

Village council meets in regular session

(Submitted by Carolyn Lemler, clerk/treasurer)

The regular session of the Fruitport Village Council was held on Monday, March 16, 2009, with all council members present.

Motion by Pope, seconded by Alger, to approve the minutes of the February meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Ed and Yolanda Bayne, Peach Street, addressed the council regarding their volunteer work at the 8th Avenue Park. They are making the park an ongoing family project. B. Raymond will get a garbage receptacle for the park in the spring.

Correspondence:

R. Vanderstelt received a letter regarding the upcoming 2010 census.

R. Vanderstelt received a letter from Gary Zang regarding the timing of the traffic signal at Park and Third, now that daylight savings time has begun. Council decided not to change the timing of the flashing signal.

Budget Transfer Motions:

Motion by R. Vanderstelt, seconded by Pope, to transfer from general fund line item “DPW Equipment Purchase” to general fund line item “street lights” \$800.00. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by R. Vanderstelt, seconded by Pope, to transfer from “Major Street Fund” line item “Supplies” to “Major Street Fund” line item “Fringe Benefits,” \$250. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Vanderstelt, seconded by Pope, to transfer from “Local Street Fund” line item “Sidewalks” to “Local Street Fund” line item “PCS/Repairs” \$600.00. Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Carl Rothenberger II will be working with D. Bendixen to get spring clean up scheduled and review Village ordinances.

Jerry Alger reported that Ken Pollidan from Breakaway Bicycles is willing to donate a bike rack to be installed near the Peach Tree.

Bruce Raymond said they are working to resolve the web site problems. Pine Street Park will be cleaned up with help from the Eagle Scout candidate. His intended project cannot be completed now due to permit requirements. New benches will be installed along the hillside in Pomona Park. Boat ramp dock will be cleaned and readied for installation.

Jacob Wier reported that cattails at Pine Street Park should not be totally cleaned out since they provide a fish habitat area. The cattails will, however, be trimmed back.

Roger Vanderstelt reported that a request from R. Mergener to use 80 hours of vacation from his time off bank for the upcoming year prior to the start of the year is against the union contract.

Motion by Raymond, seconded by Pope, to allow Mergener’s request as a one-time only request. Motion passed.

Motion by Rothenberger, seconded by Pope, to allow J. Remwolt to carry his unused vacation time forward as a one-time only request. Motion passed.

D. Pope will discuss the changes with Mergener and Remwolt and explain that these are one-time only allowances. J. Alger and D. Pope will set up the work schedule for the DPW workers as specified in the union contract.

The regular session closed at 8:15 p.m. to allow for the budget hearing. R. Vanderstelt read the budget summaries for general fund, major street fund, local street fund, and debt service fund. Discussion followed and questions were answered.

R. Vanderstelt presented the proposed budget resolution, seconded by Pope. Resolution passed unanimously.

Motion by Vanderstelt, seconded by Pope, to allow the clerk/treasurer to transfer funds as necessary. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

No further information from the Muskegon County Signal Maintenance Group.

Third Avenue sidewalk handrail: R. Vanderstelt checking on who is responsible for the repairs. B. Raymond will check for boundary lines.

New Business:

Old Fashioned Days: Lions Club has the permit form. Council waiting for return of permit and insurance.

Sewer: No money currently available to install the sewer lines. Mark Lee is researching other possibilities for the township to install sewer lines on Pontaluna Rd. and Third Avenue. A public meeting will be held prior to any serious planning.

B. Raymond has information about a fire insurance withholding program to allow the Village to escrow a percentage of the fire insurance settlement to assure clean up of the property if it is abandoned or not rebuilt. D. Pope asked for time to study the issue and table it until April.

B. Raymond reported that the village is on the U.S. Department of Justice list to get a grant to be used for police department work.

A house in the Dennis/Douglas subdivision is allowing sump pump water to drain into the roadway. C. Rothenberger will discuss it with the homeowner.

Motion by Pope, seconded by J. Vanderstelt, to approve warrants. Motion passed unanimously. •

Protect the family Letter to the Editor:

I am writing about the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child. This treaty threatens the parent-child relationship, our Christian way of life, and the sovereignty of our state and country. Under this treaty, our discipline, religious upbringing, and virtually every decision we make as parents would come under the authority of our government.


Does this sound outrageous? This treaty, originated 20 years ago in the U.N., was never presented to the senate for ratification, but is now being presented by Senator Barbara Boxer of California. If this treaty is ratified, the government (the U.N.) would hold ultimate authority over parents and their minor children. With the advent of the internet, children could be guaranteed any access, without parental consent. Wendy Wright, of Concerned Women for America, states that the treaty treats children as autonomous beings and restricts parents by negotiating parental rights.

Our own Congressman, Pete Hoekstra, has stated that this is very bad public policy. In response to this treaty, Senator Hoekstra has authored an amendment to the United States Constitution, the *Parents’ Rights Constitutional Amendment*, which allows parents to direct the upbringing of their children.

I always believed that this was not only our right, but our duty as parents. Our government has succeeded in slowly chipping away the very means that produce healthy, moral and productive children. The treaty even includes a section that states we cannot interfere with a child’s leisure time.

