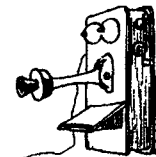


Peoria Partyline



connecting the extended Peoria community

Volume 2. No. 2

June 2006

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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

Nicki Veenstra:
641-625-4244

Artist, Collector Moves to Peoria

During the last few months of 2005, everyone was interested in changes taking place at 301 Peoria Chestnut St. Who was moving to town and what was going up on the empty lot where a chicken house used to stand? The intrigue intensified as what looked like a vault appeared on the fresh cement slab, and kennels were built on the north side of the new ProLine building. Who made the great choice to build something new in Peoria? Was it a business or someone's home?



Some examples
of Lithic Art

The questions were just begging to be addressed, so the Peoria Partyline team sent someone out to get the answers. It was with great pleasure that Nicki Veenstra met the owner of the new building. It turns out he is a very interesting and talented person—and he was more than happy to answer all our questions. Here's what Nicki found out.

First of all T.J. Onken is the person causing all the stir and he is a craftsman and a collector. His passion is modern Lithic Art—that is pieces of art in stone which are created using the flint knapping technique. He not only collects such pieces but he also creates them himself. In 2004 T.J. founded the Modern Lithic Artists Guild which offers a “homebase” for those who create axes, dovetails, and other modern pieces of Lithic art using the flint knapping technique. “I'm president of the Guild,” said T.J. “and we work to raise recognition of these artists. There are eight to ten thousand such people in our country but most are unknown and under appreciated.”

Since the Guild's secretary, Angela Parker, lives near Pella, it made perfect sense for T.J. to consider this area when he decided to split his time between Illinois and Iowa so he could help Angela and her husband Dave strengthen and expand the Guild. It also meant building a second home. He found out about the empty lot in Peoria from Mel Deur, and it seemed a perfect spot.

After a couple of setbacks because of zoning and nearby hog confinement buildings, T.J. soon had the proper permits in hand and construction began. As of today, T.J.'s building is nearly done. “It will be my home and office,” says T.J. “and a place where I can take pictures of art pieces that will go into the third Guild Journal that I am working on.” It will also serve as a personal art studio. The vault provides a secure place for storage of

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All About Resting in Peace in Richland Township (Part I)

“If my wife Barb wanted to bury me in Peoria Cemetery, what would she need to do?” I asked Lawrence and Helen Roose. Gathered at our kitchen table, they glanced at Barb who assured them that we had no plans yet, at least not until after I expire! Since Lawrence is a Richland Township trustee and Helen the clerk who takes care of township cemetery records, I figured they'd be the best ones to go to for all the information I was seeking about the cemetery where Barb and I take walks so often.

My first question focused on lots in the cemetery. Lawrence and Helen were ready with an answer. At the cost of \$400, a four unit lot is 24 x 12 feet. Today most people purchase a single 12 x 6 foot gravesite for \$100. This is very reasonable compared to other cemeteries. Back in 1910, a four unit lot in Peoria cost \$5. “I'm always ready and willing,” says Helen, “to walk with people who want to select an empty site in the cemetery. After they select a site and pay for it, I'll write out a certificate to close the deal. Unwanted lots,” she adds, “can be sold to someone else but must be transferred through the township clerk.”



- Continued on page 3



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

Business Services

Peoria Trailer Sales, Dennis Rozenboom at Peoria Repair, is now selling H & H and Calico Stock Trailers, 641-625-4381.

VAN'S Electrical and construction services, John Van Wynn-garden, 1480-168th St. New Sharon, IA, 50207, Phone: 641-625-4280.

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

Peterstra Backhoe, 10 + years of experience, tile holes, water lines, sewer systems, demolition, etc. Backhoe and dump truck. Call 641-780-6800.

Van Den Broek Concrete, Inc. for all your concrete work, Cornie Van Den Broek, Cell: 641-660-0109, or 641-625-4107.

CoLine Graphics, Custom Vinyl and Lettering. Call Karen Harrill at 641-780-4207 for more information.

For Sale

Farm Fresh brown eggs, 65 cents a dozen. Nancy Van Wyk, 625-4591.

