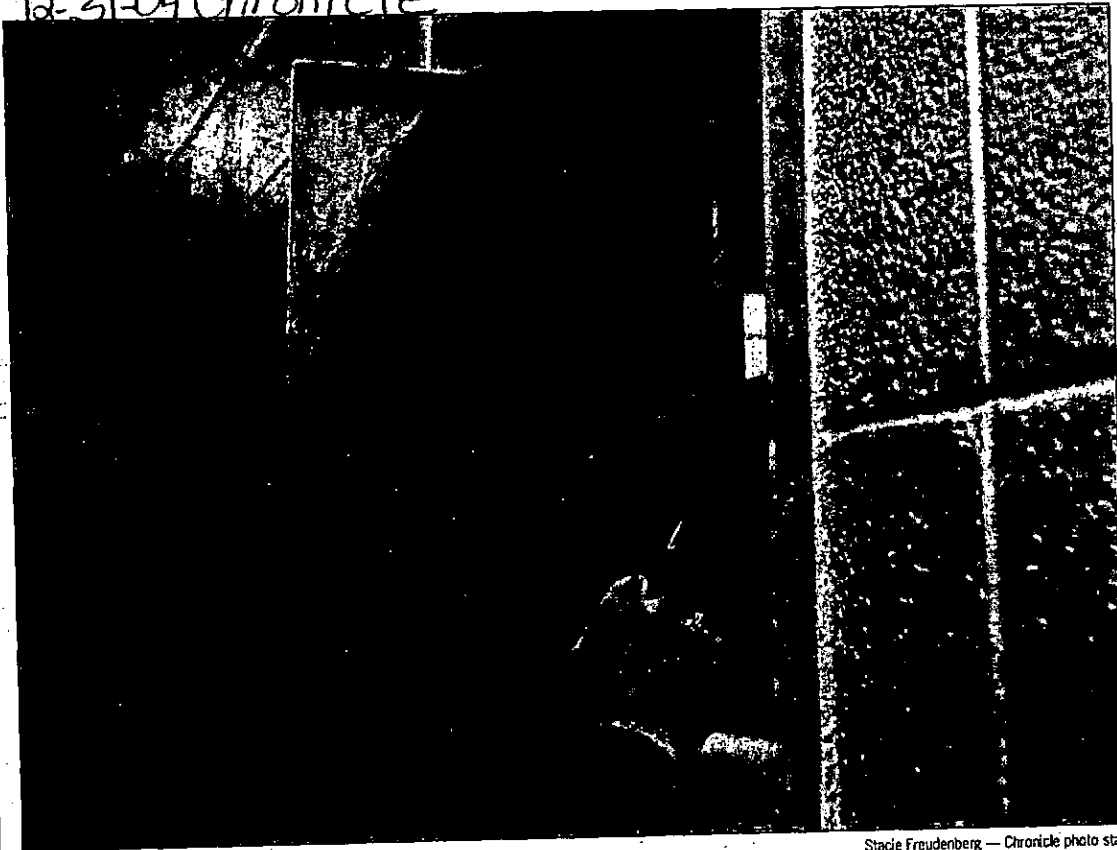


# Touring the cell blocks

12-31-04 Chronicle



Stacie Freudenberg — Chronicle photo staff

Kane County Board member Hollie Kissane peers into an inmate holding cell at the Kane County Correctional Facility Thursday in Geneva as part of a tour for the new members of the county board.

## County board views conditions at the jail

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

In the Kane County Jail, the ceiling in booking leaks when it rains.

The stains in the ceilings are among the first things incoming inmates see when being admitted to the overcrowded facility at 777 E. Fabyan Parkway.

A leaky roof was one of several eyesores Kane County Board members saw Thursday. Six of the seven new board members toured the jail, some seeing it for the first time.

The tour, hosted by Sheriff Kenneth Ramsey and Chief of Corrections Todd Exline, brought members up to date on the jail's poor conditions and plans for a new 600-bed jail to replace the current site.

Mark Davoust, R-St. Charles, was out of the country and did not attend. Chairman Karen McConnaughay had scheduled a tour for the new members on Dec. 8, however, no one could attend.

The new jail is planned for

### Kane County Jail by the numbers

- **Opened:** October 1975. Additions made in 1984, 1989 and 1996
- **Estimated square footage:** 87,000 square feet
- **Capacity:** 398 prisoners
- **Currently houses:** 413 prisoners; 78 prisoners on average were housed in McHenry County Jail per day in 2004.
- **McHenry County charges** \$67 a day per prisoner; prisoners also sent to Jefferson and Kendall counties.
- **Guards on day shift:** 11 to 13
- **Ratio of prisoners to guards:** 40 to 1, to 120 to 1, depending on type of cell
- **Cost to house one prisoner per day:** \$38 (excluding overhead)
- **Security status:** Entire jail now considered maximum security. Former medium security cell blocks designed for 16 prisoners, currently hold 32. Original maximum security cell blocks designed for three prisoners, currently hold six to eight.

— Kane County Chronicle

the Judicial Center campus at Peck Road and Route 38 and is expected to cost \$42 million.

When the new jail is built, Ramsey said he knows what he wants to do with the current facility.

"I want to be the one to push the plunger and blow it up," he said.

The jail opened in October 1975. Ramsey said

former board Chairman Phil Elfstrom declared it full in January 1976.

"We've always been behind the eight ball," said James Mitchell, R-North Aurora.

Mitchell is chairman of the Judiciary/Corrections/Public Safety Committee, which McConnaughay recently created by merging its component committees.

The jail houses 413 inmates, 15 more than its capacity. Overflow inmates are sent to jails in McHenry, Jefferson and Kendall counties.

McHenry County, which housed an average 78 Kane County inmates per day in 2004, charges \$67 a day per inmate.

Lee Barrett, R-East Dundee, said this is lower than the \$74 they usually charge because Kane County houses some of McHenry County's juvenile offenders.

McHenry County used to charge \$50 per prisoner. However, facilities for juveniles since have been constructed in other counties.

"Unfortunately, they're available cheaper than ours," Mitchell said.

Kane County charges about \$80 per juvenile offender.

Ramsey said the jail's design has made it inefficient to maintain and sometimes a safety threat.

See JAIL, page 2

and by 6:30 a.m. Saturday and Sunday. If delivery problems occur, call our customer service department before 10:30 a.m. and we will deliver your newspaper before noon.  
**Customer service:** (630) 232-9239

#### CONTACTING THE NEWSROOM

**Newsroom, direct:** (630) 845-5355  
**Sound Off:** (630) 232-9238  
**Main number:** (630) 232-9255  
**News tip line** Ext. 355  
**Business news** Ext. 355  
**E-mail:** [BUSINESS@KCCRONICLE.COM](mailto:BUSINESS@KCCRONICLE.COM)  
**Features** Ext. 355  
**E-mail:** [LIFESTYLES@KCCRONICLE.COM](mailto:LIFESTYLES@KCCRONICLE.COM)  
**Deaths, family album** Ext. 355  
**E-mail:** [EDITORIAL@KCCRONICLE.COM](mailto:EDITORIAL@KCCRONICLE.COM)  
**Opinion/editorials** Ext. 355  
**E-mail:** [EDITORIAL@KCCRONICLE.COM](mailto:EDITORIAL@KCCRONICLE.COM)  
**Neighbors items** Ext. 355  
**E-mail:** [NEIGHBORS@KCCRONICLE.COM](mailto:NEIGHBORS@KCCRONICLE.COM)  
**Night news desk** Ext. 355  
**Sports desk** Ext. 355  
**E-mail:** [SPORTS@KCCRONICLE.COM](mailto:SPORTS@KCCRONICLE.COM)  
**Newsroom fax:** (630) 232-4962

#### ADVERTISING

**Sales:** (630) 232-9222 Ext. 228  
**Classified:** 1-800-287-9420  
**E-mail:** [CLASSIFIEDS@KCCRONICLE.COM](mailto:CLASSIFIEDS@KCCRONICLE.COM)  
**Fax:** (630) 232-4976  
**Legal notices:** (630) 232-9255, Ext. 219

#### INTERNET

Visit our Web site. We're at [www.kccronicle.com](http://www.kccronicle.com)

#### SPEAKERS AND TOURS

To schedule a speaker from the Chronicle, organizations should call (630) 232-9255, Ext. 307.  
 Available speakers include editors and managers.  
 Tours of our plant at 1000 Randall Road in Geneva may be arranged by calling (630) 232-9255 Ext. 307.

from Davis on Dec. 24, when he

more than 117,000 people dead.

## Jail: Average time spent by prisoners is 28 days

Continued from page 1

"This was built in the '70s, when everything was touchy-feely," he said.

Ramsey said 18 prisoners once escaped by pushing out a Plexiglas window in a then-medium security cell block. Bars now guard that window.

In 2003, a prisoner in the maximum security cell block reached through the bars and grabbed a corrections officer by the hair, attempting to hold her hostage and trigger a riot. The cell block aisle is 3 feet wide. Ramsey said he made the entire jail maximum security about seven years ago to work around prisoner housing issues.

"If the whole jail's maximum, I can move anyone anywhere," he said.

Most cell blocks are at double capacity or more. The former medium security cell blocks were designed to hold 16 prisoners. Each now holds 32.

The original maximum security cell blocks were designed for three. Ramsey said they usually hold be-

tween six and eight.

Among the few cell blocks not overcrowded are the high-risk cell blocks, where prisoners who would be in danger from other inmates are housed. Ramsey said the high-risk inmates often have mental illnesses or are suspected child molesters.

"Even criminals have a sort of code of honor," he said.

