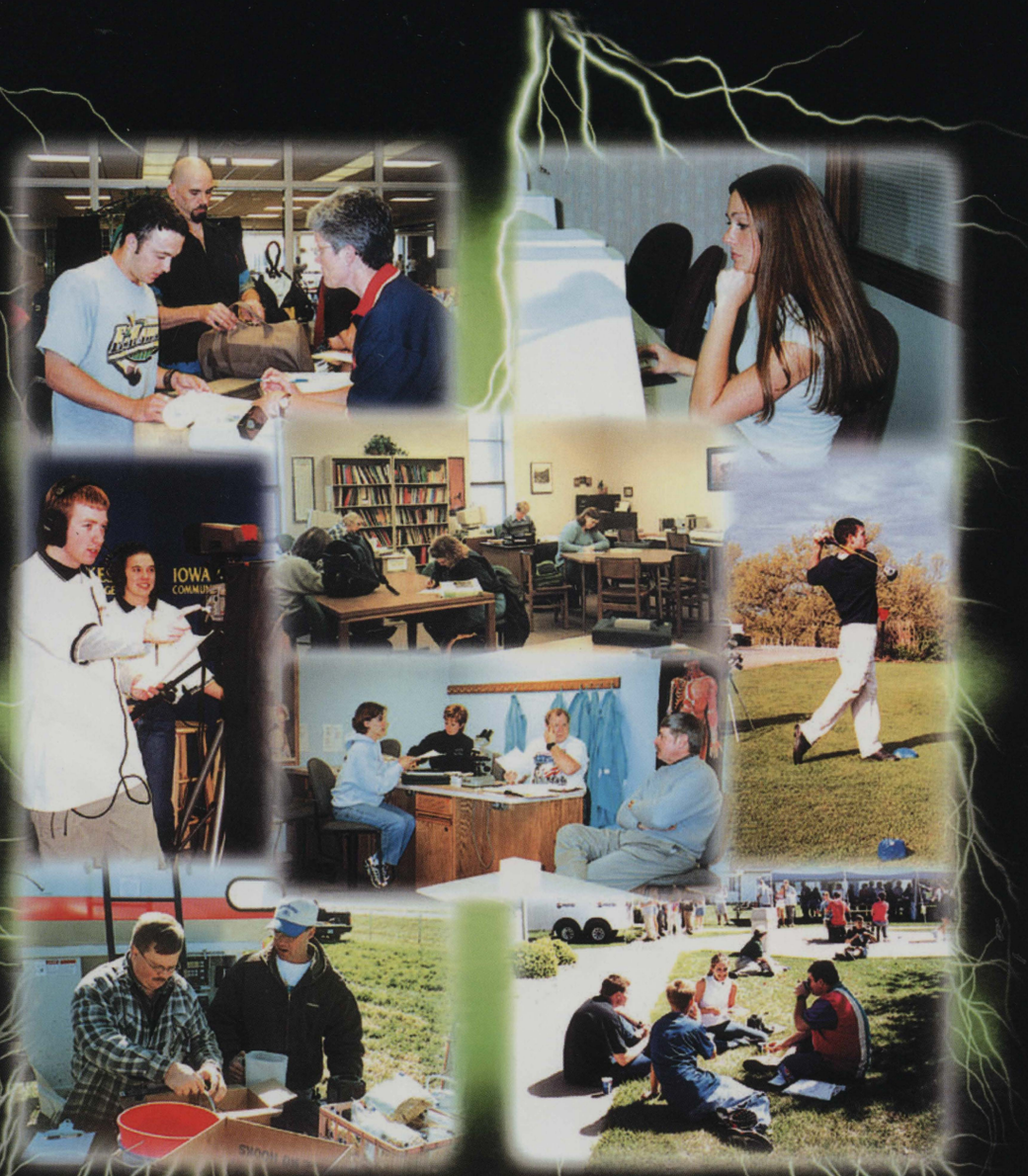
Portraits

Of the Iowa Great Lakes

Every year the staff of the Dickinson County News spends several months preparing this special section, an edition filled with the stories of the people and places that are the Iowa Great Lakes.

Dickinson County News • March 2003



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Welcome ...

Inside these pages, you'll find detailed stories on the everyday lives of people in the Lakes region we all love to call home.

We've illuminated the faces of many citizens who work to make this area what it is, revealing the passions that drive their lives, their jobs and their enjoyment of the Lakes.

Some of our featured faces are familiar players. Others we found hidden behind the scenes, and still others are just beginning their tenure of impact on the area.

While the *Dickinson County News* has traditionally produced a "progress" edition at this time of the year, we wanted to present the stories in an exciting new magazine style format. This book is an annual effort of the *Dickinson County News*, consuming months of interviewing, writing, photography and creative advertising efforts.

Welcome... We hope you find enjoyment in Portraits for weeks and months to come.

On the cover:

The Iowa Great Lakes is a place where fun abounds. Smiles and laughter are a huge part of what makes the Iowa Great Lakes a premier place to live and play. This photograph was taken last summer at a Dickinson County community celebration. *Dickinson County News* staff writer Joy Hibma snapped the photo.

Portraits
of the Iowa Great Lakes

March 2003

A special of ***The Dickinson County News*** • 1706 Ithaca Ave., Spirit Lake, Iowa

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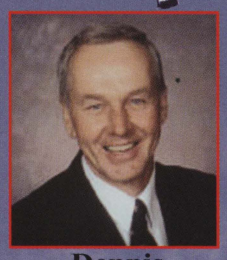
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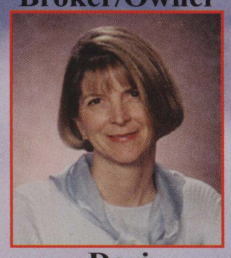
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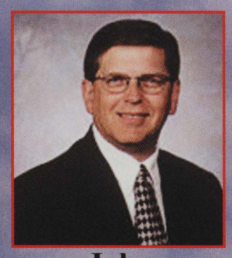
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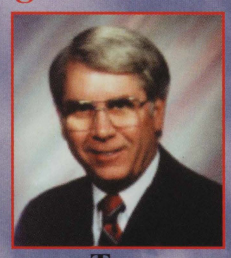
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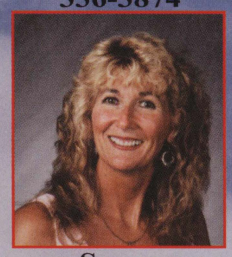
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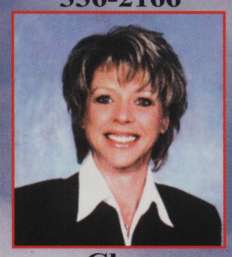
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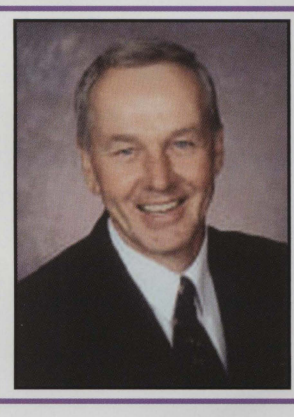
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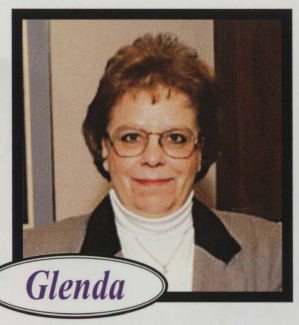
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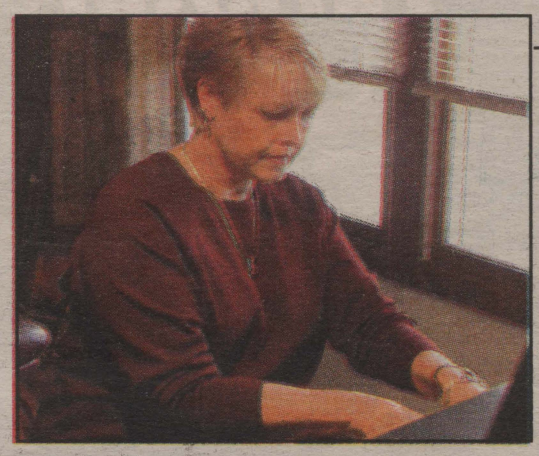
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Healing hands

Linda Hinshaw heals swans, squirrels, raccoons and more



The healing hands of Linda Hinshaw have cured more than 15,000 creatures in her 23 years of helping animals. Hinshaw got her start with the charity in the early 1980s, first caring for five baby raccoons.

DCN photo by Anitra Wolf

By ANITRA WOLF
Managing Editor



Linda Hinshaw's home is one of the most unique places in the Iowa Great Lakes. Ironically, one could drive by it hundreds of times without having any idea of its value.

Hinshaw has a nice view of the lake. She has a warm cozy fireplace and there is a large deck out front.

But what makes Hinshaw's home unique is not its location or even the remodeling work being done.

Hinshaw's home is unique because it doubles as a wildlife refuge.

On an early spring day, Hinshaw's routine includes caring for everything from trumpeter swans to owls.

When she walks through her house performing her day's work, thirty-some infant raccoons spring up to get attention.

A two-week-old squirrel burrows in the hands of its caretaker as she changes its blankets.

Two mini chickadees eat cat food from a tiny spoon.

And as she administers a bottle to a two-week old fawn, she sighs and says, "This is why I do what I do."

Hinshaw's home doubles as an animal refuge because she operates the Orphaned and Injured Wildlife Refuge in Spirit Lake. While her home may look ordinary from the outside, what goes on inside is extraordinary.

On any given day, Hinshaw houses a number of injured or orphaned creatures in her house. It's not unusual to find squirrels, rabbits, owls, pigeons and even swans in her home.

One of Hinshaw's most notable visitors was Clyde, a trumpeter swan. Clyde was injured in an automobile accident near Buffalo Run. Soon after the accident, he was transported to Hinshaw's home – the Orphaned and Injured Wildlife Center.

"He was brought in gasping that Thursday (April 4)," said Hinshaw. "I thought he was going to die."

Clyde had a fractured shoulder, wing and leg when he arrived. He also had some internal bleeding. Things looked serious.

"But the x-rays didn't turn out as bad as we expected," she said. 'It looks repairable, but we won't know for a while if he will be able to fly again."

Clyde has since undergone a remarkable recovery and now lives in a swan pen near Clear Lake where he has chosen a new mate.

Hinshaw loved every moment she got to spend with Cylde, and feels the same way about most of her patients.

"I really love these animals," she said. "My whole life I wanted to be a veterinarian."

Hinshaw began her career in wildlife care 23 years ago. And while

→

"I have connected with wildlife in ways you will never read about in any book. There is so much more here than pure science. How do I put into words the bond of trust that can form when you see the fear leave their eyes and the gratitude and relief set in. I know that the animals need me, and they tell me in so many ways, other than words, that they feel safe and appreciate the care I give them. To get to the heart of the matter, the real truth is that I need them more."

Linda Hinshaw

she didn't exactly become a vet, Hinshaw does get to work intimately with the animals she cares for on a day-to-day basis.

"I was always the person in the neighborhood who would take care of the injured animals," she said.

After gaining this reputation, Hinshaw soon saw the need to branch out.

"I started to pester the Department of Natural Resources at an Audubon Society Meeting," she said. "Soon, I had five baby raccoons to take care of. They were pleased with my first efforts and decided to take on the charity."

There was no organizational structure in the early 1980s for care of injured wildlife.

"To do it legally, I had to be sworn to an oath," she said. "The binding contract was a one dollar bill. That's my lucky dollar bill, and I still have it."

So, Hinshaw took an oath in front of Department of Natural Resources representatives.

"I promised to care for them, to not make them my pets, and to release them when they were healed," said Hinshaw. "Later that summer, I cared for more raccoons and some baby owls, and it just exploded from there."

So for more than 20 years, Hinshaw has operated the Orphaned and Injured Wildlife Hospital in Spirit Lake, caring for many types of wildlife, including swans, owls, raccoons, rabbits, fawns and others.

"I love nature," she said. "I love wild things. In this job, I get to touch them, handle them and help them."

Since opening, Hinshaw has cared for more than 15,000 animals from throughout Iowa and surrounding states. Today, she gets calls from all over the country for advice on wildlife care.

This year was a little out of the ordinary for Hinshaw. She met with an unlikely foe – the West Nile Virus.

"We saw a dozen owls, two swans and some red tails, all infected with the West Nile Virus," she said. "All but one survived."

Hinshaw expects the West Nile Virus to reappear this spring and summer.

"I think it's going to get worse before it gets better," she said. "Over time, the birds will develop an immunity."

While caring for wildlife has indeed become a full-time job, Hinshaw doesn't stop there. She has also given educational programs to more than 100,000 children using a short eared owl as an educational tool.

"The owl allows kids to see what I'm talking about," said Hinshaw. "It gives them hands-on experience and they learn from that."

After 23 years, thousands of injured animals and many, many educational programs, one might think she's ready for a



Linda Hinshaw holds an adult male trumpeter swan that was recently cared for at the Orphaned and Injured Wildlife Hospital in Spirit Lake. Hinshaw takes care of thousands of animals each year and handles many of the swans in Iowa's restoration program.

DCN photo by Anitra Wolf

A matter of need

by Linda Hinshaw

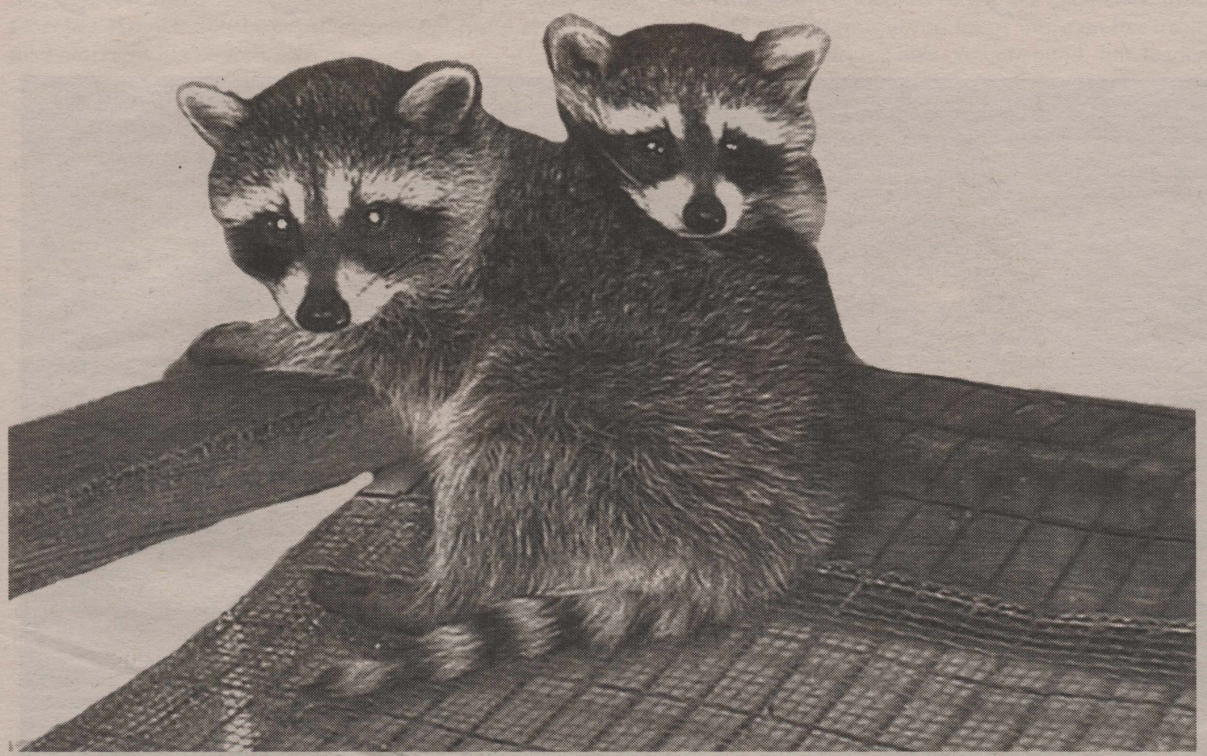
"I have connected with wildlife in ways you will never read about in any book. There is so much more here than pure science. How do I put into words the bond of trust that can form when you see the fear leave their eyes, and the gratitude and relief set in. I know that the animals need me, and they tell me in so many ways, other than words, that they feel safe and appreciate the care I give them. To get to the heart of the matter, the real truth is that I need them more.

Take time to look, smell, listen and touch Nature. Drink it into your spirit. The great power, beauty and majesty will heal your soul. You will be reborn and truly see for the first time."

This piece appeared in one of Hinshaw's charity newsletters. Reprinted with permission.

"You could say my hobby is my work. I still love it. The animals are a lot of fun too. They've all got such unique personalities."

Linda Hinshaw



but Hinshaw says this isn't the case at all.

"You could say my hobby is my work," she said. "I still love it. The animals are a lot of fun too. They've all got such unique personalities."

It takes a unique person and a special personality to do what Hinshaw has done.

And she plans to continue her extraordinary work in her ordinary looking home for years to come.

About Orphaned and Injured Wildlife

Orphan and Injured Wildlife, Inc. is a non-profit, tax exempt licensed wildlife care facility located in Spirit Lake. Their mission is to provide quality care to wildlife, returning them to the wild when they're ready and to promote awareness, understanding and respect for wildlife through educational programs.

The operation, under the direction of Linda Hinshaw, cares for several hundred wild animals and birds each year. Hinshaw performs all care duties and is assisted by veterinarian Ross Dirks with the more serious cases.

Orphaned and Injured Wildlife, Inc. operates on donations. To donate to the cause, send money to Orphaned and Injured Wildlife, 3012 Center Lake Drive, Spirit Lake, Iowa 51360.

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A Family portrait

A snapshot into the lives of the Tom Ransom family

By JOY HIBMA
Staff Writer



Snap: Ryan spots up for a three-point shot. It arches high into the air and swish, increases the team's lead.



Snap: Randi Ransom penetrates, dishing the ball off to a teammate. It bounces hard to the right; she gets the rebound and the bucket.



Snap: Tom stands up, giving out instruction to a young player. He's a teacher and a coach, pointing out better solutions and giving encouraging words when hard work pays off.



Snap: LeAnn sits anxiously, waiting to see what will happen. With the rest of her family actively participating, she wants each one to do their best. She's the encourager and supporter and she types up Tom's game plans.

Most in the area have seen or heard of the Tom Ransom family. Ryan and Randi have wowed opponents in various sports over the years. Their talent, combined with their quickness and support for each other, only benefits the teams on which they play.

The desire Ryan and Randi have for hard work and success also shows up in the classroom as both are talented students and have had a wide range of success in music and other activities.

But it's the family's closeness that impresses most.

"We're a close knit family," said Tom, Ryan and Randi's father. "We support each other in the good times and the bad."

LeAnn, his wife, agreed.

"It's a blessing to see how close Ryan and Randi are," she said. "They get along so well, and they support each other. Ryan is Randi's best friend and vice versa."

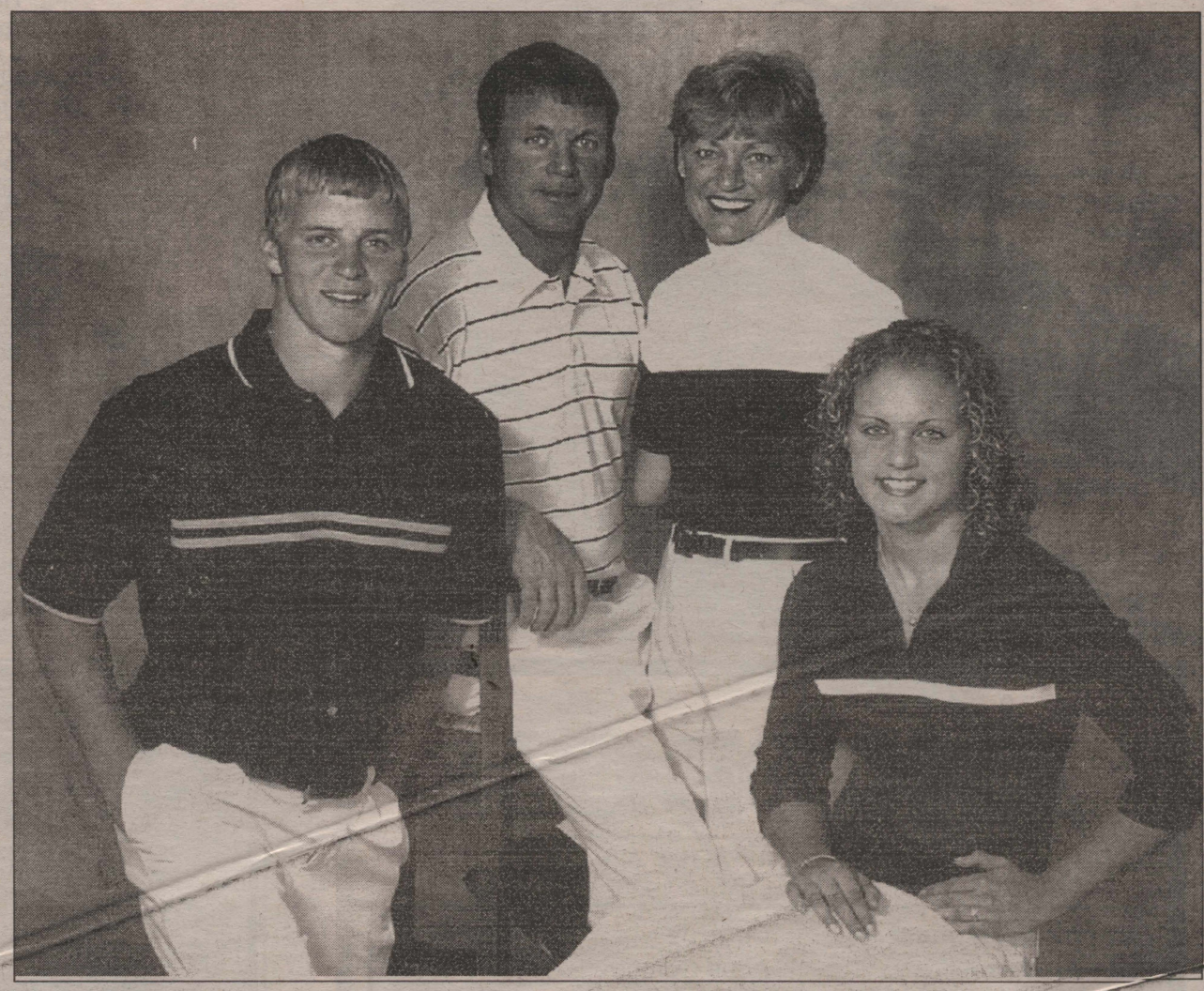
The friendship the two siblings share has been a definite blessing this year. It has been a support line for one of them specifically.

In early December, Randi, a junior at Harris-Lake Park and one of the better point guards in Northwest Iowa, went down hard in the middle of one of her games.

During that moment, everything stopped ... for Randi, for her parents and for her brother.

Randi had already made her mark that fateful night, quietly scoring 28 points and getting several assists. She had easily handled the ball and the press, breaking down the defense. It was hard not to miss her basketball expertise.

But the hard fall in the third quarter stopped all that.



The Tom Ransom family posed for this family portrait this past summer. contributed photo

Fans held their breath as they heard the agonizing cries of pain.

Randi had fallen hard on her left knee, tearing her ACL and part of the meniscus. It meant a two-hour knee surgery and several months of rehabilitation — she was done for the season.

The fall affected the rest of the family as well.

"It was hard on all of us," LeAnn said. "You could even tell in how Ryan was playing those next few games. It got all of us down."

.....

Ryan, who also plays in the point guard position, has led the boys team through a successful season this year. His athletic skills — football, basketball and baseball — are something coaches appreciate. To opponents, he's seen as a threat they have to stop.

But both Ryan and Randi would say it was the hard work they have put in together that made them what they are today.

"It's fun as parents to see how your children relate, because those two have always enjoyed being around each other and had a friendly rivalry," LeAnn said. "At two, Randi didn't want a doll, she wanted a Michael Jorden basketball hoop. The two of them wore that thing out."

As they grew older, the competition grew more fierce. Both Ryan and Randi spent a lot of time playing at their outdoor hoop, and during the winter months it wasn't uncommon to find the two going one-on-one with each other at the Harris Elementary, where LeAnn is a second grade teacher.

However, the two siblings are also individuals. They both have a passion and love for sports — some of them the same — but they have different interests as well.

Ryan quarterbacked the Wolves football team the last several years and plays an active role on the baseball team. He also ran sprints for the Spirit Lake Park track team.

He's also a good student and works hard to maintain his grade point average and is on the school's National Honor Society. Recently, he was named to the Iowa Basketball Coaches Association boys Academic All-State team. He's also active in his church's youth group.

But for those who know him well, it's the time he gets to spend outdoors that he enjoys the most.

"I really enjoy being able to be out in the open," Ryan said. "It's something I find time for."

It's not uncommon to find Ryan out hunting or fishing, something father and son often do together.

This year their goal was to find a big buck.

"We never found the one we wanted," Ryan said. "We passed up a lot, but it makes it more of a challenge to be more selective."

Tom agrees, especially since they have a freezer full of deer from last year.

.....

Although Randi isn't into hunting or fishing, she specializes in her own extracurricular activities.

Starting on H-LP's volleyball team, she has surprised several opponents with her spikes or digs.

Her athleticism is also quite apparent on SLP's track team. Running sprints, she participated in several state relays the last two years.

Although fans won't see her running around the track this spring, they should see her on the softball field in the summer; participating in a sport she loves almost as much as basketball.

"It's fun to play," Randi said. "I really hope I'll be able to once summer comes."

While she works hard to get her knee back in shape, she has had the opportunity to focus more on her trumpet.

First chair in jazz and concert band, her leadership and musical talent is something many musicians appreciate.

She excels in the classroom and is on the school's National Honor Society. She is involved with her church's youth group.

"I guess whatever I do I want to do my best," Randi said. "I appreciate the support my family gives me in the things I do."

Ryan also appreciates the family support.

"I'm glad we get along so well," he said.

However, it's not hard to trace both Ryan's and Randi's commitment, dedication and talent.

.....

Both Tom and LeAnn excelled growing up and have worked hard to pass on those skills to their children.

Tom always enjoyed sports, even playing football and baseball at Sioux Falls College. It's where he met LeAnn, who attended there for two years and then transferred to Westmar College in LeMars.

Immediately after college (in 1973), Tom began teaching and coaching at Meriden-Cleghorn school system in Northwest Iowa. He taught science and physical education courses while coaching football, girls basketball and track.

"It was almost too much that first year," he said. "Then my second year, I dropped girls basketball, but picked up the position of Athletic Director. I'm not sure how that gave me more time."

In the summer of 1975, Tom and LeAnn were married.

"Right after that we started graduate school," LeAnn said. "It's what we had to do."

LeAnn needed the graduate school courses because even though she had her bachelors in elementary education, she went on to get her resource room and special education expertise.

"What fun we had that summer," LeAnn said. "We took courses and in our free time, we played tennis and golfed."

In 1978, Tom was offered an opportunity to work in South Sioux City. But it was a position he only held for a year.

"I enjoyed it, and it was good," he said. "But it was also hard. There's a lot of advantages of being in a smaller school system, and I realized that once I taught and coached in Sioux City."

After that experience, Tom decided to get out of teaching and get back into farming. The couple moved to Harris where Tom grew up, living on the acreage Tom was raised.