Please join me in supporting Senator Hoekstra’s bill to amend the United States Constitution to protect our families. This isn’t about concern for our children, it’s about control over the family unit.

Ruth Vanderstelt  
Fruitport



Drinking and driving  
equal disaster

by Rev. William Randall

April was Alcohol Awareness Month, but the emphasis needs to continue into May. Graduation events are coming soon. Some celebrations will involve drinking unless common sense prevails. We need to discourage it. Teens need to be aware of the consequences of drinking and driving.

Judge James Graves, who recently sentenced a woman to prison for a drunken driving death said, “Every time someone goes out on the road intoxicated, there is a risk. This is why every state has made drunken driving causing death a felony.”

It is interesting that recently a car has been sitting outside North Muskegon’s middle and high school’s main drop-off center as a sobering reminder. It was brought there by the Muskegon County Sheriff’s Department.

Warnings to teens can avoid tragedies and alcohol addictions. We need to also offer help to those who struggle with addiction. I serve as Chaplain at the Muskegon Rescue Mission. There, we urge total abstinence from alcoholic beverages. Obviously, the use of wine was a part of Old Testament and New Testament times; however, modern manufacturers produce liquor with a much higher alcohol level than the wines mentioned in Scripture. Alcohol use is a social problem out of control. Many would agree that those under 21 should not drink nor should pregnant women or those who are breast feeding. Operators of vehicles or machinery should avoid alcohol. Recovering alcoholics and those who are dependent upon drugs should practice abstinence. Christians who want to have a clean testimony by not causing someone else to stumble should say “no” to alcohol.

At the Rescue Mission, we see cases where men and women are being delivered from substance abuse by the power of Christ. We praise God for this, but some who come and go sadden our hearts. How much more must God be grieved by the terrible use of alcohol in our community? A few years ago, Muskegon had the distinction of being the beer tent capitol of Michigan. Efforts need to be made to remove this image. Take notice that most community festivals have beer tents to raise money and so people can “raise hell” as they say. This makes teens think that you can’t have fun without drinking. This thinking can be reversed by those who will say “no” to alcohol. •



Then and now

by Al Schneider

“Are you better off now than you were eight years ago?” It’s a question that we often hear from politicians’ lips during presidential campaigns. Or, how about this one? “Are you better off now than you were back in the ‘good old days’ like in the ‘30s?” Of course, the answer is, “yes!” “Old Fashioned Days” can serve as a reminder of how things were back then. So much has improved. Most of us old timers have bigger and better homes with better plumbing, electrical gadgets, and entertainment centers. Also, we

have cars without cranks, power lawn mowers, automatic sprinklers, and so much more. People who passed from the scene during that period would be amazed.

But let me pose another question. “Are we happier than we were back then?”

We have so many reasons to be happier now. As kids, for instance, most of us walked to school. At my house, Mom told me that if the thermometer outside our kitchen window registered less than below -20 degrees Fahrenheit, I could stay home, for fear that I might get too cold during my eight block trek to school. Did I tell you that I grew up in Wisconsin?

Later, I moved to the farm where some kids walked almost two miles to get to a one-room schoolhouse. Life was tough and the rewards were few. It was, after all, the Great Depression. We learned to make the most of bad situations, and life went on. I recall how difficult it was to get my hands on a nickel to buy an ice cream cone.

Still, I don’t recall a lot of griping. As kids, we found games to play or created some. Adults found pleasure in neighborhood card games. When we could afford gas, we would sometimes take a ride through the countryside in our old Essex.

Most of us weren’t politically astute enough back then to realize that the depression was holding on much longer than it should have. We trusted the government to make good decisions for us. Looking back, we now know that it was World War II that finally lifted us out of the economic downturn. In any case, we came away determined never to let this happen to us again.

Enter 2009. Here we go again. Apparently, we have learned nothing, neither how to avoid going into a depression nor how to get out of one. There are wars and threats of war all around us, none of which are sparking the economy. Our treasury has initiated massive spending policies in an attempt to alleviate the problem. Meanwhile, the ranks of the unemployed are expanding. Much of the nation has already lost faith in our leadership and is resorting to protests.

This time, unlike the last time, few, if any, are singing *Happy Days are Here Again*. The people are in no mood for singing anything.

What will happen to us? Time will tell.

In the meantime, enjoy the memories during Old Fashioned Days. There are lots of fun times packed into this short holiday period, and a few smiles will do you good. •



Note of thanks Letter to the Editor:

I would like to thank all the boys and leaders of troop 1023 for cleaning my yard. They did a wonderful job. Three trailer loads of leaves! With my leg off, I just couldn’t do it this year.

This is the list of boys and adults who did all the work: Ryan Richert, Andrew Youngquist, Warren Schmidt, Zachary Lewis, Ian Roup, Adam Pawlowski, Dylan Larson, Tyler Anderson, Mike Retzlaff, Shanna Retzlaff, Bill Koeller, Doug Himbaugh, Chris Smith, Kenny Smith, Steve Roup, Tambrey Stone and Laurie Pawlowski.

Robert France  
12417 State Road

4-H Leaders!

Needed for our 4-H  
issue: pictures &  
information about  
your 4-H Club getting  
ready for the FAIR!



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