Hallways are used for storage space. "Weekenders" — prisoners sentenced to weekend detention — sleep on cots in the gymnasium. Cars involved in investigations or that have been vandalized are left in a courtyard designed for prisoner recreation.

"Where else?" Exline said. Low-level offenders such as vandals often do not serve any time at the jail.

"There's no room in the inn," Ramsey said. "They don't come here."

While the average time spent in the jail is 28 days, Ramsey said one prisoner has been there since 1997. Casey Williams is accused of

sexually assaulting and killing his 18-month-old child. He still is awaiting trial. "No one should be in the system for more than a year," Barrett said. "There is no good reason."

Barrett was chairman of the Public Safety Committee until McConaughay merged the committee with Judiciary and Corrections. He is not on the new committee.

Barrett said more pre-planning is needed to ensure that the new jail will meet the county's needs through the years. He estimated that preplanning would cost one-half of 1 percent of the planned cost for the project. "It's the most important dollar you'll spend," he said.

Barrett said overcrowding could be alleviated by encouraging judges to sentence prisoners to diversionary programs, such as electronic monitoring and pretrial releases for low-flight risk accused.

He said judges are reluctant to do so.

"If they released someone who shouldn't be released, it wouldn't go too

well at election time, would it?" he said.

Barrett is working on population projections for the planned jail. He said the jail will need to accommodate about 700 inmates by 2009, and 800 by 2012. He said he based his projections on the average 34 annual bookings per 1,000 Kane County residents, projected population growth and the average length of stay.

Although plans call for a 600-bed facility, several board members are pushing for a modular design that would ease the construction of additions.

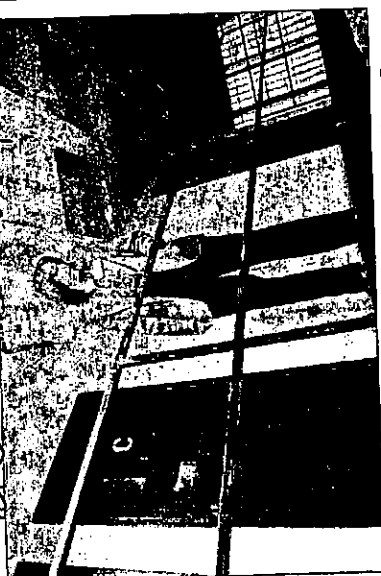
Three architecture firms are in consideration for the project. Sealed bids have been requested and will be discussed Jan. 10.

The Jail Steering Committee plans to discuss its recommendation during a Committee of the Whole meeting on Jan. 13.

The board is expected to make its selection on Feb. 8.

A meeting, Web site and newsletter are in the works to keep the public informed.

12-31-04 Daily Herald



Newly elected Kane County Board member Mariëna Fox, a Democrat from Aurora, joined nine other board members on a tour of the county jail Thursday.

# Jail tour inspires Kane County to consider moves

By TONA KUNZ  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

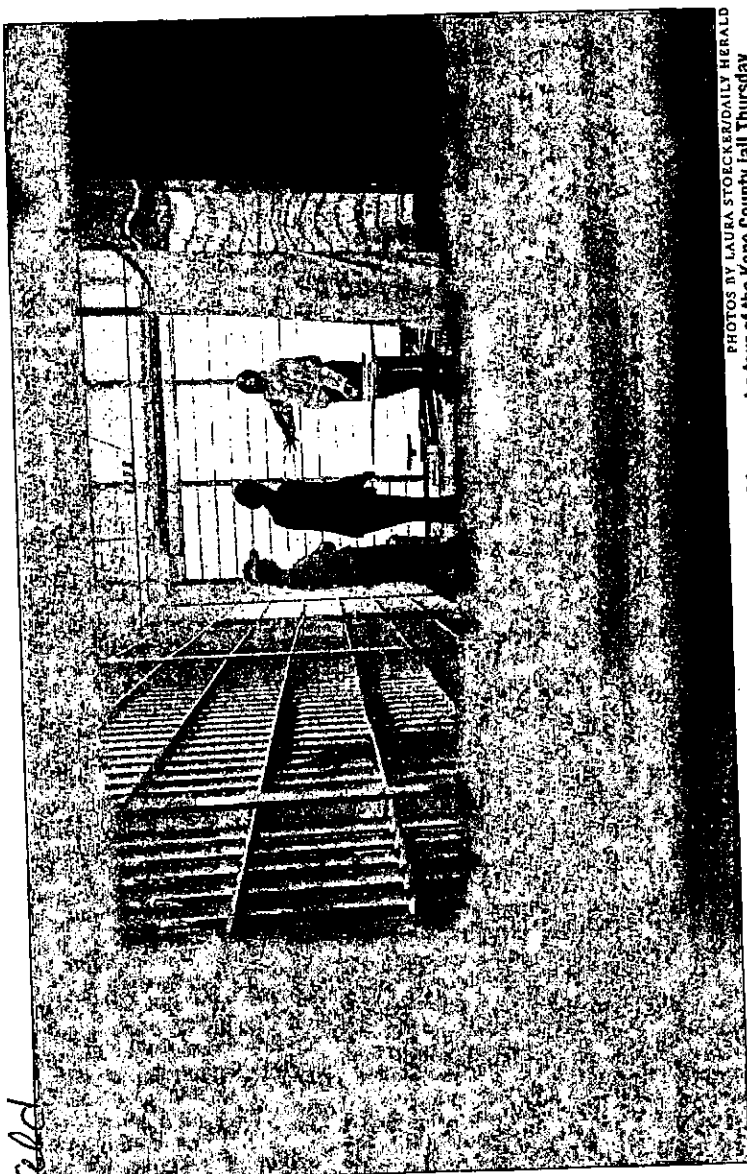
Newly elected Kane County officials got a tour of the crowded jail to get them on board with plans to build a new jail.

The Thursday tour did more than just that. It also got several veteran Kane County Board members wondering if the county shouldn't overhaul more of the judicial system's buildings as well.

Officials plan to pick an architect in February for building a 600-bed jail in St. Charles

to replace the 400-bed jail in Geneva. That same design firm could look at expanding or moving other county buildings.

Barb Wojnicki, a Republican board member from St. Charles, thinks officials should do just that and look into the savings of moving more than the jail to vacant land near the judicial center off Route 38 in St. Charles. Otherwise, she said the county could fall into the same short-sighted thinking that left the jail overcrowded 30 years after opening.



Kane County Board members Barb Wojnicki of St. Charles and Bonnie Kunkel of Aurora get a tour of the Kane County jail Thursday from Sheriff Ken Ramsey.

Lee Barrett, a Republican from East Dundee, suggested following the judge's recommendation of moving the circuit clerk's office and all its court files to the Route 38 campus — and maybe tack on the coroner's office, said Rudy Neuberger, a Democrat from Aurora. Combining the jail and coroner's offices could solve the space problems for both and save on infrastructure costs, he said.

While everyone seemed to agree buildings need to shift

around, not everyone wanted them to land in the same place.

James Mitchell, a Republican from North Aurora, said he could see the value of moving the circuit clerk's office to Route 38, but not the coroner's office.

He favors looking into letting the coroner's office share or take over the clerk's space in the former Montgomery Ward building off Randall Road. Officials have a lease for the building and declined to com-

ment on how costly it would be to break it.

Key to all of the plans is what happens to the existing jail.

Ramsey and new County Board Chairman Karen McConaughay have talked of creating a subcommittee to look into what to do with the current jail property. Zoned industrial and backing up to a Forest Preserve, the site likely would carry a hefty price tag and could help pay for other building moves.

But Tom Van Cleave, a new Republican board member from Batavia, said the county shouldn't jump at selling the land.

He favors continuing to use at least part of the property for a jail.

He would keep those convicted of a crime and sentenced to less than a year in the county jail at the Fabyan site away from those awaiting trial, who he would put in the new jail off Route 38 near the judicial center.

PHOTOS BY LAURA STOECKER/DAILY HERALD

1-27-04 Daily Herald

# Consultants tell county to build a new jail

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Kane County's chronically overcrowded jail needs to be phased out over time and eventually torn down in favor of a new facility, consultants reviewing future jail plans told county leaders last week.

Central to the debate is deciding whether to build a jail next to the existing lockup on Fabyan

Parkway in Geneva or to start over at the county judicial center off Route 38 in St. Charles.

Either way, the recommendation from Colorado-based consultant Voorhis/Robertson Justice Services Inc. is to scrap a 200-bed addition to the existing jail.

The expansion option had been approved by the county board in 2002 but was scrapped in early 2003.

Soon after, the then-newly configured county board corrections and rehabilitation committee, led by Karen McConnaughay, a St. Charles Republican, launched a new review of jail options.

That work, McConnaughay says, has proved building an addition to the aging and crowded facility isn't the best choice.

"A different option yields a

better investment for the taxpayers," McConnaughay said.

By next month, Voorhis/Robertson is expected to report back to the county board with detailed cost projections for jail projects at both the old site and the judicial center.

The concept under discussion involves building a new facility piece by piece and phasing out the old jail as the new cellblocks open.

As part of the financial estimate, the potential cost savings of building a jail next to the courthouse will be factored in as well as the short-term higher costs that likely would develop if parts of the old jail in Geneva were operating at the same time as a new jail in St. Charles.

Both locations being considered provide a jail much larger than the current 400-bed model. McConnaughay said one long-

term design puts a completed jail at 2,400 beds, though officials say such a large facility likely wouldn't be built.

Sheriff Ken Ramsey, one of the key players in the discussion and longtime proponent of action on the jail, said he was pleased to see plans taking shape after so many delays.