"I did miss coaching, especially since I had the opportunity to coach a lot of great kids — some I still stay in contact with to this day," he said. "But farming has been good and I have enjoyed it."

Tom was the one that stayed home with Ryan and Randi as they grew up. Being a self-employed farmer, he had a little more leeway.

"I remember when Ryan was born," LeAnn said. "The first thing Tom gave him was a Nerf football and basketball."

While LeAnn continued to teach, Tom helped Ryan and Randi get ready for school. The three read a lot of books and both kids easily learned their alphabet at a young age.

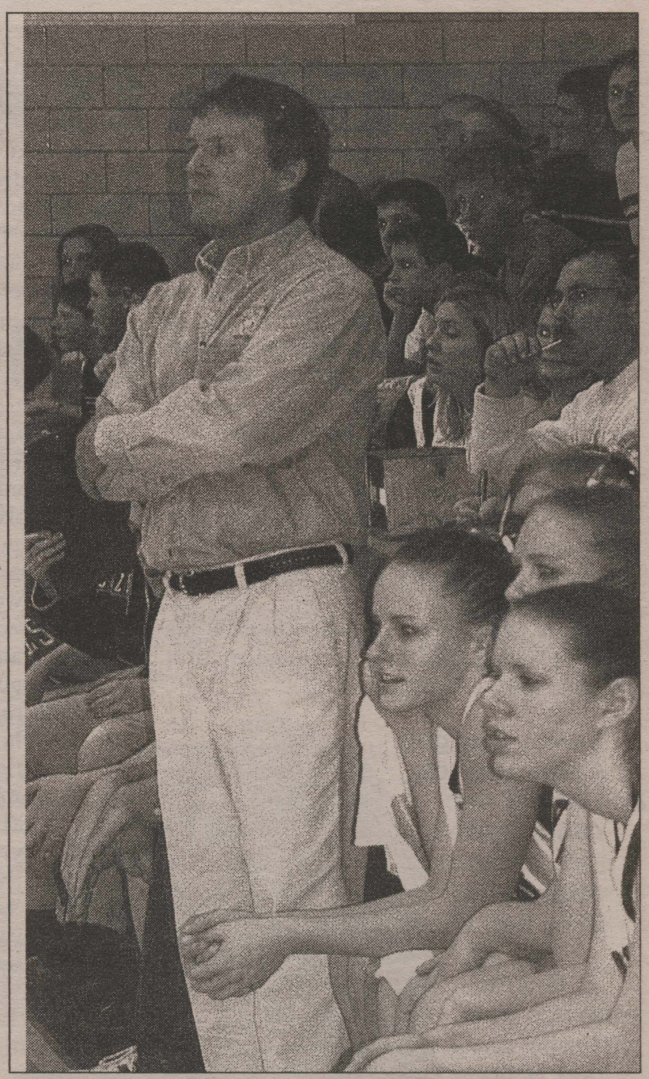
Tom also had the evening meal ready by the time LeAnn got home from school.

"That's one thing I miss now," LeAnn said with a laugh.

LeAnn has worked in the H-LP school system for 13 years, but she has 28 years of teaching under her belt. Prior to being the second grade teacher at H-LP, she worked in the Spirit Lake school system for nine years.

"It was a good change, as it gave me the opportunity to be in the same school system as my kids," she said. "I started here when Ryan was in kindergarten."

Until a year ago, Tom and LeAnn mostly supported their kids from the stands. Tom did coach his kids in the younger grades, and at times, he refereed junior high games, but he hadn't been involved in high school sports



DCN photo by Joy Hibma

Tom watches a game from the sidelines, seeing how it plays out.

for almost 20 years.

Last year, Tom was asked to help coach girls basketball. Gary Richardson, then the school's superintendent and a good friend of the Ransoms, talked him into it.

It also helped that Randi was playing.

"But then Gary leaves us," Tom said with a smile.

Tom took the head coaching position when Richardson accepted a position as superintendent in the MOC-Floyd Valley school system. It became something he was looking forward to.

"We have a good bunch of girls; some of them young, but with a lot of potential," Tom said.

.....

On the night of Randi's injury, everything seemed to be going well. The Wolves were up by 30 points in the third — then she went down.

Tom's heart went out when he saw his daughter fall and cry, because at that moment, he was a father,



LeAnn hugged Lydia Brandt, one of her second grade students., after Lydia gave her a pie at Grandparent's and Friends day last November.

DCN photo by Joy Hibma

not a coach.

"It was one of the hardest games I've ever had to coach," he said.

The next week the family found out that Randi needed surgery.

But Tom and the rest of the girls did their best. The three months were used to develop younger players and use the expertise of upperclassmen.

A freshman came up to play the point guard position, and many others had the opportunity to have a lot of varsity playing time.

"It gave a lot of younger players experience that will only benefit the team in the future," Tom said.

The Wolves lost several games by less than three points, and by the end of the season, the hard work was beginning to pay off. They were learning their fundamentals and were recognizing opportunities to score and penetrate.

But because of the closeness of the family, the rest hurt right along with each loss. It wasn't easy for Randi to watch her friends and teammates struggle.

LeAnn has spent plenty of time in nail-biting situations over the years as well; she felt her husband's pain, as well as the team's. But then in her own way, she participates; she types up Tom's game plans.

"It's easier for me to do them," she said.

LeAnn also said that the family wins and loses together.

"It's a family thing," she said. "Whether it's Tom, Randi or Ryan, we win and lose together."

It's most likely what makes this family so special, and something many dream of having.

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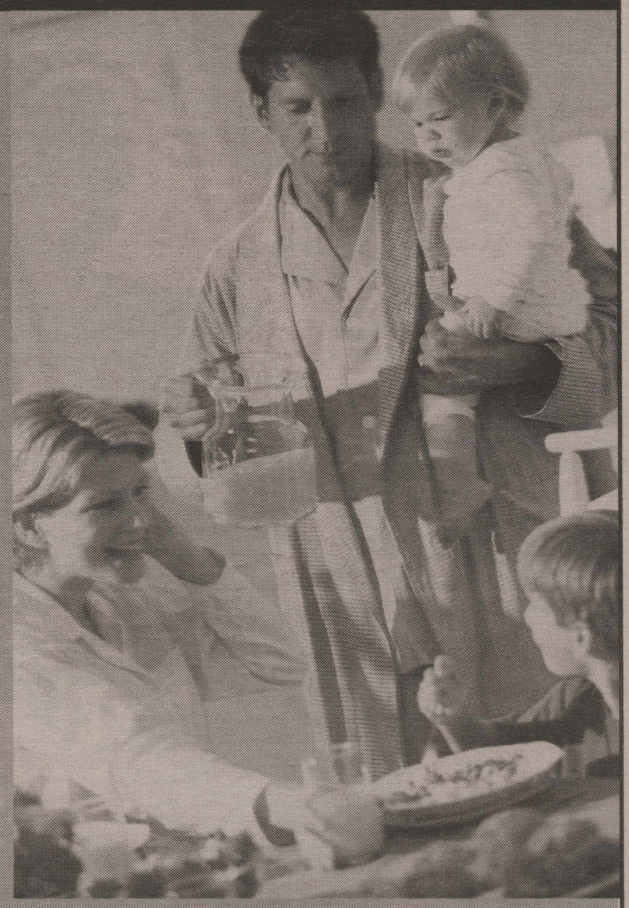
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Marilyn Maye posed with an Okoboji fan following one of her performances in the Iowa Great Lakes. But not before changing into some more comfortable clothes.

DCN photo by Anitra Wolf

Marilyn Maye holds special memories of Okoboji

By ANITRA WOLF
Managing Editor

It was the early 1960s. The air was dry, the dust was plentiful and it was evident that a horrible drought had hit Iowa.

Yet, floods of people flocked to the Lakeview Room at The Inn in Okoboji to hear Marilyn Maye perform.

Mid-show she began to sing one of her songs, "Rain." And although Iowa hadn't seen rain in weeks, the skies opened at her command, offered a loud clap of thunder and a downpour began.

"It was so amazing that it happened at that very moment," she said.

Many are hoping she'll bring rain with her once again this year, at her performances at the Inn on July 10, 11 and 12.

Maye said she's thrilled to be coming.

"There are very few places where I play where I know four generations of people," said Maye. "That's what's so wonderful about working up at the lake. That personal friendship is here."

And just how did Maye develop personal friendships with four generations of people?

Repeat appearances.

She's been coming to the Lakes to play since 1956.

"We first played at the Lakes when The New Inn opened," she recalled. "The parking lot wasn't laid yet and it was a rainy summer. The Lakeview Room wasn't finished yet, so we opened in the lobby."

Maye remembers singing "Rain" that summer, too.

"It ("Rain") soon became a trademark with us at the Lakes," she said.

And Maye's performances soon became a trademark of The Inn.

"We've played for 45 years at The Inn," said Maye.

Although she was absent a season or two, Maye estimates she's performed there about 35 times. She makes a point of getting to know her audience.

"We all become very dear friends," she said. "And if I don't know you going into a performance, by the end of the two hours, you'll be my very dear friend."

Maye has two particular friends at the Lakes who have raved about her performances.

Herman Richter, co-owner of The Three Sons and co-founder of the University of Okoboji, has seen her a number of times and has seen first-hand how much she enjoys her audiences.

"It's just so much fun to have her here," said Richter. "It's fun not only having her sing, but how she visits, too, and involves people in her show.

"You have a good time because she's having a good time," he continued.

Connie Cory reflected on Maye's style in a piece published in the Okobojian a few summers back.

"The sound was stunning, sophisticated, driving," she wrote. "I was hooked. We all were."

Maye counts both Richter and Cory as friends she enjoys when she visits the area.

At one point, Maye developed friendships through boat excursions on her Lakes boat. She named it the "Maye Day."

"Every year, we'd have our Christmas in July," she said. "My trio and I would buzz around the dock and sing Christmas songs to everyone in July."

And if having Lakes area friends and owning a boat here isn't enough, Maye has also earned some credits at the University of Okoboji.

She was the first U of O homecoming queen and is the university's music director.

As music director, Maye has written the U of O school song and composed

→



a song to help save Arnolds Park.

"Arnolds Park is very near and dear to my heart," she said.

Richter also said that Maye's concerts are an important part of the summer.

"It's a required course this summer at the University of Okoboji," he said. "Well, it's one of the only required courses, along with a ride on the Queen."

But Marilyn's fame spans further than the Lakes area. She is known around the world and has compiled a resume of national singing credits.

Maye grew up in Des Moines, and after she was discovered by Steve Allen, he helped launch her career on his television show. Since then, Maye has recorded seven albums and 34 singles and has made appearances at nearly every night club in the country. She also holds the record for performances on the Johnny Carson show.

Why the huge popularity? Some say it's the confidence, others the energy, but most of all, it's the sound.

Maye combines jazz, Broadway music and other styles in her performances. She expects to perform the same styles and songs this summer.

While Maye travels around the world performing, an Okoboji performance is always a bit more special to her – so special that she's put out a CD called "An Okoboji Maye," which was released last summer at her Okoboji performance.

"This CD has been released because I've had a long love affair with the Lake and the people who reside and/or vacation there during the summer," wrote Maye in the CD's jacket intro. "Lake Okoboji is a beautiful place with a spirit of joyfulness, fun and openheartedness."

"An Okoboji Maye" is available at The Inn's gift shop and at other locations throughout the Iowa Great Lakes.

Marilyn has embraced the Iowa Great Lakes region, and the people of the Lakes have embraced her.

"I love it because it's like a piece of heaven; something that's only found in Northwest Iowa," she said. "Lake Okoboji is one of the most wonderful lakes in the whole world, and my audiences always have a joyfulness and an open heart about them."

The University of Okoboji School Song

By: Marilyn Maye



Chorus:
A Pox on Yale — Poo Poo Purdue and
who needs Michigan State for American
Truth and knowledge too.
We must matriculate

To the University of Okoboja
You are the first to me
My life I owe ya
You teach the vital things
No class is boring
The education here is so rewarding.

1. We drive up 71
It's our life's highway
The place to study FUN
is here in Ioway.
The class in swimming is so sensational
'cause skinny-dipping is co-educational.

2. Congeniality is our prime purpose
Facing reality just makes us nervous.
Each lawyer will go far — I've always told ya
He'll never pass a bar at Okoboja.

3. Homecoming dances prove to be so swingin'
We love to meet the gang and we'll still be singin'
'Bout all the campus joy
that's always there for us
The student body knows
no school compares to us.

4. The class in brotherhood is so inspired.
A credit in goodwill is what's required
As each semester ends, we understand how to be a loyal friend and shake a hand now.

5. And when it's time that we have graduation
We'll value our degree in lake education.
We learn that love must be for all creation
To U. of O., we give our adoration.



"I love it because it's like a piece of heaven; something that's only found in Northwest Iowa. Lake Okoboji is one of the most wonderful lakes in the whole world, and my audiences always have a joyfulness and an open heart about them."

Marilyn Maye

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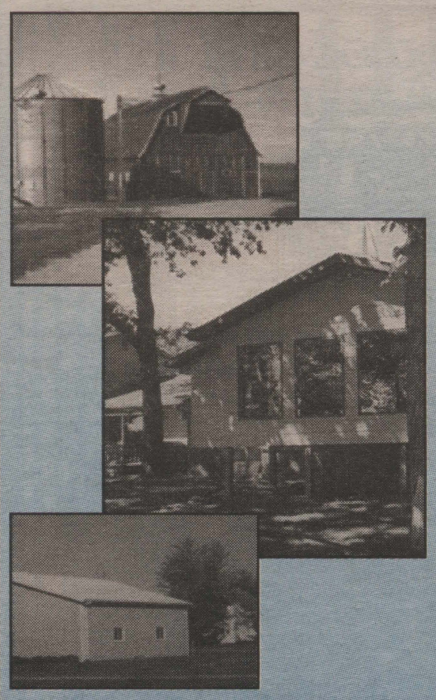
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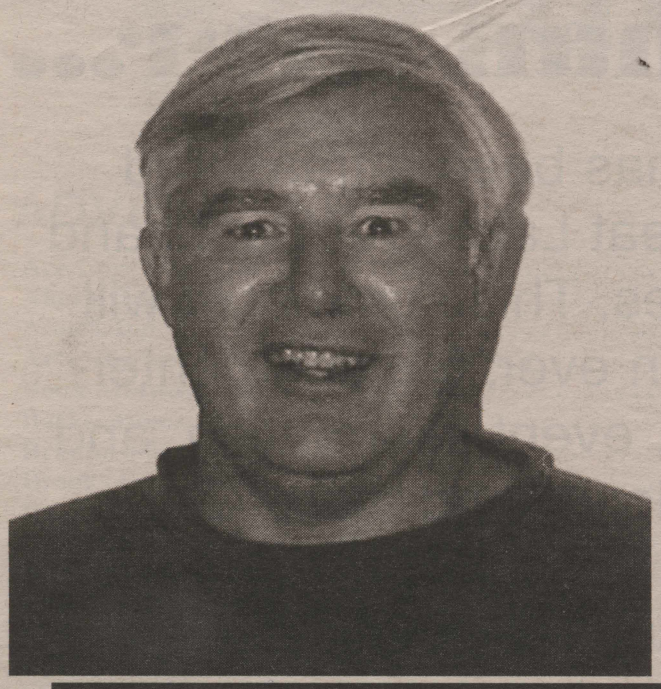
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Jessica Johnson

Bob Shaw shares contagious lakes enthusiasm



By CARLENE DEAN
Contributing Writer

Enthusiasm can be contagious. And a person would be hard-pressed to not catch the community-promotion bug from Spirit Lake business owner Bob Shaw. He is a walking testimonial to the greatness of the Iowa Great Lakes Area.

Shaw is the owner, or "custodian" as he puts it, of Shaw Paint, Glass and Locksmithing on 18th Street (U.S. Hwy 71/IA Hwy 9). He is an avid participant in his community; both as an entrepreneur and as a volunteer, he helps preserve, enhance and showcase that greatness.

In so doing, Shaw's work – and the efforts of others like him – helps the local area become more "colorful" and attractive in a variety of ways.

He came to Iowa in 1964 from his native Pennsylvania with a scholarship to attend the now-defunct Westmar College of LeMars. Upon graduating, he began his educational career and taught in a handful of Iowa towns, "all great communities," Shaw said.

His last position in that field was at Spirit Lake High School, where he taught physical education and coached athletics.

He enjoyed molding and inspiring young minds in the school setting. "I've always liked kids, and I enjoyed working with them," Shaw recalled.

But teaching meant the family had to relocate about every three to five years, he said. He reached the point where he wanted to put down roots for his family. Specifically, the idea was to plant them in Spirit Lake.

So, how did a former educator come to be the proprietor of a paint, glass and locksmithing supplies and service shop? To fulfill a dream and to grab on to the opportunity he felt the Lakes area was offering to him.

"I painted my summers through high school and college, and also while I was a teacher," he said. The dream took shape during his final years in the land of academia.

This vision, combined with his painting experience, led to the opening of the shop with the big yellow key and the multi-colored paint can on the front of the building.

Shaw loved his teaching profession, he also enjoys

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"We've worked real hard, we have great employees and a great customer base. We're having fun."

Bob Shaw

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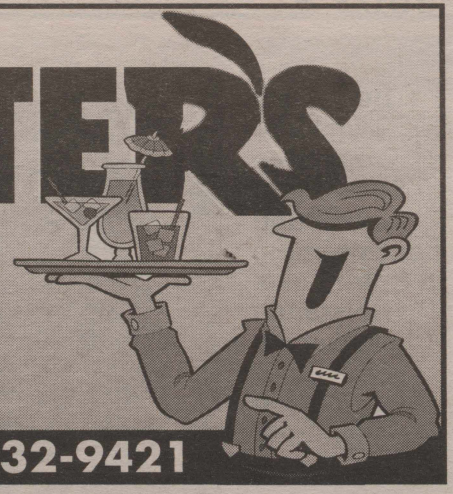
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Bob Shaw owns and operates Shaw Paint Glass and Locksmithing in Spirit Lake. He stands here beside some color samples in his store.

DCN photo by Michelle Kalkhoff

enjoys his part in the realm of business ownership. "We've worked real hard, we have great employees and a great customer base," he said. "We're having fun."

Being in business allows him to be involved in the community, kind of similar to the way he was while teaching. However, in the 25 years since opening the doors to his business, Shaw said he has preferred to avoid the limelight and work behind the scenes.

Beyond his role as a businessman, Shaw also participates in the area he loves through volunteer work. One of his notable activities includes being among a group of people who were responsible for starting the University of Okoboji Winter Games.

Begun in the late 1970s, this is an annual event held in January. "It (the Winter Games) started with a handful of people with cabin fever, wanting something to do. Now, we're into crowd control," Shaw said with a smile.

The first year of the event included an obstacle course put on by the Boy Scouts, ice sculpture, broomball and kids' ice fishing. Shaw said, "Our biggest concern was where to get the money to buy fishing poles for the kids."

That worry has long since gone by the wayside. The U of O Winter Games have expanded, adding new attractions over the years, and are very well attended. As a result, the event is self-sustaining and no longer relies on the local Chamber for funds.

One interesting activity during the cold-weather celebration is the "burning of the greens." This actually has roots, so to speak, in a Christmas tree-burning held by Shaw and some neighbors on New Year's Eve, a few years prior to the first Winter Games event.

Another feature is the U of O cheerleaders for the games, which was in part the brainchild of Shaw's wife, Kate. "This is a way to honor the 'givers' in our community, those who contribute so much of themselves," he said.

Shaw's volunteerism and business ownership have a sort of hand-in-glove relationship. He is deeply committed to his community and gives of himself to it.

There is a circular effect: The community reaps the benefits when the volunteers' efforts bring people to the Lakes area – something they do with a fair amount of success.

Once they are here, people enjoy the many offerings available to them, and they patronize local businesses. Some decide to move to the area and start new enterprises, which means more jobs and added growth. It is a win-win situation for all involved.

But Shaw is modest about his participation in all this. "I'm just another volunteer who enjoys what he does and wants to see it continue," he explained.

The "it" which he refers to encompasses the prosperity enjoyed by the Lakes area, plus the promotional activities which help attract people to it.

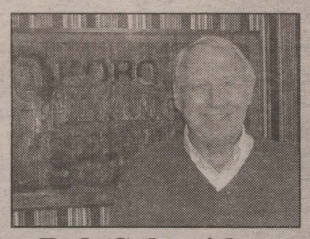
This is not a very difficult task. "We have so much to offer here," Shaw said with obvious pride. "We are a positive draw to people from a five-state area."

To what does he attribute this? "We have a very unique situation in that we are very self-sustaining here. Our economy stands alone. Always has, always will," he said.

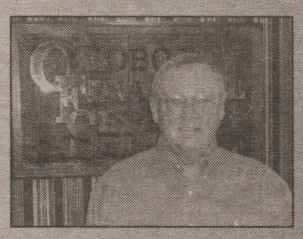
In addition to working on the Winter Games, Shaw's local involvement includes his membership at St. Mary's Catholic Church, where he serves as an usher and Eucharistic minister. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus, and also is on the board of directors for the Discovery House.

In different ways, Shaw's work in the painting industry and his volunteer activities both contribute to making the Lakes area a more colorful and pleasant place in which to visit and to live.

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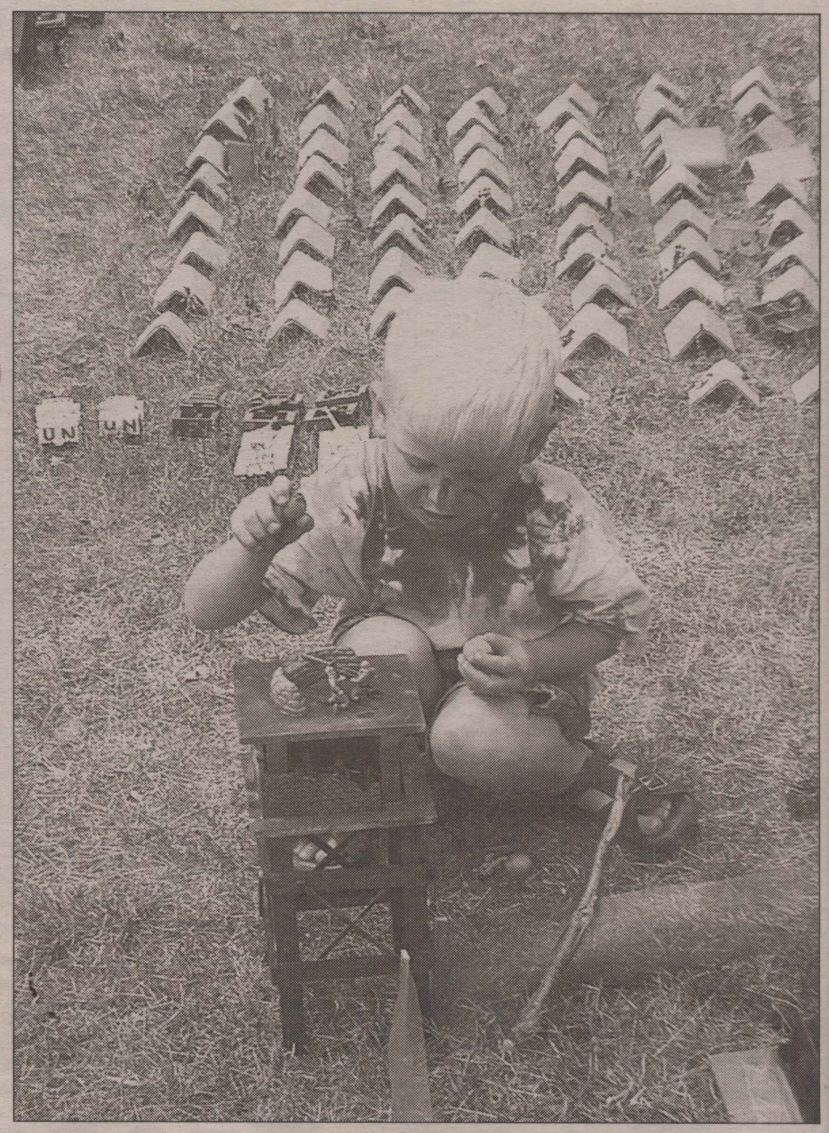
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Year in review –
In Pictures



Boji Falls, a log flume ride, had its grand opening in May 2002. The ride was donated to the park from another amusement facility and was reconstructed in the summer of 2001. In 2002, park patrons enjoyed the ride, especially on the hot days of summer, and in 2003, the ride will again be a special feature.



Youngster Jacob Nelson enjoyed a special Fourth of July celebration near Triboji Bay during his holiday visit. The military extravaganza was set up by five brothers for area youth to enjoy.

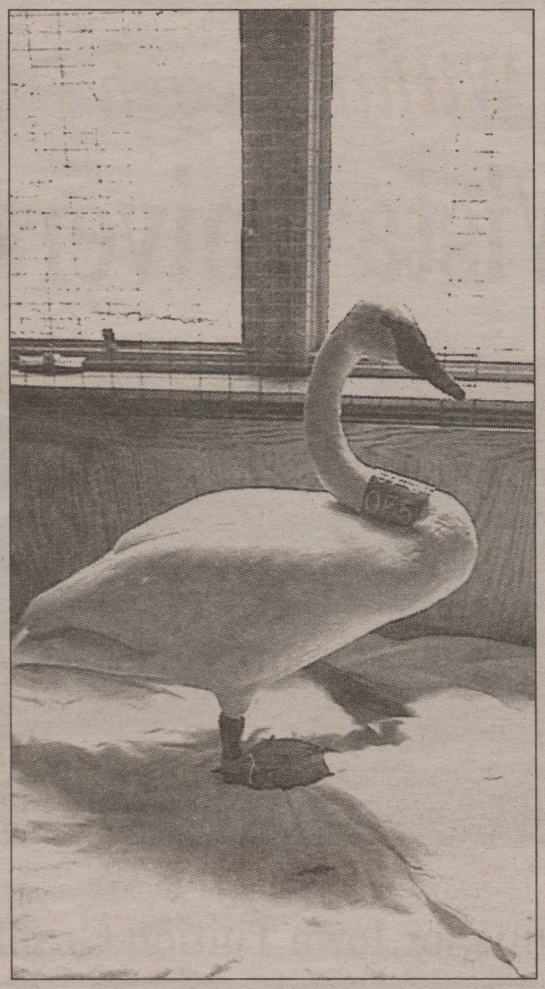


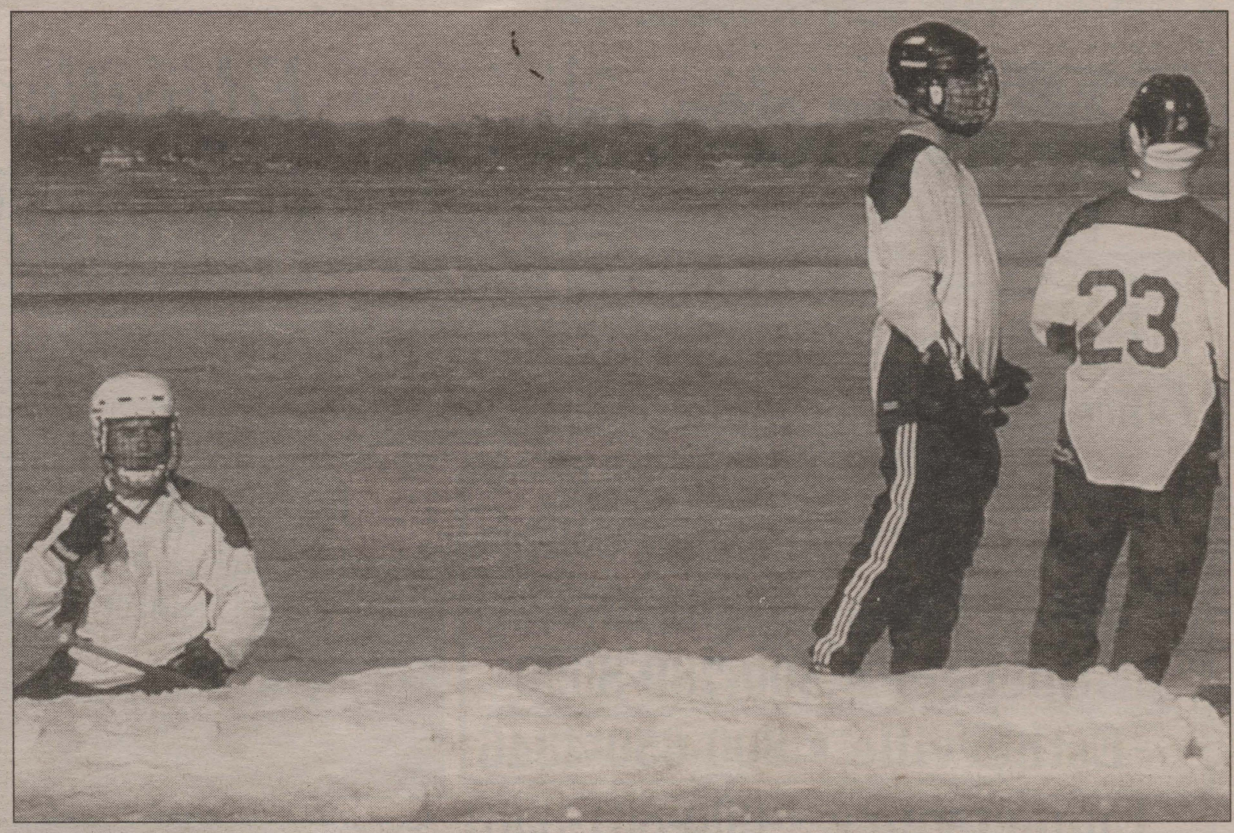
The Preservation Hall Jazz Band opened the Lauridsen Performing Arts Center at the Lakes Art Center in September. Frank Demond, the trombone player was one of seven band members to bring an extraordinary performance for the center's grand opening celebration.



