

HOMER



News & Views

A PUBLICATION OF THE HOMER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

PRESERVERS OF OUR PAST -

Homer Historical Society

by CHRIS REEL

Did you know that Homer was originally located one and one half miles north of its present site? Or that the Old Homer Park, located on the Salt Fork, was the place to be? Or that Homer was a major, bustling community in the past? Or that there is a jail in town? If you have lived in Homer for awhile, you may. But many of us who are more recent transplants remain unaware of Homer's colorful past.

Thanks to the dedicated members of the Homer Historical Society, much of the past has been preserved for the enjoyment and enlightenment of future generations. The building, located just south of the fire station, is a veritable treasure-trove and a fascinating place to visit and is itself historically interesting. Built in 1904 for \$3,500, it held the offices of the village and the township. It also housed the library until the library and offices were moved to their present location.

The Society was founded in 1977 "as a lasting project of the 1976 Homer bicentennial Committee" to "establish and maintain a museum and to collect and preserve any available historical material connected with the history of Homer and the surrounding area" Present officers are Marian Edwards - President, Gene Happ - Vice President, Charlotte Brown - Secretary, and Evelyn Cope - Treasurer. Besides ongoing

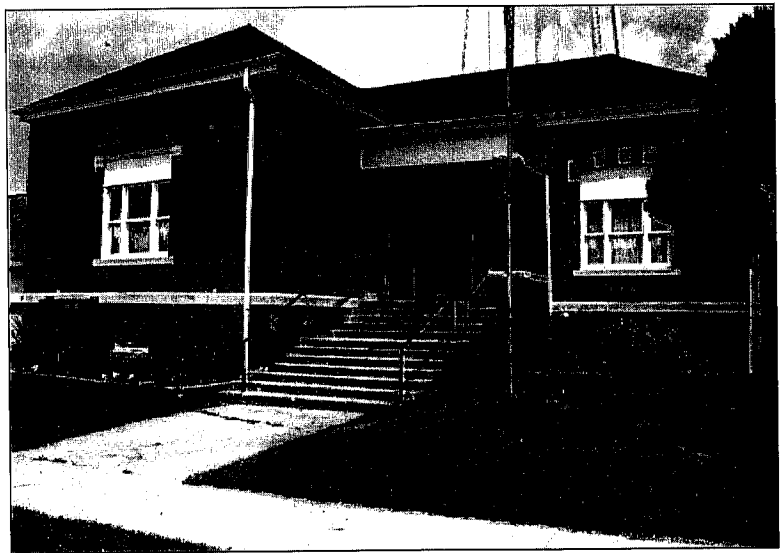


Photo by Jim Alred, Homer, IL

work of collecting, cataloging and displaying materials, the Society has monthly meetings, a picnic, and a Christmas carry-in dinner. Regular meetings are held on the first Tuesday evening of the month at the museum, and most include a speaker. Members of the public are always welcome to attend meetings and activities and are also welcome

Continued on page 3

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HOMER News & Views

Homer News & Views is **your** newsletter. Its content and value depend upon each resident of the Community. We are depending upon you for the content of this newsletter. What this newsletter becomes is up to each of you. We need your help! If you have anything you would like to contribute, please drop it off at the Homer IGA or mail to the HCDB, P.O. Box 74, Homer, IL 61849.

Notice: This newsletter is published by the Homer Community Development Board to report items of interest to the citizens of Homer. The information included is intended to be accurate, but should not be relied upon for legal or official purposes.

WIENKE'S SHOE REPAIR

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Your Red Wing agent

to join. The Society is funded by gifts, fund-raisers and publications.

The Old Homer Park, which was recently featured in the News Gazette, has a fascinating history. People rode the interurban from miles around to come to the park. Thousands of people might be there at a time. Its history is preserved in the museum, along with old yearbooks and trophies from Homer High School, oral histories of local residents and transcriptions of those histories, old newspapers from the 1800's to 1980 on microfilm, genealogical records, photographs, tools, clothing, and advertising memorabilia.

