

HOMER



August, 2000

News & Views

A PUBLICATION OF THE HOMER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

HOMER 4-H 49ERS CLUB

Current leader Crystal Allen started the 4-H 49ers Club in 1995, after a period when there was no 4-H club in Homer. Charter members chose the name based on Route 49, which runs through Homer. Members have come from Broadlands, Sidney, and St. Joseph, as well as Homer. The club usually includes 10 to 12 members; current members are Caitlin Allen, Levi Allen, Cody Clem, Diane Happ, Matthew Knoop, Lucinda Knoop, Hannah Stites, Wesley Stites, Andrea Wolf and Elyse Wolf.

4-H is a national organization open to all youths 8-19 years of age. It is designed to teach communication and life skills through hands-on activities. Parent and family involvement is encouraged to help complete projects. High moral values are taught along with cooperation and teamwork. Members also learn how to conduct a business meeting using parliamentary procedure, and practice giving public presentations. Each member is required to be enrolled in at least one project and must complete project requirements. They must also give one demonstration or speech concerning their project and complete a record book by the

— 4-H MOTTO —
"To Make the Best Better"

end of each year. Projects include hundreds of topics such as art, computers, cooking, electricity, environment, horticulture, livestock, wildlife, and wood-working. 4-H provides many activities including summer camp, fishing camp, and horse camp. Horticulture and livestock judging contests are also offered. Members showcase their projects at Club-o-rama, the Champaign County Fair, and the Illinois State Fair.



Photo by James Alfred

Homer 4-H 49ers Club — (L to R) Andrea Wolf, Wesley Stites, Hannah Stites, Caitlin Allen, Levi Allen, Leader Crystal Allen. (Not pictured) Diane Happ, Elyse Wolf, Mathew Knoop, Lucinda Knoop, Cody Clem.

The 4-H 49ers meet every second Saturday at 10 a.m. in the Homer Community Building. There are no dues or fees to join, but the members are expected to help with fund raisers and are asked to bring snacks and drinks to the meetings. The University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service provides the project books and publications to the members and clubs. Club leaders are

trained by the Extension Service and must have an Illinois State background check. The leaders are continually being trained in new areas. September is the month to sign up for the coming year. A member must be 8 years old by September 1, 2000 to join for the 2000-2001 year.

(Continued on page 4)

BOARD MEMBERS

SOUTH HOMER TOWNSHIP BOARD

Meets the 1st Wednesday of each month at 202 S. Main St., Homer

- Don Morgan, Supervisor/Treas. 896-2197
- Katie Woodmansee, Clerk 896-2006
- Kenneth MacInnes, Trustee 896-2390
- Richard Freeman, Trustee
- Connie Messman, Trustee 896-2100
- Cheryl Baird, Trustee 896-2008
- Elbert Rogers,
Road Commissioner 896-2831

HOMER VILLAGE BOARD

Meets the 1st & 3rd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

- Dave Lucas, Mayor 896-2618
- Cindy Pruitt, Treasurer 896-2114
- JoAnn Wallace, Village Clerk 896-2193
- David Burns, Trustee 896-2797
- Joe Humphrey, Trustee 896-2597
- Mike Johnson, Trustee 896-2228
- Jim Lacey, Trustee 896-2365
- Orlena Pruitt, Trustee 896-2748
- Lauri Umbarger, Trustee 896-2067

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St. Charles, Church of Christ, Presbyterian, Methodist

- David Burns, President 896-2797
- Steve Burwell, Vice President 896-2551
- Betty Taylor, Treasurer 896-2844

HERITAGE SCHOOL BOARD

Meets the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Homer School.

- Jim Fish, President 896-2756
- Dave Bosch, Vice President 834-3443
- Charles Berry 834-3361
- Bruce Block 834-3090
- Dale Katterhenry 896-2647
- John Lannon 684-2728
- Kevin Wright 896-2865

HOMER HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD

Meets the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Homer Historical Building

- Marian Edwards, Co-President 896-2254
- Gene Happ, Co-President 896-2004
- Charlotte Brown, Secretary 582-2056
- Pat Butler, Treasurer 896-2657
- Helen Krukewitt 896-2198
- Molly Shoaf 896-2549
- Becky Smith 896-2722
- Nondus Wakefield 896-2447

HOMER YOUTH LEAGUE BOARD

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- Tom Wakefield, Vice President 896-2347
- Stacy Johnson, Secretary 896-2228
- Lisa Wakefield, Treasurer 896-2347
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Director of Concessions 896-2088
- Dale Katterhenry,
Director of Equipment 896-2647
- Kim Little,
Director of Fundraising 896-2849
- Jamie Bryan,
Director of Public Relations 896-2388
- Daniel Gordon, Director-at-Large 896-2585
- Cindy Pruitt, Director-at-Large 896-2114
- Jim Swathwood,
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HOMER ZONING BOARD

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- Chuck Benner, Secretary 896-2516
- Don Glenn, Zoning Admin. 896-2776
- Ginny Dillon 896-2719
- Mike Flickinger 896-2815
- Gene Happ 896-2004

HOMER HOME EXTENSION BOARD

Meets the 3rd Friday of each month at 12:30 p.m. in members' homes.

- Mary Ann Rohl, Co-Chair 896-2270
- Virginia Baird, Co-Chair 896-2207
- Shirley Miller, Vice Chair 896-2340
- Elvira Wakefield, Secretary 896-2153
- Lois Hockersmith, Treasurer 896-2553

HOMER LIBRARY BOARD

Meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Village Hall.

- Sara Essig, President 896-2772
896-2145
- Jeanine Bensken, Vice Pres. 896-2693
- Linda Pruitt, Secretary 896-2742
- Marilyn Collins, Treasurer 896-2282
- Gertrude Brown 896-2049
- Cindy James 896-3014
- Cathy Lance 896-2086

HOMER RECREATION BOARD

Meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Village Hall.