"We are moving forward more than we ever have before," he said.



# Consultant recommends modular jail design

*Old jail would be phased out*

**Costs to be developed at next meeting**

By TOM SCHLUETER  
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — A jail consultant says a new jail should be built, that it should rely on modules and that the current building should be phased out. Corrections Committee Chairman Karen McConaughay, R-St. Charles, Sheriff Ken Ramsey and Chief Judge Philip DiMarzio met Friday with James Robertson of Voorhis/Robertson Judicial Services on the plans for the new jail.

"It's a completely different concept in jail design," McConaughay said.

The plan would have a jail built in modules either at the current site at 777 Fabyan Parkway or at the judicial center. Because of the modular concept, the old jail would be phased out.

Costs for both options would be developed at the next meeting.

"We really didn't get into numbers," she said.

The county board already has \$12 million allocated for a

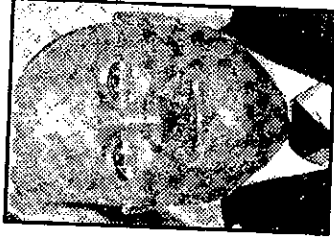
200-bed addition. Also, the county has budgeted \$2.7 million this year for sending its overflow of prisoners to other jails, mostly in McHenry County.

The current jail has an official capacity of 400. On Thursday, there were 511 in Kane County custody, of which 70 were in McHenry County.

The money spent farming out inmates would be put toward staffing the new jail.

Kane could have additional jail beds within one year of the county board's approval of the project.

"I feel pretty confident that they are going to be able to come up with something that will be very viable and workable," Ramsey said. "Within a few weeks, we should have some information and proposals for the county board to re-



**Ramsey**

view, and they will be able to make decisions and get the project going."

McConaughay said the Corrections Committee should have firm costs at its next meeting Feb. 26.

Included in those numbers will be staffing costs.

If the county board approves the concept, it would mean the end of the proposed 200-bed addition.

The county board has paid \$586,000 to Cordogan, Clark & Associates for the design of the addition.

*Contributing: Mark Foster*

# County board candidates debate new Kane jail site

By LISA SMITH  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

There's no question the Kane County jail needs to be replaced.

Every day at least 500 — and at times, up to 700 — people stay in the facility built to house less than 400.

But there is the question about where a new jail should be constructed. County board members last year shelved plans to build an addition to the 29-year-old facility in favor of building a new facility, but have not decided on a location.

The Republican county board candidates competing in the March 16 primary for their party's nomination are at odds over the best location for the jail. In the 14th District, which comprises part of St. Charles and Geneva townships, candidate Mark Davoust supports building a jail on county-owned land next to the existing judicial center on Route 38.

"The Kane County Judicial Center is a logical site for a jail," Davoust said, adding that he would not rule out considering other possibilities.

To his opponent, Arney Silvestri, that site is out of the question because it is too close to established neighborhoods.

"Logistically it would be great, but you have to be sensitive to the area," said Silvestri, a custom home builder who lives in St. Charles.

Davoust, a St. Charles Township resident and vice president

of a Batavia manufacturing company, said the building could be designed so that it does not negatively impact the character of the surrounding area. Silvestri supports rebuilding at the current site, if it is economically feasible.

Consultants hired by the Kane County Board to study the issue are expected soon to outline detailed final cost projections for building a new facility both at the current site and at the judicial center.

They already have advised against building an addition to the current facility.

Anthony Cvek, a candidate for District 10, which includes all of Batavia and a small portion of Geneva, criticized the county board for dragging its feet on the issue, but he added he is encouraged officials are considering the best long-term solution.

"I think when you look at a new facility that's got a modern layout and modern amenities ... I think you'll see management costs decrease," said Cvek, a Batavia resident who owns a home remodeling company.

Tom Van Cleave, president of the Batavia school board and former member of the city's plan commission, considers both building a new facility near the judicial center and renovating the current facility viable options.

"I'm in favor of keeping the existing structure, remodeling it and bringing it up to standard," said Van Cleave, who works as

the marketing manager of the Holmstad retirement center in Batavia.

Van Cleave suggested getting the project moving by hiring firms with experience in jail building.

"It can be placed on a fast-track working with the right professionals," he said.

Joseph Ferrone, a Batavia GOP committeeman, said the cost to take a prisoner from the judicial center to jail is a waste of money.

"They need a completely new jail," said Ferrone, who was appointed to the county's juvenile justice council by State's Attorney Meg Gorecki in 2002.

Jack Cook, the incumbent Republican county board candidate seeking re-election to the District 20 seat covering northeast Elgin, said the county board and Kane County sheriff's office should work together to address overcrowding.

He did not point to a specific solution, saying all options should be considered.

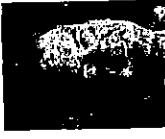
"We need to scrutinize things and find a way to solve the problem," Cook said. "There's got to be a solution one way or another ... I want to see this to some kind of fruition."

His challenger, Larry Wegman, agreed the jail remains a serious problem and said inmates should continue being housed at other counties' facilities, when need be, until a final site decision is made.

"I believe we should maintain basically the status quo until



Jack Cook



Mark Davoust



Arney Silvestri



Larry Wegman



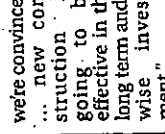
Anthony Cvek



Joseph Ferrone



Tom Van Cleave



Tom Van Cleave

Larry Wegman

## Jail booking system is flawed, chief says

By PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

The Kane County jail chief said Thursday the sheriff's office is conducting an internal review of inmate booking procedures and equipment to prevent another accidental prisoner release.

Part of that review has prompted changes in staffing and a call for a new booking computer system following several embarrassing cases in which inmates were mistakenly allowed to leave the jail.

"The jail management system is something we are looking to upgrade," said jail chief Todd Exline.

"The only reason we have it is because it's free."

Exline said the system is about four years old and the only such jail computer system in use in the state.

When it was installed, it came free of charge from the manufacturer and was intended to be used in every Illinois county.

He described it as "cumbersome and difficult to navigate."

The day-to-day booking of prisoners in and out of the jail requires strict controls on photographs, fingerprints and mounds of paperwork. Some of it is kept in paper files while other portions are computerized.

"The jail management system is something we are looking to upgrade. The only reason we have it is because it's free."

Todd Exline, jail chief

Bringing it all together can cause problems, Exline said.

Earlier this month, Sheriff Ken Ramsey announced that an inmate had been mistakenly released because of an employee's error.

It was the second time in a month a prisoner had been mistakenly set free and fifth time since late 2000.

The computer system, brought up at a meeting of the county board's corrections and rehabilitation committee Thursday, is the latest in a series of deficiencies pointed out by the sheriff and corrections staff at the 30-year-old jail based in Geneva.

That corrections committee is continuing to review plans for a new jail or future jail expansion but no decisions have been made.

Meanwhile, Ramsey continues to call for more guards to control the situation in the 398-bed facility that routinely houses more than 500 inmates.

• Daily Herald staff writers Gail Pierce and Tom O'Konowicz contributed to this report.

# County to get first look at new jail proposal

2-27-04 Chronicle

## Consultant to present two options for prefabricated building modules

By TOM SCHLUETER  
Kane County Chronicle

ROBERTSON — The Kane County Executive Committee will get a long-awaited look Wednesday at two proposals for a new jail.

The county's jail consultant, James

Committee Chairman Karen McConnaughay, R-St. Charles, "The No. 1 priority is, 'How do we increase operational efficiency?'"

To increase efficiency, Robertson proposes prefabricated, two-story building modules, each of which would hold about 100 inmates. They are designed to be operated with minimal staff.

McConnaughay said Robertson will present the cost of building and operating the jail through 2020 at the meeting. On Thursday, she said she did not



McConnaughay

know how much it would cost to build the modular jail.

Committee member James Mitchell, R-North Aurora, said the modular building technique could make it possible to build a larger, more efficient jail for less money than the county originally planned with a 200-bed addition.

In 2002, the county board allocated \$12 million to build a 200-bed addition to the current jail, which would have raised its capacity to 600.

McConnaughay was appointed Corrections Committee chairman in December 2002, and along with a new committee membership, voted to scrap the addition.

The move was criticized by some because the addition was scheduled for completion sometime this year.

See JAIL, page 2

## Jail

Continued from page 1

McConnaughay defended the move, saying that the plan lacked long-range goals to relieve the chronically overcrowded jail.

In January, an average of 503 people were in Kane County custody on a daily basis, with 70 housed in other jails every day, most of whom were in McHenry County.

Efficiency at the jail has been an issue in the last month as inmates twice, on Jan. 29 and Feb. 13, were mistakenly released from custody.

On Thursday, jail director Todd Exline said the incidents are being investigated.

"We are reviewing procedures," he said.

Exline also said that the software for the jail management system installed three years ago for free as a demonstration project is "cumbersome."

"We are the only county in Illinois using it," he said.

McConnaughay, who is running for the county board chairman, said she hoped the board could ignore the upcoming elections and make a site selection within the next couple of months.

"This should have nothing to do with the timing of the political process," she said.

See yourself in Neighbors ...  
neighbors@kcchronicle.com

2-27-04 Daily Herald

# Is \$12 million enough for a new jail?

*Despite skepticism, experts say Kane can get 300-bed facility for that price*

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

A new jail capable of holding nearly 300 prisoners could be built beside the Kane County

judicial center for roughly the same price of a 200-bed addition to the old lockup, the county's jail design consultants say.

The building estimates are

## Page 3

• What board candidates think about where jail should be built.

preliminary, but county officials say experts from Voorhis/Robertson Justice Services Inc. have indicated the \$12 million set aside more than two

years ago for an addition can get them a new expandable facility.

