

The Lowell Ledger

Volume 30 Issue 36

Serving Lowell Area Readers Since 1893

Wednesday, July 14, 2004

Riverwalk Festival celebrates with an abundance of entertainment

By Dan Schneider

The big happening in downtown Lowell last Friday and Saturday was the annual Riverwalk Festival.

Clouds threatened Friday night but only Lowell mayor Jeanne Shores and city manager Dave Pasquale got wet. And they were soaked to the bone sitting under the flush tank.

The main event that night was the celebration of the Lowell Showboat's 25th birthday on the Riverwalk Plaza. Dick McNeal played some music on the calliope, which has been around since 1937. Then the Lowell Leadership Institute for Volunteer Excellence was recognized for their efforts in refurbishing the showboat this spring/summer.

Ivan Blough was officially named "Mr. Showboat." He led the restoration work this year in addition to

having built the 25-year-old boat. In his acceptance speech, he praised the volunteers who helped restore the Robert E. Lee, saying they were evidence that Lowell's civic enterprise would be in good hands for years to come.

Sweet Willie Singleton of the Bob Taylor Dixieland Band played happy birthday to the showboat on his trumpet, then joined the rest of the band to wail out some dixieland numbers.

Pontoon boat rides with Flat River history, duck mascot antics, caricature drawing and duck race ticket sales were all going on last Friday night at the Riverwalk Plaza.

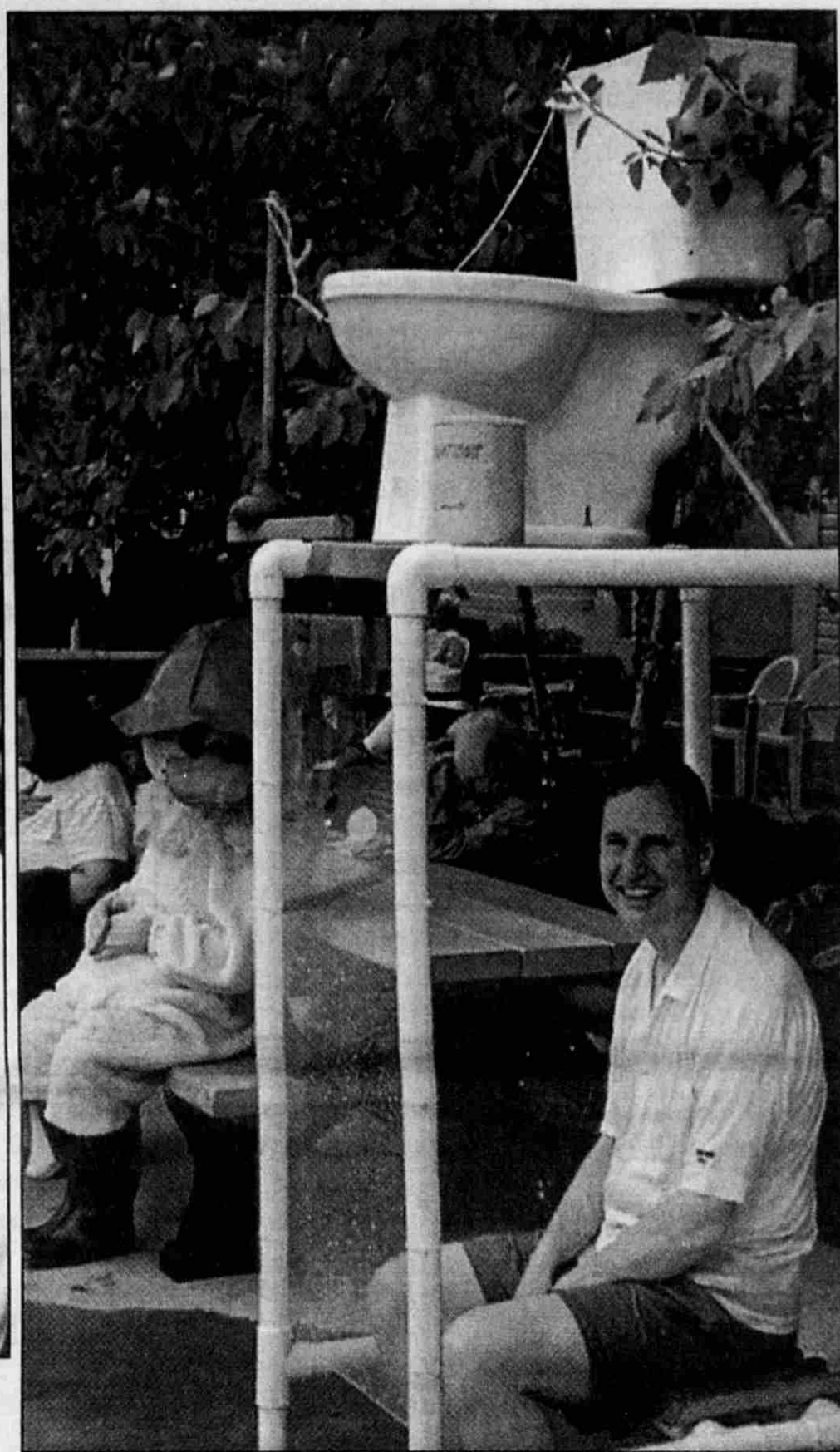
Saturday morning, things kicked off with the FROM the Heart parade along Main Street. Clowns collected a pickup-truck full of food for Flat River Outreach Ministries food pantry. Meijer donated an additional 12 shopping carts full of food.

