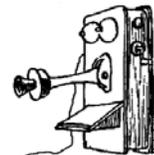


Peoria Partyline



connecting the extended Peoria community

Volume 7. No. 4

December 2011

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Peoria Partyline Mailing List

Do you want to be on our mailing list? Will you be moving or have a new address?

Call
Helen De Jong:
641-637-4332

E-mail us
with questions or
submissions:

peoria.ia.news@hotmail.com
Online issue: www.peoriacrc.org

Larks Club a Lively Pastime (Part I)

When Peoria church services were held in the morning and afternoon on Sundays in the 30s and 40s, many families found themselves searching for something wholesome to do for entertainment later in the day. Someone suggested getting together once a month to sing.

And so the *Singing Club* was born. No one is sure what year that was, but we do know that sometime later the group's name was changed to the *Larks Club*. Early participants included Andrew & Jennie Bandstra, John & Ann Roose, John & Ida Kloosterman, John & Wilma De Young, Mr. and Mrs. Klaas Gonlag, Bass and Lena Vander Wilt, Jake and Marie Veldhuizen, Henry & Nellie Nibbelink, Tom & Minnie Vander Hart, Case & Margaret Boerefyn, and Robert & Teresa De Jager. Several doubled as a pianist—Ann Roose, Margaret Boerefyn, and later Robert De Jager and Nellie Nibbelink.



Try-outs were not required but some—though definitely not all of the participants—were great singers. John and Ida Kloosterman once taped a session, and it sounded pretty good! Perhaps that night those singers whose only contribution was a joyful noise, were asked to sing softly. That would definitely not have included Bass Vander Wilt. As a little kid, John C. Roose remembers sitting on Bass's lap, hearing his booming laugh, and also his booming tenor voice.

The Larks Club gatherings in no way resembled a Dutch Psalm sing. Instead they sang from the "Tabernacle Hymns." Can you imagine the dismay of the staunch Dutch if they would have known of the Pentecostal element in their congregation?

Henry & Nellie Nibbelink had a pair of parakeets that would try to compete with the singers when everyone gathered at their home. After a time the birds would get hoarse, so Nellie would cover their cage to give their throats a rest. The De Youngs also had a pair of parakeets. Their birds were given freedom to fly about the house, which provided entertainment but also posed a problem since Casey Boerefyn's well polished pate was an irresistible landing pad for the birds. When the birds lost their charm, they were corralled, caged, and taken upstairs. The first part of the evening was spent with each member choosing a song. When it was Jake Veldhuizen's turn, everyone knew ahead

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Farm Sale for Peoria Farmer

After over fifty years of farming, Jake Van Gorp decided it was time to sell his farming equipment and retire. In 2010 he still harvested crops but now he is 81 years old and ready to quit.

The house that Jake grew up in was built by his stepfather in 1917. It is a big, two-story house on the south edge of Peoria. The original farmstead was on the east side of Peoria (across from where Ken Kiser lives), but then his stepfather moved it to the present location—a spot long used by local teams as a baseball field.

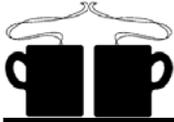


Jake was born in that house in 1929. In 1956 he married Bernice and they raised three children on the farm. In 1996 Jake and Bernice moved to Pella while at the same time he turned his hog operation over to Jerry De Bruin.

Jake remembers growing up in Peoria when the Dahm store was open on Wednesday nights as were some of the other businesses. At the store you could buy about anything you needed: food, clothes, farm supplies, etc. It was big

enough that there were clerks to help you find what ever you needed. He also remembers a local farm store called the Peoria Implement Company. It sold Case equipment but during

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**Neighbors are much more than just names!
Grab a cup of coffee and let's meet Gary Wouterse!**

Driving south out of Peoria, one passes a grand square house with a red roof. The property—1367 Dean Ave—had stood vacant for quite a while, and talk was going around that there was extensive, interior water damage due to pipes freezing and bursting when the home was unoccupied. Would anyone want to purchase this house and give it some much needed TLC?

