



## HOMER BOY SCOUTS

— by Chris Reel —

**H**omer's Boy Scouts and their leaders are going places. In addition to their weekly meetings on Monday evenings from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. at the Homer United Methodist Church, they will be doing a lot of hiking. They are preparing to hike part of the Appalachian Trail in the summer of 2001. This year's hikes and those of early next year will prepare them physically for the challenge of an extended hike, as well as test out the equipment they will be bringing along.

Led by Scoutmaster Dave Wakefield, Assistant Scoutmaster Mark McLane and five other leaders, the 12 Boy Scouts range in age from 11 to 18. At their weekly business meetings, they plan and communicate information about upcoming events and do skill building in preparation for the fun of camping. They are mainly a camping troop, doing a week long camp out in the summer, and camping many weekends during the school year. The various activities, including Camporees and the Klondike Derby, stress the importance of teamwork as the boys learn to work together towards a goal.

Throughout their years in scouting, the boys can earn several ranks, beginning with that of Boy Scout, which they typically earn at age 11. Then comes Tenderfoot and

Second Class during the first year, followed by First Class. Later ranks include Star, Life and Eagle, which are done at the boy's own pace.

Homer has one boy scout who has just completed his Eagle Scout rank, Matt McLane. With the help of his troop, boys and leaders, he prepared a safety area around and under a play area at Kickapoo State Park. They dug out the

area, bordered it with railroad ties, and filled it in with a soft fall material of soft bark. Congratulations, Matt!

The Boy Scouts are overseen by a troop committee made up of Jack Knoop as chairman, Anne Knoop, Tom and Sue Smith, Darlene Wakefield, Jami and Bruce Bryan, Peggy and Mike Jenkins, Marsha and Dennis Riggs and Bonnie and Bub Miller. Committee members ensure that the scout troop has the resources

it needs. Members of the troop include Josh Jenkins, Lance Kingston, Matthew Knoop, Matt McDuffie, Josh McLain, Matt McLane, Ben, Chris and Joe Miller, Justin Minick, Matt Riggs, Andrew Wakefield and new member Jacob Smith.

Each boy pays an annual fee of \$16, part going to the local troop and part to the Boy Scout council in Champaign. They may purchase an optional Boys Life magazine for \$8

*(Continued on page 4)*



Troop 42 — (L to R) Back Row: Josh McClain, Matt McLane, Matt McDuffie, Andy Wakefield, Josh Jenkins, Justin Minick, and Mark McLane. Front Row: Ben Miller, and Matt Knoop.

Photo by James Alfred

# BOARD MEMBERS

## 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

## HOMER YOUTH LEAGUE BOARD

- Mike Johnson, President . . . . . 896-2228
- Tom Wakefield, Vice President . . 896-2347
- Stacy Johnson, Secretary . . . . . 896-2228
- Lisa Wakefield, Treasurer . . . . . 896-2347
- Ricki Latham,  
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,  
Director-at-Large . . . . . 896-2861

## HOMER HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD

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

- Marian Edwards, Co-President . . 896-2254
- Gene Happ, Co-President . . . . . 896-2004
- Charlotte Brown, Secretary . . . . . 582-2056
- Evelyn Cope, Treasurer . . . . . 896-2583

## HOMER CHURCHES COOPERATING BOARD

St. Charles, Church of Christ, Presbyterian, Methodist

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

## 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

## 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

## 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 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
- Greg Knott . . . . . 896-2348
- Tiffany Matthis . . . . . 896-2689
- Ryan Byerley . . . . . 896-2026

## HOMER ZONING BOARD

- Barb Gillhaus, President . . . . . 896-2237
- 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 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Meets the 2nd Monday of each month at 12:30 p.m. in members' homes.

- Greg Knott, President . . . . . 896-2348
- Ray Cunningham, Secretary . . . . 896-2558
- Don Glenn, Treasurer . . . . . 896-3034
- Pat Varvel . . . . . 896-2392
- Becky Smith . . . . . 896-2722
- Kevin Knott . . . . .
- Madeline Shreeves . . . . . 896-3034

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.

*Thank You!*

**STAN CATO**

*for 13 years of dedication to the Homer Community.*

**HAPPY RETIREMENT!**

*Stan was the founder of both the Homer Community Development Board and the Homer News & Views*

# FOCUSING ON HOMER'S BUSINESSES

— by Naomi Roberts

## James Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning

Since 1987, Guy James has been in the plumbing, heating, and air conditioning business. He is a joyous Christian man, who insists on honesty in all of his business dealings, James won't sell you something you don't need.

Together, with his two sons, Guy and Mike, James installs plumbing, heating, and air conditioning in new homes. Their service area is quite large. They have contracted jobs for new homes in Danville, Champaign, Mahomet, Sullivan, Gibson City, and Rantoul. They contract between 20 and 25 houses each year, along with smaller repair jobs too. James keeps busy, because of the words, "Most everybody needs what he does."

James didn't begin as a plumber. His career actually began as a printer at the University of Illinois. Then Jim Wakefield hired him as an apprentice plumber in 1976. He worked for Wakefield until 1985. Between 1985 and 1987 James worked for Chief Plumbing, and also did some maintenance work for Royce & Brinkmeyer. James did his first new house installation of plumbing, heating, and air conditioning for Merle Mennenga Construction. It was Mennenga who urged James to start his own business. In 1987 James began his business, working out of his own garage, making fittings and threading pipe. Now, thirteen years



Photo by James Alfred

later, James has his own sheet metal shop, three trucks, (which he buys from Hill Ford) a dump truck, a Case backhoe, a Skid-Steer bob cat, and a trailer. James purchases most of his supplies from Capital Group, where he was recognized as the #2 Buyer of the year in 1999. He also does business with Plumbing Supply House, Connor Company, and California Contractor.

