

DATELINE: DeWitt

*Photos and Stories by Joe Hoppe
September 17, 1984*



DEWITT - TV COMING SOON

DeWitt area Continental Cablevision subscribers will soon be able to view local programming on channel 29.

"Everything's ready to go as soon as we get this piece of power equipment," said Bob Peterson, city representative to Continental Cablevision and DeWitt City administrative assistant. The equipment should relieve a power problem with the transmitting and receiving equipment located in City Hall. Peterson is also awaiting delivery of videotape recording equipment.

The station will be run by DeWitt Cable Communications Commission. Bill Simonson is the chairman of the committee.

Channel 29 will provide information on schools, local government proceedings, and weather 24 hours a day, in "billboard" format. One hour in the evenings is planned for taped programming provided by DeWitt Public Schools. Programs such as taped sporting events, school concerts, and childrens theatre are planned.

Groups or individuals wishing to take advantage of public access policies will have proposals reviewed by the Cable Communications Commission.



AWARD WINNER --- DeWitt Township Police Chief Carroll D. Lee displays the stance that helped him win the Chief's Match and Highest Overall Score for Department Size at the 47th Annual Police Pistol Match, held in Jackson, September 6.

The competition consisted of slow fire, rapid fire, and timed fire segments. Lee used a .45 caliber automatic.

He is shown here with his first place prize; a .38 caliber police special. Over 480 policemen, from all over the state, competed in the match.

SCHOOL'S OPEN BUT...

DeWitt teachers, at this writing, have yet to ratify a contract. They are currently teaching under a tentative agreement with the school board.

Education Association, the teachers, and the School Board members expect to ratify the contract early this



5th graders at C.H. Fuerstenau school enjoy recess during the second week of classes at DeWitt Public Schools.

In This Corner

Greetings, DeWitt residents. My name is Joe Hoppe and I'll be doing the Shopping Guide's DeWitt page now that Tina Steger has gone back to MSU for her Master's Degree in journalism. I'm a University of Michigan graduate myself, but, if you give me a chance, maybe you'll be like a lot of other people I've met around here and say "well you're okay anyhow."

I just graduated in April, and have been living in East Lansing all summer. This is my first professional journalism job.

Now I have a question. I ended up with "DeWitt residents" in the first sentence of the column because I didn't know what a DeWitt resident would call himself. I almost used "DeWitter," but then I wasn't sure. "DeWittite" and "DeWittian" also came to mind. What do you readers prefer?

Answers to that question, and any suggestions, comments, announcements, etc. can be mailed to me at The Shopping Guide offices at 1200 N. Larch, Lansing, 48906. If you'd like

to call and leave a message, the phone number is 372-4800.

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In the future, I would like to use this column as a kind of personal space, where I can write about things in and around DeWitt that I think are interesting (and hopefully you will too), but that might not fit into a category as defined as "news" or "feature stories".

So, I'd like to use this issue's column to write about the wonderful red and orange lifeboat-now-sandbox at Riverside Park. Driving into DeWitt for the first time, that colorful boat really stuck out and grabbed me.

According to the metal plate on the bow of the boat, it was built January 10, 1934 by the Manitowoc Shipbuilding Corp. in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. It was probably one of many lifeboats for a Great Lakes freighter.

As a lifeboat, it had a capacity of 25 persons. As a sandbox it could hold at least as many plus a few Tonka trucks, sand castles, and maybe a dog or two.

It took some real investigative reporting to find out anything else

BUT...

DeWitt teachers, at this writing, have yet to ratify a contract. They are currently teaching under a tentative agreement with the school board.

A contract was expected to be reviewed Wednesday, September 12 by school board members. Before the contract can be ratified, it must be approved by the Ingham-Clinton

Education Association, the teachers, and the School Board members expect to ratify the contract early this week

Salary and benefits were reportedly the teachers biggest concerns. Details of the contract cannot be disclosed until ratification.

about the colorful craft, but after the people at the City Office directed me to Dan Lynn at the School Administration Offices, I found out that it used to belong to ex-DeWitt resident Jerry Cole of Wilson Street. Lynn thought that Cole had originally intended to put a motor in the boat and use it as a pleasure craft, but

never got around to it. So, he ended up donating it to the city, which wisely put it to its present use.

As close as anybody can figure, the lifeboat at Riverside Park has been there "six or seven years."



