

"The meetings are encouraging. They seem to be considering all options," said McCoy who, along with Strasma and Brook McDonald, chief executive of The Conservation Foundation in Naperville, participated recently in one of several private meetings IDOT planners and consultants had with area policymakers before Wednesday's public sessions.

Because the state established a protected corridor before studying the region's transportation needs, McCoy said a perception of the inevitability of an outer belt lingers.

McDonald agreed. "IDOT and their consultants are certainly talking as if they are not bound by the existing protected corridor," he said. "The process they are doing right now is what they should have been doing initially and they would have more credibility."

"People want to believe that it's an open case, but deep down inside people are pretty skeptical," McDonald said.

The support that state Transportation Secretary Tim Martin and House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) have shown for construction of a Prairie Parkway has done little to ease that skepticism, Strasma said.

Based on the results of the workshops, IDOT proposes to define a range of potential alternatives, from widening existing routes and creating major arterial streets to making mass transit improvements and building new expressways.

The workshops follow the release in March of a preliminary needs analysis of the study area, including Kendall and parts of Kane, Grundy, DeKalb, Will and LaSalle Counties. It concluded that 85 percent of the area's roadways consist of two-lane streets and highways that are congested and face a 76 percent increase in vehicle trips by 2030.

A lawsuit challenging the state's authority to protect the existing corridor is pending in the state Appellate Court in Elgin. The suit was dismissed by a lower court.

Panel OKs preliminary plan for Valley View homes

By Tom Schlueter
Kane County Chronicle

Some committee members concerned about impact on STC schools

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Kane County officials on Tuesday approved a preliminary plan for a proposed subdivision in Valley View despite concerns about its density. Whitmore Place would have 128 multifamily and single-fam-

ily homes on 40 acres along Route 25 between Robert Road and Courier Avenue in unincorporated St. Charles Township. The Development Committee approved the plan 4-2 because water and sewer service will be provided to an area where it has been lacking.

"This is part of a bigger com-

mittee to provide sewer and water to the rest of the area," said Phil Bus, Development Department executive director. The next step is for the developer, I.K. LLC of Geneva, to comply with a list of requirements such as the design of the sewer and water systems, established by the development department.

Once those requirements are met, the developer would apply for a zoning petition. A public hearing would be scheduled by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The Development Committee would take the ZBA's recom-

mendation and forward the petition for the full county board to approve or disapprove of the zoning change. The land currently is zoned for agriculture. The developers will seek planned-unit development, with a list of requirements such as the design of the sewer and water systems, established by the development department.

"I see this as an intensely dense development in an already overtly crowded school dis-

trict," said committee member Barbara Wojnick, R-St. Charles.

Students who live in the sub-

division would attend St. Charles schools. Peter Lappin, one of the developers, said his firm has estimated that Whitmore Place would generate 72 to 74 students by the time the development is built out in five years.

"Previously, we would have

Wojnick and Paul Gervikas,

to truck water in," Shalstreet said.

"This will benefit the entire

D-Aurora, cast the dissenting

Daily Herald Paddock Publications Inc.

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Opinion

"Our aim:
To fear God,
tell the truth
and make money."

H.C. Paddock
1852-1935

F3

6-16-04 Daily Herald Far more of a passion than a job

Millions of people get up every morning and go off to work in a haze of caffeine and varied levels of enthusiasm. Many employers welcome workers who show up mostly for a check or for health benefits.

Fewer welcome workers who see their jobs as a career, a calling of some sort. And fewer still welcome employees who look at their jobs as the passion of their lives.

There will be one fewer of the latter when Jon Duerr departs from his post as Kane County Forest Preserve District executive director. By all accounts, Duerr has been a terrific public servant, a man universally respected for his work on behalf of Kane County residents during his 19-year tenure with the forest preserve district.

But what is most unique about Duerr is that he stood for something, cared about something beyond the government bureaucracy and budget. He was an ecologist, a conservationist, a bird watcher, a world traveler in search of new natural vistas — and a fierce protector of dwindling open space. So his job wasn't just where he went to spend eight hours a day; it was part of his lifestyle

Our View

future travel list that undoubtedly will take him around the world in his search for new birds and plants and vistas to see. Forest Preserve President John Hoscheit already has invited him to be an active consultant for the district, and he intends to take up that offer.

To be sure, the district will move on under new leadership. But it will be a different sort of management, with more emphasis on bureaucratic tools like budgeting, grant writing and planning, and less hands-on experience. It likely will involve less time standing in the middle of a prairie wondering about the ecological future and what to do about it.

"When I was in high school, you started to see the rural subdivisions," Duerr said. "As a sophomore in college, I came up with the idea that I'd like to see 15 percent of Kane County be open space."

He might not have reached that number exactly, but he came closer to making his dream a reality than many people do. Maybe because of his passion for the job. And certainly to the benefit of those in Kane County, many of whom never knew he didn't just manage the forest preserve, but understood and deeply loved what he was managing.

For sure, Duerr won't be too far away, despite a

list of possible favorites.

"You're asking a father which one of his kids he

likes best," said Duerr before tossing out a long list

6-16-04

Beacon news

Kane board targets federal money for historic house

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — An Aurora Kane County Board member is questioning whether federal money intended to renovate blighted properties should include a hired man's house built in the 1870s.

The County Board Development Committee Tuesday supported spending about \$28,500 in federal Community Development Block Grant funds to help renovate the hired man's house on the Corron Farm property, recently purchased by Campton Township as a farmland and historic preservation project.

The money would go to the township through the county, which administers the federal grant program. The township intends to turn the historic Corron Farm, a former dairy operation, into a working museum.

"Campton Township's intent is to create a museum, and this house is part of it," said Barb Wojnicki, R-St. Charles, Campton's board representative.

But board member Gerry Jones, D-Aurora, said he wondered if this federal money was intended for such a project.

"To me, that money should be going to buildings in urban areas," Jones said. "I understand the historic value of the site in general, but why the handyman's house? I don't see CDBG doing any of this."

Scott Berger, block grant administrator for Kane County, said the house has value as part of the overall Corron Farm site. It will be part of showing how people lived in Kane County in the 19th century.

Mark VanKerkhoff, director of Building and Community Services, said because so little has been done to the 1870s house, it "is almost like being frozen in time."

He pointed out that the block grant money is actually left over from the 2002 funding year. No one else has applied for it, he said. Also, the money would only pay part of the estimated \$73,000 it will take to renovate the house. The rest will be paid for by Campton Township, or by volunteer in-kind work and contributions.

"It's unused funding, no one else came forward, and this is a historic site that is an asset to the community," said board member Doug Weigand, R-Batavia.

"They (Campton Township) spent millions of dollars on open space, and they will pay for most of the renovation. It's not like they came to us empty-handed."

Committee members voted in favor of the expenditure, with only Jones voting against it.

6-16-04

OUR VIEW

Beacon news

No deadline for freedom of information

At issue: A bill would force people to sue quickly — or not at all — if they are denied access to public records.

We say: This would be a setback for freedom.

When politicians propose reasons for hiding behind closed doors the decision making of how our tax money is spent or who our public policies will benefit, then people rightly should worry.

Illinois is notorious among the 50 states for closed-door government. It was the last state to adopt a Freedom of Information law, in 1983.

When then-Gov. James Thompson signed the bill into law, he did so with an amendatory that added 26 exceptions — 26 different instances when government can go behind closed doors and make decisions and discuss policy that affect us all.

In the 21 years since, the Illinois Press Association reports that another 54 exemptions have been added to the law. The process to obtain a government record can be lengthy and governments — whether they are cities, school boards, county boards, townships or whatever — have a lot of wiggle room for denying access.

Now, in a bill championed by the city of Chicago, another hurdle could be added.

Legislation is on the desk of Gov. Rod Blagojevich that would establish a 60-day time limit for filing suit if you are denied public information.

This is wrong on two counts.

First, as Hugo Rojas, the executive director of Common Cause/Illinois says, "Rights should not have a statute of limitations." No other state has such a short deadline for going to court. The deadline for filing suit under the federal FOI act is seven years.

Just as important, such a short deadline all but ensures such cases will end up in court — or be dropped, to the advantage of the government body. What time is left for intermediaries to intervene or to try other recourse? Who wants to be forced into heading to court?

Gov. Blagojevich took a great step forward for freedom of information last year, signing a law that requires governments to keep verbatim records of secret sessions.

He should not set back the public's right to know this year. Please veto that bill, Gov. Blagojevich.

This opinion of The Beacon News editorial board was staff written.

6-16-04 *Beacon News*

Housing plan expected to upgrade Valley View

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA.—A new development in the Valley View subdivision north of St. Charles should improve the area, Kane County officials believe.

The County Board Development Committee Tuesday endorsed the preliminary plan for Whitmore Place, to be constructed on the west side of Route 25, east of Seminary Road, between Roberts Road and Courier Avenue.

Even though some commissioners said they thought the housing might be too dense in the development, they said improvements in the area's infrastructure, such as sewer and water and drainage, makes it worthwhile. The improvements will help the neighboring Skyline Estates subdivision, too.

"I have concerns about the density, but I'm

trying to balance that against the benefits for the community," said board member Gerry Jones, D-Aurora, who voted for the preliminary plan.

Whitmore Place would have 40 single-family lots, 128 multi-family units and one commercial lot, on about 44 acres. County officials also said they liked the fact that the county and the village of Wayne were able to agree on the Whitmore plan. Last week, county development officials attended a joint meeting of Wayne's village board and planning commission.

Development Director Phil Bus said Wayne has a concept for a master plan along Route 25, and Whitmore's design "meets some of the concepts" in that plan. Wayne even considered annexing Whitmore at one time but does not have enough land next to it yet. The development would put residential property on what has been zoned light industrial, county planners said.

Bus said Whitmore will be part of upgrading sewer and water in Valley View, as well as standard storm drainage there.

The water situation will be helped so much that a representative of the St. Charles Fire Department, which serves the area, took the unusual step of speaking in favor of the development before the Development Committee. The representative said the development "will allow us to extremely increase water system pressure" and will enhance the sprinkler system at nearby Anderson Elementary School.

Phil Bus

Development Director

St. Charles

Fire Department

St. Charles

Development

Committee

St. Charles

County

Board

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Wayne

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Jewel talks stall in Sugar Grove

By KELLEY CASINO
Kane County Chronicle

SUGAR GROVE — Village board members insist a compromise can be reached, but negotiations for a proposed Jewel-Osco and shopping center were stalled again Tuesday night.

"We're just not going to be able to move forward at this point," David Nebel of Waterford Real Estate Developers said. "I think it will be a while before we can get back to you with anything."

The 200,000-square-foot shopping center is proposed for the northeast corner of Route 47 and Galena Boulevard, where the land already has been annexed in to the village and zoned.

Four main issues, which developers said are very serious, stand in the way of drafting a development ordinance to be approved by the board. Most board members, however, supported staff decisions over the requests of the developers.

"If we want full access ... then that's the way it's going to be," Trustee Bob Bohler said of the village's desire to connect the pre-existing Castle Bank and Phillips 66 station to the new development with no strings attached. "This is our community, we're the village court, we're making the decisions for the residents. It's not the other way around."

Jim Hornecker, real estate manager for Jewel-Osco, said providing any access to Castle Bank makes that property an outlot of the development, but some board members were unhappy with that assessment.

Trustees Mari Johnson and Thomas Renk said the easement between the properties should be penciled in for future development if it is warranted.

Also debated was whether the village should offer an incentive agreement to help offset extraordinary costs of development.

Tracy Kasson, an attorney representing the developers, said much off-site work would need to be done, including widening Galena Boulevard and putting left and right turn lanes on Park Avenue and Route 47, among other things.

The majority of board members were unwilling to offer a sales tax abatement as of Tuesday night for various reasons, including the slow pace of the project, negative negotiations and the possibility of deterring future grocery stores.

"I'm just looking for more assurances," Johnson said. "I don't want it perceived that the village doesn't want development, because that's not true. We have tried to cooperate, and I feel we have been strung along."

The remaining two issues were held pending further research and attorney review.

Direction was given to staff and developers to attempt future negotiations and eventually bring the project to the board for approval, although it is unclear when the next meeting will be.

The Jewel itself would be approximately 63,000 square feet, leaving plenty of square footage for inline shops and a 16,000-square-foot, freestanding shopping center.

Community Development Director Scott Buening said the project would be very beneficial for the village, adding, "It provides a market we don't have."

Sugar Grove doesn't have a grocery store right now, the nearest one being in Yorkville or the west side of Aurora. Buening said some residents even go to Batavia to shop.

"I just want everyone to try to keep an open mind about the bigger picture — to get the first, the largest, the biggest retail development in Sugar Grove," Nebel said. "We are very excited about the opportunity to come here, but it's going to be a long-term process."



AL CAPONE'S

6-16-04 Chronicle County releases draft 2030 plan

Document will update county's 2020 plan

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Kane County on Tuesday released the draft copy of the 2030 Land Resource Management Plan.

Planning director Sam Santell said the document will be mailed to municipal officials, plan commissions, townships, libraries and the farm bureau. "It will be the focus of an extensive public review process," Santell said.

The document updates the county's 2020 plan, and is designed to accommodate the 750,000 residents who are expected to live in the county in 2030.

The purpose of the draft is to solicit public comment. Three public forums have been scheduled in the north, central and south parts of the county. Santell said a formal public hearing on the plan will be scheduled before the plan is formally adopted next year.

The county's 2020 plan, adopted in 1995, has been generally accepted by governments, the development community and the public. The philosophies expressed in the 2030 plan reflect those in the previous plan.

The philosophies split the county into three vertical sec-

2030 plan forums

- 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 29, Dundee Middle School, 37W450 Route 72, West Dundee.
- 7 p.m. Tuesday, July 13, Geneva High School, 416 McKinley, Geneva.
- 7 p.m. Wednesday, July 14, Waubonssee Community College, Bodie Hall, Room 147, Sugar Grove.

To accommodate 750,000 residents, the plan shows the urban corridor and critical growth area moving to the west. The biggest changes between the 2020 and 2030 plans is the inclusion of the villages of Hampshire, Elburn and Sugar Grove into the critical growth area, to reflect the growth that officials expect in those areas.

The renaissance of the urban corridor calls for downtown revitalization, neighborhood preservation, redevelopment and infill development.

The critical growth area will be refined as the urban corridor moves west and the smaller villages begin to annex land.

The plan recommitts to keeping at least 50 percent of the county's land in agriculture, Santell said.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Panel endorses subdivision on urban Valley View land

By PATRICK WALDRON
Daily Herald Staff Writer

After a year of negotiations, a consensus has been reached on a proposed 168-unit subdivision in Valley View that could improve sewer and water conditions for the area. Whitmore Place won recommendation from the Kane County board's development committee, the village of Wayne and county planning officials. The plan for the 40 acres in St. Charles Township first went

before the development committee in April 2003 but was put on hold while developer L.K. LLC worked out conflicts with Wayne.

"This has been worked over by an awful lot of people," said development director Philip Bus of the project on Route 25 between Seminary Road and Courier Avenue. The plan calls for a new water tower to be installed at the developer's expense. The water tower would improve water pressure in nearby Skyline

Estates, Anderson Elementary School and other residential areas.

Bus called the plan an example of solid development within the so-called urban corridor in the eastern third of the county. Bus said he would like to see more projects like Whitmore, which put new homes on empty land in urban areas, rather than proposals to put sprawling developments on empty farmland to the west.

Wayne officials came to the same conclusion after adding

See **VALLEY VIEW** on PAGE 10

some conditions of their own. Wayne requires no more than 20 percent of the townhouses to be renter-occupied and requires an elaborate landscape buffer between the property and Route 25. "This area has always been problematic," said Carol Schoengart, an intergovernmental liaison working with Wayne. "There are problems that need to be solved. This is something that is helpful."

Still, some on the committee

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Valley View: 168 residences planned

Continued from Page 1

felt the project was putting too many homes in too small an area.

"I did not anticipate it would be this dense," said Paul Greviske, an Aurora Democrat and one of two committee members voting against the project.

The plan calls for 40 single-family homes each on a 10,000-square-foot lot and another 128 townhouses on the balance of the property, roughly 22 acres. It breaks down to about four residences per acre, LK partner Peter Lappin said. The recommendation now

6-16-04 Daily Herald

Corron Farm may get grant money

BY PATRICK WALDRON

Daily Herald Staff Writer

A small, two-story 19th century house on the Corron Farm in Campton Township needs a coat of paint and some other touch-ups, and Kane County's community development block grant program is poised to make that happen.

But at least one county board member thinks the \$28,592 block grant would be of greater use for neighborhood upkeep in the more urban areas of the county rather than spent at an old dairy farm now owned by the township.

"I don't see community development block grant money

being used for anything but tearing that building down," said Gerald Jones, an Aurora Democrat. "What makes it so unique to spend money to save it."

Jones questioned why the money, received from the federal government through the grant program, would be used to restore a building built in the 1870s that is not now, nor really ever has been, a residence.

The grant program's administrators, Campton Township officials and ultimately the county board's development committee disagreed with Jones' opinion, saying the Corron Farm would be an appropriate and important place to spend the money.

"Restoration is an acceptable activity," said Scott Berger, the grant program's manager. "This is a historic property."

The building is known as the hired man's house and is one of the oldest structures on the farm. It was added earlier this year to the list of the county's historic places. County officials said the house had never been retrofitted with plumbing or electricity and can provide a glimpse into the past.

Board member Barb Wojnicki, who represents most of Campton Township, said the plan is to turn it all into a museum.

The proposal now goes to the executive committee for further consideration.

6-16-04 Daily Herald

Elburn board studies future projects

BY DENISE PERRY

DONAVIN

Daily Herald Correspondent

As Elburn village officials looked ahead to upcoming projects for the next year or more, Metra-related tasks topped the list.

During this week's committee of the whole meeting, Village Administrator Dave Morrison noted that the plans for the Metra station have not been finalized. Metra committed to building a warming shelter and the village is working with a developer to expand that to a

station.

Also, the parking lot design and engineering need to be completed.

Metra service is expected to start by December 2005.

Police Chief Jim Linane said his staff is already looking at video surveillance and other methods to control crime at the Metra lot.

"We will see an increase in incidents, with break-ins and end-of-the-line scenarios — people who don't get off the train in Geneva when they are supposed to" he said. "We'll need a plan."

Linane also mentioned that his department is starting bike patrols on weekends and during festivals.

The police department is hoping to upgrade its phone system and Internet capability. They have no voice mail, Linane said.

Other proposals were mentioned by Linane, Morrison and Art Sanchez, public works director.

"There is no monetary amount connected to any of these items," Village President Jim Willey said, referring to all of the projects mentioned.

6-16-04 Daily Herald

Elburn development advances

Village's planning commission signs off on permit, some engineering for commercial site

BY DENISE PERRY
DONAVIN
Daily Herald Correspondent

The commercial development at the northeast corner of routes 47 and 38 is several steps closer to reality with the approval by the Elburn planning commission at Tuesday's meeting of the special use permit for the bank and final engineering for most of the site.

LaSalle Bank and Walgreens are the two main tenants planned for the 6 acres of corner retail space. Three smaller buildings ranging from 4,000 to 7,000 square feet will be leased to restaurants and other retailers.

Claremont Holdings Inc. plans to retain ownership of the property.

"Never give up a corner," said one of the owners, George Maniatis. The primary owner is George Tavolars. Both were present at the meeting, but most of the description and defense of the design was left to architect Peter Theodore.

Theodore was also the architect called in by officials with Jewel food stores, one of which is planned for the southwest

corner of the same intersection, said Elburn village administrator Dave Morrison.

Theodore has created a town market square surrounded by the retail buildings with terra cotta pots and brick pavers unlike anything else in Elburn with a center seating area.

"It is imperative to maintain the specialness and sanctity of this community," said Theodore. "Your guidelines are extensive, but we exceeded them."

The architecture has brick on all sides and mansard roofs. There's not a trash bin in sight, because they are hidden by brick walls with cedar or wrought iron doors. Pedestrian walkways and 20 more parking spaces than the 112 required are also part of the plan.

"Is this an environmentally friendly design?" asked plan commissioner Sue Filek.

"The square is sand-laid brick in a herringbone pattern so water will drain through it," Theodore said. "There is a vast majority of green space and landscaping. It is much more pervious than 99 percent of centers around here."

Residents came in worried

but left reassured. Questions about noise, odors from restaurants, and lighting were answered by both the architect and village administrator.

Morrison said, "According to our zoning ordinance smoke, dust, glare, noise or odors cannot leave their property."

Because IDOT may not approve an entry from Route 47, traffic concerns were raised by neighbor John Dillon about

trucks on Walker and First streets.

Morrison said the village is in the midst of a general traffic study and a curb cut on Route 47 is one of the recommendations.

Final engineering on all but the Walgreens site was approved by the commissioners so the Prairie Valley North Commercial Center can proceed to the village board for approval.

F3

b-16-04 Daily Herald

Neighbors don't want to play ball with new fields

BY LISA SMITH

Daily Herald Staff Writer

Arguing that it didn't fit the surrounding pastoral setting, two dozen Campton Township residents on Tuesday spoke out against a plan to develop 17 ball fields on a 120-acre farm site.

Neighbors of the proposed Poynor Park in northwest Campton Township raised concerns about traffic, noise and light pollution during the often contentious public hearing.

