

The Culver Citizen

Thursday, March 18, 2010 Vol. No. 116 Issue No. 10 50¢
Serving Culver • Lake Maxinkuckee • Monterey since 1894



Odom FUNERAL HOME



In Brief

Jazz Street Cafe this evening

The public is invited to the Jazz Street Cafe at the Culver Community High School cafeteria this evening, Thursday, March 18, starting at 6 p.m. Dinner will be served and guests entertained by the music of CCHS' award-winning vocal choir group Jazz Street, directed by Diane Darrow. There is an \$8 donation requested at the door. More information is available at 574-842-3391.

Fish fry to benefit fire dept. this weekend

Culver's VFW Post #6919 is sponsoring an all-you-can-eat fish fry in conjunction with the Culver-Union Township Volunteer Fire Department Saturday, March 20, from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Post, 108 E. Washington Street in Culver.

Prices are \$4 for children 12 and under and \$8 for adults, and carry out orders will be available. The doors are open to the public and all meal fundraiser proceeds will be donated to the Culver Fire Department. The fish will be prepared by the Tyner IOOF Lodge. Those with questions may call 574-842-3886.

End-of-month meal at St. Mary's March 30

St. Mary of the Lake Catholic Church's end-of-month community meal will take place Tuesday, March 30. On the 30th day of each month, a community meal will be provided for anyone interested in attending, with food and drinks supplied by parishioners (the format is similar to Grace United Church of Christ's mid-month meal). St. Mary of the Lake is located at 124 College Avenue in Culver. Questions may be directed to 574-842-2522.

Thursday Tech Time March 25 at CUTPL

Thursday Tech Time is an open discussion group for anyone interested in computers and technology. Sessions will be held from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of each month. Each session may have a speaker and topic or may simply be an open discussion. All sessions are free and open to the public. The March 25 session will cover Google and the various services it offers, including

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At the helm of a Culver tradition

LEFT: Greg Odom and his family have officially taken over the former Bonine-Odom Funeral Home in Culver in full, and recently the sign outside the longstanding location of that funeral home came to reflect the change. SEE STORY BELOW.

CITIZEN PHOTO/JEFF KENNEY

Fun at Young Author's

RIGHT: Award-winning children's author Carolyn Crimi, visiting Culver as part of the Culver Elementary School-hosted Marshall County Young Author's Conference last week, "decorates" CES Assistant Principal Craig Hopple, to the delight of her young audience. SEE STORY BELOW.

CITIZEN PHOTO/JEFF KENNEY

'Quite a legacy'

Odom takes over Culver's 100-plus year-old funeral business

By Jeff Kenney
Citizen editor

The Odom name is certainly not new to Culver. After all, it's been affixed to the large sign outside Culver's only funeral home since 2005, though only in recent months has the name resided there alone, no longer joined by the "Bonine" moniker which occupied it for some four decades. Further, Greg Odom and his family have been familiar to Culverites since 2000, when Greg began working with longtime director Jim Bonine, who began to phase out of the daily operation of the funeral home and mortuary with Greg's arrival.

Now, Odom is the fourth owner of the more than century-old business, and just the second outside the Easterday family who started it in the 19th century, and the Bonine-Odom Funeral Home has become the Odom Funeral Home.

Odom and his wife Karen, along with a 16-year-old son (another son, an adult, lives and works in St. Louis) arrived here in August, 2000, from Marion, Illinois, where Greg had been a third generation coal miner, a profession in which he intended to continue "forever," he says. However, he started working with a local funeral director in Marion and eventually went back to school at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale and obtained his mortuary science degree, working for the next five years in the local mortuary industry. A salesman friend of his, who worked the Culver territory and knew Odom wasn't happy where he was, contacted Odom about the Bonine Funeral Home.

"We came up and visited one weekend and fell in love with the place," recalls Odom. "I worked a week and moved up here right away. We did a lot of prayer about it, but it turned out ok. We've been very happy here."

Odom worked for the Bonines until March of 2005, during which time discussion of possible future ownership of the business came up, something Bonine was also interested in.

"He (Jim Bonine) helped me learn a lot about the business," says Odom. "I'd had five years' experience where I was at, but Jim opened up (about) the business end to me...I've got to give credit to Jim for giving me a chance here."

Odom's buyout of the business was actually complete last fall, though the name only changed on the sign after the turn of 2010. And over the months, the Odoms have concentrated, says Greg, on "helping families create meaningful ceremonies celebrating the special people in their lives. That's where I like to spend my energy, so they feel happy that they've honored that individual (the deceased).

"And of course the grief part of it is another side of it that's a big thing I feel strongly about. We give handouts on grief and point people in the right direction if they need information on grief. We do a remembrance service once a year to celebrate the lives of people to show they're not forgotten about. On the anniversary of their death, we light a candle in remembrance of that person. We try to keep track of that...we try to show the families that we really care, too."

Odom stresses that those in Culver needn't assume their choices in funeral-related services are limited simply by the small size of their community.

"I try to keep up with the trade to offer the same value to our families here as in bigger cities. Funerals are expensive, and I

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Award-winning children's author Crimi has message, fun for kids at CES

By Jeff Kenney
Citizen editor

Culver Elementary School played host to the 25th annual Marshall County Young Author's Conference Thursday night and marked the occasion with a visit from award-winning children's author Carolyn Crimi.

Crimi shared time with students at the school before a private book signing and "meet and greet" with winners in the conference's annual student writing contest, and gave an address to parents and students in the school's recently-renovated gymnasium.

CES principal Chuck Kitchell introduced the two winning writers from each school, which included Jacob Stayton and Katelin Serton (Argos Elementary), Lily Gregorash and Cheyenne Durbin (Culver Elementary), Jia Bloom and Grace Allmon (Jefferson Elementary), Samantha Zechiel and Matthew Gerard (Webster Elementary), Gabby Garver and Katie Johnson (Riverside Intermediate), Emma Ross and Jenna Swihart (Triton Elementary), Carson Spaid and Amanda Spearman (Bremen Elementary), Samuel Evans and Callie Ruth Burch (Washington Elementary), Leah Smith and Nathan Bubica (Menominee Elementary), Victoria Jennings and Olivia Jennings (St. Michael's Catholic School), and Caleb Christy and Erin Fuchs (Laville Elementary).

During her program, Crimi shared with the audience her reaction to a phone call from

See Author page 12

Council hears trash bids, talks Culver development

By Jeff Kenney
Citizen editor

The town of Culver officially opened three bids for its town-wide trash service last week, bringing the community one step closer to mandated waste pickup for each resident.

Town Manager Michael Doss, at the March 9 meeting of Culver's Town Council, opened bids for town-wide service with two alternatives. A: the waste hauler providing trash and recycling totes, or B: residents each provide their own totes.

Of the three bidding companies, waste hauler Key Waste's bid came in lowest at \$14.09 per resident per month for alternative A and \$13.56 per resident per month for alternative B. The Waste Management company came in next at \$14.45 for alternative A and \$12.60 for alternative B, with Richard's Disposal coming in highest at \$20 per month for alternative A and \$15 per month for alternative B. Doss noted the bids were for a three-year contract and weekly pickup, which would take place Mondays. He asked the Council to allow him and town attorney Jim Clevenger time to look over the bids in detail before the Council formally accepts one.