- Danny Gordon, Chairperson 896-2585
- Kim Matthis, Secretary 896-2689
- Cindy Pruitt, Treasurer 896-2114
- Bobbi Gordon 896-2585
- Lynda Umbarger 896-2540
- Tiffany Matthis 896-2689
- Ryan Byerley 896-2026

HOMER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Meets the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Village Hall

- Greg Knott, President 896-2348
- Ray Cunningham, Secretary 896-2558
- Don Glenn, Treasurer 896-2776
- Pat Varvel 896-2392
- Becky Smith 896-2722
- Kevin Knott 896-3276

Everyone is encouraged to attend any of the above meetings. If you would like to list your nonprofit organization members, contact any of the CDB Board Members listed above.



HOMER News & Views

Homer News & Views is YOUR newsletter. Its content and value depend upon each resident of the community. If you have anything you would like to contribute, please drop it off at the Homer Country Market or mail to the HCDB, P.O. Box 11, Homer, IL 61849.

*Photography by James Alred
Typesetting & Design by Andrew Shreeves*

NOTICE: This newsletter is published by the Homer CDB 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. Opinions expressed within are the personal opinions or feelings of the writers and not to be taken as a criticism of anyone.

FOCUSING ON HOMER'S BUSINESSES

— by Naomi Roberts

Homer Country Market

Is there life after Homer IGA? According to Rick Bates, the new owner and operator of the former IGA, which is now known as Homer Country Market, yes there is life after Homer IGA. Although the IGA brand name will no longer be carried, Bates will still be affiliated with Super Value. Super Value supplies all IGA stores with the IGA private label, but they also offer the Super Value brand name to smaller stores. Super Value also puts out the weekly advertisement for its smaller store customers, which is why some things are not offered in the store. The ads run for several stores, and some offer all items and some don't. Maybe in the future, more will be offered. There won't be any coupons in the weekly ads either, but Bates accepts all vendor coupons. He feels the customer should get the product at an everyday low price without a coupon.



Homer Country Market Owner, Rick Bates with daughter Jessica and son Bobby.

Twice a year, he will do a coupon book for special things.

Bates is an articulate, friendly man who grew up on a farm near Tolono. He still lives on the farm and makes the commute daily. Sometime in the future he may think about a move to Homer.

In 1974, Bates began in the grocery store business as a stocker in Maggio's store in Tolono. Three years later, he became the night manager. In 1985 Maggio sold the store to Stan Cato and his partner. Bates worked for them until they sold the business to him in 1999.

Bates was attracted to Homer, not just because it was an opportunity to own his own business, but also because he likes small town life. He enjoys knowing people and calling them by their first name, and he in turn enjoys having people call him by his first name. His children are also in Homer. Bobby is thirteen and Jessica is eight.

Bates didn't come to Homer to get rich, but to make a living in a quiet, friendly town. He wants to be a boss who offers his customers good friendly service and a good clean atmosphere too. He believes in old-fashioned traditional values of offering the cleanest and the best goods while treating people decently. He feels people must be made to feel welcome.

Bates feels life is about conveniences, and he intends to make Homer Country Market a convenient customer service



Rich Bates, Owner, Homer Country Market.

store. Although the price may be a little higher than Champaign's Meijer or Super-K grocery stores, because the volume isn't there, it is still more convenient to shop at Homer Country Market than to drive 25 miles. With convenience in mind, Bates also intends to install a debit/credit card system. This will allow customers to charge groceries directly to their bank account. At some time in the future, he is also thinking about a deli for those who need a quick lunch or dinner.

While there won't be much change in the way of product being sold, you will find some subtle changes in the atmosphere and the service offered.

Rick is a friendly guy. Stop by, introduce yourself and make him feel welcome to the Homer Community. ■

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4-H 49ERS CLUB *(cont'd from page 1)*

The 4-H 49ers include several successful young people. Three members, Caitlin Allen, Lucinda Knoop and Matthew Knoop presented their projects at the state capitol in Springfield last March. They met with their respective state representatives and learned about Illinois government. All three had shown the projects at the Illinois State Fair and received the Superior Awards, the highest rating at the state level. Caitlin Allen has also participated in the Champaign County Livestock Judging Contest, being chosen for the state judging team the last two years.

— 4-H PLEDGE —

*"I pledge my head to clearer thinking,
my heart to greater loyalty,
my hands to larger service,
and my health to better living
for my club, my community,
my country and my world."*

The members had overseen the flower bed at the north welcome sign for the past five years. They planted annuals, watered the flowers, trimmed, and weeded the flower bed. The club is looking for another community service project since the north flower bed no longer exists.

The last five years, they have sold ice cream at the Homer 4th of July celebration. This has been the only fund raiser. The money will someday be used for college scholarships for the members. The club also sponsors a project tour at the end of each year. All members go to each other's homes to view all the projects, after being shown at the county shows. One year, the members made Christmas wreaths out of trash bags and donated the money to the Heritage School. ■



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HOMER'S GREATEST GENERATION

PART II — BOB DAVIS

— by Chris Reel —

We owe much gratitude to the men and women who served in World War II. We mourn for those who never came back. And we treasure those who did, for they became our spouses, parents and grandparents. Many of us would not be here today if these men had not returned from the war. They also became our neighbors, business owners, employees and community leaders.

One such veteran of the war is Bob Davis of Homer, who served as a P-47 Thunderbolt fighter pilot in Italy. He was a senior at Fairmount Community High School when the Japanese invaded Pearl Harbor. Thanks to his high school history teacher, Bob was well aware of the events going on in Europe at the time. Early in his freshman year at the University of Illinois, Bob made trips to Chanute Air Force Base in an attempt to enlist as an aviation cadet. In February, 1943, at the start of his second semester, at age eighteen, he was called to active duty.

After several days and nights on a troop train from Chicago, eating from mess kits and warming themselves by an open fire in one of the baggage cars, Bob and the other recruits arrived at crowded Sheppard Field, Wichita, Texas, for basic training. From there, he was sent to Jonesboro, Arkansas, to a college training detachment where he received about ten hours instruction in Piper Cubs, began learning Morse Code, and was in the first graduating class.