"I think all of us moved out here for the open space," said resident Devin Moose.

Designed by Elmhurst-based Conservation Design Forum, the concept plan depicts five lighted softball fields, four lighted baseball fields, two baseball warm-up areas, four practice soccer fields, three practice football fields and one lighted football game field.

The project also includes a picnic pavilion, two playground areas, 5,500 feet of sidewalks, another 5,500 feet of limestone

trails, 45 acres of naturalized open space and a building for restrooms, concessions and storage.

Two entrances would be built off Swanberg Road, with parking proposed for about 500 vehicles inside the park.

Township Supervisor Neal Anderson said the township has received numerous requests for such "active recreation" sites.

"These facilities are extremely important to our community," said resident Joe Garbarski. "We're helping our kids in the community, giving them a place to play."

But most residents at the hearing said they wanted to see more green space in the park.

The site, between Silver Glen and Empire Roads just west of Swanberg Road, was acquired last year and funded by a 2001 open space referendum.

Anderson said the township is pursuing a \$400,000 state grant to create the park. He said officials do not have a timetable in place for developing the site.

6-16-04 Daily Herald

Jewel-Osco plan on hold in Sugar Grove

BY KIMBRIELL KELLY

Daily Herald Staff Writer

A proposal to build a Jewel-Osco in Sugar Grove is on hold after the board Tuesday night refused to approve a \$1 million incentive agreement.

Trustees hoped that in offering the incentive, Jewel officials would commit to a timetable to build after years of discussions and no construction. Still, Jewel officials said they could not say in what year they might start the project.

"We have tried to cooperate up to a certain point," Trustee Mari Johnson said. "But I feel like we've been strung along."

Jewel officials have been working on plans for three

years, though the project is not a done deal. The village has been discussing a possible economic incentive for the last year.

"The incentive isn't there for Jewel to build now," Village President P. Sean Michels said of the proposed offer.

The board, however, didn't rule out the possibility of an incentive and directed village staff members to continue negotiations with the property owner, Waterford Real Estate Development Inc., and Albertson's, which owns Jewel. The board said a future agreement could include an incentive for the first grocery retailer larger

See **DEAL** on **PAGE 9**

Deal: Trustee says incentive isn't needed

Continued from Page 1

than 60,000 square feet to build at the site, or could include a timetable for Jewel.

If built, the 61,000-square-foot Jewel-Osco would be the largest retail store in Sugar Grove. It would be one of two anchors in a planned, 200,000-square-foot shopping center at the southeast corner of Route 47 and E. Park Avenue.

Some trustees said there's no need to offer a grocer an incentive in an area ripe with consumers.

"In the last 18 months Sugar Grove has become the place to be. If Albertson's doesn't see that, it can't be our responsibility," Trustee Kevin M. Geary said. "Grocery stores don't get incentives. By the nature of their business, they have to be there because that's where their consumers are."

The agreement, proposed by Albertson's, would have required the village to rebate Jewel the lesser of \$1 million or seven years of sales tax revenue the village collects from the store. The agreement would have begun a year after approval.

Jewel officials say they need the money to complete \$3.2 million in off-site public improvements, such as adding turn lanes.

6/16/04 *Beacon News*

Money no barrier for mammograms in Kane

BEACON NEWS STAFF

Recent reports from the Washington, D.C.-based Institute of Medicine note that only about 60 percent of women old enough to receive mammograms are getting them. Lack of insurance is cited as the main obstacle.

For women living in Kane County, however, that shouldn't pose a problem, according to Kay Catlin and Sharon Lough, two St. Charles women who founded Two Women For Women in 1999 to provide free mammograms for uninsured and underinsured women. "Between our program and one run by Visiting Nurse Association of Fox Valley, which is funded through an Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention Grant, no woman should have to go without an annual mammogram because of lack of funds or insurance coverage," said Catlin.

"If they need a mammogram and meet certain minimal requirements, we can help them get one free of charge at a variety of different participating providers located throughout the county,"

To be eligible, women must reside in Kane County, be uninsured or underinsured and otherwise unable to afford a mammogram. They must also be 40 years of age or older and be able to name a doctor to whom the radiology report can be sent.

The group currently has provider agreements with Randallwood Radiology in St. Charles, Deinor-Community Hospital in Geneva, Provena-St. Joseph's Hospital in Elgin, and Fox Valley Family Physicians (current patients only), also in Geneva. To participate in the Two Women, For Women program, eligible women must call ahead for a required service voucher: (630)377-3883 or (630)584-5376.

For more information, call (630) 892-4355.

"Our goal was to fill the proverbial cracks in the system for women wanting — but unable to afford — mammograms," said Catlin. "In conjunction with the VNA program, we feel we've done that and now hope even more women will take advantage of the opportunity."



The readers are restless

Is that a group of irate townspeople carrying torches and pitchforks?

Mr. Page, I am surprised you did not get your facts straight, or you were given misinformation. I take issue with your somehow age-prejudiced belittling descriptions of the ladies of Carroll Tower. You, Mr. Page, have it all wrong. These educated and polite and proper people do not "hiss nasty words." How can you in all good conscience print what is not true?

It's a gift.

Next, a broadband trifecta:

(Forwarded e-mail)

Subject: Tri-Cities Broadband issue

Who is this Mr. Page? He must be a total idiot. Is he just some resident who likes to mouth off? There's one in every crowd I guess. My suggestion is to either invite Mr. Page to a meeting, or to just ignore him.

Bill,

Your repetition of the same anti-FTTH (fiber to the home) talking points are tiresome and sometimes lack fact. You have no proof that the technology leap won't work. And I happen to believe that the folks that are leading this drive are sophisticated enough to do the job right.

Bill,

We'd love the chance to sit and talk with you about the new broadband proposal.

So, I take it you're holding back on the "Ignore the total idiot" option for now? I don't know...being "just some resident who likes to mouth off," I'm probably not sophisticated enough for the likes of all of you.

I got a real jolt from the recent article about Randall Road and the enforcement of the new speed limit. The funniest part was the lamentation by some official wondering how the county can get out the word and educate those drivers who speed on the S-curve. I guess all of the signs saying "Speed Limit 50 mph" isn't enough. By the way, what do you think of the county's inane plan to narrow the lanes and put in the 9-inch concrete divider?

A narrow lane in Kane near Crane is plain inane. (And thank you so much for that set up...)

I heard a rumor that a group of

dissatisfied GOP leaders is trying to draft an opponent to State Sen. Chris Lauzen in the 2006 elections. Any truth to this rumor? And if there is, whom are we talking about?

The rumors are true... as far they go. It's no secret many Republican biggies would love to see Chris replaced with someone they could actually work with, but no serious names have surfaced. Interestingly, if someone does step up to take on Lauzen, they'll be well financed by these same heavyweights. I'd do it, but the requirements for elected office are too much for me — especially the mandatory rubber chicken dinners.

In reading the news reports about the retirement of District 303's Superintendent Fran Kostel, I have only seen quotes from school board members. I know the parents and students who went through the whole mold horror have a lot different view of Kostel than some of his friends on the board. Why didn't you also print what his non-fans had to say?

Because this is a family newspaper, not cable TV.

Please stop writing about the situation at Corron Elementary School. You obviously do not have any compassion for the parents and children caught in this terrible problem. The reason there's a lawsuit is because it's the only way the parents have to prevent their children from having to go to school with children who aren't from their neighborhood.

And this is a problem how?

I can't believe you are taking the side of the people in Maple Park who were busted in a gambling sting. Gambling is a terrible activity and causes a lot of pain and anguish.

Tell me about it. I had the Lakers in six.

Your arrogance is unbelievable! How can you continue to write such stupid things about the broadband project? You are a half-wit!

"Half-wit?" What happened to "total idiot?" And is this a promotion or demotion?

• Bill Page lives in St. Charles and writes about local issues on Tuesday and Thursday. Calls and e-mails answered at (630) 584-0809 or wpage@mediawerks.org.

6-17-04 *Daily Herald*

Jury: Shooting was justified

BY TONA KUNZ

Daily Herald Staff Writer

A 63-year-old man gunned down by a Geneva police officer last month had more than twice the legal limit of alcohol in his system and was a "time bomb," according to officials.

"There was no doubt in my mind he got out of his car to stick that officer," said Illinois State Police Master Sgt. Kris Melvin, who investigated the shooting in the parking lot of the Citgo Gas Station on Route 38 and Crissey Avenue in Geneva.

A Kane County coroner's jury Wednesday agreed the officer likely was in danger and deemed the shooting of Dimas Santiago as a justifiable homicide.

Geneva police and the state police have ruled the same. Kane County State's Attorney Meg Gorecki will release a final report on the shooting today that will include information from the coroner's inquest.

Coroner Chuck West said that when Santiago was pulled over May 15 by a 29-year-old veteran Geneva police officer, he had a blood alcohol content of .218. Melvin said Santiago had driven from his home in Rockford, where he got drunk and in a fight with his wife earlier in the day.

Santiago had friends in the area and a stepdaughter living a few blocks away, but police said it was never clear if he was on his way to see them. What was clear after talking with friends and family, Melvin said, was that Santiago was a "time bomb."

The officer who pulled Santiago over told Melvin that he saw Santiago start to reach for his wallet and then change his mind and grab a knife. The 8-inch kitchen steak knife was left over from a trip with his wife the day before to cut willow branches, Melvin said.

The presence of the knife likely would have violated his probation for two prior DUIs

and a third he was facing in DeKalb County along with charges of possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of marijuana. Santiago might have worried about going back to prison, a place he'd already been on attempted murder charges, Melvin speculated.

Whatever he was thinking, when the officer leaned in the passenger's-side window of the car and asked for Santiago's license, he decided to grab a knife instead and jumped out of the car, said Melvin.

The officer said he backed up, trying to put space between the two of them and yelling for Santiago to put the knife down. Santiago kept approaching, silently.

The officer tripped, and by the time he rose up and pulled his gun, Santiago had cleared much of the distance between them, Melvin said. The officer fired two shots piercing Santiago's abdomen and his heart. He dropped to the pavement on Route 38 without a pulse.

Irvin puts emphasis on reusing old assets

■ Economic development:

Aurora mayoral candidate wants to employ eminent domain for redevelopment

By **Dave Parro**
STAFF WRITER

AURORA — Standing in front of the abandoned Chicago Northern Railroad depot on South Broadway, mayoral candidate Richard Irvin Wednesday outlined his economic development plan to revitalize the city.

Using the dilapidated 1923 structure and the surrounding 17 acres as an example of wasted opportunities, Irvin promised to aggressively pursue development of the site and similar properties throughout Aurora. The old train station was abandoned in 1986 when the downtown commuter station was moved to the Aurora Transportation Center on North Broadway.

"We've got to use properties like this spread through the city that are remnants of Aurora's greatness," Irvin said.



Aurora mayoral hopeful Richard Irvin outlines his development plans

♦ Turn to **IRVIN**, A2

IRVIN

From Page A1

One of the main elements of Irvin's plan, and perhaps the most crucial to its success, is forcing owners who sit on vacant property to develop or sell the eyesores. If they won't comply, the city should take the property through eminent domain and turn it over to a developer who is willing to invest in it, he said.

Redeveloping downtown is crucial to the city's success because it will bring big businesses to Aurora, Irvin said. A full-time city lobbyist who travels to Springfield and Washington would bring back resources to aid the process, he said.

"We've got to actually go out there and force things to happen," Irvin said. "We can't just sit on our hands."

Eminent domain is commonly used for taking property for public uses, such as roads, but confiscating land for private development could be more difficult to prove to a judge as a higher and better public use.

As Aurora learned during the failed RiverCity project, which included the train depot, taking land for redevelopment isn't easy. The city sought quick-take power from the state to acquire some of the property for the \$450 million project, but the General Assembly would not grant the authority.

City spokesman Bill Catching said Aurora has rarely used eminent domain because the cases can be tied up in court for years, and prospective developers don't stick around that long. Quick-take authority allows a city to immediately take possession of property, but it has to be approved by lawmakers

on a case-by-case basis.

While the city has the power to use eminent domain, land acquisition is still costly.

"Typically, we have shied away from using eminent domain," Catching said.

Environmental attorney Jeff Jeep, who Irvin contacted because he has helped other cities redevelop old manufacturing sites, said Aurora does have the ability to use eminent domain to take contaminated property such as the train depot land. The law holds previous owners responsible for cleanup if the property is held by the city, he said.

Irvin's opponents in the spring 2005 city election — Tom Weisner, Bill Wyatt and Angel Hernandez — each have listed economic development as a top priority in their campaigns, but none of them have specifically mentioned using eminent domain as a main tool. Wyatt said Wednesday that condemnation isn't always effective and should be used only as a last resort.

"Before you start throwing words like that around, you have to sit down with the owner and negotiate," Wyatt said.

Irvin, a private attorney, said it wouldn't be easy to take property, but the city has to at least attempt it in some cases for the sake of redevelopment.

"The reality is that we have to try it," Irvin said. "We can't just let it sit there and let it be blighted."

Other elements of Irvin's economic development plan announced Wednesday include forming an economic development advisory committee, forming an education committee for work force development and building better relationships with county and other nearby governments.

6-17-04 Beacon News

Public offers solutions to traffic woes

By Matt Hanley
STAFF WRITER

YORKVILLE — At two public meetings Wednesday, nearly everyone agreed there is a need for relief from dangerously crowded roads — especially Route 47.

But what to do to solve the traffic problem was about as clear as the spaghetti-like designs drawn on the maps around the room.

"We're really trying to engage the public in this process," said Jason Poppen, a spokesman for the consulting group assisting the Illinois Department of Transportation. "And we're grateful for (their) input."

About 25 city representatives and landowners sat at three tables with maps of the Kendall-Will-Kane area. Each person was invited to draw on the map their ideas of what would work best to relieve the traffic problems that have plagued the area.

Participants sketched suggestions that ranged from widening existing roads and building Yorkville and Aurora bypasses to leaving room between highway lanes for a train track.

All the ideas will be sent to IDOT engineers, who will create lists of possibilities, and present those condensed versions to the public in the next few months.

The hope is that those options will address four needs identified by IDOT: Improve regional mobility; address needs of local roads; improve access to jobs outside the region; and improve safety.

Prairie Parkway

The Prairie Parkway, linking Interstate 88 in central Kane County with Interstate 80 near Minooka in Grundy County, is the state's major road proposal for the area.

While the highway is still considered a proposal, not a plan, IDOT this week purchased the first of more than 160 plots that lie in the road's proposed corridor, running through western Kane and Kendall counties down to Minooka.

According to project manager Rick Powell, the state bought one .9-acre piece of property north of the Fox River between Plano and Yorkville. Although the state is years from possibly laying down pavement, the property owners felt they couldn't build on land that

might eventually be ceded to the state.

"They probably could have built something and stayed for 10 years and never had a problem," Powell said, "but long range, they just didn't want to do anything."

Other property owners will face the same decisions as the Prairie Parkway project moves along, and Wednesday, everyone was clearly struggling with an appropriate way to balance property and transportation needs.

On his way out of the meeting, Ron Vrabel said he planned to take side roads, even though Route 47 would have been the shortest trip back to his home in rural Minooka. After attending the wake of a friend who had died in a car accident on Sunday, he just couldn't stomach the truck traffic anymore.

Vrabel reflected the attitude of many people in attendance: he didn't necessarily need a big new highway, yet he was tired of the local traffic.

"I just have to stay away from the trucks," he said. "They talk about 30-year plans — there's a problem here now that they should do something about."

North Aurora president to leave post

■ BY GARRETT ORDOWER

Daily Herald Staff Writer

North Aurora Village President Mark Ruby will not seek a third term. He has been village president since 1997 and served as a trustee for four years before that.

"I think that we've accomplished a lot," Ruby said. "I've enjoyed it and I feel like it's time to move on."

During the past year, Ruby has taken on additional responsibilities, serving as both village president and village administrator since Robert Nells was fired from that position in August.

"The village expects to name a new administrator today.

Ruby's service with the village started as the negotiations for

the North Aurora Auto Mall were winding down in 1994.

Some other major accomplishments include wrangling with the Illinois Department of Transportation to get the intersection of routes 25 and 56 rebuilt and negotiating boundary agreements with Batavia, Aurora and Sugar Grove.

The Aurora boundary agreement proved particularly prickly, involving a land swap for the Sullivan Road bridge a many other issues.

The village has also shored up its bookkeeping under Ruby's watch, earning audits in the top one percent of the nation for the past several years.

The village has also dictated its desires to developers rather than the other way around,

making sure massive developments like Tanner Trails brought controlled growth to the village, Ruby said. At the same time, the village has maintained a diverse array of housing.

Recently, the village has made progress in attracting commercial developments to the village, including a Woodman's grocery store.

Ruby has also represented the mayors of Kane County on the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission. He told the village board about his decision several weeks ago. So far, no one has officially announced their candidacy for mayor. Ruby has not ruled out an endorsement, depending on who seeks the office.

Residents 6-17-04 Chronicle unable to speak on water park

SUGAR GROVE — More than 30 residents attended a village meeting Wednesday, some to contest and some to hear more about a possible water park.

Talk of the project was not scheduled for discussion by the planning commission, as no formal petitions have been filed by the perspective developers.

"There's nothing pending before the village, and there's nothing before us on it, so it's kind of a moot question at this point," planning commission Chairman Irv Ochsenschlager said.

Most, if not all, of the attendees of the meeting were residents of Windsor Point subdivision, which sits in close proximity to the prospective location for the park — the southwest corner of Route 56 and Galena Boulevard.

Craig Hauser and Al Markus said yellow fliers of an unknown source were placed on their doors saying the issue would be discussed at the meeting. Both went to oppose the water park, saying that attracting 300,000 people annually and even further crowding Routes 47 and 56 and Galena Boulevard were very unattractive side effects of the proposal.

Officials allowed residents to ask a few questions at the end of the meeting.

No public hearings will be held until developers have made an official water park proposal.

— *Kane County Chronicle*

6/17/04 Daily Herald

Power line plan about out of steam

BY PATRICK WALDRON

Daily Herald Staff Writer

The Randall Road power line proposal sits only one bureaucratic step away from becoming a memory.

Judges at the Illinois Commerce Commission have recommended throwing out St. Charles officials' challenge to ComEd's desire to thwart its own Randall Road power line plan first brought to the commission in December 2002.

If granted by the full utility oversight panel sometime in July, the so-called power tower proposal once touted by ComEd as the best and only way to bring much-needed power to the Fox Valley will be gone for good.

"The proposed order supports ComEd's position and we are optimistic that the ICC

will bring closure to this issue," ComEd spokeswoman Meg Amato said.

As the last real holdout keeping the dying proposal alive, St. Charles now says it won't get in the way.

"It's time to just move on," Mayor Sue Klinkhamer said.

Any responses challenging the latest recommendation are due by July 9. A date for the full commission's final judgment hasn't been set.

The proposal to string 138,000-volt power lines on 80- to 120-foot-tall poles along Randall Road between South Elgin and North Aurora evolved after years of study and negotiation between ComEd and local wholesale power buyers St. Charles and Batavia.

The demise of the proposal, in the face of an

avalanche of political and public opposition, has taken nearly as long.

In February, ComEd decided to spike the Randall Road proposal in favor of upgrading and expanding its system of existing 34,000-volt power lines.

Using new technology that allows for more efficient transmission of power, the utility giant said the power towers no longer are the least costly or best option for the Fox Valley.

That change in direction by ComEd came a year after the company, under mounting political pressure, put a halt to the project's public approval process.

To build a power line like the one proposed for Randall Road, the company was required to get permission from the ICC.

Get busted in the city and your suburb will know

BY ROBERT SANCHEZ
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Suburbanites driving to Chicago in search of drugs now can be guaranteed one thing: Their hometown cops will know if they get caught. Chicago Police Superintendent Philip Cline said the department has started sending letters to suburban police chiefs every time someone from their communities is arrested trying to score drugs in the city.

"The drug addict that's coming

into Chicago to buy dope is the burglar or thief that's living in your suburb," Cline said. "So we share that information with them (suburban departments)."

Cline's comments came during Wednesday's Chicago and Heroin Symposium in Isle. The one-day conference, organized by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, brought national and local leaders together to discuss Chicago's heroin problem and what can be done to combat it.

Chicago now has the dubious distinction of being the country's heroin abuse capital. Statistics

show the city leads the nation in numerous categories of heroin abuse, including heroin-related emergency room visits and suspects testing positive for opiates, officials said.

One example: 26 percent of men arrested in Chicago during 2002 had opiates in their systems at the time of their arrests, authorities said.

"We are a transportation hub," said Richard Sanders, special agent in charge of the DEA's Chicago field division.

"It's not only an inner-city

problem," Sanders said. "We have youth from the suburbs coming into the West Side of Chicago to purchase (drugs)." Cline said he believes the city is moving in the right direction in its battle against drugs. "But you got to remember, there's still neighborhoods where parents are afraid to let their kids out in front of their house because they're afraid they are going to get caught in the crossfire of gangs that are protecting their drug territory," he said.

"Until we can erase all of that, it's not going to be successful."

said. "We understand that. We just need help in getting more people to do it more rapidly."

Cline said he believes the city White House drug czar John Walters said the key to fighting the drug problem is for every one, from federal authorities to drug prevention experts, to work together.

"The issue is not to chase this around," Walters said. "The issue is to squeeze it and make it small."