The town also held a third reading of ordinance 2010-002, which annexes land on three properties south of Davis Street into the town of Culver. Part of the land is intended for development of Garden Court senior living housing. Doss said a 30-day waiting period will follow the reading and notice given for remonstrance of the decision.

Tom Turner, Executive Director of the Marshall County Economic Development Corporation, was on hand to share information with the Council as to the efforts of the MCEDC in helping create and grow local businesses throughout the county. He noted the Corporation can assist Culver with grant writing and administration, and has used its website as an effective tool to draw new business to the area.

Much Council discussion with Turner focused on ways to make Culver more marketable. Turner, who noted the MCEDC doesn't presently deal with retail-type businesses, said "Culver is so unique, I think it differentiates itself (from other county communities' business models)."

He suggested options for the Culver community such as building an office, rather than industrial, park and said it's likely more important for Culver to develop its downtown than put great amounts of energy into drawing manufacturing to the area. He also emphasized advertising Culver. "I grew up with kids that went to Culver (Academies) and I thought it was in North Carolina," said Turner. "That's anecdotal, but Culver's a real secret. Most people would not expect to find something like this in northern Indiana."

Turner said "weak communities who know they don't have much going for them" tend to focus on recruiting industrial-type businesses, adding he doesn't feel any Marshall County communities fit that bill. He described industrial recruitment as "high cost and low probability," adding much of this county's recent growth has come from expansion of existing industry rather than recruiting new.

"I would look at Traverse City, Michigan (as a model for Culver's business development) rather than, say, a Bremen," added Turner, noting the notion that people don't visit

See Council page 2

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CITIZEN PHOTOS/JEFF KENNEY

Health Fair fun

Students and parents took part in the Marshall County Health Carnival last Thursday at the Culver Middle School cafeteria. ABOVE: Hunter Ringer (age 9, right), examines animals at the Indiana Department of Natural Resources table alongside brother Wyatt Ringer (age 7) and their mother, Jessica Ringer. TOP RIGHT: Olivia Compton, age 4, accepts a jump rope from Connie Deery of Culver, representing the St. Joseph Regional Medical Center. BOTTOM RIGHT: Attendees at the health fair were entertained by members of Culver Academies student rock band Dernier Nirvana, including (from left) Cindy Tsai (piano), Giang Liang (drums), Winnie Wei (vocals), and Xin Peng (guitar).



Council from page 1

Midwestern resort communities like Traverse City during the winter is a myth.

He also said manufacturing has been declining for the past three decades, and often relies on cheap electricity, which may be a less common commodity in the future.

During his Town Manager's report, Doss announced 2010 street paving projects, based on utilization of a recently-completed DLZ Engineering pavement management study, are slated to include Lakeview Street from College Avenue to Washington Street; Lake Street from College to Lake Shore Drive; and Academy Road from Lake Shore Drive to Forest Place. Sealing of cracks on several streets is also planned, he added.

Noting some Council members had requested leaving \$5,000 in the town's sidewalk sharing program budget (since, as Doss explained, that's approximately the amount requested from citizens each year), Doss asked the remainder of funds from that budget go towards street

repaving, with about \$4,000 left over for safety sidewalk repairs as needed around town. The Council approved leaving \$5,000 in the sharing program.

Doss also said Culver's street department will do the tear-out of existing curbs on Lakeview Street, saving the town \$8 per lineal foot over hiring an outside contractor for the work, and facilitating replacement of curbs and gutters on that street.

The Council voted against accepting a bid from R. Bachman Concrete to begin repair of Lakeview Street's curbs, pending a second bid being obtained.

Also, a small, long-discussed piece of town-owned land in an area adjoining the Culver Cove property was sold to the only bidder for the land, Glenn Roberts, at \$7,511.

Board President Sally Ricciardi discussed a meeting planned tentatively for March 25 with members of Culver-Union Township's EMS and fire departments, concerning the possibility of creating fire and EMS territories. The move is the result of proposals in the state legislature to do away with township boards and trustees, with all funds previously allotted to those entities to be sent instead to the county.

"If that happens," explained Ricciardi, "that's going to leave our fire and EMS a little bit wanting."

She noted current Union Township trustee Marlene Mahler suggested the creation of a fire territory – which could encompass the EMS as well – as a means of retaining more local control over those emergency services.

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Under that system, the Council would no longer have any control over local fire and EMS, which would instead be governed by their own board, which Ricciardi said she believes would consist of appointed members. The proposed meeting would include Mahler's explanation of the specifics of the territories.

The Council also voted to allow use of a vintage half-track tank in this year's Lake Fest parade, as requested by Jon Schmidt of the Culver area. The same request was denied last year, said Ricciardi, as some parade route pavement was then new, and Council members hadn't had time to research the pressure per square inch of the tank, which Schmidt has since said is actually less than that of a car.

Fire chief Mike Grover updated the Council on the recently-installed fire siren at the town hall, which is planned to replace sirens on the north and south sides of Culver as a fire whistle, though all will remain active as emergency weather signals. Grover said the siren is in need of a part, which has been ordered. He also told Council three members of the fire department climbed the water tower at the east end of College Avenue earlier that day and replaced light bulbs there. Doss said the company changing the bulbs last time charged the town \$500 for the work, which the fire department did for free.

Other Council votes included repairs of the door at Culver's water plant for \$2,565 and repair of a town sewer pump at \$2,688.

Odom from page 1

want people to feel like they're getting some value out of what they're paying for.

"I keep a list of different types of services and show it to every family," Odom adds. "We've done balloon services, one with a Dixieland band; we did a Notre Dame-themed service. I try to get people to open up their imagination to whatever is meaningful to them."

Funeral services have changed over the past decade, Odom notes, including – as might be imagined – facets incorporating technology. The use of digital images and music via DVDs for visitations and other occasions has become a regular part of the funeral home's offering. There's a push on to show funerals streaming on the internet, something to which

Odom says his family has given thought.

"We want to keep improving," he explains. "You can't offer everything, but you try to offer something really good."

Greg Odom believes the business he's taken over is the second oldest of its kind in Marshall County, having started in downtown Culver in 1893. It was operated by members of the Easterday family until the Bonines took it over in the early 1960s, moving the business to its present home at the corner of Main Street and Lake Shore Drive.

"It is quite a legacy," he acknowledges.

Odom says the Culver community has embraced his family, a sentiment that's entirely reciprocal.

"Culvers been very good to us," he smiles. "The people have been great to us... very, very welcoming. I can't say enough about that. And the trust they place in us...we make mistakes, but people have been very forgiving."

"Culver is a great place, really," he adds. "It's a unique little town. I'm surprised at how many people die away from here and want to be buried here."

He says he and his family hope they're here "for a long time. Lots of young guys are looking to get the same opportunity I got. I thank God it worked out."

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Death notice

Guzzo

Paula Faith Guzzo
March 8, 2010

CULVER — Paula Faith Guzzo, 12, of Culver, died at 7:36 a.m. Monday, March 8, 2010.

