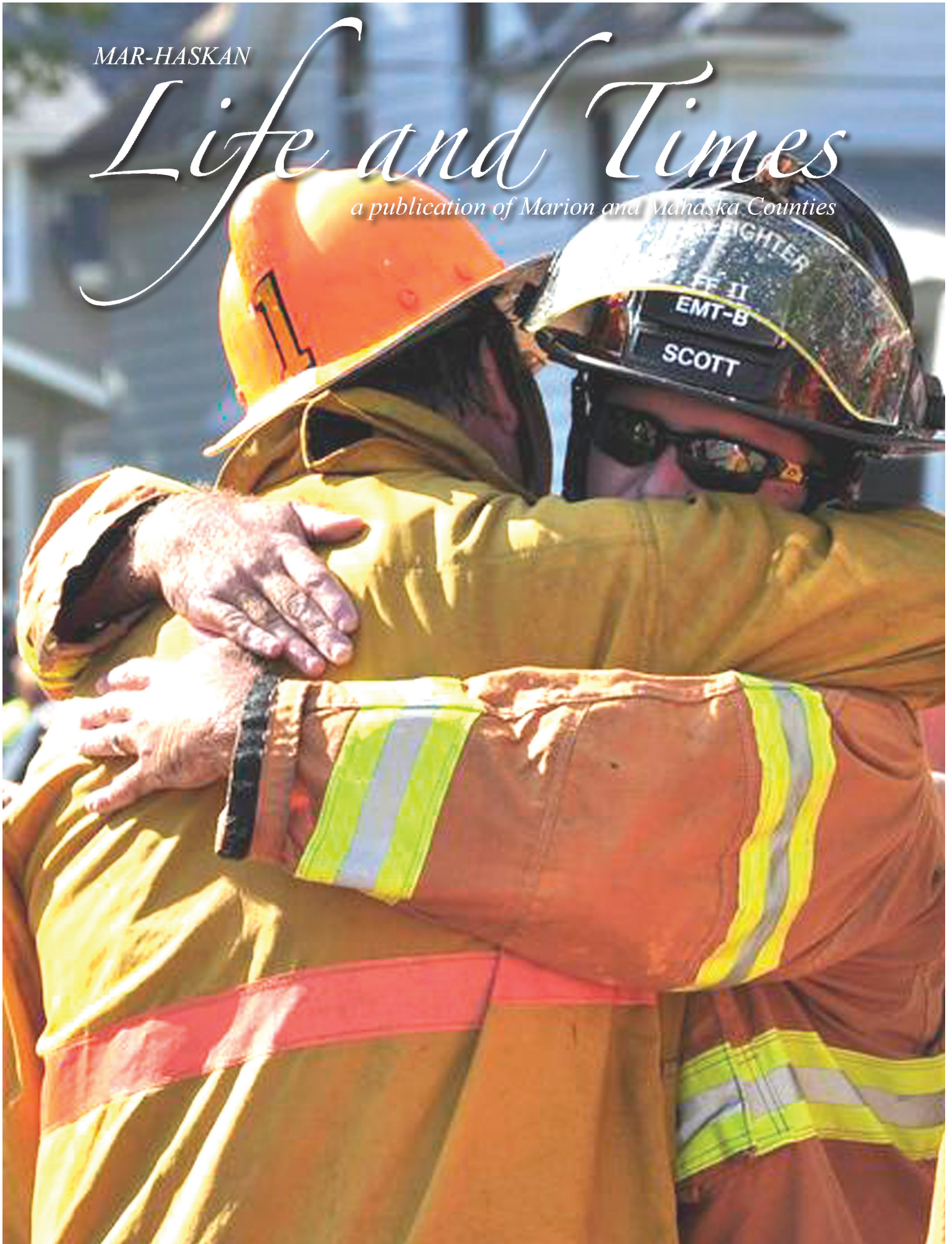


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The mammoth dig site in rural Mahaska County is a popular destination for researchers and students alike.

For more than a year, the University of Iowa Natural History Museum has coordinated research efforts at the site with volunteers from the University of Iowa, Iowa State University, William Penn University, Indian Hills Community College as well as students, county conservation officials and experts from around the country.

Researchers have uncovered fossils for three mammoths at the site. More importantly, researchers also have recovered the remains of the mammoths' environment at the dig

site. Bones recovered from the site date back to 14,000 B.C.