Local resident and businessman Bruce Vetter has spent a great deal of his own money and donated his time to digitize old negatives and glass plates. Some of his work is on display in local businesses, such as a map of Homer from 1869. These old records deteriorate in time, and modern technology offers a way to preserve them by digitizing. They will be placed on CD-ROMs.

People are encouraged to donate to the museum any items of historical interest, including written materials. They can be copied and the originals returned to the owner if desired. By preserving and studying the past, we can understand ourselves better, and catch a vision for the future. But the Society needs more than materials. It also needs new members, people who share the vision and can carry on the work in the future. Are you one of those people?

The building is open from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. on Thursday afternoons. Stop in, and be sure to visit the jail.

Homer Library News

The Homer Historical Society has donated two new memorial books to the library. In memory of Jack Ellis, we have *First Facts About American Heroes*, a book for young readers. And in memory of Mrs. Martin Wienke, they have given us the National Audubon Society's book and *The Bird Garden*. Both are available for check-out.

Chris' Quick Pick: *Mariner's Compass* by Earlene Fowler. What would you do if someone you didn't know, had never even heard of, left his entire estate to you? Moreover, you couldn't figure out why, he appeared to know a lot about you, and made an unusual requirement in order for you to inherit. Our heroine faces danger and opposition as she tries to solve the puzzle.

The Summer Reading Program began with an excellent attendance for the DePriest puppet show on June 8th, and will end soon with a pizza and award party.

During the hot days of summer, the library is a cool place to be. Come and see for yourself!

Homer Recreation Board

We hope you enjoyed Homer's Independence Day Celebration on July 3rd. We were a little worried about the turnout this year because of the date change, but were very pleased to see so many of you on such a hot and humid day. The hot air balloon rides were canceled due to upper air winds, but we still enjoyed the Churches Cooperative Service, great food, music, and contests. To all the organizations that participated in creating this event, Thank You! I know how much work it is to coordinate the health department, food, volunteers, and everything else. We really do appreciate you!

The Recreation Board is in serious need of volunteers to be on the board. We are down to two members, soon to be one member. Please call Kate Vetter @ 896-2224 or e-mail her at daferne@net66.com if you are interested in volunteering. If we do not have enough responses by August 13th, the Village Board will entertain the idea of dissolving the Recreation Board all together. Please show Homer your support now. We cannot do this alone!

—Kate Vetter

Homer Recreation Board President

HOMER



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“The Odd Jobber”

– or –

Who can I call?

Your screen door isn't working right and there's a big limb in your front yard. Do you know who to call to fix the problem? You sold your couch to the lady down the street, but you don't have a truck and neither does she. Much of the time we don't know who to call for the "little" every day problems that we can't fix. Sometimes we hear of someone by "word of mouth", but if the "word" didn't reach *you*, you're in a quandary. If we only knew, chances are there is someone here in Homer who could do the job we need done, so we'd like to help solve the dilemma with a new column called the "Odd Jobber."

Can you repair a sewing machine, a bike, a lawn mower? Do you house-sit, baby-sit, pet-sit? Can you wash the vinyl siding, trim the bushes, mow the grass? Can you paint, deliver rock for the driveway, sharpen a saw, sew a dress, work on trees, haul the old fridge? Let us know your special odd job.

Write your name, address, and phone number on a post card and mail it to the CDB, P.O. Box 74, Homer, IL 61849 or drop off at the IGA in the drop off box or you can email to kim_matthis@rsmi.com. We'll print the information in the next issue of *News & Views* in the "Odd Jobber" column. Since our paper is supported by advertising, please no professional businesses, however, we will be happy to tell about your special odd job talent. In this way, we can help each other, and you'll get to meet others in our town. We think this column can be a valuable asset to the community, so let us hear from you soon!