She is survived by her parents, Thomas and Janet; and her sister, Taylor Cheyenne Guzzo, all of Plymouth; maternal grandparents, Richard and JoAnn Smith of Plymouth, and Robert and Beverly Brosmer of Granger; paternal grandparents Thomas and Becky Guzzo, Sr. of Bremen, and Katherine Guzzo of Rochester; and numerous aunts, uncles and cousins.

Visitation took place from 4 to 6 p.m. Thursday, March 11 at the Wesley United Methodist Church, Culver. Funeral services took place at 6 p.m. Thursday at the church.

Memorial contributions may be made to the MLD Foundation, 21345 Miles Drive, West Linn, OR, 97068-2878.

The Johnson-Danielson Funeral Home, 1100 N. Michigan St., Plymouth, was entrusted with arrangements.

Condolences may be sent to the family via the funeral home's Web site at www.johnson-danielson.com.

Birth - Hanselman



Hazel Mae Hanselman, daughter of Rusty and Shannon Hanselman, Argos, celebrated her first birthday Feb. 26, 2010.

Maternal grandparents are Jim and Brenda Hutchinson, Argos. Paternal grandparents are Dave and Nona Crosby of Hamlet.

Maternal great-grandparents are Owen and Bertha Fluckey, Argos.

Engagement - Ross, Oszuscik

Scott Alan Ross, Bremen, and Sara Jeanne Oszuscik, Bremen, announce their engagement to be married May 15, 2010 at the Emmanuel United Methodist Church, Culver.



The bride-to-be is the daughter of Keith and Pat Oszuscik, Plymouth. She is a 2004 graduate of Plymouth High School, Plymouth, and a 2008 graduate of Manchester College, North Manchester, where she earned a bachelor's

degree in Accounting and Finance with minor in Economics.

She is currently employed with Kruggel Lawton & Co. South Bend, as a staff accountant.

The groom-elect is the son of Jim and Sue Ross, Plymouth. He is a 1994 graduate of Plymouth High School, Plymouth. He is currently employed at Del Monte Plymouth, in the sanitation department.

Community calendar

Thurs., March 18

Kiwanis Club mtg., noon, Culver Public Library
 Story time, 3:30 p.m., Culver Public Library
 Census job testing, 6 p.m., Culver Public Library
 Culver Board of Zoning Appeals mtg., 6:30 p.m., town hall
 Knights of Columbus St. Mary of the Lake Council #13720 business mtg., 7 p.m., church rectory basement

train station-depot

Thurs., March 25

Kiwanis Club mtg., noon, Culver Public Library
 Story time, 3:30 p.m., Culver Public Library
 Census job testing, 6 p.m., Culver Public Library
 Thursday Tech Time, 6 p.m., Culver Public Library
 Knights of Columbus St. Mary of the Lake Council #13720 business mtg., 7 p.m., church rectory basement

Fri., March 19

Computer class, 10 a.m., Culver Public Library

Sat., March 20

Spring break begins, Culver Academies
 Quilting group, 9 a.m., Culver Public Library
 Census job testing, 2 p.m., Culver Public Library

Sun., March 21

Lenten Service, 4 p.m., Emmanuel United Methodist Church

Mon., March 22

Spring break begins, Culver Community Schools
 Story time, 11 a.m., Culver Public Library
 Free computer class, 6 p.m., Culver Public Library
 DivorceCare, 7 p.m., Grace United Church of Christ

Tues., March 23

Tuesday Tea (and crafts), 1 p.m., Market Basket & Co., SR 17
 Town Council mtg., 6:30 p.m., town hall

Weds., March 24

Story time, 9:30 a.m., Culver Public Library
 Genealogy mtg., 10 a.m., Culver Public Library
 Garden Club, 6 p.m., Culver Public Library
 Lions Club mtg., 6:30 p.m.,

Name: MARCH WEEKLY ADS;

Death notice

Remembering our uncles

Dear Mr. Kenney,

Thank you for the wonderful editorial on Kings Lake and the interview with my uncle, Charles "Mick" Henley. (*Culver Citizen*, Feb. 25, 2010) We called him Uncle Mickey.

In a day when middle class African Americans were prohibited from buying, leasing and renting properties in the major resort communities of America, Kings Lake afforded us a much needed getaway from the hot urban pavements and stone façades of Chicago. Mick and Bernard called their property that grew to significant acreage, "Berniki's Oasis" (conflating Bernard and Mickey). We spent many summers with our uncles, parents and other neighbors at Kings Lake.

As a rail buff, I enjoyed the frequent trains that ran through the area (and into Culver) in the late 50s and early 60s. At Kings Lake resort we experienced nature, wild animals, worked on our hobbies, and enjoyed a strong loving community guided by faith in God, in our future, and in each other. My brothers and I also vacationed with our own children at Kings Lake. We have a few photos of them enjoying the water at the Public beach in Culver and on the pier in Kings Lake.

My grandmother, a business owner in Chicago, originally bought a farmhouse that sat on old Route 17 in 1954. She had planned to live there after she retired, but sold it in 1959. As Mick pointed out, most roads and streets there were unpaved.

One of my favorite experiences was the time our new 1961 Ford Falcon would not climb the rained out, muddy road we have taken to the lake for a fishing expedition. My brother Greg and I were so proud. Along with our dad, we actually pushed the car up the muddy road to "Old 17"

as my 7 year-old sister nervously sat at the steering wheel.

As Uncle Mick pointed out, the only thing we could not do at Kings Lake was swim. For this reason we often traveled to the public beach at Culver to enjoy the clean warm summer water of Lake Maxinkuckee. The ten-mile drive always seemed like an eternity as we rode along S. R. 17 with great anticipation.

The first time we went to the Culver Beach we were a little fearful. We knew that our uncles were the kind of people who never allowed the race prejudice of others to define their behavior and their sense of self. They were never plagued by the attitude that as "Negroes" they should "be neither seen nor heard." Because this was a time of great racial turbulence in America, my brother Greg and I expected trouble.

We were pleasantly surprised that day in 1959 by the warm greeting we received from other children and their parents. This was a new experience. There were still many beaches on the shores of Lake Michigan in Chicago, where we could not go without racial harassment or worse.

Our family remembers Culver (including our treatment in its business establishments) as a place of warm hospitality, populated by friendly people. It was no surprise to us that Uncle Mick decided to stay there after giving up his Kings Lake home.

Thank you for bringing these wonderful memories back in your comprehensive article on Kings Lake. Thank you for featuring our Uncle Mick.

Dr. Donald F. Guest, pastor
Glide Memorial United Methodist Church
San Francisco, California

Trinity baked potato supper will be April 9

Culver's Trinity Lutheran Church will hold a "Baked Potato Supper" at the Vandalia railroad station in Culver Friday, April 9. All are encouraged to dine from 4:30 to 7 p.m. This is a fund raiser to support the Culver Food Pantry and Trinity. Feel free to bring personal products (deodorant, soap, toothpaste, etc.) the evening of the dinner, and those items will be delivered to the Culver Food Pantry.

Members of the Culver Youth Community Organization (CYCO) will be assisting at the supper. The CAVS, from the Culver High School, and the Culver Academies Service Club will both be in attendance and at your service!