Saturday, July 13, was a typical day at the mammoth dig site.

A group from the Indian Creek Nature Center in Cedar Rapids as well as faculty from William Penn University and Indian Hills Community College, and Iowa State University graduate student Pete Eyheralde along with the Mahaska County Conservation Board Naturalist Laura DeCook were uncovering bones left and right at the dig site.

"They've got about a dozen bones they want to take out," said Dr. Jim North of William Penn University. "This is a very productive site."

North said researchers were trying

figure out how much top soil needs to be taken out to extract the bones. He said workers have to dig straight down to fossils instead of digging in from the sides in order to prevent cave-ins.

"It looks like tedious work, but it's exciting," North said. "You uncover a bone a little at a time."

Dave Brenzel of the Indian Creek Nature Center said the volunteers had found a mammoth's lumbar vertebrae.

"We've got a section of lower back that looks associated," he said. "It's not unusual for backbones to be articulated."

"It's the most complete thing we've seen," he added.

Later in the day, workers also found

a mammoth tooth from a lower jaw, Brenzel said.

Brenzel said 14 people are working side by side as closely as the fossils they find.

"This area is a game of pick up sticks," he said.

As the dig site has expanded, workers have dug out stair steps to help with removal of debris from the dig site and to mark the limit of where fossils have been found, Brenzel said.

Indian Creek Nature Center Naturalist Jan Aiels said working at the dig site is a wonderful learning experience.

"This is such a unique opportunity for hands-on science," she said. "It's a once in a lifetime opportunity."

"I marvel at the natural history of this county," Brenzel said.

Brenzel said the lands that the county conservation board takes care of includes this site, sand prairies and

coal fields.

The mammoth dig site is "a particularly vivid way to grab people's attention," he added.

On Tuesday, July 16, a group of Cargill employees conducted a team-building exercise at the dig site.

Nine members of the Technology Innovation Leadership Team

rolled up their sleeves to dig for mammoth fossils and build some team cohesion at the mammoth dig site in rural Mahaska County.

"I'm a William Penn University graduate, so I know Dr. North," said Cargill Director of Technical Services Brent Rogers said.

"We try to keep Cargill and William Penn close."

Rogers said he had received an invitation two weeks ago from William Penn officials to come to the dig site.

"My son and I came out and we had an enjoyable experience," Rogers said.

After the visit, the Cargill Technology Leadership Team held a meeting and decided to do a team-building exercise and tie in a community service element too.



"We're all science nerds," Rogers said. "It's more like fun."

Rogers said the Cargill team members also are interested in helping with establishing a mammoth learning center in the area.

Rogers said the Cargill employees arrived at 12:30 p.m., and would spend the afternoon at the dig site.

"We discovered a tooth," he said.

Brenzel was overseeing the dig site Tuesday.

Brenzel said he was pleased that the eastern end of the excavation pit is productive with mammoth fossils.

"This side is just as productive as the other," he said. "It's going to be a fun fall."

Brenzel said he was glad to have the Cargill employees working at the site.

"They're scientists too," he said. "It's a quid pro quo. They're biochemists" so they lend their expertise in helping analyze the fossils and dig site..

Brenzel said that Mahaska County Conservation Board Naturalist Laura De Cook will bring a group of local teachers to the dig site in early August before classes begin.



Herald photo by Andy Goodell

Lee Wymore, program director for science and mathematics at Indian Hills Community College, left, and Oskaloosa High School Science Teacher Mike Goudy, right, work at the mammoth dig site in Mahaska County in June.

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Around Town

Pella

Joyce Kolenbrander Exhibition

Through September 20th

Joan Kuyper Farver Gallery

Joyce Kolenbrander is a Chicago native who has lived, worked and shown art in New York (Including at the Agora Gallery in Soho), New Jersey, Illinois and Iowa. Now retired, she lives and works in Pella, Iowa. She works with ink, oil, graphite, watercolor, montage, wood and photography - whatever a given subject seems to require. Her work will be on display at the Joan Kuyper Farver Art Gallery from June 18-September 20, with the gallery open Monday-Friday from 7:30 am to 4:15 pm.