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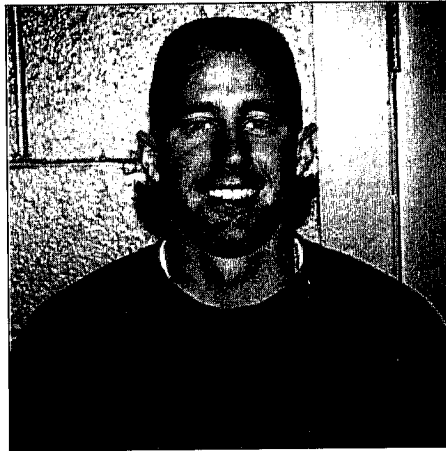
Saluting Homer's Volunteer Firefighters

—An Ongoing Series



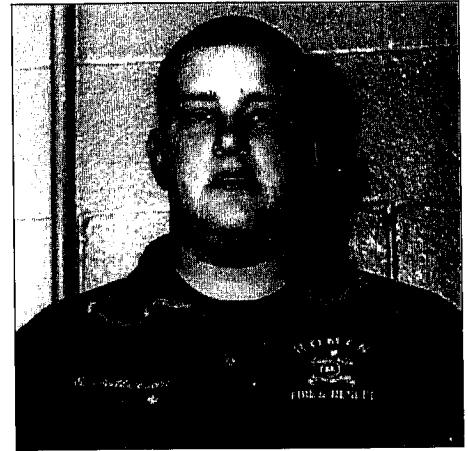
MARK STEWART

Mark has lived in the Homer area for ten years and is employed by PRO Ambulance Service in Champaign. He and Lauri Spears are expecting their first child in September. Mark has been a volunteer fireman for eight years and holds the rank of Assistant Chief. His special training includes Firefighter II, Haz-mat OPS, Paramedic, Farm Rescue, and Water Rescue. Mark enjoys the people and friends in the Homer area and strives to help our residents in traumatic situations. He also enjoys racing dirt track midget cars.



ANDY PRUITT

Andy has lived in Homer all twenty-three years of his life. He is employed as a paramedic with PRO Ambulance in Champaign. Andy has been a volunteer firefighter for five years and has the rank of Fire Fighter and Medical Officer. He regards his fellow firefighters as a great team and thinks of them as a second family. He likes the people and the small town atmosphere of Homer and looks forward to raising a family here. Andy teaches different classes, coaches baseball, and enjoys hunting and riding his motorcycle.



SHANNON PATTERSON

Shannon lives just northwest of Homer and has been in the area for five years. He is employed as a union electrician with Bodine Electric in Champaign. He and his wife Katie have a son, Cody, born in May of this year. Shannon has been a volunteer firefighter for five years. He has the rank of Firefighter/EMT. His special training includes EMT, Essentials of Firefighting, Haz-mat Awareness, Fire Instructor, and Extrication. He enjoys knowing and helping the people of our small community. Shannon **LIKES** fishing, hunting and being outdoors.

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The Card Shop — 105 S. Main St., \$6,500. Janet Driver 896-2617

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If you would like to list a business or building for sale in Homer, please contact Kim Matthis at 896-2689 or Stan Cato at the Homer IGA. (No charge for this service.)

Homer Church News

PRESBYTERIAN NEWS

We joined with the other churches for the community worship service at Homer park on July 3rd. We heard and welcomed Steve Burwell to our community. He, with his wife Susie and family, will be ministering to the Homer Methodists and others in need. May God bless their ministry.

On July 11th, we began a study of our revised catechism, a statement of what we believe. The study will be during the early part of our Sunday worship. the material is in question/answer form with scripture references. ANYONE is welcome to these sessions, with material provided – bring a bible. For more information, call 896-2861. While the material is presented from a Presbyterian/Reformed point of view, others may find it helpful.

On July 25th, Patrick Hubert brought the morning message. We appreciate his willingness to share with us.

WORDS YOU PROBABLY WILL NOT HEAR

IN CHURCH: "Let's get there early so we can get a good seat up front".

Also, have you noticed how large a \$10 bill is in church, but how small it is at the store?

– Jim Swathwood, Lay Pastor

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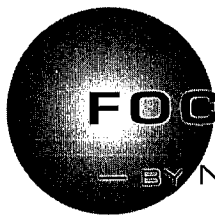
Different Perspectives

The story is told of an avid duck hunter who was in the market for a new bird dog. His search ended when he found a dog who would walk on water to retrieve a duck. Shocked by his discovery, the man wondered how he would break this news to his hunting friends. No one would believe him.