"We have to squeeze on both the supply and demand sides," he said.

6-17-04 Chronicle North Aurora names new village administrator

Aurora native expected to start in early to mid-July

By ERIC SCHELKOPF
Kane County Chronicle

NORTH AURORA — Sue McLoughlin is coming home to Kane County to become the village's new administrator.

McLaughlin, 39, on Wednesday re-

signed from her post in Byron, where

she had been the city administrator

side of Aurora and is a 1983 graduate of West Aurora High School. The area has seen tremendous growth and development since then, which McLaughlin said will be one of her challenges.

"You want to make sure you get the right mix of development, as well as making sure it is in the right area," McLaughlin said. "I have a very broad planning and zoning background, which I think will help North Aurora. I call myself a problem solver. My job is to help them (village officials)."

North Aurora officials have concentrated on commercial growth.

Several major retailers have plans to build in the village, including Woodman's Food Market, Walgreens, Kohl's and Target.

Neil was criticized for not doing

enough to attract commercial growth.

McLaughlin said she looks forward to talking to North Aurora residents.

"I work well with residents. Some

people have difficulty talking to resi-

dents. I don't have too much diffi-

culty," McLaughlin said.

McLaughlin said she hopes to

move to North Aurora within a year.

She lives in Byron with her husband,

Rick, and their 4-year-old son, Yates.

6-18-04 Daily Herald

Land may go back to the dogs

*Training school
wants estate for
canine purposes*

BY PATRICK WALDRON

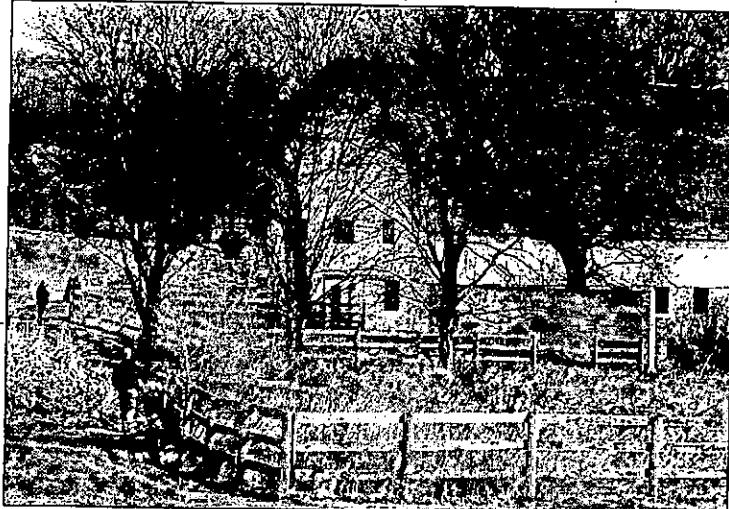
Daily Herald Staff Writer

For decades, Emily Schweitzer considered it a way of life on her Dundee Township estate to pamper her cherished Irish setters, so much so that they even had their own air-conditioned dog kennel.

Since her death in September 2001, the Kane County forest district-owned estate, once alive with the sounds of dogs barking, has been quiet. But of late, a howling has been heard — to tear down the historic buildings the dogs used to run around.

But now, it seems, the Schweitzer property could again echo with canines under a proposal brought forward by an Elgin dog training club seeking to take over at least part of the 160-acre forest preserve as its new teaching center.

"This was her dream, to have a dog training operation on her property," Kathy Reiland, speaking for Car-Dun-Al Obedience



DAVE TONGE/DAILY HERALD

Dogs could soon return to the Schweitzer property under a proposal from Car-Dun-Al Obedience Dog Training Club Inc. to lease the property's barn from the Kane County Forest Preserve District as the club's new training center.

Dog Training Club Inc., told the forest commission's utilization committee in making her proposal this week.

Adding to that, it's just about exactly what the forest district was looking for, though it may not save every piece of the Schweitzer estate.

"I welcome this enthusiastically," said forest district commissioner Dan Walter, a South Elgin Republican. "The location is perfect."

For months the forest district has been poring over an inventory of its more than 300 buildings on the district's 12,000 acres. Many of those buildings have been eyed for demolition, including Schweitzer's old home, the kennel and the barn now sought by Car-Dun-Al, to save money on long-term maintenance costs.

Historical groups and some forest commissioners have objected to a number of pro-

posed demolitions, chiefly the Schweitzer buildings.

Reiland said the Car-Dun-Al proposal includes the group sinking \$100,000 into rehabbing the barn and possibly adding onto it. The barn then would serve as home base for the club, which handles about 500 dogs a year and is now based at the Simpson Electric Co. building in Elgin.

Reiland said the group has no interest in Schweitzer's old home and did not know how they would use the kennels.

Forest district Commissioner Barb Wojnicki, a St. Charles Republican, had asked if the club would be willing to use the house for offices, but Reiland said that wouldn't be needed.

Car-Dun-Al is interested in a long-term lease, perhaps 30 years, to guarantee a presence there for years to come.

The concept has had some wondering if the Schweitzer forest preserve would become a massive dog park. That question remains unanswered, as do many other specifics.

Commissioner Jan Carlson, chairman of the utilization committee, asked Car-Dun-Al to work with the forest district staff members to come up with a detailed, written request to be presented later this summer.

6-18-64 Daily Herald State's attorney rules shooting was justified

BY TONA KUNZ
Daily Herald Staff Writer

The Kane County state's attorney's review of a fatal shooting by a Geneva police officer found the killing justified.

The findings released Thursday are the final report on the actions of Officer Daniel Yates, a 5½ year veteran of the Geneva Police Department. Yates, 29, shot and killed Dimas Santiago, 63, on May 15 during a traffic stop on Route 38. Officials ruled Yates had no choice but to shoot Santiago, who came at him with an 8-inch kitchen knife.

Kane County State's Attorney Meg Gorecki called Yates' behavior heroic because he initially tried to get away from

Santiago and talk him into putting the knife down. When that failed, he shot Santiago.

Officer Yates put himself in jeopardy when he retreated onto a busy highway in the dark hoping to get away from the attacker," Gorecki said. "The actions of Officer Yates saved not only his own life, but quite possibly the lives of innocent bystanders who may have been harmed by Mr. Santiago."

Officials considered a witness' account of the incident, along with the officers' and Santiago's past when reviewing the shooting. The Rockford man was convicted of manslaughter in Cook County in 1963 and of involuntary manslaughter in DuPage County in 1978.

Assistant State's Attorney Bob Berlin. The delay in issuing the report was mainly because officials needed toxicology results showing Santiago's blood alcohol level at 2.18 and a ruling from the coroner's inquest jury, Gorecki said. The jury ruled the Santiago death a justifiable homicide Wednesday.

• Staff Writer Garrett Ordower contributed to this report.

manslaughter and attempted murder in DuPage County in 1978.

Officer Yates was out on bail for DUI and possession of drug paraphernalia charges in DeKalb County when Yates pulled him over. "This is the end of it as far as we are concerned," said First Assistant State's Attorney Bob Berlin.

The delay in issuing the report was mainly because officials needed toxicology results showing Santiago's blood alcohol level at 2.18 and a ruling from the coroner's inquest jury, Gorecki said. The jury ruled the Santiago death a justifiable homicide Wednesday.

• Staff Writer Garrett Ordower contributed to this report.

6-18-04 Daily Herald North Aurora names new administrator

BY GARRETT ORDOWER
Daily Herald Staff Writer

After nearly a year of searching, North Aurora has found its new village administrator in a city of about 3,000 southwest of Rockford.

Sue McLaughlin, 39, will leave the Rock River Valley town of Byron to begin her job as village administrator on July 1. Her contract runs through December 2005. Village officials would not release her salary.

The village has been searching for a new administrator since firing Rob Neils in August, although she expects to live in North Aurora before becoming involved in the community.

citing dissatisfaction with his communication skills and a lack of commercial development under his watch.

Contract negotiations with two other candidates fell through earlier this year and a search found McLaughlin. "She's the kind of person that will relate well to people," Village President Mark Ruby said. "She received her master's degree in public administration from Northern Illinois University in 1999 and worked as a school graduate closer to home as director of planning and zoning for Winnebago County before becoming involved in the community.

"She seems to be very qualified and helped push a still pending "anti-monotony" ordinance aimed at eliminating "cookie-cutter" subdivisions.

In coming to North Aurora, she inherits a number of ongoing issues from the effort to become involved in the community.

Administrator of Byron last year. During her time in Byron, she helped to create a tax increment financing district for the downtown area, worked as an ambassador for the Byron Chamber of Commerce and

Community Park. She also revamped a zoning code that was nearly 50 years old and helped push a still pending "anti-monotony" ordinance aimed at eliminating "cookie-cutter" subdivisions.

For McLaughlin, the position will bring the West Aurora High School graduate closer to home as director of planning and zoning for Winnebago County before becoming involved in the community.

"She seems to be very qualified and experienced, very enthusiastic," Berman said. "She has an outgoing personality and she is interested in being involved in the community."

release the Route 31 corridor to the need for a new village hall and police station. The village also has been working on an aggressive street repair program and wants to attract more retail outlets to the village.

Most of the challenges they face are in growth and development, which has been one of my chief babies with my planning and development background," McLaughlin said.

"I hope to make development occur in the best way possible."

The village board voted unanimously to hire McLaughlin at Monday's meeting, but did not

Gorecki: Shooting was justified

6-18-04 Chronicle
Geneva police officer
won't face criminal charges

By PAUL ROCK
Kane County Chronicle

ST. CHARLES — A police officer was justified in firing the gun that killed a knife-wielding Rockford man last month, Kane County prosecutors said Thursday. Kane County State's Attorney Meg Gorecki said her office will not pursue criminal charges against Geneva Officer Daniel Yates in the May 15 shooting of Dimas Santiago, 63.

Gorecki said she considered several factors, including the circumstances of the traffic stop, Santiago's criminal history and re-

ports from the Kane County Coroner's Office and Illinois State Police.

Her decision also was based on interviews with Geneva police officers, she said.

The state police and the coroner's office had ruled before Gorecki's announcement that the shooting was justified.

Geneva Police Lt. Joe Frega said the announcement was no surprise.

See SHOOTING, page 2

A closer look

- What happened: Geneva Police Lt. Joe Frega describes what happened on May 15. [Page 2A](#)

- Our View: Officer Daniel Yates acted appropriately in a life-or-death situation. [Page 8A](#)

Shooting: Actions described as 'heroic'

Continued from page 1

The incident is thought to be the first fatal shooting by a Geneva police officer in the department's history.

Yates, 29, an officer with the department for 5½ years, was placed on administrative duty for five days and took a week of vacation after the shooting, but returned to patrol work May 30, Frega said.

Yates was not on duty Thursday and could not be reached for comment.

"It's anticlimactic," Frega said of Gorecki's announcement. "It's as it should be. It was clear from beginning to end, but it's always good to hear it. It did not come as a shock or surprise."

Gorecki described Yates' work in the incident as "heroic."

"Officer Yates put himself in jeopardy when he retreated onto a busy state highway in the dark, hoping to get away from the attacker," Gorecki said in a statement. "The actions of Officer Yates saved not only his

life but quite possibly the lives of innocent bystanders who may have been harmed by Mr. Santiago."

Frega said Yates followed correct department procedure and did take steps to avoid shooting Santiago.

"The officer was clearly justified in shooting the man when he attacked with the knife," Frega said. "(Yates) chose to retreat, and Santiago took the opportunity to continue. The officer could have shot him immediately but retreated to create more distance."

Geneva Mayor Kevin Burns said he was happy with Gorecki's decision.

"We're extremely pleased," Burns said. "Our officer, under extremely stressful circumstances, carried out his duties in a professional, responsible and justified manner. We felt very confident that our officer acted in the way he was supposed to."

Burns said Gorecki's announcement also should remove doubts about whether the shooting was necessary.

"It laid to rest any alternative opinions on the matter," Burns said.

Santiago had an extensive criminal record dating back more than 40 years, Gorecki said.

- In 1963, he was convicted in Cook County of manslaughter and sentenced to five years probation and 90 days in the Cook County Jail.

- In 1965, he was sentenced to one to 10 years in prison for probation violation.

- In 1978, he was convicted in DuPage County of involuntary manslaughter, attempted murder and aggravated battery.

- In 1984, he was paroled from the East Moline Correctional Center, a minimum-security facility. He was formally discharged from the prison system in August 1987, state records show.

- In 2003, he was convicted of drunken driving.

- In March, he was arrested in DeKalb County and charged with drunken driving, possession of marijuana and possession of drug paraphernalia.

State's gambling receipts fall short

By Mary Massingale
Copley News Service

SPRINGFIELD — With less than two weeks left in the fiscal year, gambling revenues for the state are bringing in about half of what the governor's budget office originally predicted.

But a spokeswoman for the budget office said officials downsized their prediction a few months ago.

"We revised our estimates to \$100 million," said Becky Carroll.

An October statement shows the budget office decreased its original estimate to \$182 million, while the annual budget book issued in mid-February shows a further

originally projected an additional \$190 million from the increased graduated tax rate that tops out at 70 percent. The higher taxes roll back to a maximum rate of 50 percent on June 30, 2005, or when an inactive 10th riverboat license becomes operational.

According to reports from the Illinois Gaming Board, the first 11 months of higher taxes on the casinos approved last year have brought the state an additional \$83 million, when compared to the first 11 months of the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2003.

Gov. Rod Blagojevich's budget office

marked down to \$85 million. Neither reduction was publicized. However, when the state reaped \$135 million more than estimated for a tax amnesty program, the governor's office in early December issued a press release with a headline announcing the accomplishment. Ditto a few weeks later, when an extra \$10 million was garnered from the same program.

In July 2003, the state hiked the tax rates on all riverboat casinos. In the most significant change, the tax rate on all casino revenue in excess of \$250 million was raised to 70 percent from 50 percent, heading the

Admissions have fallen dramatically since the state increased taxes on the casinos last year.

Casino	May '03	May '04
Empress, Joliet	222,700	143,236
Harran's, Joliet	255,403	160,612
Hollywood, Aurora	203,418	125,043
Grand Vic, Elgin	241,821	250,894
Statewide	1,604,989	1,308,185

Source: Illinois Gaming Board

money-making casinos — specifically the Grand Victoria in Elgin, Harran's in Joliet and Hollywood Casino-Aurora — would lose money on every dollar above \$250 million that they brought in.

A spokesman for the Illinois Casino Gaming Association said his estimates of state revenue from the new taxes were on target all along. "I predicted last year that they wouldn't

get half of what they were projecting," said Tom Swolk. "But I'm just concerned the downward trend is going to continue into next fiscal year."

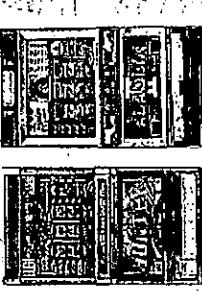
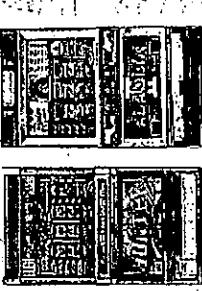
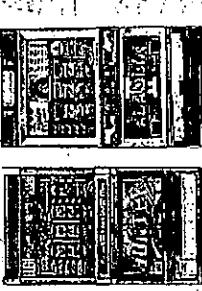
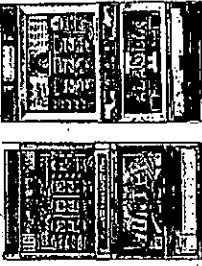
His concerns may be valid. Adjusted gross receipts for the first 11 months of the current fiscal year total \$278.6 million less — or 16.9 percent — than for the same period last year, and admissions from the gaming tax — which ranges from \$5 for the larger boats to \$3 for the smaller, Rock Island boat — plus a share of the gaming tax equal to 5 percent of the adjusted gross receipts. The state then receives the rest of the admission and gaming taxes.

For the first 11 months of the current fiscal year, the local share totals \$9.3 million, or 9.4 percent — less than for the same time frame last year.

GAMBLING

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❖ Turn to GAMBLING, A2



Mayor of N. Aurora won't seek re-election

6-18-04 *Beacon news*

By Brian Shields
SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

NORTH AURORA — Village President Mark Ruby has decided not to run for re-election in the spring of 2005, as he is satisfied with the job he's done in moving the village and its board forward.

Along that same theme, North Aurora officially announced the hiring of Aurora native Susan McLaughlin as the new village administrator. McLaughlin will start July 1, which ends a 10-month run where Ruby and Buildings Commissioner DeWayne Williams did much of the administrator's work after

Robert Nelis Sr. was fired last August.

Ruby has been on the Village Board since 1993 and president since 1997. He said he looks forward to devoting more time to his two young grandchildren and his wife, Marilyn, who will retire from teaching in the West Aurora School District at around the same time Ruby leaves office.

"I still enjoy it, but I will be happy to relinquish the position and to organize my time on my own terms more than I've been able to do now," said Ruby, who also noted the additional stress of also serving as administrator.

"I think (the village) is in good shape, not that there aren't challenging things to do yet."

In November 2002, Ruby told the Beacon News he wanted to run for a third term as village president be-



Mark Ruby has been village president since 1997.

♦ Turn to **MAYOR, A2**

MAYOR

From Page A1

cause "there's a lot of projects I would like to see through before I leave office."

Ruby credits the good relationship he has with Board members as the mechanism that brought many important issues forward within the last four years. He said housing and business development and improvements in the village largely have happened because trustees have not been afraid to ask for what was best for the village.

Ongoing projects involving the Tanner Trails and Woodland Lakes subdivisions, correction of the bottleneck at Routes 56 and 25, and safety and aesthetic improvements along Route 31 also are sources of pride for Ruby.

"Boundary agreements are in place, we have good relationships with our neighbors, a lot of commercial stuff is coming, and we have good control of our finances," Ruby summarized.

"I think we have accomplished a lot, and I say we, because I think it really has been a team effort."

Ruby said he knows of several people who possibly would run for village

president in 2005, but he declined to name any because they have not made their intentions public.

McLaughlin, 39, who graduated from West Aurora High School, is currently the administrator/comptroller for the village of Byron. She will be introduced by the Village Board at the July 12 board meeting.

McLaughlin also has experience with the city of Rockford and Winnebago County government. She had a master's degree in public administration from Northern Illinois University and an undergraduate degree from Illinois State University.

"We're looking forward to her coming here, and I think she will have a strong stake in the community," Ruby said. "This is home territory for her, and I think we feel we've done well in the search, though it took a while."

Two strong candidates were considered in April, but the deals fell through, and the village had to start the new search, which produced McLaughlin.

Ruby said he will visit village offices from time to time, but he won't become the equivalent of an honorary employee in his retirement.

"You don't want to do that too much if you can help it," Ruby said, "but it's a habit that will be a little hard to break."

6-18-04 Beacon news No human West Nile cases confirmed yet

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The number of confirmed cases of West Nile virus in Illinois birds has increased more than fivefold since June 1, but it's difficult to predict whether the state will see a major outbreak of the mosquito-borne illness this summer. So far, 27 West Nile cases have been confirmed in birds in Illinois, 13 mosquito pools

have tested positive for the virus, and 17 of the state's 102 counties are affected, said Tom Schafer, a spokesman for the Department of Public Health.

No humans in Illinois have been infected so far this year, Schafer said Thursday. There were 54 human cases and one death last year.

Nationally, 14 human cases have

been reported this year to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention — 10 in Arizona and one each in California, New Mexico, South Dakota and Wyoming.

West Nile has been found in birds or mosquito pools in Cook, Kane, Winnebago, Boone, McHenry, Lake, Ogle, Stephenson and Rock Island counties.

6-18-04 Daily Herald High school smoking rate drops to 1 in 5 students

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Smoking among U.S. high school students has fallen to about one in five — the lowest level in at least a generation — in a drop-off the government attributes to anti-smoking campaigns and higher cigarette taxes.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported Thursday that nearly 22 percent of high school students said they were smokers in 2003. That is down from more than 36 percent in 1997, and the lowest level since the CDC began keeping track in 1975.

The drop was so dramatic that for the first time in more than two decades, the percentage of high school smokers is lower than the percentage of adult smokers. That was seen as an especially encouraging sign by the government.

In fact, the CDC study found that anti-tobacco efforts have been successful across the board, from curbing the

number of first-time smokers to reducing the ranks of the heaviest smokers.

"We are reaching all the youth. If we can stop youth from becoming addicted smokers, eventually we can stop this epidemic," said Terry Pechanek, associate director of science for the CDC's Office on Smoking and Health. "We're making the progress we've been working toward for the last 40 years."

Dr. John Banzhaf III, who helped mastermind lawsuits against the tobacco industry, said the study illustrates "probably the most dramatic progress which has been made in terms of any public health problem, at least in recent memory."



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Centers for Disease Control

Kane treasurer says tax system 'in jeopardy'

b-10-04 Chronicle

Computer woes could delay next year's tax bills until August

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Kane County's tax system is in deep trouble and immediately must be fixed, a top official said Wednesday.

Without new computers, the current system could break down and set

the entire tax collection process back by months, Treasurer David Rickett said. "The entire tax extension process is in jeopardy next year, and I don't say that lightly," Rickett said. "I'm not sure we can process anything next year."