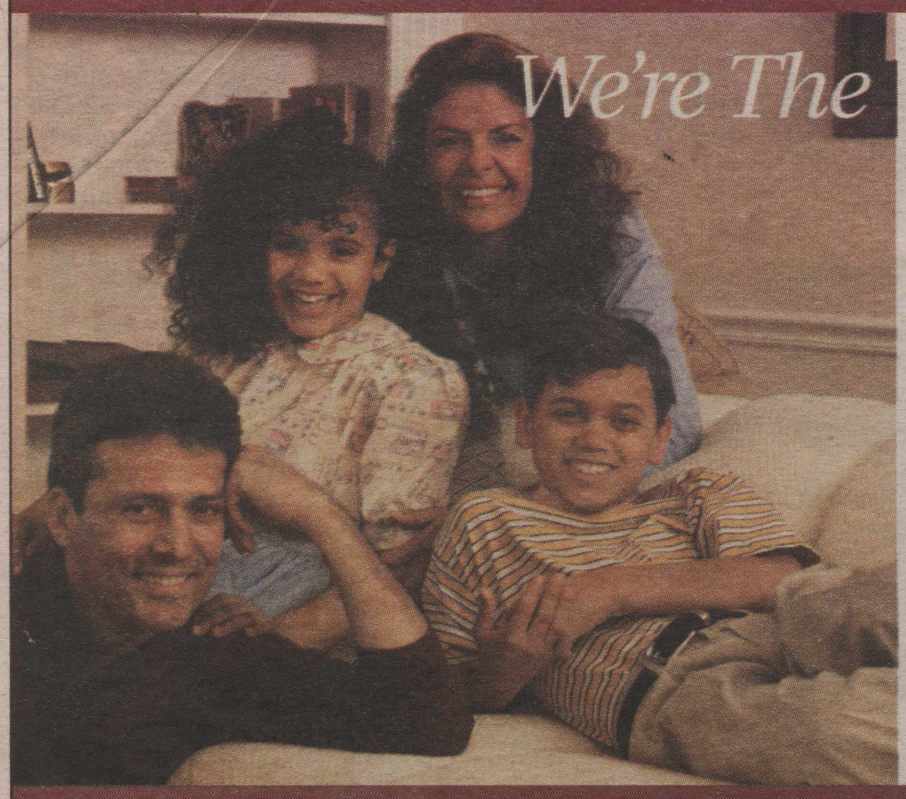
The Spirit of the Lakes Excursion Train hit the tracks last summer. The train travels from Orleans to Lake Park and features a dining car and a scenic trip through the area The train operates on a regular schedule in the summer, and also does special holiday excursion trips throughout the year

Clyde, a Lakes Area Trumpeter Swan, was injured in a hit and run accident in the spring of 2002. Clyde underwent treatment and has since been moved to a swan pen near Clear Lake, where he has chosen a new mate.





The 23rd annual University of Okoboji Winter Games took a bit of a hit this year with the lack of snow. But events still went on as scheduled, and the ice was thick enough to move the celebration back to Smith's Bay. These boys prepare for a game of ice hockey, one of many sporting activities that highlight the weekend.



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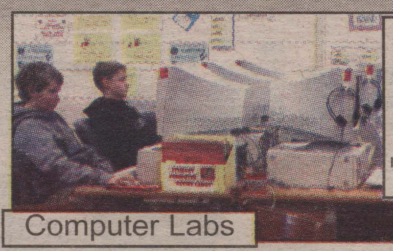
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Sixth graders complete Accelerated Reader tests in the Media Center. Each student at OMS has quarterly independent reading goals which they strive to meet through the Read-Up program.

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Miss Iowa

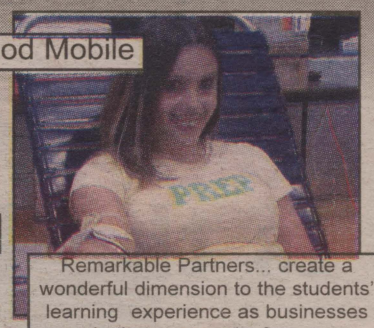


Role Models.... are critical for developing strong character. Miss Iowa 2002, Stephanie Moore, visits her elementary alma mater to encourage students "to follow their dreams."



Culinary Arts

Blood Mobile



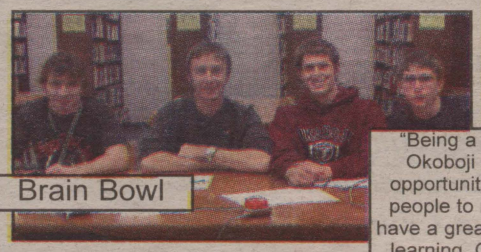
Remarkable Partners... create a wonderful dimension to the students' learning experience as businesses in the community form a relationship with "their" class.



OMS students and parents gathered at Kenue Park on Make a Difference Day to tear up carpet for the new Nature Center. OMS was awarded as the Red Ribbon School in Iowa for their volunteer efforts in relations to drug-free awareness.

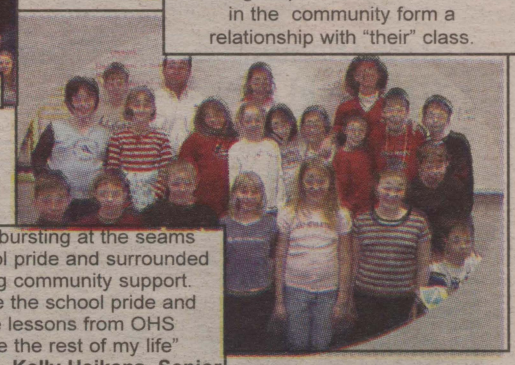


Jazz Band



Brain Bowl

"Being a student at Okoboji is a great opportunity for young people to mature and have a great experience learning. Okoboji is a school that achieves excellence through different strengths."
Chase Lenz, Senior



"OHS is bursting at the seams with school pride and surrounded by strong community support. I will take the school pride and the life lessons from OHS with me the rest of my life"
Kelly Heikens, Senior



OHS Students of the Month

School Match Award Winner

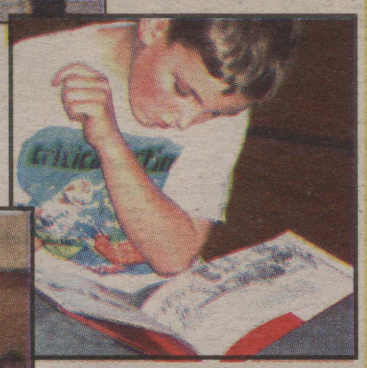
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"At Okoboji a student has a plethora of opportunities to pursue outside the classroom. there are multiple sports programs to be involved with as well as a fine music program and an excellent speech, debate and theater program."
Colin McDonough, Senior

Reading and Literacy... are very important at Okoboji Elementary. Special events such as Reading Under the Big Top promote reading as this young reader demonstrates.







Excellent Technology... This group of speech students are presenting in the Iowa Communications Network (ICN) classroom created for distance learning.

Variety of Sports



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Scott Oleson, Senior

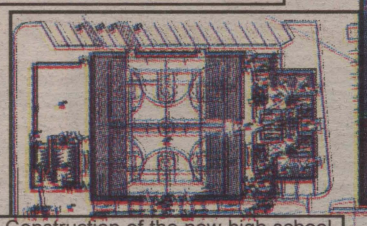


Pep. Band

Okoboji Community School District

Our Mission

"Preparing our learners for a productive life in a changing world...."

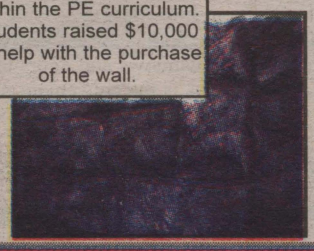


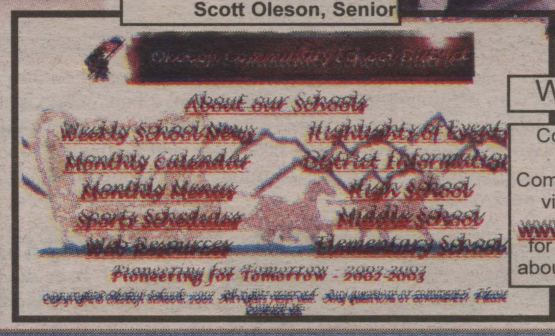
Construction of the new high school gymnasium and supporting facilities will begin in early summer.



State-of-the-Ar Facilities... New Construction to elementary building...includes a comprehensive Early Childhood Center including kindergarten classrooms and space for a prekindergarten program and expanded Media Center.

OMS is pleased to add a climbing wall to the gymnasium. It will be used within the PE curriculum. Students raised $10,000 to help with the purchase of the wall.





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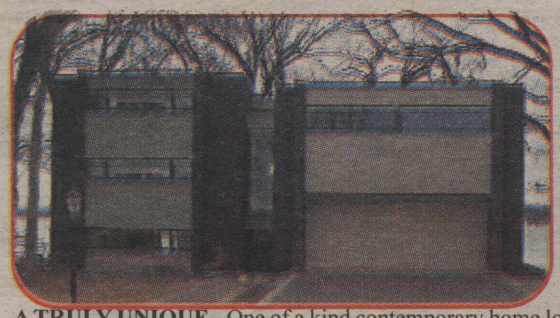
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WOW! - 100 Ft. of lakeshore with fantastic view and a completely remodeled home with vinyl siding and a loarge 2 car garage. Home features a large living room with a great view, nice dining room, large master bedroom and bath, plus 2nd bedroom and bath. Also features a large covered deck plus patio. Home is being sold mostly furnished including appliances plus washer and dryer.



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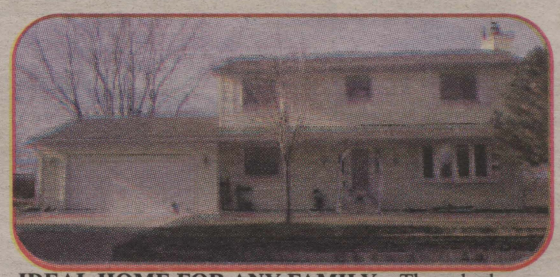


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Bruce Tepfer's love for children shines in his job



Bruce Tepfer shared in a Halloween lunch with some of his elementary students this past year. His direct involvement with the students and their day-to-day activities makes him a unique and well-loved superintendent.

DCN photo by Anitra Wolf

"Young kids are so loving and caring. And the dedication of this staff and community is incredible."

Bruce Tepfer
Terril Superintendent

By ANITRA WOLF
Managing Editor

If you ask any student in the Terril School system about their Superintendent Bruce Tepfer, you'll get some stories you wouldn't expect.

"Mr. Tepfer plays soccer with us in the snow," one student would say.

"We had a Halloween party with him in October – in the dark," another would chime in.

Another student might remember him dressing up as a clown for a party or as a Miss Terril contestant at a homecoming event.

Bruce Tepfer loves kids, and he loves his job. In his third year as Terril's superintendent and elementary principal, he doesn't see himself doing anything else.

"Young kids are so loving and caring," he said. "And the dedication of this staff and community is incredible."

Tepfer's career finally led him to Terril following several educational experiences.

Tepfer grew up in Fort Dodge, Iowa, and attended Iowa Central Community College, majoring in art. He then went on to Sioux Falls College (now the University of Sioux Falls) to earn his BA in Art Eduction.

He moved to Des Moines and worked as a graphic artist, but quickly decided that wasn't his calling.

"I just didn't feel like I was doing what I was supposed to be doing," he said.

So, Tepfer began his teaching career. His work included being an art teacher in Winthrop; teaching middle school, serving as principal and later as assistant superintendent in Webster City; and serving as principal in Perry. In the meantime, Tepfer also earned his masters degree.

Then, on a bit of a whim, he decided to move to Florida.

Tepfer attended a convention in Orlando, and soon found himself interviewing for a job at a school directly across the street from the ocean.

"I spent seven wonderful years there," he said.

It wasn't long before Tepfer felt a need to return to Iowa.

"I had a difference of opinion with the leadership at the school, my mother was not doing very well, and I missed the seasons," he explained.

Tepfer moved to Spirit Lake into a family cottage founded by his grandfather. He then got a job at Village West selling timeshares.

"Very few people realize it, but I've still got that job," he added.

While working at Village West, Tepfer received a call from St. John Vienney School in Fairmont, Minn., where he soon became principal. He worked there for six years before taking the job in Terril.

In just three years at the Terril School, Tepfer has compiled a long list of accomplishments, including the initiation of a Character Counts program, promoting a sound reading program, increasing Terril's technology capabilities, starting a preschool program, and fostering a community spirit for the school.

Despite a shaky future for the Terril district, Tepfer feels there will always be a school of some kind in the community and he hopes to be a part of it.

"I envision myself living up here and staying in Terril in some capacity," he said.

While being a superintendent and principal takes up a good deal of time, there is more to Tepfer than just his job.

"I've got a lot of friends, and I love to entertain," he said. "I've got constant company at the cottage."

Tepfer also has a number of hobbies: golf, fishing, landscaping, interior design, scuba diving and underwater photography.



Bruce Tepfer (right) posed as Miss Administration for a homecoming skit earlier this school year. Tepfer enjoys his job because he gets to have fun with the kids.

DCN photo by Anitra Wolf

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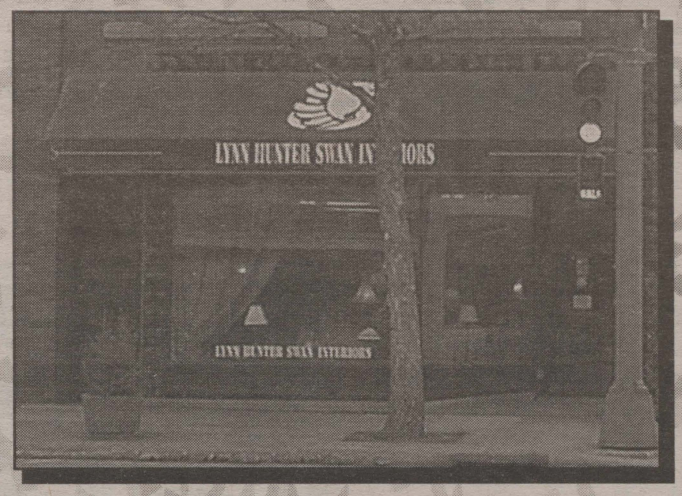


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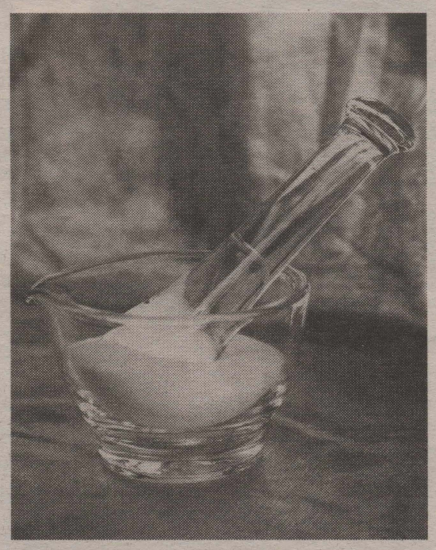
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Karen Carr teaches the art of music

By JOY HIBMA
Staff Writer



Playing piano and teaching piano technique is Karen Carr's livelihood, but also her passion.

DCN photo by Joy Hibma

A woman with a long history of commitment and success, pianist and teacher Karen Carr has a lot to be proud of. However, it's not anything she usually flaunts, much less wants to talk about.

Carr has been teaching piano for more than 38 years, 31 of them while living in the Lakes area. She began her national debut at age 10 when she played "Children's Corner" by Claude Debussy for a television program called "Happy's Party" in Philadelphia, Penn. Several months later, she played on T.V. for another program.

In college, she performed with the Tampa Philharmonic Orchestra and won a coveted young artist award. She even found herself playing Gershwin's "Concerto in F" with the local Symphony — she was only 17.

Also during college, she began giving lessons, even while taking her own lessons from well-known teacher and professor of music Lucille Dworshak at the University of Tampa.

It was those first lessons that enabled her to find her lifelong passion.

Since then, Carr has taught almost every year, only taking short breaks for periods when she got married and when her children were babies. Even though each year is different, currently, she gives over 50 lessons a week and 200 lessons a month. She is teaching children of former students and has had students go on to find enormous success.

"There are former students everywhere who are now piano teachers themselves," Carr said. "From Phoenix (Arizona) and Mason City to two who are teaching in the Twin Cities."

The two Twin Cities teachers are former students who competed against each other in their era. Now, they're best friends and get together every Friday to practice piano duets, as they're preparing a possible recital. They're also in each other's upcoming weddings.

A recent student, Jessica Hurley, gave her junior recital at Simpson College in Indianola in early November. A piano and vocal major, Hurley has worked hard to get to this point. Carr made sure she attended.

Even with all her musical background, Carr still tends to give credit where credit is due — to her father. She says he helped provide the foundation for her musical success.

"He was a trumpeter in the 40s and was a part of a dance band," Carr said. "He was my biggest motivator and encourager."

She remembers him saying when he came home every night, "Have you practiced today?"

"There are former students everywhere who are now piano teachers themselves. From Phoenix and Mason City to two who are teaching in the Twin Cities."

Karen Carr

"At least that's what I remember him saying first," Carr said.

The words "Have you practiced?" are now words she uses with her students. "Practice makes perfect" is another common phrase, and she said, "You can usually fool a teacher for a little while, but not forever."

Her success as a teacher partly comes from her own talent, but also experience. Carr knows what works, and although she sometimes says she gets in a rut, she works hard to keep things fun and exciting.

However, there are several things to which she adheres.

"Technique is the biggest thing," Carr said. "If you don't have good technique, you don't have anything."

She said there are times where a lot of work is involved to get a student to the point of good technique, but it's a challenge she finds worth taking.

Teaching a student how to listen is another point Carr feels strongly about. She also encourages memorization and having a repertoire available to play at any moment.

"You should have something to play when you're asked at the spur of the moment," she said.

She also likes to have each of her students play for an audience several times a semester.

"I like to provide opportunities for them to play every other month," she said. "It may be at the nursing home, or like this holiday season, some of them will be playing at the Spencer Mall."

For those who are willing to work hard and achieve a certain ability, she has them participate in the Iowa Music Teacher's Association (IMTA) competition. The auditions always take place in mid-January, and the week right before, she holds a formal winter recital at the Okoboji High School Auditorium.

"It's especially good for a pianist because they're up there by themselves playing on a beautiful grand piano," Carr said. "It takes a lot of confidence and poise."

She also said the recital is almost harder



Carr has been teaching piano lessons fro more than 38 years.

DCN photo by Joy Hibma



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than the competition a week later.

"It's why I do it that way because it gives them a chance to be in front of their peers and family beforehand," she said.

At the IMTA competition, each student competes in their ability level and plays three memorized pieces for a judge, as well as taking a keyboard proficiency test and theory test. Each level has its own test.

The next public performance Carr has her students participate in is a little more informal and fun. During the spring, she has a piano party at her house and invites students, their families and friends for food and fun.

"Everyone brings food, and when they want to play, they can. It doesn't have to be memorized and it's a time where there isn't a lot of pressure," Carr said.

However, in order for her students to be successful in public and also as they progress through their lessons, she says practice is the key. She also spends a lot of time working with them during their lessons.

"I spend a lot of time helping them perfect the difficult spots," she said. "Even during memorization, I help each student analyze the music and makes sure they learn it and are able to associate and remember things."

Carr said memorization is more than just repetition, especially in the advanced levels.

"You need to be more thorough than that," she said. "You don't really know or understand the piece if you go that route. You also need to have starting places throughout the piece, in case you get stuck or have a memory block."

Carr said she's been blessed by the type of students she teaches every year. She feels it's been a privilege to work with such wonderful people.

"I really appreciate them, and I've gained so many friends — not just students, but also their parents," Carr said. "They come from all over the area."

She doesn't know how long she'll teach, but retirement isn't anywhere in the picture — at least not yet.

"My former piano teacher taught until she was 90 years old. I hope I don't go that long, but I don't want to quit anytime soon," Carr said.

She believes as she gets older, she'll probably cut down on the number of lessons she teaches every week. She'll go as long as she can, partly because she finds teaching so rewarding.

"I don't know what else I would do that would satisfy like this does," Carr said. "It's a part of my life."

Teaching students the love and enjoyment of music has become Carr's passion and service in life.

"You influence so many young people, especially at crucial times," she said. "Plus, I believe it's my service back to the community, and it's definitely rewarding.

It's obvious her students believe it as well.

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WEST OKOBOJI PAWN

"I first got involved with the water quality of the lakes 50 years ago, right after the war. My father was president of the Okoboji Protective Association (OPA) in the mid-1940s. My brother was president of the OPA for two or three years after dad died. Our family has had two generations of people caring about the Lakes."

A heart for the lakes – Ace Cory



By MIKE JORDAN
Contributing Writer

The Iowa Great Lakes area has been a destination point for tourists for well over a century. For many, the Lakes have become a second home, mostly during the summer months. Still others have moved here and claimed the area as their permanent address.

But Ace Cory has lived nearly his entire life on the shores of West Lake Okoboji, and except for the years he served his country in the United States Marine Corps, the Lakes have been his home.

More than that however, Ace has developed a passion for this place called Okoboji. He has a heart for the area and the clean, blue waters of West Lake Okoboji in particular.

Ace's concern for the Lakes he loves is understandable. His is a long and solid history that goes back in his family to both his father and his brother.

"I first got involved with the water quality of the lakes 50 years ago, right after the war," Ace explained, "My father was president of the Okoboji Protective Association (OPA) in the mid-1940s. My brother was president of the OPA for two or three years after dad died. Our family has had two generations of people caring about the Lakes."

Ace was born and raised in Spencer. His father was an attorney there. Even in his early years, he spent most of his time at the Lakes.

"I learned at an early age the importance of keeping our lakes' waters clean," he continued, "My historical background and previous long-term involvement in worthwhile causes, all so dear to my heart, have helped me realize the connection between our lifestyle here, and the quality of our water."

Ace is President of the Iowa Great Lakes Inter Lake Association, an umbrella group of officers and key people involved with all of the various area lakes protective groups.

He is past president, and is a director, of the OPA, as well as a director of Friends of Lakeside Lab, and the Clean Water Alliance.

Ace also sits on the Planning and Zoning Board for the City of Okoboji, is a past member of that city's Board of Adjustment, and is a past Regional Director of the Nature Conservancy.

"I think people do not realize what a treasure our lakes are," Ace declared, "We need to be diligent in our efforts to educate people about our lakes, and how to keep them clean. There are dangers to our lakes that exist. First of which is aquatic milfoil. Milfoil is a fast growing form of vegetation that can take over a lake in a short time. That vegetation flourishes and grows best in eight to nine feet of clear water – something we have a lot of here. It has taken over several lakes in Minnesota. Cedar Lake, for example, in the Minneapolis area, is one of those lakes that has become full of milfoil. They now have to use a special machine to harvest the vegetation from the lake by pulling the milfoil up from the lake's bottom, placing it on a barge, and trucking it away to be spread on farm fields. The cost to deal with that problem runs one to one and a half million dollars, and they never seem to get it all. If you find milfoil in a lake it is too late. The best thing to do is keep it out of the lakes if possible."

"We have signs around our lakes cautioning boaters to look for it on their boats, trailers, motors, and even in their bait and live wells. It only takes a small amount of that vegetation to begin to infiltrate a lake," Ace added.

Unlike milfoil, which can render a lake virtually unus-

→

able if gone unchecked, zebra mussels, second on Ace's list of dangers to the lakes, literally chokes off water supply lines.

According to Ace, zebra mussels can grow around water intakes and cause them to be closed off, which could stop the water flow to many of the area towns that rely on lake water as their only water source.

"We are a Class A water source with West Lake Okoboji. There are not a lot of those around. It is terribly important that we keep it that way for a source of good, clean water for our communities to use," Ace continued.

"Clean water quality should not be the concern of just a few," he declared, "The water quality here impacts not only recreation and tourism, but also the businesses and industries that have located here; and the enjoyment their employees and their families, friends and relatives experience by being at the Iowa Great Lakes."

Ace Cory, for the past 17 years has been the owner, and sole proprietor, of Ace Cory Realty. He is also a Registered Principal on the New York Stock Exchange, a life insurance agent, and farm operator and manager.

Ace primarily sells lakeshore real estate, and most of that which he sells lies along the shores of West Lake Okoboji. There is a reason for that. Having lived there for more than 50 years, Ace knows most of the families through several generations in many cases. He understands their situations, and is able to help them buy and sell property.

Ace has also developed a reputation as a straight shooter. He tells it like it is, no matter the outcome. Because of that, and his success in the business, lakeshore people search him out when it comes time for them to make a change in their living arrangements at the Lakes.

"With the continued dedication of water quality-minded citizens, I can see controlled growth in our area as not a bad thing."

