

# News & Views

A PUBLICATION OF THE HOMER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BOARD



ost of what is written here has been recorded in one place or another, but part has been passed down through generations by word of mouth, and cannot be verified.

Hans Adam Junt emigrated secretly from Switzerland in 1752 to America, settling in Virginia and later, in Bedford County, Pennsylvania. Even though Hans Adam deserted his native country, he was able to inherit a considerable fortune from the family holdings in Switzerland.

Hans had two sons, John and George, born in the United States. Both served in the Revolutionary War. After the war, both men moved to Shelby County, Kentucky, where George married Polly Underwood. George and Polly had thirteen children, two of which, William and Joseph, eventually moved to Vermilion County, Illinois. More of George and Polly's children probably moved here as well, because several Yount families settled in Catlin and Vance Townships in Vermilion County during the early 1800's, and limited research indicates all had their roots with George and Polly Underwood Yount.

Of the two aforementioned Yount children, William was the oldest, born in 1783. Joseph was born July 29,1793, seventh of the thirteen. While still living in Kentucky, Joseph married Sara Redmon daughter of George Redmon, another Revolutionary War soldier. George and his family moved to Edgar County, Illinois, near Paris before 1827. Joseph, Sara and family also moved to Illinois, living first with Sara's family near Paris and then moving to Homer. They settled on Section 34, in Vance Township of Vermilion County in 1828, two miles north-east of Homer.

The original Joseph Yount home was a four room house constructed in 1829 on Section 34, 1/2 mile east of the county line. There were two rooms down and two up, each eighteen feet square, with a fireplace in each. The two upstairs rooms

were not connected; a separate stairway provided access to each. No trace of the house remains today. It was torn down in 1930, and the location is now a corn and soybean field.

Between October of 1831 and June of 1834, Joseph Yount purchased acreage from various family members and friends for a total of one hundred and thirty (\$130) dollars. Added together, these land purchases comprised a farm of 100 contiguous acres.

Joseph Yount died in 1845. Today, Richard Freeman and James 0. Smith are the great-great grandchildren of Joseph and Sara Redmon Yount.

Jonathon Arberry Yount was the fourth child of Joseph and Sara Yount. He was born in Kentucky on Nov 2, 1823 and moved with his parents to the Homer area when he was four years old. Jonathon eventually married Sarah Hawkins, a 'domestic' in the Yount household, on February 6, 1862. Sarah was 19 years younger than Jonathan. Jonathon stayed and tended the original Yount farm, eventually acquiring some 900-plus acres.

His widowed mother Sara was considered part of his household by the Vermilion County Census. The census of 1850 lists her as having property valued at \$4,000. The census of 1860 lists Sara as having \$1700 worth of farm land and \$500 value in personal property.

Jonathon Yount is listed in the 1860 census as having farm land valued at \$14,000 and personal property worth \$4,500. In the 1870 Vermilion County census, Jonathon has property in Vance Township with real estate valued at \$28,000 and personal property worth \$5,000. Assuming that the census figures were correct, Jonathon was the most wealthy man in Vance Township in 1870. The one man that came close to *continued on Page 3...* 

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## HOMER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Newsletter

Please remember, this 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.

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.

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### Yount-Smith Continued...

that much property was Charles Yount, a cousin.

According to real estate transactions found in the Vermilion County Recorders office, Jonathon made 14 land purchases in Vance township, and 7 land purchases in South Homer township from 1836 through 1871. Two of the more unusual of these 'purchases' was to acquire 160 acres from the United States for \$0, signed by President Millard Fillmore, in 1851 in South Homer Township. The north 60 acres of this land is now owned by James (great-grandson) and Eleanor Smith, and was part of the Kathryn Rowand farm. Jonathon also acquired an adjoining 40 acres from the U.S. Government in 1854 for \$0. This 40 lay just across the county line in Vance Township.

Two of the South Homer purchases were from his older brothers, Washington and Jackson Yount, for the north 126 acres of the NE 1/4 of Section 4, just north-east of Homer, in 1850. The north 67 acres of this land are now owned by James 0. and Thomas 0. Smith, and this should be a Centennial Farm, assuming that all the records can be confirmed. The successional ownership is as follows: Jonathon Arberry Yount -- Jonathon Arberry Yount Estate -- Children of Jonathon Arberry Yount -- William E. Yount, only owner, 1894 -- Pauline Yount Smith -- James 0. Smith and Thomas 0. Smith.