At the classification depot in San Antonio, in the summer of 1943, he did close order drill, learned more Morse Code, did rigorous physical training, and began to learn airplane identification. His group then transferred to Cuero, Texas, about eighty miles to the southeast, to a private flying school, where he trained on the single engine PT-19. At this point, Bob had about sixty hours of training. In the winter

in the Waco area, he trained in a 450 horsepower single engine aircraft, the BT-15, more advanced than the primary trainer. At this point, pilots chose whether to go into multi-engine training, or single engine fighter training. Bob chose the latter.

At Moore Field in Mission, Texas, Bob trained on the AT-6, a 650 horsepower aircraft fitted with machine guns, and having the potential to carry bombs. In these faster, more powerful airplanes, Bob and the other pilots did formation flying, gunnery and instrument training. In March, 1944, Bob graduated from advanced flight school, received his pilot wings and was commissioned an Air Force Second Lieutenant.

Following graduation, Bob received training on the P-40 fighter, a difficult airplane to fly and similar to the Flying Tigers that flew in China. Rudy Frasca

has one of these on display in Urbana. Bob was glad he didn't have to fly them in combat. Then it was on to Virginia and the P-47, called the Thunderbolt, one of the largest single engine fighter planes at the time.

While at Blackstone Air Force Base in Virginia, Bob and the others had an interesting experience with a four-star general, General Arnold, nicknamed Hap Arnold, who was the commanding general of the Air Force. He came to inspect the air base, bringing with him a contingent of other generals and colonels. Calling everyone to attention, he questioned the commanding officer and some of the trainees. Unhappy with the answers he was getting, he turned to a one-star (Brigadier) general with the image of a typical pilot — hat crunched and slouched back, clothes rumpled, shoes not shined — and got a casual response. With a smile on his face, General Arnold questioned the Brigadier General about his posture, his hat, tie, and shirt collar, and put him in a "brace" (a very rigid attention, eyes straight forward) in front of all the young trainees. It was unheard of for a full general to test a lesser general in front of lesser ranking officers.

Ordering the Brigadier General to see that more aircraft became available as soon as possible, General Arnold left the room with the smile still on his face. That afternoon about twenty brand new P-47's arrived; the pilots deplaned and took off their helmets to shake out their hair, revealing them to be ladies, some old enough to be mothers or grandmothers of the young

pilots in training. General Arnold taught all the young hot shot pilots a strong object lesson that day.

Landing at Naples, Italy, in the summer of 1944, Bob traveled by truck and train to Caserta. He volunteered to go to Tarquinia, about 50 miles northwest of Rome, where there was a need for P-47 fighter pilots, and joined the 346th fighter group. Additional training there on the P-47's gave Bob and his comrades more training time than pilots who were there ahead of them.

Squadron commander Major Schindler took Bob under his wing in preparing him for combat. On their second mission of Bob's first day of combat, they encountered flak on the way to and from the enemy target northwest of Milan. His first reaction was that flak was no big deal. He soon learned otherwise. One piece did pierce the cockpit, but it fell harmless to the floor.

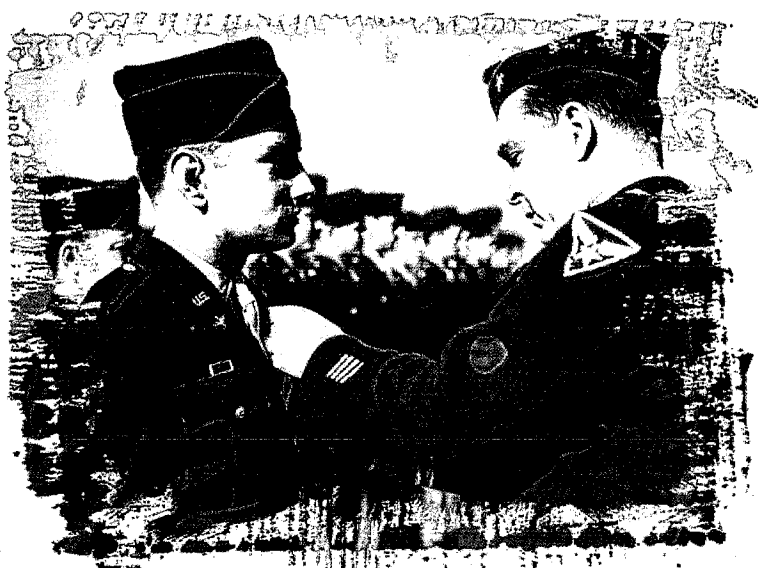
Bob Davis and his group were often assigned to escort the 15th Air Force B-25 and B-26 bombers to their targets and back again. But

there was more to it than that. They also would go in ahead of the bombers, dive bombing to strafe ground positions that were sending up flak. The pilots would pick targets of opportunity on the way home, such as transport trucks, trains, rail bridges, oil wells and airplanes.

By 1945, the United States had produced vast amounts of aircraft and the German air force was pretty well beaten. There was little aerial opposition. Bob did not experience any air to air combat, though he did destroy seven enemy aircraft on the ground.

Once, in bombing a locomotive, he waited a few seconds longer than he should have, and was flying so low when he let the bomb go that he saw parts of the train whistle blow above his wing. Pilots could easily become almost hypnotized on a target, so that some pilots actually crashed into the targets. Bob learned to change his tactics, to come in at a steeper angle and break off his attack quicker.

Bob destroyed nearly forty locomotives and dozens of trucks. The heavily armored Tiger tanks were difficult to destroy, but when one was on concrete,



Second Lieutenant Robert Davis being presented the distinguished "Flying Cross" by Brigadier General Robert S. Isreal, 1945, Pisa, Italy.

the pilot could ricochet fifty caliber bullets off the concrete, up under the Tiger tank and destroy it that way. Another tool used to destroy these tanks was napalm, jellied gasoline. Bob once destroyed a long train this way, dropping his wings to drop one bomb and then the other. He was able to scatter it practically the whole length of the train.