Ace Cory

Ace has a long and impressive employment history beyond that. He was formerly a vice president and Registered Principal with First Mid-America, Inc., now known as Paine Weber, on the New York Stock Exchange.

He began his career, after college, with General Mills as a buyer on the Kansas City Board of Trade.

He worked for Cargill Incorporated from 1948-1969, reaching the position of branch manager of their Omaha office in 1956.

Ace served two different tours of duty with the U.S. Marines. Once from 1944-1946, as a second lieutenant, and then, first lieutenant, during World War II; and then from 1952-1956, in the Korean War as a captain.

Ace, and his wife, Connie, have seven children. Their children live in various parts of the United States, including Washington D.C., Minneapolis, Wyoming, Oregon, and Los Angles, Calif. They also have eight grandchildren.

Ace has been a competitive sailor for years and is a former pilot. He also enjoys golf.

"With the continued dedication of water quality-minded citizens, I can see controlled growth in our area as not a bad thing," Ace emphasized, "Development and environmentally concerned people have always been at odds, but it has not been a fist fight; it has been more of a tug of war."

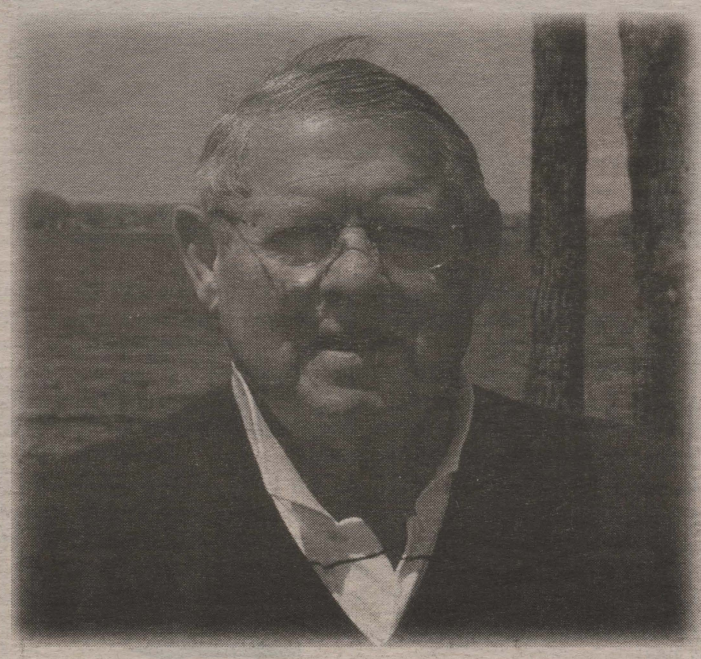
"As long as we are reasonable as to the number of boats being allowed to operate on our lakes; and the present movement of manufacturers away from two cycle engines for water craft that pollute our waters to the slow trend toward four cycle engines, which will help to keep our waters clean ... our area will benefit from both of these positive moves toward better water quality," Ace concluded,

Ace sees a night time speed limit law on our lakes as being a benefit here as well. He would also like to see the anti-keyholing ordinances enforced locally. Noise pollution from powered watercraft on the lakes is another problem that he would like to see the lakes patrol enforce, too.

"The water quality district established here, that the legislature provided for two years ago, and the taxes by cities to support it, have proven to be a boon to clean water issues. We borrowed some of the language from other parts of the country that had water quality districts, in writing those laws to establish our district. When we studied it, we hoped to get matching funds of three to one. This year those funds will be nine to one in matching dollars - and could be as much as 12 to one next year. Those matching funds come from federal and state sources. The future of our water quality is in good hands with the water quality district we have established."

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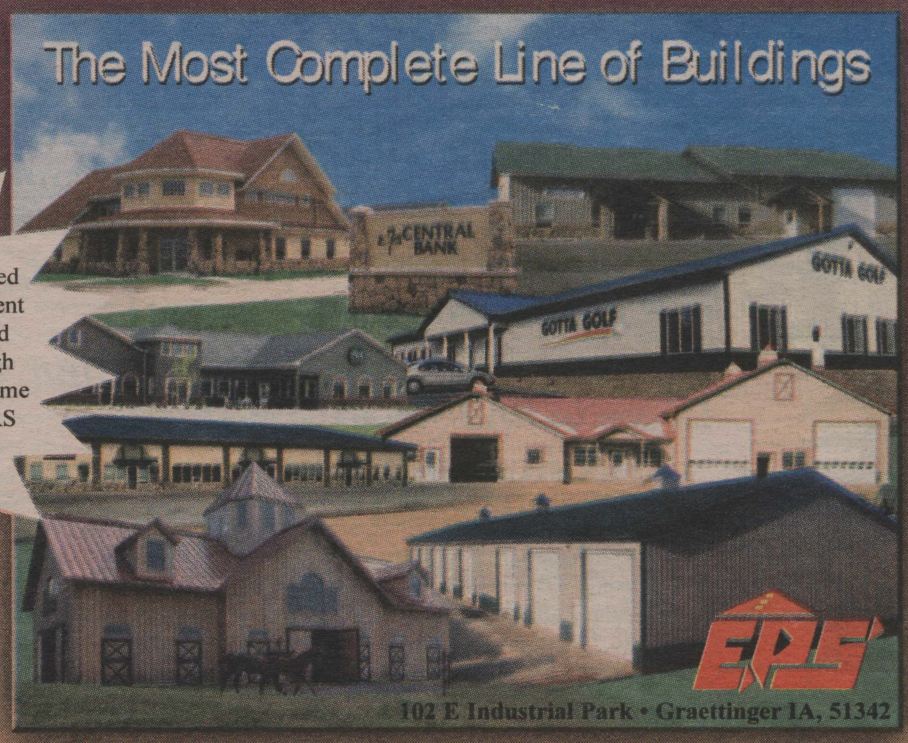
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("Iowa Great Lakes Area Winter Sunset" - photo by jan turner)

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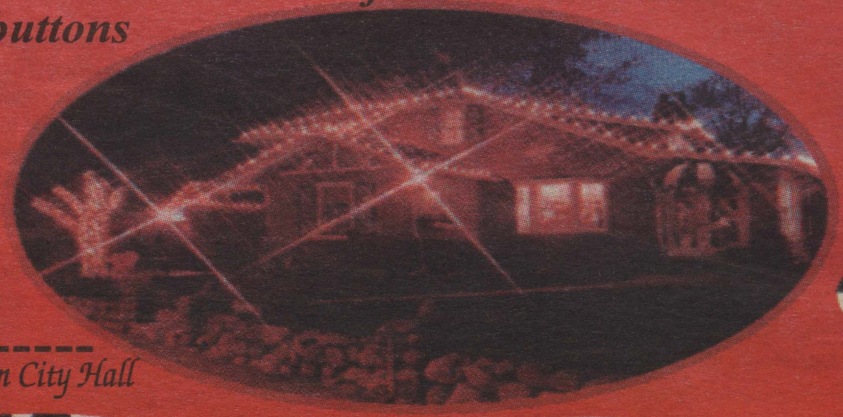
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Mission Possible:

Reaching kids is Roland Schmidt's goal

By MIKE JORDAN
Contributing Writer

He knows teaching. He has a teacher's background. And, as a result, he's successfully reaching out to kids through education.

Roland Schmidt was raised on a farm just outside of Elma in Northeast Iowa. He attended high school at Cresco, and then graduated from the University of Northern Iowa at Cedar Falls, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in the social sciences. He also holds a Masters Degree in administration from Buena Vista University in Storm Lake.

In a way, Schmidt has followed in both of his parents' footsteps. Before his father returned to farming, he was a history teacher. Schmidt's mother taught at the elementary level. But Schmidt has stepped out on his own in the field of teaching even though he views both his parents as his mentors.

For the past 10 years, Schmidt has been a freshman social studies teacher, and has taught sociology, geography, and government at Spirit Lake High School – the first, and only place he has taught.

Coming to Spirit Lake to teach was like a homecoming for Schmidt. He was very familiar with this area, because for three summers, while he was in college, he worked at the Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camp.

In addition to teaching, Schmidt has been a coach, sponsored the school's quiz bowl, and for the last seven years, has been the Huddle Coach for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) in Spirit Lake.

This year, Schmidt is teaching government, geography and sociology. He is also returning to coaching after a four-year absence while he finished his masters degree. Schmidt coached the high school boys' junior varsity basketball team and also helped with the varsity team.

But the FCA is Schmidt's mission. He knows the importance it holds in many student's lives, and the ripple effect that happens after students experience the life-changing message of FCA.

"The Fellowship of Christian Athletes is not just for the athletes. It is for anyone who finds value in the message," Schmidt said, "FCA was formed to influence athletes in school and it has had a powerful influence on them, but it has also had a powerful influence on behavior in our school. We meet kids where they are, and talk about the Gospel with them. The temptations kids face are tremendous. We encourage them to do the right thing at FCA."

The FCA meets monthly at Spirit Lake, during the school year. The meetings are about an hour and a half in length. This year attendance at those meetings has averaged between 70 and 80 kids.

Each meeting begins with an opening ice breaker activity. The kids interact with each other and have fun. Then the business portion of the meeting follows. At each meeting, a skit is used to introduce the topic for that evening. A discussion normally takes place with a speaker leading it. The focus is on the topic each time. Sometimes the speaker is a guest, most of the time it is Schmidt leading the discussion.

According to Schmidt, the FCA has a long history at the school that, except for a few dormant years, has seen the organization grow, and now flourish.

Among the former teachers that have helped it along, names like Bob Shaw, Mike May and Darwin Bears are prominent. But there have been many others, Schmidt indicated.

The FCA has received support from the Methodist Church men's group in Spirit Lake, as well as the noon Kiwanis. The organization also holds its own fund-raisers as well.

"Being a huddle coach is very important to me," Schmidt added, "But FCA can't be built around one person. It depends on strong leaders. It is important to be surrounded by strong student leaders and we have been blessed with strong student leaders for FCA."

The FCA is an active group. During the year, they have numerous outings as an organization. For example, they go watch the Minnesota Timberwolves professional basketball team play in the Twin Cities each year. While they are there, they go to the Mall of America, and get to stay at Trinity Baptist Church's big complex in St. Paul.

FCA has held family nights, campouts, and sponsored gym nights with various activities. They have also gone to Ames, watched the Iowa State Cyclones football team play and attended FCA drug-free events, where Iowa State University coaches and athletes have spoken and testified before the students about their experiences with Christ.

"The FCA students and I personally invite kids to come to our meetings," Schmidt stated, "I think the student to student interaction is important. Although the trips are a gimmick to get kids to come, and some come just for the social aspect of it, FCA is filling a piece of many student's lives that is missing. The interaction of the athletes and the coaches bring a powerful and positive influence into student's lives. It is a mission and an outreach, introducing these young people to the Gospel. We don't water it down. The point is Jesus saves."

FCA helps students look closer at their lives to find out what is motivating them to do the things they do in life.

Schmidt takes his teaching very seriously as well, "Teaching at the high school involves four years of people's lives that are some of the most formative," Schmidt continued, "They are at a point in their life when they are growing up. They are deciding what they want to do in life. They are deciding what are those values in life that are important to them. Then deciding, who is that person I'm going to be."

"As an adult, four years is not a very long time. An adult may keep on growing, but may not see a lot of physical growth. Whereas, you look at freshman and they are growing physically. Emotionally, they are growing up and there is just a lot they are going through. For me, being a part of their learning process is very rewarding. The best part of

"The Fellowship of Christian Athletes is not just for the athletes. It is for anyone who finds value in the message."

Roland Schmidt
Spirit Lake Teacher

the learning process is helping someone else learn," Schmidt declared.

"Both my parents stressed leadership. They were involved in investing in people, regardless of the financial reward. They taught me to invest in people, and I would never get short changed," Schmidt emphasized. It is obvious that has been Schmidt's experience. He cares about kids and is quick to give the credit for his successes to others.

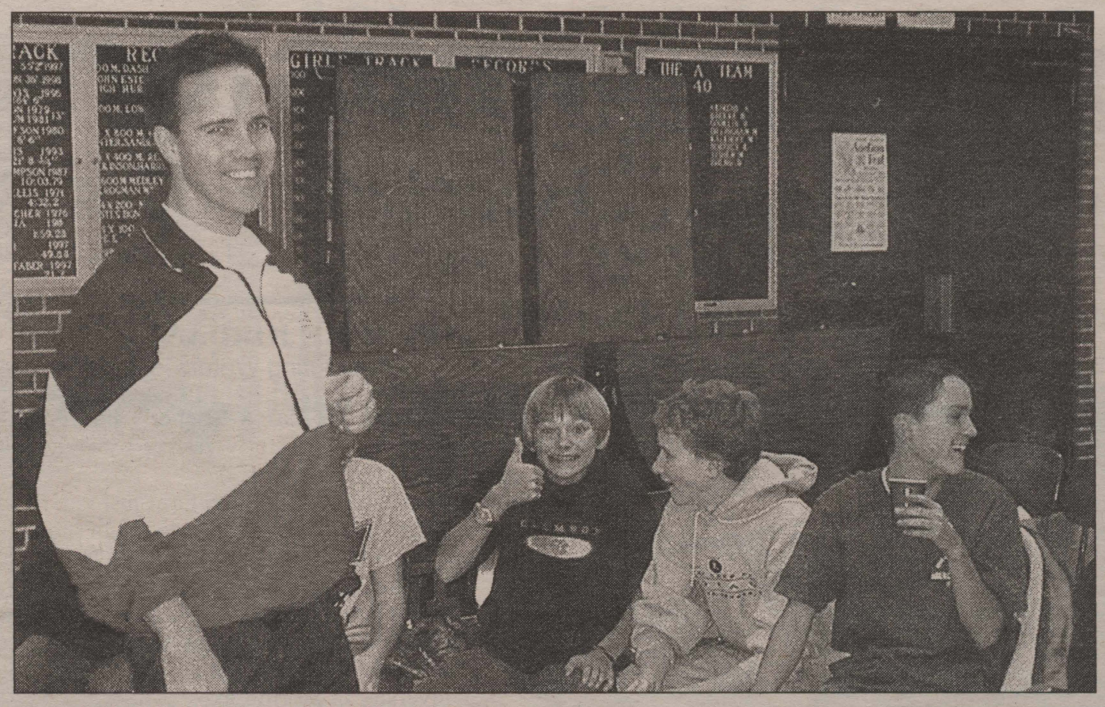
For example, he had this to say about his wife, Barbie: "My wife is so supportive of what I do. Barbie is one of the more creative people I know. I could not do what I do without her help."

Schmidt loves the variety of his work at school, but he and Barbie are heavily involved in their church as well. Schmidt is a deacon there. Barbie is a deaconess. They teach Sunday School, and are part of the AWANA program at their church as well.

The Schmidts have two children, a girl, Stacie, who is a fifth grader at Spirit Lake's Middle School; and a boy, Ryan, who is two and a half.

"I am very fortunate to teach in an outstanding school system in Spirit Lake. I have also been very fortunate to have been mentored by some master teachers here. The administration has given me flexibility in my development, and encouragement along the way," Schmidt said, "It would be difficult for me to think of a better way to do this. The kids sent here are energizing ... if not anything else. As a teacher learning happens, and is the joy of work."

Schmidt went on to say that he is open to moving into an administrative role. He feels he is prepared to do that emotionally and spiritually, as well as professionally. But in his mind, the right opportunity would have to come along. For now, he is content to stay here because he and his family enjoy the area.

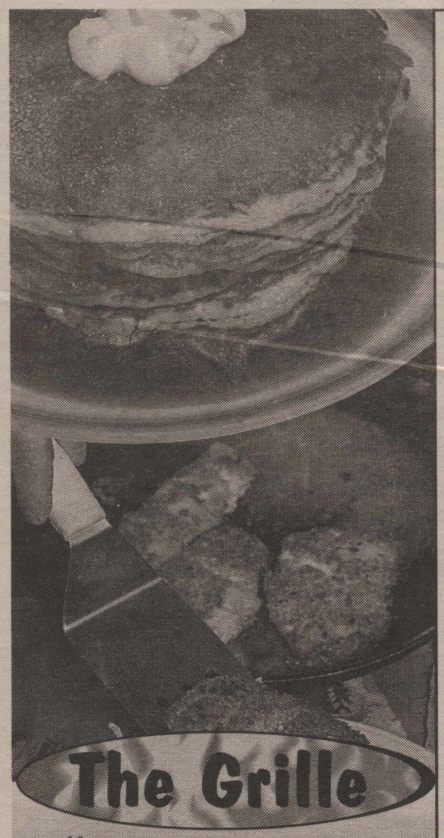


Roland Schmidt smiles during an FCA event he planned recently. Schmidt has invested his life in people, specifically the kids at his school.

submitted photo

"Both my parents stressed leadership... They taught me to invest in people, and I would never get short changed."

Roland Schmid



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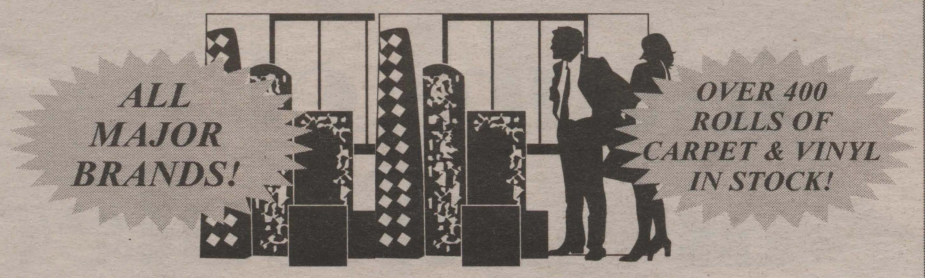
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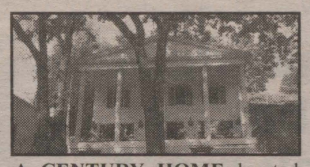
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Felton figures in future of area theater

"The camaraderie of theater is what I've come to enjoy most about it ... working with other people in a common goal ... to entertain, is very satisfying"

Michael Felton



Michael Felton played the Rainmaker in the Lakes Area Community Theatre's production of 'Rainmaker' last fall.

DCN photo by Joy Hibma

By MIKE JORDAN
Contributing Writer

Michael Felton is a man of many talents. He is creative, and can be controversial.

Felton has a love of theater that, although not long in history, is well-founded in a variety of work he has done for the stage.

"I was in one play in high school. I played a small part. It wasn't until about seven years ago that I got my start in theater for real," Felton explained, "I began in stand-up comedy at the Funny Bone in Davenport. The Funny Bone is a nationally franchised business. I didn't enjoy it, (doing stand up comedy) but knew I wanted to do theater. My stand-up comedy routine got me into 'Tony & Tina's Wedding,' which was the first play I ever did. I ended up doing that off and on for two years in Rock Island, Ill."

"In 'Tony & Tina's Wedding,' I played the same character every time. I was the ex-boyfriend of the bride who was a druggie. I didn't want to do it that way so they let me do it as a biker. No one else had done it that way so it got me popularity with the audiences," Felton added, "During the wedding scene, I showed up 20 minutes late for the wedding, wearing my leather boots and jacket and bandanna. I came walking right down the center aisle late, and sat down right behind the bride's mother. When the pastor asked if anyone objected to this union, I stood up, took my jacket off, but didn't say anything."

Felton enjoyed that role and played it in "Tony & Tina's Wedding," in Chicago and when he moved to New York.

"It was interactive theater. I didn't have to memorize much dialogue. It was improv for the most part," Felton said, "Other than the main characters, the audiences were the guests in the wedding. It was a full Catholic wedding with a reception following. Storylines changed as the audience learned about it ... as it went along. It was a play that was structured but not scripted."

Since first doing theater seven years ago, Felton has only spent four months not being involved in some part of a stage production. In fact, he usually starts work on the next play before finishing the one he presently is working on.

"When I moved to New York, I became obsessed with doing theater. They talked me into a play that I was in for two solid years," Felton continued, "I started with real small

→



contributed photo

Michael Felton played Mr. Green in the show, "Visiting Mr. Green." His role was that of an 86-year-old New York Jewish man .

parts. Each time I did a production the parts got bigger."

In addition to acting, Felton has been a prop manager, light and sound manager, set designer, costume designer and stage manager as well. "I tried to be involved in everything. I directed a lot. Produced my own play and now have my own production company, Felton Productions," Felton explained, "Coming back here, the biggest thing for me has been the artistic control I have, like putting on 'True West' by Sam Shepard."

The first play Felton ever produced, "True West," he also acted in, playing the part of Lee. That character happens to be the one he has enjoyed playing the most, out of all the roles he has done.

Felton returned to acting in October of last year, playing the part of Bill Starbuck, in "The Rainmaker," at the Lauridsen Theater with the Lakes Area Community Theater. It was something he had been looking forward to doing ... stepping away from the other creative aspects of theater.

"The camaraderie of theater is what I've come to enjoy most about it ... working with other people in a common goal ... to entertain, is very satisfying," Felton declared, "My biggest role in my mind has been in 'Visiting Mr. Green' where I played Mr. Green, an 86 year old New York Jewish fellow."

Felton sees a renewed interest in theater today because, in his estimation, television and film have set the people a part from the story. "Going into a theater and having live actors performing in front of them, makes it more real, and more enjoyable for audiences," Felton indicated.

Asked why people like to be in plays, Felton stated, "It all comes down to that need to be seen ... that need to be on stage. People either think to themselves, 'I wish I was up there on stage,' or they think, 'why is that person up there?' The inner need to be up on stage is personal satisfaction."

A common thought in theater, according to Felton, is that comedy is for audiences, and drama is for the actors. "Comedy is really harder to do than drama," Felton explained, "I think drama is a way to be more real ... reality based. I like to do comedy as well as serious theater."

As far as theater in the Lakes Region, Felton had these thoughts, "I hope there is so much theater here that this area turns into the next Branson, Mo. Vaudeville is ideal for this area. I would like to do one strong theatrical play a year here. The Blue Water Cabaret is the type of theater needed for the audiences we have had. Comedy in the summertime draws more tourists. A dinner theater, providing people a place to come, dine and be entertained with more than, say just a band, in a more sophisticated, mature level is where I would like to see theater evolve here. Entertainment that sells. That is where the vaudeville we did last summer started."

"Viewing the community as a whole, a larger area, from Spencer on south, to north of the border to Jackson, Minn. and beyond, would make community theater stronger here as well," Felton emphasized.

It is the business and marketing side of theater that Felton realizes needs to be built upon. "There is a ton of talent in this area," Felton continued, "The only way I've ever seen it work is getting the community involved in theater. Friends and family come to watch their friends and family perform. It snowballs from there. The directors, actors and backstage folks draw people to theater. All forms of entertainment in theater can be done here. That is my dream."

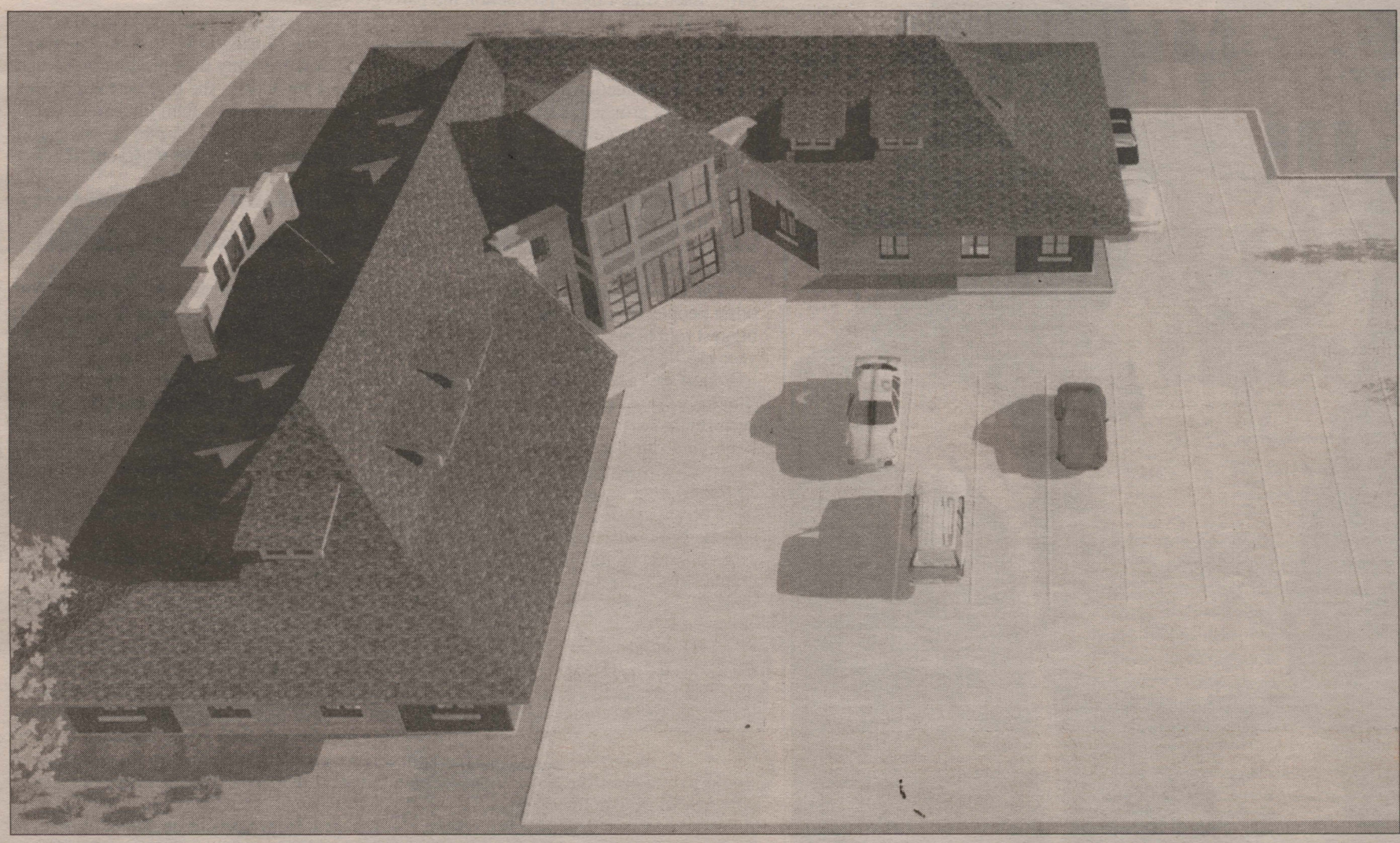
Felton has had all of his theater experience on the job. He is not schooled in this fine art. He produced one play in New York, a one act play produced at the Opal Theater on 42nd St., just off Time Square. That theater does three one act plays every night all year round.

However, Felton, taught a college course on theater appreciation through the Lakes Art Center and Iowa Lakes Community College last year to 40 students. He plans to teach that course again this year as well.

"I would really like to thank the community. They have embraced me. The local community has, the theaters have, and the businesses have, all let me do things that I have wanted to do, for over the last two years now," Felton stated, "It takes a lot of money to do what I've been allowed to do ... the community has allowed me to do those things. I plan to be here for a longer time than this ... doing a lot more than I've done. I've got two other productions in the works right now ... three actually, I'm writing a play, I've got the Vaudeville Show, and then I've got another three-man show I'm working on, all coming up in the next several months."

Felton claims some rather strange influences in his theater work. They include Sam Shepard, David Bowie and Alice Cooper. "To me they are true entertainers. All of their shows are theatrical productions," he said.