Since the first plans for the judicial center, which opened in 1993 off Route 38 in St. Charles, hit the drawing board, the concept called for a jail to someday be built next to the criminal courts building.

The current jail, which was designed to hold less than 400 prisoners at any one time, rou-

tinely houses between 500 and 700 prisoners per day.

Now, a year after an addition plan nearly ready for groundbreaking was shelved, the pieces may be there to solve the jail's longtime overcrowding problem.

But no one is ready to say the new \$12 million plan will do it. "That's without any hard

See KANE on PAGE 8

numbers," said Karen McConnaughay, a St. Charles Republican and chairman of the county board's corrections and rehabilitation committee.

In fact, county board Chairman Mike McCoy, who has pushed for a jail solution for years, said this week he seriously doubts such a project

## Kane: Some estimates may be out next week

Continued from Page 1

could be completed at that price. Kane County Sheriff Kenneth Ramsey was unavailable for comment Thursday.

A definite answer to the price question is likely months away. But some cost figures will be announced next week.

On Wednesday, McConnaughay said officials from Voorhis/Robertson will present long-range figures exploring the costs of the basic jail options the county is facing.

The options involve doing nothing and keeping the Fabray Parkway jail in Geneva as is, building the previously approved and later rejected 200-

bed addition to the Geneva jail, or constructing a new jail in stages — at the Geneva site or next to the judicial center.

The first phase of such an expansion is what the consultants believe could be built for \$12 million. Later additions to that new facility could eventually be added to phase out the old jail.

McConnaughay said: the numbers next week will compare staffing and construction costs of all those options.

The staffing projections deal with numbers through the year 2020.

The same consultants putting together the numbers have already told a subcommittee working on the jail that doing

nothing or moving forward with the 200-bed addition are not good options.

That leaves new construction as the leading scenario.

McConnaughay doesn't expect action next week but hopes to have a board decision this spring.

"It's important that the board think about this," she said.

If building new becomes the best avenue, then choosing a site becomes the debate's focus. And many around the board table realize part of that debate will include objections from residents living near the judicial center.

"That's an issue the board is going to have to contend with," McConnaughay said.

2-27-04 Chronicle

# Monitoring McConaughay

*Board member will have system installed in house to test jail alternative*

## Electronic

### monitoring system

- **What:** Ankle bracelet sends a signal to the monitoring equipment in the home installed to a phone line.

- **Costs:** \$3.09 a day

- **Other information:**

There are 85 people currently using the program as a cheaper alternative to jail.

If the bracelet or equipment is tampered with, an alarm is set off.

Call waiting and DSL interferes with the system.

By TOM SCHLUETER  
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — As a way to learn more about the court system's electronic monitoring program, a county official will try it out herself.

Karen McConaughay, Rehabilitation Committee, Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee, will have an electronic bracelet attached to her ankle and the monitoring system installed on her phone line for three days.

"It should be a lot of fun," McConaughay said. "Unless I can't stand it."

Court Services uses electronic monitoring as an alternative to putting people in jail.

The ankle bracelet sends a signal to the monitoring equipment in the home. The signal is transmitted over a phone line.

The monitoring equipment only can pick up the signal if the person is in the house. If the person leaves without authority, the signal is lost and the Court Services

Department is alerted.

There was one glitch: At Thursday's committee meeting McConaughay learned that the experiment would have to wait until the DSL and call-waiting

services were disconnected from her telephone line.

The monitoring equipment will not work with the interference from those



McConaughay

services.

Court Services director James Mueller said the cost of the technology has dropped from \$7 a day for each unit to \$3.09.

The program is cheaper than sending people to jail, but Mueller said, "I can never come here and tell you that you can get out of the jail business."

On Thursday there were 85 people in the program. Last year the most on the program was 120, Mueller said.

Judges decide who is eligible for electronic monitoring.

Special programs supervisor John Owens said the bracelet is waterproof.

If someone tries to remove or disable it, a tampering alarm is set off.

Unlike a global positioning system it does not track the person's whereabouts.

At last month's committee meeting, Mueller asked the members if any of them would like to try out the bracelet. McConaughay volunteered.

"They're thinking about expanding the program," she said. "I'm kind of looking forward to it."

2-27-04 Chicago Chronicle

# Residents weigh options for Fabyan improvements

By PAUL ROCK  
Kane County Chronicle

BATAVIA — John and Gail Carroll do not mind if the county decides to cut 10 feet from their property to make improvements on Fabyan Parkway.

As long as Fabyan becomes a safer, quieter road, they even would sacrifice the stand of lilac trees in their backyard.

"We all agree something needs to be done with the road," said John Carroll, who lives with his wife on Winnebago Trail, a street that backs onto Fabyan. "It's unsafe. It's worth it if they remove the noise."

The couple were among more than 100 Batavia and Geneva residents who attended an informational meeting in which the Kane County Division of Transportation outlined options for revamping Fabyan between Western Avenue and Kirk Road.

The meeting was the first step in the county's attempt to get state and federal funding for the project.

Fabyan, which currently averages 28,000 cars a day, is one of the county's busiest roads, and on par with Kirk.

That volume is expected to jump to 40,000 by 2010 and

60,000 by 2020, said Paul Holcomb, a chief designer for KDOT.

The county is considering several options, both for the short-term and long-term.

Among the short-term solutions under consideration are to widen the road to include a center turning lane and to add traffic signals and signs.

Another option is to make access to some side streets, such as Thoria, Surrey and Heather roads accessible only with right in and right out turns.

Long-term plans include widening the road to six lanes, adding a raised median and building concrete barriers to

completely block access to Thoria, Surrey and Heather roads from Fabyan.

Holcomb said feedback from residents will be used to shape a feasibility study that then would be submitted to state and federal agencies for funding and approval.

Until the study is completed, cost estimates for the project are not available.

"We're trying to identify safety concerns," Holcomb said. "There are various alternatives, and we want to get feedback from these entities and see what they think before we start phase one and get into design issues."

Batavia 4th Ward Alderman

Tom Schmitz said he would like the county to skip short-term solutions and build for the long term.

"I like doing it all the way," Schmitz said. "Plan for the future. Not just 2020, 2050."

Schmitz said some of the proposed changes, particularly limiting access to streets, would be hard for some to accept.

"Closing down streets would be difficult, but with the amount of cars they're estimating, it would be difficult to access them anyway," Schmitz said. "Change is not accepted well, but it's something that has to happen."

2-27-04 Chicago METRO Tribune

# Kane officials to review jail expansion options

## Consultants weigh in on 3 proposals

By William Presecky  
Tribune staff reporter

For the first time since a long-standing plan to build a 200-bed jail annex was halted a year ago, Kane County officials will be given alternatives to review aimed at solving chronic overcrowding at the facility. In addition to the planned \$12 million addition to the existing 400-bed jail, experts will pre-

sent board members Wednesday with three other plans: do nothing; build an expandable, modular-style jail at the existing complex on Fabyan Parkway in Geneva; or build a 300-bed modular jail at the county judicial center on Illinois Highway 38 and Peck Road in St. Charles.

Karen McConaughay (R-St. Charles), Judiciary Committee chairwoman, who led the move to stop the expansion plan the county had spent several years and more than \$600,000 developing, said she hopes the County Board will be prepared to vote

on a long-term jail solution by June.

McConaughay urged members of her committee Thursday to attend next week's Executive Committee meeting, where the consulting firm hired by Kane last year will review its analysis of each of the options.

McConaughay said she did not plan to press members for a quick response to Wednesday's planned presentation by James Robertson, of Voorhis/Robertson Justice Services Inc., of Aurora, Colo. Whatever the decision, she said, "It will change

the course of how we deal with this problem [and] you want to make sure it was well thought out."

McConaughay said she would oppose any attempt to delay a decision on the jail until after the 2004 election campaigns, which includes her own for County Board chairman.

"This should have nothing to do with the timing of the political process," she said.

McConaughay's preference is for modular construction, which she said is quicker to complete and more efficient to operate.

"The No. 1 priority is how do we increase the [jail's] operational efficiency. Keep in mind, the current facility is so inefficient we have nowhere to go but up," she said.

Kane County's 400-bed jail was built in the mid-1970s and expanded three times since then. Although the level of overcrowding has stabilized of late, the county's inmate population routinely has exceeded jail capacity by 100 to 200 inmates, with the overflow being transferred to jails outside of Kane at a cost of about \$1.5 million annually.

2-27-04 Beacon News

# Kane might have money for new jail

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Kane County Board optimists are saying the county could get a new jail started for the same money it was going to use to build a 200-bed addition to the old jail.

One board member even predicted privately this week that \$12 million — at one time set aside for the 200-bed addition which was never built — will buy 300 beds in a new facility next to the Judicial Center on Route 38 west of Geneva.

Officials will know more next week, when consultant Jim Robertson presents a recommendation that will spell out two basic

alternatives: the beginning of a new jail at the Judicial Center; or building a new jail at the site of the current one on Fabyan Parkway in Geneva, and tearing down the old one.

Either way, the building approach will be modular, which officials said will allow the county to build, and pay for, a jail in increments.

The official recommendation will come March 3 at the County Board's Executive Committee.

Karen McConaughay, chairman of the board's Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee, and Jim Mitchell, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, also hope to bring forward at that meeting a resolution establishing a Judicial

Coordinating Council.

That council will be a formal confluence of officials who run the courts and law-enforcement arms of the county government, along with County Board members and people from the community. The council is supposed to better coordinate the justice system, which includes the future of the jail.