The red and orange lifeboat in Riverside Park has got to be one of DeWitt's most colorful landmarks. It was built January 10, 1934 by the Manitowoc Shipbuilding Corp., Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

DATELINE: DeWitt

Photos and Stories by Joe Hoppe

September 24, 1984



STILL UNDER TENTATIVE AGREEMENT

DeWitt Public School teachers are still operating under a tentative agreement and will probably still be doing so until early next week, according to Teacher's Representative Leila Whiting.

Although the contract has been approved by the Ingham-Clinton Education Association, it has yet to be okayed by the teachers and the school board.

Teachers are need to have copies of the contract in-hand for inspection 3 days before the teachers can ratify it.

CANDIDATES --- 10th District Congressional hopefuls Republican Bill Schutte and Libertarian George Leef spoke at the DeWitt Businessmen's Association luncheon in the Memorial Building Wednesday. The politicians' main subject was the economy. Democrat incumbent Don Albosta did not respond to the DBA's invitation.

GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS

In this and future Shopping Guides, we'd like to start explaining how to work with the city government of DeWitt. In the future we'll be running articles on petitioning the city council.



VIEW on WEBB ROAD --- Workers on the Webb Road sewer project expect to have the mainlines and all the sewer leads done by Thursday this week. The whole project, with lawns resodded and dirt replaced, will be completed in "about a month."

The sewer system was designed by Rangefinders, Inc. The total cost of the project should be approximately \$70,000, and will be split up among the Webb Road residents getting new link-ups.

J.C. Harte and Sons are contractors.

Council Asked To Move Siren

The main concern of the DeWitt City Council's Tuesday, September 18 meeting was whether to move a civil defense siren located in the city's street right-of-way on the property of Paul Platte, at the corner of Waxwing and Schavey.

The siren was placed on Platte's property in 1979, after the site was found to be the best location for a warning siren serving Lake Geneva and the surrounding area by the City Police Chief, Clinton County Sheriff and an authority from Michigan State University. It is used primarily as a tornado warning signal and is

TEN MOST WANTED

The following list of the current ten most often checked-out books in the DeWitt Public Library was compiled by Head Librarian Judy Jerrad.

1. *Aquitane Profession*, by Robert Ludlum
2. *Full Circle*, by Danielle Steel
3. *Idaho*, part of the *Wagons West* series by Dana Fuller Ross
4. *And the Ladies of the Club*, by Helen Santmyer
5. *Deep Six*, by Clive Cussler
6. *Possessions*, by Judith Michaels
7. *Deceptions*, by Judith Michaels
8. *Lady from Plains*, by Rosalyn Carter
9. *Murder on Embassy Row*, by Margaret Truman
10. a number of biographies and paperback romances tie for tenth place.

**The *Munch Bunch* series, *Serendipity* series and the *Can You Solve the Mystery* series were all extremely popular children's books this summer.



Attorney Richard Abood presents the city council with his argument...

FUNCTIONS

In this and future Shopping Guides, we'd like to start explaining how to work with the city government of DeWitt. In the future we'll be running articles on petitioning the city council, getting property re-assessed, and whatever else we can think of that might concern our readers. Suggestions are welcome, by the way. Registering to vote and absentee ballots seemed like a reasonable place to start.

To register to vote, all you have to do is fill out the card at the Secretary of State's Office or at the DeWitt City Hall. To vote in the City of DeWitt elections coming up November 6, you must be a DeWitt resident and register by October 9. If you are going to vote in any elections this fall you have to be registered by October 9.

Absentee ballots are popular if you plan on wintering in some warmer climate, or can't make it to the polls for any other reason. Official reasons for granting absentee ballots are: you will be absent from the community on which you are registered for the entire time the polls are open to you, physically unable to attend the polls without another's assistance, have religious convictions against attending to polls, are an election precinct inspector in a precinct other than the one you live in, are 60 years old or older, or, you cannot attend the polls because you are in jail awaiting arraignment or trial.

Mail requests for absentee ballots to the City Clerks Office at 414 Main Street, DeWitt or come to the City Hall and pick up the form yourself. The deadline for the absentee ballot applications is 2 p.m. November 3. Call the Clerk's Office at 669-2441 with any questions.

The ballots themselves must be postmarked by 8 p.m. November 6.

The siren was placed on Platte's property in 1979, after the site was found to be the best location for a warning siren serving Lake Geneva and the surrounding area by the City Police Chief, Clinton County Sheriff and an authority from Michigan State University. It is used primarily as a tornado warning signal and is tested once a month during the summer. The siren was last used to sound a tornado warning in August.