In the new homes installation, James puts in a bid along with four or five companies. Once he is chosen for the job, he works with the new owners as to type of fixtures and colors they want. Then the work begins. and just like other construction companies, James has deadlines to meet.

James says he enjoys working for General Contractor, Barbara Kenny,

because everything runs smoothly. With Kenny as the general contractor, there is always plenty of time to complete the work, due to her computerized schedules.

The thing James dislikes most about his business is the septic tank work. After a little thought and a huge smile, James decides "No, the work, all the physical work, I enjoy. It's the paperwork I dislike."

With installation of plumbing, heating, and air conditioning in approximately two houses a month, plus several repair jobs on older homes, James and his two sons are extremely busy. You can contact him by phone at 896-2256, and leave a message. Sometimes he takes a little time to get back to you, but he will return your call. ■

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## HOMER BOY SCOUTS *(cont'd from page 1)*

per year. Other ongoing costs are activity costs, such as food for the camp outs. Fund raisers include the popcorn sales in October and November and the Sno Cone stand at the Fourth of July at Homer Park. As the troop prepares for the big hike next summer, they will be holding fund raising suppers. The boys are good cooks, says Scoutmaster Dave Wakefield.

The Homer Lions Club is the chartering organization and is responsible for paying the charter fee, making sure the troop has a place to meet, and alerting them to fund raising and community service opportunities.

The council in Champaign provides training for leaders in the areas of skills training, handling and preventing situations such as child abuse. Scoutmaster and assistants are required to take training and many other leaders take advantage of it, too, with training offered at least twice a year. The Boy Scouts policy is "two-deep leadership," meaning that more than one adult is always present; no boy is ever alone with a leader.



Photo by James Altred

Troop 42 — (L to R) Justin Minick, Josh McClain, Matthew Knoop, Andy Wakefield, Josh Jenkins, and David Wakefield.

The goals for Homer Boy Scouts are to provide fun, safe and learning experiences for scout age youth in Homer, and to learn to work together with others towards a goal. Their leaders are working hard to see that these goals are achieved.

Dave adds that other boys who are not now members are invited to join them on the hike next summer. However, they must be a member of a local troop by September 1, 2000. They can be a member of a cub scout troop or the Explorer troop. There is no age requirement; it is up to the parents to decide if a boy is old enough for the trip. Contact any of the above mentioned adults for more information. ■

# SALUTING HOMER'S VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

— *An Ongoing Series* —

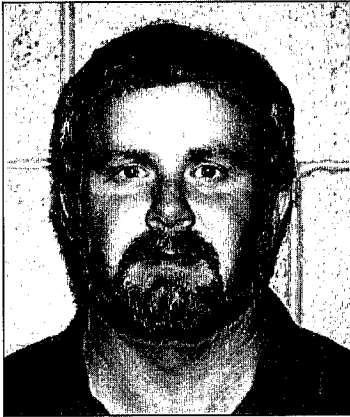


Photo by James Alford

**DAVE UMBARGER** joined the Homer Fire Department in 1984 to help serve the citizens of Homer. He has enjoyed watching the department grow during that time and expand into a new facility. He is a Firefighter, First Responder and Emergency Rescue Technician. He has also been the director of E.S.D.A. for the past 3 years. He would like to thank the citizens of the area for their support of the department. Dave is employed as a Correctional Officer by the Champaign County Sheriffs Department. He has lived all of his 37 years in Homer and he and his wife Lauri have 2 boys, Nicholas and Brandon. ■

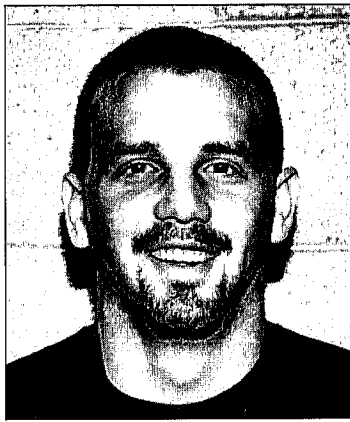


Photo by James Alford

**JASON RUSHING** grew up in the Homer community and became a firefighter right out of High School 5 years ago. He has the rank of Firefighter. He loves being in public service and helping others, and he has plenty of opportunity to do just that in his job at Provena Covenant Medical Center in the emergency room.

He likes hunting, fishing and being outdoors, and enjoys living in a small town where everyone knows each other. When someone needs help, people are there for you.