Festival, cont'd., pg. 10-11



Mayor Jeanne Shores and City Manager Dave Pasquale survived repeated drenching during the Riverwalk Festival on Friday night.

Photo of Shores submitted by Bruce Doll



New businesses in Lowell signal positive growth

By Dan Schneider

In just one year's time, new business starts have outpaced business closings in the city of Lowell. And the result is fewer vacant retail spaces and buildings. Since last July, 22 new businesses have opened in Lowell while 12 businesses have either closed or left town.

"This is the most since I've been here," said Lowell city manager Dave Pasquale. "Particularly in the last five or 10 years there's been a lot more growth in the downtown and a lot more interest in the downtown."

"I think in the last 10 years we have seen things consis-

tently improve," Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce executive director Liz Baker said. "It started with the streetscaping of the downtown with the DDA and at the same time the historic district commission was established."

The city underwent a revamping of its downtown infrastructure in 1996. This involved improved sidewalks, streetlights and parking lots. Baker also credits the Lowell Area Community Fund as being a catalyst for the improvement of downtown Lowell.

"It has made an incredible impact on this community," she said. "It's a gift that a lot of communities would die for."

Nine new businesses have opened in the downtown historic district since last July. The older buildings seem to hold an appeal for certain types of businesses.

"I had a lot of people talk to me about building a new storefront in Lowell but that's just not as interesting to me," Shannon Parnofiello said.

Her business, Hearthstone Design Studio, L.L.C., opened in March in the former State Savings Bank building.

"It was important to show that I could do that kind of historical restoration," Parnofiello said.

New businesses, continued., pg. 3

Hoping to cut down on vandalism, developer seeks street name change

By J. Lobdell
 Contributing Writer

Street signs can disappear for a number of reasons: They get hit ... Mother Nature is a bit too strong ... or, in the case of High Street, people simply just take them.

Sundry Development hopes to curb the sign-taking ventures on High Street by

seeking to have the name of the street changed to Highland Hill. The change would affect only that portion east of James Street which enters into Sundry's new development, also called Highland Hill.

The reason, as stated in a letter presented to the Lowell City Council at last week's meeting, is to help create a consistency in identification

for the street. With the street signs gone, it becomes difficult for people to locate what they are seeking. The name change would help reduce the need for the city to constantly replace the signs, Sundry stated in its letter. The developer noted that only one family would be affected by the change, requiring them to have an address change without really moving.

Councilman Jim Hodges said he didn't see why the family should have to change their street address and that perhaps the road could have a dual name for the time being. A public hearing has been set on the matter for July 19. Property owners along High Street, east of James

High St. name change, cont'd., pg. 4

Inside
The Lowell Ledger

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Several seats contested in Bowne Township election

First in a series of three articles on township elections. Lowell Charter and Vergennes townships will follow.

By Dan Schneider

It is a contested election for all offices in Bowne Township this year. Candidates are elected to four-year terms. Since there are no democrats in the field, the Aug. 3 republican primary will decide who takes office at the township's Nov. 16 board meeting. Aug. 3 is the only day to vote for Bowne Township offices.

The following are brief descriptions of the different township offices and the candidates running for them.

Supervisor candidates:

The Bowne Township supervisor is the executive officer for the township, in charge of its overall operation. The supervisor's job is to make sure the township is running smoothly. The supervisor, a member of the Alto Downtown Development Authority, attends township planning commission meetings as a non-voting member.

The supervisor chairs township board meetings, must be involved in the activities of the township and tries to resolve the concerns of the citizens. Annual salary is \$20,000.

Peter Siler, 58, is com-

pleting his first term as Bowne Township supervisor. Siler, a teacher for 32 years, taught agri-science and biology for 26 years at Lowell High School; he was also the FFA advisor.

Siler has lived in the township for 30 years. He's been married 36 years and has two children and three grandchildren.

Siler was secretary of the Bowne Township zoning board of appeals (ZBA) from 1978-1981 and a member of the township planning commission from 1975-1977. He was chairperson of the ZBA from 1999 until he won the 2000 election for supervisor.

"Over the last four years we've accomplished a number of things," Siler said.

He counts among them negotiating a Renaissance zone with the Magna-Donnelly Corp. that kept 700 jobs in Alto, adopting and enforcing a noise ordinance and creating an overlay district to raise and standardize construction requirements.

If elected to another term, he said, "My goal is to continue to develop communication with our residents ... and to increase the enforcement of our zoning ordinances, work with our planning com-

mission to upgrade our master plan to have an accurate vision for the future of our township.

"What I want to do most of all is keep things going in the right direction."

Chris Wenger, 68, has lived in Bowne Township 62 of those years. He went to work as a dairy farmer after completing high school at Middleville. He is now semi-retired.

Wenger served 12 years on the Bowne Township board of review and 15 years on the planning commission. He was supervisor for eight years, from 1992 to 2000.

"It was a pretty mellow time. I didn't see any big changes, just trying to maintain our status as it was, or is," he said. "I'm not into making big promises because it's easy to make promises but when you get into the political world they can be kind of hard to make happen sometimes."

Wenger lost the 2000 election but is running this year because several people had asked him to.