So the hunter invited a buddy to go with him. They made their way to the blind and waited. When a flock of ducks flew nearby, they drew their guns and shot. The dog responded by running across the water and retrieving the bird. However, the friend remained silent. Not one word about this amazing dog.

Driving home, the hunter said to his friend, "Did you notice anything unusual about my dog?"

"I sure did," responded the friend. "Your dog can't swim."



FOCUSING ON HOMER'S BUSINESSES

— BY NAOMI ROBERTS

HOMER AUCTION

One hundred dollars once, twice, sold for a hundred dollars, is a normal sound every Saturday night at the Homer Auction. The Homer Auction is a family business, owned and operated by Harley Rogers at 110 S. Main Street. He has been in the business 30 years.

When Rogers first talked to Homer's town board members about opening an auction, he was told an auction would never be a money making business. Rogers is proud today that he never listened to them, because what began as a sideline business has turned into a full-time job. For the past 19 years Rogers has been self-employed. The first five years Rogers was open, no one from Homer attended. Now a few of Homer's residents frequent the auction, but most of the two to four hundred people that attend every week are from out of town. They are repeat customers who have been coming to the auction so long that Rogers has sold to several generations of the same family.

Roger's weekly auction consists of tools, household goods, glassware, and antiques, but when he first started the business he auctioned livestock, mules and goats. The largest thing he ever auctioned was a fire truck.

Estate sales have become a big part of Rogers auction. They have at least one to three estate sales a week. Rogers manages to do this by a weekly 150 to 200 mile circle run wherein he buys the estate goods.

Sometimes Rogers sells things on consignment for other people. Thirty percent of the selling price is his commission for doing this. He also makes pickups and repairs as part of his service to the people. While Rogers offers this extra service to his customers, he does not take part in the actual auction itself. He hires auctioneers from Danville to handle the auction, and they are aided by Rogers employees. He has two presenters on the floor, who hold up the merchandise to be auctioned and he has two people at the back of the building who help load up what has been sold. He also employs a clerk and a cashier who help with the small concession stand. The



Photos by Jim Alred, Homer, IL

concession stand serves hot-dogs, candy, ice cream, popcorn and beverages as a convenience for the auction customers.

After all these years in this business, Rogers still loves it. He says part of what makes a business successful is, "You must like what you are doing." The work is hard. He works seven days a week, and it is hard physical labor, because sometimes they handle the furniture as many as four times before it is sold. He also meets a lot of nice people. Some of them have attended the auction for 25 years. This tells Rogers they are satisfied customers, which of course makes him happy. Satisfied customers are good for business. They advertise, via word of mouth, his top of the line, honest show and never charge him a dime. Stop by at 6:30 p.m. some Saturday night, you might find a bargain, or the perfect antique you've been looking for and no doubt you'll become one of those satisfied customers. Don't forget to sign in and get your number so you can bid. Of course you can always be a spectator, but spectators seldom have as much fun as those who take part in the actual bidding.

A Tribute to a Lady Whose Life Exemplifies "Community Spirit"

If you asked Betty Lacey what the two most important things in her life would be, the first answer would be family and the second would be the growth and welfare of the community.

Betty was born August 19, 1922 at Danville, the daughter of George Frederick and Idell Deatha White Sanford. Her sister, Emma June, now deceased, came along years later.

In 1937, at the age of 17, Betty and her sister moved to Homer where they lived together by themselves and attended Homer High School. In 1940, she graduated and on November 10th she married Kenneth Herbert Lacey at the Homer Presbyterian Church. In 1941, the first of five children, Kenneth Herbert was born. Then came Barbara Jean and Judith Ann. She was always keeping busy doing any odd jobs that needed to be done. She did sewing for people, book-keeping for local businesses, cleaned the kitchen of the local restaurant and delivered newspapers.

She began doing volunteer work for the school, one afternoon per week, teaching art to the 6th grade class. During that same time, she painted the windows in the downtown businesses for Christmas for several years.