Jason is still single, but he has a very special friend of 4 years, Amy Earley. ■

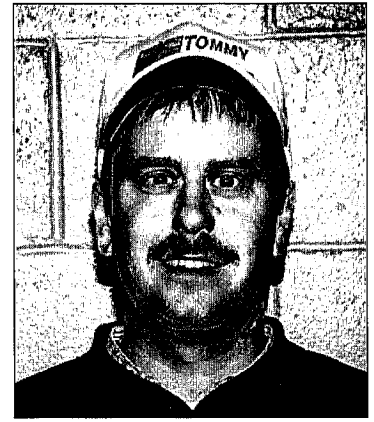


Photo by James Alford

**DALE KATTERHANRY**, Julie, Danielle and Tyler have lived in Homer for 6 years at 203 W. South. They like the quiet community and hometown atmosphere and are active in local affairs. Dale has been a volunteer fireman for 4 years, and this year became a Medical Officer. He has special training as Firefighter II, E.M.T. B, and University of Finley Vertical Rescue Technician. He likes helping people, and the challenge of reacting in a positive way to different circumstances. He enjoys coaching children's sports, remodeling, woodworking, home inspection services, and learning new things. He is employed at Frito-Lay. ■

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# HOMER'S GREATEST GENERATION

## PART I — ART BROWN

— by Chris Reel —

**T**om Brokaw's book, *The Greatest Generation*, has caused renewed appreciation for those who served in World War II. Among those from Homer was Art Brown. He is no longer with us, but thanks to Nondus Wakefield, the Homer Historical Society and a project of the Illinois State Historical Society, Art had shared his experiences in the war. They are recorded on a cassette and have been transcribed and placed in the files of the historical society.

Art graduated from high school in 1934, worked for two years and then went to college. Even during the depression, Art never was without a job, and he put himself through college. While a Vocational Agricultural teacher in Woodlawn, Illinois, he and two others from the high school went to Scott Field Air Force Base to volunteer, following the raid on Pearl Harbor. Due to his color blindness, the Air Force didn't take him.

Art and Gertrude moved to Homer as newlyweds in August, 1942, so that he could start a Vocational Ag. Department at the high school. While in his previous location of Woodlawn, Illinois, he had a draft deferment, but once he moved, it was lifted, and Art found himself drafted into the Army after school started. In fact the Ag. Department at Homer High School didn't open, and Art went into the service on October 12, 1942.

After three weeks of basic training at Fort Lewis, Washington, Art was asked to teach recruits who couldn't read or write. Soon Gertrude was able to join him, taking care of the little daughter of Major Coats from Peoria, Illinois. They lived in the basement of the major's house; because the major was an officer and Art a noncommissioned man, Art and Gertrude could not be on the same floor with him.

When basic training was over, he went with his division to the Mojave Desert in California for advanced training. But because Art was college educated, he was once again pulled out, this time to be sent to Fort Benning, Georgia, for officer's school. Over a week later, Art was sent back to the Mojave Desert, having never reached Fort Benning. Officer's school was full. Then he went to Hawaii to do guard duty, two hours on, four hours off, day after day after

day. Two weeks later, a Colonel pulled him off that to serve as a reconnaissance officer assistant. For ten months, all he did was to ride all over the islands with the Captain, making maps and assisting the officer.

From there his unit, the 33rd Division, 122nd Infantry, Company N, shipped out for the South Pacific, to New Guinea. Their mission was to keep the Japanese away from the air strips. After six weeks of rain and mosquitoes, doing combat patrol for five to ten miles surrounding the air strip, he was sent to McArthur's Officer Training School at Brisbane, Australia. Three hundred men went to the school, knowing only 100 would be commissioned. The

rest would be sent back to their units. The competition was greater than any Art ever experienced. Excellence was required in every area. Every little slip, a miss in target practice, clothes not pressed, dirty barracks, counted against a person. The pressure was so great that a slip up could cause some to break down and cry. But Art made it. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in January of 1945.

Sometime between the end of officer school and his return to combat, Art's dad died. Because mail took so long to catch up with people in combat, word didn't reach him until six weeks later when he got the news in a letter from Gertrude.



Art Brown, 1943

As a second lieutenant with the 158 Regimental Combat Team, Art's duty was up front, clearing the beaches, preparing the way for the divisions to come in. They were pinned down for six weeks; Art was the only officer to survive; at least 150 men were lost. He was shot several times. For his service in combat, Art received the Purple Heart, Combat Infantry Badge, Asiatic Pacific Theater Campaign Ribbon with three Bronze Stars, and others. This phase of his time in service was so intense, so bloody and traumatic that Art did not want to talk about it. It was only when he was interviewed for the state history project in 1994, that he was willing to discuss it. He didn't want to think about it or talk about it and had no interest in military organizations. He never went to see war movies. He preferred to forget about his time in combat as much as possible.

Following this period of combat in New Guinea, the war was ending. VJ Day (Victory Over Japan Day) was September 2, 1945, when the surrender was formally signed. Art went into Japan at the same time as General MacArthur, and was involved in activities such as dealing with AWOL soldiers, picking up weapons from Japanese townspeople and bringing truckloads of gold out of the caves.

Art got home from the service on December 24, 1945, and began teaching at Homer High School on January 2, 1946. Seeing that Art and Gertrude had no car, no home and no furniture, members of the community provided those needs for them.

Art had much more to say in his interview with Nondus Wakefield. The entire transcript can be read at the Homer Historical Society, which is open on Thursday afternoons from 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. ■

## 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.

— JUNE, 2000 —

W. Lutz ..... 896-2498  
M. Woodside ..... 896-2453

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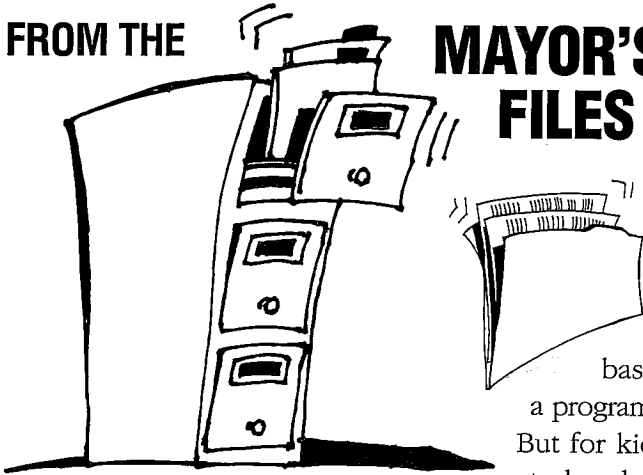
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FROM THE

MAYOR'S  
FILES

— by Dave Lucas



baseball, they have as good a program as any town in this area. But for kids that are not disposed to baseball, there is very little.