Help is On the Way

Travel through our neighborhood and it won't take long for you to notice that highway T-33, north of Peoria, is due for some much needed help. According to Jerry Nusbaum, Mahaska County is well aware of it too. "On June 26th, the county will be letting bids for the re-construction of T-33," he said. "and at the least, we're planning to go from Peoria to the county line." Lest we get all excited about that development, Jerry cautions, "Remember, we are allowing bidding to start June 26th, but the timing to do the construction is still up in the air."

The county can't guarantee the road will be replaced by a certain date in time because funding controls the timing. "Locally we can set the dates," continues Jerry, "but then it's wait and see. Because the Iowa Department of Transportation controls funding, we are at their mercy. It's even possible the project won't happen until next year."

In years past there were plenty of contractors willing and able to take on road projects, however in recent years that number has decreased. Today many make a profit by taking on larger paying contracts and then picking up local and smaller county contracts on the side.

"An ideal time to have the road down for work, would be right after school lets out

until harvest," Jerry admits. "but that won't happen unless we'd somehow be able to fund large incentives."

The problem of T-33 is not uncommon in Iowa. In 1985 highways such as T-33 were poured 7 inches thick with the promise of a 30- to 40-year life span. What happened instead has just been bad chemistry. Time, cement, certain aggregates, roadway 'grind,' and increased loads and speed have reduced many such highway's lifespans to only 20 years.

Jerry believes that they can overcome the failures of the past. "Today we have class 3 stone," he says, "plus we have a better understanding of what cements and aggregates to use and what 'grind' to put on the surface. We hope to replace T-33 with 8 inches of concrete." While they're at it, they also plan to assist the roadbed and grade the curves to

make a smoother and safer road.

So, for all of you out there who would love to drive on a new T-33, it's coming—just be patient!
-Doug Pleak



Centennial Peoria Christian School will be celebrating 100 years in 2007. A book that focuses on the school's history is being prepared. If you have a one or two sentence memory about what the school was like when you attended there, please send it to Marilee Vander Wal. When submitting a memory, please put the years you attended the school with it. Name of person submitting the memory is optional. Please keep memories general—not personal. My phone number is: 625-4145, e-mail: lorenvw@kdsi.net. Thanks for participating!



In contrast to expensive newspapers lying around your home, the Peoria Partyline is a real deal. Last year it came to you free, and admit it—you looked forward to each issue! It's also a paper that covers topics you care about!

So—what are you waiting for? Send in your donation today so that our little newsletter can become financially independent! Thanks to everyone who has already donated. We see each gift as a "yes, I enjoy and appreciate the paper."

Here's the information:

1. Suggested \$2 a year for everyone receiving the newsletter.
2. Personal classified ads will cost \$6 a year or \$1.50 per issue.
3. Business classified ads will cost \$10 a year or \$2.50 per issue.

Send a check to the Peoria Christian Reformed Church marked for the Peoria Partyline

Thank You!

Peoria VBS

- ◆ July 10-14, 8:30 to 11:30 daily.
- ◆ 4 yrs. old through those who just completed 6th grade.
- ◆ Kids will be taking a whirlwind trip around the world.
- ◆ Program planned the evening of the last day with the Hog Roast immediately following.
- ◆ Watch for more information to come out in the weeks ahead.



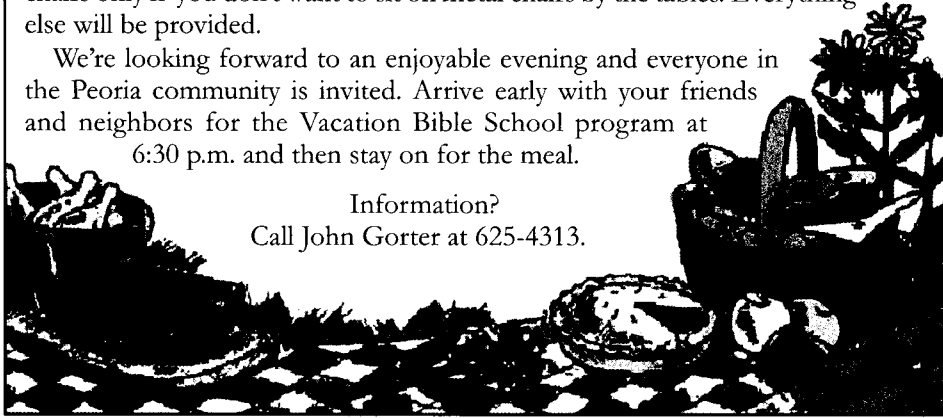
Annual Peoria Hog Roast

Finger licking pork BBQ is on the menu for the Peoria Community Hog Roast coming up again this summer. Julie Roose will be preparing the food so we know it will be great. Join us for the meal on Friday, July 14 at 7 p.m.—right after the Vacation Bible School program. Weather permitting, we'll be gathering on the Peoria Church grounds. If there's rain, look for us in the gym.