With a modular approach, the county could pay for as much of a new jail at the Judicial Center as it could afford. Officials could add to the jail there over time, while phasing out the old jail on Fabyan Parkway. That is why there is some optimism the money already set aside for the former addition project will be

enough to start a new jail.

"I'm very excited about the proposals," Mitchell said Thursday. "We would be able to build new bed space at a cheaper price."

## Picking a site

Building at the Judicial Center site is not a new idea. When the Judicial Center was built west of Geneva, there was a master plan that included all components of the justice system at that site.

But there are many more subdivisions with Geneva and St. Charles residents in the area now than when the Judicial Center was built. If the county decides on a new jail at the Judicial Center, it would have to go through normal site plan consid-

erations, including public hearings.

The jail has been suffering from overcrowding for a number of years. Recently, however, jail population has leveled off some.

Earlier this week, Chief Judge Philip DiMarzio said cases have been running more quickly through the judicial system since the county added two new assistant public defenders. Also, incidences of crime have been down a bit.

Mitchell pointed out, however, that the county already is doing most of the diversion programs it can.

"So, the (jail) numbers are going to go up; they're not going to go down," he said.

# County looks for answers for jail

2-16-04 Daily Herald

BY GARRETT ORDOWER

Daily Herald Staff Writer

Few would argue the Kane County jail has too many people in it.

At least 500 people stay in the 400-bed facility daily. At times, that number has spiked to 700.

In the wake of the fifth mistaken release of an inmate since late 2000, Sheriff Ken Ramsey likened the environment — created by crowding and a dearth of staffing — to a pressure cooker with its lid ready to blow.

In July 2002, the county tried to relieve that pressure by approving a 200-bed expansion. Last year, it backed away from the plan.

But even if the \$12 million addition had gone forward, said corrections and rehabilitation committee head Karen McConnaughay, it wouldn't have done much to prevent such mistakes as Friday's release of 35-year-old Marceah Spikener of Aurora or that of 21-year-old Juan L. Ramirez in January.

"It's symptomatic of something that all of us have to come to terms with," said McConnaughay, the Republican nominee for Kane County Board chairman. "The fact is that the criminal justice system is overloaded, and whether we had an additional 200 beds or not would not have prevented something like this."

Critics of the plan said adding beds to the old jail simply would have kept in place inefficiencies inherent to the 28-year-old building. And in the long run, they said, it would cost far more in additional staff than might eventually be spent on building a new jail.

"You need to look at the whole process," said Jim Mitchell, head of the judiciary committee. "Not just the jail and how many people go in there."

When consultants pitch plans to solve problems with the jail at

## Jail: Sheriff already had a shake-up planned

Continued from Page 1

the county's March 3 executive committee meeting, it will be exactly those long-term solutions they address.

One possibility is to put the new jail near the site of the Kane County Judicial Center, which could significantly lessen the amount of time corrections officers and employees spend transporting inmates.

McConnaughay said it's those same employees who work in the booking department, which was responsible for at least the past two mistaken releases. When they spend time transporting people, they are taken out of the booking process at the jail.

Though the \$12 million price tag floated earlier for a tempo-

rary solution seems high, the cost of staff accounts for 90 percent of the costs of incarceration, she said.

The existing building requires more people working to keep the jail secure than would be needed in a facility with a better design, she said.

"The place is like a maze," McConnaughay said.

An option that will be discussed at the executive committee meeting will be a 300-bed building that could be expanded and could also provide relief quickly.

Ramsey placed most of the blame for Friday's incident on human error, saying if the policies in place had been followed it would not have happened.

But he said those policies and other operations will be revis-

ited. In response to Ramirez's release, Ramsey already had planned a major shake-up in staff to take effect Feb. 22.

The board did provide for six more corrections officers last year, but they remain in the eight-month hiring and training process. On Saturday, Ramsey said he needed 50 additional officials.

The short-term solutions, McConnaughay said, will have to come from the sheriff and his staff as they manage the day-to-day details.

"We don't run the jail. He does," McConnaughay said.

That leaves the lingering question of the jail facility itself.

Mitchell said the best-case scenario would include about 300 beds ready in a more-efficient facility in a year.



F3

## Week in review

Your chance to catch up on news of the week.

### State's attorney news:

- Kane County State's Attorney Meg Gorecki filed papers Monday asking a judge to block the county board's efforts to remove her from office. Her law license is suspended for four months beginning today, and Kane County Board Chairman Mike McCoy three days earlier called a special meeting Monday, Feb. 2, for the board to determine if the suspension equated to a vacancy of office, which means the county could remove her permanently.
- Tuesday, Chief Judge Philip DeMarzio appointed Kathy Moran, chief of the civil division of the state's attorney's office, temporary state's attorney. Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan had recommended that Gorecki ask for a temporary SA to be named.
- Wednesday, Judge Michael Colwell denied Gorecki's request.
- Friday, Colwell heard arguments as to whether Gorecki's seat is vacant, but did not rule the position was vacant.

### No DARE in Geneva:

Geneva public school officials Monday dropped the Drug Abuse Resistance Education program.

### Two dam choices:

Full removal, or a whitewater dam, are the only options the state is willing to consider for the north Batavia dam, state officials said early last week. Even though park district officials had urged the state to consider a half-height dam. The city council favors the full-removal, which really would cut the dam configuration to about 18 inches high and install structures to create small pools and stabilize sediment.

### Short-lived freedom:

An inmate at the Kane County jail who was being held on charges of aggravated battery to a child was mistakenly released Tuesday night, sheriff's deputies said. Juan Landre Ramirez, 21, of Elgin, was released from the Kane County Adult Corrections Center in Geneva just after 7 p.m. when he was mistaken for another inmate, deputies said. He was found Wednesday and returned to jail.

Founded 1872  
**Daily Herald Paddock Publications Inc.**

DANIEL E. BAUMANN, Chairman/Publisher

DOUGLAS K. RAY, President/CEO

ROBERT Y. PADDOCK JR., Vice Chairman/Executive Vice President

JOHN LAMPINEN, Senior Vice President/Editor

M. EILEEN BROWN, Managing Editor

# Opinion

"Our aim:  
To fear God,  
tell the truth  
and make money."

H.C. Paddock  
1852-1935

PAGE 16 SECTION 1 DAILY HERALD

## Build on solid progress toward jail plan

For those who have followed the long and tortured history of Kane County jail problems, a consultant's recent recommendation probably seemed to belabor the obvious.

In a nutshell, the 98-page assessment given the county board by the Jail Division of the National Institute of Corrections suggested that building a new jail might be the wisest long-term course for the county. Yes, it said, the county could build an addition, as it has planned to do off and on for years. But the proposed 200-bed addition wouldn't be sufficient to serve long-term needs and wouldn't address the basic inefficiencies of the current facility or system.

The recommendation did not include cost estimates for the various options, but Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee Chairwoman Karen McConaughay says a draft cost evaluation could be available later this week.

Given public comments and views we have heard from criminal justice system candidates during editorial board interviews, it is apparent there is growing consensus that a new jail, probably adjacent to the judicial center, is the right

### Our View

move over the long term. That is a view we generally share, though with a caveat about unanswered cost questions. We also urge the county to address two problems the report identified — a need to create better methods to collect hard judicial system data and diversion of more pretrial inmates from the jail.

Because the jail and courthouse are not located together, additional costs and inefficiencies caused by the need to transport prisoners have been a daily fact of Kane County life. Putting the facilities together simply makes sense, and we suspect cost estimates will reflect that fact.

It also appears that members of the steering committee helping to push the county toward a long-term jail solution — McConaughay, board Chairman Mike McCoy, Sheriff Ken Ramsey, Chief Judge Philip DiMarzio and Judiciary Committee Chairman Jim Mitchell — have set aside personalities and politics well enough to work together productively.

The group is studying a jail construction method that uses prefabricated hexagonal cell blocks that would form a sort of honeycomb effect. New hexagons could be added over time to allow a phased shutdown of an old facility and a phased construction of a new one. The only limitation to those hexagons? They can't be built upward and, thus, require lots of land. Fortunately, the county has plenty at the judicial center site.

Better still, discussions once limited to short-term crisis management have now ranged so far as to include a suggestion from DiMarzio that even a full judicial center expansion might be accomplished by adding courtrooms to an adjacent jail, freeing up space for other departments in the current judicial center.

That's a long way down the road, but exactly the sort of logical and efficient planning that has been sorely lacking until recently. It is also the sort of long-term, sensible thinking that would sell well with beleaguered taxpayers, most of whom understand the stress on the current jail is growing, but have doubted whether previous plans would solve the problem at a reasonable cost.

F3

# Officials want public involved in jail planning

Chronicle 11/19/04  
Web site, newsletter under way

By PAUL DALLING  
Kane County Chronicle

ST. CHARLES — As plans for the new 600-bed jail proceed, county officials want to make sure the public is informed and involved.

county and Sheriff's Office sites.

Also, a public information meeting tentatively is scheduled for Jan. 27.

"We recognize the importance of public participation, and we are making sure that everything we do is available to the public," said Karen McConnaughay, the Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee chairwoman.

The Web site will be linked to the

takes over as county board chairwoman Dec. 1.

Continual overcrowding in the county's current 400-bed jail at 777 E. Fabryan Parkway have led to plans for the new jail. The jail will be on the campus of the Judicial Center at Peck Road and Route 38 and is expected to cost \$42 million.

Typically more than 500 people are in the county's custody. The overflow is shipped to counties that have

excess jail space.

The importance of public participation was reinforced during a recent training program. Chief of Corrections Todd Exline said.

The Planning of New Institutions program, run by the National Institute of Corrections, selects representatives from jurisdictions building new jails.