Like Bowie and Cooper, Michael Felton has theater in his blood and gets a transfusion each time he steps on the stage. It is that innate enthusiasm Felton brings to the area's theater productions that is catching fire, not only with other actors, but with the community as a whole.



Schwartz Chiropractic will soon be moving to Highway 71. They have purchased a lot across from Cenla Campground in Spirit Lake and will be building a healthcare professionals facility there.

submitted graphic

Area chiropractors move forward

By MIKE JORDAN
Contributing Writer

Schwartz Chiropractic plans a move

Dr. Michelle Schwartz, owner of Schwartz Chiropractic at 808 18th St. in Spirit Lake, has some exciting news for her patients and the community of Spirit Lake as well.

That news has come in several forms for Schwartz. She explained, "We have purchased a lot across Highway 71 to the east of Cenla Campground in Spirit Lake. We are now in the design stages of building a 7,000 to 8,000 sq. ft. health care professional's facility."

Schwartz and her husband, Mike, CEO of the component division of Institutional Equipment Incorporated of Emmetsburg, will be acting as the developers of the facility. They have hired Ken Webb of Emmetsburg as their construction manager for the project. Ground breaking for the facility is to take place this spring.

"We intend to sell portions of the building off as a condo-type arrangement," Schwartz stated. "The building will have two entrances, one to the west, facing the highway, and one to the north. Our goal is to have it turn key and operational by September of 2003."

The City of Spirit Lake has most of the infrastructure work done in the area of the location, according to Schwartz. They now have a street running into a frontage road along Highway 71 that curves around the property. It will have lighting similar to the lighting along Lake Street in the city.

"Builders are available because they are ahead of schedule due to the warm weather we've been experiencing," Schwartz continued. "We plan a ground breaking for April 15. Rick Elbert of Emmetsburg will be the contractor."

"The new facility will be a one-story design with a large entrance-atrium waiting area that will be a warm and inviting place for the patients," Schwartz emphasized.

Schwartz will have her chiropractic office to the left of the main entrance as it is planned now. To the right of the entrance, another healthcare or other professional will have their office with room beyond that for yet another two offices to be established. A total of four offices are now planned for the facility.

Right now healthcare professionals interested in the new facility include a dentist, possibly a dermatologist, pharmacist and a podiatrist, Schwartz indicated.

"Our goal is to have our new building filled before April 15. Pam Kragt of Dowden Hinn is the realtor working with us on this," Schwartz added.

Schwartz plans to locate a staff break room, insurance room and a secondary health care professional services area within the structure as well.

Schwartz does plan to add associate chiropractors to her practice. She has recently added acupuncture as a patient service to her practice. She has taken training in acupuncture in Kansas City, Mo. and her mother, Darla Schwartz, a patient advocate and inactive LPN/EMT-A, is also a trained acupuncturist with Schwartz's practice.

In addition to Darla, Schwartz has employed the services of Kori Jostand as her clinic coordinator.

Hope Reynolds, an acupuncture patient, had this to say

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about her experience with acupuncture treatments with Schwartz: "I had no relief from my pain before I started the acupuncture treatments," she said. "I had tried chiropractors and had been to back specialists in both Iowa City and Sioux Falls. I was told to take medication and do stretching exercises on my own. But as soon as the medications wore off, the pain would return. I have been in pain since last May. Often I would be crying, the pain was so bad."

Since attending Schwartz for acupuncture, she has found relief.

"I am on my fourth visit to Schwartz Chiropractic for acupuncture and now I am sleeping well and working again," she continued. "The acupuncture is relaxing, alleviates my pain and gives me energy. In fact, people at work wonder what's up with me because of my energy level after having the acupuncture treatments."

"I would encourage others having trouble with pain or other medical conditions to come and try this first," Schwartz added. "The acupuncture treatments help to reverse many medical conditions."

Schwartz Chiropractic has a prescription index that contains over 2,000 different formulas for acupuncture procedures. It is made available to the public at her office for reviewing.

"We have a lot of success stories here with our patients that fuels the energy of our staff. It shows that our efforts have been productive in getting results for people's better health," Schwartz concluded.

Schwartz will be adding another staff person to her business soon. Darci Schumaker will be making a career change from a hairdresser to Schwartz's chiropractic assistant, joining the practice in late spring of this year.

Schwartz also has plans to add a massage therapist and reflexologist to her business when it relocates this year.

Dixon celebrates 30 years in business

Dr. Larry Dixon, founder of Dixon Family Chiropractic Clinic, has been a chiropractor for 30 years. In that time he has found joy in his work by helping to change people's quality of life.

Dixon explained, "The most enjoyable part of my work is dealing with people. It is the best part of my entire day. It is satisfying to see what we do can change an individual's quality of life for the better. Where they've had pain or poor function in a part of their body for months or even years, seeing that what we do has a positive influence on their daily activities is most enjoyable for me."

"I am on my fourth visit to Schwartz Chiropractic for acupuncture and now I am sleeping well and working again. The acupuncture is relaxing, alleviates my pain and gives me energy. In fact, people at work wonder what's up with me because of my energy level after having the acupuncture treatments."

Hope Reynolds

Acupuncture patient at Schwartz Chiropractic

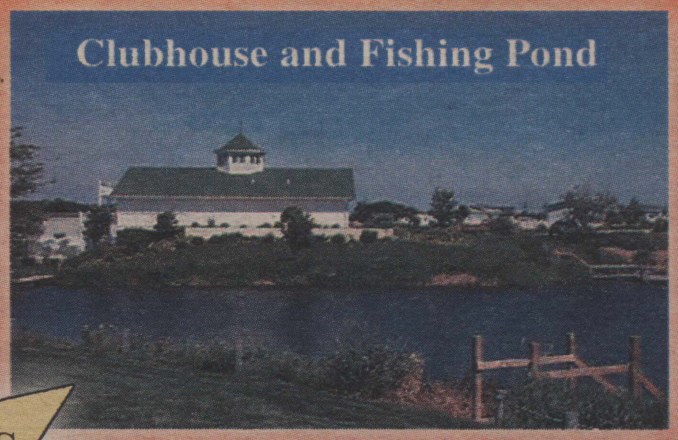
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Speech Therapy
Sports Medicine
Urology

"As a result of chiropractic adjustments and soft tissue techniques, the body responds to treatments that help to break that cycle, allowing the body to heal itself"

Larry Dixon, Chiropractor

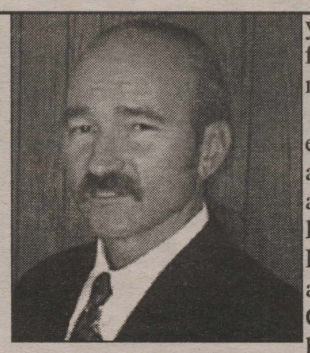
Dixon decided while still in the seventh grade that he wanted to be a chiropractor. "I remember sitting in an FFA class and our instructor going around the room, asking each of us what we wanted to be as adults," Dixon related, "I lived in a farming community so the other students were saying things like, 'I'm going to be a farmer; I'm going to go into farming, and I'm going to repair farm machinery.' When he got to me I said, 'I'm going to be a chiropractor." In that small farming community, it was something of a shocking announcement."

Dixon recalls his mother, father and brother all seeking chiropractic treatments while he was growing up at home. Even at the age of five, he was aware of the help his mother had experienced from chiropractic care. Dixon's brother, six years his senior, contracted MS at the age of 19. The chiropractic treatments benefited him as well.

After finishing high school in Hawarden. Dixon attended Morningside College. He enrolled in Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport in 1968 and graduated from there in 1972.

"After finishing at Palmer College of Chiropractic, I went right into a new office in Sioux Center with Dr. Hagan. It was close to my hometown of Hudson S.D. I worked there four and a half years," Dixon said.

Then, in 1976, I built this office, opening my doors for business in the spring of 1977. At the time I built, we were outside of town with a nice view of Center Lake across a grassy field. Now this entire area is developed."



Dixon

According to Dr. Dixon, chiropractic is a method of restoring function to the joints of the spine and extremities of the body by adjusting the spine and extremities with various types of forces. When joints don't function properly because they are inflamed with swelling, the surrounding tissues, including the nerves, receive messages from the brain telling muscles to become spasmodic in an attempt to protect the joint.

"As a result of chiropractic adjustments and soft tissue techniques, the body responds to treatments that help to break that cycle, allowing the body to heal itself," Dixon explained.

It is for that reason that Dixon chose chiropractic as a career. "I was intrigued with hands-on, one on one work with people. I liked the idea of doing something that would truly help people," Dixon declared.

Staying abreast of the changes in the insurance industry with third party pay situations has been Dixon's most challenging part of his work.

"I plan to continue to do this full-time for another 10 years. Then cut back my hours. I never really plan on fully retiring until I can't physically do the work any more," Dixon added.

Dixon is celebrating his 25th anniversary of the establishment of his office in Spirit Lake. His clinic also employs the talents of his son, Dr. Wade Dixon and Wade's wife, Dr. Adelee Dixon as chiropractors. Dixon's other son, Dr. Miles Dixon, operates Dixon's Family Chiropractic Clinic in Brandon, S.D. Additionally, Dr. Wade and Dr. Adelee operate a Dixon Family Chiropractic Clinic in Lakefield, Minn., Adelee's hometown.

The clinic also employs Janet Gentle as a massage therapist full time.

"It has been a real blessing having a chiropractic office and raising a family in the Iowa Great Lakes community," Dixon said. "I've enjoyed the diversity of this area.

In September 2002, the Dixon Chiropractic Clinic held a Patients' Appreciation Day in a big white tent next to their clinic. They had the event catered and 500 people came to enjoy the food and prizes. Door prizes for the event included televisions and VCRs as well as massages.

Dixon Chiropractic Clinic has now extended their hours of operation staying open three days until 6 p.m. and two days a week until 7 p.m. as well as staying open Saturday mornings.

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June Goldman reflects on life and her role in the area



By MIKE JORDAN
Contributing Writer

June Goldman knows about diversity. She has a diverse educational background, has lived in numerous parts of this country and grew up with a variety of children of 22 different nationalities.

June's work life is equally diverse in that she was once a teacher, is a wife and mother, as well as having been a county supervisor for 14 years. She is an author, public speaker and lay minister and was a director of church relations for Westmar College, started the nine county dinner date system and was instrumental in getting the humane society going locally. She also sits on two national boards, one state board and a district board of the United Methodist Church and is on a number of committees.

The only child of Charles Kenneth and Shizu Narishima Parker, June was born in Japan. Her father was an English and history teacher at a boy's higher school (similar to our men's colleges) in Osaka.

Originally from Massachusetts, Charles graduated from Williams College in 1919 with an English and history major.

"My father was an adventurer," June related, "He wasn't interested in an ordinary teaching position. He applied for a teaching

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"I had friends from different countries but we never thought of our differences. I learned to understand and appreciate those friends as I was growing up. I found that although we had different backgrounds we had a lot in common, and it taught me that in dealing with people it is important to find the commonality. "

"I hope I've provided balance to the debates we've had at the county supervisors' meetings. I've not been afraid to speak my piece. I did not harbor any grudge either. I tried to move to middle ground on most issues."

June Goldman
Former Supervisor

job in China and was hired to teach English, history and French in Foo Chow. That was a bad time to be in China, however. The great famine of 1920 in northern China had forced the people south to the cities in search of food and work. My father became very uncomfortable living there as whenever he went out Chinese fathers approached him trying to sell him their children for as little as 50 cents. They needed the money for food for their families, and 50 cent would buy them a month's food supply."

June's father soon sought release from his teaching contract in China and prepared to return to the United States. After being released from the contract, he decided to visit Japan, since he was close to that country and felt he might never have the opportunity to see Japan again.

"My dad boarded a steamer for Japan. Upon his arrival there, at the port city of Kobe, he cable grammed his bank in China to have them send his savings to him, but the bank cabled back that they had gone bankrupt," June continued, "Dad was stuck in Japan with only $30 to his name. The only thing he could do was get a job."

Being an adventurer and resourceful, Charles got a job as a bookkeeper at an import/export business, even though he could speak little Japanese. Bookkeeping not being his forte either, Charles stayed late every day after work to try to catch up. A secretary at that business stayed to help him, also helping him learn the language. That secretary became Charles' wife on July 11, 1922, and eventually became June's mother.

In Japan, June attended the Canadian Academy when she was old enough to go to school. She and 200 other students, children of people working in Japan from 22 European countries, attended the international school.

"English was the common language at the Canadian Academy," June said, "It was like living in the United Nations. I had friends from different countries but we never thought of our differences. I learned to understand and appreciate those friends as I was growing up. I found that although we had different backgrounds we had a lot in common, and it taught me that in dealing with people it is important to find the commonality."

June attended the Canadian Academy until she was 15. Then her family sent her to live with her grandparents in Massachusetts. After graduating from high school, June enrolled at Wellesley College where she became a college freshman at the all women's school.

With English as her major and sociology as a minor, June started her college education with a career goal of teaching English in mind.

But her first job upon graduation was as an editorial assistant on the monthly magazine, "Zion's Herald."

It was during her college years at Wellesley that she met her future husband, Max. Their chance meeting and eventual courtship was the result of an event Wellesley held annually.

"We were holding a harvest hop at Wellesley and each girl had to find their own date," June related, "I heard about an event that the Wesley Foundation, a college age youth group at Copley Methodist Church in Boston was holding and thought that would be the place to go to find a date for our formal."

"When I got to the event they were holding a mixer where each person drew a farm animal name and was to be matched up, boy to girl. I drew a mule. We were supposed to go around making the sound of whatever farm animal was on our slip of paper ... looking for the matching person making a similar noise. So I went around braying, looking and listening for the other mule. Well, one of the organizers of the event came over to me and said there had been a mix up and there was no other mule, but that two men had both drawn slips with the word cat on them. So I ended up spending the time with both men during the evening, sizing up which one I felt would look best in a tuxedo," June laughed, "When it was time for me to return to Wellesley, Max took me to the bus, and I asked him if he would accompany me to the upcoming harvest dance at my college. That is how our courtship started."

Seeing the humor in the situation Max and June continued to communicate, with Max sending her messages to her school addressed to the "mule" at Wellesley's barn yard, stall number 17 (June's room number) and June addressing her correspondence to the cat at Boston University.

That humorous approach must have worked because in September of 1947, Max and June were married.

Following Max's graduation from seminary school, the Goldmans moved to New Hampshire where Max took a three-point charge as his first three-church assignment.

The Goldman's first child, Stuart, was just four months old at the time of their move.

As is the custom in the Methodist Church, the Goldmans moved from church to church over the years, coming first to Iowa at the Pierson Methodist Church, then on to Storm Lake, Titonka/ Doon, Forest City and then Keokuk. In 1974 Max was assigned a church in Estherville and retired as an active pastor at a Methodist church in Sioux City in 1984.

June and Max have three children. Stuart now lives in Littleton, Colo. with his daughter Abigail, who is a senior in high school. He is director of administration and finance for a consortium of Corinthian Colleges. Their oldest daughter, Candace, lives in Berkeley, Calif. and is an attorney for Alameda County. Jennifer del Pino, their youngest child, lives in Florida where she is the director of the Miami center for DeVry College. Jennifer has three children, Sergio, who is a sophomore in college, Christian, who is a senior in high school and Nicole, who is an eighth grader.

First elected to the Dickinson County Board of Supervisors in 1989, June, ran for that position because she was upset with the haphazard way zoning ordinances were set up in the county. "I wanted to put some teeth into the regulations on zoning because of our growing random development here," she said.

"I hope I've provided balance to the debates we've had at the county supervisors meetings," June declared, "I've not been afraid to speak my piece. I did not harbor any grudge either. I tried to move to middle ground on most issues."

Commenting on the issues most pressing for the new supervisors June said, "I still think we have a ways to go to get some kind of workable system going so our ordinances are compatible and in sync ... a united front in protecting our lakes and this area that we are so proud of ... needs to be established too."

So what does the future hold for June? Public speaking for one. June has done a great amount of public speaking over the years and plans to continue to do so in the future. She is also in the process of writing a tongue-in-cheek book on Dickinson County as well. She is still a member of two national boards, a state board and a district board of the Methodist Church. Additionally, June is the lay pastor for the Fostoria Methodist Church.

Recently married to Karl Kiilsholm, a retired central Iowa farmer, the two plan to travel visiting their family as well.

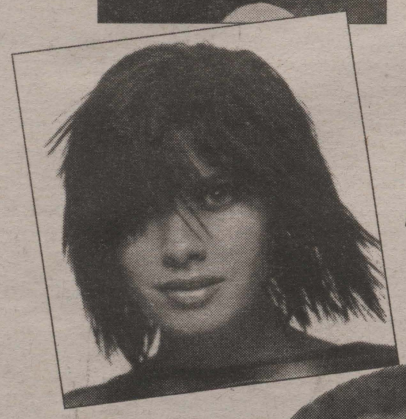
In closing June said, "I certainly hope we can resolve the courthouse issue in the near future. I think we need a symbol of our area's pride ... of who we are ... something functional, but beautiful in a courthouse building." On the Iowa Great Lakes she added, "We need to convey to the people in Des Moines what a jewel this area is to the state of Iowa."

June continues to be a part of positive change ... she advocates for a change for the better in all that she is a part of, and plans to do so in her future dealings as well.









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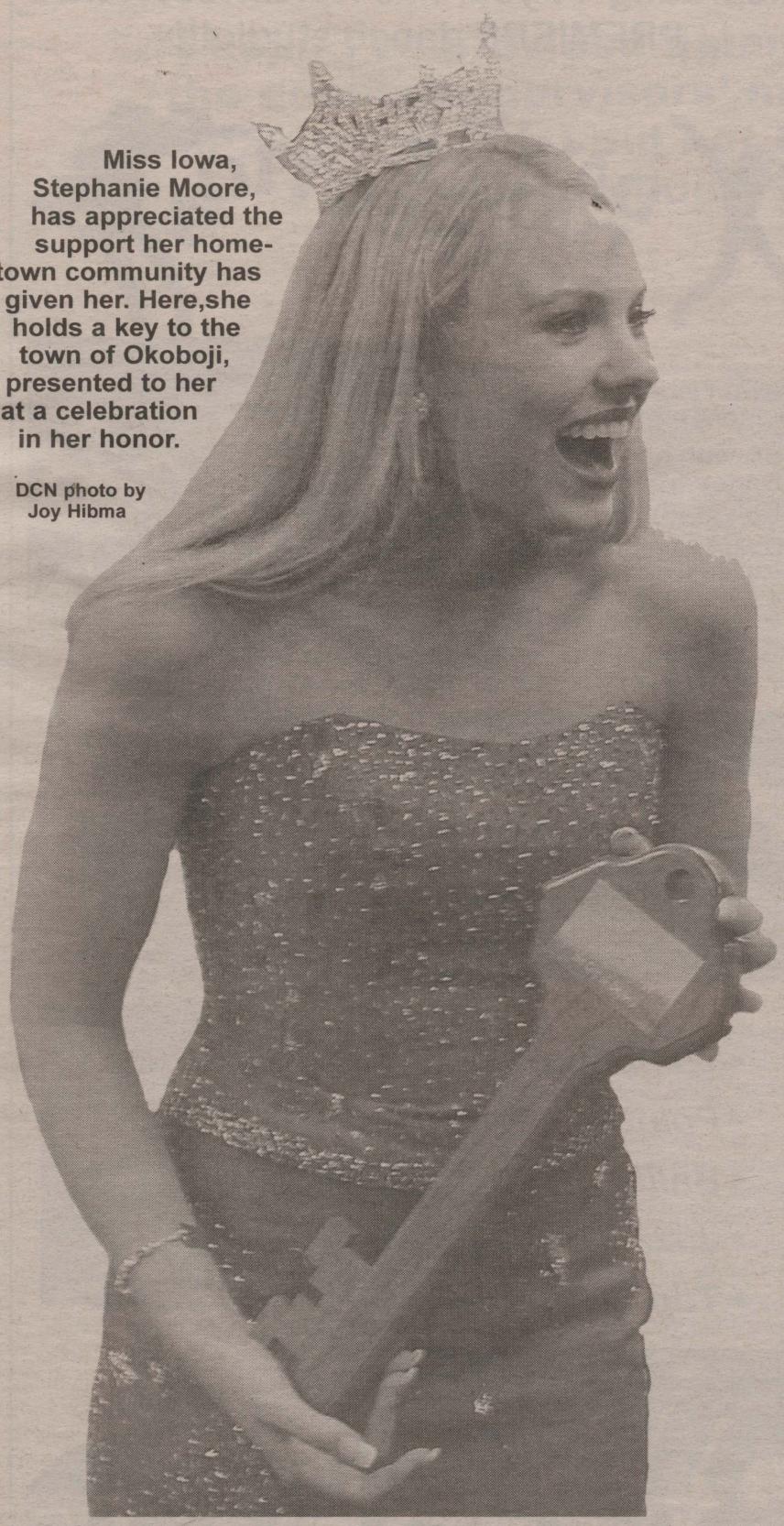
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Miss Iowa, Stephanie Moore, has appreciated the support her hometown community has given her. Here,she holds a key to the town of Okoboji, presented to her at a celebration in her honor.

DCN photo by Joy Hibma

Okoboji native lays claim to Miss Iowa crown

By JOY HIBMA
Staff Writer

A lot has happened in a year's time, at least in the life of Stephanie Moore.

Last year, Moore was busy preparing for college finals and rigorously getting ready for the Miss Iowa pageant.

Now, 10 months later, Moore has experienced the limelight. She was awarded the Miss Iowa crown last May and spent the next four months preparing for the Miss America Pageant. In mid-September, she traveled to Atlantic City to compete, showing the country her beauty — inward and outward.

Even though, she wasn't selected to be Miss America or even nominated for the top 15, she was very appreciative of her time amongst other contestants.

"I had really wanted to be in the top 15, but I felt good about it all. I did the best I possibly could at each of the preliminaries," Moore said. "I can't think of anything I would have done differently."

In late September, the Miss America Pageant was shown nationally on ABC affiliates. Moore was confident at the beginning, as each state was shown. She showed the world her love for life and genuinely smiled, something not all portrayed.

She was not selected to be in the top 15, but interested viewers could easily pick her out throughout the evening. Moore was one of six interviewed about the food they'd eat once the pageant was over.

"When the night is over, I know I'd like a big bowl of ice cream with chocolate syrup," she said.

Which, by the way, did happen. The hotel she stayed at sent a bowl up on Saturday night as a complimentary gift.

She was also shown having fun with the other contestants, as they encountered Atlantic City, N.J.

"It's a beautiful city, and people were always following us around, especially the media," Moore said. "I did feel secure in all the public areas, but I wasn't really used to being treated like a celebrity, at least the way they did it down there."

Moore had to wear her Miss Iowa badge the entire time, and whenever the contestants were out in public, there were mobs of people. One night at her hotel, which was the Atlantic City's Hilton Casino Resort, the bellman had to escort her to the back elevator because of the growing crowd.

"It was fun to be around the people, but at that time, it was almost getting overwhelming," Moore said. "I wasn't really used to that."

The experience, among others, was what helped Moore realize she wants a "normal" life in her future. The taste of stardom was a wonderful experience she said, but not something she would enjoy every day.

"It was nice to see, because you always wonder what it would be like," she said. "My taste of curiosity was filled, and I now know I don't want to be in the limelight for the rest of my life."

There were several things Moore enjoyed about being in Atlantic City and being a part of the Miss America pageant. The three weeks she was there all led up to the final evening, but each one was key to the ultimate selection.

Each of the contestants spent a lot of time learning dance steps and stage positions. They also got a chance to know each other.

There were four contestants in each hotel, and Moore had the pleasure of personally getting to know Miss Alabama, Miss Alaska and Miss Maine.

"We'd ride places together and would often eat together," Moore said. "They were really fun girls, and because I got to know them, it was probably why I cheered a little louder for Miss Alabama (she made it into the top five)."

When Moore returned back to the state, she took a little time off just relaxing.

She came home and visited her family

"Being able to talk to kids and interact with them in different experiences has meant a lot."

and friends.

"I needed it after everything that went on," Moore said.

But when she went back, she found herself looking forward to meeting new people and communities around the state — especially boys and girls.

"It's always a treat for boys and girls to see and hear someone they admire," she said. "They're so much fun to watch."

Each child tends to gaze in awe, watching every action and listening to every word. They'll try to catch different motions and grasp words they can possibly mimic later.

Which is one reason she was so excited to get back into the open; Moore is trying to be a positive role model to those around her, especially those in the younger grades.

"That has been my biggest gratification this year," Moore said. "Being able to talk to kids and interact with them in different experiences has meant a lot. To be able to look in their eyes and let them know how special they really are is amazing, because you can tell it makes an impact, and some of those children need to hear reassuring words."

Over the last few months, Moore has been busy visiting various communities throughout Iowa. She devotes a week to the city, getting to know the individuals.

When in Sioux City, she met the mayor and his team. She was able to spend some time at several schools, the city's fire department and even help with several girls' organizations.



Moore visited the area schools in mid-Januar y. Here, She spent a day at the Okoboji Elemen -tary build- ing, reading books and visiting each class- room.

DCN photo by Joy Hibma





Stephanie spoke with a crowd of area Girl Scouts during her "Meet Miss Iowa" tour in the Lakes area. Here, she leads the girls in an exercise, where they were to write nice things about eachother on sheets of paper taped to their backs.

DCN photos by Anitra Wolf

"You definitely see the difference one person can make. You see how everyday people make the difference in the life of the community. It's spurred me on and pushed me forward."

Stephanie Moore
Miss Iowa

She's also spent time in the Quad Cities and was in Des Moines in February.

She even included her hometown during the week of Winter Games. From Monday, Jan. 20 through Sunday, Jan. 26, she visited and participated in activities and event in the Iowa Great Lakes.

"It was exciting to be able to come home and spend a few days with the people I know and love," Moore said.

While she was here, she spent time at all four county schools (Harris-Lake Park, Okoboji, Spirit Lake and Terril), talking to elementary students. She told them they are special and that they need to believe in themselves.

"I tell them they need to set goals — even if they seem impossible at the time — and believe they can achieve them," she said.

She says it's always exciting to look in their eyes and see their admiration.

"Then that's when I tell them how special they are," Moore said.

Moore did get to spend some individual time with some of the students as she visited different classrooms.

She'd read them a book, and then the boys and girls ask her questions about her experiences and generally ask her to sing.

"I've had some really fun questions," Moore said. "One was like, 'Do you live in a castle?' or 'Do you go everywhere in a limousine?' I think to myself 'if you only knew.' It's fun and I'm able to break some stereotypes often associated with pageants."

While visiting the schools, she enjoys interacting and meeting each school's principal and staff. She says a person can learn a lot about a school by spending time with the principal.

"When you're visiting a school and you see that the principal treats me the same way they treat the children, it's exciting. Their attitude permeates the entire building and the positive, loving environment is seen in the classrooms because the teachers often reflect the principal," she said. "I have met apathetic principals and you don't see the love and respect from the kids or the teachers and it also reflects throughout the building."

Over the course of the week, Moore also spent time helping local mentoring programs; something she has done throughout the year. She visited Shepherd's Fold Ministries in Milford, helped with a DARE graduation and even spent some time with the Spirit Lake Girl Scouts. She talked with both Kiwanis groups and was actively involved in the Winter Games.

