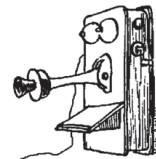


# Peoria Partyline



connecting the extended Peoria community

Volume 7. No. 1

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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  
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**641-637-4332**

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)

## Coffee Time with the Boys Goes On

For many years there has been a group of local residents who meet weekday mornings for coffee time. They started out in the Veenstra store and then moved to either the Peoria Feed Mill or Peoria Repair shop once the store closed. After the Feed Mill closed and then the Repair Shop in the fall of 2008, it seemed the group might have to disband. And for some time that was true until Mark Roose invited the group to meet in his garage. Since then Mark finished his shop at home and the group meets there around a big table.

Besides drinking coffee, the group discusses farming, community/current events and even occasional lively discussions on religion and politics. The morning I was there, Mark talked about going to Haiti with his wife Julie to see two children they hope to adopt. The

trip was part of the adoption process. The group talked about the effect the floods had on the corn and soybeans in the river bottom and the possible adverse effects of trying to harvest it as silage for cattle. Also discussed were crop insurance, crop prices, weather and harvest conditions.

Then the conversation turned to past experiences working at the Peoria Stockyards as several had worked there when they were younger. Marty Vander Molen could even remember running the corn sheller for ¼ cent per bushel.

There are a few in the group that don't farm but most are area farmers. So when it's fit to be in the field they don't meet until they are done or get rained out. Mark says anyone is welcome to come and join the group and he



will supply the coffee. If you want a good cup of coffee and an enlightening visit with some of your neighbors, join the group at Mark Roose's shop at 9:00 a.m. If there is no field work, they meet Monday through Friday.

-Terry Bandstra

## Choir Concert Blesses Congregation

On Sunday evening, November 14, a big bus pulled into the Peoria church parking lot. On board was a singing group from Zion Lutheran—a church in Iowa City. They had come to participate in our worship service and bless us with some choral numbers.



I found out about the choir some years ago when visiting my sister and brother-in-law. They were both members of the choir and after a concert I was happy to be able to

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## Life in Lunt School Part 2

Another reason Marilyn preferred to walk—rather than ride a pony to school—may have to do with her “handkerchief episode.” It happened while bare back riding to school with her brother. Enjoy as we continue the story.

Now why I was riding a pony with a handkerchief in my hand I do not know, but I had to inform Dale that I had dropped it. First he gave me a “you dumb kid” look, and then he dismounted and retrieved my handkerchief. His plan for getting back on didn’t go too well either. “Scoot back so I can remount,” he said. But in the process of scooting back, I kicked the pony causing her to buck and nearly unseat me. That earned me another “you dumb kid” look!



Sometimes—for a change of scenery and sense of

adventure—we would walk across the fields. That choice meant crossing a creek. One wintery day we got our fill of adventure. After climbing down to the creek we could not scale the icy bank on the other side. After many attempts, Dale finally made it up and we, after numerous attempts, threw our lunch pails up to him. He then lay on his stomach, reached down, and helped pull us up.

I don’t recall that school was ever cancelled due to inclement weather. If it was too cold to walk—or snow made travel by motorized vehicle impossible—my Dad hitched a team of horses to a wagon with sled runners, put a couple of straw bales in the wagon for us to sit on, wrapped us in blankets, and we were off to school.

Unless it was pouring rain or dangerously cold, we spent all our recesses and noon hours outside. We played *Annie*, *Annie Over*, *Red Rover*, *Drop the Handkerchief*, and softball if weather allowed. For some reason, it seems that the little kids never made it up to bat. Instead they roamed the outfield and chased the ball that occasionally rolled down the hill. We were unsupervised during recess and noon hour, and if disagreements among the students arose, we handled it on our own. There may have been some pushing, shoving and shouting, but I don’t recall any blood flowing—at least not enough to merit medical attention.

