What's Inside SPOTLIGHT: **Bures Berry Patch-pumpkins and much more - pg. 18**

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Volunteers use ingenuity to restore historic home at Folklore Village

by Brooke Bechen

Dozens of people gathered at Folklore Village this weekend to learn about music and have a good time at the organization's annual Fall Swedish Festival. But while those people attended workshops, practiced instruments and listened to guest speakers, several volunteers were also busy working on a special restoration project.

"Since last spring, volunteers have been working on a project to rebuild a historic Norwegian log cabin which was originally built by craftsman Aslak Lie," Terri Van Orman, executive director of Folklore Village said.

Aslak Lie, pronounced Lee, was well known in Norway as a master craftsman, carpenter, cabinetmaker and blacksmith. He immigrated to the United States in the mid-1840s and began building a log home in southern Wisconsin. Known for his decorative and ornate craftsmanship, Lie built three homes: two in Norway and one in Wisconsin.

Sitting secluded on a plot of land east of Mount Horeb, the log home was in need of relocation and extensive restoration. In 2003, the owners of the building donated it to Folklore Village, and volunteers there have been working toward its restoration ever since.

With the help of a grant from the Jeffris Family Endowed Preservation Fund, a thoroughly researched historical, architectural analysis and restoration plan was completed in early 2009. The plans included rebuilding the home to its original form, a two-room one story cabin.

To make the restoration process possible, Van Orman knew a team of knowledgeable volunteers had to be assembled. She kept in mind the philosophy of Folklore Village, and wanted the restoration to also be a great learning opportunity.

She had visited Mount Horeb and marvelled at the elegant Norwegian "stabbur," located on the main street of Mount Horeb in front of Open House Imports. The stabbur's creator, Nels Diller, had studied craftsmanship for two years in Norway and was the perfect person to lead this restoration.

"I thought the stabbur was one of the most magnificent pieces of woodwork I'd seen in a long time," she said. "Nels was the first person I thought of when it came to this project."

With Diller on board for the project, a group of volunteers began meeting on Saturdays last winter to discuss the first step in restoring the home - securing the foundation. In the spring, they got to work laying out the perimeter of the foundation.

Thirteen holes were dug and filled with concrete. Local craftsman Greg Winz designed and installed an elaborate pier system to keep the foundation level and stable. Then logs could start to be laid and assembled.

Using a variety of tools, many of them original to Norway, Diller and the volunteers began work on the logs. A plan was drawn up to illustrate which original logs were in good enough shape to be reused in the restoration, which logs were too deteriorated and which logs could be used as a template to create similar logs.

As well as using unusual tools like a Swedish axe, a French stock axe and a mosefarkniv (a moss channel draw knife), Steve Sprain, a volunteer helping with the project, designed another tool he has nicknamed a "herkimer." The tool uses a pulley and tripod system to raise logs onto the foundation without the use of heavy equipment like a skid steer.

"The project calls out for ingenuity," Diller said. "That's what makes this fun, being able to meet those challenges. I think people thrive on challenges."

The challenges have driven the volunteers to use their creativity in more ways than one. And adapting to those challenges has allowed the volunteers to encompass an important message Folklore Village stands for - the passing along of experiences and techniques to others willing to learn them.

"We don't just want to get this project done," Diller said. "We want it to be meaningful for other people too."

For Diller, any project where he uses his hands and his mind is a meaningful one.

"All the effort and man power that goes into making an old building, it's almost a religious feeling for me," he said. "I'd rather see pictures of people working on the buildings than pictures of the finished project."

Diller and the numerous other volunteers will begin wrapping up their restoration project for the year as the season changes to winter. The foundation and the rescued logs will be covered with both shelter and snow until the spring, when volunteers will begin working on the Aslak Lie home again.

"It's been a full summer for these guys," Van Orman said. "But it's been a great adventure this year to see this come to reality."

"In many ways, I feel like we're just getting started," Diller added.

Folklore Village welcomes anyone interested in helping with the restoration project in the spring to contact them at 924-4000. Volunteers do not have to be skilled, but more so open to learning about woodworking, hand tools, log restoration and building with their hands in general.

"We're passing on a tradition here," Van Orman said. "It's a marvelous interchange."

Nels Diller and Steve Sprain demonstrate how Sprain's "herkimer" tool is used to lift heavy logs without the use of modern machines.

Diller uses a variety of hand tools, many of them unusual and original to Norway, to restore the Aslak Lie cabin. He displayed them for this photo above.

WASB executive director Ashley encourages communities to talk about public education

by Brooke Bechen

With many public education items on the state's legislative agenda, Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) executive director John Ashley is encouraging school boards and community members across the state to get educated on the issues and let their voices be heard.

"In Wisconsin, we don't have a vision for what we want public education to be," Ashley said. "And we need to do that."

"It's a discussion I'd like to have in our communities and not with someone in Madison."

Representatives from 31 school districts in southwest Wisconsin met at Southwest Technical College in Fennimore last Thursday for the WASB Region 9 meeting, where many of those items were discussed. Ashley also travelled to Fennimore to attend the meeting, visiting school administrators along the way and gathering information on the issues facing school districts in southwest Wisconsin.

Funding is certainly an issue Ashley is concerned about. There was a zero percent increase in aid this year in Wisconsin, while neighboring states have seen increases of four percent, Ashley said. The last increase was in 2008.

Examples of funding uncertainty can be seen throughout the state with the rise in districts leaning toward referendum.