In July 1953, she and her husband "Knip" opened Lacey's City Service, which was a gas station and repair shop located on Main Street. The original building is still there. She was not just a bookkeeper, she also changed tires, pumped gas, was the designated parts runner and any other job that needed to be done. The station was open until 1959 and at that time came the first addition to the second family, Bonnie Sue. Little more than a year later came the last of the children, James Sanford. Along with everything else she was doing, she had two small children, three teenagers, and she was an active volunteer with Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

In the 1970's the Girl Scouts of town collected books and started a small library in what is now the Historical Society. When they outgrew the small area there, she went to the town board and convinced them to give up a room in the city building for the library. The request was granted and the move was made. She was a part time volunteer librarian for the first eight years and served on the library's first board of directors.

From 1978-1985, she was an archivist for the Homer Historical Society, for which she is a life long member. She also served on the first board of directors and was the president of the society during 1981 and 1982.

In 1979 when U.S. soldiers, including Paul Lewis, a native of Homer, were captured and held hostage in Tehran, Betty went to the Presbyterian Church every day at 12:00 noon and rang the church bell twelve times. On January 20, 1981, the hostages were released. On that day, the Methodist Church and Betty at the Presbyterian Church simultaneously rang the church bells 444 times, signifying one ring for each day the hostages were held.

From February 1980 to 1985, she was the volunteer coordinator for Telecare of Southeast Champaign County, which is an organization for the care of senior citizens. They provided such services as Meals on Wheels, transportation, grocery shopping and delivery for seniors and so on.

In 1981, she worked with other people and with the staff at the headquarters of the Peace Meal at Eastern Illinois University and started the Homer Peace Meal. She worked diligently to get volunteers to help out with whatever was needed.

In 1985, Lois Stauter and a few other volunteers spent a year creating the book, "Dear Edna" for the Historical Society. Betty was responsible for most of the pictures, captions and technical editing of the manuscript. She put in countless hours and weekends to see the project through. (Dear Edna is a compilation of news clippings and various other pieces of information that belonged to Edna Lewis, a Homer news correspondent for many years. It tells of the history of Homer.)

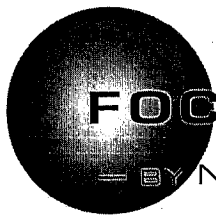
In 1995, Betty joined the Rec. Board and served two years as president.

She currently belongs to several local organizations, such as the Home Extension Association, Historical Society, the Women's Association and the Adult Fellowship of the Homer Presbyterian Church and the DAR. There have been numerous volunteer projects within these organizations. With the HEA, she has quilted blankets for AIDS babies, made dolls with no faces for physicians to take to other countries for children with facial deformities, And made stuffed animals for police and emergency rooms to have for abused and/or traumatized children. With the Women's Association, she has quilted blankets, and crocheted sweaters, hats and booties to donate to Empty Tomb to give to mothers who need them. You can also count on Betty whenever there is a bake sale, craft sale, or any other fund raising event in the town.

At 77, she still has quite a busy schedule. Three to four days a week, she helps take care of her youngest grandchild, five year old Cody, and her great-granddaughter Barbie. She also goes to exercise class several times each week and goes to various meetings and luncheons whenever required. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her family, sewing and crocheting, crafts and scrapbooking. She also enjoys genealogy and has traced her ancestors all the way back to coming over on the Mayflower.