Along with meat on buns, there will be a couple of salads, baked beans, a dessert, and something to drink. So eat light that day . . . come hungry! Bring your lawn chairs only if you don't want to sit on metal chairs by the tables. Everything else will be provided.

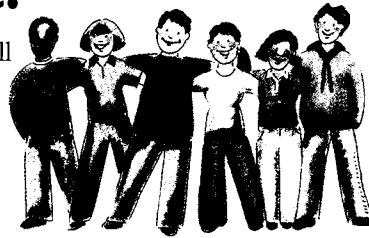
We're looking forward to an enjoyable evening and everyone in the Peoria community is invited. Arrive early with your friends and neighbors for the Vacation Bible School program at 6:30 p.m. and then stay on for the meal.

Information?
Call John Gorter at 625-4313.



Peoria – Here We Come!

What would city kids from New Jersey do in small town Peoria? Ten students, and their teacher Tammy Veenstra, recently found out. Tammy, a native of Peoria, teaches at Somerset Christian Academy in Zarephath, New Jersey, and she enjoys sharing stories about growing up in Iowa with the kids there. She must have made an impression because ten students from her home room, and the principal, decided to come to Iowa for their senior class trip. On April 30 they flew to Des Moines, rented a van, and made the trek to Peoria. There they stayed in the local “bed and breakfast”—commonly called the unoccupied teacherage—and camped on the floor. Tammy's mother Patty, who lives next door, coordinated meals for them.



After a rest, the teens were ready to go out and experience Iowa. Warmly welcomed to the Peoria church that evening, one of them sang a special number during the service, and then they all got a taste of real Iowa people as everyone crowded around to meet them and ask questions.



What an adventure—New Jersey city kids learning how to Dutch dance in Iowa.

Monday and Tuesday the group traveled to Minneapolis where they visited the Mall of America, and on the way home they stopped to see the Field of Dreams—another Iowa landmark. Rounding out the trip, they had supper at the Ox Yoke Inn in Amana.

On Wednesday the group took off to enjoy more local flavor. They toured local farms, fed lambs, played with puppies, and even enjoyed some paintball warfare.

Thursday the group led chapel at the Peoria Christian School, took lessons from the kids

there on how to Dutch dance, and then headed to Pella to experience the sights, sounds, and Dutch treats that are always a part of every Tulip Time adventure.

All too soon it was Friday—time to go home. Why did they want to come to Peoria? “It was something different that no other senior class had done,” they said. “And besides, it was too expensive to go to Jerusalem!”

—Doris Nibbelink

—Artist, Collector continued

valuables including his art collection, guns, and extra copies of the Guild Journal. “A main reason I need the vault for my collection,” shares T.J. “is that in case of fire it will protect the stone and flint. If such items would get hot in a fire, they would shatter when coming in contact with the cold water used to put out the fire.”

Growing up with two younger brothers in Illinois, T.J. learned to appreciate Lithic Art because of his family's interest in it. He also enjoys fishing and hunting—another reason this area looked good to him.

“I learned so much from T.J.,” shares Nicki, “and I encourage you to learn more about Lithic art too. This summer, *Knapp-In* will be hosted at Roberts Creek Park on June 9-11. It will be a great event that educates visitors all about stone art.”

T.J. also enjoys animals and you may have noticed he has a few kennels by the building for his dogs. Right now he's asking for our help. Around Feb. 22, one of his dogs got out and T.J. would like to know what happened to it. Blue is a male mix breed dog that has a brown face with a white stripe down his nose, blue/gray shoulders, and black hindquarters. Have you seen him? Let T.J. know (625-4180).

Welcome to the neighborhood, T.J.!