Many of Jonathon's land purchases were made during the years of the civil War. According to family legend, he traded in horses and mules, and profited greatly. Since he had roots in Virginia and Kentucky, he was locally accused of aiding the confederacy (supplying horses and mules). A local militia was formed to confront Jonathon to try to learn if the rumors were true. The militia rode by horseback to the farm's border, where they paused to assess the situation. As they were deciding how best to proceed, a member of the group noticed rifles pointed toward them from the other side of a rail fence. Somehow, Jonathon was aware that the militia were approaching, and had prepared an ambush. A quick conference concluded that discretion was the better part of valor, and the militia returned to Homer. The result of this action was that Jonathon did not trust any Homer bank, and supposedly, buried money on the farm. His death from pneumonia in 1872 at the age of 49 was sudden and unexpected; so much so that he did not reveal where, or how much, if any, money was buried. Supposedly, \$30,000 was missing when the estate was audited. If true, it may still be in the ground somewhere on the farm. However, deep plowing over the past 126 years has not uncovered any trace of it.

End of part one. Part two of the Yount-Smith Farm Lineage will be printed in the August News and Views.

### Letter to Editor

When you buy or deal with any local business and they make a commission, whether it's your local realtor, grocery store, hardware, drug store, gas station, barber or other local store, that money the local person makes, may be spent over and over locally three or four times before it leaves town. When you buy groceries, etc., or deal with merchants out of town, the money leaves town immediately and no one else in town benefits from it. Let's keep all the local merchants we can and try to add more. Our town needs to grow. Sidewalk traffic is what it takes to keep local businesses going and get more businesses.

Wolf Real Estate can show any properties: commercial, homes or farm land. Call us anytime. We are in the Multiple listing service. Other realtors can show any of our properties also.

Sincerely, Dale Wolf

### **Youth League News**

The youth league team sponsors are: Veach Masonry Inc., Midwest Coin Amusement, Kirby Funeral Home, Homer IGA, Frito Lay, Eagle Amusement Co. Illini FS, Asan Rasquels and Don's Marathon. One team still needs some group to sponsor it. Please consider the possibility of donating to help them. Due to the fantastic donations we were able to outfit all the teams with new equipment, such as bats, balls, catcher gear, etc. Everyone who participated in the fund-raiser and the people who supported the fund raising effort really deserve a hearty round of applause. Thirty percent of the teams were actually involved in raising the funds and they acquired nearly three thousand dollars to help the program. That makes me wonder how much they could have gotten with one hundred percent participation. The Homer Youth League would like to extend it's warmest regards to Jeff Matthis, Ron Humphrey, Kevin Judy, Dale Katterhenry, Mike Johnson and Tom Wakefield for helping build the announcer stand. And another helping of that gratitude goes to Payton Judy and Cole Judy for cleaning up the garbage around the field.

The next Youth League meeting will be Friday, June 12th at 7:00 p.m. at the village hall. As always, these meetings are open to the public and residents are encouraged to attend and make suggestions and comments. Please feel free to contact any board member at any time with questions, concerns, suggestions or comments. And we would like to say that we are happy to see Jim Swathwood is doing well and back into the game. (So to speak).

## **Homer Library News**

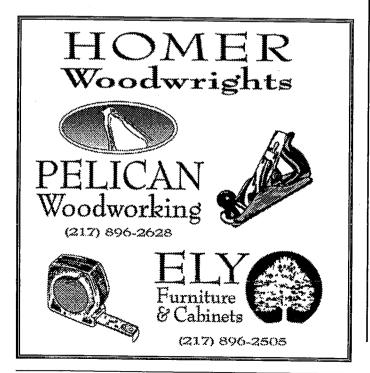
The final distribution of books for the Reading is Fundamental program has been completed. Three times during the school year, we give a free book to each child in grades kindergarten through fourth in the Homer school building. This is made possible in part by the Homer library, with the balance of funds coming from the federal RIF program.

Thanks to a grant from the state library, we now have a fax machine and TTY (for the hearing impaired), both of which are available for public use. Stop in the library for the details. There is a small charge to cover the cost of using these items.

You can now leave a message on our answering machine, should you need to call us when we are not here. This is also courtesy of the state library.

Chris' Quick Pick: The Heart of America by Mike Trout. The author is the co-host of the Focus on the Family radio program with Dr. James Dobson. This time last year, he and his son-in-law set out on a cross country bicycle trip, to meet with the people of America, and better understand their needs, concerns, dreams, etc.

During the fiscal year which ended on April 30, our patrons borrowed 9922 of our books, videos, and magazines. We received 294 books and other materials by interlibrary loan. We held 33 sessions of children's programs with a total attendance of 526 people.