See JAIL, page 2

## Jail: Incoming board members will tour facilities

Continued from page 1

The participants then run through scenarios, participate in role-playing games and examine case studies to become familiar with all aspects of building a jail.

"We got into the nitty-gritty," Exline said. "Even if we want to use steel bars or not."

Exline, McConnaughay, Undersheriff Mike Anderson and board member John Noverini, R-Carpentersville, attended the session in October.

"It was the most valuable information we've received so far," McConnaughay said.

The corrections committee has scheduled an orientation program designed to share this new information,

as well as all information to date, with the seven new members brought to the board by the recent election.

On Dec. 8, the incoming board members will tour the current jail facilities and attend a presentation by Jim Robinson, a consultant on the jail project.

On Dec. 16, during a meeting of the Whole Steering

Committee will present its choice for the jail's architect. The six competing firms are The DLR Group from Chicago, HDR Inc. of Chicago, Healy Bender Associates from Naperville, ROAW from Indianapolis, Teng & Associates of Chicago and World Architects and Engineers based in St. Paul, Minn. World has an office in Elgin.

# Architects make pitch for Kane jail project

■ **Six firms in running:**  
Three who make first cut will be back Dec. 9

By Linda Girardi

SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

GENEVA — Were it not for the Kane County seal, the board room drama played out much like a scene in Donald Trump's reality series *The Apprentice*.

Six architectural firms, each proclaiming to be experts in the field, this week gave elaborate presentations to members of the Kane County Board on why they should be selected to design a new 600-bed jail.

The difference: No one was fired.

But no one was hired yet, either.

The Jail Project Steering Committee will narrow the list to three prospective firms, and invite them back for a second round of interviews on Dec. 9. The group will single out one firm on Dec. 16 for recommendation, with County Board action at the January meeting. Contract negotiations will follow.

"We like to believe we are ready for this challenge," Kane County Board chairman-elect Karen McConnaughay said.

The firms, ranging in teams of two to 10, were each given 25 minutes to give reasons why they should be the architectural leader for the estimated \$48 million project.

McConnaughay, chairman of the County Board's Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee, said the three-hour exercise gave board members an opportunity to grasp the complexity of the issue.

Since 1992, the county jail has been strained with an increasing number of inmates. Funding has been a primary obstacle to a solution.

"We have set a goal to build a facility that is going to be the most cost-effective to operate," McConnaughay said. "That's why this is going to be successful."

The six competing architects are:

- The DLR Group of Chicago.
- HDR Architecture Inc. of Chicago.
- Healy, Bender & Associates Inc. from Naperville.
- RQAW Consulting Engineers & Architects of Indianapolis, Ind.
- Teng & Associates Inc. of Chicago.
- Wold Architects and Engineers of St. Paul, Minn.

Each said they had access to firms specializing in a full range of disciplines, from engineering to food services. They emphasized their experience in designing facilities in Illinois, including ones in Kendall and Will counties, and states throughout the country.

The design teams attempted to draw distinctions of having experience in local projects in both Kane and DuPage counties and for being sensitive to residential neighborhoods surrounding the Kane County Judicial Center on Route 38 in St. Charles. They addressed security issues, costs and operational efficiencies.

The existing jail at 777 E. Fabian Parkway in Geneva has a design capacity of 399 inmates, but Tuesday's population was 520, according to Chief of Corrections Todd Exline.

"We want to do it right and plan for future expansion — something that has never been done correctly in the county," Undersheriff Mike Anderson said.

A formal public hearing schedule, Web site and newsletter will be established to keep citizens up-to-date. The first public informational meeting is scheduled for Jan 27.

11-17-04 Daily Herald

# Would-be jail builders show their stuff

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

*County board hears pitches from six firms in a series of interviews*

The six firms contending to design a new Kane County jail showed off their resumes to county board members Tuesday in a series of in-person infomercials each used to stress experience and accountability.

In alphabetical order on the half hour, each firm got to

bring in a management team and explain why its approach fits what Kane County is looking for in its future jail architect.

The night's lineup included national justice facility firms such as Chicago-based DLR Group and HDR Inc., as well as

smaller, more local firms such as Elgin-based Wold Architects and Engineers.

"It also presented an opportunity for education," said county board Chairman-elect Karen McConaughay, a St. Charles Republican.

She said the 3½-hour meeting

before the steering committee overseeing the jail project allowed all board members to learn not only about the firms but also the overall business of jail construction.

Earlier this year the county board decided to pursue the building of a 600-bed or more

jail near the county's judicial center off Route 38 in St. Charles. It is expected to cost roughly \$42 million.

That decision came after years of arguing over the future of the current, chronically overcrowded existing jail in Geneva. The 400-bed facility was hous-

ing 520 inmates Tuesday. To get to this point, the county already dumped a plan for a 200-bed addition to the jail in Geneva and started from scratch.

Jail Chief Todd Exline said Tuesday that he was excited to see the county advance this far toward building a new jail with

See JAIL on PAGE 16

## Jail: Board hopes to have 3 finalists by month's end

*Continued from Page 1*

such a range of firms.

"With all six of these firms you are going to get something innovative and new," Exline said. "We are moving forward."

McConaughay said the goal is to have the list of six firms narrowed to three by the end of the month.

Another series of interviews

will follow and the selection should head to the county board in January.

The six firms in the running are: DLR Group; HDR Inc.; Wold; Naperville-based Healy; Bender & Assoc.; Indianapolis-based RQAW Corp.; and Chicago-based Teng & Assoc.

Throughout the night different firms emphasized different themes.

As part of its presentation, Wold stressed its local ties as a Kane County firm.

Teng representatives talked about the company's existing relationship with the county and the fact the company began researching this project months before firms were solicited.

DLR pointed out how in the last five years it has built various jails with a total of 33,000 beds.

# Six firms present plans for county jail

11-17-04  
Chronicle

*Final decision  
to come in January*

By TOM SCHLUETER  
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Six teams of architects tried to sell themselves to the county board Tuesday as the best choice to design a new 600-bed jail.

Members of the county board and the Jail Steering Committee listened as the architects each had 25 minutes to give their spiels.

"The process is an education for the county board and the public," said Karen McConaughay, R-St. Charles, chairman of the Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee and board chairman-elect.



McConaughay

McConaughay would not say after the presentations which firm she preferred.

Twelve firms responded to a request for qualifications. Of those, six were chosen to give their presentations at the public meeting Tuesday night.

Three of those firms will be chosen to be interviewed, with a final selection by the county board at its January meeting.

A 600-bed jail built out on the campus of the Judicial Center at Peck Road and Route 38 is expected to cost \$42 million.

Kane County's present jail has a capacity of 400, but typically there are more than 500 people in the county's custody. The overflow is shipped to counties that have excess jail space.

The six firms were The DLR Group from Chicago, HDR Inc. of Chicago, Healy Bender Associates from Naperville, RQAW from Indianapolis, Teng & Associates of Chicago and Wold Architects and Engineers, headquartered in St. Paul, Minn.

All the firms listed their experiences in jail construction and their willingness to work with the county and the public to get the project done.

The firms also touted their connections to Kane County.

For example, even though RQAW is from Indianapolis, Wight & Co. is part of its design team. Wight & Co. designed the county's Judicial Center and Juvenile Justice Center.

Wold has offices in Elgin.

## Jail

Continued from page 1

Teng designed the bridge over the railroad tracks at Keslinger and Peck roads, as well as the county's build out of the circuit clerk's office on Randall Road.

Each of the presentations also mentioned the costs of operating a jail, which can outstrip the cost of construction after several years.

The Judicial Center will pose problems, in that a major natural gas pipeline bisects

the property. Also, residential neighborhoods have been inching closer to the site since the Judicial Center was built in the early 1990s.

A detention pond adjacent to the Judicial Center might have to be relocated to squeeze a jail in next courts building.

Like McConaughay, jail director Cmdr. Todd Exline would not reveal his favorite design firm.

"They all bring something unique to the table," Exline said.

# Community growth hits the classroom

school every year."

## Kaneland students

### learn about

### their role

9/24/04

BY KELLEY CASINO  
Kane County Chronicle

MAPLE PARK — Growth in Kane County is sparking more than a need for better transportation, more homes and additional infrastructure.

It has added curriculum at Kaneland High School to focus on community development.

"We are growing so fast, and the kids don't understand it," teacher David Travis said. "All they know is there are more kids at

"Cities of Today, Cities of Tomorrow" is an addition to the curriculum in Travis' world geography course for high school freshmen that provides a study of urban development. The main goal is for the students to understand the impact and benefits of community development, Travis said.

"I think the topic is great, especially for the growth this area is experiencing," said Matt Cudney, land entitlement manager for Pulte Homes. "It's a great opportunity to try to explain and show the students how they can have influence over what happens."

Cudney was one of more than a dozen community leaders and businesspeople who gathered Thursday in Travis' classroom to hear an

overview of the curriculum and provide outside input.

The curriculum, which is a few weeks into its pilot semester at Kaneland, combines in-class instruction with guest speakers and lecturers, panel discussions, the development of an ideal city and student presentations.

"What they need to understand is that the decisions that are being made will affect them tomorrow, but tomorrow's decisions are theirs," Travis said.

Critical thinking, economic reasoning, problem solving and analysis are a basis for the class, as is the fact that people's choices have consequences.

"It's really critical that we teach our kids rational, logical decision making," said Terry Borg, director of

the Illinois Global Economics & Finance High School.

The method behind the ultimate decisions by community leaders and businesspeople is the exact process that Travis wants to teach his freshmen. He said they do not understand what goes into forming a community because they do not usually think about what is best sociologically, only individually.