The computer system in the as-

essment office does not communi-

cate with the computer system in the tax extension office, a problem that caused bills to be sent to taxpayers three weeks late this year. The same scenario could occur next year, except that the first bills might not be in the mail until July or August, Rickett said. "The amount of money owed by the taxpayers would not be increased or decreased by the delay. The problem would affect taxing districts that rely on quick disbursements of the tax revenue by the county," Rickett said.

A delay in fund disbursement

likely would mean taxing bodies such

as school districts, park districts and library districts would have to borrow money at taxpayer expense to when information tries to migrate from one database to the other.

The county col-

lected \$71.8 million in property taxes this year. Next year that figure is ex-

pected to climb to \$750 million.

"The county really needs to ad-

dress this," Supervisor of Assessments



Sallie Huber said. The township assessors and Huber's office uses one system, while the tax extension office is on a different system. The problem is caused by expense to when information tries to migrate from one database to the other.

"In my opinion, you have to have one database. I think everybody agrees on that," said Roger Fahnestock, director of the county's Information Technologies Department.

Taxes

Continued from page 1

each property owner pays. The treasurer serves as the collection point for the taxes.

"My name is on that tax bill, but I have no control," Rickett said.

Rahnestock and Rickett said software and hardware to fix the problem would cost between \$300,000 and \$400,000.

Officials have seen the problem coming but have not developed a "clear solution. One of the issues revolves around the three offices and their separate functions in the tax cycle.

The county assessor's office

collects the property assessments from the 16 townships and certifies the property val-

ues. The tax extension office takes that assessment information and applies it to the tax levies filed with the county clerk by the various govern-

ment bodies, then calculates the tax rates and how much

each property owner pays. The exemption problem would be like (comparing) a hand grenade to a nuclear war," Rickett said predicting what could happen next year. "I just want a working tax system. It doesn't matter how it gets there."

Kane moves ahead with 2030 plan for land use

6-10-04 Chicago
By William Presecky
Tribune staff reporter

Kane County is within six months of adopting a revised comprehensive land-use plan that would test whether at least 50 percent of farmland and open space can be maintained.

The County Board's Development Committee set in motion this week the final review and adoption phase of a plan update that was begun more than a year ago.

The committee authorized release of the last of four reports on the land-resource management concept, which sets the stage for the 2030 plan to be adopted by the County Board in October.

The biggest challenges for the county are how and where to accommodate an estimated 300,000 new residents by 2030 while maintaining the county's character.

For planning purposes, the proposed land-use strategy divides Kane into three areas: an urban corridor that straddles the Fox River; a rural, agricultural area along its western border; and a critical growth area in between the two, where Kane makes the transition from city to country.

The report issued this week, "Refinement: Challenges for the Critical Growth Area," identifies three challenges: water supply, housing and transportation.

The three preceding reports focused on the draft plan's basic strategy, on its recommitment to preserve farmland and agriculture, and on refocusing attention on infill development in Kane's historic urban corridor.

The county's ability to achieve the aims of the draft 2030 plan, namely to maintain a combination of 50 percent farmland and open space while accommodating unprecedented growth, depends on the response to development pressure, said Phillip Bus, executive director of the Kane County Development Department.

The premise of the draft plan, is that roughly half of Kane's population growth should occur in the urban corridor.

It also presumes that municipal decision-makers in the critical growth area will respond to the plan's challenge to reduce traffic congestion, provide more diverse housing and help maintain a sustainable water supply, Bus said.

According to the report, 90 percent or more of the population growth projected for Kane will occur as a result of municipal planning, zoning and annexation decisions.

Bus said the county Regional Planning Commission will present the plan for public review this summer.

taxation system 'in peril'

□ **Computer woes increase:**
Official says next year's collections could be late

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Growing computer problems could put tax collecting "in great peril" next year, Kane County Treasurer David Rickert said Wednesday.

Rickert, who is charged with printing and mailing the tax bills and collecting the money, said tax collections will be late next year if the County Board does not act soon to develop a better computer system for his office and the county clerk's office.

He told the board's Finance and Budget Committee that it could take an estimated \$300,000 to \$400,000 to put together a system that will coordinate with the property assessment system in the supervisor of assessments office.

"The entire tax cycle is in serious jeopardy next year," Rickert said. "It's going to take action by the board to force this."

The problem will be delayed tax bills, which will result in delayed tax collections. And that will mean delayed disbursements to county taxing bodies which depend on taxes for their budgets, possibly forcing schools, park districts and other agencies to borrow money, Rickert said.

If the tax cycle works as it's supposed to, he said he would get the information needed for tax bills by April 1. This year, he got the information

TAXES

From Page A1

on May 7, with three business days to get the bills out.

He said if the situation continues as it did this year, tax bills might not get mailed next year until July or August, which would mean taxes would not be collected until into the fall. Money is not disbursed until at least 30 days after the taxes are collected.

"School districts, villages ... all those that get property tax money do not have that kind of reserve," he said, adding that it could force agencies to borrow money short term to meet their budgets, which would cost taxpayers.

The problem is the system used by the supervisor of assessments office and by assessors in the county's townships does not mesh well with the computer system in the county clerk's and treasurer's offices.

When data collected by the assessors is sent to the county clerk, it can be garbled and have missing items and incorrect items, Rickert said. Time is spent trying to correct the information.

The tension was so great to get this year's tax cycle finished that two key employees in the county clerk's tax extension office resigned.

Rickert's comments Wednesday

were not new. He and County Clerk Jack Cunningham and Supervisor of Assessments Sallie Huber have been telling County Board committees this was a problem as far back as January.

Those three officers, as well as the information technology office, have been meeting to try to come up with a solution.

Rickert and Cunningham at one point had plans to bring in computer firms to install a system, but at the time, Information Technology Director Roger Fahnestock said the county could solve the situation itself. Fahnestock said Wednesday he now agrees an outside system is needed to coordinate the supervisor of assessments office with the county clerk and the treasurer.

Rickert said timing is critical; the offices need a system within a month. He also told the Finance Committee he'll ask for about \$15,000 to fix some tax bill problems from this year. He estimated his office will have to send out about 15,000 adjusted bills to people who did not get the exemptions they were supposed to get.

The problem, he said, was related to the same computer situation causing delays in the system. Still, he added, these problems will pale in comparison to what could happen next year if a new system is not installed.

"This would be like a hand grenade in a nuclear war," he said.

Treasurer: System on verge of collapse

By PATRICK WALDRON
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Kane County's tax collection system could fall apart by next year if immediate changes aren't enacted to streamline the piecemeal computer systems that now run the show, county Treasurer David Rickett said Wednesday.

The call for a revamp of the

two main systems used by the county's supervisor of tax assessments and the county tax extension division to assemble, calculate and print the 155,000 tax bills isn't new. But during this tax cycle, the criticism has reached a fever pitch with mistakes on tax bills

small problems."

"It's a serious problem, and we are already starting to see

small problems."

The call for a revamp of the

in thousands of mailboxes and drum beat of attention from board members — and residents — upset that their bills did not include the proper exemptions.

It all means the discussion

can't be put off any longer, Rick-

ett said.

Problems with the generation

of tax bills for county property

owners this year have received a

some properties were justifiably dropped, thousands were mistakenly cut out, county leaders say. The incorrect bills have placed pressure on Sallie Huber, the county's supervisor of tax extension, to resign. It all means the discussion can't be put off any longer, Rick- ett said.

Problems with the generation

of tax bills for county property

owners this year have received a

Continued from Page 1

As it exists now, too many errors are being created during the process, including incorrect addresses, lost exemptions or even inaccurate bills.

Fahnestock and Rickett believe that problem could be fixed, or at least improved, with the installation of a more compatible system to be used in the assessors office. For her part, Huber said the setup she has now — called the Visual Property Assessment Management System — works wonderfully for the duties her office is required to perform.

When it comes to the rest of the process, Huber said, she's trying to help in anyway she can.

"I have been in several meetings and there are several issues that have left," Huber said. "We are doing everything we can from our side to assist the county clerk and the county collector (treasurer) to develop p their end of the system."

Rickett wants action within a

month and plans to bring his

plea to the county board's public

service committee June 21.

Tax: Pressure put on assessor

assessments, for the last month. Huber said Wednesday the mistakes were an administrative error in her office and have nothing to do with the doomsday predictions Rickett is making.

Rickett acknowledges that this year's exemption problems were not necessarily related to the computer compatibility problem he's talking about, but he does stress how it's all connected. The exemption mishap is a sign of things to come, he said.

"It's like a hand grenade in a

nuclear war," he said.

Rickett has called on Roger Fahnestock, the county's information technologies director, to oversee meetings between the treasurer, the county clerk and the supervisor of assessments.

Fahnestock said the goal is to find a way to get the assessor's computer system, and the information in it, to transfer efficiently to the computer system used by the clerk's tax extension office.

6-10-04

Chronicle



Bill
Page

The real price paid

To the surprise of absolutely no one in District 303, a small group of parents have filed a lawsuit over the situation at Corron Elementary School. According to the parents' suit, their children's constitutional rights have been violated, apparently because they have to ride a bus to school. Whatever your views on the lawsuit, one thing is for certain: the cost to both sides is going to be steep.

If the suit is immediately dismissed, it will cost the district around \$10,000, but if it goes to court the low estimate I'm hearing for attorney's fees is between \$60,000 and \$100,000. That's a lot of money for a district that's spent the last few years climbing out of a financial hole — enough to hire a couple of teachers, fund the elementary art and music program or replace dozens of old computers. However, whatever the cost is to the school district, it probably won't be as high as that paid by the children at the center of this dispute.

While no parent wants to put their child on a bus when there's a school around the corner, the reaction of some of these Corron parents has been way over the top. To hear them tell it, a bus ride to another school means not only is their child's entire education in jeopardy, but they will be friendless and alone as a result. Sorry, but when I hear their overblown fears, I can't escape the feeling they are setting up a self-fulfilling prophecy — and setting up their kids to be miserable.

Parents from all over the area, not just District 303, have for years bundled their children on to buses for a sometimes lengthy ride to school. It's not what most would think of as ideal; it's just the way things are. The important aspect to keep in mind is that whatever the situation, kids adjust to it if they have the support of their parents.

If instead of support all they hear is how horrible and unfair things are, then

kids will act accordingly.

Congratulations to the St. Charles East and Batavia baseball teams! Both have made it to the quarterfinals of the state tournament, being held this weekend at Elfstrom Stadium.

Having one team from the area make it this far would be terrific, but two is unbelievable. Of course, in all our hearts we know what the ideal final game match-up would be ... we just might differ on what we want as the final score.

For me, I'd love it if the Bulldogs and Saints met for the title; were tied after regulation, and then the game was called because of a rogue monsoon.

On Tuesday, Kane County lost one of its best when Undersheriff Dan Schindlbeck died after a courageous battle against cancer.

He was a good cop, of course, and he had the respect of all of the law enforcement agencies and personnel he ever had dealings with. However, of all the phrases one could use to describe Dan Schindlbeck, the one that come to mind quickest is the simplest: He was one of the good guys.

Dan was one of those men who people instinctively liked. He had a great sense of humor, and just being around him made the day better. He will be sorely missed by all of us who had the honor to know him.

Visitation will be held from 1 to 8 p.m. Friday at Dieterle Funeral Home, 1120 S. Broadway, Montgomery.

On Saturday, Dan will lie in repose from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. at Holy Cross Catholic Church, 2300 Main St., Batavia. Funeral Mass will begin at 10:30 followed by burial at Mount Olivet Cemetery in Aurora.

• Bill Page lives in St. Charles and writes about local issues on Tuesday and Thursday. He can be reached at (630) 584-0809 wpage@mediawerks.org.

Assessments supervisor defends her job record

■ Alleges 'character assassination:' Sallie Huber says she will seek another term

By Steve Lord
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA - Kane County Supervisor of Assessments Sallie Huber said Wednesday she will seek reappointment to her job with the new County Board chairman in the fall.

"I would sit down and discuss this with her," Huber said, obviously assuming the new chairman will be Karen McConaughay, R-St.

Charles, who is the GOP candidate facing Democratic candidate Tom Meadath of St. Charles in the November election. "I love my job. I enjoy serving the public."

Huber's comments came a day after County Board Chairman Mike McCoy, R-Aurora, said he would not re-appoint Huber to the job in which she has served since 1990.

He said her office is inefficient and has trouble dealing with the public. He also said Huber has problems dealing with her employees.

Huber's term as supervisor of assessments ran out in 2002. McCoy did not reappoint her, but he did not appoint anyone new either, which means she continues to serve.

McCoy said he did not appoint someone else because of changes being made in tax cycle coordination between the supervisor of assessments, the county clerk and the treasurer. He said officials wanted continuity in those changes.

Now, McCoy said he would not reappoint Huber, or anyone else, with only about five months left in his term. He said he would leave major reappointments to the new board chairman.

Huber Wednesday called McCoy's comments about her office and her job performance "character assassination."

"He has never been over here to see my staff work," she said. "To

indict all of them like that is unfair."

McCoy made his comments after Aurora Township Assessor Davis Offutt came to Tuesday's County Board meeting to praise Huber and criticize those who have criticized her job performance.

Offutt, the president of Kane County Assessor's Association, said he spoke on behalf of all the assessors in the county.

McCoy said that was ironic, because as recently as two years ago, assessors were criticizing Huber's performance. He produced two letters from the Assessor's Association, one from 1998 and the other from 2002, which criticized her.

Huber said Wednesday that she has answered the comments in those letters in the past.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

6-10-04

Beacon news

Bring on the rain

The Aurora Memorial Day parade was a microcosm of all that's good and great about our city. Like any parade, ours was filled with patriotic scenes, good music, older Americans who know of the sacrifices of generations past, and younger ones just beginning to understand what it means to be free.

But Mother Nature was the real star of the show, and provided the symbolic backdrop to the day's events.

Just as in real life, some of us walked in the sunshine, some walked in the rain. Some of us saw the smiling faces of contentment, some of us saw the pained expressions of people bracing against the elements.

Some of us took pleasure in finishing the walk in comfort; others found strength in the

struggle to persevere. Just when you thought the storm had passed, another was right behind.

The amazing thing was this: Along the route, many people refused to leave. Instead, they stayed and they cheered. As members of our campaign team slogged through the streets, the people along the route were truly inspirational and 100-per-cent Aurora.

Shared common experiences like this are what really bring a community together.

I would like to thank my volunteers, the Kane County Eagles Cheerleaders and coaches, the wonderful crowd and, especially, Mother Nature for an experience we will not soon forget.

Bill Wyatt
Aurora Mayoral Candidate

Assessors' 6-11-04 Daily support for Herald supervisor questioned

The flap over tax exemptions for Kane County property owners took a personal turn this week when the county's supervisor of assessments, Sallie Huber, received a glowing endorsement from the township assessors but criticism from the county's chairman.

"We believe the recent articles in the paper and criticism within the county may be motivated by interest not consistent with service to the taxpayers of Kane County," said Aurora Township Assessor Davis Offutt.

In recent weeks, Huber has taken a beating from several county board members upset that hundreds and maybe thousands of property owners had a \$3,500 exemption left off their tax bills.

The board members have demanded Huber's office personally contact the roughly 27,000 property owners dropped from the list of those eligible for the homestead exemption. She has resisted the idea, saying most of those people probably aren't eligible for the exemption.

Apparently tired of attacks against Huber, Offutt appeared before the Kane County Board Tuesday on behalf of the Kane County Assessors Association to defend the system and Huber.

That supportive speech was upstaged by Chairman Mike McCoy, who offered Offutt a sarcastic "thank you" at the end of his remarks.

"Glad to see you are behind her, considering I got a letter signed by you to fire her," McCoy said referring to a 1998 letter from the assessors outlining how Huber "embarrassed" the county at a state workshop.

Offutt stood up and said he never signed such a letter but McCoy was able to produce it and another 2002 letter critical of Huber within an hour of the



Patrick Waldron
Kane County

DAILY HERALD SECTION 5 PAGE 5

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Waldron: Undersheriff's funeral is set for Saturday

Continued from Page 1

meeting's end.

McCoy, who is no friend of Huber and said he "would never reappoint her," said he couldn't resist pointing out Offutt's contradiction and the apparent political quarrel between the assessors and the county board.

Huber's term as supervisor of assessments expired in 2002 but McCoy said he will leave it to the next board chairman to name her replacement.

Huber this week defended her office and said she "followed the law" in dealing with the exemption notices.

Advisers moving on: Wednesday was the last day on the job for county finance director Cheryl Pattelli after eight years of being the government's chief financial officer.

Pattelli, of Sugar Grove, has accepted a job with the DuPage County Water Commission. She attended her last county board finance committee meeting this week and told the members it was a pleasure to work for Kane County.

"I have really enjoyed working here," she said.

She summed up her work by telling the committee that the county's reserves have increased by \$20 million since she came on.

"The financial condition of the county is outstanding right now," Pattelli said.

Also this week, Bob Sandner announced that he would be leaving his post as the legal adviser to the county board.

Sandner, of St. Charles, works for the civil division of the Kane County State's Attorney's office and for the last 10 years has handled the day-to-day legal matters of the county board and board chairman.

He is leaving for private practice and will join St. Charles attorney Timothy Dwyer.

Final salute: Law enforcement officers from across the county are expected to attend the services for Kane County Undersheriff Dan Schindlbeck, who died of cancer this week at age 60.

Visitation will be from 1 to 8 p.m. today at Dieterle Memorial Home, 1120 S. Broadway Ave., Montgomery. Visitation will continue at 9:30 a.m. Saturday at Holy Cross Catholic Church, 2300 Main St., Batavia, until the funeral Mass at 10:30 a.m. Burial will be at noon at Mount Olivet Catholic Cemetery, 278 Ashland Ave., Aurora.

• *Patrick Waldron covers Kane County government and politics. To contact him, call (630) 587-8632 or send e-mail to pwaldron@dailyherald.com.*

See WALDRON on PAGE 5

Police chief can keep patrolling

6-11-04 Daily
BY TONA KUNZ
Daily Herald Staff Writer

A Kane County judge said the Maple Park police chief nabbed in a gambling sting can continue to carry a gun and patrol the streets of the rural town west of Elburn.

Defense attorney Terry Ekl of Clarendon Hills requested that Chief Chester Morris of Elburn be able to keep his service revolver even though the conditions of his bail prohibit carrying a weapon.

Against the objections of the Illinois attorney general's office, which requested Morris be put on desk duty, Kane County Judge Donald Hudson consented Thursday to let Morris keep his gun and patrol while

he awaits trial.

Morris is the only full-time officer in the town of 765 people about 10 miles west of Elburn.

"It would appear to be illogical not to allow him to function as chief of police," Hudson said.

Morris, expected to plead not guilty in the next couple of weeks, faces a combined trial with 12 other people picked up May 28 in a 15-month investigation of gambling at DJ's Tavern, 221 Main St. in Maple Park.

The other 12 pleaded not guilty Thursday to charges of gambling, paying out money for gambling or running the gambling operation. Morris' plea was delayed because of a paperwork problem, Ekl said.

So far the 12 have agreed to a jury trial, and Assistant Attorney

General Abigail Abraham said she plans to put them all before the same jury.

The tavern's owner, David L. Weeks, of 612 Victoria Lane in Yorkville, has hired Attorney Thomas Breen of Chicago to represent him and six of his employees. Abraham said that might cause some conflicts when the trial starts.

Abraham contends Weeks ran the gambling operation that brought in an estimated \$700,000 a year in profit from nine video poker machines and an undisclosed amount of money from a sports betting operation, spinning wheel and dice game. His bartenders are charged with paying out cash to

See PATROL on PAGE 13

Patrol: 12 suspects plead not guilty

Continued from Page 1

undercover police placing bets, according to the indictments.

Ekl said conspiracy trials tend to take a long time so he doubts there will a quick resolution. The prominent DuPage County lawyer would know. He was a defense attorney in the trial of DuPage County prosecutors and police dubbed the "DuPage Seven."

All 13 in the case are charged with felony conspiracy, but the tavern owner and manager and Maple Park village president and police chief face additional charges. All of the charges are felonies each with a possible penalty of probation or up to 5 years in prison and a \$25,000 fine.

Bartenders indicted on one

count of conspiracy to commit gambling and one count of conspiracy to commit keeping a gambling place are: Amy Davies, of 2408 Juniper St. in Cortland; Susan Duewel, 204 Green St., P.O. Box 142, Maple Park; Kelly N. Ferdinand, 19552 Airport Road, Maple Park; Keith Nickels, 107 Main St., Maple Park; Reed T. Overhaug, 215 Center St., Maple Park; Mary E. Richardson, 507 Maple Ave., Maple Park; Hope Baker, 1037 N. 13th St., DeKalb; Sheila Bode, 314 Moody St., St. Charles; and Jennifer Roelfsema, 714 Willow St., P.O. Box 46, Maple Park.

Tavern owner Weeks and tavern manager Michael J. Faber, of 613 E. Main St., P.O. Box 106 in Maple Park, face the added charge of syndicated gambling.

Village President Mark T. Delaney, of 507 Maple Ave., faces the additional charges of four counts of official misconduct because of the nine times state police allege they found him gambling or watching gambling in the tavern. Maple Park Chief Morris also is charged with three counts of official misconduct because of the four times state police said he saw gambling and did nothing to stop it.

Ekl said charging Morris with a felony for not making an arrest makes no sense.