—Nicki & Marilee



- May 29:** Memorial Day Service
Peoria Cemetery, 9 a.m.
- June 5-9:** Vacation Bible School,
Lower Grove Church
(there will be a program
on Sunday, June 11 at
6 p.m. Everyone
welcome)
- July 10-14:** Vacation Bible School,
Peoria Church,
8:30 - 11:30 a.m.
- July 14:** Peoria Hog Roast,
Peoria Church, 7 p.m.
- July 2007:** Peoria Chr. School will
celebrate 100 years

- Resting in Peace continued

When actual burial is needed, there is an additional cost for digging the grave. In Peoria this is done by Earl Dunnick. State law requires a vault, within the boundary of the plot, and the gravestone is always placed at the western edge of the plot—by the head of the person being buried. This is done so the person can rise to see Jesus coming from the east on Resurrection Day.

It is up to the family to maintain their loved one's gravestone. Temporary cut flowers are allowed for short periods of time but any permanent plantings are prohibited.

Lawrence and Helen shared a lot more interesting information with me as we continued to visit. Watch for "Part 2" of this story in the next issue!
-John Gorter

July 6,7,8, 2007 will be the dates for Peoria Christian School's centennial celebration next year. Mark your calendars. Watch for more details in the next Peoria Partyline.

Signs of Change

There is a new law in town. Not the badge wearing kind but the intimidating type called speed limits. In an unincorporated town like Peoria, it's a little strange to see new signs going up. From either end the speed limit goes from 55 down to 35 mph as drivers come into town.

"We just want Peoria to be safe," says Mahaska County Engineer Jerry Nusbaum. "It bothers me to see people speed by the school. We've put in rumble strips to try to slow people down."

"The postings are set by the Department of Transportation," shares Jerry. "We request the DOT to evaluate the location for a speed limit, and then the county sets the signs for the recommended zones."

Jerry would also like to see the road through Peoria improved, nearby roads made straighter, and the sharp 'S' curve (west of New Sharon) removed. But basically he is concerned about safety. "If we made the New Sharon curve a 'lazy' curve," he wonders, "would people then drive 80 mph?"

Mahaska County is also helping drivers 'see the light.' The county, in cooperation with Mid American Energy, is placing lights at key intersections. The 'Peoria-T' will be getting a light in the near future. "It will be placed a little off-center of the intersection," said Jerry, "so if an unfortunate driver should happen to lose control, he/she won't hit the pole." It will cost the county around \$800 to \$1,000 for the light and only \$11.00 a month to operate.
-Doug Pleak



IN MEMORY

Long time Richland Township resident, Earl W. Boyd, passed away on Saturday, March 18. A colorful personality, Earl touched a lot of lives and we're sure that he will continue to be a part of our community because so many people have fond memories of him.

In his younger years, Earl was a trapper. He was very particular in cleaning the furs he gathered and took pride in the quality of those that he sold. He liked things neat, which was evidenced by his yard, and for years he was well known for his help with area clean up. Many remember how adept he was at cutting up scrap metal.

After years of working for the county as a mechanic, Earl welcomed retirement because he loved to travel. It is said that he visited most (if not all) the states in our country.

He also LOVED fishing—if it included bank poles or doing it from his boat. He had a cabin down by the Skunk River and, as he aged, he invented ways to adapt so he could still get his boat down the river bank and into the river. One of his biggest catches was a 30+ pound flathead which he brought to the Peoria Christian School to show the kids. Many remember how he loved to sit and visit with his friends—a good use of all the hours he waited for fish to get hooked on his bank poles!

Earl was never without a kind word, and it was well known that he always had extra gum for the children in church. If they took a piece, however, they had to give the wrapper back so there would be no "litter bugs."

All in all, Earl will be remembered for many of the things that matter the most—life experiences, friends, and enjoying life.

Thanks for the memories, Earl. You'll be missed!

-the Peoria Partyline team

Celebrating 25 Years of Sorghum

On July 22, friends and neighbors will be gathering at Lower Grove Park to celebrate a quarter of a century of sorghum growing, harvesting, pressing, and processing on the grounds there. It promises to be a fun and exciting event.

The evening will be kicked off with a potluck dinner followed by entertainment provided by our own Sammie Lee. Then there will be time for everyone to visit and no doubt there will be sorghum related activities for those eager to learn more about this time-honored tradition.

Lower Grove Park will also be open for camping all summer. Large groups, or those wishing to reserve the shelter house, should contact Clarence Spoelstra at 628-3934.

Harvest of this year's sorghum will be in the fall—the date depends on the weather. Watch for details about our Harvest Days (and the above event) in upcoming Pella newspapers.
-Marilee Vander Wal