During the winter of 1944-45, weather having slowed down the action, Bob was living at Pisa, just one half mile south of the leaning tower. The pilots were billeted in an old hotel,

with maid service and an Italian chef. There was a Russian camp not many miles away. Although they were fighting on the same side in the war, neither group could speak the other's language. But they were told not to even try to talk to each other. It was forbidden. Bob got his first lesson in the politics of the war.

Bob's most valuable mission took place in April of 1945. Due to severe weather that winter, the battle lines had remained static. The plan was to use Patton-like tactics to break out of the Apennine Mountains and dash

north across the Po Valley, a long, narrow flat valley which ran west to east. The strategy was to rush tanks and armored vehicles and run head long, not stopping to fight, to prevent the Germans from setting up heavy defenses north of the Po.

Bob's squadron provided weather information early that morning, and later, aerial cover for the start of the offensive. As the mission began, he was high enough up to see from coast to coast and as far

south as Rome; every road was full of traffic with every kind of military vehicle, the most military might he had ever seen in one place. The ground forces were protected by the fighter planes above. It was an awesome sight that made Bob proud of his country.

The next day, Bob had a flight of eight P-47 planes and was called upon to eliminate an enemy stronghold on a rise on the north side of the Po. American forces attempting to cross the Po in amphibian ducks were being bombed out of the water by Germans on a nearby hill. The 150 miles the P-47's



had to travel to the Po from northwest of Milan went very quickly at five hundred miles per hour going downhill. Getting the planes lined up in two groups at right angles to each other, in properly timed order as they came at the target, Bob had his flight take out the enemy position in just a few minutes using their 850 caliber machine guns. As soon as the attack began, the ducks safely began to cross the river.

In attacking ground targets, the strategy was to use the element of surprise as much as possible, attacking the target once and leaving. One fellow, an excellent pilot technically but head-strong, disregarded this rule, going back time and time again on the same day. Once he was hit and barely made it back to the base; a second time he ripped the belly tank off his plane as he scraped a mountain top. The next time, he crashed into a mountaintop and was killed. He had been warned many times by fellow pilots not to keep going back.

Some pilots escaped situations that seemed impossible. Others were killed in freakish ways that had nothing to do with their skill or performance.

Pilots were required to fly one hundred missions, lasting an average of three or four hours each, before they could go home. Bob was single, so he volunteered for a second hundred missions, but only got to fly twenty-nine more before the war in Europe ended.

As the war in Europe came to an end in the summer of 1945, Bob was aware that it was coming. He happened

to be in Milan the day after dictator Mussolini and his mistress were hung upside down. His body was gone, but the scaffolding was still there.

Getting back to the States was a challenge for this single-engine pilot. Assigned to a twin-engine B-25 squadron on the Adriatic Sea, he had a little bit of training before being made a co-pilot for the flight home. His pilot had been General Doolittle's co-pilot in the Bombing of Tokyo. B-25's have a flight range of 1500 miles. With just enough gas to get there, they had to make a stop fifteen hundred miles away at tiny Ascension Island in the middle of the south Atlantic. A navigator was in the lead plane of the dozen or so in the flight, and he got them there in good shape. After stops in Brazil, Ecuador and Puerto Rico, they arrived in Savanna, Georgia, where they were processed by Chet Hillard from Homer.

Bob could have gone on to jet school and trained on P-59 jets, but he didn't

want to make a career of the military. The death of a famous war ace, Richard Bong, on a routine training flight in a P-59 clinched his decision, and he returned home to enroll at the University of Illinois. He graduated in 1948.

For his service during the war, Captain Davis received the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with seven oak leaf clusters and a Presidential Unit Citation for meritorious combat duty.

Bob appreciated the way almost everyone in this country enthusiastically supported the troops and the war effort. It went far beyond any loyalty and support that the country has seen since then.

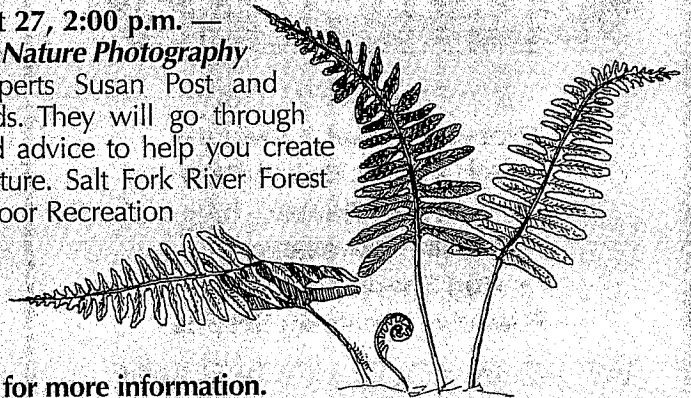
For the last 20 years, the 346th Fighter Squadron has held reunions about every two years at locations from coast to coast. The next reunion will be on September 28, 2000, at Charleston, South Carolina. Virginia and Bob Davis will be attending, along with about 75 other veterans, wives and widows. ■

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE SPECIAL PROGRAMS — by Sarah Livesay



Friday, August 11, 8:00 p.m. — Millennium's Mighty Meteors. This stellar program will allow participants to learn about and hopefully view the Perseid meteor shower. We will make star-finders and sundials and enjoy this summer night with Staerle Planetarium's David Leake. Middle Fork River Forest Preserve Activity Center, Penfield.

Sunday, August 27, 2:00 p.m. — Learn all about **Nature Photography** with local experts Susan Post and Michael Jeffords. They will go through techniques and advice to help you create the perfect picture. Salt Fork River Forest Preserve, Outdoor Recreation Center, Homer.



Call 896-2455 for more information.

HOMER LIBRARY NEWS

Homer Library's commitment to the program continues unchanged, even with the addition of over 70 children who are being moved from the Broadlands building to Homer. However, this places a burden on the library's budget. If there is any way that you can help us provide the extra books for these children, and help welcome them to Homer, please consider a donation to our RIF program. Make out your check to the Homer Community Library, with a note that it is for RIF. This is a worthy program. Even reluctant readers get excited when they receive their free books, because they get to choose the books.

