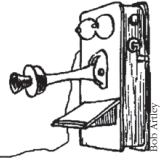


# Peoria Partyline



connecting the extended Peoria community



Volume 2. No. 4

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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**

E-mail us  
with questions or  
submissions:

[peoria-ia-news@hotmail.com](mailto:peoria-ia-news@hotmail.com)  
Online issue: [www.peoriacrc.org](http://www.peoriacrc.org)

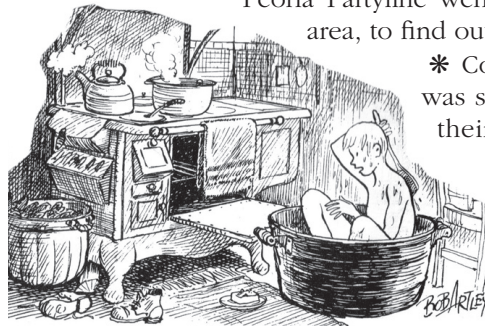
## Memories of Winters Past



Years ago people coped with winter in their own creative ways.

Children hurried down from frigid, upstairs bedrooms to dress by warm stoves downstairs. Baths were taken in front of the open oven door of the kitchen cook stove and dirty bath water was hauled outdoors to be poured into a snow bank amid clouds of steam. Long winter evenings, a blizzard, or severe cold offered some rare leisure hours for reading, a homemade checkers game, "Hide the Thimble," a round of dominoes, story telling, or hand shadows by lamplight.

Were there memories of winters past waiting to be discovered in the Peoria area? The Peoria Partyline went searching for people who grew up in this area, to find out. Here's a sample of the stories we found:



\* Cornie and Erma Van Wyngarden said there was snow—and a LOT of it—during the winters of their childhood. Cornie, who attended school in Peoria, remembers one winter when school was closed for three weeks due to roads blocked by snow. As a child, Erma says her upstairs bedroom didn't have heat. "If we took a glass of water along at bedtime," she shares, "it would have ice on it in the

morning!" To provide a bit of heat in their frigid bedrooms they would heat a big flat stone in the wood-burning cook stove oven, wrap it in newspaper, and bring it along to bed to keep their feet warm.

\* Freeze drying is what comes to mind for Minnie Van Wyngarden. As a young mother of two small boys still in diapers, she remembers getting up around 4 a.m. (while the boys were still sleeping) to start the wash in a wringer style washing machine. "Once the diapers were done," she remembers, "I would hang them side-by-side on the long line outside. In no time they would be frozen stiff. Then I'd bring them in—stiff as a board—and rehang them on a clothesline strung across my big farm kitchen until they thawed out."

\* "Winter, more often than not, meant little contact with the outside world," said Mel and Chum Deur. "Sometime there would be no Sunday worship but in turn that meant more family stuff—singing around the family organ, playing cards, and making homemade ice cream." Mel remembers making a trip to Pella, by bobsled, with Jake Vander Molen. "We



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## Activities of Club Echo in the Air

Those loud popping sounds you may have heard coming from the western edges of Richland Township on Saturdays, are actually gunshots—coming from long range, high-powered rifles. Nothing to worry about though. Gordon Gritters and his club are professionals who enjoy testing their skills on a 1,000 yard long shooting range that Gordon has set up out in the country. Hosted by Gordy's Gunsmithing Shop, the shoots are actually part of a competition that includes ten matches per year. Each match ends with an awards ceremony for the top point-setters.



Gordon prepares his rifle for another competition.

To say the club members are professional is putting it mildly. It takes an incredible amount of skill to compete. At

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## What's Going On at Peoria Christian School?

God has been faithful and good to the Peoria Christian School for 100 years, but a steady drop in enrollment over the last few years was causing some concern. To address that concern, a committee was formed to study ways to create a better educational system for Peoria.

"Our goal," said committee chairman Daryl Bouwkamp, "was a design that would include more direct instruction time for teachers, upgrading the curriculum, returning to some proven classical methods, and personalizing education according to each child's needs." In short, it would be a Personalized Learning Solution.

There was a lot of optimism within the committee that the new plan would not only benefit current students, but that it would serve to make Peoria unique and attractive for other families as well.

Thanks to a lot of hard work, everything was in place to launch the new

program this fall. Since the school is without an administrator, the board, education committee, teachers and curriculum committee played key roles in ushering in the new changes.

Today, school in Peoria is structured around 14 modules, with activities changing every 25 minutes. In the lower grades, there are three reading and math modules daily, giving intense instruction in the basics. Each child has one module a day, personalized to their unique needs and interests.

Marilyn Ver Meer, first and second grade teacher, was concerned at first that the changes would mean a lot more planning. Now she is very pleased with the system. "The biggest positive is that we have facilitators," she says. "I only have to work with one grade level at a time since we have wonderful volunteers doing a marvelous job!"

Many of the 18 volunteers are former teachers and some have teaching certificates. They assist the students in one grade level, while the teacher instructs the other class.