"I'm hoping to get a little more unity in the board again, they seem to have some discontent among themselves

Sandra Kowalczyk, 61, is the current Bowne Township clerk. She has held the office since 1976. She has lived in the township 39 years, having moved there from Cascade Township.

She has worked for the Kent County Board of Education, as secretary for Jay Van Andel and at the Michigan State University extension office.

She is running for another

right now."

Wenger believes the most immediate challenges the township will face is from development pressure.

"I think that zoning is one of the big changes coming up ... there's going to be a lot of people wanting to change it and we're going to have to deal with that by whatever means we see fit at the time," he said. "My point really isn't to stop growth, it's to try and direct it—keep it in an orderly fashion so we don't waste a lot of land area in doing it."

Clerk candidates:

The Bowne Township clerk takes minutes at meetings, handles elections and voter registration, and keeps track of township records. In addition, the clerk is in charge of the cemeteries and is secretary for the township office. Annual salary is \$27,000.

Jeff Miller, 37, has lived in Bowne Township for six years. Before that he lived in Ionia County but he has family roots in the township.

"I live on part of my grandfather's farm and I've been coming to Bowne Township since the day I was born," Miller said.

His great-grandparents are buried in the township's Quaker cemetery.

Miller is a landscape architect. He graduated from the five-year program dedicated to that profession at Michigan State University. This is the first time he has run for a township office.

He said the township needs to start getting input from its residents early in the planning process. He used the example of a township recreational plan to demonstrate why this is important.

"We need to establish a recreational plan," Miller said. "Currently we don't have that so when funds become available, decisions are made by a few people, a few board members."

He would like to see the township develop broader-perspective plans for the future.

"Our current board seems to be more reactive than proactive," Miller said. "We're at a critical juncture in our township as far as development pressure and I think we need some planning tools put in place to direct it."

"We have the most agri-

term, she said, because "I am very proud of Bowne Township and the people that are in it and I'd like to see that continue."

"We're very conservative and we try to take care of the people in our township and provide them with the best things we can without being extravagant."

She said her experience would benefit her if elected to another term.

"I have the history of the township," Kowalczyk said. "You have to be here to see how things have developed and what has taken place and that's what I've been doing."

She is running for another

cultural land as far as percentage per township of anybody in Kent County and we need to conserve that."

Treasurer candidates:

The Bowne Township treasurer collects taxes, keeps track of bank accounts, and invests township funds. The treasurer also does the sewer billing for the village of Alto. Annual salary is \$25,000.

Sally Johnson, 64, is the current Bowne Township treasurer, nearing the end of her fifth term. She has lived in the township nearly 39 years. Having studied at Davenport University, she worked as an accountant for Lowell Light and Power before retiring to raise her children. She has also worked as a teacher's aide at Alto Elementary.

As treasurer, she oversaw the transition this year when the township began handling its own billing.

"I love my community and I love working with people and I like working with figures," Johnson said. "Our accounts have grown, I've invested, so we have good interest-bearing accounts."

Her goals if elected to a sixth term, she said, are to "just keep doing my job to the best of my ability."

Tammi Wingeier, 45, is running for Bowne Township treasurer. She has lived in the township for 29 years. For the last five, she has owned the Ice Cream Caboose outside of Alto. Previous to that, she worked for Timpson Orchards and as a sales representative for a check-printing company. She has taken classes in accounting at Davenport University and correspondence accounting classes.

"I was approached to do that (run for treasurer) and I thought about it and thought, 'that's the kind of job I'd like to do and I could be more involved in the community and could keep an eye on the growth that's happening,'" she said.

Kim Culbertson, 47, is running for Bowne Township trustee. She has various professional pursuits. In addition to working at J.C. Penney's phone center for 18 years, she

raises sheep and sells antiques. Culbertson has served nine years on the board of review for Bowne Township, as chairperson from 2002 to present. She has lived with her family in Bowne Township since 1993.

"We intend to live here for a long time and we're committed to the township,"

Excavating. His main focus in running for trustee is to try to get more residents involved in Bowne Township's government.

"If every citizen of the township would come to at least one or two meetings a year, they would have a lot better idea of what goes on in the township and what we are facing in terms of development in the area," Fuss said.

To that end, Fuss said the board needs to focus on getting better office and meeting space. He said the current meeting hall, now used due to mold problems in their previous building, can only hold about 12 people.

"I would say the low (attendance) would be six and the high would be 20," Fuss said of the board's meetings during his term. "I think there's just more people concerned with what their local government is doing."

David Fuss, 43, is completing his first term as a Bowne Township trustee.

"Four years ago I noticed that at a lot of the meetings it was a unanimous vote on everything, not much was discussed," Fuss said. "Since I've been on, we've kind of found out that there's been a 3-2 split on quite a few of the main issues."

Fuss, who graduated from Lowell High School in the class of 1980, was a dairy farmer until about six years ago. Now he drives a dump truck for O.E. Bieri and Sons

division of Amway Corp. for 10 years. She currently owns her own embroidery business and works part time as a retail merchandiser for a company in Illinois.

In a statement faxed to the Ledger, she said, "My goal as trustee is to work with fellow board members to accomplish a common goal: to do what is in the best interest of the residents of Bowne Township."

Joyce Reynhout has lived in Bowne Township for six years. She and her husband, James, own Horizons Lawn Maintenance there.

She has taken business courses at Davenport University and Grand Rapids Community College.

Her reasons for running for trustee stem mostly from her desire to get the community more involved in township government.