Platte wants the siren removed because he feels that it lowers his property value, it's annoying, and he "just doesn't think it should have to be there if he doesn't want it."

Attorney Richard Abood, retained by Platte to bring his argument before the council, stated that the siren should be removed because:

1. According to the State of Michigan's Platte Act, municipalities may only use the street right-of-ways on citizens properties for utilities and similar things. "A civil defense siren," said Abood, "is not similar to a utility."
2. Due-process was ignored when the siren was placed on Platte's property against Platte's wishes.

Consumers Power estimates that it would cost \$400 to move the siren to another location.

The City Council referred the matter to DeWitt's attorney and asked DeWitt City Administrative Assistant Bob Peterson to contact Lake Geneva Association about the availability of a



Attorney Richard Abood presents the city council with his argument on why the Platte's (lower right) should not have to keep a civil defense siren on their property.

nearby parking lot as a siren site. The issue remains unresolved.

In other business, the council accepted a proposal by Peterson that the city employ the services of APTS, an Okemos appraisal firm, to "put a fair market value on all property" in DeWitt. The City would be purchasing a license for software and the labor of having it put into the present computer system. Peterson hopes that the system will be in use by December 31. New property will be appraised with this system. A citywide appraisal will begin in July 31, 1985. The council approved that a contract be drawn between APTS and DeWitt.

The council also okayed purchase of a JVC 7110 video cassette recorder from Continental Cablevision, at \$530, for broadcasting taped programs over channel 29, and referred a petition on the downtown water issue to City Engineer Orla E. McGuire and the Sewer and Water Committee.

TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION

CLASSES

482-1291 Ext. 31

Kiddy Creations in the Kitchen --- 5 - 7 year olds, Michigan fruits featured. 4 weeks, started Saturday but still openings. 9:30 - 11:00 Saturdays, \$4.

Mens Exercise Class --- Starts today. 8 weeks, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. \$12.

Basket Making --- basic techniques. Starts Monday, Oct. 1, 4 weeks, 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. Mondays. \$14 materials included.

Insulated Window Systems --- make and install Roman shades. Starts Monday Oct. 1, 6 weeks. 7 - 9 p.m. Mondays. \$14

Folded Star Quilt --- design, layout and construction of folded star quilt in one night. 7 - 10 p.m. October 3. \$4.

Historic DeWitt

By Kenneth Coin

DEWITT--150 PLUS 1

Last year DeWitt was in the news for the celebration of its sesqui-centennial. We were reminded of Captain David Scott and his family; their tedious 6 day journey from Ann Arbor, and the first days at the Indian village of Wabwahnaheepsee (Now DeWitt).

Now, one year later, what progress had taken place at DeWitt 150 years ago? The following were news items of 1834:

*Captain Scott, his wife Eunice and two sons David and Charles were living "comfortably" in a log house, approximately 25' x 25' located behind the current city fire station. This house doubled as a hotel/tavern to the many settlers following the Pontiac-Grand River Trail, merely a glorified footpath, which passed its doorstep. The cabin was called "Scott's" a name which also lent itself to the naming of the settlement.

* Twenty acres of Clinton county land were under cultivation. Captain Scott and his sons broke ground in July and the acreage was sown with wheat.

* Sylvester Scott, the Captain's eldest son, returned to the settlement in the fall with his wife, Sophronia and new-born son, George. Their homestead was located one half mile west of "Scott's". (Millbrook Meadows now covers the original farm.)

* A second family, unrelated to the Scott's, came to the settlement. The Chauncey S. Ferguson family carved out a homestead west of that of Sylvester Scott's in section #6.

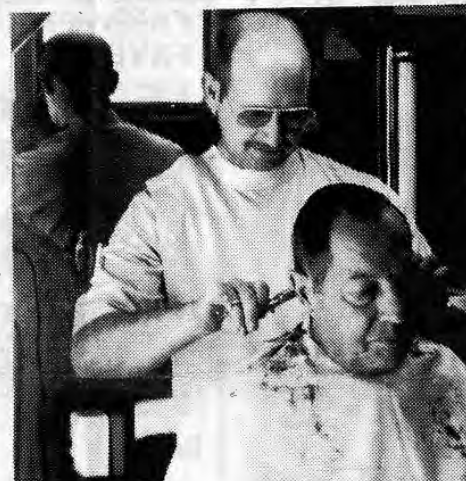
* Autumn, 1834 saw the return of some Indians to their winter camp at Wabwahnaheepsee. There numbers were reduced that year by an epidemic of Asiatic cholera transmitted to the interior of the territory by white settlers.