Tickets can be purchased from any Trinity member or they can be purchased at the door. Tickets are \$7 for adults and \$4 children 12 and under.

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Name: BEST GIFT; Width: 30p11.5; Depth: 10 in; Color: Black; File Name: 00088012; Ad Number: -; Customer Name: Pilot News; Size: 30 in

Name: MARCH ADS; Width: 20p4.667; Depth: 4 in; Color: Black; File Name: 00087907; Ad Number: -; Customer Name: Family Vision Clinic; Size: 8 in

Name: RESERVATIONS/GIFTS; Width: 20p4.667; Depth: 4 in; Color: Black; File Name: 00087994; Ad Number: -; Customer Name: Culver Reservations; Size: 8 in

Middleton impacted Culver, world-wide historical events

Jeff Kenney
Citizen editor

In the plethora of local lore that has accumulated concerning the May 29, 1933 robbery of Culver's State Exchange Bank – and the subsequent capture of the robbers by a band of Culver vigilantes and law enforcement agents – credit is given, and rightly so, to a number of individuals, from Col. Robert Rossow of the Culver Military Academy to Culver telephone operator Elsie Wagner. Certainly the scene in Culver that May day was quite different from the

1920 robbery of the same bank which left one Culverite, businessman Jacob Saine, dead.

Behind the scenes and the (at least indirect reason) for the remarkable and much-lauded success of Culver's citizens in overcoming the Chicago gangsters who hit the town in '33 was Lt. Phillip Middleton, whose son John and his wife Sandra are well-known Culver residents and graduates of Culver High School.

What's more, Middleton played a quiet but significant role in a number of areas of history, both local and world-wide.

Middleton, originally from Iowa and a graduate of the Dodge Radio Institute in Valparaiso, came to Culver to help operate Culver Military Academy's own local radio station, WCMA, at its inception in September, 1926. Through the years, Middleton had a storied career in radio, operating five different stations in Chicago including well-known WGN, besides working for radio stations in Gary, Ind., Holland, Mich., and many others, according to John Middleton.

Culver's WCMA radio, picked up in at least 25 American states and even a foreign country or two, shut down in 1932 (that station will be the subject of an article in the near future in this paper), though Middleton continued on as a clerk at the Academy's post office.

While in Culver, Lt. Middleton met and (in 1932) married his wife, Cleta Zecheil, at the time a dental assistant to local dentist Dr. Leonard.

Middleton, notes his son, was a member of the US Reserve Corps and a crack gunshot who participated in – and won a first place gold medal in -- the Indiana Civilian Rifle Team national matches at Camp Perry, Ohio (a renowned tradition which continues today). John Middleton believes his father's connection with the state rifle team and Army facilitated his making arrangements for Culver's State Exchange Bank to buy a case of one dozen Krag 30-40 rifles, the predecessor of the then-current Springfield 1903 rifles. The Krag models, says John, would have been in Army

surplus in those days and would have been "pretty cheap."

While John Middleton doesn't know the specifics of the evolution of Culver's proactive plan of defense for its bank, the effort was clearly the result of the 1920 affair, which left Saine the victim of gunfire returned to his Saine and Sons grocery storefront at the southeast corner of Main and Jefferson Streets, the site of today's Culver Academies Museum and Gift Shop. He had been firing at the bank robbers, as had been Jerome Zecheil, who was wounded in the shootout but survived. All but one of the bandits – Saine's murderer was the lone exception – were

later caught, but clearly Culver had a bitter taste in its mouth as to future robberies.

Nor was in coincidence that the State Exchange Bank was hit twice during this period. In fact, the likelihood of a second robbery only increased as the Great Depression hit its ugly stride. Culver's bank was the only one in Marshall County to remain open with no restrictions as a Class A financial institution under presidential orders. Through the years of the Depression, deposits were at an all-time high at the State Exchange, which even had the capital for a major renovation completed in 1936. A year later, a branch bank was opened in Argos. Under the leadership of W.O. Osborn and supported by a strong and savvy staff, the State Exchange Bank had earned a reputation it would keep for decades, as one of the great American success stories of small, community banking.

This, of course, drew less-than-savory attention as well in the

form of five armed men in a car with Illinois plates entering the bank at 9:04 a.m. that May morning. As a gushing editorial from the Chicago Daily News in 1933 explained, Culver residents "had organized a stout band of vigilantes under an academy officer. From a concealed office in the bank, a girl at a switchboard could survey the premises. When the raiders entered she sent to the academy a call which set in motion the prearranged plan of action."

That plan, as has become the stuff of legend (and a colorfully-written spread in the December, 1933 issue of "True Detective" Magazine), included Rossow and other Culverites' pursuing the robbers into the swamps west of Culver.

The bank had purchased and dispersed those Krag rifles provided by Middleton to businessmen throughout the downtown area, notes John Middleton, as far north as Dale Jones' DX gas station (today's Bike See Middleton page 6



PHOTO SUBMITTED/JOHN MIDDLETON

Lt. Phillip Middleton in the late 1920s-early 1930s, during his days at Culver Military Academy and its radio station, WCMA.

It's time to fish

As everyone has noticed, the ice has melted off of the lake. So now it's time to fish. I know there are several people who ice fish also, but I haven't got into ice fishing.



Pastor's Corner

By Pastor Ron Lewellen
Emmanuel
United Methodist Church

I tried it once and by the time I made a hole big enough to get the boat in the water, I was too tired to fish!

Jesus talks to us about fishing and fish several times in the Bible. He fed 5,000 people with just five loaves and two fish. He spent a lot of time on the Sea of Galilee. It was here that he calmed the storm; also Peter walked on the water, but it was here when he called Peter, Andrew, James and John to follow him. This was four out of the 12. So fishing was important to Jesus also. He told them "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men."

This is also a calling for every Christian to follow Jesus and he will make you a "Fisher of Men."

Those who fish have a lot of good attributes that Christians can learn from such as: patience, dedication, endurance, and the ability to put up with any kind of weather on any day.

REAL Services menu

Those interested in sharing a meal at REAL Meals are asked to call Ruth Walker at the nutrition site (the Culver beach lodge) before 11 a.m. on the day before for reservations, at 574-842-8878. A donation is suggested for each meal.

Thursday, March 18: Liver and onions, mashed potatoes and gravy, baby carrots, and milk.

Friday, March 19: Scrambled eggs, biscuit and biscuit gravy, diced potatoes, green pepper strips and ranch, orange, margarine, and milk.

Monday, March 22: BBQ pork, bun, sweet potato patties, mixed vegetables, dessert, and milk.

Tuesday, March 23: Beef stew with corn, carrots, potatoes, cauliflower, broccoli, biscuit, peaches, and milk.

Wednesday, March 24: Oven fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, bread and margarine, cinnamon applesauce, and milk.

Thursday, March 25: Sweet and sour chicken, rice, black-eyed peas, roll and margarine, blueberry crisp, salad, and milk.

Friday, March 26: Tuna salad sandwich with cheese and onion, pea and cheese salad, fresh fruit (in season), cookie, and milk.

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Where in the world was the Culver Citizen?