Betty Lacey



FOCUSING ON HOMER'S BUSINESSES

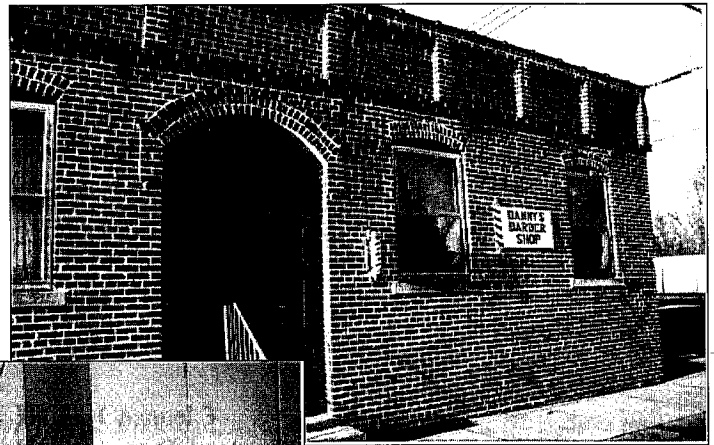
— BY NAOMI ROBERTS

DANNY'S BARBER SHOP

Danny Higginbotham has been a barber in Homer for approximately 15 years. Ten of those years he worked on Main Street. The last five years he has operated Danny's Barber Shop at 103 West First. Higginbotham operates one of the few remaining barber shops in this area. He draws customers from Champaign-Urbana, Savoy, Villa Grove, Fairmount, Ogden, and Sidell, mainly because he operates his business as an old fashion barber shop. He doesn't take appointments. Customers are taken in the order they come into the shop. When he gets several customers at one time, he does like any good business man does. He skips lunch and breaks and works until every customer has been taken care of and is satisfied.

Thankfully, he has a lot of satisfied customers and Danny is grateful for that and their patronage. He feels very fortunate to have a regular clientele. His customers are men and boys; he doesn't do women's hair. He offers regular haircuts and styling for men and boys. He does wet cuts or dry cuts, whichever the customer prefers. The 'little guys' draw him pictures, or color pictures for him which Danny proudly displays on a refrigerator in the shop. The pictures are proof of their satisfaction in their haircut, and of course, they always look to make sure their artwork is displayed for everyone to see.

Danny has two licenses which he must renew, but unlike beauticians he doesn't have to fulfill a certain amount of



Photos by Jim Alred, Homer, IL



Danny gives Bob Jinks a trim

hours required by the state each year in order to maintain his license. He has a registered Barber license and a shop license. When he first started in the business, he had to go to school and then apprentice for two years and three months. He did his apprenticeship in Shelbyville and Decatur.

Barbers are a lot like beauticians in one way, however.

They hear a lot of discussion on politics, ball games, and a plethora of other topics, but Danny says "Seldom are any major problems ever solved." It's just good, jovial, wholesome conversation.

If you are in need of a haircut stop by Danny's Barber Shop. Remember you don't need an appointment; just walk in. His hours are Tuesday through Thursday, 7:30 - 5:00, Friday, 8:00 - 6:00, Saturday, 7:30 - 3:00. He is closed on Sunday and Monday. You can call Danny at 896-2048.

Homer Peace Meal

Pace Meal Senior Nutrition Program serves a hot lunchtime meal Monday through Friday to people 60 years of age and older. The meal provides 1/3rd of the Recommended Daily Allowance for older adults and ensures a variety in the diet of older persons who live alone. Not only does it provide the hot meal, but coming to the local meal site encourages friendships amongst those who participate. The Program also provides home delivered meals for homebound persons who qualify for this service.

Peace Meal has been a part of the Homer community since July 1983. During that time, the Program has seen a number of changes. In recent years, federal dollars available for nutrition programs has not kept pace with the costs of running them. For this reason, Peace Meal has chosen to go out and fundraise the additional money needed to run the Program rather than decrease services.

The past several years, Peace Meal has challenged local sites to raise \$1,250 locally to help with fundraising goals. This has been done a number of different ways: through raffles, bake sales, memorials in honor of an older parent and through direct donations. Last year, over 2,900 meals were served to senior citizens in Homer.

Homer has raised \$500.00 towards this year's fundraising goal, but still needs to raise \$750.00. Donations in any amount are welcome. If you or your organization feel this is a worthwhile program you can drop off donations to the local Site Supervisor, Sharon Jeffers. She is at the Homer City Building Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. through 12:30 p.m. Thanks for your support!

— Cathy Lentz, Assistant Director, Peace Meal

Homemakers Extension

Homer Homemakers members have been enjoying some meetings out of town recently. In April, 11 members attended a "Home Town" meeting at the St Joseph Methodist Church, along with St Joseph, Sidney and Ogden units. The lesson "Are You Listening" was given by Michelle Pride.

On June 18th, 10 members traveled to Danville, Indiana for shopping and lunch at the Mayberry Cafe, however, the Mayberry Cafe happened to be closed for remodeling, so lunch was enjoyed at "Dave's Pizza! (Yes, there is another Dave's Pizza).