Kenneth Coin is the author of a 13 volume DeWitt history series. It was printed last year and sold at the public library, which received all the profits from the sales.

Coin spent two years researching and writing the books. Sources included census records, and the state library, business records and township records.

Coin, of Scott Street, is a lifelong (27 years) DeWitt resident, and has also lived in his 130 year-old house all his life. He became interested in history "listening to older people when I was young."



DEWITT EVENTS

Police Pancake Supper --- 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 29 at DeWitt Township Hall, 4700 Brook Road, to benefit the Child Safety Seat Program. All you can eat, sponsored by DeWitt Township, City and Bath Township Police Departments, served by the officers. \$2.75 adults, \$1.75 children under 12, \$9.00 families.

DeWitt City Parks and Recreation Department Volleyball Sign-Up --- 3 - 6 p.m. Today, City hall for Coed Adult League. Individuals need to sign waiver form, teams need to sign team waiver, roster, \$50 fee. Individuals will be placed on teams; 12 teams. Schedules posted Sept. 26, playing begins 28. Referees needed; 669-2441.

In This Corner

Greetings again, DeWitt residents. The paper offices got one call for me on that subject, and the caller preferred "DeWitt residents" to DeWittite, DeWitter, and DeWittian. You can still call if you have a preference.

We're starting a couple or new things in this Shopping Guide. the first, the series on working with DeWitt City government, was the idea of Bob Peterson, the city administrative assistant. Thanks, Bob.

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We're starting a couple or new things in this Shopping Guide. the first, the series on working with DeWitt City government, was the idea of Bob Peterson, the city administrative assistant. Thanks, Bob.

The other new series, Historic DeWitt, was Tina Steger's (the old Shopping Guide reporter) idea. Kenneth Coin is the man putting the "historic" on Historic DeWitt for the Shopping Guide.

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Barbershops are a great American institution, lauded in legend and lore. It's pretty hard to find a good one these days, though. If one has the red and white striped pole, too often "hairstylist" is scrolled around on the whitepart. Most on't even have the pole, and few call themselves barbershops.

I was reall happy to see that DeWitt had an honest-to-goodness barbershop. The Family Barber Shop, on Main Street, looked to have great potential from the outside, real red and white striped pole, striped awning, false front and all.

Inside the Family Barbershop is everything you could expect it to be. And then some. It's got three chairs; one for haircutting, one for setting stuff on and one for whoever wants to sit up in it and read the Free Press, wonderful old octogonal mirrors, bulletin boards, a mat in front of the sink that says "Get Wild Root Cream Oil, Charlie" and a fine undeniable barbershop aura.

The list of services and their prices on the wall include flat tops (\$5) and scalp massages (\$3). "I did 2 or 3 flat tops this morning," said Bill Lonier, who has worked at the barbershop 21 years and owned it for 12. "Did 3 or 4 yesterday." On scalp massages, though, he does "very few of them



"So would you like 'Go Blue' on the back?"
Jim Reck gets his hair cut by Bill Lonier.

anymore. Some guy will come in with a hangover or his wife hit him with something and then they'll get a scalp massage."

Last Wednesday the hair clippings on the floor were mainly gray and white. Jim Reck was getting a haircut. Walter Steenbock and Bill Schwartz were waiting their turn.

Reck likes to joke with Lonier about Michigan State. Reck is a Spartan fan, Lonier prefers the Wolverines. "Yeah, I've been trying to get Bill to paint this place green and white. I just might have to do it myself one of these days," says Reck.

Later, when Reck is in the chair for his cut, Lonier asks him "How do you want it, Would you like 'Go Blue' on the back of your head?"

They're barbershop joking around. Later I found out that Reck is going to be 94 the next day. Or at least that's how old Lonier thinks he must be.

"Going to have a birthday party?" asks the Barber.

"Yep. I got two fifths of Jim Beam back home. I'm going to drink one and put the other on my grave." They go on with everybody joining in, wisecracks, puns, just like you'd imagine a barbershop is supposed to be.

Incidentally, the Family Barber Shop is a family place. Lonier cuts both women's and girls hair too, even if he does prefer "barber" to "hairstylist".

roster, \$50 fee. Individuals will be placed on teams; 12 teams. Schedules posted Sept. 26, playing begins 28. Referees needed; 669-2441.