Pella Farmer's Market

Every Thursday

3:00 pm - 6:00 pm

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Pella Opera House Membership Appreciation & Announcement of 2013-2014 Events

August 30th

6:30 pm

Pella Opera House

The Opera House will be hosting its annual Membership Appreciation event. All current members, as well as those interested in becoming members are invited to attend. Complimentary appetizers and a cash bar will be available. Please drop by to hear the announcement of our 2013-2014 season. For more information, please call (641) 628-8625. All are welcome and admission is free!

First Baptist Soup Supper

September 26th

4:30 pm - 6:30 pm

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VETERANS REMEMBER YEARS GONE BY, MILES AWAY FROM HOME

BY AMY HOLMQUIST



Every year we celebrate the Fourth of July with fireworks, cookouts and a day off from work. But we tend to overlook the huge significance of such an important day for our country that happened 237 years ago when our forefathers signed the Declaration of Independence.

It's the day that declared our nation's freedom, but the fight has never stopped there. Since that day in 1776, we have continued to fight for this nation's freedom and security, recruiting strong armed forces to defend our rights. Today, you may not know of those in our small towns of Iowa that served in the world wars, Korean War and other conflicts, or the family members who had to send loved ones away from our precious Iowa to other parts of the country and world to serve.

DeJong remembers being 'one of them'

In 1950, Pella and the surrounding

towns were starting to say goodbye to young men as they were drafted to the Korean War, and Ed DeJong was one of them.

"I think all of the guys wondered, 'When am I going to get called?' There were a few that signed up, but all of us were waiting for the draft and all of the ones that knew were going to get drafted or called did get drafted and went," he commented on that year when he was in high school at Pella Community, waiting to get called.

DeJong was in one of the last rounds

of drafts in 1953. As he expected, he was called in and he took off for basic training. Although he accepted his duty to serve where needed, being

pulled away from the farm and small town life of Pella was hard.

"It's a time away from home, from family," he commented.

Fortunately for DeJong, two weeks before his basic training was completed, the Korean War ended. Even though he

wouldn't have to go to Korea,



Ed DeJong

DeJong was still drafted to complete two years in the Army. When he was discharged in 1955, he came back to Pella and served as Chief of Police for 12 years. He and his family moved a few times after, but he came back to his hometown of Pella where he retired from P e l l a Corporation.

"I think I'm probably somewhat sentimental toward a lot of veterans, that we have a strong patriotic feeling, but we don't really speak out like we should. I think we all have a strong,

patriotic feeling. The time we spent in the service we're glad we did, but we wouldn't want to do it again!" He added.

Serving was his duty for Van Berkum World War II was hitting close to home when the allies started getting involved in 1941, the same year Pella native John Van Berkum enlisted. At the time enlisted men were not immediately leaving home for training, so Van Berkum continued on with his studies at Central College. In 1943, just two years into his undergraduate studies, he was called in to the Navy Air Corps.

After training, he was offered an assignment as an aircraft ID instructor. The military gave him only a few hours to consider his answer. He

decided instead to volunteer as a gunner on the merchants ships. In Pascagoula, Mississippi, Van Berkum boarded the ship and went on a trek across the Atlantic. He made no less



than 15 round trips across the ocean on various ships that carried 1,000 lb bombs and other supplies to Europe, the Middle East and India. The trips were extremely dangerous, encountering enemy submarines and floating mine fields. It was during one of these trips that he lost his hearing manning one of the 3" guns. He spent some months in London recovering from a complete hearing loss before regaining most of his hearing and returning to service.

While on board one of the merchant ships, Van Berkum met a Dutch man who was second in command. He had been a Captain in the Dutch Navy, but lost his ship to German torpedoes. Subsequently rescued, the Captain ended up in New York seeking asylum where he continued to serve the war effort and landed on board Van Berkum's ship. From a Dutch heritage himself, Van Berkum met the Captain amid the fact that someone of Van Berkum's position

usually did not associate with Navy personnel. But the rich Dutch heritage brought them together miles away from each other's home. The Captain often sought John out as a compatriot, speaking Dutch together, and also taking advantage of John's library of American books, which helped improve his English. Even though the experience out to sea cost him his hearing, he never regrets making the decision to volunteer for the liberty ship duty and serving in the military.

"Serving was our duty, and for us young guys there was the allure of 'guts and glory'. Few of us ever considered the hardships, danger and loss we would experience." John Van Berkum said.