"I think there should be more information in more places for the public to see," Reynhout said. "I would like to find ways to draw more of the township into the meetings ... get a bigger consensus when decisions are made."

"I want to feel comfortable with the direction the township is going and I want to be the voice of the community."

Karen Kowalczyk-Hendrick is a current Bowne Township trustee. She is a life-long resident of Bowne Township, has been married to her husband Brian for 15 years and has three children.

She was a project specialist in the international sales

NOTICE VERGENNES TOWNSHIP PUBLIC TESTING OF VOTING EQUIPMENT

A public test of the voting equipment to be used in the August 3, 2004 Primary Election in Vergennes Township will be held on Friday, July 23, 2004 at 2:00 p.m. at the Vergennes Township offices located at 10381 Bailey Dr., Lowell, MI 49331.

Mari C. Stone
Vergennes Township Clerk

NOTICE VERGENNES TOWNSHIP PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Lowell City Council will conduct public hearings at their regularly scheduled meeting of Monday, July 19, 2004 at 7:30 p.m. at the City Council Chambers, Lowell City Hall, Second Floor, 301 East Main St., Lowell, for the purpose of receiving comments from the public on the following:

- An Ordinance to amend Section 4.20F (Private Streets) of Chapter 4, "General Provisions" of the Zoning Ordinance of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Lowell.
- Proposed renaming the section of High Street, east of James Street, to Highland Hill Drive.

Copies of the proposed Ordinance is available for public inspection during normal business hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday) at City Hall and the Englehardt Public Library during scheduled hours Monday through Saturday.

Interested persons may submit written comments to City Hall, 301 East Main St., Lowell, MI 49331 prior to the meeting or appear in person.

Betty R. Morlock,
City Clerk
616-897-8457

Mari C. Stone
Vergennes Township Clerk

NOTICE VERGENNES TOWNSHIP

A Public Hearing will be held and a Special Exception Use Permit will be considered at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Vergennes Township Board on July 19, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. at the township offices located at 10381 Bailey Dr., Lowell.

Duane and Carolyn Fitzgerald, 5575 Cascade Rd., Grand Rapids, are requesting a Special Exception Use Permit to place a mobile home for temporary residence during construction of a permanent residence on property they own at 841 Montcalm, located on the south 1/2 of the northeast 1/4 of Section 24 in Vergennes Township. They intend to remove the unit after the home is complete. The request is permitted as a Special Exception Use under Section 201.415 C, Accessory Dwelling, of the Vergennes Township Ordinance.

A copy of the application is available for public inspection at the township offices on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Comments will be received at the Public Hearing or in writing by forwarding to the Clerk at the township offices or by e-mail at clerk@vergennestwp.org. Written comments should be received by 7:00 p.m. July 19, 2004.

NOTICE VERGENNES TOWNSHIP

A Public Hearing will be held and a Special Exception Use Permit will be considered at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Vergennes Township Board on July 19, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. at the township offices located at 10381 Bailey Dr., Lowell.

NOTICE VERGENNES TOWNSHIP

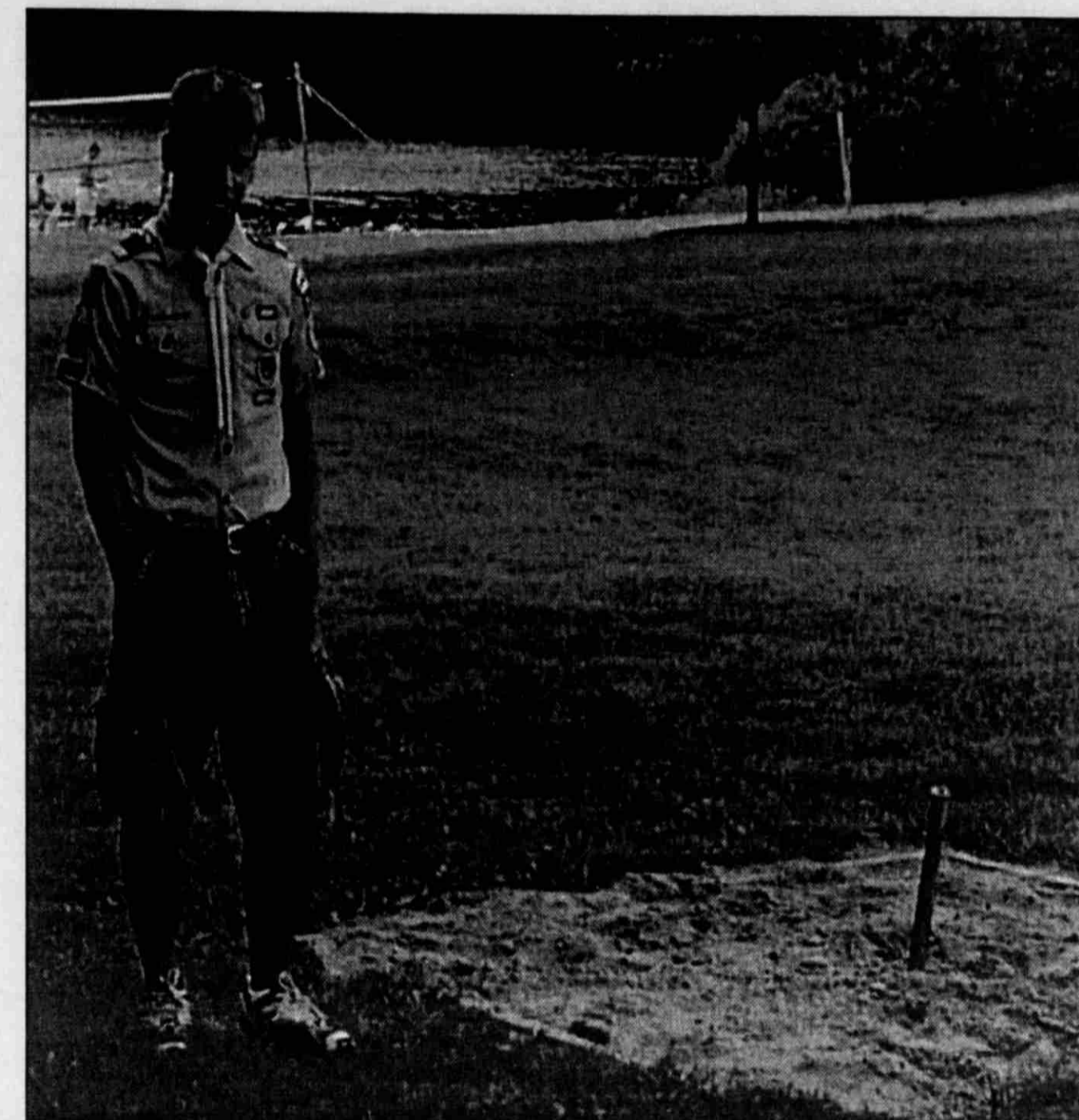
A Public Hearing will be held and a Special Exception Use Permit will be considered at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Vergennes Township Board on July 19, 2004, at 7:00 p.m. at the township offices located at 10381 Bailey Dr., Lowell.

