

The Nosy Neighbor

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Program Offered to Orion for First Time

Rebuilding Together's Joni Conrad, Executive Director of the Geneseo/Cambridge division, is looking to expand into the Orion area.

Thus far, the Geneseo/Cambridge division of the nation's largest volunteer organization preserving and revitalizing low-income houses has completed projects in Andover, Atkinson, Annawan, Cambridge, Colona, and Geneseo.

Conrad is anxious to find qualified homeowners in Orion along with volunteers, both professional and non-professional, and monetary support.

Homeowner rehab application forms are available on Rebuilding Together's web

site, www.rebuildingtogether-gc.org. Forms are also available at Orion Village Hall.

To receive the benefit of free home repairs you must meet certain requirements regarding income, age, disability, etc.

The volunteer group is equipped to do home modifications, home rehabilitations, and install low-incline ramps. Applicants must own the home, live in the Orion school district, and submit projects that emphasize safety, warmth, and independence.

Rebuilding Together projects can include new window and door installation, gutters, flashing, new roof, yard work, new siding, porch railings,



Lend a helping hand or refer someone in need.

wheelchair ramps, and more. Those who don't need assistance themselves can help by referring low-income homeowners in need, volunteering on a work day, sharing the story of the organization, planning a fund raising event, or making financial or material donations.

The group has already begun receiving referrals for 2010 and is still accepting applications.

Tower Improvement in the Offing?

Village trustee Melvyn Drucker has submitted the necessary paperwork to apply for federal grant funds for improvements to the east water tower.

The tower was inspected and had minor repairs performed

last fall, at which time it was determined that the interior and exterior of the structure needed to be painted.

With costs projected at approximately \$235,000, Drucker chose to apply for grants funds in an attempt to

alleviate the burden on village residents and businesses.

The grant application must pass muster with Congressman Bill Foster's office in order to be forwarded to the Appropriations Committee for further consideration .

The Importance of Census 2010

According to the official 2010 Census web site, in the month of March every household in the United States will receive a short, 10-question 2010 Census form. Residents should complete and return the form by April 1st.

Participation in the 2010 Census is required by law. Each question helps to determine how more than \$400 billion will be allocated to communities across the country.

Questions will include name, sex, age, date of birth, race, household relationship, and home ownership status.

If you fail to complete the form a census taker will attempt to make contact as many as three times and ask the questions that appear on the form. Census takers will begin visits in April and conclude in July.

The census taker who collects your information is sworn for life to protect your data.

All census workers undergo an FBI background check and, for the first time in census-taking history, fingerprinting as an extra precaution. These security measures already screened out about 16% of the hundreds of thousands of applicants for census operations in 2009.

Proper completion of census forms by Orion residents will help ensure that the correct amount of tax dollars will be directed to the village for the next ten years.

Would you be interested in serving on a task force to determine the need for a new baseball diamond complex?

Task Force to be Formed

On February 15th village president Jim Cooper announced the formation of a task force to determine the need for a new four-plex baseball diamond facility.

Cooper said he has fielded complaints from players' parents about shuttling their children to practices in Andover in

order to find available ball fields. As a result, he decided to form a task force to determine the feasibility of building additional diamonds.

The increasing number of baseball leagues formed over the past two decades has stretched Love Park beyond its capacity. Diamonds are too

few in number to accommodate practices and games for all leagues.

If a new ball facility was built, the purchase of additional land would be necessary.

Anyone interested in serving on the committee can contact Cooper or recreation committee chair Roger Peterson.

2010 Law Update

Henry County Sheriff's Deputy Joe Femali urges the public to take heed of new traffic laws that became effective January 1st.

The laws regulate the use of cell phones while driving.

A person cannot operate a vehi-

cle on a roadway while using an electronic communication device to compose, send or read an electronic message.

Also, a person regardless of age may not use a wireless telephone in a school speed zone or a construction zone or a maintenance speed zone.

Cell Phones Available

The Orion Division of the Henry County Sheriff's Dept. has three 911-emergency cell phones available for those in need.