The boys occasionally took delight in pelting the girls’ outhouse with walnuts, which brought the girls out shrieking as if under “mortar fire.”



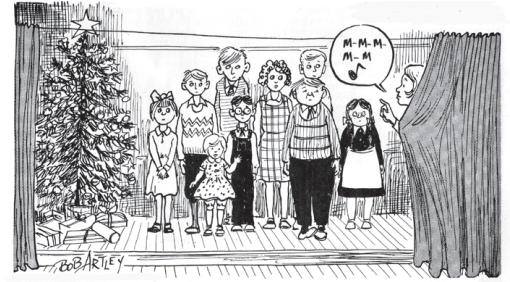
Our school yard was surrounded on three sides by hilly pasture land with a creek running through it. In the winter we had fun skating on the ice during noon hour. That would be “overshoe skating” since none of us had ice skates.

One winter a large piece of heavy tin showed up at school. We bent up the front to make a toboggan, all climbed aboard, and sailed down the hill into the creek. Somehow we all survived—which is amazing—since our toboggan would never pass today’s safety standards.

Back then girls wore dresses to school, so “snow pants” were necessary for outdoor activities. Mine were navy blue with

cuffs at the bottom that imprinted blue rings on my stockings when they got wet. Wet snow pants were hung around the stove to dry once class resumed. We never had low humidity in our school on winter afternoons.

A fun activity was making seasonal window decorations for the school. We used patterns from “The Instructor” magazine. All-school programs—usually with some holiday theme—drew in parents, older and younger siblings and neighbors several times a year. My long term memory of the content of our programs fails me except for three lines from what I assume was a Thanksgiving program: “We hac(have) meat, we can eat, let the Lord be thanked!”



When the Lunt family still lived in the house up the hill, we students in the lower grades would often walk up to their home to act out nursery rhymes for their daughter Wanda. She was confined to a wheelchair with a severe form of arthritis. I don’t recall that we practiced before our performances—so it was far from a Broadway production—however, Wanda was so gracious and thanked us so warmly that we felt we had done a good deed. Besides, we had “escaped” school for 30 minutes or so!

With the innovation of bus service (actually panel truck service) to Peoria Christian School, my sisters and I began attending there when I was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. I’m not sure if it was that year or not, but soon afterward Lunt School closed.

I’ve never regretted the years I spent in a rural school. We learned tolerance, independence and a sense of community as the older students helped the younger ones—both in the school room and also with coats and boots before going out to play.

I have great admiration for all teachers, but especially for those brave souls who taught us in rural schools. They braved snowstorms, hauled in coal to keep the stove going in the winter, encouraged the timid, and stood up to trouble makers. They were true pioneers. —Marilyn Vander Linden/Doris N

### Remembering Ida Kloosterman

Ida was the eighth of nine children born to the Gerrit Nibbelink family who farmed in Richland Township. She attended Peoria Christian School, married a local farmer (John Kloosterman), and was a devoted farm wife for 79 years.



John and Ida enjoyed traveling—visiting all 50 states except for Hawaii—and Ida was admired for her crocheting, embroidery and pie baking skills.

Ida was a dedicated wife for 67 years until John died. She missed him terribly.

Ida loved the Lord and was a lifelong member of the Peoria CR church.



## The Holy War Part 2

After hearing about Seventh Day Adventist Henry Nicola's successful work in neighboring New Sharon, the Richland Township religious community watched the arrival of his son LeRoy in Granville with interest. The interest turned to anxiety, however, when it was reported that—after just a month—ten households around Granville began observing the seventh day according to SDA principals. The concern was great enough to make the area Oskaloosa Herald correspondent write in a piece—“we're learning that the Granville people are letting the Adventists get away with them.”

Trying to stave off potential erosion of the flock, Elder Reynolds—a leader in the Christian Church in Peoria—challenged the Nicolas to a debate in Peoria. This debate lasted for five days before packed audiences, and consisted of just one statement: “Resolved, that the seventh day of the week is the Sabbath and is universally and perpetually enjoyed by all men.”