"They're learning relatively fast that this does affect them," he said.

Officials were impressed with the progress of the curriculum Thursday and offered their assistance.

"I think this sounds like a really great program to get these kids started," Sugar Grove Trustee Mari Johnson said. "They (the students) really are shaping (their) community, and it's a big deal."

## Kane County narrows jail construction search to six

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

9/24/04

GENEVA — Kane County officials have a list of six companies interested in building a new county jail at the Judicial Center.

Karen McConnaughay, R-St. Charles, chairman of the County Board's Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee, said officials arrived at the six after narrowing down an original list of 12 companies that answered the county's call for requests for qualifications (RFQ) documents.

Speaking to her committee Thursday, McConnaughay said the jail project steering committee, which evaluated the RFQs, tentatively has scheduled a Nov. 16 meeting at which the companies will attend and give 20-minute presentations on their qualifications to build the new jail.

From that, she said the steering committee could narrow the list again to three or four companies and then send them requests for proposals (RFP) from the jail project. McConnaughay said the steering committee could end up soliciting bids for the job from all six companies.

"All six of these are quite capable of building a jail," McConnaughay said, "but at some point, you have to pick."

The six companies are: Wold Architects and Engineers, headquartered in St. Paul, Minn., with an office in Elgin; RQAW Corporation, headquartered in Indianapolis, partnered with Wight & Co., of Westmont;

Teng, a national company with a Chicago office; Healy, Bender & Associates, of Naperville; HDR Inc., an international firm with a Chicago office; and DLR Group, a national company with a Chicago office.

McConnaughay said the list is a good balance between companies that have done jobs across the county and ones that have done jobs locally.

The steering committee is made up of McConnaughay, board Chairman Mike McCoy, R-Aurora, board member Jim Mitchell, R-North Aurora, Sheriff Ken Ramsey, Jail Director Todd Exline and former 16th Circuit Chief Judge Philip DiMarzio. Recently elected Chief Judge Donald Hudson will assume the duties on the committee now.

The county's consultant on the jail project, Jim Robertson of Voorhees-Robertson of Colorado, has developed a scenario of the county building a new jail of around 700 beds for about \$47 million. The new jail would be at the Judicial Center on Route 38 in St. Charles Township, and would be built in phases, which means the county could be operating part of the new jail and the old jail on Fabyan Parkway at the same time.

All of the details, though, will be finished when the county is ready to send out its request for proposals and when the companies come back with their bids.

McConnaughay said she is hoping to get the RFPs out and back in December, and get a jail contractor selected by January.

# Possible architects for jail cut to six

9/24/04  
Firms to present  
designs at forum  
*Chronicle*

By HEATH HIXSON  
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — County officials have settled on six companies as possible architects for the proposed new county jail.

A selection committee of county board, sheriff's and judicial officials have settled on the companies from a pool of 12 that submitted their plans to the county to design the proposed \$47 million, 600-bed jail on the Kane County Judicial Center campus at Peck Road and Route 38.

The firms will present their design plans at a public forum tentatively scheduled for Nov. 16 at the Kane County Government Center. Each firm will have 20 minutes to present their plan, said Karen McConaughay, R-St. Charles, county Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee chairman.

The list includes companies that previously have worked on Kane County buildings, and the selection panel tried to include local firms.

"What we tried to do was create a selection process to review that offered different types of perspectives," McConaughay said.

County officials voted in June to move forward on the jail.

See JAIL, page 2

## Jail: Committee tried to include some local firms

Continued from page 1

The architect selection is part of the project's early stages.

The firms include a joint proposal from RQAW Corp., of Indianapolis, and the Wright company of Downers Grove; Healy, Bender and Associates Inc., of Naperville; the DLR Group, a national firm with an office in Chicago; Wold Architects and Engineers, a national firm with an office in Elgin; Omaha-based HDR company; and Teng and Associates, a national firm

with an office in Chicago. McConaughay said the firms will present their design plans at the forum, but a question-and-answer period would not take place because of concern of fairness issues such as each firm being asked the same question. She said the selection panel specifically wanted to make the presentations public.

The committee at a different meeting then will consider whether to cut the group further and eventually call for formal bids with the possibility of an architect being chosen by January, she said.

Kane County Sheriff's Office Chief of Corrections Todd Exline, a panel member, said the agency seeks "a safe and efficient design" and enough bed space to house the county's inmate population.

"We are very pleased with the recent process," Exline said. "I think we are moving forward in leaps and bounds."

The new project is contrary to a previously approved \$12 million addition to the county's current jail on Fabryan Parkway. The addition was abandoned late last year because of concerns from

some county board members that the addition was a short-term fix to the jail's overcrowding problems.

Exline said the jail's current capacity is 399 inmates, but the jail population on Thursday was 550 inmates.

The county also pays to house inmates in other county jails.

The county Adult Corrections report shows that the jail has been consistently over capacity in the last four years. In the 31 days of August, the report shows the jail was over capacity each day by a minimum of 29 inmates and a maximum of 64.

3-24-04 Beacon News

# Kane panel seeks jail at courthouse

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — This could be Kane County's version of *Back to the Future*.

The favored place for a new county jail appears to be next to, and possibly connected to, the Judicial Center on Route 38 in St. Charles Township. That is similar to the county's situation before 1972, when the old jail adjacent to the Courthouse on Third Street in Geneva was closed, and the county built a separate jail on Fabyan Parkway.

But even as the Corrections and Rehabilitation and Judiciary committees voted together Tuesday afternoon to put the Judicial Center site front and center, they agreed to keep open the idea of building a new jail at the present Fabyan Parkway site and even adding onto and rehabbing the current jail.

"There are a lot of unanswered questions," said board member Karen McConnaughay, R-St. Charles, who was chairman of the joint meeting. "We're saying we really prefer the Judicial Center site, with the caveat that we have to fill in a lot of other details."

The committees were spurred on by new numbers from jail consul-

tant Voorhies-Robertson of Colorado, which showed that, over 15 years, building a new jail at the Judicial Center would be about \$27.5 million cheaper than building a new jail at Fabyan Parkway.

The numbers were based largely on the two biggest costs connected to a jail project: construction expense and the cost of staffing the jail.

The savings is based on the idea that staffing will be significantly cheaper with a new, better-designed jail. Also, the county will not have to pay to send prisoners to other county jails, as it does now.

Board member Doug Weigand, R-Batavia, said despite the savings, the board still might not be able to afford building a new jail anywhere.

"Rehabbing the current jail may be the only practical solution," he said. "We only have one, finite pot of money."

Building and staffing a new jail at either site will cost more than \$300 million over 15 years, the Voorhies-Robertson numbers said. Currently the county has about \$12 million to start the first phase of a new building, but officials need to look at what kind of financing would be necessary to keep going through the second phase.



# County officials prefer new jail

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Building a new jail next to the Kane County Judicial Center emerged Tuesday as the preferred alternative among officials overseeing the county's long-debated jail expansion project.

"The consensus is that the judicial center is a good idea," said Karen McConnaughay, chairwoman of the county board's corrections and rehabilitation committee, "if we can find a way to pay for it."

At the same time, board members indicated their preference would be to have a new jail connected to the courthouse and not just a freestanding building on the judicial center campus.

More than a year ago, McConnaughay's committee scrapped a plan to build a \$12 million addition to the chronically crowded jail on Fabian Parkway in Geneva in favor of exploring alternatives.

That committee and the county board's judiciary committee have been working with the Colorado-based consulting firm Voorhis/Robertson Justice Services Inc. to look at building a new jail in favor of fixing the old one.

In the last three weeks, the consultant's work has essentially narrowed the choices down to two: build next to the existing jail or start over at the county's judicial center in St. Charles.

For the second time in a month, Jim Robertson presented board members with projected cost figures showing what it would take to build a new 768-bed facility in either location.

Over a 15-year period, the numbers, which include figures for construction and staffing the jail in any form, show a \$27.5 million savings if the county builds a jail at the judicial center.

But the figures don't present a simple choice because Robertson's projections break the jail project into two phases: one 288-bed phase done in 3 years

## Jail: Questions linger about the finances

*Continued from Page 1*

and the other 480-bed phase done over the course of the next 12 years.

For just construction, phase one at the judicial center would cost nearly \$11.4 million, with phase two adding another \$37 million. The construction costs at the existing jail site are slightly cheaper but the staffing costs are much higher, according to Robertson's projections.

But some around the board table, including Doug Weigand, a Batavia Republican, have their doubts.

He stressed the importance of building a jail connected to the courthouse, but questioned if it all would ever be done.

Weigand pointed to the original judicial center plans that showed a jail in that site's long-term design.

"It's been 10 years there, and we haven't done phase two," he said. "What happens if you don't build this phase two?"

See JAIL on PAGE 12

# Study: Jail at Judicial Center saves money

3-24-04 Chronicle

*Project would cost millions less  
to operate than Fabyan facility*

By TOM SCHLUETER  
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — A jail at the Judicial Center would cost \$27.5 million less to operate over 15 years than the same facility on Fabyan Parkway.

The study by Voorhis/Robertson Judicial Services said constructing and operating a 788-bed jail at the Judicial Center site would cost \$303.9 million over 15 years, while one built at the current jail site would cost \$331.5 million.

Members of the Judiciary and Corrections and Rehabilitation committees met Tuesday in a special joint session to consider the project and to hear the pros and cons of the options.

With \$12 million set aside for an abandoned 200-bed jail addition plan, the county still must find \$40 million to \$50 million to build the new facility.

"We have not even talked to the financial people," said Karen McConnaughay, R-St. Charles, the Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee chairman.