Chris' Quick Pick: *The Perfect Storm* by Sebastian Junger. This 1997 book has been made into a movie, telling the true story of one of the worst storms to hit the Atlantic off the coast of New England. What is a perfect storm? Read the book and find out.

Are you concerned about internet privacy? The June, 2000, issue of PC World tells what information web sites collect, what you should be concerned about, and what you can do. ■



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HOMER PEACE MEAL

We have been on the move. In May we took a trip to Rantoul to tour the kitchen where our food is prepared daily, and to have lunch with the cooks and Rantoul seniors. In June we took another trip to Rantoul, this time to Prairie Village, where we were treated to lunch, games, and a tour of the facilities. We all had a good time. In July we celebrated all birthdays of May through July. We were entertained by The Hillbilly Kitchen Band. August's party is still "under construction" so stay tuned for more information. Hope to see you all there.

Our program is going well. We have met our fundraising goal for the year 2000, thanks to our rummage sale, Christmas raffle, noodle sales, and donations. Thanks to all who helped. In October we will begin our 2001 fundraising.

We are now delivering meals to 9 seniors in Homer. If you or someone you know could use this service please contact Sharon for more information. We also serve meals at the Community building Mon. – Fri. at 11:30 am. We would love to see new faces and old ones that we have not seen in awhile. The only requirement is that you be 60+ years old, and like to eat lunch with friends! For more information or reservations please call Sharon Jeffers at 896-2121 or 896-2668. ■

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HOMER CHURCH NEWS

HOMER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

On July 2, about 200 Homer residents joined in a community worship service at the city park. All four churches had a part, with Steve Burwell of the United Methodist Church bringing the message. Holy Communion was celebrated. Following the service, many stayed for a fellowship meal. The next scheduled event is the community songfest in September.

An Everyday Survival Kit

Items needed: toothpick, rubber band, band-aid, pencil eraser, chewing gum, mint, candy kiss, tea bag.

Here's why: *Toothpick* — to remind you to pick out the good qualities in others ... Matthew 7:1. *Rubber Band* — to remind you to be flexible, things might not always go the way you want, but it will work out ... Romans 8:28. *Band Aid* — to remind you to heal hurt feelings, yours or someone else's ... Colossians 3:12-14. *Pencil* — to remind you to list your blessings everyday ... Ephesians 1:3. *Eraser* — to remind you that everyone makes mistakes, and it's okay ... Genesis 50:15-21. *Chewing Gum* — to remind you to stick with it and you can accomplish anything ... Philippians 4:13. *Mint* — to remind you that you are worth a mint to your heavenly father ... John 3:16-17. *Candy Kiss* — to remind you that everyone needs a kiss or hug every day ... I John 4:7. *Tea Bag* — to remind you to relax daily and go over that list of God's blessings ... I Thessalonians 5:18.

The churches of Homer welcome you! If you do not have a church home, or need to renew your relationship with God and the church, stop by for their services, or contact one of the ministers, or members. The church, for some, may seem like a ship in a safe harbor, but that is not what ships are made for. ■

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— Your Red Wing Agent —

HOMER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"Where Faith in God Makes a Difference"

Vacation Bible School will begin at Homer United Methodist Church on Sunday, August 6 and continue through Thursday, August 10. The theme this year will be "2000 Ark Avenue". The "Focus on Christian Living" class of Sunday School will be the sponsors of the Bible school with Patrick Hubert as director.

Times for VBS were not set at press time, but it will be an evening event. There will be games, special activities, crafts, Bible study, story time, and refreshments, and at the conclusion on Thursday, there will be a family potluck.

Bible school is open to all children in the community from the ages of Pre-school through 6th grade, so come join the fun at Homer United Methodist. For more information you may call Patrick at 896-3025.

Saturday, August 5, the Teen Christian Organization will be holding a free Car Wash at the church. Pledges will be taken prior to the event and all proceeds will be used toward a TCO summer 2001 Mission trip.

On Sunday, August 6, worship will be held at Homer Lake at 9 a.m. Special music will be by Dick Gerdes and a coffee hour will follow, hosted by Bob and Virginia Davis.

There will be no Sunday School during the month of August, and worship service will begin at 9 a.m. This will also include Sunday, September 3. 9 a.m. Sunday School and regular 10:15 a.m. worship will resume on Rally Day September 10. ■

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, always give thanks for everything to God the Father."

--- Thought for the Day ---

"What will I harvest from the seeds I plant today?"

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HOMER CHURCH NEWS

HOMER CHURCH OF CHRIST

"Reaches Out to Surrounding Communities"

In October of 1997, God led the Homer Church of Christ to conduct one of the largest building projects that Homer has seen for a long time. In fact, they have the largest paved parking lot in Homer. A new 13,000+ square foot church facility was built and fully equipped with all new furnishings. Best of all it is all on one level. **NO STAIRS TO CLIMB!**

More impressive than their facility is their mission and purpose statement: ***"To glorify God by reaching the unchurched, making responsible disciples and training them for a ministry in the Body of Christ."***

Their worship service is contemporary and uses drums, guitar, keyboard, piano and flute to provide a worship experience that is both God-honoring and personally inspiring.

Knowing that our community is blessed with many babies and young children, they have a wonderfully staffed nursery on Sunday. In fact, there is a display that will flash a number in the worship center, if the parent of a child is needed.

But, they also understand that many people in Homer do not want to go to any church. Yet, they still desire to minister to anyone, whether there is an interest in church or not.

Several times a year the congregation works hard to gather useable items, mainly clothes, to give away for FREE!

Now, they are going a step further. They are preparing a car-repair ministry to help people who just can't keep up with the light maintenance repairs that need to be done. Repairs such as oil changes, wiper blades and filters. This ministry is overseen by a real mechanic. If this meets a need in your life, you don't have to attend church to be served. Just call them at 896-2332, through the love of God, they'll do what they can. It's not a gimmick to get you to go to church.