Election, continued...

She said the township needs to "do some advanced planning of what we'd like to see and where we'd like to see it go so we already have something in place and aren't just scrambling at the last minute."

Trustee candidates:

As members of the town-



Eagle Scout in the "pits"

Paul Mundt stands at the south side of the pair of horseshoe pits he constructed at Stoney Lakeside Park for his Eagle Scout project. Materials for the project were donated by Stock Lumber and Earth Tech. The idea to make horseshoe pits for his Eagle project came about because other members of his troop had recently built them at Fallsburg and Creekside parks and he thought Lowell could use one near the lake.

Mundt, 17 and a senior this fall at Lowell High School, expects to get his board of review this fall. A member of troop 102, he's been a boy scout since 1996. In addition to the 12 merit badges required for the Eagle ranking, Mundt earned 21 other badges. He is the son of Mark and Theresa Mundt.

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Riverwalk festivities, continued...From Page 1

The Ionia Free Fair float won first place in the parade. June Rollins and her horse-

drawn float took second. Third place went to Leo Bowen and his tractor brigade.

Meanwhile, classic cars were rolling into the Lowell Fairgrounds for the Brian

Mead Memorial Riverwalk Cruise-In. The longest trip was from Hart. Some antique tractors also showed up, some motorcycles, and a number of kids' bicycles with some impressive chrome.

Dale Sweetland, of Gowen, won the 350 Chevy motor, the door prize at the car show. The cruise-in raised more than \$400 from day-of registration fees for Flat River

Outreach Ministries. About 120 classic cars showed up for the event.

All the cars and motorcycles rumbled along Main Street, mid-afternoon. Then ducks were launched from the Division Street bridge and taken by swift current down to the fairgrounds. The duck belonging to Bev Anderson of Lowell crossed the finish line first. Anderson won

\$1,000. Ducks purchased by Star Terzes and Caitlin Kosheba took second and third place, respectively.

That about wrapped things up until nightfall, when fireworks exploded in the sky over Stoney Lakeside Park. From the fairgrounds, the bright explosions were visible above the treeline while fireflies danced around below.



The Riverwalk Duck, tailed by Charles Myers, hams it up during the FROM the Heart parade last Saturday morning.



Parade Grand Marshal Jim White pulls his weight in the parade.