Along comes Gary Wouterse. He checks out the house and decides to purchase it after discovering that the damage was not nearly as extensive as the stories told. It was mainly confined to one part of the house. He went right to work and though repairs are still ongoing, he moved in this past summer.

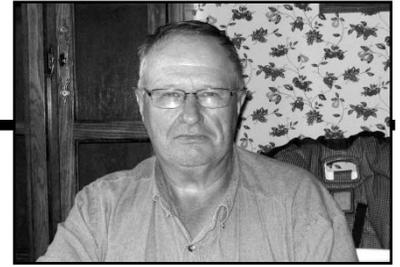
Gary was born in Pella and raised on an acreage near to where Kooyman Lumber is now. His father grew tomatoes. Gary went to Amsterdam School—a country school southwest of town—and after one year of high school he worked for a farmer cousin before moving on to Pella Corp. He was drafted into the armed services during the Vietnam conflict, but was stationed in Germany during those years.

When he returned to the area, Gary took up his work at Pella Corp again and met a gal named Linda Roose. Once married, they lived on the home farm for most of their married life.

Gary and Linda were foster parents for a few years and then adopted two children from India. Their son B.J. and his family live in New Sharon. Heidi lives in Tucson, AZ. Eventually Gary and Linda moved into Pella because Linda was confined to a wheelchair. She passed away in July of last year (2010) due to complications from muscular dystrophy.

Gary retired from Pella Corp ten years ago. He took up working for Larry Rozenboom and his son Sean—first in landscaping and then in the truck accessory business. After Linda passed away, he longed to move to the country again. He was drawn to his new home because there was room to play and store his toys. Gary's toys include antique tractors—a hobby he shares with Larry Rozenboom. These tractors are put to use on small acreages in the area.

Gary likes the house, although he's still getting used to traffic going by his place. Welcome to the neighborhood, Gary. We are glad that you were willing to settle in and get the property in shape. We appreciate having you here.
-John Gorter



Living With a Miracle

Recently, our daughter celebrated her 4 ½ year birthday which doesn't seem like a big deal to the average person but to us, it's a miracle! To recap, our Stella was diagnosed at one month of age with a condition called Spinal Muscular Atrophy, a neuromuscular disease that affects 1:6000-10,000 births and is the leading genetic killer of young children. SMA is a motor neuron disease (much like ALS/Lou Gehrigs in adults) affecting the voluntary muscles for activities such as crawling, walking, head and neck control, respiratory, swallowing and even smiling but the brain is fortunately not affected. One out of forty people carry the gene for SMA so it's not all that rare.

Because of Stella's early onset at one month of age, Mayo Clinic indicated that she was the most severe that they had come across and therefore we could expect her to live weeks or months. We were literally told to "take her home and love her" as there was nothing else we could do. Well, we did just that BUT we did not give up hope as we researched to find out what we could do to help Stella. We also believe treatment for SMA is on the horizon based on recent research developments.

Stella requires a special diet and respiratory therapies and has a lot of equipment including a ventilator, suction machine, cough assist, feeding tube, an eyegaze system to communicate, and a nurse/parent to assist her at all times—but deep down, she is a pretty normal girl who loves princesses and the colors pink and purple. Since receiving her tracheostomy last year, Stella has remained hospital-free and is even attending preschool four days a week! It has been a joy to watch her grow and learn in a school environment like every other child.

One of her favorite things to do is to drive her powerchair. Yep, that's right, she uses two fingers to activate proximity switches that allow her to go left, right and forward. She is not allowed to drive in reverse just yet! Her brothers, Treyton (6 ½) and Sayer (3) have had to learn to stay clear of Stella when she's driving!

Like other SMA children, Stella has developed scoliosis and has a 60 degree curve which is starting to impede her right lung. Stella will undergo a spinal fusion in March 2012 to straighten her spine which will be held together by hardware. In an attempt to make her bones as strong as possible for her upcoming surgery, Stella has been undergoing pamidronate infusions to increase bone density. As we prepare for her surgery, we welcome your prayers for Stella's scoliosis to remain stable until the surgery date and for the surgery to be successful so she can get back to doing the things she loves to do.