Fun Facts

Chances are that the pork hot dogs and sausages consumed on the Fourth of July originated in Iowa. The Hawkeye State is home to 20.3 million hogs and pigs.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, <<http://usda01.library.cornell.edu/usda/current/HogsPigs/HogsPigs-03-28-2013.pdf>>

56 people signed the Declaration of Independence.

In July 1776, there were an estimated 2.5 million people living in the newly independent nation.

Source: Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970
<<http://www2.census.gov/prod2/statcomp/documents/>>

Around Town

Knoxville

53rd Annual Knoxville Nationals

August 7th-10th

The 53rd Annual Knoxville Nationals begins with qualifying night on August 7th. Come see the best Sprint Car racing has to offer each night. The week before, August 1st-3rd, come see the greatest 360 Sprint Car drivers during the 360 Nationals. Each week, the raceway has excellent dirt racing to offer. For more information, visit www.knoxvillraceway.com.

Knoxville Airport Fly-In, Drive In Breakfast

September 14th

Look for more details on this at www.journalexpress.net in the coming weeks.

Knoxville Living Windows/Lighted Parade

November 21st

The holiday festivities begin around 6:00 p.m., with window displays, Santa Claus and a parade featuring lighted floats.

Marion County Festival of Trees, Marion County Historical Village

November 23rd-24th

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FIREFIGHTING: ONE BIG FAMILY

BY BETHANY YOCUM



The word “family” can mean different things to different people. Some would consider a family to be a group of blood-related individuals, while others would consider a family to be a group of people they feel close to and can count on. For Marion County firefighters Jeremy Scott, Joel and Joey Braafhart, and John Pierce, the people they’ve worked with in the fire department can be classified as a family in both senses of the word.

Pella Fire Department member Jeremy Scott recalls being around the fire department at a young age. He attended meetings and other functions with his dad.

Jeremy’s father, Don Scott, was the fire chief at the fire department in

Redfield. Don is also a past president of the Iowa Firefighters Association.

“I went when I was about three, my son’s age, to everything with my dad,” Jeremy says, “meetings and other things with the fire department, like that.” For Jeremy, firefighting is somewhat of a family tradition. His grandfather, aunt, uncle, and younger sister all are, or have been, firefighters in Iowa.

Though Jeremy has only been with the Pella Fire Department for about a-year-and-a-half, he previously served on the fire departments at Redfield and Coralville. Having worked with family at the Redfield Fire Department in the past, Jeremy says an advantage to having family on the department with him

was knowing that they all have the same experiences and knowledge of what to do with fires. He says that feeling also extends beyond blood relatives.

“We all know what to do, and we know we can call on anyone--the whole fire department is a family, really.” Jeremy says that when moving to Pella, he did not know many people, and being a part of a close-knit community at the fire department helped him to make friends and feel at home. He says, “the fire department is really unlike any other organization I’ve been a part of.” Joey Braafhart cites his decision to join the fire department as influenced by his father’s involvement with the fire department.

“Growing up in [the fire depart-

ment], I pretty much knew everyone there, which played a part," Joey says. Joey and his father, Joel, both serve as volunteer firefighters at the Pella Fire Department, like Jeremy. While having his father in the fire department was instrumental in Joey's decision to become a firefighter, Joel Braafhart's beginnings at the fire department were not family-related.

"Where we lived, my neighbor was a firefighter, and he just asked me if I would be interested in being a volunteer," Joel recounts. "I said yes, and about six months later, they came to me with a pager and said, 'Here, when it goes off, come to the fire station.'"

He has been a part of the Pella Fire Department since 1980, and Joey has been with the Pella Fire Department since 2009. Another of Joel's sons served as a firefighter in Dayton for three years, and they also have a cousin who serves on the fire department in Maxwell.

Joel and Joey both say their in-

volvement as volunteer firefighters feels very family-related, and not just coincidental. They feel at home in the fire department.

"It's like a big family," says Joel.



"The camaraderie, and knowing there's somebody behind you, to watch your back during fires and stuff."

The family feeling of working with the fire department is something that Jeremy, Joel, and Joey all attest to, but for Columbia Fire Chief John Pierce, the fire department family is especially literal in terms of blood-relation. All but one of his sons serve on the Columbia Fire Department; Jeff, Jason, Justin, and Josh.