LeRoy Nicola obviously had the position of affirming this



statement, with Elder Reynolds opposing. Three respected citizens of the township—as moderators—were asked to declare a winner after the debates. Unfortunately for Elder Reynolds, the debates did not go all that well for his position. At the conclusion of the debates, he refused to allow the moderators to render a decision. This only fueled the fire of the opposing sides and provoked strong feelings that spilled over into commentary in the local papers.

Not wanting to just sit on the sidelines, the Methodists of Granville decided to enter the fray. Seeing how things had backfired for the Christian Church representative, they decided to bypass the local talent and pull out “the big guns.”

Watch for Part 3 in the June issue of the Peoria Partyline to find out what happened next.

-Calvin Bandstra



**Neighbors are much more than just names!  
Grab a cup of coffee and let's meet the Vander Molens.**

For more than a year I was told, “A lawyer has moved to our township.” I found myself waiting for the punch line, but after a brief pause I realized that it wasn't a joke. “So where does this lawyer live and what is his phone number?” I asked. No one seemed to know. Eventually I got an address and a last name (Vander Molen), but still no telephone number. Thankfully someone finally provided a cell phone number. It belonged to the lawyer's wife. Her name was Susan.

I was pleasantly surprised to hear “Hello” the first time I called. Then I dove into my introduction: “This is John Gorter, I live in Peoria ... reporter for the Peoria Partyline ...” Suddenly Susan says, “John, do you know who this is?” “No,” I hesitantly replied. “I was Susan Duren,” she replied.

Immediately my mind went back in time to Jackson, Mississippi, where I was attending seminary with Susan's father. Susan was born a few months earlier than our son in the same Mississippi hospital, but she has no childhood memories of the south. When she was six months old, Susan and her parents, George and Margaret Duren, moved to Pella.

Mike grew up in Pella as well. His parents, Bob and Terri Vander Molen, moved their family to the farm when his grandparents, Bernie and Alida Vander Molen, retired and moved to town. Mike remembers being intrigued by a machine shed on the farm that was built by his grandfather. Word is that Uncle Cecil put a \$100 check in a jar and placed it in the foundation. “That shed will be torn down soon,” says Mike, “and I'll be looking for that jar!”

Both Mike and Susan attended Christian elementary and high schools, but they did not start dating until their senior year. After high school Susan attended Trinity Christian College in the Chicago area for a while, and then obtained her nursing degree at Mercy College in Des Moines. She is now

employed at the Pella Community Health Center.

Mike received most of his undergraduate education—a degree in chemical engineering—at Iowa State University. He and Susan then married and he worked for a while at Cargill in Eddyville. Desiring to become a lawyer, Mike moved Susan to Kalona so he could attend the University of Iowa and come home at night. “We enjoyed that little town,” said Mike, “but our dogs never got used to the horses and buggies that came by our place. They did a lot of barking.”

Mike started his legal career at a firm in St. Louis, Missouri, where they lived for three years. He does patent work including international patents. Then an opportunity opened for the Vander Molens to return to Iowa. Mike's parents were moving off the farm and occasional commutes and the internet would allow Mike to continue working for his firm. In the summer of 2008 they moved back to Richland Township.

Recently Mike and Susan toured Ireland. Ask them about this delightful trip sometime, especially about redheaded Irish boys throwing snowballs at them. In August of 2010 they were blessed with a baby boy, Ian James. He spoils his parents by sleeping well at night.

Mike and Susan enjoy their home in the country as well as their dogs, cats, and some sheep. They enjoy walks and tending their garden. In a few years they hope to harvest some fruit from apple and peach trees they've planted. They enjoy college sports and have season tickets to Cyclone football games.

It is very nice having y'all in the neighborhood.