"It is about the most ludicrous theory of prosecution I have ever seen in 30 years," he said. "Under their theory, if a police officer stops a speeder and lets them go he is guilty of official misconduct."



6-11-04 Beacon News

Waste Management cleared in benzene dumping at landfill

By Steve Lord

STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Attorneys investigating the improper dumping of benzene-laced soil at Settler's Hill landfill here said Thursday it was not the fault of landfill operators.

Michael Childress and Tim Dwyer, attorneys hired by Kane County to investigate the Feb. 5, 6 and 9 dumping, said in a memo presented to the County Board's Executive Committee "it does not appear that Waste Management Inc. or R.W. Collins (waste transporter) have any culpability with respect to the improper disposal."

But Childress and Dwyer told the board they have just begun to scratch the surface of their investigation. At this time, they told board members they have more questions than answers.

"Right now, we know Shell has a

protocol, and we know that protocol wasn't followed," Dwyer said. "The question is, why?"

The County Board hired Dwyer and Childress to look further into the situation that took place on those three days in early February. Shell Oil apparently mistakenly dumped about 200 tons of soil contaminated with benzene at Settler's Hill and did not notify Settler's Hill officials until Feb. 19.

Landfill officials had mixed the soil with about 9,000 tons of other garbage by the time they found out about the dumping. They have taken steps to isolate it and mitigate the possible damage and leaking.

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency has said it would be all right for Settler's Hill officials to keep the contaminated soil if it is sealed properly. That also was the conclusion of Earth Tech Inc., an environmental engineering firm hired by the

county, which said more environmental damage might be done at this point by digging up the buried soil.

But county officials still want to know what Shell's responsibility in the matter is. Board Chairman Mike McCoy, R-Aurora, said Thursday board members want to know if they can recover costs incurred by dealing with the situation from Shell and make sure there was no fraud on Shell's part. McCoy also said county officials want to send a message.

"We want to show everyone we take this seriously," McCoy said. "You don't do this at Settler's Hill."

Childress said the attorneys have interviews set up with Shell employees involved with the situation. "At this point, Shell is cooperating," Childress said. "Something spurred them to take contaminated soils to Settler's Hill. We don't know what yet."

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MET

6-11-04 Chicago Tribune

Kane cleared in landfill probe

County broke no rules, state says

By William Presecky
Tribune staff reporter

The state Environmental Protection Agency has concluded that no regulations were violated by Kane County or its landfill operator in the February dumping of contaminated soil at Settler's Hill Landfill in Geneva.

Notification that the Illinois EPA had accepted the county's explanation of how the 12 truck-loads of tainted soil were allowed into Settler's Hill as well as its compliance plan to leave the soil in place and to safeguard against any reoccurrence was announced Thursday.

Along with the county and landfill operator Waste Management of Illinois Inc., Shell Oil Pipeline Co., which transported

the benzene-laced soil to the landfill, was exonerated by the state EPA, pending "additional information . . . that would warrant a change in that decision," according to an agency letter made public by Tim Harbaugh, director of the county's Department of Environmental Management.

With the help of a consultant, Kane County has concluded that the 180 cubic yards of contaminated soil dumped improperly poses no imminent threat to health or safety. With the state EPA's action, the County Board's Executive Committee ordered Thursday that the oil company be notified of the county's intention to resume landfill operations in the area where soil was commingled with about 9,000 tons of garbage.

Meanwhile, two attorneys hired by the county to assess what civil liability Shell might have in the matter said they are

continuing to investigate, with the company's cooperation, exactly how tainted soil was sent to Kane County from a Kankakee-area pipeline facility that began having leakage problems as far back as November 1988.

"I'm not accusing anybody, but I don't have a comfort level yet [with Shell's explanation]," said County Board Chairman Mike McCoy (R-Aurora).

In addition to recovering the costs incurred by the county responding to the improper disposal and sending a firm message "to show that we take this seriously," McCoy said, "I want some kind of comfort level that this was an honest mistake."

"At this juncture, there's a boatload of information that we don't know," said attorney Timothy Dwyer of St. Charles.

Settler's Hill is on Fabyan Parkway west of Kirk Road. It is Kane's last active landfill and is scheduled to close by 2006.

6-11-04 Beacon News Traffic tie-ups expected for Schindlbeck funeral

AURORA — Such a large number of mourners are expected to attend the funeral of Kane County Undersheriff Dan Schindlbeck Saturday that county officials are advising there may be traffic tie-ups resulting from the funeral procession.

Schindlbeck, 60, died Tuesday after a long battle with cancer.

Sheriff's officials said he was so well-respected in Aurora, the county and throughout the state police community that at least 200 cars are expected in the funeral procession.

Schindlbeck was an Aurora police officer for 28 years, leaving Aurora in 1994 to become the right-hand man for Kane County Sheriff Ken Ramsey. He was past president of the Kane County Chiefs of Police, a member of the Illinois Chiefs of Police and Illinois Sheriff Association and many other organizations.

Aurora and all of the other police de-

partments in Kane County will be represented at the funeral, as will state and county police, Naperville and numerous other departments.

The funeral Mass is scheduled for 10:30 a.m. Saturday at Holy Cross Church, 2300 Main St., Batavia.

The funeral procession is expected to begin between 11:45 a.m. and noon, proceeding west from the church to Deepath Road, south on Deepath to Indian Trail in Aurora, east on Indian Trail to Route 31, south on Route 31 to Galena Boulevard, east on Galena Boulevard to Lincoln Avenue and south on Lincoln to the Mt. Olivet Cemetery at Lincoln and Ashland avenues.

Some streets around the cemetery will be closed because of the procession.

Visitation is from 1 to 8 p.m. today at the Dieterle Memorial Home, 1120 S.

Broadway, Montgomery.

6-11-04 Daily Herald Debate rages in Geneva over animal, water facilities

BY GARRETT ORDOWER
Daily Herald Staff Writer

The 5-year-old debate over a Kane County Animal Control facility spilled over to Geneva's plan commission Thursday night, as residents voiced last-minute objections to it and a water treatment plant at the same location.

Both would be situated on 40 acres at the southwest corner of Peck and Keslinger roads.

The \$25 million water treatment plant would occupy 10 acres of the site, and the animal control facility another 2½. The remainder of the site would include biking and hiking trails, detention and retention ponds, native planting and a sledding hill, Water Superintendent John Donahue said.

The treatment plant would eliminate the need for home water softening equipment.

Donahue first presented pre-

liminary plans for the facility to city officials eight months ago. Despite that, numerous residents brought new concerns to the plan commission during nearly three hours of public testimony, ranging from the chemicals that would be on the site to the height of the facility and the potential toxicity of storm water collected there.

Donahue assured residents that all federal, state and local laws would be followed with regard to the chemicals at the reverse osmosis facility, and that the storm water would be essentially what already flows to the site plus that created by the 29,000-square-foot treatment building and other paved surfaces.

"We won't make it worse," he said.

However, nearly everyone praised the barn-like design of the plant, designed to mesh with the rural area surrounding it and

its location south of Prairie Green and north of Peck Farm North.

Residents also expressed concerns about traffic at the animal control site, which could attract 50 cars a day.

In addition, the presence of a crematorium sparked questions about noise and odor, which officials said would not be an issue. Currently, one-third of the 500 dogs handled yearly by the county are killed, officials said.

The county debated the facility for four years before voting 15-10 to approve it in May 2003. Board members Karen McConaughay, Jan Carlson and Rob McConaughay were present at the hearing to voice their continued objections.

The plan commission could make a recommendation to the city council at its 7 p.m. June 24 meeting at city hall, 22 S. First St.

Thirteen in gambling sting

go to court

6-11-04 Chronicle

Next court date
either July 22
or July 23

By HEATH HIXSON
Kane County Chronicle

ST. CHARLES — Maple Park Police Chief Chester A. Morris and 12 others on Thursday pleaded innocent to charges of being involved in an illegal gambling operation.

Morris, Maple Park Village President Mark Delaney and 11 others are linked to an alleged illegal gambling operation at D.J.'s Tavern in Maple Park. The group includes the bar's owner, manager and nine bartenders.

The baker's dozen was taken into custody within the last two weeks and face charges of conspiracy to commit gambling and conspiracy to commit keeping a gambling place. A few, including Morris and Delaney, face additional charges.

The group made its first court appearances Thursday in front of Kane County Judge Donald C. Hudson. The next court date for the 13 was set for either July 22 or July 23.

After the hearing, Morris' attorney, Terry Ekl, questioned the indictment of his client, equating the charges to requiring a police officer to arrest someone.

"It's about the most ludicrous theory of prosecution I have seen in 30 years," Ekl said. "He was unaware that there was any gambling going on."

Charges came after a 13-month investigation by the Illinois State Police, Illinois Attorney General's office and the Illinois Department of Revenue into alleged illegal gambling at the tavern.

A Kane County grand jury indicted the 13 after the investigation allegedly turned up an open gambling operation that included video poker machines rigged to a cash-payout system, a bookmaking operation and other forms of illegal gambling.



Delaney



Court dates

Defendant, court date

- Chester A. Morris, Maple Park police chief, July 22
- Mark T. Delaney, Maple Park village president, July 22
- Mary E. Richardson, Maple Park, bartender, July 22
- Kelly N. Ferdinand, Maple Park, bartender, July 22
- Michael J. Faber, Maple Park, bar manager, July 23
- David L. Weeks, Yorkville, D.J.'s Tavern bar owner, July 23
- Hope Baker, DeKalb, bartender, July 23
- Sheila Bode, St. Charles, bartender, July 23
- Amy Davies, Cortland, bartender, July 23
- Susan Duewel, Maple Park, bartender, July 23
- Keith Nickels, Maple Park, bartender, July 23
- Reed T. Overhaug, Maple Park, bartender, July 23
- Jennifer Roelfsema, Maple Park, bartender, July 23

Gambling

Continued from page 1

Morris has been charged with three additional counts of official misconduct for allegedly allowing gambling to continue and not arresting those involved. Ekl said his client had been in the tavern four times in the last 13 months.

Morris' presence at the tavern is "problematic" and signified an endorsement of gam-

bling, said Abigail Abraham, an assistant attorney general who is prosecuting the case.

"His presence in the bar lends support to those who gamble because it basically sends the message that it is OK, that nobody is going to be arrested," Abraham said.

Delaney also has been charged with four additional counts of official misconduct. The tavern's owner, David L. Weeks, and manager Michael J. Faber also have been charged with one count each of syndicated gambling.

Leaders still have landfill questions

County wants
better answers from
Shell on toxic soil

BY PATRICK WALDRON

Daily Herald Staff Writer

Kane County leaders aren't satisfied with the answers they have heard so far on how 201 tons of benzene-contaminated soil from a Shell Pipeline Co. project ended up in Settler's Hill landfill in Geneva.

"At this point Shell is cooperating," said Michael Childress, a special state's attorney hired to investigate the error. "But why they started using Settler's Hill out of the blue in February is one of the questions we'd like an answer to."

The county has stopped short of threatening to take legal action but hasn't ruled out a lawsuit as officials negotiate with the oil giant for restitution to recoup financial losses brought on by the soil dump and also look for proof the company did not act fraudulently.

The soil at issue came from a pipeline project in Kankakee County, a venture that itself has been the source of several lawsuits since a gas leak there in November 1988, according to the county's investigation.

In this most recent incident, some of the soil from the site was mistakenly taken to Settler's Hill between Feb. 6 and 9. Ten days later the company reported the error to Waste Management, the landfill's operator, and Kane County, the landfill's owner.

Childress told a panel of top county board members Thursday that it is unclear how Shell discovered the mistake or why the 10 days went by. Through interviews and documents, Childress did report that Shell clearly violated its own disposal plans.

County leaders say the company has said the situation is the result of a "miscommunication," an assertion Childress and others doubt.

"While we are not prepared to conclude that Shell's response was inaccurate, we are unconvinced that a simple miscommunication and lack of diligence could be responsible for the events that have transpired," Childress said in a three-

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Continued f

Contaminated: McCoy says county won't tolerate illegal dumping

Continued from Page 1

page memo to county board members.

"Right now we have more questions than answers," Childress said.

Representatives from Shell said they are doing all they can to help the county.

"This was an honest mistake, and we are cooperating with legal representatives of the county to review this matter and get them the information they need," said Shell spokesman Shawn Frederick.

The lawyers' investigation is proceeding even after the Illinois Environmental Protection

agency closed its books on the illegal dump.

The IEPA issued violation notices to the company, Waste Management and the waste hauler earlier this year. But on May 27, the IEPA agreed with county-hired environmental experts that the material did not pose a serious danger and would not have to be removed.

Despite that, board Chairman Mike McCoy said one of the ultimate goals of the ongoing investigation is to send a message that the county won't tolerate illegal dumping of any kind at Settler's Hill. What method the county will use to guarantee that may become

clearer next month, McCoy said.

And from an operational perspective, the illegal dumping issue is on the verge of interrupting regular operations at the landfill, said Tim Harbaugh, the county's environmental management director.

Since the discovery of the soil, that section of the landfill has been closed down. Harbaugh said keeping that area undisturbed has limited the amount of garbage that can be dumped.

The county's lawyers recommended notifying Shell that the illegal dumping site will be covered with new garbage. That notification would protect any future legal action.

See CONTAMINATED on PAGE 13

Kane considers suit for illegal dumping

6-11-04 Chronicle

McCoy still wants to know how contaminated soil made it to Settler's Hill

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — A preliminary investigation into how contaminated soil illegally was dumped at Settler's Hill Landfill has uncovered more questions than answers, county lawyers said Thursday.

Two special prosecutors assigned to the investigation said it was too early to know whether

legal action against Shell Pipeline Co. of Houston is warranted. "A company like Shell is built for litigation and they're already lawyered-up," Michael Childress, a special assistant state's attorney assigned to the case, told members of the Executive Committee.

A lawsuit against Shell filed in Kankakee County over the same gasoline spill has produced docu-

ments that Kane County will study to see why the soil, contaminated by a pipeline spill in 1988, illegally found its way into Settler's Hill. Childress and Timothy Dwyer,

also appointed to the case, said they will study the documents and conduct interviews with plaintiffs of the Kankakee suit as well as the company over the next two weeks. They are expected to report back to the committee next month. Despite 'Childress' comment that Shell is "all lawyered-up," he also said: "At this point, Shell is co-operating."

See SOIL, page 2

Soil

Continued from page 1

The investigators have learned that the pipeline sprung a leak in 1988 and released 120,000 gallons of gasoline. In response, Shell excavated 16,000 cubic yards of soil in and around the spill.

"We are cooperating with the legal representatives of the county," said Shawn Fredericks, Shell Pipeline Co. spokesman.

The soil contaminated with benzene, toluene and ethylbenzene was stockpiled near the site, and some of it was shipped to Settler's Hill on Feb. 5, 6 and 9, 2004.

"Why they decided out of the blue to take it to Settler's Hill is unknown," Childress said.

Settler's Hill is not licensed

to take hazardous waste. Benzene-contaminated soil is considered hazardous. Benzene has been linked to cancer.

Kane County Board Chairman Mike McCoy said the investigation is meant to discover how the incident happened and to prevent it from happening again. The county also wants to collect money that it has spent resolving the issue.

"At this juncture, there's a boatload of information we don't know," Dwyer said.

"Right now Shell has a protocol, and we know it didn't follow it."

McCoy stopped short of saying the county will file suit against Shell.

"I would not rule it out. Shell is cooperating, but I haven't seen anything that shows this is an innocent mistake. Why did it go to Settler's Hill? That's something we want to know," McCoy said.

'It's an emotional roller coaster'



County board member Gerry Jones battled esophageal cancer

By DAN CHANZIT
Kane County Chronicle

Kane County Board member Gerry Jones suffers from acid reflux, so he always knew that he was at risk for cancer of the esophagus.

The reflux condition causes stomach liquids to back up and damage the lining of the esophagus. The constant inflammation can cause pre-cancerous cells to develop.

On Tuesday, Kane County Undersheriff Dan Schindlbeck died of complications from esophageal cancer. He was 60.

About 11,000 cases of esophageal cancer are diagnosed each year, accounting for about 1 percent of all tumors, according to the American Cancer Society.

Given the seriousness of his condition, Jones paid attention to his doctors, but the 58-year-old grandfather said he did not live in fear.

"The percentage is not very high, so (developing cancer) is nothing that you consciously think about," said Jones, who lives in Aurora. "I was getting checked, I figured, 'Why should I worry? The odds are on my side.'"

Then last May, doctors discovered a tumor. Jones was devastated.

"I panicked," he said. "I said, 'Why me? I don't want to die. I wanted to see my grandchildren grow up. You go through all this emotion.'

It has been just more than a year since Jones' cancer diagnosis, so his battle still is very fresh. He remembers the day he learned about his tumor. His doctors told him he had six

months to live unless it was removed.

The surgery involves removing portions of the stomach and esophagus and reconnecting the digestive tract and "They pull up your stomach and drag out your intestines," Jones said. "The cure is to cut."

Jones survived the difficult 15-hour surgery. Doctors installed a feeding tube, and he returned home to recover. His wife, Dolores, a nurse, stayed by his bed.

He did not need chemotherapy or radiation treatments because his tumor was contained to his esophagus. "I was very fortunate," he said.

The recovery process has been difficult, Jones said. "The doctors just cut a big chunk out of you," he said, shaking his head. "There are peaks and valleys. You're not comfortable. You're crying because you are grateful, and you are crying because you are scared. It's an emotional roller coaster."

He credits his friends and family for their support. He received prayers from people he didn't know. That, he said, made all the difference.

"Never underestimate the power of prayer," he said. "If you're religious or not, prayers are just a bunch of people wishing you the best and trying to project love. That is the kind of thing that brings tears to my eyes."

Jones said he does not feel like a cancer survivor, especially after watching his wife battle breast cancer.

County board member Gerry Jones of Aurora is a cancer survivor. He will participate in the American Cancer Society Relay For Life on June 25 in Geneva.

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Jones smiles: "I've been to the Relay For Life before, but this time it will be a little different."

Chris Binkley — Chronicle photo staff

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The event is an all-night walk around the track at Elststrom Stadium in Geneva. Teams of about 15 people raise money and pledge to keep at least

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He said he looks forward to attending the relay.

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Chris Birk — Chronicle photo, staff
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See CONTAMINATED on PAGE 13

Assessors' 6-11-04
Daily
support for Herald
supervisor
questioned

The flap over tax exemptions for Kane County property owners took a personal turn this week when the county's supervisor of assessments, Sallie Huber, received a glowing endorsement from the township assessors but criticism from the county's chairman.

"We believe the recent articles in the paper

and criticism within the county may be motivated by interest not consistent with service to the taxpayers

of Kane County," said Davis Offutt, Aurora Township Assessor.

Davis Offutt

In recent weeks, Huber has taken a beating from several county board members upset that hundreds and maybe thousands of property owners had a \$3,500 exemption left off their tax bills.

The board members have demanded Huber's office personally contact the roughly 27,000 property owners dropped from the list of those eligible for the homestead exemption. She has resisted the idea, saying most of those people probably aren't eligible for the exemption.

Apparently tired of attacks against Huber, Offutt appeared before the Kane County Board Tuesday on behalf of the Kane County Assessors Association to defend the system and Huber.

That supportive speech was upstaged by Chairman Mike McCoy, who offered Offutt a sarcastic "thank you" at the end of his remarks.

"Glad to see you are behind her, considering I got a letter signed by you to fire her," McCoy said referring to a 1998 letter from the assessors outlining how Huber "embarrassed" the county at a state workshop.

Offutt stood up and said he never signed such a letter but McCoy was able to produce it and another 2002 letter critical of Huber within an hour of the

See WALDRON on PAGE 5



Patrick Waldron
Kane County

DAILY HERALD SECTION 5 PAGE 5

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Waldron: Undersheriff's funeral is set for Saturday

Continued from Page 1

meeting's end.

McCoy, who is no friend of Huber and said he "would never reappoint her," said he couldn't resist pointing out Offutt's contradiction and the apparent political quarrel between the assessors and the county board.

Huber's term as supervisor of assessments expired in 2002 but McCoy said he will leave it to the next board chairman to name her replacement.

Huber this week defended her office and said she "followed the law" in dealing with the exemption notices.

Advisers moving on: Wednesday was the last day on the job for county finance director Cheryl Pattelli after eight years of being the government's chief financial officer.

Pattelli, of Sugar Grove, has accepted a job with the DuPage County Water Commission. She attended her last county board finance committee meeting this week and told the members it was a pleasure to work for Kane County.

"I have really enjoyed working here," she said.

She summed up her work by telling the committee that the county's reserves have increased by \$20 million since she came on.

"The financial condition of the county is outstanding right now," Pattelli said.

Also this week, Bob Sandner announced that he would be leaving his post as the legal adviser to the county board.

Sandner, of St. Charles, works for the civil division of the Kane County State's Attorney's office and for the last 10 years has handled the day-to-day legal matters of the county board and board chairman.

He is leaving for private practice and will join St. Charles attorney Timothy Dwyer.

Final salute: Law enforcement officers from across the county are expected to attend the services for Kane County Undersheriff Dan Schindlbeck, who died of cancer this week at age 60.

Visitation will be from 1 to 8 p.m. today at Dieterle Memorial Home, 1120 S. Broadway Ave., Montgomery. Visitation will continue at 9:30 a.m. Saturday at Holy Cross Catholic Church, 2300 Main St., Batavia, until the funeral Mass at 10:30 a.m. Burial will be at noon at Mount Olivet Catholic Cemetery, 278 Ashland Ave., Aurora.