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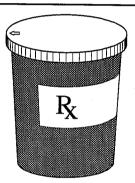
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## From the Mayor

ecently there has been a lot of talk in the papers about area villages setting up TIF (Tax Increment Financing) Districts. It is my plan to set up a TIF in Homer this fall once the new water line is in and water is flowing. Let me take this occasion to explain what a TIF is and how it works, along with a view of how it will benefit Homer.

TIF legislation was enacted by the State of Illinois to provide a financing mechanism that would encourage developers to invest in underdeveloped and blighted areas. This statute has recently been used to attract developers to small communities to build new subdivisions for residential development. Why is this necessary? There is great cost associated with building a new subdivision, if the sub-division is done correctly. This involves the building of roads, sidewalks, putting in utilities, drainage, and landscaping. Normally the developer would incur these expenses. He would recoup them as he sold lots and built homes. For the developer to make a profit on the project, with today's interest rates, the homes must sell quickly. In rapidly growing towns, this is not a problem, but in Homer this becomes an insurmountable hurdle.

The TIF can help overcome this obstacle by providing financial incentives to developers who would otherwise be unwilling to invest in Homer. The first step in setting up a TIF district is to establish its boundaries and make sure these areas meet specific qualifications. These qualifications are set by State statute. Most of Homer would qualify under the current law. I would advise including the downtown, the school, the older parts of town, and any green field areas to be developed into subdivisions. Once the boundaries are set, public hearings are held and application is made to the State to establish the district. This process could take up to 3 mouths. If the State approves the district, the property taxes of all lands within the district are 'capped'. This means that taxing bodies, such as schools, parks, township, college, and county will continue to receive the same portion of revenue for the duration of the TIF. It doesn't mean that the taxes within the TIF district won't increase. The increase will go into an account to subsidize developers and help fund projects the Village feels are important for the residents of Homer - thus, Tax Increment Financing.

One of the main concerns of TIFs are their effect on school funding. School funding should not be hurt by the establishment of a residential TIF. As student population increases through new housing construction, the increased assessed valuation of those homes within the TIF district is not included in the State school funding formula. The dollars per child could increase and this would make up for any lost property tax revenue. TIFs can also benefit schools by making sure they are within the TIF district. This makes the school eligi-

ble for TIF generated funds. An example of how this works is happening in Havana, IL. Fifty thousand dollars of TIF funds are being used to help install a new all weather track at the high school. This is just one example of how we can use our property tax dollars for projects within Homer and not have all our money go out of town.

The idea of having control over our own tax money is the greatest feature of TIF. It is truly a win-win scenario for small towns. TIF will not raise your property taxes, it might cause them to go down. It might also cause your water rates to drop. The only way to reduce tax rates and maintain current level of services is to increase the tax base. This allows the cost of services to spread out over a greater number of people. It works the same for the water rates. We have a fixed cost of operation and this fall we will have an abundant supply of water. Now we need more customers and that will lower rates.

Mayors Dan McCullum (Champaign) and Todd Satterthwaite (Urbana), along with County Board Chairman 'Bud' Barker, all members of the county board-financed Regional Planning commission, rejected Sidney's request for help in setting up a residential TIF. Satterthwaite stated that if Sidney wanted to subsidize a developer they should raise their taxes. This seems to be their solution to everything. He also said Sidney was willing to use "somebody else's tax money, but not their own'. Todd doesn't understand that all the tax money from Sidney belongs to Sidney residents. TIFs enable small communities to keep more of their tax dollars at home. This enables small communities to pay for needed development such as new sewers, new streets, renovation of village halls, business retention and recruitment without raising taxes, borrowing money or relying on grants. All this can be done without adding to the already overburdened tax payer.

The Village should be making a decision on a TIF district for Homer this summer. I plan to invite experts to our board meetings to talk about the TIF process. Please plan to attend these meetings, I believe this move can be a great plus for the future of Homer.





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# Rec. board plans July 4th activities

Plans are being made for fun in the park at Homer on July 4th. The day is planned for family fun. Games will be held all afternoon. Food will be available by several organizations. There will be several raffles, treats during the day and fireworks at dusk.

The Homer Recreation board has been busy making it possible to have a Celebration of Freedom on July 4th in the town park. Members of the American Legion Post will open the day's festivities with the Flag raising at \$1 a.m. followed by the National Anthem and a short speech by Mark Sheldon, Champaign County Clerk. The winner of the Mr. and Miss Firecracker contest will be announced followed by a bike, trike and wagon decorating contest.