They are all opportunities Moore appreciated, and over the past few months, she has realized the amount of work many nonprofit organizations put into the lives of young and old. Not everyone has been supportive of her message and desire to help others.

"Still, contrary to what people think, not all have been cheering me on," Moore said. "Sharing the message of the importance of mentoring kids has been a struggle, which has surprised me. It's much different than what I expected."

Although some individuals and communities have been less than supportive, in each place, Moore has seen the work and commitment certain individuals pour into their communities.

"You definitely see the difference one person can make. You see how everyday people make the difference in the life of the community," she said. "It's spurred me on and pushed me forward."

This new perspective has been eye-opening for Moore, so much so she's considering a different outlook for the future.

Later this year, she will be taking the LSAT's and has begun applying to law schools. Her purpose before was to go into international law and human relations, but she's considering fine-tuning it a bit and focusing more on children or finding a way she can help those who need it most.

"I just want to make a difference," Moore said.



DCN photo by Joy Hibma

Moore holds one of her friends at a Miss Iowa celebration. The child was thrilled to try on Stephanie's crown.



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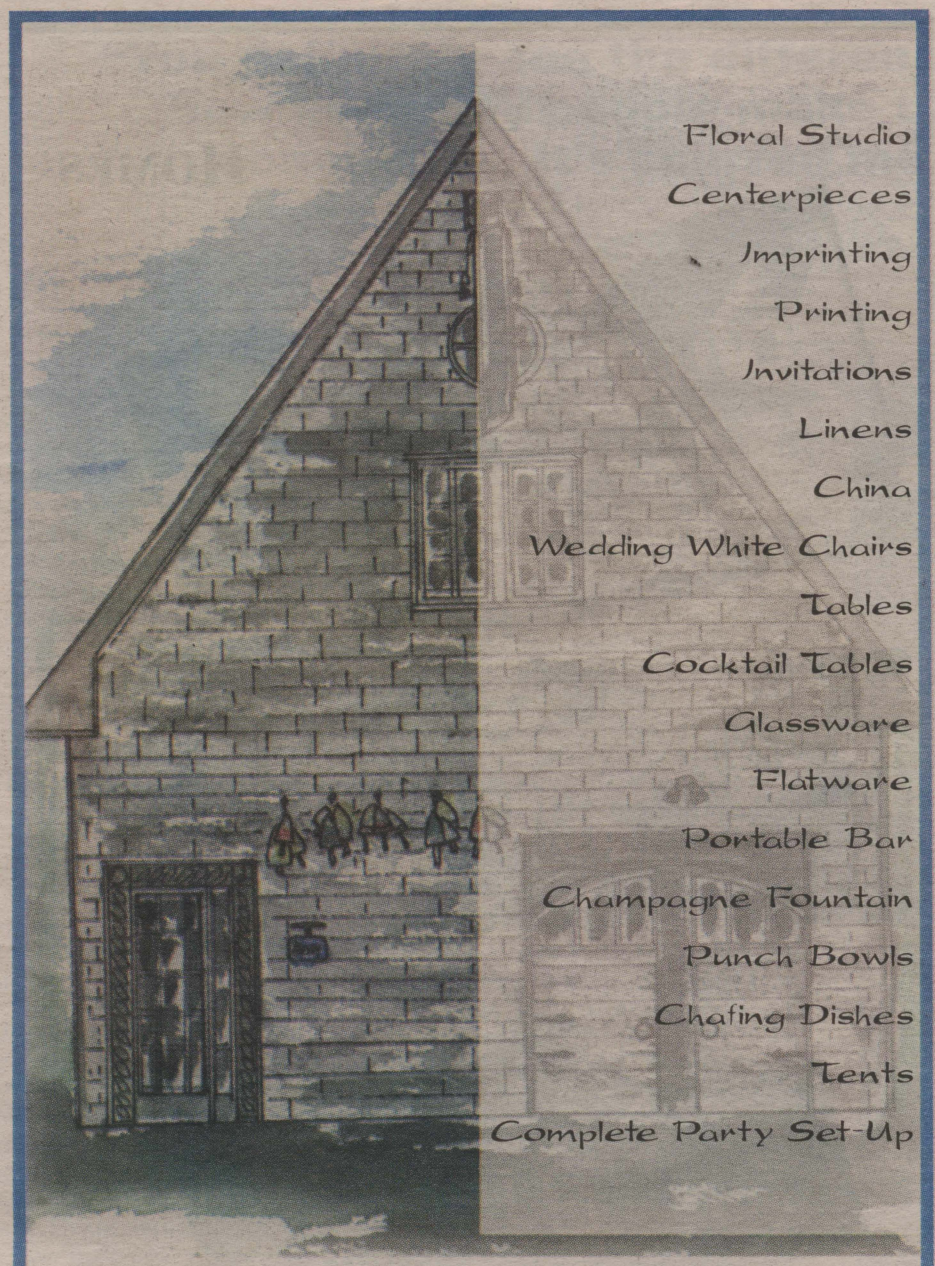


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" Many people think that hurdles are scary, because of the possibility of falling. But they're not at all."

Staci Vander Berg

Going for more gold!



Vander Berg hopes to hurdle obstacles for state title

By ROGER WILEY
Contributing Writer

The gun cracked and Alysa Klein was racing down the course. On every fourth stride, she would hurdle a wooden barrier 30 inches high. Tiffany Fisk was the second hurdler, and Klein had given the Okoboji shuttle hurdle team a lead over DeWitt Central, the Pioneers main competitor at the state track meet last May.

Fisk increased the Okoboji lead, and Tricia Kremmin ran third, maintaining the lead against the DeWitt Central challenge.

The final hurdler was Staci Vander Berg, who has anchored the Okoboji shuttle hurdle team throughout her prep career. Vander Berg would not be passed. She hit the tape at the 1:03.98 mark — good enough to win the shuttle hurdle state championship for the second consecutive year, and good enough to set an all-time Okoboji school record in the event.

All four hurdlers received gold and blue state championship medals. Vander Berg and Klein now owned two such medals, having anchored and led-off the Okoboji state championship race in 2001. That year, Kasey Anderson and Katie Keizer ran the middle legs of the event.

Vander Berg also won a silver and red medal last May, as the state runner-up in the 100-meter hurdles. As a sophomore in 2001, Vander Berg had placed fourth at state. As a freshman in 2000, she had placed sixth. Now, as a senior, Vander Berg's goals for her final prep season includes more state medals.

Okoboji has a long and distinguished history in girls' hurdle events. Rod Lockey, the dean of Siouxland Conference track coaches, has had 15 state qualifiers in the shuttle hurdle relay race in the 29 years of his tenure.

Several of his hurdlers had outstanding prep careers, placed at state, and led their shuttle teams in qualifying for state. Belinda Laursen was a top Okoboji hurdler in the late '70s and early '80s. In fact, Laursen held the Okoboji school record in the 100m hurdles for almost 20 years until Vander Berg broke it as a sophomore. Then Vander Berg broke her own record several times. The current school record was set at the Siouxland Conference meet last season at Orange City. Vander Berg's current school-record time is 14.69.

Other champion hurdlers for the Pioneers were Teresa Range in the early '80s, Lisa Gerdes in the late '80s, and Courtney Anderson in the mid-90s.

Vander Berg was not a great hurdler in junior high school. She ran the hurdles, and the mid-distances, too, "but I never won a hurdles race in junior high," Vander Berg admitted. When she joined the track team as a freshman, Lockey saw a potential top hurdler in Vander Berg, with her height and sprinter's speed, and he went to work developing Vander Berg's talent.

That teaching time paid off immediately. Vander Berg won her first hurdles competition during the indoor season, and thereafter, she was Lockey's anchor for the shuttle hurdle crew.

"I talked to Staci and her mom about Staci concentrating on the hurdles," said Lockey. "When she won that first indoor meet, we knew we had something."

All four of last year's hurdles team members will be back this year, plus a couple promising freshmen are coming up. So a third consecutive state title is a distinct possibility and is, of course, the #1 goal of all the Pioneers hurdlers.

The DCN asked Vander Berg about the art of hurdling and about her prep career.

→



Here are her answers:

DCN: *Define the art of hurdling for us. What's different about hurdling compared other running events?*

Vander Berg: With other running events, you just have to develop the running form and stamina necessary for that distance. Hurdling has three different dimensions. There's rhythm, form and speed. Rhythm is getting to the hurdle, form is jumping over it, and obviously, you have to be a sprinter to be a hurdler — that's the speed part.

DCN: *Let's talk about the dimension of rhythm. How many strides do you take between hurdles?*

Vander Berg: Three.

DCN: *And what's the distance between hurdles?*

Vander Berg: It's 8.5 meters between sets of hurdles.

DCN: *Do all four of you on the shuttle team take three strides between hurdles, or do some girls take more steps.*

Vander Berg: (Klein), (Fisk) and I take three steps. (Kremmin) takes four steps. Many of the girls we compete against take four steps. Developing the rhythm, or stride length, just comes with hurdling. It's something you learn on the track.

DCN: *What about form? Is the form you develop in clearing the hurdle something you learned easily early-on, or is it something that you're constantly improving over the years?*

Vander Berg: My freshman year, my form was terrible. My teammates, like Katie Keizer and Chalsie Quinn, helped me a lot. The coaches helped me a lot. And just watching other girls from other schools that I looked up to, that helped. My form improved a lot my sophomore year, and it improved even more last season.

DCN: *Do you think that you can improve your form even more this year?*

Vander Berg: Yes, I do. I went to a track camp in Iowa City that was coached by University of Iowa track staff this summer, and they taught me a lot about where my legs should be and where they shouldn't be.

DCN: *Describe that "form" for us. What should a hurdler look like when she crosses a hurdle?*

Vander Berg: When you go over the hurdle, you want to have your lead leg straight in front of you, and your trail leg bent at a 90 degree angle.

DCN: *Then there's the speed component of hurdling. I know that you have completed programs at the Sports Acceleration Center at the hospital. Have those programs helped to increase your speed, and have you been getting faster year-by-year?*

Vander Berg: I've done programs at the Sports Acceleration Center for the past two years, and I know it's helped my speed. They teach you how to stride out and how to have good running form. The first year, I ran 18.5 miles-per-hour in speed tests on the super treadmill. Then last year, I ran 19 mph. I think that every year it would just get faster. It was a really good experience for me.

DCN: *What has your prep running career meant to you and to your high school education?*

Vander Berg: Well, it's made me try harder in school because I want to run in college and be successful there. So, I have to do well in my school work so that I can get accepted at a good college.

DCN: *Do you have any idea how your athletic achievements will affect you later in life?*

Vander Berg: It'll always be good to know that I did well when I ran track, and when I'm older, I'll be able to tell my kids about it. And I think our school shuttle hurdle record will stand for a long time, and that's a good feeling. But I guess we'll have to wait and see about that. I want to coach track after college, so that's another effect. And I think that setting, and sometimes attaining, goals in track will help me to be more successful at setting and attaining goals later in life.

DCN: *What advice would you give to youngsters who are thinking about taking up hurdling?*

Vander Berg: Many people think that hurdles are scary, because of the possibility of falling. But they're not at all. I fell a lot in junior high school, but I haven't fallen at all in high school, yet. I've clipped the hurdles many times, but haven't fallen. I think many runners would be surprised how easy hurdling could be for them if they could lose their fear of falling.

Okoboji fans know that Vander Berg brings speed, rhythm and form to her hurdling, but she also possesses intangible qualities, like leadership and mental toughness, that have helped make her a champion.

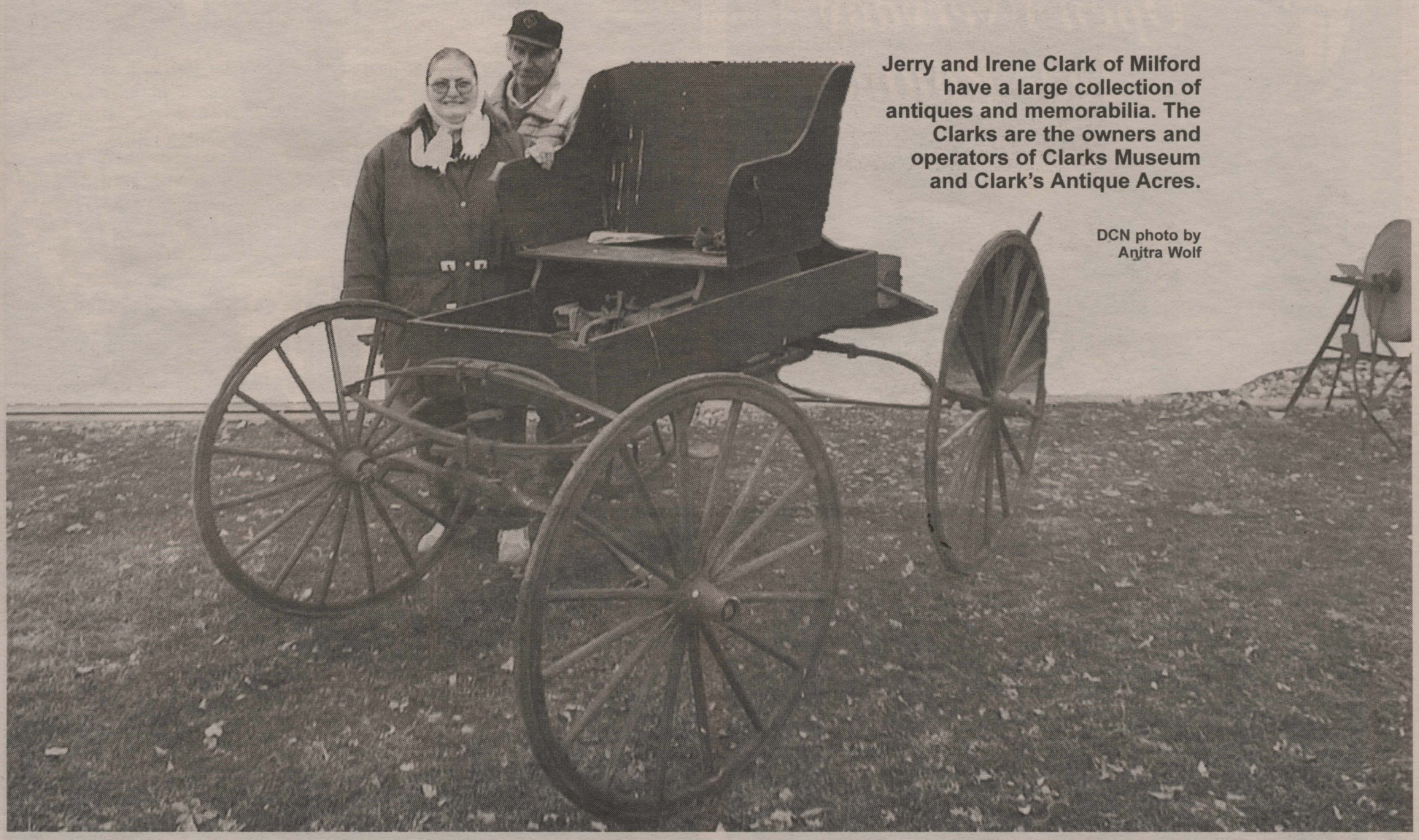
"Staci gives us great leadership for all our hurdlers," said Okoboji Track Coach Rod Lockey. "And she's very competitive. She's willing to run against anybody and go anywhere. She wants to compete at the state level, and not just in local or conference meets.

"Staci just has great desire to win. She has the mental toughness that you have to have to compete for state championships. Staci has broken 20 meet or track records so far in her career, and I think that attests to her competitiveness."

So, the Okoboji faithful can look forward to another exciting season of track and field, with the confidence that their girls' hurdlers are the best in Iowa.

Historical Haven

Jerry and Irene Clark make a life of historical collections



Jerry and Irene Clark of Milford have a large collection of antiques and memorabilia. The Clarks are the owners and operators of Clarks Museum and Clark's Antique Acres.

DCN photo by Anitra Wolf

By ANITRA WOLF
Managing Editor

Dickinson County is filled with interesting historical facts.

These include the vivid history of the Spirit Lake Massacre, the tales of the Arnolds Park Amusement Park and the origin of the beautiful lakes of the region.

But did you know that the first bank owner in Dickinson County raced against horses on foot? He raced half the distance of the horse, and never lost. This was how Mr. Marcus Snieder raised the money to start his bank.

Did you know that there used to be three more lakes in Dickinson County: Pratt, Sylvan and Pillsbury? The lakes were drained in 1914 because they were declared a public nuisance.

Are you aware that Father Meyers, the builder of the St. Joseph's Catholic Church, raised silver fox to make money?

Jerry and Irene Clark know all about these facts and many other interesting Dickinson County trivia.

Jerry and Irene own and operate Clark's Antique Acres, west of Milford. They are collectors, authors, and business people. And they love the history of the Iowa Great Lakes.

One could trace the history of the museum back to its opening in 1975, or to the couple's marriage in 1961. But according to Jerry, it runs back even further than that.

Jerry's passion for history was born at a very young age, when he learned of his family's heritage.

"The Clark family is one of the oldest families in the Lakes area," he said.

Jerry's great grandfather, Gerome Clark, built a house near Milford in 1867. The road on which it sat was referred to as Clark Road for a long time. (It is now blacktop A34.)

Jerry's grandfather, father and family were all born in Milford, and he attributes much of his love of history to his roots in the area.

Then, Jerry met Irene, a summer resident and fellow history enthusiast, and the collection began.

"We were married and have been collecting ever since," said Jerry.

The Clarks bought the farm in 1974 and began moving their collection to what is now the Clarks' Museum.

→



They officially opened the museum to the public in the early 1980s.

Their historical collection started with postcards, and has expanded into photographs, business advertisements, memorabilia and collectibles.

The first thing one will notice when walking into the museum is the number of photographs.

"We have several thousand photographs," said Jerry. "It's surprising that we have so many people in here that say 'gosh, that's my uncle or grandpa.'"

After photographs, the Clarks largest



DCN photo by Anitra Wolf

Jerry and Irene Clark pose here inside their museum, located just west of the city of Milford. The couple has spent a life time collecting memorabilia from the Lakes area and other Northwest Iowa communities.

collection is business advertisements.

"We have over 12,000 business advertisements from a 60- to 70-mile radius around the Lakes," said Irene.

"Many little towns used to have two or three grocery stores and you could exist out of an area like that," said Jerry. "We thought it would be nice to keep business names in remembrance. Everybody's made the communities what they are."

Aside from photos and business advertisements, the Clarks' museum also includes many items from the Arnolds Park Amusement Park, antique transportation units, newspaper memorabilia, railroad items, army collectibles, and many Lakes Region historical artifacts.

The Clarks also own two prize items – both sets of "Bowling on the Green," a popular English game.

"One of the sets is the third oldest known set in the world," said Jerry. "It was owned by the Duke of Bedford, and the late Teddy Roosevelt played with the set when in England."

The second set was owned by Cecil J. Rhodes, the founder of the Rhodes scholarship, who at one point owned and controlled 90 percent of the diamond wealth of the world.

Clark's Museum is open May 1 through Oct. 1. The antique business opens April 1 and remains open through November.

The sets are not exhibited in the museum due to their tremendous value.

While one would think owning and operating a museum would be a full-time task, the Clarks also operate an antique business on their property.

"We started the antique business in 1991," said Irene. "We started with consignment and crafts, but now it's all our stuff."

The antique business is found in nine buildings throughout the farm, one being an entire house at the west end of the property.

"We have a general line, but we do also have a lot of unusual items," said Irene.

Because they are on a farm and have these large buildings for storage, the Clarks are able to offer many antiques one wouldn't find elsewhere.

With their love for history, the Clarks were a natural choice to write the Milford Centennial Book, published in the 1980s.

Outside of their historical businesses, Irene and Jerry have each enjoyed other forms of employment. Jerry continues to work in his well-drilling business, and Irene was employed for the school hot lunch program for a number of years. They enjoy traveling, and they have five children.

When you dig into their hobbies, you'll find that many of them include aspects of their first love – history.

"I enjoy going out and looking for items, visiting antique places and going to shows," said Irene.

Jerry has similar interests.

"I could spend most of an evening researching some of these pictures too," he added.

So, "Is it work?" asks this reporter to wrap up the interview.

"A guy could say this is more or less a hobby," said Jerry.

But you see in their eyes that history isn't a hobby, it's their passion.

And it's one they're thrilled to share.

"Many little towns used to have two or three grocery stores and you could exist out of an area like that. We thought it would be nice to keep business names in remembrance. Everybody's made the communities what they are."

Jerry Clark





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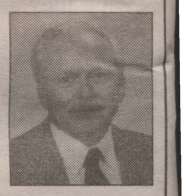
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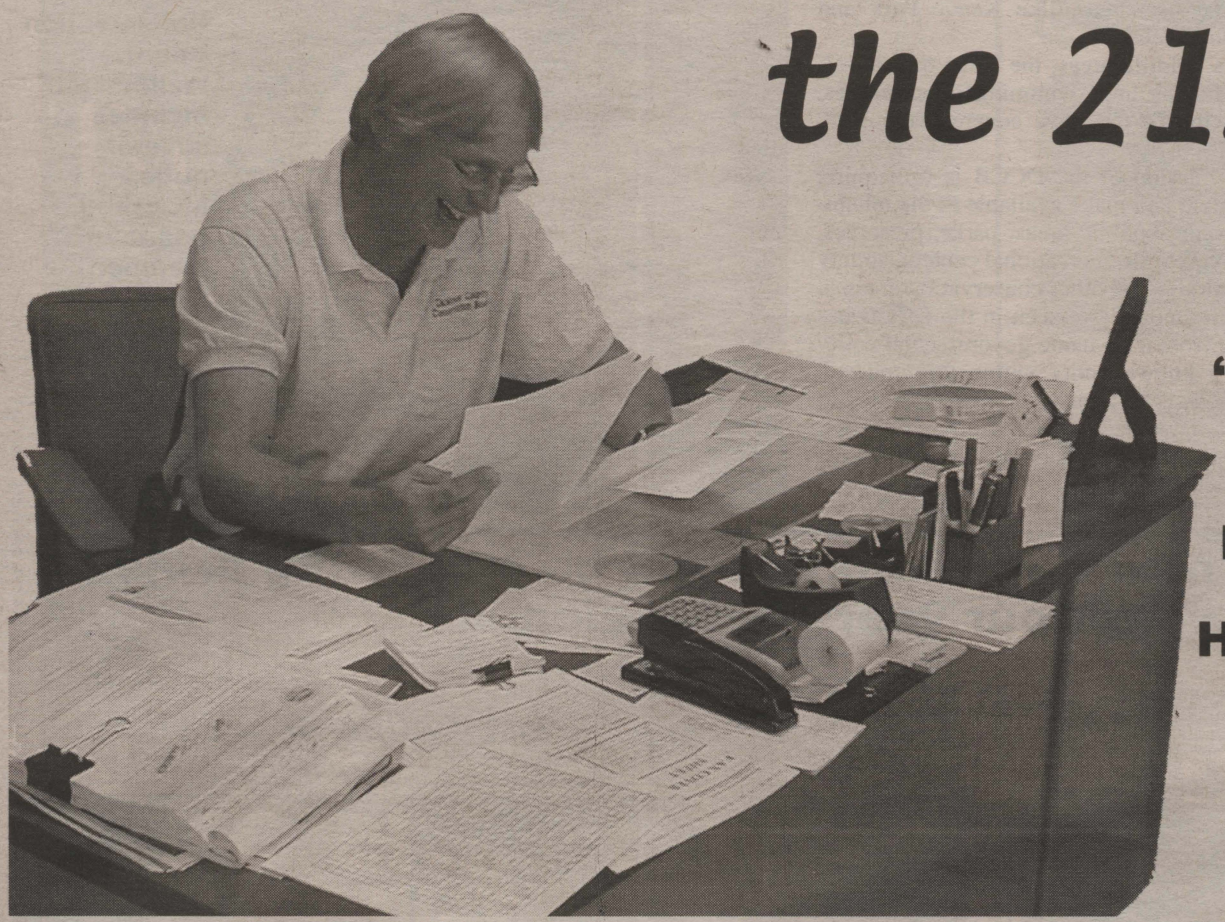
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DICKINSON COUNTY NEWS

Walters brings DCCB into the 21st Century



"I was the board's first full-time employee ... I joined some of the board's retired part-time employees in the late 70s, making snow at Horseshoe Bend and helping out here."

John Walters
DCCB Director

By MIKE JORDAN
Contributing Writer

According to John Walters, Dickinson County Conservation Board Director, the county conservation board system goes back to the 1950s. It was at that time that the legislature made it an available option for counties to create a conservation board.

The Dickinson County Conservation Board was founded in 1969. By Iowa Code, the supervisors put the formation of the county conservation board to a vote of the people; and with the public's consent, a county conservation board was formed at that time.

"I believe the board was initiated by Dwight Antisdel with his vision of Horseshoe Bend out here," Walters explained. "It was not, however, the first Dickinson County Conservation Board Park. The first management area the county was in charge of was Orlean's Beach. The reason for that is Orlean's Beach is state property and it was easy for the conservation board to get their feet wet by actually taking over operation of that area with a management agreement with the state DNR. The concept for Horseshoe Bend Park followed soon after."

Walters joined the Dickinson County Conservation Board in 1979, doing part-time work over the winter months when he was laid off from his construction job. Over time, Walters became a full-time employee of the board. He also started taking classes at Iowa Lakes Community College in accounting, basic business methods and conservation management.

In 1990, Walters was named the board's first director, a position he has held since.

"I was the board's first full-time employee," Walters related. "I had worked construction work and had built metal buildings. I had also done concrete work and had worked in a factory, too. I joined some of the board's retired part-time employees in the late '70s, making snow at Horseshoe Bend and helping out here."

Walters, as director of the DCCB, has a number of varied administrative duties to perform in his position, as well as overseeing the field work of the board's other employees. Writing reports and handling correspondence are part of his daily tasks, as well as up dating e-mail lists, developing maps of the trails and monitoring the board's tree and shrub programs.

"Part of my job is orienting new board members about the DCCB. I do the budget, annual report, direct the field staff and work on maintenance and improvement projects we are involved in," Walters added.

The Dickinson County Conservation Board is a five-member board with a new board member appointed to it in rotating five-year terms. That results in the supervisors making a new board appointment annually.

Present board members are: Don Buetel from Terril, Randy Cornwall from Lake Park, Kathy Kleene from Spirit Lake, Don Lamb from Milford and Ron Walker from Arnolds Park.

"I like the development end of my job best," Walters declared, "Development projects within a park – the installation and layout of such things as camping facilities and playgrounds – really interests me most. The board meets monthly. Basically, I do what the board tells me to do from those monthly meetings."

The Dickinson County Conservation Board does some programming with the DNR. Most of their funding, however, comes from the county's general fund, with some additional funding coming from REAP and the Waste Reduction Fund.

"When I first started here, life was simple," Walters said, "Everything was pretty close to home with Orlean's Beach and Horseshoe Bend our only real responsibilities. Then we added the West Port Pit. Still, our work was mostly maintenance ... more janitorial in nature except for the planting of a few trees."

"It was not very all inclusive. Then we added recreational equipment and acquired and developed Kenue Park. But the trail system was the big one. It made the board open up and go bigger," Walters continued, "The trails started when I became the director. The DOT and grant paper work changed my job. I became an inspector. Then the floods of 1993 and the FEMA paper work introduced me to working with the federal government. Working with the federal government, as opposed to work

→

ing with the state, is different."