At press time, sharp-eyed readers Kevin Van Horn and Louise Anella recognized the locale of our "Where in the World is the Culver Citizen" photo from last week. The photo was sent by Jim Hahn of Culver, and depicts Jim himself reading his copy of the Citizen in front of the famous statue, "Christ the Redeemer" at Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. The Citizen is obviously a world traveling publication, and the editor thanks Mr. and Mrs. Hahn for sending a photo proving even a work of art like this one can't pull one's eyes from the pages of the paper!



The editor encourages those traveling outside Culver to shoot similar photos of themselves or family or friends with the paper in hand at some well-known, iconic, or unusual location around the state, country, or world.

Guesses as to the location of this photo or submissions of similar photos may be emailed to citizen@culcom.net, dropped off in one of our drop boxes (located at the Culver Public Library and Culver Coffee Company), or call the editor at 574-216-0075.

PHOTO SUBMITTED

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Name that Culver "citizen"

Last week's Mystery Citizen drew comments from several correct guessers as to how little he's changed from the "early" photo (taken while he was a cadet at Culver Military Academy), to the present. He was, of course, Bill Cleavenger of Culver, who today is Marshall County Coroner. Readers who knew from his photo included Lynn Overmyer, Lora Pinder, Rick Tompos, Julie Bess, Larry Miller, and Carin Clifton.

Adding to correct guesses on the previous week's Mystery Citizen, reader Patricia Crowell of Colorado correctly identified Karen Banks Easterday after press time for last week's paper. This week's Mystery Citizen has touched the lives of many Culverites over several decades and continues to do so in several local community endeavors.

Guesses may be emailed to citizen@culcom.net, dropped off in one of our drop boxes (located at the Culver Public Library and Culver Coffee Company), or call the editor at 574-216-0075.

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Famous attorney Darrow defended Culver bandits

By Jeff Kenney
Citizen editor

In another odd twist of historical fate, one of the looming figures of 20th century legal and political life was also entwined in the drama that was the 1920 robbery of Culver's State Exchange Bank, the incident which led to John Middleton's securing of rifles for Culver's downtown prior to the 1933 robbery (see article this page).

Famed American attorney Clarence Darrow (1857-1938) is probably best known as the attorney opposing William Jennings Bryan in the so-called "Scopes monkey trial" of 1925, seen by many as a pivotal case that effectively put Charles Darwin's theories of evolution on trial. Darrow was famously portrayed by Spencer Tracy in the best-known Hollywood version of the trial, "Inherit the Wind" in 1960, though he was also famous for – among others – his defense of teen "thrill killers" Leopold and Loeb in 1924.

However, as noted in an article by Florence S. Stauffer in the Warsaw Times-Union newspaper of November 13, 1975, Darrow – already a famed Chicago attorney known for "fighting for the underdog" – took the case of the four bandits charged with murder for the death of Culver's Jacob Saine during the robbery. Initial attorneys for bandits Joe Beyerss of Knox, and John R. Burns, Art Silbert, and Peter J. Fox, all of Chicago, asked for a change of venue for the trial after Saine died of his wounds, suggesting a fair trial in Marshall County – where the prisoners were housed – was impossible due to the intense feels in Culver and the surrounding area aroused from the case.

The trial was moved to the Kosciusko County court in Warsaw, where the prisoners were moved in March, 1921. When the news came that Darrow would represent the defendants, crowds quickly converged on the courthouse. Area media coverage was naturally intense, with the local paper headline encouraging readers to "Follow the Culver

Bank Bandit and Decker Murder Trials."

Darrow was joined in his defense by William Reed of Knox and James Fardy of Chicago, while prosecution was handled by Marshall County Prosecutor Harley Logan, Prosecutor Henry Graham of Warsaw, and F. E. Bowser of Warsaw. There was some difficulty securing the all-male jury, though possibly largely because it was planting season at the time and many prospective jurors (and the majority of those finally chosen) were farmers.

At Darrow's request, State Exchange Bank president SC Shilling (who 12 years later would shoot the driver of the getaway car in the 1933 robbery) was moved away from jurors. Darrow also objected to multiple witnesses repeated essentially the same description of the 1920 gun battle that marked the bank robbery (he was overruled by the judge).

Under Indiana law, all the robbers were guilty of the murder regardless of who pulled the trigger. Beyerss didn't deny the intent to rob the bank, and Darrow repeatedly asked for a verdict of not guilty on murder charges and suggested five to 20 years' sentences for the robbery itself.

The State Exchange Bank closed on the last day of the trial, May 19, so employees could join the growing crowd of spectators jamming the courthouse. In fact, the numbers swelled – with Culver residents, high school students, attorneys seeking to study Darrow's style, and folks from every walk of life – the judge admonished the crowd and complained of the danger of a stampede in case of fire.

Darrow's impassioned and articulate closing argument focused on making the world a better place through the employment of civilized mercy on the "boys" who committed the robbery.

"If that (administering the defendants the death penalty) is all you can say for your churches, your civilization, the influence of your religion -- if it is all you can say for the

human race, it would as soon kill as save, then you had better kill us all and get done with it, and start with something else that would promise better than man."

Darrow insisted the death penalty wouldn't prevent future robberies ("You cannot scare people into goodness by killing a few men.") and emphasized that the robbery itself was over by the time the killing took place, so that each defendant was acting as a single man rather than part of a fully culpable unit. He also noted Saine opened fire on the robbers first, and that the bandits returned fire so they could escape.

"These boys," Darrow said, "not one of them intended to kill. They intended to rob and their moral guilt is fixed by their intent, and to say they should not have the smallest penalty gentlemen is to say you are not humane men."

After four hours' deliberation, the jury found all four defendants guilty of murder and handed down life sentences for each. Ironically, notes Stauffer, Darrow just missed his future Scopes monkey trial opponent, Bryant, who attended a conference that weekend at Winona Lake.

In a fascinating footnote to the story, Beyers – according to an address given by Marcia Adams in 1998 to the Antiquarian and Historical Society of Culver – was up for parole some years later when then-State Exchange Bank president W.O. Osborn was asked his opinion of the idea. Supposedly Osborn approved of the parole, noting Beyers was only 16 at the time of the robbery and had served several years in prison and should be released. Osborn, in fact, became Beyers' parole officer after the latter moved to Culver. He even brought his bride-to-be for Osborn's approval.

"The young man obtained a loan from the State Exchange Bank," adds Adams, "and never defaulted a payment."

Middleton from page 4

Barn at Main and Lake Shore Drive) and including Walter Johnson's Sinclair service station (today's Family Vision Clinic), the Easterday Funeral Home (Gladie's Deli nowadays), and south down the line to Rector's Pharmacy, Ewald's grocery (both just south of Gladie's), across the street to Oliver Shilling's Culver City Drugs, and the service station several blocks south on Main Street, today the home of Remax Realty.

The Krag guns became the saviors of the day in the hands of Culver City Drugs proprietor Shilling, who climbed to the roof of the building south of the bank (just south of today's Heritage Park) and shot the bank robbers' driver between the eyes. Without their navigator, the thieves were uncertain of the best route west to Chicago and found themselves lost and eventually in marshland west of Ober, where Rossow's later recollections of the day noted "Lt. Phillip Middleton, U.S. Reserve Corps... and others were present" to aid in the bandits' capture.