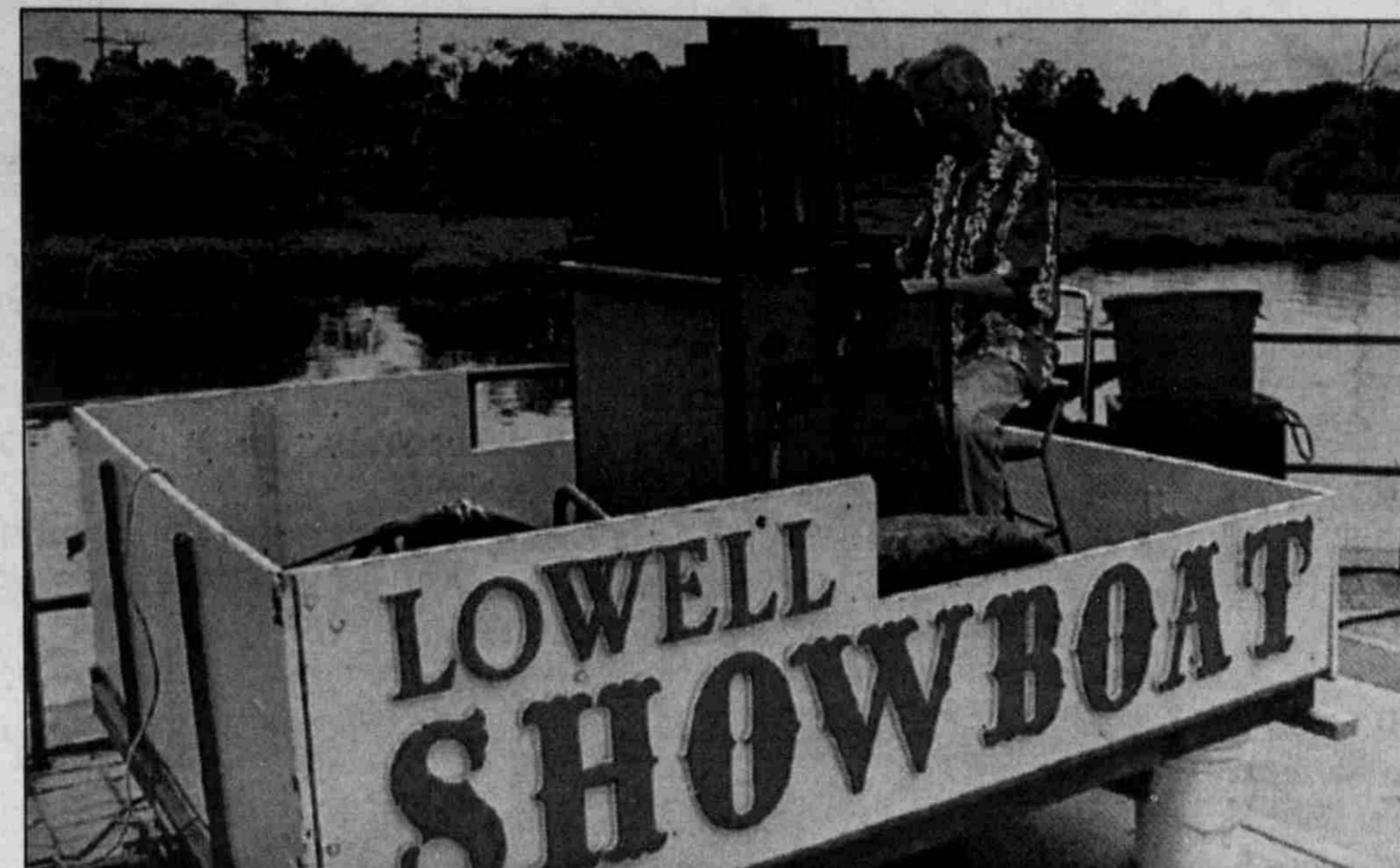
Alex Jacobson and his cowboy puppet wave to the crowd during the parade. The pair were on one of two Kackle's Orchards trailers in the parade. The trailers later shuttled people back and forth between Riverwalk Plaza and the fairgrounds.

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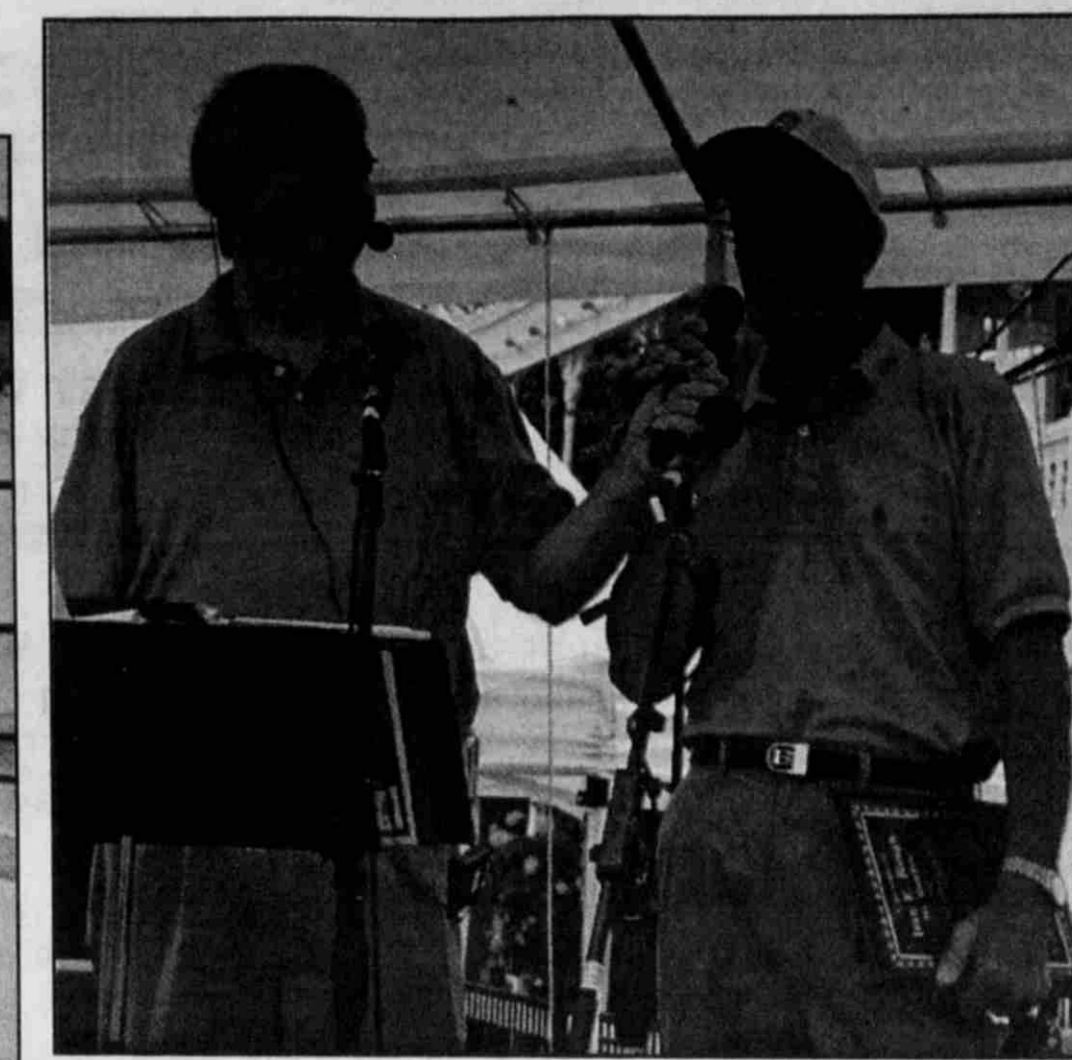
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More Riverwalk Festival views...