Joy Pierce, John's wife, is also an EMT at Columbia, and their daughter-in-law, Cameron, is an EMT and a firefighter at Columbia as well.

Joey's brother and nephew are

also firefighters in Iowa, and she has a niece who is an EMT; their family tradition of firefighting and working with emergency medical situations is a strong one.

Though John and Joy now have a large number of family members who are firefighters, John originally joined, not because of family connections, but because the Columbia Fire Department "needed help." He joined with the Columbia department in 1978 and has been the fire chief there for about twenty years. Joy and John's children, Jeff and Justin, are EMTs as well as firefighters, and Joy says she likes having family working with her.

"It's nice to work with family; you kind of know what to expect," she said.

John feels similarly about having family in the fire department, saying, "You know what you've got when it's your own family." However, he does say that having fam-



ily on the fire department makes him a little more concerned about the risks involved. "Obviously you worry about everyone in the department, but I suppose when it's family, you are a little more concerned about their well-being. But you're always concerned with everybody; you want everyone to be safe."

In terms of changes in the fire department communities over the years, John and Joel both say that the training process has changed since they first joined. John cites keeping all the firefighters up to date on their training and certifications as one of the biggest challenges of being a fire chief. The state requires each firefighter to have 24 hours of training a year through meetings, experience, and classes, and about 60 hours of training, initially.

Joel recalls not having been required to complete any training when he began at Pella. Training was "on the fly" at calls and through work with other firefighters.

Joel says the increased training may dissuade more people to volunteer in recent years because of busyness and time issues. However, he also feels that the increased training makes the city more conscious of just how much time and effort are put into volunteer firefighting.

He says the community has become more aware of the fire department's role, as calls have increased. When he began, he remembers having around 40 calls a year, and it has now increased to 150 or 160.

Firefighting is about working together to keep communities safe, and the closeness Jeremy, Joel, Joey, and John have experienced with their respective relationships in the fire



departments speak to that. It's good to know that Marion County volunteer firefighters feel so strongly about their sense of family and community. Family or just friends, pay or no pay, they are dedicated to volunteering to keep our communities safe.



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Around Town **Oskaloosa**

Sweet Corn Serenade

August 1st

12:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Downtown Oskaloosa

Food, craft and product vendors, 12 to 9 pm; sweet corn and beef burgers, 4 to 9 pm; Kids activities, 4 pm; Hawkeye Pedal Pull, 6 pm. Music by Kassie 5:30 to 7:30 pm, Oskaloosa City Band, 8 pm.

Serenades and Sundaes

August 10th

10:00 am - 5:00 pm

Nelson Pioneer Farm

An old-fashioned ice cream social with music and fun for the family.

River Canoe & Kayak Float

August 17th

9:00 am - 5:00 pm

The Mahaska County Conservation Board and the Mahaska Wellness Coalition are hosting a canoe and kayak float. The route is yet to be determined. For more information, contact the Mahaska County Conservation Board at (641) 673-9327.

Nelson Pioneer Farm Fall Festival

September 21st

10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Nelson Pioneer Farm

Crafts, games and good times. Vintage farm equipment, fiddling contest, music, historic craft demonstrations, farm supper and field work. Admission, \$5. For more information, call (641) 672-2989.

Kidtoberfest

October 12th

10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Penn Central Mall

Pictured here is Homer Long, left, and longtime friend, "Shorty" Hicklin. Homer's 100th birthday is July 5. He has had many experiences as a local musician playing old time country music. - See more at: <http://oskaloosa.com/local/x331665185/An-important-place-on-a-musical-journey#sthash.gyORWRG2.dpuf>



Homer Long's 'life of music'

By Andy Goodell

He may be at the century mark, but Homer Long's love for traditional American music remains.

Long was born July 5, 1913 to Jesse and Rena Long in the town of Lacey.

He first began playing music as a child after his mother urged him to take violin lessons. Much of what motivated him to play was the enjoyment he got out of playing. He said that, when he was growing up, he listened to Grand Ole Opry performers on the radio.

"I kind of got interested in this Country/Western stuff and got to playing a couple hoedowns," said Long, as he showed a photo of himself holding a violin at around age 10.

Over the years, Long played numerous events including those in Pella,

What Cheer, Ottumwa, Oskaloosa and Fremont. He also played at nursing homes in Keokuk and Poweshiek counties, as well as other events in Eddyville and Barnes City. "He's just had a life of music," said daughter Gloria Bartlett.