On July 16th, our unit had "lunch in the gazebo" at Pine Acres, rural Homer. The luncheon, prepared by Dorothy Shiley, owner, featured foods made using the fresh herbs that Mrs. Shiley grows.

Flowers are blooming once again along Main Street as members met May 21st for a meeting at Virginia Bairds home and flower planting. Members take turns throughout the summer to water and maintain the flowers. Many thanks to Bruce Wicks and Stan Cato for their donation to this project. It was decided at the May meeting to pledge \$1,500.00 to the Park Playground project. Proceeds from our December Housewalk made this possible. Betty Lacey gave a lesson on "Ornamental Grasses".

The Home Extension also held their annual "Pie by the Slice" sale on July 3rd at Homer Park. Proceeds will go toward community projects.

The Unit does not meet in August, but will resume in September beginning a new calendar year with new officers.

We welcome guests and/or new members at any time.

MARQUEE SIGN KEEPERS

If you have a message to post on the Homer Lions Club Marquee for events, please telephone the Lions Members listed below with the information. If the listed persons responsible for posting and removal of messages during the month shown are unavailable, please contact K.C. Jones, sign chairman, at 896-2763.

Sign keepers for June 1999 are

A. Brown – 896-2049

D. Wolf – 896-2253

Sign keepers for June 1999 are

P. Compton – 896-3046

M. Patel – 896-2767

*It's a matter of
community pride*

*—Support
Homer's
Businesses!*

PUBLICIZE

submitted by PAT VARVEL

At one time or another, every nonprofit organization in Homer has held an event that they wanted the public to attend. Therefore they needed to get the word out and had to spend a little time looking up addresses of radio and TV stations and newspapers.

The following is a resource you may wish to save for future reference.

The Leader

115 S. East Avenue, Ogden, IL 61859. 217-582-2373 or fax them at 217-582-2237.

Southern Champaign County Today

5 S. Main Street, Villa Grove, IL 61956. 217-832-4201 or fax them at 217-832-4001.

Thrifty Nickel

61 E. University Ave., Champaign, IL 61820. 217-356-4804 or fax them at 217-356-4970.

What's Happening in Homer article

c/o Doc (Robin) Hatton, 112 Linwood, Collinsville, IL 62234 or email: doc@hatton.com

Homer News & Views

c/o HCDB, P.O., Box 74, Homer, IL 61849, or drop off at the IGA in the HCDB box, or email: kim_matthis@rsmi.com

Community Building Marquee

c/o The Lion's Club. monthly list of people responsible for marquee is posted at the village hall and *News & Views*.

Most of the following radio and TV stations prefer to have your nonprofit organization correspondence two weeks prior to the event.

RADIO STATIONS:

WIXY

Matt Bisbee, 2603 W. Bradley, Champaign, IL 61820

WLRW

Matt Bisbee, 2603 W. Bradley, Champaign, IL 61820

WDWS

2301 S. Neil Street, Champaign, IL 61820

WDAN

1500 N. Washington Avenue, Danville IL 61832

WIAI

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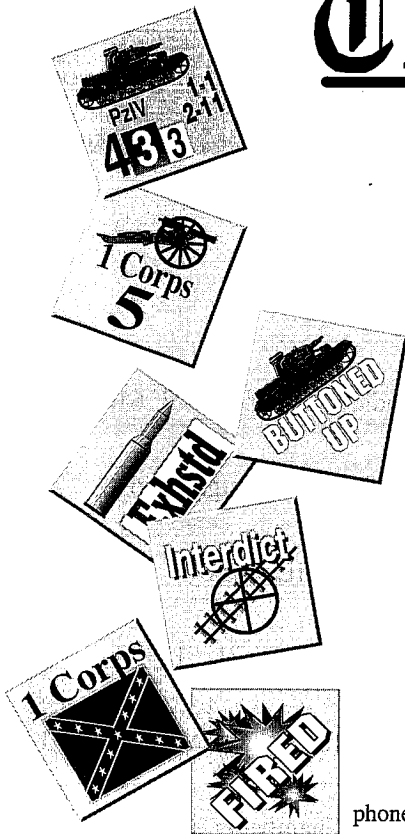
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