Walters has seen the philosophy change with the DCCB as the board members changed. Since then, the trails in Dickinson County and their usage has exploded for the county. The DCCB has added two hunting areas to their jurisdiction as well: One, a 158-acre farm known as the Judd Wildlife Area, is located just a few miles west of Horseshoe Bend Park; the other, known as the Superior Marsh, a 40-acre area, lies north of Superior. The DCCB now manages a total of 470 recreational acres.

The future of the DCCB is toward continued expansion as well, according to Walters.

"In the next five years, the new nature center will be a very big project. I see it lasting two to four years in development," Walters explained, "Funding is an issue there. We've a long way to go on that. The trails will always be big. They will never go away. More habitat improvements and the tweaking of the 200 acres we have in hunting areas will be important. Wetlands, natural grasses, shelter belts and food plots can all be developed there."

Walters sees the major strengths of the DCCB, in his mind, being the board itself. "Our board is well-rounded. We have expertise on our board in city government, government in general, education, and wildlife interests as well," Walters emphasized. "Areas in need of improvement are related to our nature center and environmental education, but we are getting to them. We are weak in the full utilization of our day-use areas, like Kenue Park and Horseshoe Bend as well."

The board's wildlife areas, the spine trail development, and fishing and swimming opportunities, Walters feels, the DCCB have covered very well, however.

The stated mission of the DCCB is to acquire, develop, maintain and make available to the inhabitants of the county, public areas, parks, preserves, parkways, playgrounds, recreational centers, county forests, and wildlife and other conservation areas.

"The biggest change I've seen in the DCCB has been its going from a no-name governmental entity to becoming a known entity within this county," Walters concluded, "I applaud the early-on board members, like Dwight Antisdel, Lorraine Walker and others. They developed the trails system philosophy and carried through it."



John Walters has played a key role in growing the Dickinson County Conservation Board. Walters' job includes several duties, including board member orientation, writing, and overseeing field work.

DCN photo by Mike Jordan

"In the next five years, the new nature center will be a very big project. I see it lasting two to four years in development. "

John Walters
Dickinson County Conservation Board Director

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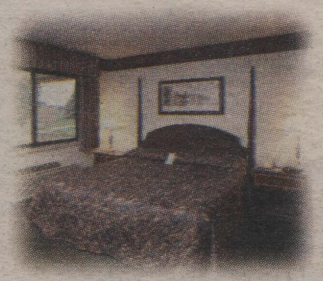
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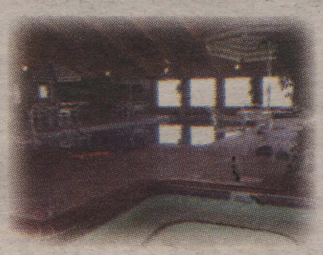
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The Massacre Monument is just one of dozens of historical sites in the Iowa Great Lakes. The area is rich in history and many of the museums and other sites have captured the stories of the area and region.

Explore the history of the Iowa Great Lakes

• Historical sites and museums tell of the area's rich history.

By MIKE JORDAN & ANITRA WOLF

The people of the Iowa Great Lakes are worthy of celebration. But there would be no people were it not for the rich history of the region.

The Iowa Great Lakes can trace its history back to the age of the glaciers but the history of its first settlers is much more recent history in comparison.

HISTORICAL SITES

Many historical sites exist within the borders of Dickinson County.

Gardner Log Cabin

The most famous probably is the Gardner Log Cabin located in Arnolds Park on Pillsbury Point.

Placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973, the Gardner Cabin is the only structure that remained standing following the Indian massacre known as the Spirit Lake Massacre of 1857.

Built by Rowland Gardner and his family upon their arrival here in July of 1856, the structure remains standing today pretty much as it was created then thanks to the restoration work of the state historical society.

It was around this log cabin and the surrounding area that seven people, including all of the Gardner family except daughters Abbie and Eliza were slain.

Massacre Monument

Next to the Gardner Cabin stands the largest historical marker in the county, the massacre monument. Standing some 45 feet tall and constructed of granite, the monument was built in the 1890s. The bronze tablets on its face list the forty area victims of the Spirit Lake Massacre, as well as the Relief Expeditionary Forces that came to the area following the massacre.

In the same vicinity as the monument is located the private cemetery for the Gardner-Sharp family with headstones marking their graves, and a state run historical site interpretation center.

James Mattock Cabin Marker

Located just to the south of the Okoboji highway bridge on the far northern edge of the city of Arnolds Park, lies the historical marker designating the site of the James Mattock Cabin that was burned by the same renegade Indian, Inkpadutah and his band of Dakota Indians that had attacked and killed the Gardner family. Mattock, his wife and all five of their children died in the blaze along with Robert Madison, a guest in their home at the time.

Carl Granger Cabin Marker

In Okoboji, right next to the Okoboji Police Station, lies the historical marker for the site of the Carl Granger Cabin. Here four young bachelors, all from Red Wing, Minn., died at the hands of Inkpadutah and his band as the renegades traveled north in their bloody raid. Granger, Dr. I. H. Harriot, Bertell A. Snyder and Joseph Harshman were all killed at this site.

Howe Cabin Marker

Just to the north of Camp Foster lies another historical marker for a site where the Howe Cabin once stood. Here, Joel Howe, his wife, and all six of their children fell victim to the Indians' terrible massacre.

Thatcher Cabin Marker

About a mile to the north of that site, a historical marker points to the place where the Thatcher Cabin once stood. It was here

→

that the same Indians killed the Thatcher baby, a Mr. Noble, one of the Noble children and a Mr. Ryan, brother-in law of the Thatchers. Both Mrs. Thatcher and Mrs. Noble were taken hostage but later died at the hands of the Indians. Mr. Thatcher, who had been away for provisions for his family, escaped the massacre.

Marble Cabin Marker

Near Marble Lake, just off the western shoreline of Big Spirit Lake, is another historical marker of the Spirit Lake Massacre. This site locates the Marble Cabin that was built by William Marble and his wife prior to the winter of 1857. Following the murder and destruction of the other cabins to the south, Inkpadutah and his band of renegade Dakota warriors traveled north again. Coming upon the Marble Cabin, they shot William Marble and took his wife hostage. She was later freed in a trade with friendly Indians at the Yellow Medicine Reservation in May of 1857.

Old Fort Marker

A historical marker at the ten hundred block on Hill Ave. in the city of Spirit Lake marks the site of the "Old Fort" for the army's encampment there. From 1861 to 1863, the army occupied a cabin at this site prior to joining the Seventh Iowa Cavalry. The army built a 25 x 30 ft. long log cabin which they used as a fort here.

Old Stockade Marker

Next to the Dickinson County Courthouse in Spirit Lake lies a large granite boulder with a bronze tablet that was used as a dedication to the 40 families that sought shelter there in the "Old Stockade" that was built as a protection for them from the Indians.

Other sites of historical significance in the county include **Caylor Prairie**, the **Queen steamship** and the area's lakes, and the former railroad lines and depot sites.

MUSEUMS

Clark's Museum of Area History and Antique Acres

The Lakes Area has changed remarkably in the past 100 years, and Clark's Museum of Area History and Antique Acres specializes in keeping track of these changes through the collection of Lakes Area memorabilia.

The museum began in the early 1980s, collecting old street scene postcards from the Lakes Area and has since expanded to include old business advertisements, items from Arnolds Park Amusement Park, collections from former Lakes Area restaurants, and a display of horse-drawn farm machinery.

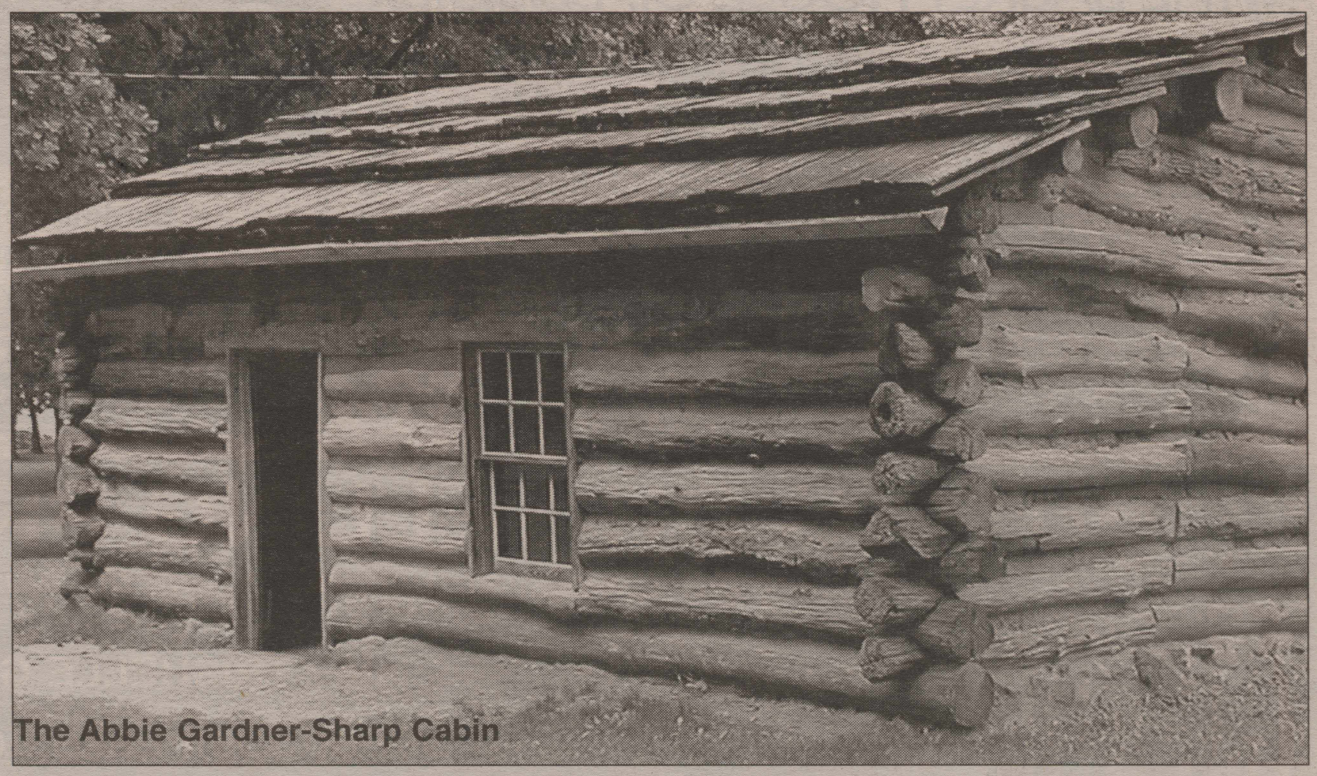
In conjunction with the museum, there is also a two-story antique house from which visitors can bring home treasures of their own.

Clark's Museum of Area History and Antique Acres is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. seven days a week in the summer months (June, July, and August). In the Spring and Fall months (April, May, October, and November), the museum is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day but Monday. They are closed during the winter.

Dickinson County Museum

Few Dickinson County residents remember what life was like at the turn of the century, but several former residents have donated items to the Dickinson County Museum to help their 2003 counterparts take a trip back in time.

The Dickinson County Museum, a collection of memorabilia and artifacts that have been given by residents of Dickinson County. Some of the items on display at the museum include Indian artifacts, apparel from the early 1900s, medical equipment, and a living quarters area, set up with things found in a 1900 home.



The Abbie Gardner-Sharp Cabin

The Dickinson County Museum is open 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday from May 1 to Oct. 1.

Abbie Gardner-Sharp Cabin

The Abbie Gardner-Sharp Cabin is dedicated to the history of the Spirit Lake Massacre of 1857 and depicts what life would have been like in that time period.

The museum is set on the same ground upon which many Lakes residents were killed. Abbie Gardner-Sharp, for whom the cabin is named, was taken prisoner during the massacre.

The Gardner-Sharp Cabin is open from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

Higgins Museum

While most old money tends to get burned and discarded before it becomes collectable, the Higgins Museum has acquired an extensive collection of old money for museum patrons to view.

The Higgins Museum opened in 1978 and has since established an extensive collection of bank notes from around Iowa and the United States. Featuring bank notes that date from 1863 to 1935, history unfolds through the currency. The museum's collection stems from 281 Iowa towns and all 48 continuous states.

The Higgins Museum is open from Tuesday to Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. from mid-May to late September.

Iowa Great Lakes Maritime Museum

Maritime means connected to water, so it's no surprise that the Iowa Great Lakes Maritime Museum includes a collection of things having to do with the water in the Lakes Region.

The museum's collection includes a wooden boat display and a collection of historic lake and old amusement park memorabilia.

Area history is also emphasized in this museum.

The Maritime Museum is open daily year round, with varying hours depending upon the season. Currently, they are open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

The museum is opening in the summer from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday and Monday.

Lakes Art Center

History at the Lakes Art Center is of a different form, and the art center provides a diverse variety of both historical art and modern art opportunities for the community.

Featuring exhibitions, instructional classes, and other activities, the Art Center promotes the various types of art – visual, music, drama, writing, and film.

The Lakes Art Center holds its own permanent collection and often partners with local artists and schools to show the artwork based in the Lakes Area. The center also hosts traveling exhibitions as well.

The Lakes Art Center is currently expanding to include a 300-seat performing arts theatre and an interactive gallery geared toward families. The theatre was completed last summer, and the gallery is now open to viewers.

The Lakes Art Center is open year-round Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Parker Historical Museum of Clay County

If you're looking to dig a little deeper into the region's history, the Parker Historical Museum in Spencer has already done the work. The Parker Museum collects preserves and artifacts dealing with the history of Clay County and the surrounding area.

Situated in a 1916 Arts and Crafts style home, the museum boasts a 1918 LaFrance fire engine that helped fight the famous Spencer fire. Other artifacts found in the museum include: agricultural items, school and military items and an exhibit on a Clay County settlement dating from 1856-78.

The Parker Historical Museum is open Tuesday through Friday year round from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. During the summer months (June through August), they are also open on Sundays from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

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"Taking care of sick kids on the ambulance crew and the fire and rescue crew are the most intense experiences I have had."

Chris Yungbluth

Chris Yungbluth – a man who wears many badges

By ERICA JACOBSON
Contributing Writer

Chris Yungbluth is a young man who wears many badges.

He attended school in Royal, Iowa and learned a strong work ethic from his father. His father was a volunteer fireman for the city of Royal, and he can remember the pagers going off for his father to attend a call. This is one reason Yungbluth, himself, decided he wanted to become a fireman.

Yungbluth came to the Lakes area from Royal five years ago. A position at the hospital on the ambulance crew provided him a reason to move to Okoboji. He is currently beginning his fifth year with Lakes Regional Healthcare. He often works 24-hour shifts which includes 12 hours on back-up call and 12 hours on first-call. Back-up call requires him to be within twenty minutes of the hospital. Whereas first-call requires him to be within five minutes of the hospital. Usually at this time, Yungbluth is found on hospital grounds, so he is available for emergencies which require ambulance service.

"Taking care of sick kids on the ambulance crew and the fire and rescue crew are the most intense experiences I have had," Yungbluth said. "However, it all pays off when we receive a thank you or a look of appreciation."

Yungbluth wears other badges as well. He is also a volunteer and part-time employee of the Arnolds Park and Okoboji Fire and Rescue Crew. He has been on the team for four years and saw the two communities joining together in 2000, which he feels was an advantage for the community as a whole. Chris holds the position of fire fighter and EMT on the Fire and Rescue squad. He initially joined the crew to obtain some fire fighting experience, but says it has become a lot more to him than that.

"There are a lot of people in the county who are important to the crew. When a pager goes off, volunteers stop what they're doing and show up for calls. It is amazing," he said.

Yungbluth also enjoys the feeling of support and encouragement the department receives from the communities. He believes this is what makes the fire and rescue team thrive.

"For the most part, we're like a family," said Yungbluth. "Of course we have our occasional differences, but we know we'll be here for each other, if we need to be."

Yungbluth has a couple more interesting badges he wears, not only is this young man a fire fighter and an EMT, but he also works as a reserve police officer for the local police departments. He has held this position for a little over a year and enjoys it immensely. He mainly works during the summer months when the tourist industry is at its height, however, he has also worked in the off-season to achieve year-round experience.

If that were not enough, Yungbluth also teaches a class at Iowa Lakes Community College. He teaches an EMT class. He enjoys teaching others, because he likes to watch people learn new things.

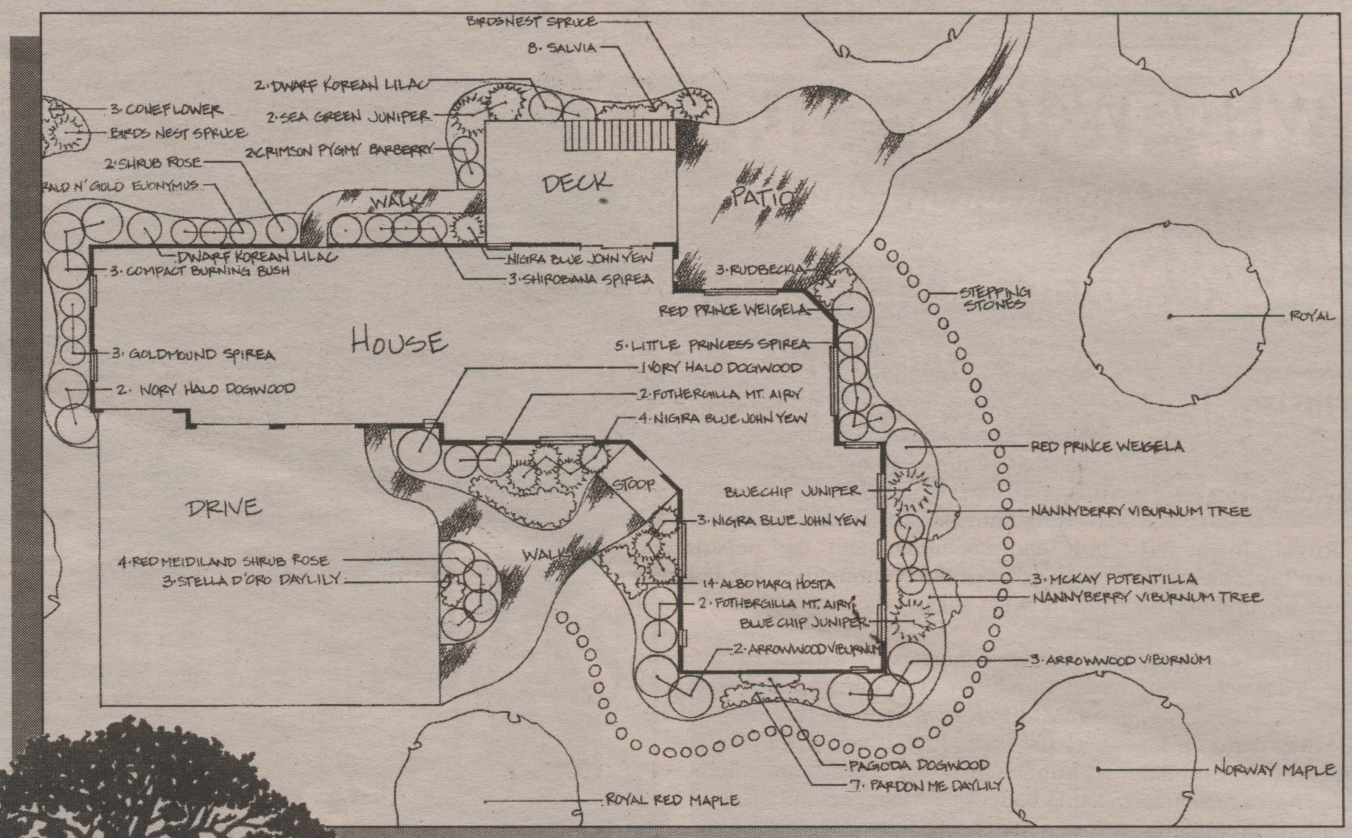
Yungbluth also manages to succeed in the roles of husband and father. He has been married to his wife for four years, and together they have one child, a little girl. The family resides in Okoboji and enjoys the life and activities that the lakes area supplies to year-round residents.

Yungbluth may have summed it up the best himself: "The people of this community inspire me, because the locals pull together and make the visitors feel welcome. They make it feel like a home away from home."



Chris Yungbluth is a man who wears many badges – EMT, fireman, and police officer are just a few of the roles Yungbluth plays in the Dickinson County community.

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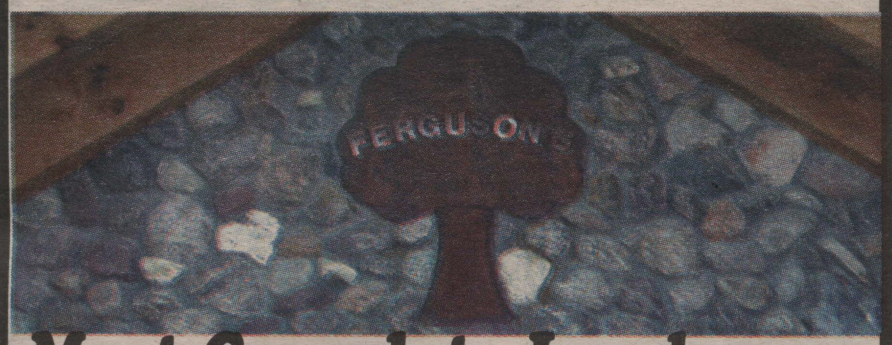
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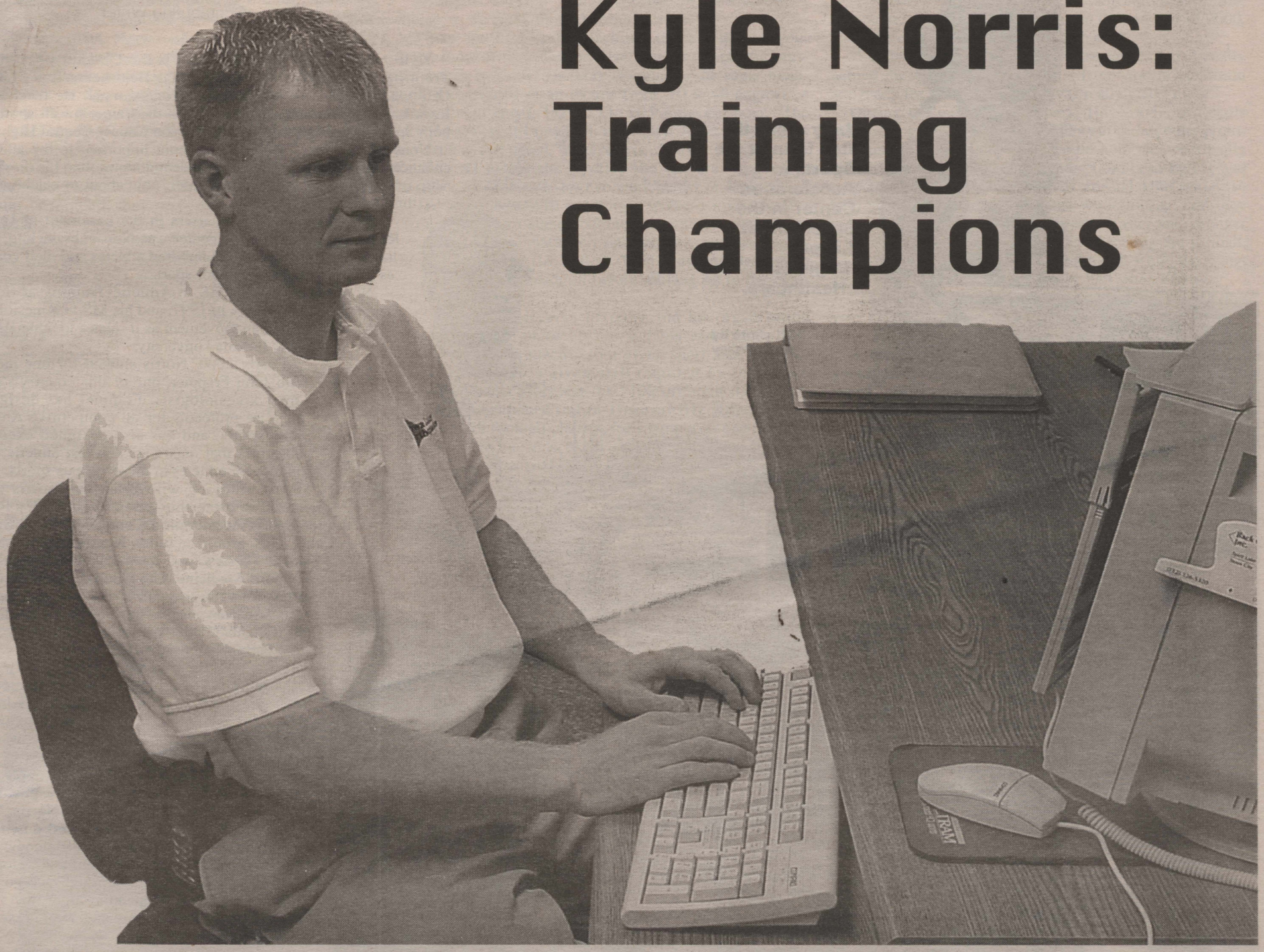
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Kyle Norris: Training Champions



"The first time every athlete goes through the program, we put them through a general program," said Norris. "We want to make sure that we've laid down the groundwork for good running efficiency, and for the base strength that we want to develop. "

Kyle Norris



Many area athletes train at the Sports Acceleration Center in the basement at Lakes Regional Healthcare.

DCN photo by Roger Wiley

By ROGER WILEY
Contributing Writer

Kyle Norris wears many hats. He is the Director of Athletic Training Services for Lakes Regional Healthcare/Iowa Lakes Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine, for example. He teaches at Iowa Lakes Community College. He is the trainer for all sports at both Spirit Lake High School and Jackson County Central High.

None of his "hats," however, is more important to the athletic enhancement of prep and college student athletes than his directorship of the Sports Acceleration Center, now about to celebrate its third anniversary.

Housed in spacious quarters in the basement of Lakes Regional Healthcare, the center was Norris' brainchild, and has been a boon to several hundred athletes and their coaches in every major and minor sport.

Norris received his BS in Athletic Training at South Dakota State University in 1997, and his MS in Kinesiology (the study of human movement as it relates to athletics) in 1998 at Indiana University.

In early 2000, Norris studied for one month with John Frappier, one of this country's premier kinesiologists. Frappier has designed exercise protocols for all competitive American sports, and has also designed exercise machines that maximize and test athletic performance for athletes in these various sports.

After studying with Frappier, Norris then organized an ownership group to establish a Frappier Sports Acceleration Center (SAC) in Spirit Lake. This group includes Norris, Great Lakes Physical Therapy, and Iowa Lakes Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine. The group then leased their quarters from the hospital.

The SAC franchise in Spirit Lake is one of 105 such franchises internationally. Sioux City and Sioux Falls also have SAC franchises.

In the past three years, approximately 450 prep and college athletes have completed at least one sports acceleration program. Almost 100 of these athletes have completed more than one program — some as many as four times. The initial program for athletes in any sport is standardized. "The first time every athlete goes through the program, we put them through a general program," said Norris. "We want to make sure that we've laid down the groundwork for good running efficiency, and for the base strength that we want to develop.

"Then, the second time through, we go 100 different directions, depending upon the sport involved and the strengths and weaknesses of the athlete."