One time, while playing in Greater Ottumwa Park, Long came across famed country singer Marvin Rainwater. Long said he started playing one of Rainwater's famous tunes while he was there.

No matter if you call it — "blue grass" or "old time music," Long enjoyed providing happiness to those who'd listen to his fiddle playing.

Of course, Long is a fan of musicians who play in the old time way. He noted that he enjoys the work of artists like Jim Reeves and Bill Monroe. Long said he liked playing the songs of famous old time musi-

cians. In particular, Long said he enjoyed playing most anything the people listening liked to hear.

"I had quite a collection of songs," said Long.

Although the fiddle was his preferred instrument, Long has played banjo, guitar, Dobro, steel guitar and even fashioned his own bass guitar out of walnut, said Bartlett. Long said he liked the fiddle the most because it was the easiest to tote around when traveling.

"Even with the fiddle, you'd have to pack up your own sound system and that took up a lot of room," Long said.

Much like many other musicians, Long played in a number of groups including The Sundowner Band and Happy Memories Band. While playing with The Sundowner Band, the group earned third and then first place in the seniors contest in differ-

ent years at the Iowa State Fair, noted Bartlett.

"The first time we went up, we didn't get on about second base," explained Long. "Next time we went up, we beat 'em out."

Long has had a storied musical journey.

During his years playing hoe-downs and other events, Long and many others played numerous shows at the What Cheer Opera House.

Bartlett said this period of her father's musical career is perhaps the most interesting. She noted that her father, as well as her mother Helen, met Daryl and Opal Walker from What Cheer while playing in Fremont. "They had invited mom and dad over to their house in What Cheer and then they got to playing on their front porch," Bartlett said.

"There got to be so many people that gathered around when they would

and I think it was probably Opal and Daryl Walker that kind of made the arrangements to get into the opera house."

Bartlett noted that her father and other performers had standing room only audiences at the What Cheer Opera House.

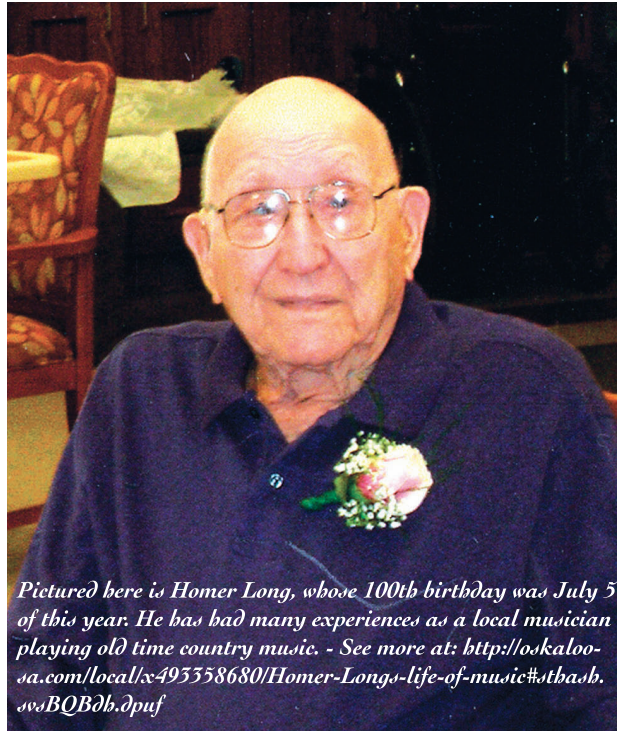
"They raised a lot of money and helped in the renovation of the opera house," said Bartlett, noting that these efforts helped replace the stage curtains and renovate the bathrooms.

"I played there several years," Long said.

Bartlett said her parents played with several other folks at the What Cheer Opera House and developed friendships that way. A lot of their shows at the opera house took place in the 1990s, said Bartlett.

have these jam sessions that they decided to move into the opera house

"They had a lot of fun together just as a group of friends," said Bartlett.



Pictured here is Homer Long, whose 100th birthday was July 5 of this year. He has had many experiences as a local musician playing old time country music. - See more at: <http://oskalooosa.com/local/x493558680/Homer-Longs-life-of-music#sthash.svsBQB0b.dpuf>

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