-John Gorter





# ... 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:** First crop grass and alfalfa round bales. 625-4122.

## Community Calendar

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| Feb. 26 | Hostess Supper<br>Peoria School Gym            |
| Mar. 9  | Prayer Service<br>Peoria Church 7 p.m.         |
| Apr. 22 | Good Friday Service<br>Peoria Church 7:30 p.m. |
| Apr. 24 | Easter Service<br>Peoria Church 9:30 a.m.      |
| May 30  | Memorial Day Service<br>Peoria Cemetery 9 a.m. |
| May 19  | 8th Grade Graduation<br>Peoria School 7 p.m.   |
| June 2  | Ascension Service<br>Peoria Church 7:30 p.m.   |

## Road Report

The county is planning on redoing the road from the Skunk River Bridge to about half way up the hill by Milton Vos but no further because they would like to change the corner. Don't get too excited though. Approval and budget concerns have to be addressed first. More info to come.

## *-Choir Concert continued*

visit briefly with the wife of the choir director. She asked what church I attended and—after discovering it was a small country church—she had a lot more questions. Before parting ways I invited her to visit Peoria some day. Then I added, “And bring your choir!”

It was meant to be, and last summer—when I needed to round up some special music for our church—I immediately thought of her. It took just a couple of phone calls to turn my invitation into reality.

The choir expressed joy in performing for us, and our congregation gave them a warm welcome and expressions of deep appreciation.

Everyone met in the Peoria gym for “coffee time” afterwards. Our Pastor Gorter, and the pastor of Zion Lutheran, had fun visiting with each other too. It was discovered that they knew each other from years gone by when they were both pastors in Pella. *-Marilyn Vander Linden*

## Donations Donations Donations Donations Donations Donations

**The Peoria Partyline is starting its 7th year!**

**If you appreciate the paper, here's what you can do:**

Suggested \$2 annual donation. Send your check to the Peoria Church marked  
**for The Peoria Partyline** (120 Peoria West St. Pella, IA 50219)

**Classified Ads:** Contact Terry Bandstra for information. 625-4122

## Here's the story of the plane crash near Peoria.



While doing some prep work to qualify their farm as a century farm, Pete and Nancy Westerkamp found some old pictures—one of which was the mystery plane crash. Thanks to them and Terry Bandstra, here's the story.

In 1950 Pete's dad, John Westerkamp, bought a new four row planter with attachments. Apparently he didn't need or use the attachments, and a year or two later he decided to sell them. A winter ad in the Farm Bureau

Spokesman brought in a phone call from a farmer who lived some distance away. The man wanted to come in his plane to purchase/pick-up the items. “Do you have any place I can land near your farm?” he asked. When told about a nearby hilltop owned by Gerrit Rus, the farmer thought that would work.

The landing went fine and the farmer parked his plane just west of Westerkamp's house while he completed his transactions. In the meantime it began to snow—a heavy, wet snow. By the time the farmer started the engine and taxied out onto the hilltop to leave, there was a build up of snow on the wings of the airplane. He was able to get the plane off the ground but not high enough to clear two big cottonwood trees which stood at the base of the hill. The plane hit some branches on the trees which almost turned it back to the direction it had come from. In seconds the plane was down but the pilot was able to walk away without being seriously hurt. According to Pete it was a good thing the plane went down where it did, because it wasn't gaining altitude and the next objects in its path were the church and school on the north side of Peoria! In fact they were less than nine hundred feet away and the pilot probably wouldn't have walked away from that crash!

The nose of the plane and the landing gear were damaged and the door was hard to open, but there was no broken glass. Since there was snow on the ground, the plane couldn't be moved until it had melted. Consequently it stayed there for about six weeks which allowed the kids in the area to play in it.

The kids in the photo: Rodney Rus, Joyce and Arvin Roose, and Anna, Loretta and Pete Westerkamp. The two adults in the picture are part of the crew who came to take the plane apart. Look closely—can you see one of the cottonwood trees? *-Pete W. & Terry Bandstra*