So, yes, we do live with a miracle! Our little star has been a light to all who know her! As her parents, we live with a hope for a future for Stella while also maintaining a balance of reality that SMA is still a deadly disease that has taken far too many children too early. We are blessed and thankful for each day we are given. If you would like to follow Stella's journey, you may do so at www.caringbridge.org/visit/stellaturnbullturnbull

-Sarah Turnbull, Stella's mommy





Service of Unity

History was made the evening of August 28 when the Lower Grove and Peoria churches held a joint worship service. The leadership of both churches recognizes that each church has its own history and practices, yet both are united in the gospel of Jesus Christ, especially in today's world. It was natural for a desire to arise to have a joint worship service to highlight our unity, rather than our differences.

The service—held at the Peoria church—was patterned after Lower Grove's normal order-of-worship. One of Lower Grove's elders, Ken Broadway, led in a time of heartily singing traditional gospel songs. Numerous members from both churches shared prayer requests, and then Ken led in a time of prayer. The offering was taken towards support for a missionary family that both churches support—Jonathan and Trista Vander Wal. They work for Wycliffe Bible Translators in Congo.



Later in the service a choir—with people from both churches—sang a number, and Pastor John Gorter preached on Acts 4:12. He emphasized that our only way to God is through Jesus Christ. After the service, everyone shared a time of refreshments and visiting outside.

Many comments were shared that this was a great service and that we should have done this long ago. Who knows, this could become an annual event for our township.

Thank you to all who planned this service and who helped carry it out.
- John Gorter

Another Plane Crash Story

Years ago Gerrit Rus had part ownership in a small plane, and he would often land on the crest of a hill just east of his house. Donald and Debbie Vander Hart live on the property today—about a fourth mile north of Peoria.

In 1954 or '55 Gerrit had the hill planted in alfalfa, and in spite of considerable growth a plane landed there. Was the pilot dropping off Gerrit or perhaps picking him up? Whatever, within time the plane tried to take off again. John Westerkamp and his son Pete were out in their field putting up hog fence when they heard the plane engine rev up. Curious, they watched as the plane taxied but couldn't get enough speed to clear the neighbor's fence! The landing gear caught the barb wire on the fence and it immediately flipped upside down. Fortunately the pilot was not hurt and the plane only had minor damage. It is not known who the pilot was but this crash occurred about 800 feet from the site of the airplane crash featured several issues ago.



-Terry Bandstra

Larks Club continued

of time that he would choose, "He Brought Me Out of the Miry Clay." Meanwhile, the children—who had arrived with their parents—ran around and invented their own entertainment. It was a big deal for the kids. It's probably safe now to report on some of their activities, since the statute of limitations for their crimes is in effect, but names will be omitted to protect the guilty. Every house offered different items of intrigue for the younger set. Andrew Bandstra was the local barber in Peoria, and he had a barber's chair in the basement. All those interesting hair cutting instruments provided for some daring but creative play. The youngins also discovered a little "medicinal hootch" that he had tucked away. Of course it needed be tasted—without being discovered of course!

In warm weather, barns and haylofts offered good hiding places for a game of *Hide and Seek*. One girl ran smack into a clothes line—fortunately her head was securely attached. And, "yes" it's possible to get suspended on a picket fence if you don't quite clear it when trying to jump over it.

The Vander Wilts owned a grumpy billy goat, and the kids thought it was fun to try and rile him up. It's a wonder he didn't break his neck butting his head against the barn door.



In the winter, the children couldn't go outside. But that didn't stop their antics. Their parents suggested Bingo, but they chose something much more exciting. What was it? Watch for Part 2 in the next issue.

-Doris Nibbelink and some former Larks Club kids



Little Peter Jordan was born to Joy and Jordan Roose on September 16. Timothy, Arie, and Lydia were excited to welcome him home.



In Loving Memory

Marie Bokhoven was born near Sully, Iowa. She was the second of ten children and attended a country school. In 1943, she was united in marriage with Herman Bokhoven at the parsonage of the Sully Reformed Church. Marie and Herman first lived near Fremont before moving to a farm west of New Sharon. They were blessed with three children and farmed for 50 years. Marie assumed a very active role in the operation. In addition to these responsibilities she enjoyed gardening and canning before moving to Pella upon retirement. Many in this area knew her and will miss her.