"Long renowned because of its military academy," wrote the Chicago Daily News, "the little town has now acquired new fame by putting to most effective use the principles of preparedness and disciplined organization taught in its famous school."

Joining the Indianapolis Star and an apparent host of well-known media and commentators, the Chicago paper cited Culver's successful thwarting of the robbery as a

model for other communities.

Sometime after 1935, Phillip Middleton left his postal position at Culver to join the Civil Conservation Corps, moving to Oregon and Montana and overseeing a company of "CCC boys from Tennessee" building cabins for national parks, relates John Middleton.

When World War II began in earnest, Lt. Middleton was there, fighting in the European theater while his wife Clea came back to the Culver area with their young sons Bob and John. Middleton was part of the 20th Armored Division which, among its other accomplishments, liberated the infamous Nazi concentration camp at Dachau on April 29, 1945.

Today, John Middleton turns the pages of a book of photos the 20th Armored put together of its wartime memories; invariably, one lingers on the pages of photos from the liberation: piles of bodies, most of them Jewish, stacked dozens high, one after another.

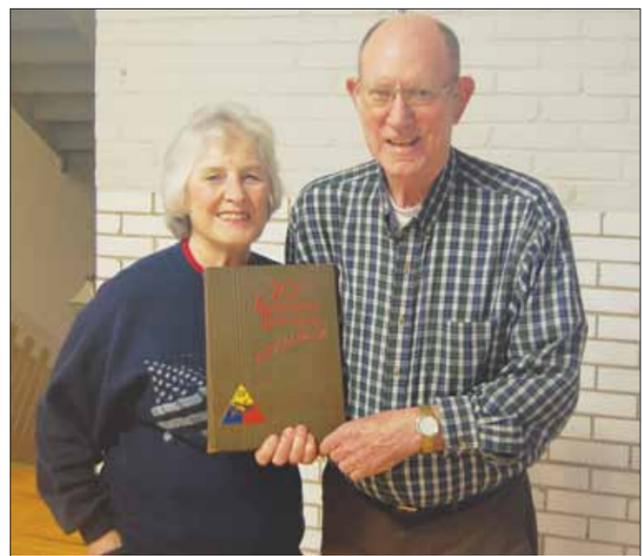
"Those that deny the Holocaust happened," he says soberly, "There's the proof, right there."

The book was his father's, but it's one of the few family memories of the war. Phillip Middleton, understandably, spoke very little of what he'd seen during those dark days.

Eventually, says John, his parents purchased and remodeled an "old school house out by Newman's old dairy," what had once been the one-room Kaley school, and remodeled it. During the decades following the war, Phillip Middleton lived a quiet life as an engineer at the Studebaker plant in South Bend, speaking little of his livelier days of bank robberies, riflery gold medals, and the battles of World War II, and of his contributions to some of Culver's – and the world's – most memorable historical events.

Editor's note: The Culver bank robberies of 1920 and 1933 continue to be popular local topics, and some area residents alive today recall the '33 robbery from their childhood. A number of articles and original newspaper accounts of

both incidents are available for viewing at the Center for Culver History, the museum operated by the Antiquarian and Historical Society of Culver at the Culver Public Library. From the AHS collection, information (and the full text and photos from the 1933 "True Detective" magazine article) on the robbery may be read online at the library's website, www.culver.lib.in.us/state_exchange_bank.htm.



CITIZEN PHOTO/JEFF KENNEY

ABOVE: John Middleton, with his wife Sandra, stands approximately where his father helped operate radio station WCMA, on the upper deck of the Recreation Building on the campus of Culver Academy, on whose roof the antenna stood for many years. In his hands is the World War II photo book his father kept from the 20th Armored Division of the war, which liberated the Nazi concentration camp at Dachau.

BELOW: Then-publisher and editor of the Culver Citizen M.R. Robinson displays the special edition he published on the capture of the bank bandits in 1933.



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School board discusses cost-savings, renovation, accreditation review

By Bobbie Washburn Ruhnow

Culver Community School's board of trustees observed a moment of silence in memory of 12 year old Paula Faith Guzzo at their Monday evening meeting. Paula was an honor roll student at Knox Middle School, but had attended Culver Elementary.

In the business portion of the meeting, Kathy Hermanson, school nurse, reported on the state mandated vaccination requirements for 6th through 12th grade students effective immediately. All students must have the TDAP vaccinations that include Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis, also, Meningitis and two chickenpox vaccines. A CHIRP (Children and Hoosiers Immunization Registry Program) consent form will be sent to parents and will be available on line at the school's web site. Free vaccinations will be offered by the Marshall County Health Department. Middle school vaccinations will begin at 9:30 a.m. in the multipurpose room. Immunizations for the Culver Elementary will be held April 7. Nursing students from Ancilla College will assist in the vaccinations and Pulaski County volunteers will assist in Monterey. Current 12th grade students are encouraged to get the required vaccinations before graduation.

Greg Saal, Stair Associates, reported on projected costs for renovation of the high school auditorium. Presently, the discussion centered on the replacement of the existing seats and chair rails. Saal projected a replacement cost of \$145 a seat. One row of seating would be removed, which

would reduce the cost of the project by approximately \$25,000. He also noted that the ceiling tile can be remediated saving \$3,500 in asbestos removal. The renovation would take four to five months and be conducted through summer vacation if approved. Board members agreed that no decision could be made at this time due to uncertainty in funds available. Brad Schuldt, superintendent, said that he could possibly have the financial information by mid April.

Each board member had a laptop computer at their station for a presentation by David Midesi, tech instructor, who introduced a new web site. Board members will now receive all pertinent information electronically saving staff time and materials. The trustee will have a log in name and password. Midesi said each school would have a web site and parents could make lunch payments, book rentals, and other costs by credit card through a secure server. Schuldt advised that laptops would be brought from the computer lab for each board meeting and would be a mixture of PC and Apple. The trustees can then decide if they wish to use a PC or Apple. Ed Behnke, a strong proponent of the PC vs. Apple computer, was not present at the meeting.

Albert Hanselman, high school administrator, updated the board on a recent visit by the North Central Accreditation team. Grades 9 through 12 were the focus of the review, Hanselman said. Five members of the review team were at the school to review documents, artifacts and conduct interviews. Hanselman noted that there were 83 inter-

views that included two school board members, patrons, teachers and 35 students. The accreditation team noted the "warm and friendly office staff and effective management skills." They also praised the "innovative technology and course variety." The team advised that the administrator empower the staff to lead improvement efforts, clearly define vision and address "why are some students not succeeding." The end result was the acknowledgement of a quality school.

Schuldt reviewed cost saving measures being put into effect due to diminished funding from the state. Presently, there are no reductions in staff anticipated, and he will be meeting with the CCTA to exchange ideas on reducing overhead. The board has already made \$186,000 in cuts to the budget, which is more than half of the funds needed cut. Schuldt noted that government budgeting had strict rules on transferring funds from one category to the next. Rainy Day funds or Capital Project funds could not be used for salaries, for example. The good news is that the Industrial Technology class will be continued. Input from patrons and some local civic clubs has indicated that this is a vital program and should be continued. Schuldt said four candidates were being interviewed that would be able take over the instruction when Tom Schmidt retires this year.