So how do we provide other opportunities, and how do we pay for them? The idea of a park district, including Heritage school district seemed to be the solution. The problem was funding. We realized that a tax referendum that would increase taxes on farmers, as well as townspeople would never pass. No one, including me, wants to pay more property taxes. That is why the idea of a single, one day event, that would have potential of generating between 15 and 40 thousands dollars sounded like the solution. This one day event could fund a park district that would give our families and kids greater opportunities, as well as preparing kids for jr. high and senior high sports programs.

Look at the benefits of this event. It would bring people into our town, which would be good for our businesses. There was some talk from one of the service organizations that they were concerned about getting there share of the July fourth "pie." This event would have increased the pie so that everyone, all the organizations that use special events to generate funds, would benefit.

Just a word about motorcross. I know very little about the sport but I know quite a bit about the gentleman who suggested the idea. He is

a man of integrity and honor. When he suggested this, I believed him and what he said about it. For those of you who have not had the privilege of meeting and knowing Spencer Ely, let me say we are very fortunate to have him and I thank him for the work he has put into this vision. According to Spencer, the motorcross is the fastest growing sporting event in the country. The time is ripe to catch the wave of popularity and take advantage of its success. To the handful of detractors and the one individual that threatened to sue the school and village over this event, I would say this. "I know it's difficult to be open and flexible to new ideas." I know you say you want to do something for the families and kids in the village. I believe this idea is a winner. Granted, it requires operating outside of your comfort zone,, but any exercise that increases flexibility does. We will continue to work on this idea, answering questions, and working out details, with an eye toward next July 4th. Be a part of planning and organizing. At the school board meeting I said that even if the event doesn't happen this year, there was a great victory in that the village board and the school board moved outside of their comfort zone to work together for a greater good and I appreciated it. That statement drew ridicule from some audience members. However, I still mean it sincerely. It is my desire to see this community work together for the common good.

On a final note, to those who opposed this plan to benefit our kids, I am still waiting for alternative ideas or donations to help the school and the village purchase new playground equipment. As always, I can be reached by message at the Village Hall. ■

## YOUTH RECREATION

It was my original intention to use my article in this issue of N&V to announce the plans for the special motorcross event to be held on July 4th and share the vision that spawned the idea. But because of the events last month and the threat of one resident to sue the village and school boards, this will become a post mortem instead. The motorcross event is dead for this year. But I still feel it is important to lay out the course of events and vision that led to the motorcross. For many years the CDB, the Village board, and the recreation board have looked at ways to provide recreational and sporting events for the families and kids in the village. We all realized that we are not Champaign and could never provide the scope of activities that larger communities do. However, we felt we could provide something.

The Homer Youth League is doing an incredible job providing baseball for the area kids. They are a small dedicated group of concerned parents who want to see our kids playing on good facilities with good equipment, managed by good coaching. For kids that like



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

I would like to clear up the rumor that there are to be no activities at the town park on July 4th.

It has come to my attention that there are still people interested in perpetuating the festivities on July 4th in the town park. This tradition makes it a fun day for families to either have family gatherings and picnics or come for the delicious food served by various non-profit organizations. Children can play freely without danger and families can relax. People from out of town that do not wish to buck the crowds and who want to visit with old friends come to enjoy the day.

As in the past, the festivities need to have many volunteers help to make the day enjoyable. The present Recreation Board has worked long and hard to get a decent playground for the kids. Their budget is at a breaking point. So funds are not available to buy prizes for games and contests as in the past. Their people will be far too busy getting the playground in shape to manage the usual activities.

If we are to have a successful freedom day celebration, there is a need for people to help decorate the park early that morning. We would need sponsors and workers for contests such as the bike, trike, wagon decorating contest, the Mr. and Miss Firecracker contest and any other contests if they are to be held. The usual games and basketball and creeper games will need knowledgeable people to run them. Any and all activities are welcome.

Organizations and groups who would like to take part in the activities or to vend for or drinks need to let the town board know. This subject will be on the agenda at the village board meeting to be held June 5. If you want a voice, please attend.

**WE WILL HAVE A FREEDOM DAY CELEBRATION IN THE TOWN PARK ON JULY 4TH!**

— Betty I. Lacey

*These are my own opinions and are not to be taken as criticism of anyone.*

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## FOCUSING ON HOMER'S BUSINESSES

— by Naomi Roberts

# Ely Furniture & Cabinets

**S**pencer Ely is a young, energetic entrepreneur, who has been in the furniture and cabinet business for the past five years. Currently, Ely Furniture & Cabinets is located at 109 E. First St. in Homer. In the near future, however, Ely plans to move the location to 2611CR 1025N. This will be easier for him to keep up with his rapidly expanding business. At the present, Ely's wife helps him in the business and with the record keeping. Once he makes the move, he plans to hire someone to assist with the furniture and cabinet work.