The Little Miss and Mr. Firecracker contest is open to all children below the age of 5. Entrants should send a picture, name address and birth date to the Recreation Board Firecracker chairman, Post Office Box 74 by June 5. Containers will be turnished by the Recreation board and put in the down town stores by June 10. Each winner will receive a \$50, bond donated by the Homer First National Bank. There will be other prizes donated by the local businesses. Votes will cost one cent each.

The young teens on the Recreation board will plan and carry out the games in the atternoon. There will be a tug of war, watermelon eating contest, water balloon toss, basketball toss, and creeper races. School groups will take part in various ways.

In the food pavilion there will be sandwiches, drinks, baked potatoes, nachos and home made pie slices sold by not-for-

profit organizations. Scouts and the post prom committee will sell sno cones and cotton candy. Other organizations are making other plans.

The Sons of the American Legion will be helping the Recreation board take up donations for the fireworks and to clean up the park. The fireworks display is to be bigger and better than ever. Members of the Recreation board viewed sample fireworks by the company earlier this spring. Their choices will be part of the display. The fireworks shooters and the volunteer firemen will take care of that part of the day's fun and the Homer Grain company has given us permission once again to use their property. Immediately following the fireworks D J's will provide music until 11:30. The town board and the local police department are relaxing the curfew that night to allow young and old to enjoy dancing on the lighted tennis courts. There will be adult supervision but parents should be with young children.

The Recreation board has asked repeatedly for local people to come forward and volunteer their time as a member of this board. To help plan and carry out the ways we spend the tax payers money. We only ask that they serve for two years. As anyone who knows me knows there is not too much physical effort required except for two days of the year. It does take a lot of planning and delegating chores to others. I have been on the board for two years as of April 1 and been acting chairman for over one year. My time is up but I don't feel I can just quit until someone comes forward to be chairman and vice chairman. If you have an hour a week please consider volunteering.

Betty I. Lacey

#### **Welcome New Residents:**

Brenda Burnsmier, Chester Callahan, Ann Crane, Richard Dawkins, Kent Dunn, Charles Floyd, Matt & Susie Garrison, Cherie Libka, Phil Mattox, Bryan McCoy, Jason Renfrow, Linda Riggleman, Aaron Rogers, Jan Schacht, Madeleine Shreeves, Trisha Watts, Joshua Westerfield, Allen Williams and Robbie Wiseman.

#### **Homer Church's Cooperating Brochures**

The Homer Church's Cooperating brochures are now available at any of the Homer churches or at the village hall. The brochures will also be distributed by the welcome wagon in the future to new residents.

#### Marquee Sign Keepers

If you have a message to post on the Homer Lions Club Marquee for June events, please telephone the Lions Members listed below with the information. The Marquee, located in front of the Homer City Building, is a free service provided by the Homer Lions. It is intended for use by non-profit organizations who have announcements of public interest.

Lions sign keepers for June are:

D. Driscoll 896-2434 W. Lutz 896-2498

## **Students Against Destructive Decisions**

Have you heard about the most successful student activist organization in the world? Did you know that this group deals with the issues of underage drinking, drug abuse and drinking and driving? Did you know that this group is now available for Heritage High School students?

Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) is dedicated to educating students and the community of the dangers of the use of alcohol and other drugs. Through positive peer pressure, students are encouraged to abstain from making the destructive decisions which could change their lives or the life of someone they care about.

You must hear the voices of these teenagers! These children are the future. They are caring individuals and want to make a positive difference in the world, not just their world but in YOUR WORLD TOO! Please take a few minutes out of your busy day right now and listen to their voices. Open your heart and maybe even take a stand in the fight to save a life!!

Why am I a member of SADD?

"I am a member so I can set an example to my classmates and to the world. I am also a member because I have made the destructive decisions. Don't you know that when you make a destructive decision, you don't only hurt yourself, but you hurt everyone around you. Take my advice, don't make destructive decisions and you won't have to ever regret it!"

"I decided to join SADD because it is something that I truly

believe in. I think it is very important to stop the crisis of teenage drunk driving. We need to work our hardest, not just sit back and let things happen. People need to get involved and fight for what they believe in."

"I would like to help other people and make them realize that we only have one life to live. We need to make it last and have fun. Drinking and driving scares me and I would like to see more people drive sober instead of getting drunk and have to drive home."

"I am a member of SADD because I firmly believe in and practice the principles that the organization stands for. I think that it is wonderful that our school finally offers an organization such as this one. It offers an opportunity for students with high morals and standards to be recognized for these and to be able to participate in and organize activities that show that they care. The SADD organization is a great organization and that is why I am a member."

"The reason I am a member of SADD is because I WANT to get involved in my school and community as an active member of an organization that is always striving to make people and activities safe for all to enjoy!"