"Major change like this is never easy,"

comments Daryl, "and there are several things to work out yet. But, given that we are only six weeks into a long-term program, I'm more than pleased with the progress thus far. We have 18 new students and families. We have K-8 kids that interact well with each other, a great teaching staff, a supportive school community as evidenced in the number of volunteers in and out of the classroom, and a healthy financial balance sheet. God is good and I believe Peoria School's future is brighter than ever."

-Doris Nibbelink

**"Major change like this is never easy . . . God is good and I believe Peoria School's future is brighter than ever."**



## Candlelight Service

The youth group at the Peoria Christian Reformed Church will lead a candlelight service on Sunday evening, Dec. 17.

This 6:00 p.m. service will include a number of Christmas musical numbers. Everyone is invited to attend.

### - Memories continued

had to get a new supply of groceries for the Peoria store," he said.

\* "I remember having a lot of winter fun as a teenager," remembers Stella Pothoven. "I especially loved sledding on bright moonlit nights and bobsled rides." One bobsled ride in her memory, she describes as "a small group of us traveling twelve miles on a cold and bright moonlit night over snow covered roads pulled by a team of horses. Afterwards we went to someone's home to warm up, roast marshmallows, and drink hot chocolate."

\* Don Vander Molen remembers bundling up and riding behind his big brother on their pony to school. "Sometimes our pony had to go through some pretty deep snow," he recalls. "Other times we challenged our friends by trying to see whose pony would go through the deepest snow."

\* Harold De Vries had to go out to the hog lot on winter mornings to search for cobs in the snow. Then he would put them in a basket and bring them to the house. They were used

to help get a fire started in the cook stove. He also remembers how neighbors always helped each other scoop out when big snowfalls would block the roads.

\* "I remember my father taking us to Peoria school with a team of horses hitched to a bobsled," says Betty Jochems. "That only happened when we got snowbound." She also remembers hearing stories of some snowstorms that made the snowbanks so hard and deep, people could drive their teams right over the fences.

\* "When we came in from doing chores," says Iris Vander Wal, "we would take off our boots, open the cookstove oven door, and warm our feet in front of the oven." Gilly has fond memories of playing carroms with the neighbor kids during long winter evenings. "I also remember when our little country school was closed for 6 weeks due to snow," he says. "The teacher boarded at our home and she got so homesick that her family had to travel a long ways with a bobsled to finally get her out and bring her home."

\* Bertha Roose remembers a very cold walk up the hill to the Peoria Chr. School. "My lunch bucket was a syrup bucket or a tobacco can," she says. "We had to put our lunch buckets by the furnace register at school to warm them up." She also swept the school's floors during the school year. A lot of work during the winter for a quarter a day. -Marilee Vander Wal



## Calling All Deer Hunters



Hey, Richland township hunters and residents, deer hunting season is here! It's what you've been waiting for! Will you get a trophy buck this year?

Whether you're hunting on your own from a tree stand or with a group of buddies, we know there are tales to tell. We've all heard stories about the one that got away.

The Peoria Partyline wants to feature a hunter that was luckier than the deer this year. We're holding a Biggest Buck Contest!

Each submission for the contest must meet at least **one** of these two guidelines:

1. You live within the Richland township
2. The buck was hunted in Richland township

Entries will be judged by total inches of scored antler.

To enter the contest please contact Nicki Veenstra (625.4244) with the following information:

- Your name and where you live
- Where the buck was shot and total inches of antler
- Your method of hunting

I would also like a picture of you with the buck. Contact me if you need help as I would enjoy seeing you with your trophy buck. Deadline for contest entry is Feb. 1, 2007. Happy hunting everyone!  
-Nicki Veenstra



### New Babies in the Neighborhood



Wade and Trish Van Dyk were blessed with a new baby boy on October 15. Rylan Eugene weighed 9 lbs. 2 oz. and was 21 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches long. Brother Dylan Wade welcomed the baby home.

Joy and Jordan Roose (and brother Timothy) welcomed a new baby into their home too. Little Arie John was born on October 17 at 2 p.m. He weighed 7 lbs. 5 oz. and was 20 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches long.



### Neighbors are much more than just names! Grab a cup of coffee and let's meet Leah Seehusen.

The teacherage (140 Peoria West Street) was built for a good sized family. So Leah Seehusen had plenty of room for her belongings when she moved to Peoria in August. She was hired to be the homeroom teacher for the 3rd and 4th grades - and to teach science courses for grades 3-8 - at the Peoria Christian School. A loving person, Leah loves to teach. She loves the kids, and she loves her spacious house.

Leah grew up in the country near Parkersburg, Iowa. Her mom is a part time librarian and her father is a salesman for Farmer's Service in the structures department. After graduating from



## Hey Kids—Here's a Quiz



1. In the song "Winter Wonderland," who do we pretend the snowman is?
2. In the song "All I want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth," why do I want my two front teeth?
3. How many times did Santa check his list in the song "Santa Claus is Coming to Town?"