Ely's cabinet business is 90% refacing. Refacing is more than just a decorative change for the kitchen. A refacing job involves replacement of the cabinet door with solid wood, along with new hinges, drawer slides and dove-tail drawers. All external parts are replaced with real wood veneer. Ely doesn't work with plastic. He uses only choice woods such as cherry, oak, hickory, maple and birch.

The job of refacing begins with an in-home estimate, which is sometimes a tedious process. Extra time is given to the estimate in order to ensure the customer and Ely are in sync with what outcome is expected. Once the choice of wood and the stain has been selected, Ely does a test stain to make sure it is the color the customer specified. After the customer verifies the accuracy of the color, Ely cuts, stains, and finishes all the pieces, then delivers and installs them. The end result, of course, is a beautiful kitchen, without

the monetary burden of new cabinets. Usually the cost is about half the price of new cabinets. The other advantage of refacing is the turnaround time. Usually a job can be completed in about four to five days. If there is a delay, it is generally due to an outside supplier, unable to deliver the

wood or hardware at the specified time. Ely deals in only the best woods, and since there is no hardwood lumber yard in this area most of his raw material comes from Chicago.

Most of Ely's business comes from Champaign and Urbana. It isn't a choice he has made. It just sort of evolved that way. His choice, however would be to serve Homer and the surrounding communities. Ely admits, the few customers in and around Homer may be due to a lack of advertising. His biggest advertisement is his booth at the Home Show at the University of Illinois every year.

Ely also teaches a natural resource management class at the University of Illinois. Ely understands the beauty and usefulness of good woods. In his "Nature and Wilderness in American Culture" class he is able to see the need for preservation of our nation's natural resources. Instead of creating conflict with his business, it actually makes him more appreciative of the hardwoods he uses.

Ely also does custom orders. He has done several entertainment centers and computer work stations. If you have envisioned a special cabinet, or a certain piece of furniture for your house, call Ely at 896-2505 for an appointment and estimate. ■

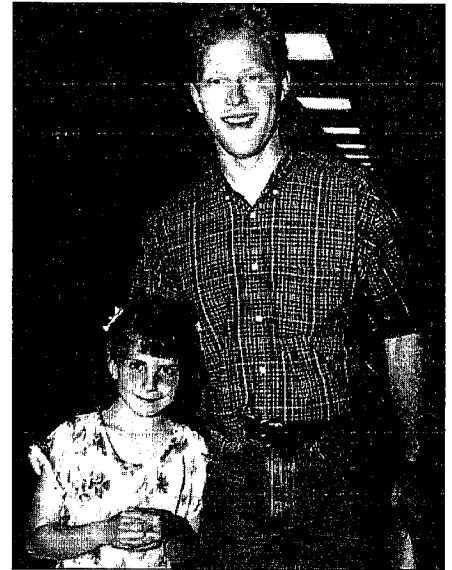


Photo by James Alfred



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# HOMER RECREATION BOARD

Only ten months have passed since we started raising money for the new park equipment. (It just seems longer than that.) But we are at the finish line. Construction has already started for the new "Splash Pad" and we hope this phase will be completed in early June. We are fortunate and very thankful to have received so much money from so many wonderful and generous people.

Phase two is supposed to start as soon as we raise enough money, which we are currently 5 to 10 thousand dollars short. The 4th of July Motocross might have put us over the top but it was cancelled due to special interest, or should I say "special dis-interest".

By now, I'm sure you have heard about the Homer Rec Board's very unique fundraising project selling special license plates to help commemorate the new playground equipment. The plates are valid for display until July 4th.

A picture can be seen in the last *News & Views*. These cost \$30 and were designed by Andrea Henson of Heritage High School. If anyone is interested in purchasing a set, they can contact Bobbi Gordon at 896-2585.

NOTE: There are only 8 sets left. If you know of anyone who would like to purchase a set, please have them contact Bobbi. We definitely want to sell them all soon and get the word out about Homer's spectacular fireworks!

We are very fortunate to have served this community for we have met some very wonderful people and we hope to see you all on the 4th of July to dedicate the new "Splash Pad".

\$25 winners from the garage sale were Patty Hawkins, Angela Doggett, Joann Wallace and Jody Bryan. We would like to thank Jody Bryan for donating 50% of her winnings to the Recreation Board. ■

# HOMER AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY #290

Children and Youth chair, Sandy, reported that the Special Olympics will be held at Illinois State University in Normal on June 16 & 17. Volunteers and donations are needed.

At the May meeting of the Homer American Legion Auxiliary, the Education and Scholarship chair, Chris, reported that the unit receive 2 applications for the scholarship that is sponsored. The 19th District Girls State Cookout was held at Homer Lake on May 7th at 3 p.m. with 35-40 delegates, alternates and their families in attendance.

The unit will be once again sponsoring the Annual Memorial Day Smorgasbord at the post home following the Memorial Day ceremony at the GAR Cemetery.

Poppy Days was May 19 & 20.

Credit was received from Danville VA Hospital for \$315.50 for miscellaneous items donated.

The Easter Egg Hunt was sponsored by the SAL and Auxiliary and passed out 4,590 eggs and 200 bags. Had a good turn-out even though it was late notice.

Delegates to the Dept. convention in Chicago are Cathy Rouse, Lauri Umbarger, Lori Rushing, and Sandy Griffin. Alternates are Chris Jones, Ginger Rushing and Tammy Hodgson.

Next Champaign County meeting will be held in Mahomet on June 7.