The Peoria Partyline team is pleased to welcome a 6th member once again. Rosemary Schmidt has agreed to join us. If you have any new stories or some breaking township news, please feel free to give her/or any of us a call. The rest of us on the team include Terry

Bandstra, Marilee Vander Wal, Doris Nibbelink, Wilma Blom and Sharon Blom.



... heard about it on the partyline ...

Business Services

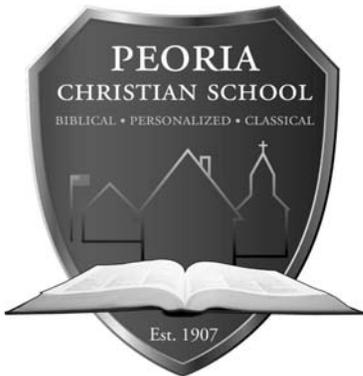


Van Dyke Repair Inc., General repair on tractors and combines. Wayne Van Dyke, 641-625-4146.

Skunk River Restoration
Repaint all makes of tractors. Jim De Bruin 641-780-6114

For Sale

For Sale: Hand-crafted gifts, deck furniture, quilt racks, windmills, and many other things. 625-4148, 1219 Hwy 102 (road to Pella).



625.4131 www.peoriachr.org

-Farm Sale continued

World War II all manufacturing was diverted to the war effort. Since the business couldn't get any tractors, they had to close their doors. It was located near where Windstream currently has their telephone building.

Jake came back from the Army in 1953 and started farming with his Dad. He started with two Case tractors. One could pull a two bottom plow and the other a three bottom. At that time all the ground was plowed so that no crop residue was showing. Then it would be disked and harrowed at least once and maybe several times before it was ready to plant. Because of this start, Jake developed an interest in restoring Case tractors which he took up as a hobby when he no longer had hogs.

In the 60's herbicides started coming out which allowed farmers to work the ground less. Jake was one of the first in the area to start chiseling—leaving some residue on the surface to help with erosion. He also went from an oats/legume/corn rotation to a corn/soybean rotation.

When he started Jake had a small flock of chickens, some beef calves and hogs. After about ten years he sold his chickens. Then, as he took oats and legumes out of rotation, he gave up the beef calves. Raising hogs is what he liked best. He went from farrowing in three-pen hog houses to having a 49-stall farrowing unit. After Jake quit raising hogs he still raised crops until the past few years when he rented part of his land to Zach Vander Linden.

While preparing for his farm sale, Jake thought maybe his equipment would be too small to sell very well. Instead it sold easily and some of it went to interesting places. The combine went to Blair, Nebraska and Jake's first chisel plow went to Colorado. A 15-foot straight disk that Jake started farming with, and a steel-wheeled three bottom plow went to a buyer from England—for \$475 each. John White was the buyer, and he is a Case collector from England. He had been looking for a certain model of Case tractor. Jake had that model so John bought it. When he heard that Jake's disk and plow were coming up for sale, he left a bid with Tri County Auction and was able to purchase those items as well.

Jake is completely retired now. He plans to sell off the rest of his restored tractors and not restore any more. He and Bernice plan to do some traveling around the world as well as visiting family in the Kansas City and Michigan areas.

-Terry Bandstra



Have you ever sat down and tried to answer some of those questions that seem to confound us? Consider these:

- Can you cry under water?
- Why does a round pizza come in a square box?
- How is it that we put a man on the moon before we figured out it would be a good idea to put wheels on luggage?
- If a deaf person has to go to court, is it still called a hearing?
- Why do people pay to go up tall buildings and then put money in binoculars to look at things on the ground?
- Do the Alphabet song and Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star have the same tune?
- Why did you just try singing the two songs above?



December 18 Youth Candlelight service
Peoria Church - 6:00 p.m.
December 25 Christmas worship service
Peoria Church - 9:30 a.m.