They are also starting bible studies in the community. Again, these studies are to help you find the strength and joy in life that Jesus offers. If you'd like to host one of these studies and invite your friends, call the church at 896-2332.

If you have e-mail and internet access and you want to hear sermons or receive bible teachings without attending church, go to: www.freshwind.org.

Finally, if you'd like to help the Homer Church of Christ reach out, they'll gladly welcome more ministry partners for Jesus!

HOMER CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWS

"I Feel Like I'm Just Surviving."

Have you been following the TV show Survivor? Maybe that's the story of your life. Maybe you feel like you are just barely surviving the trials and stresses each day brings. Are you lonely or depressed over your life? Maybe your dreams have all been shot down.

God says to you today, "The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing." (Zephaniah 3:17).

"I Feel Empty, Like Something in My Life Is Missing."

Are you tired of someone else telling you what to believe or what the Bible says? At the Homer Church of Christ, we are concerned about helping you grow in your relationship with Christ. Christ is the answer to all of your problems and challenges of life. You have been created by God and your life will never be happy until you begin living for Christ — deep down in your heart you know that already.

"I've Tried Church and It's Not for Me."

Have you been to "church" but it's just boring and over your head? There is a big difference between being a Christian and being a "church-person." Being a good person and going to church may make you a nice neighbor, but the only way to be sure you will have eternal life is for you to have a personal relationship with God's Son, Jesus Christ. Going to church and working your tail off on various church committees does not impress God if you aren't living an authentic Christian life in Christ.

"I Am Going to Visit the Homer Church of Christ This Sunday!"

Starting a new church can be a little intimidating. But, at the Homer Church of Christ, we want you to come and be our guests. We have bible studies that start at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday morning, and our morning worship service is at 10:30 a.m.

We are located at 500 E. 2nd St. in Homer, about 1/4 mile from East of Route 49 on 2nd Street, across from the G.A.R. cemetery.

We have kids church and nursery too! When you arrive, we'll meet you at the front door. Isn't it time for some new beginnings in your life? ■

The Homer Cooperative Preschool



Photos by James Alfred

Some of the Kids with Mrs. Burns at the Nature Center of Homer Lake Forest Preserve.

The Homer Cooperative Preschool, under the direction of its new director and teacher, Sheri Burns, graduated 18 children from its preschool and pre-kindergarten classes this year.

The Homer Cooperative Preschool was founded more than 25 years ago. The preschool is a not-for-profit organization that has provided services to hundreds of Homer and area communities' children, ages 3-5. Because it is a cooperative, our tuition fees have remained some of the lowest found anywhere in Champaign County, while still providing a top-quality program. We provided educational activities that include pre-math, pre-reading, and pre-writing skills, science, language development, art, music, fine and large motor skills development and computer skills. The children have fun days, holiday and birthday

parties, excursions to the park, field trips and special programs. The year ends with a week-long day camp.

This year's special events included field trips to Curtis Orchard, Salt Lake Forest Preserve, Urbana Middle School, U of I farms, Mr. Wizard Assembly, a play at Homer School, a "Mexican" Christmas program complete with piñatas and Santa Claus, and our special graduation/Spring program where all the mothers received carnations, as well as our day camp at Homer Lake.

Our fall classes begin Tues., Sept. 5. We currently have 18 registered for this year for our classes, and we have room for 2 more in our afternoon class. Morning classes meet Mon.-Fri., 9:00-11:30 a.m. Afternoon classes are on Tues. and Thurs. afternoon from 12:30-3:00 p.m. You may reach the director at 896-2797. ■



Photos by James Alfred

2000 Graduates — Back Row (L to R) Ben Ely, Zach David, Morgan Gutwein, Emily Phillips, Logan Hart, Cole Wisehart, Trae Garrison, Jacob Wolf, D.J. Robertson, and James Gordon. Front Row (L to R) Taylor Gillenwater, MacKenzie James, McKenzie Nickelson, Ashton Hastings, Tori Master, Breanna Knudson, and Brandon Umbarger. Not Pictured: Patrick Bolliger.

FROM THE MAYOR — by Dave Lucas

What a great July 4th. Thanks to all who worked so hard to make the day a success. Especially to the Fireman's Auxiliary, who took over the kids games. They put together a nice program with very little time.

The two new pieces of playground equipment turned out better than anyone dared hope. The finished products were not an accident, they were the result of a great deal of dedicated work by many volunteers. During the day's festivities, I heard several questions about the equipment and how it worked. Let me explain the workings of the "splash pad".

The water is treated, from the village water distribution system. It is not recycled, it goes down the drain in the middle of the pad and to a drainage tile. To recycle the water, it would have to be treated, a very expensive process. The base cost of the water is minimal, around five cents per 100 gals. That base cost just includes the electricity to pump the water and the chemicals to treat the water. The residential rate covers all the operational costs, such as personnel (the main cost), equipment, chemicals, upkeep, system improvements, and utilities. No! there is no plan to use this new equipment as an excuse to raise your water rates. The current water rates pay for the operation of the entire system with some extra funds that are set aside for capital improvement projects. I have calculated the cost of water at \$10.00 per day, a small price to pay for all those happy faces we witnessed on the 4th. The happy faces from the kids, because they love water and splashing, and parents, because they love to see their kids having fun.

The splash pad is activated by touching the black, magnetic actuator on the green post positioned on the pad. When activated, the "pad" runs through one of five preprogrammed sequences. The programs vary the spray that is on, how long it is on and what spray will come on next. It keeps the kids guessing all the time. When the program is finished, the system is "off" and someone must touch the actuator again to start another program. With this type of system, if no one is at the park playing, the system is not wasting water. Currently the splash pad is in the "on" mode from 10 in the morning to 6 at night. The Village Board will review these times to determine if they are satisfactory.

As to the old equipment, some of the pieces will be retained and placed back in the park or retained for placement in another park. The pieces that are not used will be sold or given away. The village board will determine how that will be done.