There will be no additional board meeting this month due to Spring break.

PHOTOS/WALT HANSELMAN AND JEFF KENNEY*

A tough light bulb to change

Three Culver fire fighters braved more than 90 feet of climbing last Tuesday to change light bulbs atop Culver's water tower at the corner of Lake Shore Drive and College Avenue.

Walt Hanselman, Brandon Cooper, and [redacted] climbed the tower's ladder and ascended to the very top of its tank in order to reach the bulbs, which have to be changed every few years according to fellow fire fighter Dave Cooper, who notes he's made the climb in years past.

Each fireman also wore safety harnesses similar to mountain-climbing equipment, clipping onto the ladder as they climbed.

While enjoying the "bird's-eye" view of Culver, Hanselman took two of these shots.

LEFT PHOTO: * Walt Hanselman and Brandon Cooper on the tower's "catwalk," as seen from the ground.

TOP RIGHT PHOTO: [redacted] gives the "thumbs up" signal as he ascends the tower's tank, its highest locale.

LOWER RIGHT PHOTO: One view of Culver as seen by Hanselman from the top of the tower, facing west down Lake Shore Drive. The closest buildings, of course, are Papa's Pizza and Inn by the Lake.



Briefs from page 1

Google Maps and Google Earth, Gmail for e-mail, and Google Docs for sharing and working with documents.

Culver Easter egg hunt April 3

The annual community Easter Egg hunt will take place Saturday, April 3, starting at 10 a.m. in the Culver town park on Lake Shore Drive. Participants, ages 2 through fourth grade, are reminded to meet at the beach lodge and bring a bag or basket to collect eggs and prizes.

Hydrant flushing

The Town of Culver will be flushing fire hydrants during the week of April 12-16. During this process your water may have a "rusty" color however it is still safe to drink. The hydrant flushing is done twice a year and is necessary to remove rust from the town's water.

CCHS Sports Spectacular April 9

Culver Community High School will host its annual Sports Spectacular from 6 to 11 p.m. Friday, April 3 at the high school gymnasium. Doors will open at 5:30. At 6 p.m., there will be a faculty versus students volleyball game. This is followed by thirteen events that test the numerous abilities of CCHS' students. At 8 p.m., the faculty will play the students in basketball. The annual dance contest will be after the basketball game, followed by a high school dance from 9 to 11 p.m. Admission to the Sports Spectacular is \$3, and the dance will be free for high school students. All proceeds go to the Culver Community Athletic Department.

Culver resident encourages personal protection whistles

One Culver resident wants to help others stay safe if attacked by way of the "three P's...Practice Personal Protection."

Pat Watson is hoping people – especially women – will consider

purchase of personal protection whistles, which she says are visible and easy to reach and can't be used against their owners as pepper spray or mace can. The whistle, adds Watson, will startle an attacker and alert others, giving a potential victim a chance to escape from personal attacks. The whistles are available alone or on a variety of necklaces, bracelets, and other formats.

Those interested in obtaining a whistle or with questions may call Watson at 574-842-4876 or purchase the whistles at Elizabeth's Garden florist on Plymouth Street in Culver.

Town wide yard sale

The Town of Culver is sponsoring a spring town-wide yard sale Friday and Saturday, April 23 and 24, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Anyone interested in participating should contact the town hall between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. at 574-842-3140. Please provide your address and the date(s) of your sale. There is no cost for the event. A map of the locations hosting a yard sale will be disbursed by

noon Thursday, April 21 at the town hall, Culver Express, and Osborn's Mini-Mart.

Culver kindergarten student Roundup

Culver Community Schools Superintendent Brad Schuldt announced the kindergarten enrollment information for the 2010-11 school year. Kindergarten Roundup for those students in the Culver Elementary attendance district will be held at 6 p.m. Wednesday, April 7, in the Culver Elementary School cafeteria. Kindergarten Roundup for those students in the Monterey Elementary attendance district will be held at 6 p.m. Thursday, April 8 in the Monterey Elementary School cafeteria.

To be eligible for kindergarten, a child must be five years old on or before Aug. 1, 2010. Children do not need to attend this informational meeting for parents.

If a parent cannot come April 7 or April 8, a parent or guardian should contact Culver Elementary at 574-842-3389, or Monterey Elementary at 574-542-2601 to make other arrangements.

Faculty artworks at Coffee Company

The Fine Arts Department of Culver Academies invites the Culver community to view an exhibition of artwork by its Visual Arts faculty, including Audrey Blessman, Jack Williams, Ashley Zimmerman, and Bob Nowalk, at the Culver Coffee Company, 634 Lake Shore Drive in Culver. The work will be on display from now until the first week of April and its viewing is free and open to the public.

Free computer classes at SCILL Center

A "Basic Computer Workshop" will be held March 31 at the SCILL Center in Knox from 8 a.m. until Noon. This class is designed for the person who has very limited or no computer skills. Space is very limited so please call today to register for this class.

On April 7 the SCILL Center will present a Basic Excel class from 8 a.m. until 12 (noon) at the SCILL Center. Starting with the basics, you will learn how to create, format and manipulate data in a spreadsheet. This is a "hands on" class where you learn on computers, not on paper.

To register or for more information, call Terri at 574-772-8001.

Town-wide spring cleanup

The Culver community clean-up is scheduled for Saturday, May 8 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Town of Culver will provide dumpsters for those wishing to dispose of debris from their home or yard. Hazardous chemicals and tires cannot

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be accepted. Please contact street department head Bob Porter (culverstreet@townofculver.org) or call 574-292-3943 with questions about what will be accepted.

Free computer classes at the library

Culver-Union Township Public Library will continue its free computer classes in March. Classes will be held Monday evenings at 6 p.m. and Friday mornings at 10: a.m. and will last two hours. Sessions for the month of March will cover the following: Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint and Microsoft Publisher. These are hands-on classes and the library will provide computers. Those with their own laptop computer may bring it to the classes. Instructors will conclude the session of computer classes with a class that demonstrates how to build a computer from parts.

Classes for March include Microsoft Publisher, March 19 at 10 a.m., and Computer Building March 22 at 6 p.m.

For more information, call the Culver Library at 574-842-2941, visit its Web site at www.culver.lib.in.us or e-mail abaker@culver.lib.in.us or stop by at 107 N. Main St.

Weekly Lenten services

The Culver Community Council Of Churches will once again hold weekly Lenten service, held at 4 p.m. each Sunday. The final service will take place at Leiters Ford United Methodist Church (March 21). All are welcome and encouraged to attend these inspirational services.

Market Basket offers weekly crafts

The Market Basket and Company, 13775 S R 17, will be holding Tuesday Tea and Crafts each Tuesday in March from 1 to 3 p.m. A

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PHOTO SUBMITTED

'Crazy' for Dr. Seuss

Students at Wesley United Methodist Preschool on School Street celebrated late children's author Dr. Seuss' birthday earlier this month with "Crazy Hair Day," during which teachers Jill Gavlick, Jennifer Luttrell, and Shelly Schrimsher encouraged students to come to school with imaginative hairstyles.