The Nominating Committee chair, Sandy, presented the slate of officers for 2000-2001. The new officers are:

- President . . . . . Cathy Rouse
- 1st Vice President . . . . . Tammy Hodgson
- 2nd Vice President . . . . . Deb Happ
- Treasurer . . . . . Susan Burton
- Historian . . . . . Carolyn Dodd
- Sgt-at-Arms . . . . . Sandy Griffin
- Chaplain . . . . . Mary Jane Burton
- Secretary . . . . . (to be appointed) ■

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# ZAY WRIGHT

## & HOMER PARK

**O**n June 5, 1914 Zay Wright and the rest of the senior class of Champaign High school went to Homer Park for a supper picnic. They had originally intended to charter an interurban but ended up taking five cars instead. Zay rode in "Russell's seven passenger 'Cole'" and the class had "a splendid time out there. Between taking pictures, watching the boys swim, dancing, roller-skating, tormenting the parrots, and sliding down the shootey-chute we managed to fill in all of the time."

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*"Between taking pictures, watching the boys swim, dancing, roller-skating, tormenting the parrots, and sliding down the shootey-chute we managed to fill in all of the time."*

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Between 1911 and 1927 Zay Wright kept a diary and wrote over 900 pages about life in Champaign County. Born in 1896, Zay grew up on a farm outside of Staley. She attended Champaign High School and graduated from Illinois Woman's College in Jacksonville in 1919. She worked as a school teacher, settlement house worker, and newspaper reporter before her marriage in 1923.

The Early American Museum in Mahomet has been working on an exhibit about Zay Wright for the museum's new Discovery Room. The permanent exhibit, which opens June third, will use Zay Wright's life to explore what

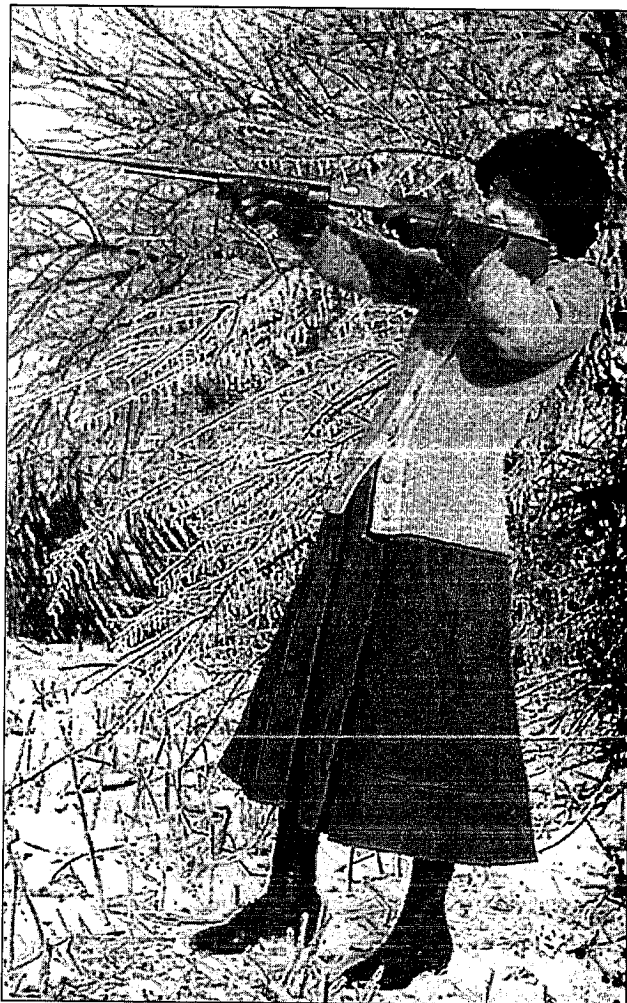
it was like to grow up in Champaign County in the early 1900s. Zay's diaries are a treasure trove of information about everyday life in east-central Illinois, and they also contain occasional references to Homer Park.

In the summer of 1915 Zay spent a week camping with her friends at "Camp Wildwood" on the Salt Fork near Homer. They rowed and swam, and stayed in a "little green four-room cabin." Their camp was a half mile from the park and their nearest neighbors were bootleggers. Sometimes they went into the park to dance and eat ice cream. Zay pasted a newspaper article in her diary which stated that "Misses Ruth Burwash of Champaign, Mary Burt, Daisy Smith, and Alice Besore of Savoy, Ethel Mathews of Sadorus, Jamie Chester of Prairie View and Zay Wright of Staley form a camping party at Homer park this week."

The group returned to the camp the next summer after Zay's first year at Illinois Woman's College. Zay wrote that "the girls are all such honest, straightforward little souls, fairly pulsating with clean country vigor and energy, and I do love them all so." The group returned the next

year as well, but this time they stayed at the Lighthouse Cabin in the park. Zay's short accounts of her experiences at Homer Park show that she valued the park for the sense of freedom that it gave her. She wrote that "Nature and conventional society have established iron rules for human beings who happen to have been born girls" and she reveled in any opportunity to escape her traditional feminine responsibilities.

Family stories claim that Zay even met her future husband at Homer Park, but her diary is mute on the subject. The diary does record that Zay and Edgar Young went on their first date in June, 1921, but they went to the Orpheum theater in Champaign — not to Homer Park. The courtship





proceeded slowly. Zay spent the summer working in Yellowstone National Park, and then returned to Champaign and began working as a reporter for the *Champaign Gazette*. She and Edgar continued to date, but they did not marry until 1923. After their marriage, they moved to Edgar's home in Newman and purchased the family farm. Zay took a teaching job to make ends meet until her first daughter was born in 1927. After her marriage Zay wrote less and less, and she stopped entirely after the second daughter was born in 1928. She died of pneumonia in 1937 and was buried outside of Newman.