Dick McNeal played some tunes on the showboat calliope before the birthday celebration for the Robert E. Lee.



Gordon Gould hands the microphone to Ivan Blough. Blough gave an acceptance speech after being officially named "Mr. Showboat."

Rumbling the Fairgrounds: Classic cars roll into Lowell

By Kelsay Myers
 Lowell Ledger Intern

Vintage cars lined the fairgrounds last Saturday before rumbling through Main Street in celebration of Lowell's Riverwalk Festival.

Dale Dawson was one of the show's organizers. His shop, L.A. Trim, does a lot of work for hot rodders. He said the show was in honor of last year's chairman, Brian Mead, who died this spring. About one-third more attended this year than last, with estimates of 120 cars officially registered by the end of the show.

The main reason for the large crowd was the \$3,000 motor built by MORE POWER in Sparta, auctioned off as a door prize. Seventeen awards were given, such as the oldest vehicle and youngest driver, and several sponsors and dealerships chose two cars they liked best.

Winners of the Participant's Choice award, Larry and Betty Pressey of Spring Lake, proudly showed off their "Raspberry Pearl" 1941 Chevy 5 Passenger Coupe. The Pressey's try to attend a car show every week-

end in the summer, but Lowell is only their fourth stop this year.

Buying the car two-and-a-half years ago, Betty Pressey was attracted to the round fenders on the striking car. Her husband Larry made lots of improvements, including redoing the bottom of the car and repainting it. In choosing the hot pink hue for their Chevy, the Pressey's wanted to stand out. Betty Pressey said, "We wouldn't see another car with that color. It's unique."

Craig and Chris Yeiter, Ada residents, own a red 1929 Ford A Tudor Sedan with a 355 Chevy engine. Craig Yeiter said, "I like the Model A body, and the price was good."

Yeiters purchased the car 22 years ago and attend about

10 car shows per year. Craig Yeiter fixed the Ford himself, except for the upholstery which he had done by L.A. Trim. The Yeiter's like to support Lowell, which is why they entered the Riverwalk car show with friends from the area.

Like the Yeiters, Mitch Evans heard about Lowell's car show from a friend. Evans is from Stanton, and his green and white 1954 Cadillac Fleetwood, powered with a 331 motor, appears at three or four shows a year.

Evans bought the car at a garage sale in Cadillac. He said, "I always liked the style." He liked the colors too, keeping them the same as the original after repairing the car himself 23 years ago.

At 3:30 on Saturday afternoon, the cars hit historic



Larry and Betty Pressey with their "Raspberry Pearl" 1941 Chevy. The beauty won Participant's Choice.

downtown Lowell in a parade. "About half of them actually rumbled through town. I would have liked to see more of them stick around," Dawson said.

He added, "We're pretty happy with how it turned out. It's pretty much what we ex-

pected, although I was hoping for 150 cars. We already have plans to make it even better next year, and we're open to any suggestions." Dawson added that numerous volunteers helped make the classic car show a success.



Craig Yeiter with his 1929 Ford sedan.

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The fourth "pillar" of self-esteem is the practice of self-assertiveness. Of all the pillars, this one takes the most courage. We need courage to be assertive, especially when it is not easy to do so. When we do the hard stuff, we grow into greater levels of self-esteem.

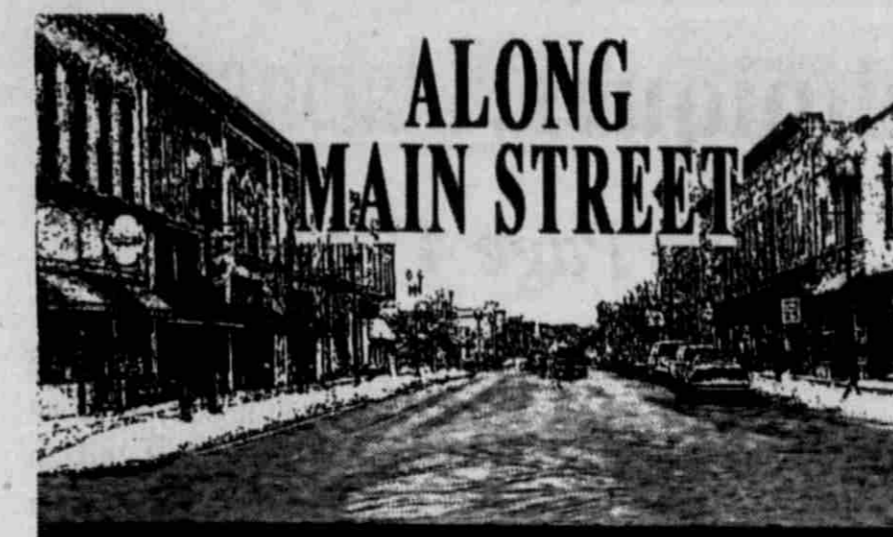
First of all, what does self-assertiveness mean? Nathaniel Branden gives this definition, "Self-assertiveness means the willingness to stand up for myself, to be who I am openly, to treat myself with respect in all human encounters."