If you would like to know more about SADD at Heritage High School or would enjoy working with these caring young people, please contact Julie Fruhling, SADD advisor at 217-896-2353.

# **Poetry**

One hundred years from now,
It will not matter what kind of car I drove, what kind of house I lived in,
How much I had in my bank account,
Nor what my clothes looked like.
But the world may be a little better,
because I was important in the eyes of a child.
From a memory Book-mg

"A Mother is not a person to lean on, but a person to make leaning unnecessary."

June 1998

# FORWARD MOTION

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#### **Amish Cookies**

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1 t. soda

1/2 c Crisco

1/2 t. baking powder

2 eggs

1/4 t. salt

1 t. vanilla

18 oz. carton sour cream

3 c flour

1 c chopped nuts (optional)

Cream sugar and Crisco. Add eggs and vanilla. Mix dry ingredients and stir in alternating with sour cream. Add nuts. Drop by teaspoonfuls on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake 375 for 8-10 min. Brown 4 T. butter. Mix 2 c powdered sugar, 2 T. hot water, and 1/2 t. vanilla. Add browned butter and mix to make a frosting. Frost cooled cookies. If desired, place pecan half on frosted cookie. Makes 4 doz.

#### **Apple Sour Cream Pie**

This recipe is from "Pie-Full Delight" Restaurant, Champaign. Mix together: 3/4 c sugar -- 2 T. flour -- 3/4 t. salt -- 3/4 t. cinnamon. Add: 1-8 oz carton sour cream -- 1 egg -- 1/2 t. vanilla. Mix well. Place 5 1/2 c peeled, sliced apples in unbaked 9" pie shell. Pour filling over the apples. With pastry blender, mix 1/2 c flour- 1/2 c brown sugar -- 3 T. butter. Sprinkle over filling and apples. Cover pie crust edge with foil to prevent overbrowning. Place pie on baking sheet to catch drips. Bake 375 30 min. Remove foil bake 35 40 min longer. Serve warm or room temp, but store leftover pie in the refrigerator.

#### **Sugar-Free Brownies**

In saucepan, melt 6 T oleo and 4 oz chocolate. Add 1/3 c milk and 1/3 c apricot, no sugar, spreadable fruit. Whisk to blend well. and set aside to cool. Mix 1/2 c flour, 36 pkts EQUAL,1/2 t. baking powder and 1/8 t. salt together. Add 1 egg yolk, and 1 t. vanilla. Stir into chocolate mix. Beat 3 egg whites and 1/8 t. cream of tarter until stiff. Fold chocolate mixture into egg whites. Fold in 1/3 c chopped nuts. Bake in 8x8 greased pan at 350 for 18-20 min. Test in center with toothpick for doneness.

The apricot fruit does not taste, and adds the necessary moistness. Conversion for EQUAL: 36 pkts. equal 10 3/4 t. of EQUAL MEASURE and 1 1/2 c of EQUAL SPOONFUL

### **Presbyterian Possibilities**

Thanks to all who showed their concern during my illness. I have gained a better appreciation for friends.

Holy Week and Easter were special for us. We worshiped with the Methodists on Maundy Thursday. On Good Friday the community service attracted a large crowd in our sanctuary. Music and sharing of the Word were appreciated by those attending. Early Sunday morning, Jacob Hubert brought the message at the Sunrise service; special music added to the experience. At the Worship service Bill Rice of Champaign preached, one of several who filled the pulpit during my recovery. On May 3, I returned to my duties. This year we collected over \$500.00 for the One Great Hour offering. These funds are used in a variety of ways to alleviate suffering and need. Special observances were held on Mothers' Day and on Pentecost, May 31. On June 28 we'll take part in the annual community service at Homer Park.

The Adult class meets at 9:00 a.m. each Sunday, with the Worship service following at 10:00 a.m. If you do not have a church home, you are welcome. I would be happy to meet with those who have inquiries about Presbyterian or general Christian beliefs. To arrange a meeting, call me at 896-2861 or contact one of our elders. PEACE AND BLESSINGS. Jim Swathwood, CLP

### HOMER BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Faye's Fashions, 109 S. Main Street, 1817 square feet \$39,900 contact Century 21 Real Estate

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

Homer Car Wash, 110 N. Main St., \$20,000 contact Wolf Real Estate 896-2253

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

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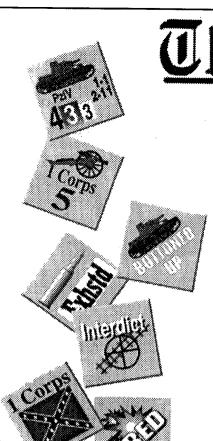
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