• *Patrick Waldron covers Kane County government and politics. To contact him, call (630) 587-8632 or send e-mail to pwaldron@dailyherald.com.*

Police chief can keep patrolling

6-11-04 Daily
BY TONA KUNZ
Daily Herald Staff Writer

A Kane County judge said the Maple Park police chief nabbed in a gambling sting can continue to carry a gun and patrol the streets of the rural town west of Elburn.

Defense attorney Terry Ekl of Clarendon Hills requested that Chief Chester Morris of Elburn be able to keep his service revolver even though the conditions of his bail prohibit carrying a weapon.

Against the objections of the Illinois attorney general's office, which requested Morris be put on desk duty, Kane County Judge Donald Hudson consented Thursday to let Morris keep his gun and patrol while

he awaits trial.

Morris is the only full-time officer in the town of 765 people about 10 miles west of Elburn.

"It would appear to be illogical not to allow him to function as chief of police," Hudson said.

Morris, expected to plead not guilty in the next couple of weeks, faces a combined trial with 12 other people picked up May 28 in a 15-month investigation of gambling at DJ's Tavern, 221 Main St. in Maple Park.

The other 12 pleaded not guilty Thursday to charges of gambling, paying out money for gambling or running the gambling operation. Morris' plea was delayed because of a paperwork problem, Ekl said.

So far the 12 have agreed to a jury trial, and Assistant Attorney

General Abigail Abraham said she plans to put them all before the same jury.

The tavern's owner, David L. Weeks, of 612 Victoria Lane in Yorkville, has hired Attorney Thomas Breen of Chicago to represent him and six of his employees. Abraham said that might cause some conflicts when the trial starts.

Abraham contends Weeks ran the gambling operation that brought in an estimated \$700,000 a year in profit from nine video poker machines and an undisclosed amount of money from a sports betting operation, spinning wheel and dice game. His bartenders are charged with paying out cash to

See PATROL on PAGE 13

Patrol: 12 suspects plead not guilty

Continued from Page 1

undercover police placing bets, according to the indictments.

Ekl said conspiracy trials tend to take a long time so he doubts there will a quick resolution. The prominent DuPage County lawyer would know. He was a defense attorney in the trial of DuPage County prosecutors and police dubbed the "DuPage Seven."

All 13 in the case are charged with felony conspiracy, but the tavern owner and manager and Maple Park village president and police chief face additional charges. All of the charges are felonies each with a possible penalty of probation or up to 5 years in prison and a \$25,000 fine.

Bartenders indicted on one

count of conspiracy to commit gambling and one count of conspiracy to commit keeping a gambling place are: Amy Davies, of 2408 Juniper St. in Cortland; Susan Duewel, 204 Green St., P.O. Box 142, Maple Park; Kelly N. Ferdinand, 19552 Airport Road, Maple Park; Keith Nickels, 107 Main St., Maple Park; Reed T. Overhaug, 215 Center St., Maple Park; Mary E. Richardson, 507 Maple Ave., Maple Park; Hope Baker, 1037 N. 13th St., DeKalb; Sheila Bode, 314 Moody St., St. Charles; and Jennifer Roelfsema, 714 Willow St., P.O. Box 46, Maple Park.

Tavern owner Weeks and tavern manager Michael J. Faber, of 613 E. Main St., P.O. Box 106 in Maple Park, face the added charge of syndicated gambling.

Village President Mark T. Delaney, of 507 Maple Ave., faces the additional charges of four counts of official misconduct because of the nine times state police allege they found him gambling or watching gambling in the tavern. Maple Park Chief Morris also is charged with three counts of official misconduct because of the four times state police said he saw gambling and did nothing to stop it.

Ekl said charging Morris with a felony for not making an arrest makes no sense.

"It is about the most ludicrous theory of prosecution I have ever seen in 30 years," he said. "Under their theory, if a police officer stops a speeder and lets them go he is guilty of official misconduct."

6-11-04 Beacon News

Waste Management cleared in benzene dumping at landfill

By Steve Lord

STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Attorneys investigating the improper dumping of benzene-laced soil at Settler's Hill landfill here said Thursday it was not the fault of landfill operators.

Michael Childress and Tim Dwyer, attorneys hired by Kane County to investigate the Feb. 5, 6 and 9 dumping, said in a memo presented to the County Board's Executive Committee "it does not appear that Waste Management Inc. or R.W. Collins (waste transporter) have any culpability with respect to the improper disposal."

But Childress and Dwyer told the board they have just begun to scratch the surface of their investigation. At this time, they told board members they have more questions than answers.

"Right now, we know Shell has a

protocol, and we know that protocol wasn't followed," Dwyer said. "The question is, why?"

The County Board hired Dwyer and Childress to look further into the situation that took place on those three days in early February. Shell Oil apparently mistakenly dumped about 200 tons of soil contaminated with benzene at Settler's Hill and did not notify Settler's Hill officials until Feb. 19.

Landfill officials had mixed the soil with about 9,000 tons of other garbage by the time they found out about the dumping. They have taken steps to isolate it and mitigate the possible damage and leaking.

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency has said it would be all right for Settler's Hill officials to keep the contaminated soil if it is sealed properly. That also was the conclusion of Earth Tech Inc., an environmental engineering firm hired by the

county, which said more environmental damage might be done at this point by digging up the buried soil.

But county officials still want to know what Shell's responsibility in the matter is. Board Chairman Mike McCoy, R-Aurora, said Thursday board members want to know if they can recover costs incurred by dealing with the situation from Shell and make sure there was no fraud on Shell's part. McCoy also said county officials want to send a message.

"We want to show everyone we take this seriously," McCoy said. "You don't do this at Settler's Hill."

Childress said the attorneys have interviews set up with Shell employees involved with the situation. "At this point, Shell is cooperating," Childress said. "Something spurred them to take contaminated soils to Settler's Hill. We don't know what yet."

JUNE 11, 2004

FRIDAY

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6-11-04 Chicago Tribune

Kane cleared in landfill probe

County broke no rules, state says

By William Presecky
Tribune staff reporter

The state Environmental Protection Agency has concluded that no regulations were violated by Kane County or its landfill operator in the February dumping of contaminated soil at Settler's Hill Landfill in Geneva.

Notification that the Illinois EPA had accepted the county's explanation of how the 12 truck-loads of tainted soil were allowed into Settler's Hill as well as its compliance plan to leave the soil in place and to safeguard against any reoccurrence was announced Thursday.

Along with the county and landfill operator Waste Management of Illinois Inc., Shell Oil Pipeline Co., which transported

the benzene-laced soil to the landfill, was exonerated by the state EPA, pending "additional information... that would warrant a change in that decision," according to an agency letter made public by Tim Harbaugh, director of the county's Department of Environmental Management.

With the help of a consultant, Kane County has concluded that the 180 cubic yards of contaminated soil dumped improperly poses no imminent threat to health or safety. With the state EPA's action, the County Board's Executive Committee ordered Thursday that the oil company be notified of the county's intention to resume landfill operations in the area where soil was commingled with about 9,000 tons of garbage.

Meanwhile, two attorneys hired by the county to assess what civil liability Shell might have in the matter said they are

continuing to investigate, with the company's cooperation, exactly how tainted soil was sent to Kane County from a Kankakee-area pipeline facility that began having leakage problems as far back as November 1988.

"I'm not accusing anybody, but I don't have a comfort level yet [with Shell's explanation]," said County Board Chairman Mike McCoy (R-Aurora).

In addition to recovering the costs incurred by the county responding to the improper disposal and sending a firm message "to show that we take this seriously," McCoy said, "I want some kind of comfort level that this was an honest mistake."

"At this juncture, there's a boatload of information that we don't know," said attorney Timothy Dwyer of St. Charles.

Settler's Hill is on Fabyan Parkway west of Kirk Road. It is Kane's last active landfill and is scheduled to close by 2006.

b-11-09 Beacon news

Traffic tie-ups expected for Schindlbeck funeral

AURORA — Such a large number of mourners are expected to attend the funeral of Kane County Undersheriff Dan Schindlbeck Saturday that county officials are advising there may be traffic tie-ups resulting from the funeral procession.

Schindlbeck, 60, died Tuesday after a long battle with cancer. Sheriff's officials said he was so well-respected in Aurora, the county and throughout the state police community that at least 200 cars are expected in the funeral procession.

Schindlbeck was an Aurora police officer for 28 years, leaving Aurora in 1994 to become the right-hand man for Kane County Sheriff Ken Ramsey. He was past president of the Kane County Chiefs of Police, a member of the Illinois Chiefs of Police and Illinois Sheriff Association and many other organizations.

Aurora and all of the other police de-

partments in Kane County will be represented at the funeral, as will state and county police, Naperville and numerous other departments.

The funeral Mass is scheduled for 10:30 a.m. Saturday at Holy Cross Church, 2300 Main St., Batavia.

The funeral procession is expected to begin between 11:45 a.m. and noon, proceeding west from the church to Deepath Road, south on Deepath to Indian Trail in Aurora, east on Indian Trail to Route 31, south on Route 31 to Galena Boulevard, east on Galena Boulevard to Lincoln Avenue and south on Lincoln to the Mt. Olivet Cemetery at Lincoln and Ashland avenues.

Some streets around the cemetery will be closed because of the procession.

Visitation is from 1 to 8 p.m. today at the Dieterle Memorial Home, 1120 S. Broadway, Montgomery.

b-11-04 Daily Herald

Debate rages in Geneva over animal, water facilities

BY GARRETT ORDOWER
Daily Herald Staff Writer

The 5-year-old debate over a Kane County Animal Control facility spilled over to Geneva's plan commission Thursday night, as residents voiced last-minute objections to it and a water treatment plant at the same location.

Both would be situated on 40 acres at the southwest corner of Peck and Keslinger roads.

The \$25 million water treatment plant would occupy 10 acres of the site, and the animal control facility another 2½. The remainder of the site would include biking and hiking trails, detention and retention ponds, native planting and a sledding hill, Water Superintendent John Donahue said.

The treatment plant would eliminate the need for home water softening equipment.

Donahue first presented pre-

liminary plans for the facility to city officials eight months ago. Despite that, numerous residents brought new concerns to the plan commission during nearly three hours of public testimony, ranging from the chemicals that would be on the site to the height of the facility and the potential toxicity of storm water collected there.

Donahue assured residents that all federal, state and local laws would be followed with regard to the chemicals at the reverse osmosis facility, and that the storm water would be essentially what already flows to the site plus that created by the 29,000-square-foot treatment building and other paved surfaces.

"We won't make it worse," he said.

However, nearly everyone praised the barn-like design of the plant, designed to mesh with the rural area surrounding it and

its location south of Prairie Green and north of Peck Farm North.

Residents also expressed concerns about traffic at the animal control site, which could attract 50 cars a day.

In addition, the presence of a crematorium sparked questions about noise and odor, which officials said would not be an issue. Currently, one-third of the 500 dogs handled yearly by the county are killed, officials said.

The county debated the facility for four years before voting 15-10 to approve it in May 2003. Board members Karen McConaughay, Jan Carlson and Rob McConaughay were present at the hearing to voice their continued objections.

The plan commission could make a recommendation to the city council at its 7 p.m. June 24 meeting at city hall, 22 S. First St.

Thirteen in gambling sting go to court

6-11-04 Chronicle

Next court date
either July 22
or July 23

By HEATH HIXON
Kane County Chronicle

ST. CHARLES — Maple Park Police Chief Chester A. Morris and 12 others on Thursday pleaded innocent to charges of being involved in an illegal gambling operation.

Morris, Maple Park Village President Mark Delaney and 11 others are linked to an alleged illegal gambling operation at D.J.'s Tavern in Maple Park. The group includes the bar's owner, manager and nine bartenders.

The baker's dozen was taken into custody within the last two weeks and face charges of conspiracy to commit gambling and conspiracy to commit keeping a gambling place. A few, including Morris and Delaney, face additional charges.

The group made its first court appearances Thursday in front of Kane County Judge Donald C. Hudson. The next court date for the 13 was set for either July 22 or July 23.

After the hearing, Morris' attorney, Terry Ekl, questioned the indictment of his client, equating the charges to requiring a police officer to arrest someone.

"It's about the most ludicrous theory of prosecution I have seen in 30 years," Ekl said. "He was unaware that there was any gambling going on."

Charges came after a 13-month investigation by the Illinois State Police, Illinois Attorney General's office and the Illinois Department of Revenue into alleged illegal gambling at the tavern.

A Kane County grand jury indicted the 13 after the investigation allegedly turned up an open gambling operation that included video poker machines rigged to a cash-payout system, a bookmaking operation and other forms of illegal gambling.



Delaney



Court dates

Defendant, court date

- Chester A. Morris, Maple Park police chief, July 22
- Mark T. Delaney, Maple Park village president, July 22
- Mary E. Richardson, Maple Park, bartender, July 22
- Kelly N. Ferdinand, Maple Park, bartender, July 22
- Michael J. Faber, Maple Park, bar manager, July 23
- David L. Weeks, Yorkville, D.J.'s Tavern bar owner, July 23
- Hope Baker, DeKalb, bartender, July 23
- Sheila Bode, St. Charles, bartender, July 23
- Amy Davies, Cortland, bartender, July 23
- Susan Duewel, Maple Park, bartender, July 23
- Keith Nickels, Maple Park, bartender, July 23
- Reed T. Overhaug, Maple Park, bartender, July 23
- Jennifer Roelfsema, Maple Park, bartender, July 23

Gambling

Continued from page 1

Morris has been charged with three additional counts of official misconduct for allegedly allowing gambling to continue and not arresting those involved. Ekl said his client had been in the tavern four times in the last 13 months.

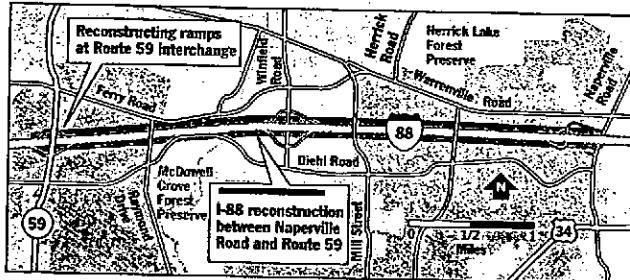
Morris' presence at the tavern is "problematic" and signified an endorsement of gam-

bling, said Abigail Abraham, an assistant attorney general who is prosecuting the case.

"His presence in the bar lends support to those who gamble because it basically sends the message that it is OK, that nobody is going to be arrested," Abraham said.

Delaney also has been charged with four additional counts of official misconduct. The tavern's owner, David L. Weeks, and manager Michael J. Faber also have been charged with one count each of syndicated gambling.

I-88 work set to begin



Road construction information

■ For more information about upcoming road construction on Interstate 88 between Naperville Road and Route 59, call the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority at (800) 865-5394 or visit www.illinoistollway.com.

\$50 million project will smooth pavement between Route 59 and Naperville Road

By Ann Hanson
STAFF WRITER

Anyone who has driven on Interstate 88 between Naperville Road and Route 59 knows it's not a smooth ride.

"You feel like you're riding on a flat tire," said Sue Kiefer, who works at the White Hen Pantry on Route 59, south of the tollway.

Kiefer, of Aurora, used to travel that stretch every day until a month ago, when she became fed up with the traffic.

"It's amazing all the tolls you pay and you're paying for the inconvenience to just sit there and the roads are all beat up," she said.

Starting next week, the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority will begin trying to change that.

The toll authority is embarking on a \$49.5 million project to reconstruct the five-mile segment from Naperville Road to

◆ Turn to I-88, A2

I-88

From Page A1

Route 59 and the ramps onto I-88 from Route 59.

Sue Kemp, assistant press secretary for the toll authority, said construction should conclude in July 2005.

Bill Szenda travels that portion of the interstate every day. The road work may cause even more traffic in the meantime, but ultimately it is needed, said Szenda, a Downers Grove resident and manager of the Mobil gas station at Route 59 and Diehl Road.

"It's going to be bad that it's under construction, but it needs to be done," he said.

The road still has its original base from 1958, when that section opened, Kemp said. It was resurfaced in 1969 and 1981, when an experimental surface was laid.

In 1993, the authority ground down the "washboard," or series of bumps along the road. Kemp said that and the most recent resurfacing has worn away.

"We can't grind it down again," she said.

Work will start on the shoulders first so they are in shape to handle the traffic that will be shifted there during construction. Kemp said they are doing that so three lanes will be open

at all times during the day.

According to a toll authority press release, lane closures will only occur at night, between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. Time between midnight to 4:45 a.m. Mondays to Thursdays has been set aside to allow two lanes to be closed if needed.

Once the shoulders have been prepared for the diverted traffic, work will begin on the westbound lanes. During that time, traffic going east will travel on the right shoulder and two right lanes.

One westbound lane will be built on the eastbound side of the road and will be separated from oncoming traffic with a concrete wall, according to the release. Then, westbound traffic will shift to the inside lanes. The right shoulder and right lane will be used for construction.

Halfway through the construction season, the westbound traffic traveling on the inside lanes will be shifted to the two reconstructed outside lanes. The westbound lane on the eastbound side of the road will stay in place.

The ramps at Route 59 also will be rebuilt, Kemp said. An extended exit lane will be added from Raymond Drive to reduce congestion often seen there now, she said.

No detours will be posted, but Szenda said he is planning to find another way to work.

"It probably take Diehl Road like everyone else, and then that'll be horrible," he said.

Water park moves too close for Sugar Grove

b-12-04
Daily
Herald

Residents not eager to see
65-acre facility open off I-88

BY LISA SMITH AND KIMBRIELL KELLY

Daily Herald Staff Writers

Several Sugar Grove residents living near the site of a proposed 65-acre water park were surprised to hear the plan now is being floated in their back yards.

Residents of the Windsor Pointe and Mallard Pointe subdivisions raised concerns about increased traffic and other issues after hearing about the project Friday.

One of the amenities that attracted Ty Wilson to Sugar Grove was its semi-rural location and abundant open space. He recently moved to the Windsor Pointe subdivision from California.

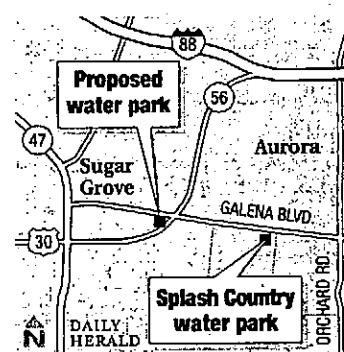
"I moved out here for peace, quiet and serenity," Wilson said of the neighborhood, which is about half-mile from the water park site. "(The water park) is probably not a good idea."

Still, he said, growth seems inevitable.

"I'd rather have a Jewel than a big water park," said Aimee Streicher, who has lived in Windsor Pointe for two years.

No formal plans have been submitted but the developer has been discussing the project with Sugar Grove officials over the past few months.

The \$15 million water park is proposed to open July 4, 2005, on a triangular site a half-mile from I-88 at Galena Boulevard and Route 56 near Sugar Grove. Visitors would enter and exit the park from Galena Boulevard, said Jim



See PARK on PAGE 11

Park: Several thousand customers expected daily

Continued from Page 1

Urhausen, a consultant working with the developer Lundmark Group LLC.

It had been proposed on Kirk Road near Division Street in St. Charles, but those plans officially were shelved when the developer signed a contract this week for the new site, which the developer wants the village of Sugar Grove to annex.

"If it goes through, I think it will be a nice draw for Sugar Grove," Village President Sean Michels said. "I think we'd be able to show Sugar Grove off."

The village would gain revenue from the water park's property, sales and amusement taxes, although Village Administrator Brent Eichelberger could not estimate an amount.

One advantage of the Sugar Grove site over the St. Charles property is its proximity to I-88, Urhausen said. The park would be visible from the interstate.

Urhausen expects the park to draw 3,000 to 6,000 visitors daily from across the suburbs. The site is a 15-minute drive from I-88 and Route 59 in Naperville and a 25-minute drive from the southern edge of St. Charles.

A few St. Charles residents living near the former site had circulated a petition opposing the water park because of con-

cerns about traffic, noise and the city's available water supply.

"I'm very happy they decided not to pursue putting it in the middle of a residential area," Dina Merrill said. "I think they'll do a lot better in Sugar Grove off the interstate."

The project has been touted as one of the largest, most state-of-the-art water parks in the Midwest, with 15 to 18 "attractions," including slides, a lazy river, wave pool and toddler splash pool. Daily admission would cost \$23-25 per person.

The water park would cover about 27 acres, with an additional 19 acres of parking available on site. The remaining land would be developed into commercial property, Urhausen said.

The site is about a 1.5 miles from the Fox Valley Park District's Splash Country water park, but both Urhausen and the park district's director, Bob Vaughan, said the two parks are too different to compete with one another.

Splash Country sits on 30 acres and draws 70,000 to 80,000 visitors annually, while the proposed water park is expected to draw more than 300,000 a year. Admission to Splash Country for a resident on a weekend is \$7, for example.

County ethics commission put on hold

6-12-04 Chronicle

*McCoy concerned about
treatment of candidates*

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Kane County Board Chairman Mike McCoy will delay appointing an ethics commission, saying he fears that the political climate would mean harsh treatment of his selections.