Zay's diaries provide a fascinating glimpse into the past, and her observations will enrich the Early American Museum's exhibits for years to come. The museum welcomes the opportunity to speak to anyone who has information on Zay Wright or any of her friends. If you have knowledge to share please contact Trevor Jones, Curator of History at the Early American Museum (217) 586-2612. ■

## CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE SPECIAL PROGRAMS — by Sarah Livesay



**Saturday, June 3, 8:00 p.m. — Owl Prowl** with Illinois History Survey Ornithologist Steve Bailey. Learn the background of these magnificent birds by watching, listening, dissecting owl pellets and walking through the dark night woods to find them! Middle Fork River Forest Preserve Amphitheater, Penfield

**Saturday, June 10, 2:00 p.m. — Summer Tree Identification** with University of Illinois Professor John Edgington. This exciting walk through the woods will introduce you to your native Illinois trees and how to identify them. Meet at Walnut Hill Shelter, Salt Fork River Preserve, Homer

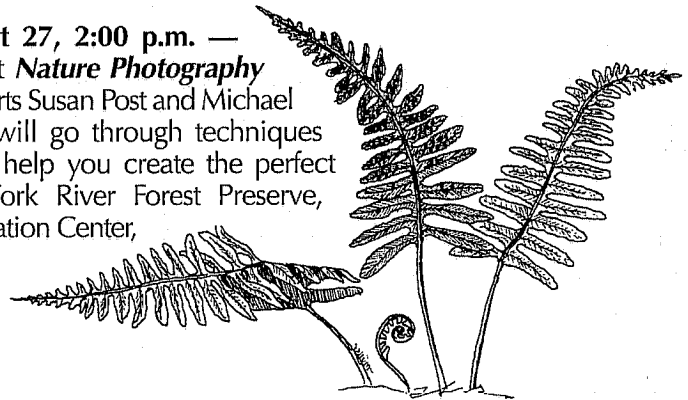
**Saturday, July 8, 7:00 p.m. — Warts and Fangs?!!** Program that will give the facts on our Illinois Amphibians and Reptiles! Come learn what University of Illinois' Dan Olsen has discovered about these creatures while viewing them for yourself. Lake of the Woods Park, Rotary Hill Shelter, Mahomet

**Saturday, July 15, 2:00 p.m. — Illinois Fish Stories** Presenters from the Illinois Natural History Survey's Center for Aquatic Ecology will be on hand to demonstrate equipment and methods used to sample our Illinois fish populations. They will also be discussing some of the studies that they are currently conducting. Salt Fork River Forest Preserve, Outdoor Recreation Center, Homer

**Saturday, July 22, 2:00 p.m. — Floral Designing with Native Plants** with Dianne Noland-Negangard. This hands-on program will give some hints and skill lessons on how to begin this art. All participants will be creating an arrangement so bring a small vase and your imagination! Salt Fork River Forest Preserve, Outdoor Recreation Building, Homer

**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 Staerkle Planetarium's David Leake. Middle Fork River Forest Preserve Activity Center, Penfield.

**Sunday, August 27, 2:00 p.m. — 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.



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## HOMER ZONING BOARD

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**T**he Board has been working on combining all zoning ordinances into one booklet. While reviewing all ordinances the Board has suggested a few changes be made that help to clarify the intent of the ordinance. The Zoning Board and the Village Board met to discuss the ordinances and the Village Attorney is reviewing them.

When all reviewing is completed the Zoning Board will conduct an open hearing to get input from the community. We will make a recommendation to the Village Board that they adopt the ordinances, and booklets will be printed so that individuals or businesses will be able to check the ordinances before building, remodeling, etc.

**At the current time, the Zoning Board is in need of one member to fill a term that will expire in 2002.** Interested persons may contact Mayor Dave Lucas or Zoning Board of Appeals Chairperson Barb Gilhaus. Terms of members are as follows: Barb Gilhaus, Chairperson - 2006; Elizabeth Walton - 2005; Ginny Dillion - 2004; Chuck Benner, Secretary - 2003; Gene Happ - 2001; Mike Flickinger - 2000. ■

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## HOMER LIBRARY NEWS

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**T**he Summer Reading Program starts on June 27 at 10 a.m. with Chris Egelston and his "Reading is Magic Show." Hey kids, if you ever wanted to see a real magician in person, this is the time! For 45 minutes, Chris will amaze you with his tricks. More information about the Summer Reading Program will be available soon.

Chris' Quick Pick: *Tough Cookie* by Diane Mott Davidson. Goldie can't win for losing. Her drains failed inspection, the latest broadcast of her cooking show was a disaster and her reputation as an amateur sleuth preceded her to the ski lodge where the show was taped. The locals were not happy about her interference following a murder. She skidded off the highway and down a mountainside during a blizzard. Through it all she did what she always does when stressed, she kept on cooking and sharing her gourmet recipes.

Summer is upon us and it's time for some leisure reading. Or, if you prefer videos, we have those too, at no charge. We are always happy to borrow materials for you through interlibrary loan if we don't have what you want. ■

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## HOMER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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**T**he CDB meets the 2nd Monday of each month. We have several new members in our group and have room for more members if anyone is interested in joining. Term of office is 3 years. We are a village planning committee publishing the *Homer News & Views* newsletter 6 times a year, an Internet homepage, and delivering welcome baskets for new residents. One of our long term goals is to identify local downtown areas in need of renovation or a facelift and working with the owners to apply for help to accomplish the reworking of the building or property. Another goal is the retention of the businesses we have now and the recruiting of new business. We are open to suggestions on the needs of the community, if anyone has ideas of things that need to be done and a way to make them happen.