4. What did Santa want Rudolph, with his nose so bright, to do?
5. We bring "good tidings" to you and your what?
6. What did Frosty do when they placed a magic hat on his head?
7. What do I do while I'm dreaming of a white Christmas?
8. What do we deck the halls with?
9. What are we dashing through the snow in?
10. "Come," they said to the little drummer boy. What did they want him to see?      **Answers on pg. 4**

## Final Days for Central Grain

On January 10, 2007, Central Grain will close its two elevators, one here in Peoria and the other in Searsboro. According to owner Clint Vos, both communities have been very supportive of the business—in fact he couldn't say enough positive things about working with people in this area. That's what made the decision to close, much harder.

"When you store grain for others," said Clint, "you need a license. With that comes a yearly audit by a CPA and a need for commercial insurance—which is 6 to 7 times more costly than if a farmer insures his own grain." So, a decision had to be made. Central Grain either had to counteract those two fixed costs by getting bigger—one million bushel or more storage capacity—or get out.

"I already have a very busy work schedule," said Clint, "and since grain storage is cyclical, I made the decision to sell half of the Peoria grain storage to Jerry Van Wyk, an Otley area farmer."

Co-managers of the Peoria elevator, Dan Hull and Stan Pothoven, both agree that they will miss their interaction  
- Continued on page 4

Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa, Leah spent a year at home, working at a few part time jobs: youth director at the Parkersburg CRC, librarian at the Aplington Public Library, and substitute teacher at Timothy Christian School in Wellsburg. Sounds like a multitasker to me!

This German gal is slowly making the transition to a Dutch community. Leah is quite friendly and can talk with most anyone. Whenever she has time, Leah likes to read a good novel or bake. She also likes to draw—faces in particular. Her favorite animals are penguins. Ask her about this sometime.

Welcome to the Peoria community, Leah! We hope that you feel at home here and that it goes well for you in teaching.  
-John Gorter



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

## Business Services

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

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

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

**Do you need scrapbooking supplies or assistance?** Creative Memories consultant Tammy Veenstra is here to help. Call 641-780-2885.

**Experienced backhoe operator** looking for jobs. Tile holes, clean-up, final grade, septic systems, water lines, etc. Affordable \$55/hour. Owner: Jim Bandstra, Operator: Jesse Peterson. Call 641-780-6800 for Peterstra Backhoe.

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

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



## Road Report



As most Richland Township residents know, the county highway north of Peoria to Co-Line has been undergoing a make-over.

As with the road to Pella, this one is being replaced due to D-cracking problems. "We expected this road to last for

30 years when we poured it back in 1985," said Mahaska County Engineer Jerry Nusbaum, "but it only made it to 20 years."

The road's premature failure can be attributed to several facts. One centers around a chemical problem between the sand and aggregates that made up the concrete mix in 1985. The second is likely due to a technique tried that gave the road surface a 'ceramic' quality. Hard, but when broken, deteriorates fast.

Several out-of-town contractors are doing the present work on the road. Monya tore up the old roadbed using mobile jack-hammers and end loaders. The broken cement was crushed and recycled as a base for the new road. Then Fred Carlson contractors stepped in to replace soft spots in the roadbed with macadam stone. They finished up with all new cement.

Jerry is comfortable that the road will be completed this fall. Ditch work and seeding may have to wait until spring. "I'm not too happy with the timing," says Jerry, "but I'm very appreciative of everyone's help in this matter." -Doug Pleak

## - Activities of Club continued

1,000 yards the 42-inch square targets are barely visible to the naked eye. Each contestant is given 6 minutes to sight their guns in on 5 clay pigeons that are lying on a limestone berm in front of the targets. They see their bullets hit the limestone and then make adjustments to their scope. These sighting rounds are important because a brisk crosswind can cause bullets to drift several feet to the right or left of the target and gravity requires one to aim 25 to 35 feet above the target to compensate for the drop of the bullet.



*A scope makes it possible to hit a target too far away to see.*

The shooters are then given 10 minutes to shoot a predetermined number of shots at the actual target, and points are tallied from those shots.

The best shooters get around 4" to 6" groups on the targets.

Gordon hosted a national competition at his range last year, and he hopes to do the same again in four years. Gordon has won some local matches and his 14-year-old daughter Heidi has won the female shooter of the year award for the state of Iowa.

-Warren Van Wyngharden

## Events Events Events



November 23: Thanksgiving worship service at Peoria Church, 9:30 a.m.

December 17: Youth Candlelight Service at Peoria Church, 6:00 p.m.

December 25: Christmas Day service at Peoria Church, 9:30 a.m.

December 31: New Year's Eve worship service at Peoria Church, 5:55 p.m.



## - Final Days Continued

with customers. "The farmers in this area are great to work with," said Dan. "When I started with Central Grain, I thought it was just for the fall, but it turned out to be a year-around job." He is looking forward to spending more time on his farm near Montezuma.

Stan, who started working at the elevator 23 years ago and has worked with several owners and managers, is ready to slow down and spend more time on his farm as well.

-Terry Bandstra

9. A one horse open sleigh 10. A new born king  
dance around 7. Write Christmas cards 8. Boughs of holly  
3. Twice 4. Guide my sleigh tonight 5. Kin 6. He began to  
1. Parson Brown 2. So I can wish you a "Merry Christmas"

Answers to Christmas Quiz