What does it mean to "treat myself with respect?" Don't we just naturally have self-respect? Unfortunately, we do not and, in fact, many of us lack this and it shows up when we spend our lives trying to live up to someone else's desires. When we claim our own identity, we learn to set boundaries to make sure we are the only one responsible for what we do. We then set our own agenda rather than living our life at the whims of another. We become more self-assertive when we realize we are not on this earth to live up to someone else's expectation.

Even though America is known as the land of "individualism," where self-expression is valued, social mores and social acceptance often inhibit self-

assertiveness. Women are still often penalized when they practice the natural self-assertiveness that is their birthright as human beings. Initially, there is fear of disapproval when one becomes self-assertive. The fear of disapproval and/or rejection can be so great that we choose not to share who we are. The presence of this kind of intimidation can make us feel that we have no right to even occupy the space we're in. An example of this is when a wife does not want to "rock the boat" in her marriage because she was taught that a good wife was never to disagree with her husband. So she remains silent. This becomes a way to betray one's own individuality. No amount of admiration of another can justify the sacrificing of one's healthy self-assertiveness. Courage here is so important, since by exercising courage we become more self-assertive and, thereby, increase our level of self-esteem.

Next month, we will address the importance of living purposely. Remember that self-assertiveness is the willingness to stand up for one's self, and to treat yourself and your opinions with self-respect that translates into a deep sense of worthiness and happiness.



ENTER A DRAWING AT GOLDWORKS
 Bring a bag of groceries to Goldworks for the Flat River Outreach Ministries food pantry during July. You'll be entered in drawings every day and a final drawing for a 1/2 ct. diamond.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
 If you would like to help build a new playground at the Murray Lake Elementary School, July 22-25, contact Glenna Bunn at 897-8827 or come to Lally and 4 Mile. Building starts at 7 a.m.

CLASS OF '99 REUNION
 RSVP to Kaily 485-3231 if you are interested in attending the '99 LHS class reunion Aug. 6, 6 p.m. \$25/ person at Applause Banquet Center.

SCHOOL BD. MEETING
 The Lowell School Board meeting, normally held the second Monday of the month, will be Monday, July 26 at 7 p.m. at 300 High St.

BOWL/HELP THE FOOD PANTRY
 Open bowling at Lowell Lanes every Saturday dur-

ing the summer from 4-7 p.m. Half of the fees for shoes and lanes go to Flat River Outreach Ministries food pantry.

CLASS OF '79 REUNION
 The Lowell High School class of 1979 will have their 25th reunion at Annalaine's Banquet Center on Sept. 25 from 6 p.m. - midnight. Write to P.O. Box 121, Lowell or call 897-0461 for more information.

FREE FOOD
 The Foodmobile will be at the 4-H fairgrounds, Foreman Bldg., on Saturday, July 17 from 10-11 a.m. or until food is gone. Bring a box or bag to collect your produce.

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'HARDT HAPPENINGS'
 Stevens Puppets, a favorite with people of all ages, will perform at the Englehardt branch on Tuesday, July 27 at 6:30 p.m. Dan Raynor and his puppets will perform "The Wizard of Oz."
 Registration is required for this program, part of the Summer Reading Club 2004. Call 647-3920.

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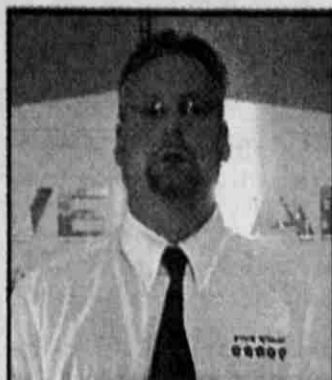
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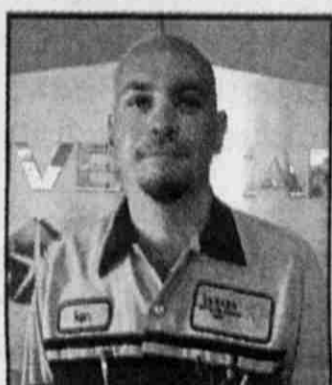
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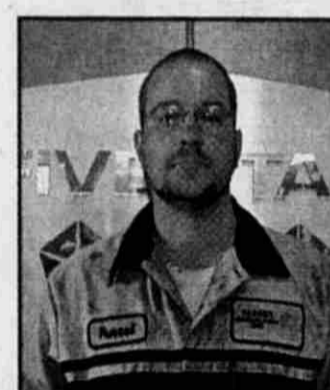
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