We are in need of persons to help make up & deliver the Welcome Baskets to new residents of our community. Members of the Homer Home Extension Group did this in the past. We thank them for serving until now.

We reluctantly accepted the resignation of Spencer Ely, our Vice President of the CDB. Spencer served for 4 years and we wish to thank him for his input and work. He had great ideas and was eager to do whatever was asked of him. Our new members are Ray Cunningham, Becky Smith and Kevin Knott.

The CDB has made a few changes in the *News & Views*. We hope you like them. We are going from 12 pages to 16 because we have so much information, advertising rates have changed, and we have a new "Classified Ads" section to be used by anyone in the community to sell a product, a house or a service. See the last page of the newsletter for rates and examples.

The *Discover Magazine* is out and Homer is included in the issue. Discover is a mid-west advertising and tourism magazine that is give out free at various public places. It is a very nice layout telling about our community and hat is offered here. Bobbi Gordon did a great job on this. Homer is a small town with lots of things to be proud of. ■

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# HOMER HOUSEHOLD

Recipes submitted by Home Extension Members

## SAUSAGE & PEPPERONI PIZZA CASSEROLE

— submitted by Pat Butler

1 lb. Italian sausage  
12 oz. wide noodles, cooked  
2 cups (8 oz.) shredded cheddar cheese

2 14-oz. jars pizza sauce  
6 oz. sliced pepperoni

Preheat oven to 350°. Crumble sausage into medium skillet. Cook over medium heat until browned, stirring occasionally. Remove sausage and drain on paper towels. In large, lightly greased casserole dish, layer one half noodles, one half sausage, and one half remaining ingredients. Repeat with second layer of noodles, then sausage and remaining ingredients, reserving several pepperoni slices to garnish top. Bake 35-40 min. Serves 6-8.

## PINEAPPLE ANGEL FOOD CAKE

— submitted by Virginia Baird

1 box 1-step angel food cake mix  
1 20-oz. can crushed pineapple (in own juice)  
1 tsp. vanilla

Preheat oven to 350°. In large bowl, put in cake mix and pineapple with juice. Add the vanilla. Stir with spoon just until ingredients are mixed well. Overmixing will cause a tough cake. Pour into ungreased deep 9x13 metal pan. (Dough may run over in a glass baking dish.) Bake 30-35 min. Remove from oven being careful not to bump pan. Let cool. Can be served plain or with whipped cream. Suitable for diabetic diets.

## NEVER FAIL YEAST ROLLS

— submitted by Virginia Baird

This recipe is good for teaching young girls to make yeast rolls without having to knead the dough.

1 9-oz. pkg. yellow or white cake mix  
3/4 cups all purpose flour  
1 1/2 cup warm water  
Melted butter or oleo

1 pkg. dry yeast  
1/2 tsp. salt

In large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Beat in flour, cake mix and salt. (Do not knead). Place in greased bowl, cover and let rise until double (about 1 hour). Punch down, divide dough in half. Roll each portion into a 12" circle. Cut dough into 12 pie shaped wedges. Roll up each wedge beginning at wide end. Place end down on greased baking sheet. Brush with melted butter or oleo. Cover and let rise until double (about 25 min.) Bake in preheated 350° oven for 12-15 min. or until golden brown. Yields 2 doz. small rolls. If an adult makes them, and wishes to make larger rolls, cut dough into 6 slices instead of 12. Bake a little longer. Can use a regular size cake mix and double the other ingredients to make 24 big rolls. ■

## Pop for a Card!



Hallmark

Father's Day is Sunday, June 18.

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**PHOTOGRAPHY** — Call me for weddings, family portraits, senior pictures, etc. Jim Alred, Photographer for *Homer News & Views*, 896-2529.

**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.

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**FAMILY HISTORY CHARTS** — made up for your personal use. Great to have for kids to do family history reports for school and for your family to keep. With the names & dates you give me, we can do the rest through the internet. No longer have to go to courthouses or cemeteries to get the information. Advice is free, and a nice 8 1/2" x 11" Family Chart is only \$5 — ready to frame. Call 896-3034.

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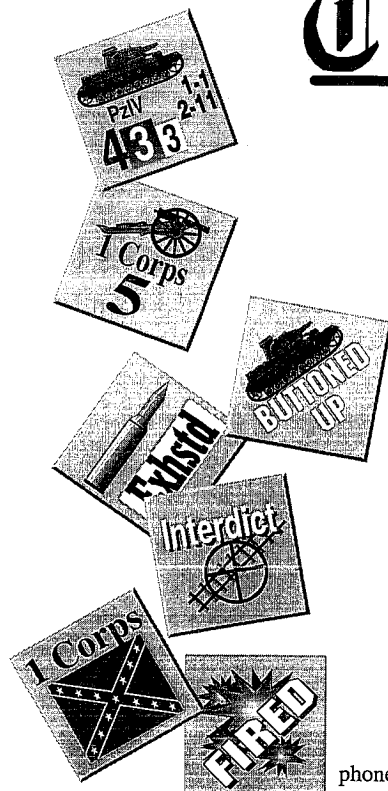
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