"I don't think people understand fully the referendum process. We don't have a choice," Ashley said. "Districts are forced to go to communities for referendums. I think there's a feeling that somehow if it doesn't pass, they're just wearing the community down."

"But 75 percent of referendums do get passed, and I think that's a strong signal that communities do support public education."

The role of technology in education is also changing, and so is the vision of what a 21st century education should look like.

"Technology in the hands of a great teacher can enhance our learning," Ashley said. "But we want the public to know that the technology are just tools."

"We have to pay teachers well and respect their roles, and technology will never change that."

Broadband internet is another concern of Ashley's, as well as the ability to prepare students for jobs that may not even exist yet. He also believes education ties directly to economic development in this area.

"We do a good job educating our kids but I'm afraid they won't have jobs that will keep them in this part of the state," Ashley said.

He is happy with the progress that is being made, but wonders what the job horizon will look like 10 or even 20 years from now for students getting a public education.

He encouraged school board members to listen to the students in their district and learn from their experiences. It is this inclusive dialogue between students, staff, school boards and the community that will ultimately lead the way for reform in public education.

Although he could not speak to the vision of public education for the entire association, Ashley explained that his vision of public education would include high quality teachers, an adequate funding solution that is predictable year after year, accessible technology for students and continuing investments in early childhood education.

"The picture of public education is very exciting," Ashley said.

For more information on Ashley or the WASB, please visit their website at www.wasb.org.

City of Dodgeville moves to invest $1.5 million

by Brooke Bechen

After meeting with representatives from Ehlers Investment Partners about potential investment options over the past few weeks, Dodgeville Common Council members voted Monday night to invest $1.5 million into an Ehlers account from the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP). The $1.5 million investment will leave $400,000 in the LGIP account.

City clerk Lisa Riley spoke to the recommendation made by Ehlers. She added that with some administration changes at Mound City Bank, among other factors, she thought it wise to get something going as soon as possible.

The motion to move the funds into the Ehlers investment account was approved unanimously. The council hopes to meet with representatives from Farmers Savings Bank to discuss further investment possibilities in the future.

Possible land purchase

Ken Johnson and his attorney were present at the council meeting to address an agenda item referring to a possible purchase. The land in question is located on the north side of County Road YZ, north of the Greater Heights Subdivision and is owned by Johnson.

Public works director Greg Lee explained that he was approached and asked if the city would be interested in purchasing the land and dividing it into several residential lots. City assessor Randy Edge added to the discussion, explaining that a lift station was added for that area in 2000 when the TIF district was established.

"We've stuck a lot of money into the lift station with the intentions for residental development," Edge said.

But the density of development has

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October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

The "Take a Walk in My Shoes" exhibit that was on display at the Iowa County Courthouse recognized all the men and women who have experienced domestic violence.

by Kayla Barnes

October helps recognize the millions of men and women who have been victims of domestic violence. Family Advocates helped raise awareness by creating a project called "Take a Walk in My Shoes" that is currently on display at the Iowa County Courthouse.

"We have a womens group that meet Tuesday evenings that came up with the idea," Family Advocate member Sara Baker said.

Family Advocates had a walk to help raise awareness on October 20 so the display went dealt with the same theme.

In this art therapy project women brought in shoes and decorated them telling of their feelings they felt in the past to what they feel now. The project was then displayed at the Dodgeville Public Library for two weeks and then moved to the lower level of the court house.

Domestic violence and abuse can happen to anyone, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, income, or other factors.

One in four women will experience domestic violence during her lifetime. Men are victims of nearly three million physical assaults in the USA. More than 60% of domestic violence incidents happen at home.

No victim is to blame for any occurrence of domestic abuse or violence. While there is no direct cause or explanation why domestic violence happens, it is caused by the abuser or perpetrator.

Family Advocates is a nonprofit organization providing services for victims of sexual assault and family/partner abuse. Services include a 24-hour help line (608-348-3838, 608-778-8714 or 1-800-924-2624), counseling, advocacy, crisis intervention, support groups, emergency shelter and more.

Family Advocates serves residents of Grant, Iowa and Lafayette Counties through offices in each county. All services are free and confidential. Speakers are available for community organizations.

Students mix science and art together at Wyoming Valley School Cultural Arts Center

The Wyoming Valley School Cultural Arts Center played host to a special Art and Science Student Exhibit on Saturday, October 24 as two projects were displayed for visitors to see during the Driftless Area Science Festival. The fourth and fifth graders at Arena Elementary Community School showcased their "Imagine Mars" project and the seventh graders at River Valley Middle School showcased their "Art and the Cosmic Connection" project, partially shown above. Other events also coinsided with the science festival, including an opportunity to stargaze at Taliesin, a Planet Walk which was also created by area students and numerous workshops, all offered free to the public through generous donations and grants.

Area Deaths

Ione M. Williams, 85, Dodgeville
Elizabeth "Betsy" Evelyn Mueller, 90, Dodgeville/Livingston
Phyllis Elaine Bean, 88, Bloomington
Richard "Dick" Rundle, 80, Monona
Lois Elaine Laufenberg-Bennett, 96, Dodgeville/Highland
Bruno J. Galle, 92, Mineral Point
Jodi A. Whitcher, 45, Dodgeville
Alvin J. Revenig, 84, Dodgeville
Donald L. Spink, 88, Rewey
Norman Zemlicka, 84, Cobb