McCoy said he does not want to ask people to serve the county only to have his enemies on the board attack them as a way of punishing him.

"I have questions whether the board would approve a commission I appointed," McCoy said. "I'm not prepared to appoint a commission in the near future."

All government bodies in Illinois are required to set procedures that will ensure that their officers and employees adhere to ethics laws. One of the procedures is to appoint an ethics adviser.

Another step, which is optional under the law, would be to establish an ethics commission that would provide the enforcement arm. The county board adopted the ordinance with a commission, while the forest preserve district, which is made up of the same people, adopted the ordinance without the commission.

"I find that unsettling, and I'm sure it was meant to be,"

McCoy said.

McCoy, who is not seeking re-election, saw his May appointment to the Board of Review defeated. At that time, he said that his opponents on the board, made up mostly of supporters of county board chairman candidate Karen McConaughay, R-St. Charles, would fight his appointments until the end of his term Nov. 30.

The county board chairman has the responsibility of appointing people to an estimated 500 positions on fire protection districts, water reclamation districts, the DUI Task Force and park districts.

"I detest to bring forward a person who has volunteered to serve the public and have them (the board) blast him with criticism that's meant for me," McCoy said.

Members of the Human Services Commission on Friday discussed appointing Director of Human Resources Ellen Burmeier as the county's ethics adviser.

As adviser, Burmeier would train elected officials and employees on the statute, which prohibits county employees from engaging in political activities, requiring another officer or employee to engage in political activities, and accepting gifts with a value more than \$100.

6-12-04 Chronicle

Friends, colleagues say farewell to undersheriff

By DAN CHANZIT
Kane County Chronicle

MONTGOMERY —

Hundreds waited more than an hour Friday afternoon to pay their respects to Kane County Undersheriff Dan Schindlbeck.

Friends and family gathered at Dieterle Memorial Home to take one more glance at Schindlbeck, regarded as a compassionate mediator and a law enforcement hero.

Memories were recalled, stories were swapped and tears were shed. Under happier circumstances, it could have been a party.

"We knew it would be big, but we didn't know it would be this big," said Schindlbeck's son, Steve Schindlbeck. "Neighbors, people he went to school with, people from police departments. Everyone is here."

Steve Schindlbeck said he was humbled by how many people came to see his father, who died Tuesday of complications from esophageal cancer. He was 60.

"He was a wonderful role model," Schindlbeck said. "But this (crowd), this speaks for itself."

The line included employees from Kane and Kendall counties, dozens of politicians and hundreds of law enforcement officials. Squad cars filled the parking lot and nearby side streets.

Aurora Mayor David Stover was a family friend. He smiled and fought tears as he recalled a recent visit to see Schindlbeck in the hospital. It was the day

before Memorial Day.

"We had a great conversation," Stover said. "In spite of what he was going through, he smiled. He was very lively."

Stover said Schindlbeck was one of the greatest mediators he ever met.

"He was good at dealing with people who were in a fight. He was a professional," Stover said. "The way he approached people was very comforting. He established their trust, and that was the beginning."

Kane County Sheriff Ken Ramsey stood apart from the line of mourners. He received handshakes and hearty hugs.

"The lives he touched and how he touched them," Ramsey said. "Dan Schindlbeck spread a lot of love."

Schindlbeck's funeral Mass will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. today at Holy Cross Catholic Church, 2300 Main St., Batavia. He will lie in state at the church from 9:30 a.m. until the Mass. The Rev. Dan Deutsch will officiate.

After the Mass, the funeral procession will travel west on Main Street to Nelson Lake Road, south to Deerpath Road, east on Indian Trail in Aurora, south on Route 31, east on Galena Boulevard and south on Lincoln Avenue to Mount Olivet Cemetery for interment.



Schindlbeck

6-12-04 Daily Herald

Chairman backs off ethics appointments

BY PATRICK WALDRON

Daily Herald Staff Writer

Convinced the Kane County Board would trash his appointments, Chairman Mike McCoy said he likely won't appoint an ethics commission anytime soon despite his earlier pleas to county leaders to establish such a panel.

"I think the county board is very split on it," McCoy said, referring to the passionate pleas from some members to put off approval of the ordinance authorizing an ethics panel. "It was unsettling to me and I'm sure it was meant to be."

McCoy feels that any names he brought forward to serve on a three-person ethics commission would become the subject of political attacks.

"It could turn into a big thing," said McCoy, whose term as chairman ends in December. He is not seeking re-election.

That feeling was cemented in May when McCoy's attempt to make a new appointment to the county's board of tax review

was shot down by the county board.

The prospect of holding off on appointing the commission is in contrast to McCoy's ardent push a month ago to get the state-mandated ethics law passed by the county board.

That ordinance did pass the board, but with several detractors. Also, the Kane County forest preserve commission, made up of the same 26 representatives as the county board, passed the ethics ordinance but did not include a section calling for the commission.

Under state laws passed late last year, all local governments from school boards to city councils were required to pass an ethics ordinance by May 19. The law, summarizing reforms such as gift bans, does not require an ethics commission or ethics adviser; but the state attorney general has strongly recommended the oversight positions be included.

At times during the local approval process McCoy was labeled by his rivals as "a political bully." One board member

even called the entire ethics ordinance "a sham."

But as McCoy backed away from the debate Friday, the county board's human service committee discussed designating county human resources director Ellen Burmeier as the ethics adviser.

Her primary role would be to educate county employees and officers on the rules spelled out in the ordinance and set up training.

Burmeier would not have powers to investigate ethics complaints against elected officials because that duty, as of now, will fall to the Kane County state's attorney.

Board members Dan Walter, a South Elgin Republican, and Penelope Cameron, an Aurora Republican, emphasized how an employee of the county shouldn't be put in a position to investigate and judge the behavior of the employer — in this case elected officials.

Walter called it "unfair" to any employee to have such a duty which places a person in an impossible position.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

6-12-04

Beacon News

Schindlbeck touched lives

Our friend died today, but he was much more than a friend.

He was my husband's first field training officer — the man who would ease the transition from an ordinary citizen to a well-trained, respectable civil servant. He was also the best man at our wedding — the man who would share our joy and allay my husband's fears over this life-long commitment. He was, in the end, a staple in our lives, with whom, along with his wife Jan, we would share many wonderful times together.

For all who knew Danny Schindlbeck, that's what he became — a constant in their lives.

To the guys at the station house who were blessed with his leadership, compassion and humor — to all of his female friends who were lucky enough to always be on the receiving end of his patented greeting of that sweet smile and quick "Danny kiss" — and to all those members of the community who were exposed to this shining representative of true community-oriented policing who took the oath "to protect and serve" so seriously.

Yes, our friend has died, but the

legacy of humor and caring he leaves will live forever in our hearts.

Thank you, Danny, for making all of our lives so much richer for having known you.

Claudia Wennmacher

Aurora

Why is Lauzen anti-union?

I wonder why Sen. Chris Lauzen is anti-union? I feel free to use the term anti-union because in 2003, he had only a 6 percent pro-union voting record in the Illinois Senate. Maybe one could call a 50-percent record a moderate and 25-percent a conservative, but 6 percent is really, in my opinion, anti-union.

His union record is so poor that I didn't really believe it the first time I said it and checked it again. Does he not realize that good union health care plans, decent pensions and livable wages are both the American dream and union goals? Is it personal?

Last, but certainly not least, I wonder what Oliver North, who I'm sure has a union card in his pocket, would think of Sen. Lauzen's anti-union act?

John Koutsky

Elburn

6-12-01 Beacon News

Aurora grocer linked to salmonella contamination

By Brian Shields

SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

testing results at the Illinois Department of Public Health are pending.

Friday afternoon, several people could be seen peering through the glass doors of the grocery after finding the door locked. All of the lights were off, and no one answered the door after several knocks.

There was a sign in Spanish telling patrons El Paso Grande was closed for remodeling and referring them to another small grocery, El Paso Chico, at 508 Grove St.

St.

AURORA — A local grocery store has closed temporarily while the Kane County Health Department investigates salmonella contamination traced to it.

El Paso Grande, at 634 E. New York St., is associated with a cluster of recent Salmonella cases, the Health Department said Friday. There are four confirmed cases and 17 other probable cases under investigation related to the store, according to the Health Department.

The store is cooperating with the Health Department, officials said, and voluntarily has closed pending the department's investigation.

Health officials recommend that any noncanned food purchased from El Paso Grande after May 21 should be thrown away.

The source of the salmonella

has not been determined, and food

and redeem the warrants, Yagel said.

"We normally would have had more than enough money, but the tax bills were late going out this year, which means our revenue will be late coming in," Yagel explained.

"When that happens, it's of great concern to us because this district has traditionally kept low reserves."

The district issued \$6.5 million in tax anticipation warrants in April, which it had anticipated redeeming in November, when the county will forward second-payment property tax revenues.

Officials could redeem those warrants early to recoup the extra interest payments needed for the June loan, Yagel noted.

By Denise Linke

SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

BATAVIA — Delays in mailing Kane County property tax bills will force the Batavia School District to issue \$1 million to \$2 million more in tax anticipation warrants this month at 4.25 percent interest, Assistant Superintendent Joseph Yagel told the Board of Education this week.

Board members approved borrowing the money, which will cost the district somewhere between \$2,400 and \$7,000 in interest.

The final interest figure will depend on how much money the district borrows to meet its June payroll and how quickly it can repay the cash

and redeem the warrants, Yagel said.

"We normally would have had more than enough money, but the tax bills were late going out this year, which means our revenue will be late coming in," Yagel explained.

"When that happens, it's of great concern to us because this district has traditionally kept low reserves."

The district issued \$6.5 million in tax anticipation warrants in April, which it had anticipated redeeming in November, when the county will forward second-payment property tax revenues.

Officials could redeem those warrants early to recoup the extra interest payments needed for the June loan, Yagel noted.

Salmonella is a bacterial disease characterized by a sudden onset of diarrhea, abdominal cramping, headache, nausea, fever and, in some cases, vomiting. The Health Department encourages people with these symptoms to call their doctors.

For additional information, call the health department at (630) 208-3801.

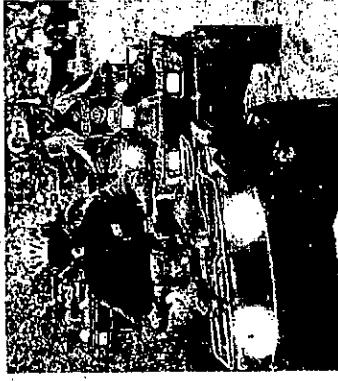
Rising ATV deaths could bring more regulation

By Stephanie Zimmerman

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

AURORA — Sheri Johnson says she'll never get over a beautiful September day that began with a child's birthday party and ended with the death of her son. Her son, Jason, 11, was best buddies with the birthday girl. As the families gathered at her home in Aurora that day over three years ago, the girl's father decided to take a neighbor's all-terrain vehicle for a ride.

An ATV group takes a ride on a sunny day.



Jason was intrigued. Against Johnson's wishes, she says, the adult let her son hop in front of him and take the wheel. They were having fun. Then, as they tried to negotiate a turn, the man apparently grabbed for the hand brake, accidentally flipping the ATV forward and throwing both riders. The ATV landed on Jason, causing fatal injuries. The adult, who was unharmed, was charged with misdemeanor reckless conduct, but the case was dismissed.

"I personally believe that they should be completely outlawed," Johnson says of

ATVs. "They are extremely unsafe. Even if he would have had a helmet on, he still would have broken his neck."

Jason was one of 118 people killed on ATVs in Illinois between 1982 and 2002, according to the most up-to-date figures available.

Nationwide, at least 5,239 people across the United States have been killed riding ATVs, and the death toll is rising fast — with 1,668 ATV deaths, or 32 percent, com-

An estimated 113,900 people suffered in-

juries serious enough to land them in a hospital emergency room in 2002 alone. About a third of those were children under 16.

"That is a stunningly large percentage," says Ken Giles, spokesman for the U.S.

Consumer Product Safety Commission.

"As a public health agency, we have to try to do something, even if the solution isn't simple."

Turn to ATV, A2

ATV

From Page A1

Jump in injuries, deaths

The death toll from ATVs has risen rapidly in recent years — by 48 percent from 1997 to 2002, despite a dip in 2002 — with a corresponding 115 percent rise in injuries in that period.

The rising number of deaths and injuries has federal safety authorities considering whether to recommend more regulation of the estimated 7 million ATVs now in use.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission recently completed a series of public hearings around the country and is expected to release a comprehensive report this summer.

ATVs have been part of the landscape in rural and outlying suburban areas for years, and their popularity is growing. About 853,000 new ATVs were sold in the United States in 2002, the last year for which figures are available, according to the industry.

What makes ATV riding so much fun, however, is precisely what can make it dangerous. The high center of gravity, vital for climbing over bumps and logs, makes ATVs prone to tipping. To steer, the rider must shift his weight from side to side while the vehicle climbs and descends over tricky terrain. The balloon tires and locked rear wheels provide traction off-road but can send a rider out of control on a paved surface.

Parental control

Polaris, which made the ATV that killed Jason Johnson, points to safety measures it already takes, including training programs mandatory for new customers to validate their warranties.

The company also employs "secret shoppers" to make sure its dealers aren't selling adult-size machines for use by young children, says Marlys Knutson, spokeswoman for the Minnesota company.

At the same time, Knutson says, parents have to bear some responsibility for the accidents.

"You don't give your 15-year-old the keys to your car," she says.

Barbara Wilkinson, of Sandwich, lost her 16-year-old son, Joshua Bickford, in a 1997 ATV accident that also killed two of his friends.

Joshua and three friends — John Kimpan III, 16; Joseph Kin-

pan, 13; and Dale Defebaugh, 10 — had doubled up on the Kimpan family's two ATVs for a ride along side a road. As they snaked along in single file, a car hit the boys from behind, killing all but Dale.

Wilkinson blames the driver of the car, who was not cited but refused to take a drug or alcohol test. But she also thinks ATVs should be banned for kids.

Recently, Wilkinson was driving about 45 mph in her car when two boys roared past her in a ditch, riding their ATVs.

"They go so fast," she says. "It's fun, sure . . . but people don't realize how dangerous they are."

Trying to explain the mushrooming rate of accidents and deaths is tricky, says the CPSC's Giles. He points to several "intertwined" issues, including drivers who don't wear helmets, or ride on pavement, or use machines inappropriate for their age, or ride with passengers and without proper training.

Despite manufacturers' warnings not to let kids ride adult-size machines, about one-third of all serious injuries were to youths under age 16, most of them who were hurt while riding adult-size machines.

Restrictions on kids

The American Academy of Pediatrics says kids shouldn't be allowed on any ATV, regardless of the vehicle's size. The Elk Grove Village-based association also recommends a recall of all three-wheel ATVs still in use.

Laws governing the use of ATVs vary by state. Illinois has little regulation. ATV owners here are supposed to register their vehicles and can't ride in state parks, but there are no laws concerning driver age or requiring helmets.

The ATV industry opposes a ban on kids using ATVs.

"We just don't think that the concept of a federal ban would really do much to change consumer behavior," says Mike Mount, spokesman for the Specialty Vehicle Institute of America, which represents all the major ATV makers except Polaris.

The industry says the injury rate actually was higher in the late 1980s and notes that, in 2002, the latest year for which federal data are available, the number of deaths and the injury rate both declined nationwide, though the raw number of injuries went up.

As for the industry's trend toward bigger and faster machines, Mount says, "They build what the consumers want."

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'He was a great cop'



Bob Gerrard -- Chronicle photo staff

The Kane County Sheriff Color Guard escorts a hearse carrying Kane County Undersheriff Dan Schindlbeck to his grave at Mount Olivet Cemetery on Saturday in Aurora. Schindlbeck, 60, died Tuesday from complications from esophageal cancer.

Family and friends say goodbye to Schindlbeck

By HEATH HIXSON
Kane County Chronicle

Aurora,
Mount
Olivet



Schindlbeck

part of the city to a standstill.

People stood in front of their homes, cars and businesses, gazing at the mass of people who traveled to say a final goodbye to the officer. One Aurora man stood outside his home holding a hand over his heart as the procession crawled by.

The "outpour of love" symbolized how Schindlbeck lived his life, Sheriff Ken Ramsey said.

See SCHINDLBECK, page 2



Bob Gerrard -- Chronicle photo staff

Kane County Sheriff Corrections Officer Sarah O'Hara leads a riderless horse Saturday at Mount Olivet Cemetery in Aurora during a funeral for Undersheriff Dan Schindlbeck.



Photo by Heath Hixson

Schindlbeck

Continued from page 1

"It was a funeral like no other," Ramsey said. "And I am sure that Danny is looking down on us and glad we did this."

Schindlbeck had served in the sheriff's department since 1994 when Ramsey was elected sheriff. Schindlbeck previously had served 28 years as an officer with the Aurora Police Department. He died Tuesday of complications from esophageal cancer. He was 60 years old.

Friends described him as a man of faith who loved his family, enjoyed his work and found humor to be a cure for the tough situations that face law enforcement officers. Most of all, they said he was a good man.

"He was a great cop," said Lt. Ron Smith, of the sheriff's department. "He was a good guy, always a friendly guy, always had a joke to tell."

He is going to leave a hole in the department that will be very hard to fill."

Hundreds of people filled Holy Catholic Church for the Mass. Both sides of Main Street were packed with squad cars from more than 40 law enforcement agencies from as far away as Lake County and Mundelein. At least 200 law enforcement officers came to pay their respects.

Schindlbeck prayed, worked, told jokes, loved and most of all enjoyed his family. At the end of a Mass when the priest said, "Go in peace," Schindlbeck literally believed it, said the Rev. Dan Deutsch.

"He lived his life, and he lived his faith. The two were inseparable," Deutsch said during the Mass.

At the cemetery, peacefully following a hearse carrying Schindlbeck's casket, a police pipe band and honor guard, was a horse without its rider.

Schindlbeck will be missed, Smith said as tears welled up in his eyes after the funeral.

Kane County Notebook

Employee checks will cost money

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

Wednesday was finance director Cheryl Pattelli's last day. She is going to take the same position with the DuPage Water Commission. Pattelli's assistant, Susan Show, a CPA and an MBA, will hold the job on a interim basis.

Pattelli, with the county for eight years, said at her last Finance/Budget Committee meeting Wednesday that the county has a cash balance of \$20 million.

"The financial situation of the county is outstanding, probably the best in the area," she said. "I'm going to miss everybody."

The cell at Settler's Hill Landfill where contaminated soil was dumped by Shell Pipeline Co. is scheduled to begin being filled again.

Operations were stopped when the problem was discovered. Now that the board has voted to let the material stay in place, lawyers said they can begin using it again as long as they inform Shell. That gives the company an opportunity to gather any evidence it needs before garbage begins to cover the soil again.

Also, Director of Environmental Management Timothy Harbaugh said two rounds of air-quality testing have been finished and a third is scheduled for the weekend of June 25 and 26. Harbaugh said the testing should be done when the Kane County Cougars baseball team is out of town so that exhaust from the fans' cars does not skew the results.

The county has budgeted six rounds of testing. After the third round is collected, officials will decide whether to go ahead with the additional three.

On a personal note:

Deepest sympathies are extended to the family and friends of Undersheriff Daniel Schindlbeck, who died Tuesday.

Dan always was helpful, funny and a good guy. He will be missed.

• Tom Schlueter is the county reporter for the Kane County Chronicle. He may be reached at (630) 845-5380 or tschlueter@kccchronicle.com.

6-13-04 Beacon News First tax payments due Monday

GENEVA — Kane County Treasurer David J. Rickett is reminding taxpayers that the first installment of property taxes is due Monday. Property owners who have not received a bill are asked to contact the treasurer's office at (630) 232-3565. The second payment will be due Sept. 14. For a fee, taxpayers may pay their

bill with a credit card over the Internet. The Web site address is www.co.kane.il.us/treasurer. Payments may also be mailed to the treasurer's office, made in person at the treasurer's office, or dropped off in the property tax drop box behind Building A at the County Government Center, 719 Batavia Ave., Geneva.

6-13-04 Chronicle Health department investigating salmonella cases

KANE COUNTY CHRONICLE

AURORA — The Kane County Health Department is investigating four foodborne-related illness cases associated with El Paso Grande Grocer, 634 E. New York St.

The department has confirmed four cases of salmonella, and 17 other probable

cases are under investigation, a department statement shows. Health department officials have issued a recommendation that patrons discard any non-canned food purchased at El Paso Grande Grocer on or after May 21.

The source of the salmonella is unknown at this time. Symptoms include the sudden onset of diarrhea, abdominal cramping, headache, nausea, fever and sometimes vomiting, the department said in the statement.

The health department en-

courages anyone experiencing

these symptoms to contact

their physician. For informa-

tion, call the department at

(630) 208-3801.

Ask Sound Off

Have a question?
We have an answer

Conflict of interest 6-12-04 Chronicle

Question: Isn't it considered a conflict of interest to have a high school varsity soccer coach also serve as president of a traveling soccer club? Won't such an arrangement simply become a feeder program to high schools?

Answer: No, there is not conflict of interest. Indeed, such coaching arrangements are common.