I also heard questions on cost. The splash pad cost \$26,920.00, the new climbing equipment cost \$13,943.00. The money came from several sources. The first "chunk" came from our generous anonymous donor. This individual gave \$30,000 to the village to be used in any manner it saw fit. I have established a committee to review proposals on how to use these funds. It was their recommendation to the Village Board that \$10,000 be given to the playground committee for the purchase of this new equipment. The board agreed and voted unanimously to make the donation. This represented the seed money for the project. The Board also voted to donate \$5,000 of general property tax dollars from

the Park repair and maintenance fund from last years general fund budget. This year we guaranteed \$1,500 from the same fund to cover the cost of concrete and other installation cost. A special legislative initiative gift of \$5,000 came from the State of Illinois with the help of Tim Johnson. The rest came from fund raisers, donations, gifts, grants, and memorials.

Of all the funds that were spent for the playground, only \$6,500 from the general fund would have been available for sewer. The rest would never have been spent for that type of project.

Let me chase a rabbit here and talk about sewers for a while. We are currently applying for a state grant to have our engineers study the most cost effective way to provide sewer. I have asked the engineers to research options such as partnering with Ogden, Sidney or even Philo. They will look at a phased system of doing the downtown first and the rest of the town later. They will look at different types of treatment systems. When this research is complete, it will be presented to the board for consideration and the best plan for the village will be voted upon. Once this plan is adopted by the board, it will be put on the ballot for a referendum vote. Any way it goes, the project will be multi millions of dollars, and several years to completion. During that time applications for state grants, loans, and legislative initiatives will be made. There will be several sources of money applied to a project of this scope. In the mean time, we will not stop moving ahead with plans for growth and development while we wait for the possibility of sewer. We will continue with many projects using differing sources of revenue.

For example, we are looking at building a new water tower. The money for the tower will come from the sale of water along with some state money. Money from the general fund will not be used. Another example, we are putting in new curbs and gutter on East First street. This three year project is funded from motor fuel tax money which comes from the tax on gasoline. We will not spend money from the general fund (property tax and income tax) or water sales on that project. By the end of July, we will have the TIF district established. This

will provide another pool of revenue for several projects within the TIF district. As you can see, your village board members are working hard to acquire different sources of revenue for a wide range of projects and spend that money efficiently so Homer gets a good "bang for its buck".

If the Village Board were a juggling team, you could say we have several balls in the air right now. As I said at the dedication ceremony at the park on the 4th, the volunteer effort on the new equipment is a watershed event in the village of Homer.

It marks the beginning of a new era of cooperation and effort to move Homer ahead and begin rebuilding what time has taken. There will be nay sayers and doomsayers, but let me remind you, so far, every thing we have put our hand to has prospered. From the land fill, to the water, and now to the playground. This is just the beginning. So why not get on board with this good effort and become a partner in the improvement of Homer and not just a bystander or especially not a hindrance. ■

Homer Park Playground Equipment Thank You's

— by Bobbi Gordon

— CORPORATE DONORS —

Jim Bell Printing, Bundy Business Machines, Burns Computers, Carle Foundation, Chicago Bears, CILCO, Cracker Barrel, Danville Pepsi, Don's Automotive, Durst Cycle, Fairmount Ready-Mix Concrete, Fish Insurance, The Gamers, Garcia's, Homer Grain, GTE, Homer Country Market, Insty Prints, James Plumbing & Heating, Lacey Excavation, Eli Lilly, Matthis Plumbing, Meijer, Menards, Monicals in Urbana, Norfolk & Southern Railroad, Pierce Trucking, SuperValu, TCI / ATT Cable, T.K. Wendl's, Toys-R-Us, UpClose Printing, WCIA, Wilson Farms, Wolf Grain Systems.

— ORGANIZATION DONORS —

Champaign County Forest Preserve District, Community Development Board, HCC Jr. High Youth Group, HCC Praise Team, Homer Church of Christ, Homer Churches Cooperating, Homer Extension, Homer Firefighters, Homer Library, Homer Preschool, Methodist Church TCO, South Homer Township, The Sundowners Club of Urbana, Village Board, Village of Homer Summer Help Crew.

— MEMORIAL FUNDS —

Lacey-Lukens, Russel Shoaf.

— MEDIA —

Doc Hatton's "What's Happening" Homer Article, The Homer Lions Club for the Community Building Marquee, *Homer News & Views*, *The Leader*, *News-Gazette* "Events & Community Calendar", *Oldies 92*, *Southern Champaign County Today*, *Thrifty Nickel*, *WBGL*, *WCIA*, *WDAN*, *WDWS*, *WHMS*, *WIAI*, *WICD*, *WIXY*, *WLRW*.

***A Very Special Thank You to
the Community Members Who Came Out
to Help Install the Equipment!***

— INDIVIDUAL DONORS —

Anonymous Donor, Joe Bear & Family, Virginia Baird, Jeanine Bensken, Stu Brown, Jodi Bryan, Dave & Sheri Burns, Ray & Christine Cunningham, Ken Czubernat, Jim & Helen Davison, Norma Diel, Darla Dodd, Connie Dunn, Fred Earl, Hilda Elliott, Jackie Ellis, Spencer Ely, Sara & Dean Essig, Darla Finley, Matt & Susie Garrison, Jimmy & Bailey Gordon, Terry Graham, Alfreda Hopper, Joe Humphrey, Guy & Darlene James, Mike James, Mike & Staci Johnson, Robert & Ethel Johnson, Tim Johnson, K.C. Jones, Jack Knott, Betty Lacey, Jim & Theresa Lacey, Lemke, Dave Lucas, Wayne & Elinor Lutz, Heather McCallister, Jeff Matthis & Family, Roger Moore, Bub Miller & Family, Don & Louise Morgan, Chris Ooms, Jesse Pruitt, Chris Reel, Charles & Delores Richard, Mike Rumer, Ray Ryerson, Marsha Sanders, Larry Shelton, Jerry Stanfield, Brian Taylor, Steve Towner, Pat Varvel, Joann Wallace, Everett Walters, Teresa Wilson.