Interested parties should contact Village Hall.



Roll-out recycle containers should be placed at the curb by 7:00 a.m. on designated Thursdays with the metal bar facing out. The remaining 2010 Orion curbside recycling calendar is as follows:

March 4th & 18th, April 1st, 15th, & 29th, May 13th & 27th, June 10th & 24th, July 8th & 22nd, August 5th & 19th, September 2nd, 16th, & 30th, October 14th & 28th, November 11th & 26th, and December 9th & 23rd.

The village's contracted recycling provider, Eagle Enterprises Recycling, began its business in 1993 and at that time only accepted newspapers. Since that time the array of items accepted has expanded drastically and a complete list can be found at www.eerecycling.com.

Electronics and paint are also accepted but only if dropped off at the Galva facility during specified hours. People taking items to the facility must check in before unloading. There is a small fee charged for computer monitors and televisions. Certain electronics and paints are not accepted and details concerning those products can be found on the Eagle web site. Those without internet access can call toll free at 1-888-932-2936.

Mayor—Continued from back page

make recommendations without being acquainted with the personality of Orion'. He vetoed the trustees' project. The board's attempt to override his veto was unsuccessful.

Quent was not alone in his opposition to the performance audit. Local businessman Jim Roberts penned a letter to the board admitting that the study would no doubt propose guidelines for more efficient use of personnel, but he pointed out that it might be nothing more than an expensive study if the village was unwilling to consider hiring an operating manager.

After Quent resigned as mayor he did return to public service as a trustee in 1989, serving until 1991, but I came to know him best afterward from periodic visits he made to Village Hall. He was always ready with

a compliment for the employees and he was interested in hearing about the current affairs of the village.

We talked about his golf game and upcoming elections, since he often served as an election judge, and he would make kind and loving remarks about his wife, Norma, particularly after he was stricken with cancer, saying that without her he didn't know how he would manage.

Quent served not only his community but also his country. He joined the Navy and served in World War II and the Korean War. Reportedly, he witnessed firsthand the devastation of the aftermath of the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima while touring the area with his superior officer.

Local organizations benefiting

from Quent's spirit of service were the Orion Masons, Lions Club, Orion Fire Department, and American Legion 255.

He was also well known as the owner of Quent's Standard Service, an honest to goodness gasoline and service station where they pumped the gas, cleaned the windshield, and checked the fluids under the hood, though my favorite thing about the station was the pop cooler where after you deposited your coins you could open the tall, narrow, see-through door and grab an ice cold soda pop in a glass bottle. Preferably orange or grape.

Quent passed away, at his home, on December 1, 2007 at the age of 89. May he rest in peace.

-Lori A. Sampson

Quent was the consummate public servant, serving his country and the community.

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Mayor Quentin Stromquist

His obituary probably said it the best: Quent will be remembered as a soft-spoken, gentle man who was ready to help anyone.

It must have been that helpful attitude that drove him to serve the community as trustee, clerk, mayor, and then trustee again.

Truth be told, I don't really remember a lot about Quent's early time in office. He served his stints as trustee and clerk long before I was employed here, and his mayor's term began in 1969 and ended with his resignation in 1979, a short year and a half after I was hired full-time.

Before Quent's resignation he and the board focused on getting an interchange built at I-74 with hopes of seeing Orion's industrial park grow and the economic climate in the village improve. The board was unsuccessful in its effort and that failure left the board blaming one of its own trustees, A. J. Ryden, who was later elected mayor in 1981.

Toward the end of Quent's mayoral service, his vision for the community seemed to take a different path than that of the rest of the elected administration, and I believe that's why he

opted to resign rather than complete his term of office.

While researching for this article I found documents referencing an issue which may have started the split between Quent and the trustees. In 1978 the board felt it would behoove the village to hire an outside agency to conduct a performance audit of the administration and management of the village.

Quent was opposed to this approach, stating in a letter to the board, in part, that 'an outsider cannot come, observe, and

Continued— See Mayor, pg. 3

The first in a series of essays about five of Orion's former mayors.

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