Students also ate green eggs and ham – after the popular Seuss book of the same name – and heard Gary Shaffer of Culver read "Green Eggs and Ham," his eighth year in a row reading the book to Wesley students.

different craft project will be offered. All crafts will be in the \$5 range, and include bead and wire spoons (March 9), glass painting (March 16), fairy craft for mom and kids (March 23), and lavender sachet (March 30).

Friends book sale

The Friends of the Culver-Union Twp. Public Library will hold its next book sale Friday, April 23 and Saturday, April 24, from 9 a.m. to noon both days. The group welcomes book donations any time; please bring to the main desk at the library. Those with questions may contact Charlotte Hahn at 574-842-3267.

Park boat slips now available

The Culver Park and Recreation Department is now leasing boat slips for the 2010 summer season. The fees for the boat slips are as follows: Culver-Union Twp. Residents: \$700; outside of the area: \$1000; waverunner spaces: \$400; and Hobie spaces: \$400. All boats and waverunners must be placed on lifts. Interested individuals should contact Kelly Young, Park Supt. at 574-842-3510 during the evening hours.

Citizen contact info

Drop-off boxes for community news are located at the Culver-Union Township Public Library and the Culver Coffee Company on Lake Shore Dr. These boxes will be accessible during the locations' normal business hours. Citizen editor Jeff Kenney may be reached at 574-216-0075. News can be sent by e-mail to: citizen@culcom.net.



CITIZEN PHOTO/JEFF KENNEY
 ABOVE: Culver Elementary School sixth grader Cheyenne Durbin (left) and third grader Lily Gregorash (middle), along with CES Title 1 teacher Terri Zechiel. Writings by the two students were the top winners from Culver in the annual Marshall County Young Authors Conference held at CES last week. BELOW: Durbin chats with award-winning children's author Carolyn Crimi, the featured speaker at the conference.



Author from page 1

her editor telling her of the publication of her first book, "Outside, Inside," after "four long years of sending out stories and being rejected."

Said Crimi, "I was so excited I started to cry on the phone with my editor...it was by far the happiest day of my life. My husband thinks our wedding day was the happiest day of my life, but no!"

Crimi's second book, "Don't Need Friends," won the Kentucky Bluegrass Award ("I like to stare at (the award)," she quipped, "and pretend it's the Caldecott award!").

She also discussed the autobiographical aspects of some of her other books, such as "Get Busy, Beaver!" "Boris and Bella," and "The Louds Move In," which she smilingly noted is dedicated to her in-laws.

Crimi is also very proud of the success of "Henry & the Buccaneer Bunnies," which sold 150,000 copies and spawned a sequel, "Henry & the Crazy Chicken Pirates."

The author read -- and poked fun at -- much of the text, and her own accompanying artwork, of the first story she wrote, centered around her own family members, when she was 9 years old.

"I wanted to be a writer when I grew up," she said, "and you can be writers."

She gave her audience several hints towards improving their own writing, from the need to read a lot, to developing an idea box, to keeping a journal. She also emphasized the importance of "sloppy copies," or multiple rough drafts of a story to allow continued improvement with each version.

"You have to work and work and work," she said, and added, "Your teacher is just trying to help you make the story better (by making corrections and requiring rough drafts)."

Also emphasized were multiple venues for writing besides books alone, from script writing for television and movies, to greeting cards, advertising, various types of magazines, and websites.

"I'm warning you," she told students before displaying a several-inch-thick stack of letters sent to her over the years, "that you will get rejection letters. I know you're all great writers, but you're going to get rejection letters because all writers get them...I'm so proud of them because it takes a lot of courage to put your heart and soul into a story knowing a lot of times it may come back to you. It's also cool because only published authors have them, so when you get them you will be part of a small, cool club. Every published author I know has a huge pile of these. Embrace it!"

CES Assistant Principal Craig Hopple was pulled from the audience to join several student volunteers in helping Crimi act out her 2009 book, "Where's My Mummy," which she read out loud and displayed on a large screen for the audience.

The Evanston, Illinois-based Crimi, who said she's published nine books and has four more about to be published -- besides some 90 stories on her computer -- also noted she's currently working on a chapter book.

My Life: 2034

Lily Gregorash

Third grade, Culver Elementary School

Editor's note: This work of fiction, by Culver Elementary third grader Lily Gregorash, was one of the top two student writings chosen at the Marshall County Young Author's conference last Thursday. It has been edited for length.

Today was crazy. I woke up at 8:59 a.m. Of course, now that we can teleport around the world in one or two seconds, then I can get up at 8:59 a.m. and even though my work starts at 9:00 a.m., I won't be late! Getting ready was pretty easy with the new Ready Box they invented. All you do is step in and it brushes your teeth, combs your hair, dresses you, gives you a shower and does anything else you can do to get ready in five seconds. Once I had gone through the Ready Box, I used the jet pack to fly out the door.

You see, we live in a house with a large white picket fence, a medium sized yard, and the only strange thing about it is, it's 2,500 feet above ground level. This is because this little town called Bird Fly interested us, and we decided to buy a house in the town. The only problem was that it was a floating town, so now our children, Elizabeth, 10 and Jack, 4, are not allowed outside the yard unless they have a jet pack or a parachute.

Well anyway, I took the jet pack across the small floating street and took the main teleportation system to Antarctica. I work in Antarctica as a scientist. I got to work and used the elevator to get to my floating desk. They went a little overboard with the antigravity thing, I think. To keep out the wind and snow, we work in a big force field-like building. I scribbled down a few notes, headed down to the main teleporter and then went to a meeting in Africa.

You might think meetings are boring, but this one wasn't. It was the meeting about a peace treaty between lions, people, antelopes, tigers, and giraffes. You see, in 2015, people invented the animal translator. People could communicate with other animals. The tigers and lions were not so crazy about being fully friends with other animals. They had just had a huge financial breakdown. But soon everyone agreed on a simple treaty. One species would only fight another species if it was a life or death situation. Everyone agreed on that. After the meeting, I went back to Antarctica and told the other people what happened at the meeting.

I now went home and fed Petro. Petro is our pet dog we found on the street. After some of his silly remarks, he ate his food. Just as Petro gave off a large belch, Elizabeth and Jack walked in. "How was school?" I asked Elizabeth. "Okay," she replied. Then she gave me a hug and went outside to play ball. I went over to the kitchen, made some supper, and finished my chores.

Then it was back to the town's teleporter and off to Mars. There I took a radiation-proof spacesuit and headed out onto the dry, desert like plain. There were towns on Mars now and the population was about 50,000 people. All of them lived in small space pods that were in caves deep below the surface. I took a few samples of soil and headed back to Antarctica to run some simple tests. I sent the test results to the main office and headed home.

Once I got home, I ate my supper and told the kids to get ready for bed. I tucked Jack in and checked in on Elizabeth. She was in her room reading her book. I have to help her with a contest. You have to write a story about what you think you'll be in 25 years. For some reason, I thought I had that same assignment when I was a child.

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