Each program is an eight-week format, with three sessions per week averaging about 90 minutes per session.

Program enrollees are essentially a "Who's Who" of area athletics. Athletes from 23 area high schools have gone through at least one program, and approximately 15 colleges have had athletes go through the program in the past three years.

During the school year, the center is typically open from 4 to 7 p.m., with several dozen enrollees at any given time. In the summer,

→

months, the center is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and is a beehive of activity. Last summer, a staff of five trained 120 athletes during the summer months.

The core staff is comprised of Norris, Levi Markwardt and Kia Gonnerman. Markwardt and Gonnerman are exercise professionals and are certified as personal trainers.

SAC has drawn athletes from all four of our county high schools — Spirit Lake, Okoboji, Terril and Harris-Lake Park. But the greatest influx of athletic talent training at SAC has been, surprisingly, from Jackson County Central in Minnesota.

"We trained about 40 kids from Jackson Central last summer," said Norris. "Last year they won the state championship in football, they made the state tournament in volleyball, and they got third in the state in softball — and we trained a lot of those kids."

More than 150,000 athletes worldwide have taken advantage of the SAC programs so far. Every enrollee undergoes standardized tests as part of the SAC program, and the results of this testing is stored in a web-formatted database, which is invaluable to college and Olympic coaches in recruitment evaluations.

Athletes, and their parents who foot the bills, naturally want to know what impact participation in the SAC programs will have on athletic performance. "I think that our programs have definitely raised the bar on helping these athletes understand how hard they can work and how hard they can push themselves," said Norris. "They see other kids go out and be champions, they see other kids go out and perform well who have trained here, and it not only raises their performance levels but raises the play of their teammates.

"It's hard work to come through here and complete a program. They gain a lot of self respect. Even if a kid only gets one-tenth of a second faster in the 40-yard dash, that means something; but it means so much more for that athlete to have the self confidence that they were able to complete a program here.

"Athletes develop 'comfort levels' in their sports of choice — we break through those barriers."

There are 22 training machines that fill the workout room, most of them for the development of specific muscle groups or skills. The core machine is the super treadmill. It is capable of an incline from -10 to 40 degrees of grade, and of speeds from 0.1 to 28.9 miles per hour. "The record pace on this treadmill is 24 mph — several athletes have run at that speed," said Norris. "We use the incline to develop the stride and develop the turnover frequency, because you obviously have to work harder on an incline."

The super treadmill requires a spotter — an exercise professional who stands behind the runner, gives directions, controls the machine's settings, and provides a measure of safety for the athlete. First-time enrollees must master this super treadmill before moving on to the other training machines.

Over the last decade, Frappier and his organization have developed "protocols" — training and testing regimens — that are specific to a given sport and, in many cases, specific to a given skill required by that sport. These protocols represent the "100 different directions" that Norris mentioned earlier. There are five different SAC protocols for football players, for example — one for linemen; another for wide receivers and backs; one for tight ends and linebackers; another for defensive backs and safeties; even one for "back pedals," a skill required of all football players.

Norris and his athletes consult about which protocols are appropriate for the athlete's sport and skill level, and those protocols become the basis for training sessions.

What is Sports Acceleration training like for the athlete? "It's hard — when I first did it three summers ago, it was the hardest thing I'd ever done," said South Dakota State softball outfielder Emily Haywood, a former multi-sport standout for Okoboji High School. Now a junior at SDSU, Haywood has earned two softball letters. She trained in her initial SAC program in the summer of 2000, just before her freshman year at college.

"I trained throughout that first summer, and it really helped me out," said Haywood. "It got me in condition and ready for a college sport. I was really glad I did it."

During the past two summers, Haywood's protocols have been softball-specific. "Kyle went through the protocols and picked out ones that would help me specifically for softball," Haywood continued. "I did cord hitting and cord throwing. They hook cords around your waist, to help you bring your hips through while hitting; and they use arm cords as resistance to develop faster and stronger arms and hands. It really helps with throwing the softball. I never used to bring my trail leg through while throwing, and now I can put a lot more on the ball when I throw.

"They also use cords for batting, which help you bring your hips through [on the swing] and keep your hands up. You can be hooked up to four different cords — one on each hip and one on each arm. It improves your stance, your hand quickness, and getting your hips through on the swing," Haywood continued.

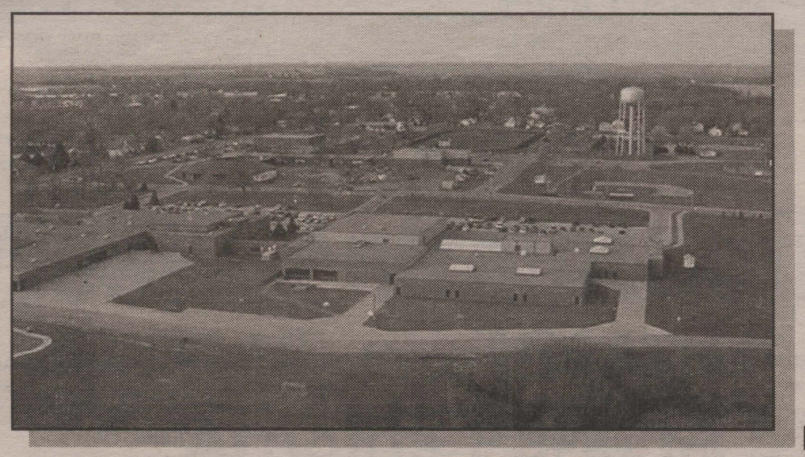
"Last year, my teammates noticed that something was different. And I certainly notice the difference — every time I step in the batter's box, I think of something that Kyle has told me. And the training has certainly improved my work ethic."

Haywood believes that SAC training not only improves athletes physically, but helps improve mental toughness as well. "When you're on the treadmill, for example, sometimes you just want to quit, but you can't because you'll fall. It helps you to push through adversity."

Which is an apt metaphor for life.

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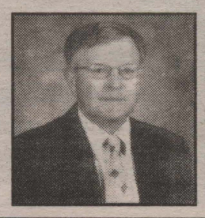
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Going Up



Lakes Regional Healthcare, formerly Dickinson County Hospital, recently began construction on a new addition. The addition includes approximately 20 single patient rooms, an educational center, and a shelled in area that will be developed at a later date.



The Iowa Rock N Roll Hall of Fame Museum opened its doors for the first time during the 2003 Winter Games. A grand opening celebration is planned for late May.

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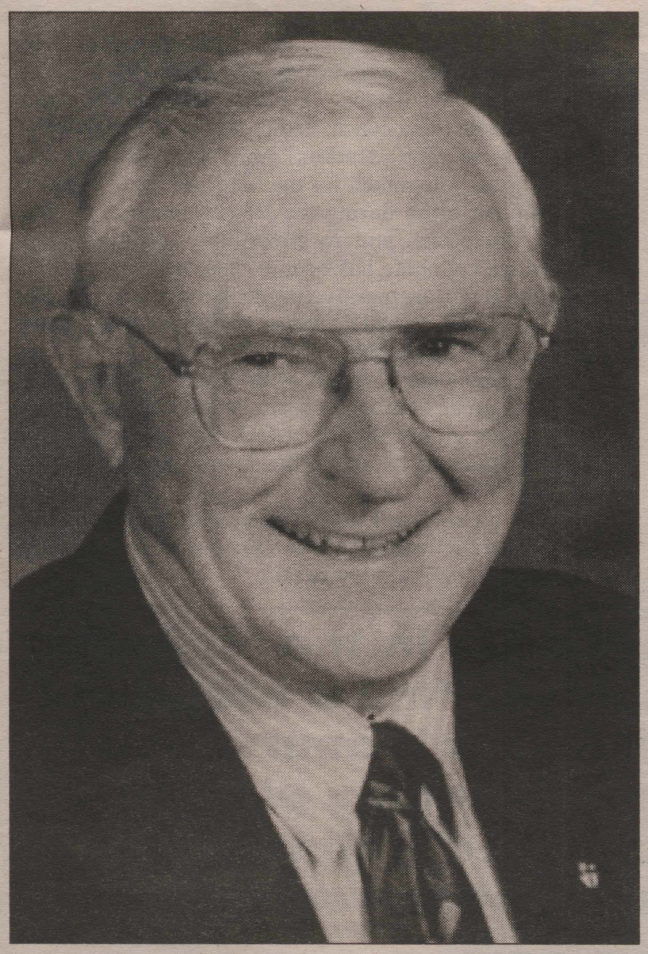
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Aubrey LaFoy shares a lifetime love of history

By MIKE JORDAN
Contributing Writer

He still writes about history. He studied history, and read about it all through his schooling. In fact, for 36 years, he taught history. You could say history has been his life – a love of history – that he shares with others.

Aubrey LaFoy – educator, historian, writer and singer – is a Milford native that has not only remembered his roots, but recorded them, and shared what he has learned about them and the Iowa Great Lakes with others through his column, "Down Memory Lane," which has been a fixture in the Dickinson County News since 1992.

Born in 1925, Aubrey was raised in Milford and along the shores of West Lake Okoboji at Jones Beach, where his family built a cottage the same year he was born.

Aubrey attended Milford Consolidated School and worked at various jobs growing up. He had a newspaper route, and when in high school, worked at the old Milford Mail, a grocery store and sold speed boat tickets at the waterfront in Arnolds Park in the summers.

It was through the tales of yore of his grandmother, an early pioneer in Dickinson County, and his aunt Freda, his mother's oldest sister, that Aubrey became intrigued with history. He began to love to read about history, famous people and everyday events early in his school years.

After graduating from high school, he enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps.

"I spent 30 months in the U.S. Army Air Corps mainly in the China-Burma-India theatre. I was a driver and a medic there. I drove the Ledo-Burma Road from India to China," Aubrey said, "After my time in the service, I attended the University of Northern Iowa were I majored in history. I graduated there in 1949, and earned a Master of Arts degree from Northern Colorado University in 1950."

Beyond his master's in history, over the years, Aubrey has accumulated some 60 hours in various coursework as well.

Additionally, Aubrey earned a minor in geography and taught geography and drivers' education for 10 years, during his career.

LaFoy first taught at Greeley, Colo. for three years

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before moving to Mason City where he taught for 25 years. He finished his teaching career in Estherville.

History, geography, and reading were his favorite subjects to teach his middle schoolers.

Married in 1948 to his wife, Connie, the young couple bought a lot on Terrace Park for $2,500 and built a cottage there in 1953. In 1971, they sold that cottage and purchased one on Pocahantas Point. They lived there until 2001 when they sold it and moved to a townhouse on Emerald Hills Golf Course where they now spend the warmer months.

During the colder months the LaFoys live with 4,500 other people in an adult community in Mesa, Ariz., where Aubrey pursues his interests in golf, writing, genealogy, reading, socializing and singing. The community there has two golf courses, two recreation centers and two swimming pools.

"We have over 400 people in our computer club there," Aubrey stated, "I also sing in our mixed chorus, along with 70 other people."

"I love the people that populate the Iowa Great Lakes though," Aubrey continued, "We belong to the Okoboji Yacht Club, which has a multitude of activities to do. The Lakes are a real treasure to be enjoyed, for not only swimming, sailing, ice boating and fishing, but also for just viewing as well. I have been all over the world, and for me, the Iowa Great Lakes is the only place to be in the summer and fall."

"I don't believe there is another place in Iowa, and even in the Midwest, that has the history we have here," Aubrey declared. "Where else can you find a history of so many steam boats, boat makers, fishing, cottages, golf courses ... an historical event like the Spirit Lake Massacre, our founding pioneers, several ballrooms – where big name bands have played – and so many grand hotels. What an interesting place! In my mind it has no equal!"

Aubrey still enjoys history. He reads old accounts in the *Spirit Lake Beacon* and *Milford Mail*, as well as discovering bits of history in old letters.

"Interviewing people, finding letters and photographs, and being able to put some of them together, with isolated facts and information into a readable story, is what I enjoy doing," he emphasized, "It keeps the old brain working."

Aubrey credits his parents and supporting family with having a great influence on him growing up.

"I had two great uncles. One especially, Uncle Jake, who was a teacher and coach, had probably the most influence on me to become a teacher," Aubrey related, "He was not only a great role model for me to follow, but I remember him having a job during the Depression years, when my father, Uncle Jack, and my grandfather LaFoy were not fully employed. Connie has been a great influence on my life too. She is very supportive of me and my writing. She is also my copy editor. Her ideas and suggestions make 'Down Memory Lane,' what it is."

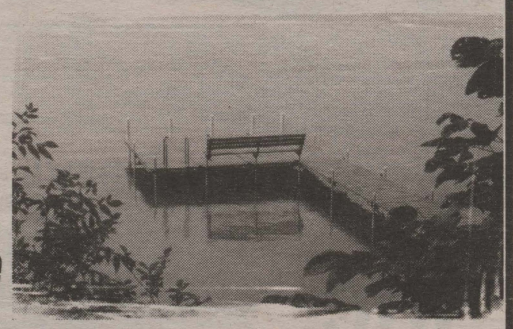
"I have also been blessed with many friends, good health and a great family (the LaFoys have three married sons and seven grandchildren). I feel privileged to live in the United States of America, the Iowa Great Lakes and Mesa."

Aubrey's column still brings interesting bits of history of our area to the readers of the *Dickinson County News* and *Okobojian*, on a weekly basis.

"I don't believe there is another place in Iowa, and even in the Midwest, that has the history we have here. Where else can you find a history of so many steam boats, boat makers, fishing, cottages, golf courses ... an historical event like the Spirit Lake Massacre, our founding pioneers, several ballrooms – where big name bands have played – and so many grand hotels. What an interesting place! In my mind it has no equal!"

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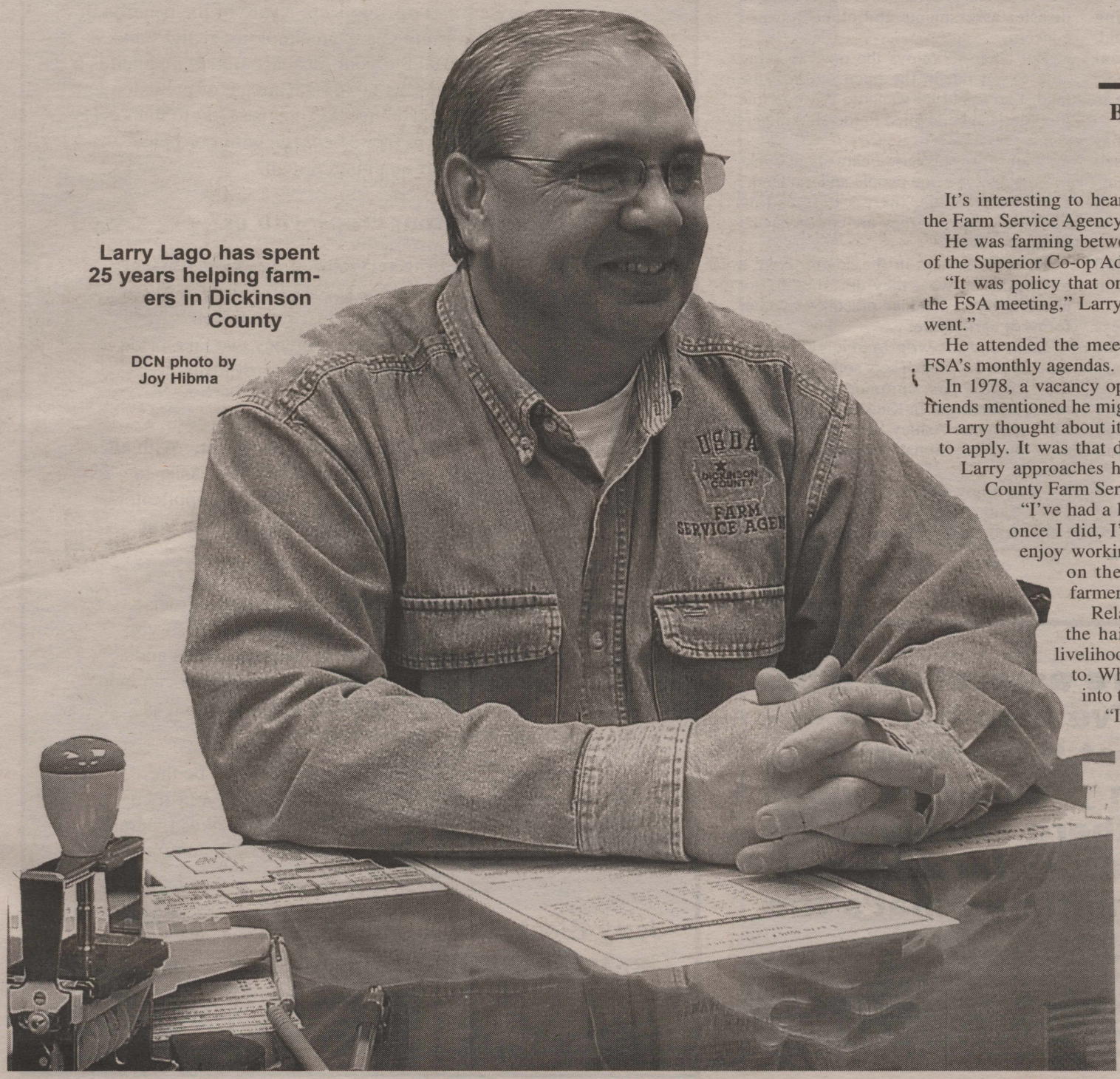
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"I've had a long and unusual route to get here, but once I did, I've grown to love it. I enjoy working with farmers, and being I grew up on the land, I know how to relate to the farmer."

Larry Lago

Lago spends quarter century with area farmers



Larry Lago has spent 25 years helping farmers in Dickinson County

DCN photo by Joy Hibma

By JOY HIBMA
Staff Writer

It's interesting to hear how Larry Lago found his way into the Farm Service Agency.

He was farming between Terril and Superior and was a part of the Superior Co-op Advisory Board.

"It was policy that one of the board members would go to the FSA meeting," Larry said. "I was one of those that usually went."

He attended the meetings and kept well informed on the FSA's monthly agendas.

In 1978, a vacancy opened at the office, and one of Larry's friends mentioned he might be qualified for the position.

Larry thought about it and after a period of time, he decided to apply. It was that decision that leads up to July 2003 as Larry approaches his 25th Anniversary at the Dickinson County Farm Service Agency.

"I've had a long and unusual route to get here, but once I did, I've grown to love it," Larry said. "I enjoy working with farmers, and being I grew up on the land, I know how to relate to the farmer."

Relating is half the battle it seems. When the hail storm hits and destroys a farmer's livelihood, it's the FSA office they often turn to. When prices plunder, a farmer may come into the office for a loan.

"I know the joys and struggles," he said. "There are both in each season. Sometimes there is success and sometimes everything seems to go against the farmer — it can be agonizing."

Larry has farming in his blood — he loves everything about it. But when he was in high school and deciding about college, he thought a different route was in store.

He attended Morningside College in Sioux City on a football scholarship. He took classes in business

→

administration, but also received a degree in secondary education and got his teaching certificate.

"I came back home to farm, but right before the school year started, the principal at Sibley called," Larry said.

His first year out of college, Larry taught several high school courses at Sibley-Ocheyedan. But although he enjoyed the classroom interaction, he felt more called to agriculture.

Now Larry's life is much different. He helps farmers understand and relate laws and program benefits. He has to break down regulations and services to individual situations, and most of all, he needs to be understanding and committed when disaster hits.

"I understand where they're coming from because I've been there," Larry said. "I do my best to help each individual farmer and give solutions that fit their particular situation. Because each one is different."

He has also seen how agriculture has transitioned into a technological-based occupation. Computers and GPS systems are found in most machinery and no-till and other land preservation techniques are often used.

"As agriculture as evolved and changed, we've also had to in order to meet the changing needs," Larry said.

He has also seen how there are less farm operators — 600 active ones in the county currently — and the acres are spreading out among them.

"When you have fewer operators, there are bigger farms, but in order for a farmer to survive, sometimes that's the only way," Larry said.

Because of the variety in agriculture, it also means the government has developed various farm programs; they've evolved over the years becoming more advanced.

Larry lets those in the county know about changes and other things going on by releasing newsletters and press releases. He holds informational meetings and makes sure he has an educated staff that holds the same sensitivities he has with the farmers they encounter.

"Other parts of my responsibilities are to manage the local USDA Farm Service Agency, delegate responsibilities for farm programs and hire the staff to efficiently and accurately get the job done successfully," he said.

It means Larry oversees loan appraisals, signs contracts and issues payments. He helps with conservation practices and funding. He also reports things into state and federal offices in regards to disaster assessments and other items of concern.

But what he enjoys the most is being able to get out in the open — on o the land. Larry said he wants to see how the program can be applied to the land in person.

"Part of it is because I care about Dickinson County — the people and the land," Larry said. "Plus, there's outstanding business people — they are entrepreneurs in many ways."

He said farmers in the county have a great pride in what they do. They're not afraid to try new tillage practices or other forms of agriculture.

Larry and his wife Marcie enjoy both aspects of the area. Their son Austin was married this past summer, and he is a financial manager in Kansas City, Kansas. Their daughter Ashley lives in Ames and is at the Professional Cosmetology Institute.

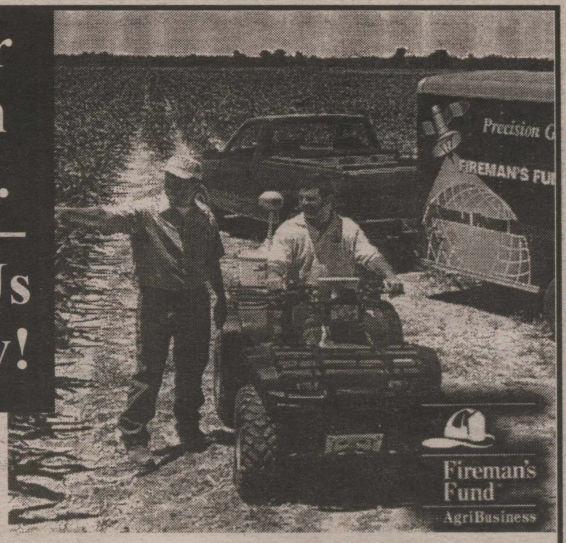
"I do enjoy the diversity of the area," Larry said. "The fact that we have the Lakes and that we are a farming community."

"As agriculture as evolved and changed, we've also had to in order to meet the changing needs. When you have fewer operators, there are bigger farms, but in order for a farmer to survive, sometimes that's the only way."

Larry Lago

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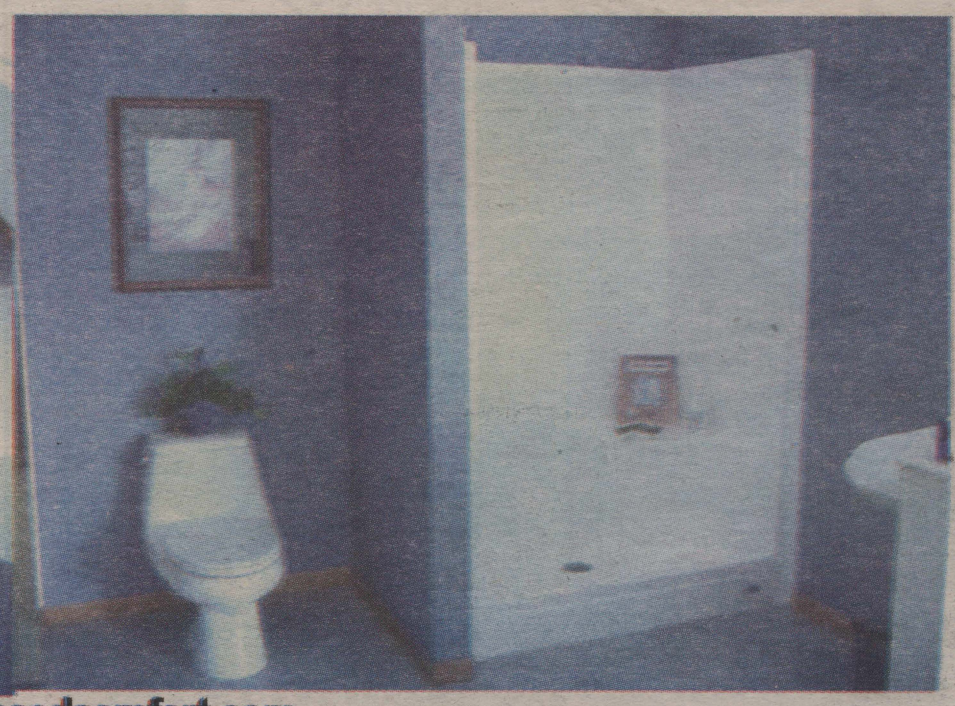
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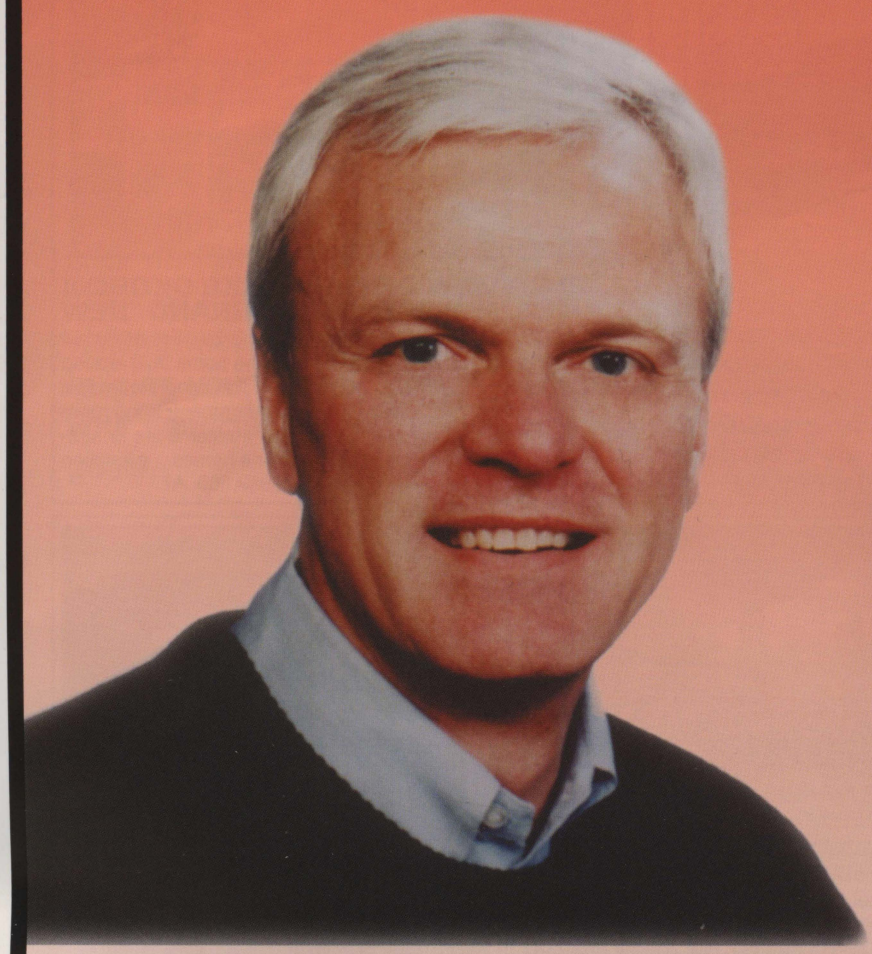


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