— VOLUNTEERS & SUPPORTERS OF FUNDRAISERS —

Car Show, Christmas Housewalk, Creative Memories Scrapbooking, Family Portraits, 50/50 Raffle, Garage Sales, Golf Tournament, Gospel Jamboree, Homer's Odyssey Softball Tourney at T.K. Wendl's, T-Shirt Sales, Raffles, & Events, License Plate Sales, 1999 Pepsi Sales on July 4th, Silent Auction.

— HONORABLE MENTION FOR FUNDRAISERS —

CDB, for donating all garage sale proceeds from last year and this year. Theresa Lacey, for organizing the Christmas Housewalk. Barb Rumer, for making and selling homemade suckers. Jim & Theresa Alred, for 2 weekends of professional family portraits. Mike Johnson, Homer Youth League, for 3-on-3 basketball tournament. David, Judy & Ryan Byerley, for the car show. Greg Knott, for school involvement in license plate sales. Homer Library, for the book sale & Read-A-Thon. Guy & Darlene James, for the Gospel Jamboree.

HOMER RECREATION BOARD — by Pat Varvel

A dedication was held on July 4, at Homer Village Park, for the new water park and playground equipment. Rep. Tim Johnson attended, along with members of the Village Board, Recreation Board, Community Development Board, and Mayor Lucas and other interested citizens. This finalized a year long project sponsored by the Rec Board and chaired by Dan Gordon. Many organizations, businesses, and individuals spent long hours in fundraising for the project. A gift of \$10,000 from an anonymous donor provided the seed money for this endeavor. Also, many volunteers spent days and evenings installing the equipment. With the summer heat upon us, the water park has proved to be a very popular spot, and combined with the new play area, the Village Park is sporting a totally new look. The dedication also included recognition of the new water supply completed in the spring for the Village. ■



Water Park and Playground Dedication Ceremony — (L to R) State Representative Tim Johnson, Mayor Dave Lucas, Recreation Board President Dan Gordon, and Recreation Board Member Bobbi Gordon.

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HOMER HOUSEHOLD

— For the Kids! —

PITA POCKET PIZZAS

Cut a slit in the top layer of a pita pocket, about 1/3 of the way from the top. With a spoon (an iced tea spoon is nice to use), spread 2 Tbsp. pizza or spaghetti sauce around inside the pocket. Then sprinkle 2 Tbsp. Mozzarella cheese inside. Place 2 Tbsp. of your favorite pizza topping inside. Suggestions: pepperoni, cooked and drained sausage or hamburger, mushrooms, peppers, pizza cheese, etc. Place pita pocket on a baking sheet and heat in a 350° oven for about 15 minutes, or until cheese melts.

DIRT DESERT

- 1 3.4-oz. instant vanilla pudding, use dry
- 1 20-oz. can crushed pineapple in its own juice
- 1 8-oz. container whipped topping
- 2 cups colored mini-marshmallows
- 15 Oreos, crushed
- 2 bananas, sliced

Place all ingredients, except Oreos, in a large bowl and stir together to blend very well. Pour into a clean, white 6" plastic flower pot or plastic bucket. Crush the Oreos as finely as you can, and sprinkle over the top of the dessert to look like dirt. Refrigerate. When ready to serve, place a silk or plastic flower in the center of the pot or bucket. Use a small, clean plastic garden shovel to serve your "Dirt Dessert!" ■

HERITAGE ATHLETICS

The *News & Views* is going to start covering Heritage High School Athletics by providing schedules and scores. Be sure and support your local athletes by attending the games.

VARSITY FOOTBALL — East Central Panthers

Aug 25	Cerro Gordo	Away	7:00
Sept 1	Martinsville	Away	7:00
Sept 8	Oakland	Home/Broadlands	7:00
<i>Homecoming</i>			
Sept 15	Tuscola	Away	7:00
Sept 22	Villa Grove	Home/Broadlands	7:00
<i>Annual Heritage Booster Club Chili Supper</i>			
Sept 29	Arthur-Lovington	Away	7:00
Oct 6	Illiopolis	Home/Shilo	7:00
Oct 13	Arcola	Away	7:00
Oct 20	South Platt	Home/Shilo	

VOLLEYBALL — Heritage Hawks

Aug 29	Oakwood	Home	6:15
Aug 31	Chrisman	Away	6:15
Sept 7	Tuscola	Home	6:15
Sept 9	Westville Tourney	Away	TBA
Sept 12	Atwood	Away	6:15
Sept 14	Villa Grove	Home	6:15
Sept 18	Georgetown	Home	6:15
Sept 19	Cerro Gordo	Away	6:15
Sept 21	Bement	Away	6:15
Sept 23	Schlarman Tourney	Away	TBA
Sept 25-28	LOVC Tourney	Bement	TBA

HOMER HOMEMAKERS EXTENSION



Homer Homemakers Extension members are shown planting flowers in the business district on May 19. Pictured at left: Lois Hockersmith, Betty Lacey, Bonnie Baird, Teresa Wilson, and Shirley Miller. Pictured at right: Mary Ann Rohl, Norma Diel, Virginia Baird, and Norma Vineyard.

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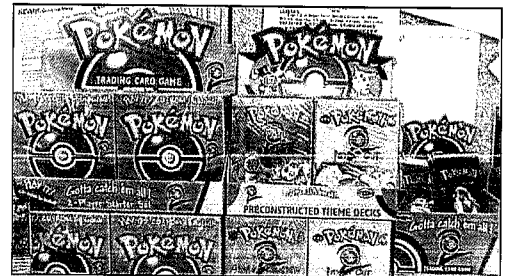
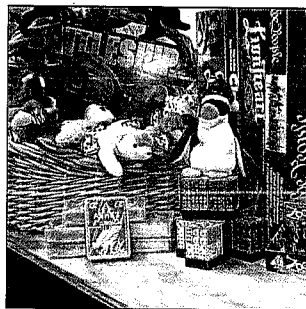
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