Gas tax hike ridiculous

Question: I'm calling in regard to Sunday's editorial by Tom Schlueter proposing that Kane County raise gas prices another 2 cents. How ridiculous is that? Gas is at an all-time high, oil has reached \$42 a barrel and, once again, your paper is advocating another tax increase. I've yet to see a tax increase referendum in Kane County that you paper wasn't advocating. And, yes, gas prices are higher in the counties to the east and north of us, as he mentioned. Just yesterday, I purchased gas for \$2.01 a gallon in Maple Park, about 20 feet west of the Kane County line. When the Kane County Board looks for these prices, they never look west, they always look at the more expensive easterly counties. So they are going to say surrounding counties? Include DeKalb, include Kendall, include McHenry and, of course, the most expensive county they can find, DuPage. For your paper to advocate raising gas prices when they are already at record high is just unconscionable.

Answer: Tom Schlueter's article was a column, not an editorial. The column was published Friday, May 29, and represented Schlueter's views, not the newspaper's. The newspaper has not advocated an increase in the local portion of the gasoline tax. State law allows Kane County to impose a local gas tax of up to 4 cents per gallon. Kane County's local gas tax is 2 cents per gallon. The Chronicle has opposed tax increases in the past.

Opinion 6-13-04 Chronicle

Publisher: Mark M. Sweetwood
Managing Editor: Gregory J. Rivara
News Editor: Christopher K. Nelson



6-13-04 Beacon news

Batavia to fingerprint school job applicants

By Denise Linke

SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

BATAVIA — Applicants for jobs in the Batavia School District will be fingerprinted as part of their background checks, the Board of Education decided this week.

Two other Kane County school districts — East Aurora and Elgin — have already switched to fingerprint-based background checks, said Assistant Superintendent Steve Caliendo. Other area districts are also considering the option, he added.

"There have been some inadequacies with the current system, which we have used for decades," Caliendo said. "In today's society, a name check is just not good enough protection for kids."

An applicant's fingerprints will be scanned by computer and checked against law enforcement databases throughout the U.S. Using fingerprints will unmask suspects, fugitives and ex-convicts who try to hide their pasts by forging new identities, Caliendo said.

Most board members approved the plan, even though the fingerprint checks cost \$50 apiece while the name checks cost \$10. The district will spend about \$7,200 more than usual to screen this year's applicants using the new procedure, said Caliendo.

"Having read about the situations some other school districts have found themselves in, I'm very supportive of this. It's well worth the extra money," said board member Jayne Resek.

Board member Jeff Glaser cast the sole dissenting vote.

"It's a violation of people's privacy," he said. "I don't like fingerprinting, random drug tests or metal detectors. If we have reason to suspect someone, that would be different. But we have given up so much since Sept. 11 that I don't think it's necessary to go this far."

6-14-04 Daily Herald Girl's death has people interested in sex offender registry



Get out of jail free: jail officials want to save time for both themselves and parents.

At their request the Kane County Board last week approved tweaking how the county's classifies its rules banning underaged smoking and drinking. Now teens caught imbibing or puffing will get a notice to appear in court but won't need to get booked in the jail and wait for their parents to bail them out.

Although sitting in jail might help teens get the "stay straight" message, it can cause jailhouse gridlock, especially when parties are busted such as last year's graduation party in St. Charles that sent close to 30 kids to the jail.

The change also will leave less of a stigmatizing mark on the teen's record because it will be listed as an ordinance violation zero.

Before you let your children wander seemingly idyllic neighborhood streets, give the registry a look. You might be surprised.

rather than a criminal misdemeanor.

Bystander or helper? A jury, not a judge, will decide if Kineta Bell should serve an extra 15 years in prison if she is convicted for her role in the slaying of an Elgin man during a botched robbery.

Bell, 20, has pleaded innocent to murder and home invasion in connection with the death of 32-year-old Kyle Juggins, who was stabbed and fatally shot Feb. 11, 2003. The Elgin woman contends she stood outside when three men stormed Juggins' apartment and pounced on him while he slept alongside his girlfriend and infant son.

Kane County prosecutors argue that Bell's participation in the crime — leading the robbers cover Kane County courts. To Juggins' home — makes her contact Tona, call (630) 587-8631. To contact Adam, call (847) 608-2728.

But Kane County Judge Patricia P. Golden rejected the idea, telling prosecutors June 8 any sentencing guidelines would be "premature" until the outcome of Bell's trial.

Kane County Assistant State's Attorney Greg Sams said a decision was needed in case the state Supreme Court later rules that defendants in similar cases qualify for an extended sentence based on their level of accountability.

Defense attorney Liam Dixon said Bell should know how much prison time she could face if she is convicted. She should prosecutors offer her a plea deal in exchange for a reduced sentence.

• *Tona Kunz and Adam Kovac*

cover Kane County courts. To Juggins' home — makes her contact Tona, call (630) 587-8631. To contact Adam, call (847) 608-2728.

A little more than a week ago, a cherub-faced 3-year-old was scooped off the couch in her locked home while her father slept.

Residents of Wilmington, a small town just south of Joliet, were shocked when they found her body in a creek across town. Parents clutched their children closer. They looked twice at strange cars on the street.

And they asked an important question: Do sex offenders live in their town?

That's a question every parent should ask no matter how big or small their community or how affluent.

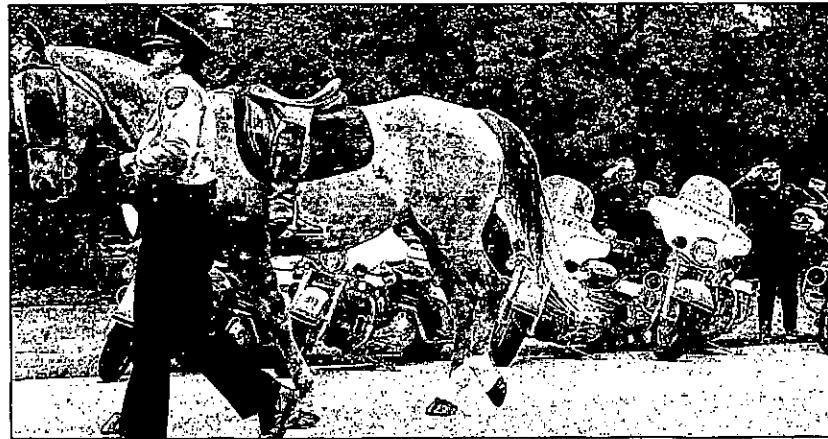
The Illinois Attorney General's Office keeps a log of sex offenders at isp.state.il.us/sor/frames.htm. It's not complete or always accurate because some offenders fail to notify authorities when they move. But it is a start-

6-13-04
beacon news FAREWELL TO A COMRADE IN ARMS



PHOTOS BY JONATHAN HOUSE / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Above: Pallbearers, including Kane County Sheriff Ken Ramsey (right), Aurora Police Chief Bill Lawler (behind Ramsey), Kane County Chief of Corrections Todd Exline (center) and Aurora Mayor David Stover (center rear), carry the casket bearing Undersheriff Dan Schindlbeck's body from Holy Cross Church in Batavia following his funeral Saturday. Below right: Janice Schindlbeck wipes away tears during services for her husband at Mt. Olivet Catholic Cemetery in Aurora. Below: Some of hundreds of police officers on hand for Schindlbeck's funeral salute as a riderless horse in his memory passes at the cemetery.



Assessors back Huber despite letter calling her 'unprofessional'

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

Criticism came after supervisor of assessments removed tax exemptions

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Despite recent criticism of Supervisor of Assessments Sallie Huber over the removal of exemptions on thousands of tax bills, township assessors are supporting Davis Offutt said the letter signed by 16 township assessors dated March 31, 1998, reflected a time when there was a lack of communication between the assessors and the association, however, differs from the association's stance six years ago when the assessors referred to "slanderous statements" made by Huber and said her "lack of professional judgment" has embarrassed both Kane County and the townships.

Aurora Township Assessor Davis Offutt said the letter signed by 16 township assessors dated March 31, 1998, reflected a time when there was a lack of communication between the assessors and the association, however, differs from the association's stance six years ago when the assessors referred to "slanderous statements" made by Huber and said her "lack of professional judgment" has embarrassed both Kane County and the townships.

between the townships and Huber. Offutt said communication between entities now is at an all-time high.

"It's just like a marriage," Offutt said. "You go through rough times."

Offutt, serving as the association's president, defended Huber last week to the county board in the wake of criticism over the removal of 27,000 homestead exemptions from

2003 tax bills. Offutt said as many as 21,000 of the exemptions were improperly applied to properties. The removal of the exemptions means an additional

\$5.14 million will be available to the local taxing bodies. The \$3,500 exemptions only can be applied to owner-occupied properties.

"That is a substantial savings to the taxing districts and the Kane County taxpayers," Offutt said.

After Offutt's remarks, county board Chairman Mike McCoy said, "I'm glad the assessors are united in favor of Sallie. Not too long ago, you all signed a letter asking me to fire her."

The letter was sent in response to comments Huber made to a national conference of assessment officials in

which she reportedly said "she would like to get rid of the assessors because, according to her, the assessors do nothing and she, the supervisor of assessments, has to do all the assessors work," the letter states.

However, nowhere in the letter do the assessors call for Huber to be fired. In fact, statutes require that the supervisor of assessments be replaced after the term expires or be impeached.

However, the timing and words clearly show a displease-

ment with her.

X Huber

Continued from page 1

The county board chairman appoints the supervisor of assessments to a four-year term. Huber's term expired in September 2002. McCoy has yet to reappoint her.

"There is no way I would never re-appoint her because of inefficiencies in the office, because of problems with the public and because of problems with her employees," McCoy said.

Although her term technically has expired, she still

holds the position because no

replacement has been named.

The 1998 letter, and a second letter written on Kane County Assessor's Association stationery, appeared to be timed to coincide with the four-year cycle.

The June 17, 2002, letter, signed by Batavia Township Supervisor Tammy Kavanaugh, lists the qualifications that the members felt would be necessary to hold the job.

Kavanaugh could not be reached for comment.

Huber declined to comment on the 1998 letter or McCoy's remarks.

"I was not part of that con-

versation. Under the advice of attorney, I've been advised not to say anything. I'm not going to get into a 'He said she said' fight in the press," Huber said.

McCoy, who is not seeking re-election, has chosen not to make an appointment, instead leaving that to his successor.

He said he believes his appointments would not be successful in the current political climate.

"I would not try to put forward any appointments," McCoy said. "That wouldn't be fair to that person. I'm not going to lead anyone down that path. I'm sure the new administration can handle it."

Districts could feel effect of county's tax problem

6-14-04 Article

Delay in mailing tax bills can cost thousands of dollars in interest payments

By TOM SCHLUETER
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — While Kane County officials attempt to deal with the political fallout of a perilous tax system, other government bodies fear the financial

problems could become a costly reality if the problem is not fixed soon.

For example, a delay of 60 days to 90 days in mailing tax bills next year, as predicted by Treasurer David Rickett, could cost a school district \$50,000 to \$60,000 in interest payments, said Joe Yagel, superintendent for business at

repercussions.

School districts in particular depend on timely distribution of property taxes to keep operating. A delay in that distribution could cause serious financial problems.

County leaders fear that delay



Batavia schools.

"That's a teacher's salary," Yagel said.

Every school district in Kane County is on a financial watch list, grenade and the potential problems for next year could be likened to a nuclear war," Yagel said. Their budgets have little or no reserve, which means they "must war."

Tax bills will not be mailed until July 14, about three weeks late, in large part

because computers in one department

when the county's tax cycle is operating the way it should.

Tax bills this year were mailed May 14, about three weeks late, in large part

said.

See TAXES, page 2

Taxes: Library districts also affected

Continued from page 1

The computers in the county's supervisor of assessments office operate a system with one database, while the computers in the county clerk's tax extension office operate from a different database.

The assessments office gathers the property values collected by the townships and certifies them.

The certified property values are sent to the extension office, which applies the tax levies adopted by local governments. The tax extension is the process that sets the rates and the amount of a property owner's bill.

County officials have wrestled with the computer problem for two years. At one point, it was thought that the situation would be remedied in-house, but officials since have abandoned that idea.

Rickett estimated that the fix would cost from \$300,000 to \$400,000.

County board Chairman

Mike McCoy said the problem is more a turf war than one of finances.

"The most important thing we need to solve this problem is interdepartmental cooperation," McCoy said.

Rickett said the situation must be resolved "within a month or it will be too late."

On the surface, the taxpayers would not see their bills affected. However, if local taxing bodies must borrow to keep up payrolls, the interest payments would cut into budgets and affect the taxpayers indirectly.

A 90-day delay in distribution would mean the elimination of a part-time salary for a circulation clerk or program budget cuts, Geneva Librarian Jeanne Hinz said.

Hinz calculated a 90-day delay could cost the library \$6,000 in interest payments. The \$6,000 represents one-third of the library's youth program budget, she said.

The district has a two-week reserve, but because its fiscal year begins July 1, anything that delays tax distribution be-

yond the middle of July could mean trouble.

Like the school district, the library board would have to issue tax anticipation warrants. "That would cost the taxpayers more," Hinz said.

The St. Charles Park District finds itself in a better position, mostly because its fiscal year begins April 1, and it does not rely on property taxes as much as a school district.

Property taxes make up 55 percent of the park district's budget, said business manager Bill Connors, with the rest coming from user fees. The district also keeps a reserve, he said.

As long as the district has some warning, the budget can be adjusted to carry it through, he said.

Under Rickett's worst-case scenario, with tax bills mailed 90 days later than normal, the park district could face problems.

Bond payments that are due July 1 could be missed. "We might have to hold off on some projects until we get some money," Connors said.

6-14-04 Chicago Tribune Suburb's 3 failed audits add up to one big mess

By Michael Higgins
and Rachel Osterman
Tribune staff reporters

People who think accounting is boring have never tried to balance the books in Carpentersville, where some of the worst municipal record-keeping in the state has resulted in four years of financial misadventures.

There was the two-year period when the village lost track of how much it was owed on parking tickets.

There was the time village staff based its budget proposal on a 5 percent sales tax, when the village's share of the tax was

only 2 percent.

And there was the two-year stretch when the village was reluctant to spend the money needed to hire an accountant, so the Finance Department operated without one.

The 32,000-resident village has failed three annual audits in a row and expects to fail major parts of its upcoming 2003 audit now more than six months late.

The failures make Carpentersville one of only four municipalities in the state to flunk any annual audits since 2000 and the only municipality its size to have such repeated problems.

PLEASE SEE AUDITS, BACK PAGE

Responsibility rests with the Village Board, said Calvary Penn, president of Citizens for Fiscal Reform, a 15-member group that started in December.

"There's been a general attitude by the board majority of 'don't micromanage—let them do their job,' when they're not doing their job," Penn said. "Village President Mark Boettger did not return calls for comment. Anderson said the high turnover in clerks makes assessing blame a fruitless task.

"For whatever reason, some of things that needed attention didn't get taken care of," Anderson said. "As far as trying to sort out who did what and why, I didn't get to look at that as 'How's that going to help me?'"

Anderson said that since he arrived 18 months ago, board members have been responsive. They've approved funds to hire a new deputy finance director, Anderson said. They have hired a consultant to look at the village's motor fuel tax records.

Meanwhile, managers rotated in and out. Seven finance directors have led the struggling department since 2000, and since 1989, Carpentersville has had eight village managers.

Bad numbers from one year led to untrustworthy numbers in the next. The town's 2002 audit committee, with Humpfert, resident but not a public official, as one member.

"This is the first time we've had to go down this road where we've got multiple years of 'no opinion,'" Staples said. "So we're kind of figuring this out as we go along."

edit to approve the village's full financial statements, getting a clean opinion on the balance sheet is an important starting point, Anderson and other officials said.

"I think it's certainly gotten better," Anderson said. "This year, I know the information is more accurate."

But critics say they are not convinced. Financial data the village newspaper showed recently in a local newspaper showed a village attorney being paid more than \$1 million, a wildly inaccurate figure, village officials say.

"It's a real mess," Trustee Nancy Moore said. "They simply don't want to address and acknowledge the problems."

Carpentersville's pension fund boards have avoided fines so far by filing after they received warnings but before the department could begin an administrative hearing, said Tom Jones, chief of the department's pension division.

Officials at the comptroller's office have referred the matter to state Atty. Gen. Lisa Madigan's office for possible investigation.

Village officials believe that this month Seiden Fox will approve the village's balance sheet for 2003.

Though the firm is not expected to be involved in the audit, Staples said.

**If they're at this point,
they're being
mismanaged.**

—Ciskeo Staples, comptroller's office
kept records in cardboard boxes.

"We had no filing cabinets," Kline said. "We didn't have any space for all these manual records."

"The town hired Selden Fox of Oak Brook to conduct its 2001 audit, but the result was the same. No opinion, with many of the same problems cited."

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The town's police and fire-fighter pension funds have filed their financial statements late four years in a row, and they could be fined if the 2003 statements aren't filed soon, state insurance officials said. After a citizens group complained, state transportation officials said they will audit the village later this month to see whether motor-fuel tax money has been spent properly.

Money moved among village funds without proper documentation, the firm concluded. Payments and receipts were entered into the accounting system without proper oversight.

The tax controls created the potential for misappropriation of cash, "phantom employees" and accounting errors, the audit firm said. The firm said it could issue "no opinion" on whether the village's financial statements represented the village's actual financial condition.

"We've got money in the bank. We've got our other sources of revenue coming in," said Anderson, appointed in December 2002. But "I'd be concerned if we got to the end of July without any other way."

The state has limited power to penalize towns for financial mismanagement, absent proof of criminal activity. Hynes' office can force towns to submit to audits but cannot penalize them for failing, Staples said.

Even so, the bill for the village's erratic record-keeping may be coming due.

Kane County Treasurer David Rickett is withholding the first installment of about \$6 million in property taxes due the village. Rickett has refused to release the funds, about 25 percent of Carpentersville's general fund, until the town files its 2003 financial statements. Those reports were due June 3.

AUDITS: Firm found problems with books in '00

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

said Ciskeo Staples, director of local government for state Comptroller Dan Hynes' office. "If they're at this point, they're being mismanaged," Staples said. "It doesn't happen any other way."

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METROPOLITAN
DIGEST

KANE COUNTY

County tracking
Salmonella trail

The Kane County Health Department said Monday it is trying to trace the source of a salmonella outbreak at an Aurora grocery that sent one person to the hospital.

Epidemiologist Cindy Gross said the investigation has not been expanded beyond the four confirmed and 17 suspected cases of salmonella infection identified last week in connection with take-out food purchased at El Paso Grande Grocer, 634 E. New York Ave.

"We're still looking for the source," she said. "We're not looking at any other restaurants."

The Health Department recommends throwing away any food, other than canned, purchased at the grocery on or after May 21.

Gross said the store, which is closed temporarily and is cooperating with investigators, prepares some foods for take-out "and the individuals who are ill had purchased the food as take-out items."

The county Health Department is awaiting the results of laboratory tests by the state in an effort to identify a potential source of the contamination.



6-15-04
Paying taxes *Chicago Tribune*

Ariana Elizondo, 2, joins grandmother Maria Rojas and others at the Kane County Government Center in Geneva to pay property taxes Monday, when the first installment was due.

6-15-04 Chronicle

Elburn considers increasing water bill by 17.25 percent

Village expected to hire firm to remove radium

By DAN CHANZIT
Kane County Chronicle

ELBURN — Village officials next week are expected to hire Colorado-based Water Remediation Technology to remove radium from Elburn's water supply.

Under the agreement, water rates would go up from \$2 per 100 cubic feet to \$2.69 per 100 cubic feet. Sewer rates would remain at \$2 per 100 cubic feet.

A resident who pays \$40 per quarter for water would pay \$53.80, a 34.5 percent increase.

Because the sewer rate remains the same, the overall increase is 17.25 percent.

Water rates have remained the same for 18 years.

The reason for the rate increase is so the village can pay for a \$2.2 million project designed to remove trace amounts of radium from Elburn water.

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency requires all municipalities to comply with

By the numbers

Prices of liquids, per 100 cubic feet

- Elburn water: \$2.69
- Gas (\$2.11/gallon): \$1,578
- Milk (\$3.69/gallon) \$2,760
- Mountain Dew (\$7.48/gallon): \$5,601
- Beer (\$8.87/gallon): \$6,653

Source: Village of Elburn

Rate increase

- Under the proposed contract with Water Remediation Technology, a resident who pays \$40 per quarter for water would pay \$53.80.
- Elburn water rates have remained the same for 18 years.

new water quality standards, which include lower radium levels. Radium is a naturally occurring radioactive material found in most deep wells around northern Illinois.

Previously, Elburn officials had considered using a method called ion exchange to rid the village's water of radium.

That method was expected to cost about \$4.5 million plus another \$500,000 each year for chemicals. Batavia officials selected a different method that raised rates by about 40 percent.

Last April, Colorado-based Water Remediation Technology officials contacted Elburn and said they could remove the radium for less money.

"We had to look at this new

technology," Village President James Willey said. "We can't afford not to look at it."

WRT's method involves sending water through pipes and filters made of the mineral zeolite. Radium is trapped by the filters because it clings to the zeolite.

The technology reduces radium to less than 5 picocuries per liter, which is the EPA limit.

If trustees sign the proposed contract, the village would agree to pay up front \$575,000 for project costs rather than finance the balance.

The village would recapture the investment from residents over 20 years. That money would go toward village water infrastructure improvements.