Tuesday's meeting pared options presented to Executive Committee members on March 3.

McConnaughay said she is confident the county can find money to build a new jail, possibly through its current bonding ability.

Tuesday's discussion, with

several board members in attendance who do not sit on either committee, left it clear that the Judicial Center site now is the preferred option.

One change to the plan that was not a topic of the



McConnaughay

March 3 meeting is providing a physical connection between the jail and the courthouse.

Such a connection would be more secure and eliminate the need to transport inmates several miles from the site in Geneva on Fabyan Parkway.

The plan calls for the project to be completed in two phases. The first phase would see a 288-bed \$16.4 million facility at the Judicial Center. This would require the old jail to remain open a minimum of three more years.

The 480-bed second phase would cost \$40 million to \$50 million.

The 15-year costs include staffing at two facilities.

Former Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee Chairman Douglas Weigand, R-Batavia, warned that once the first phase begins, county officials are committed to the second phase.

## Jail

Continued from page 1

He reminded board members of a 1995 master plan for the Judicial Center that called for the sheriff's office, jail and circuit clerk's office to be added to the campus.

"A lot of it has never been built. You still have to maintain existing assets," Weigand said.

Weigand asked board

members not to make decisions until they had all the costs, including the original 200-bed addition.

Weigand said he prefers the jail to be at the Judicial Center, but the county might not be able to afford it.

"Maybe the choice you make is not one you like, but it's the one you can afford," Weigand said. "Given our \$12 million, maybe the 200-bed (addition) is the only practical solution we can afford."

See JAIL, page 2

# Judicial Center jail plan gains support

*Final decision still months away; facility wouldn't open until 2006*

*Chronicle 3/4/04*

By TOM SCHLUETER  
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Kane County officials on Wednesday moved closer to building a new jail at the Judicial Center complex to make operations more efficient.

But the board is months away from selecting a site, and it is not likely that a new facility could start accepting inmates before 2006.

Jail consultant James Robertson of Voths/Robertson Judicial Services presented Executive Committee members with four options for a new jail.

Two options call for the jail to be built at the complex on Fabyan Parkway, and two call for the facility to be built at the Judicial Center on Peck Road.

Robertson said a 300-bed modular design at the Judicial Center site could be finished in a year.

Given a minimum 12-month construction process for the building's modular design, the earliest it would be open is spring 2006.

However, County board Chairman Mike McCoy said he believed even an aggressive construction schedule would

require two seasons, meaning that the building would not be open until late 2006 or early 2007.

"I think a best-case scenario is you break ground a year from now," McCoy said.

Robertson also included the price of construction and staffing, and a 15-year cost of each option.



McCoy

County judges gave their unanimous support for a jail near the courts. "Kane County has one of the most fragmented court systems in the state," Chief Judge Philip DiMarzio said.

Felony and family courts are at the Judicial Center, civil courts are in the old courthouse on Third Street in Geneva, the circuit clerk's office is on Randall Road in St. Charles and the jail is on Fabyan Parkway, DiMarzio said.

See JAIL, page 2

# Jail

Continued from page 1

DiMarzio said all of the county's judges support a move to the 80-acre Route 38 and Peck Road site. Former chief judges Grant Wegner and Gene Nottolini also attended Wednesday's meeting as a show of support.

"The judges voted unanimously to build the jail on the campus of the Judicial Center," DiMarzio said.

McCoy, who is not seeking re-election, said he hopes to have a site selected and an architect under contract by the time he leaves office Nov. 30.

He said each site has advantages and disadvantages.

The Judicial Center site would be more cost-effective, while the current jail has an established land use.

The Judicial Center site is near more subdivisions than the current jail complex, and some of the residents might not like having a jail built there, he said.

"There is a lot more people living out there. We have to listen to citizen input," McCoy said.

The county would have to conduct public hearings to gather that input, he said.

In the most likely scenario, the new jail would be built in phases. If it is built at the Judicial Center, Phase I would call for a 300-bed complex, meaning some inmates still would be housed at the Fabyan site.

The 300-bed Phase I would cost \$11.4 million.

Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee Chairman Karen McConnaughay said she favors this approach.

Moving all operations to the Judicial Center site into a 768-bed facility would cost \$48.8 million, money that the county does not have.

However, McConnaughay said there might be a way to have the jail consolidated at

the courts.

"It's worth taking another look at different funding options," McConnaughay said.

One option would be to use the \$2.7 million that the county spends annually to house prisoners in other jurisdictions for a bond payment, she said.



Wegner

The board also should look at using proceeds from the recorder's office or riverboat funds, she said.

Technically, riverboat funds are restricted to educational, environmental and economic development purposes. McCoy said the Grand Victoria Foundation has told him that the money is not to be used for a jail.

Robertson figured 15-year costs for all four options. A 288-bed addition to the existing jail would cost \$263.4 million, including construction and staffing.

A 768-bed new facility on Fabyan Parkway would cost \$279.3 million.

At the Judicial Center, a 300-bed facility would be the most expensive at \$294.2 million, while a 768-bed at the same site has a 15-year cost of \$269.5 million.

McConnaughay said the 300-bed cost is misleading because it assumes operating two facilities for 15 years, something she said would not happen.

A 200-bed addition to the existing jail approved by the board in 2002 would have cost \$260.5 million over 15 years.

The Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee scrapped the 200-bed addition a year ago, calling it a bad design.

The existing jail has a capacity of 400. Jail director Todd Exline said 510 people were in custody on Wednesday, with 73 housed in other jails.

# What to do about the jail in Kane

Consultants deliver options to county board members

By PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

3/4/04  
Daily Herald

The county's jail consultants laid out variations of two possible versions of a new and much larger Kane County jail Wednesday, bringing the years-old debate down to a question of here or there.

Even though the choices came wrapped in preliminary cost estimates that most county officials don't believe tell the whole financial story, the county's top judge and sheriff wasted no time picking a side.

"Right now we have one of the most fragmented court systems in the state," Chief Judge Phillip DiMarzio said, referencing how the jail, courthouse and court clerk's office are in three locations in two different cities. "I am confident you will see the benefits of building at the judicial center."

DiMarzio, backed unanimously by the county's other judges, asked the board to stop talking about additions and choices and take a step toward consolidating the court system on one piece of land.

After spending the last four years talking about an addition to the overcrowded jail on Fabyan Parkway in Geneva, the presentation by jail expert Jim Robertson put the focus back on building a lockup next to the criminal courts building off Route 38 in St. Charles.

But as Robertson's presentation of five sometimes overlapping variations of the

Page 8

• Panel to study reforming system.

See JAIL on PAGE 8

## Jail: County has \$12 million set aside for construction

Continued from Page 1

two alternatives showed, it's not a simple decision.

The variations start with keeping the 28-year-old, 398-bed jail off Fabyan Parkway but building a 200-bed addition. That's the \$12 million project approved by the county board in 2002 but later tabled.

The other options end with the eventual demolition of the existing jail in place of a new jail built piece-by-piece either at the Fabyan Parkway site or adjacent to the county judicial center off Route 38 in St. Charles, several miles away.

"In each of these options you can make good planning decisions that move you into the future," Robertson said.

Part of the new analysis compared the cost of building and staffing each alternative over the next 15 years. Each option presented brings with it a different jail capacity ranging from 607 to 766 beds. Each option also has room for more.

The key, board members and jail consultants say, is to build something that gets the largest and most secure jail with the fewest guards.

That benchmark has focused attention on building a new facility at the existing site or the judicial center.

Both locations being considered for new construction allow for completion over a number of years.

Specifically, one plan calls for a 300-bed jail to be built at the judicial center that could be used in concert with the old jail. The two-jail system would be temporary until more cells could be added to the new facility, eventually bringing 766 beds on line with potential for more.

Robertson's numbers show that the first 300-bed phase would cost nearly \$11.4 million, but staffing would add about \$5 million to the jail's payroll because two facilities would be running.

That number eventually would fall when the judicial center jail is completely built. Robertson said the completed judicial center jail would cost more to build — nearly \$49 million — but saves in long-term staffing costs.

His evaluation shows the ratio of guards to inmates would rise from 3.4 inmates per guard today to 4.7 inmates per guard

based on handling nearly double the number of inmates.

That's an outcome many board members could live with.

"The last option is the most cost efficient of them all," said board member Gerald Jones, an Aurora Democrat, talking about the 766-bed judicial center jail.

Getting there won't be easy.

Board member Doug Weigand, a Batavia Republican, said he believes the cost estimates and staffing projections they are based on are flawed. Plus, he predicted building a jail at the judicial center site would be met with a storm of resistance from nearby residents.

"There was a lot of criticism toward the (juvenile justice center), let alone a jail," Weigand said.

County board Chairman Mike McCoy, an Aurora Republican, said he would call for public hearings if a decision was made to build on the judicial center site.

He said he's a fan of keeping the jail where it is, but admits a jail next to the courthouse likely is, long-term, the most cost-effective solution.

Karen McConaughay, a St. Charles Republican and chairman of the board's corrections and rehabilitation committee, said all the new information must be used to quickly choose a site and to explore funding options.

The county has \$12 million set aside for jail construction, but McConaughay believes other sources could be tapped without raising property taxes.

Sources could include riverboat funding, a sales tax increase for public safety projects, or taking the money now paid to McHenry County to house inmates from Kane County and using it to pay down new debt accumulated for jail building.

Robertson's projections show renting jail space outside the county for local prisoners would cost \$75 million over the next 15 years if current jail conditions don't change.

Board members did not take a vote on the jail issue Wednesday but turned the new options over to the board's corrections committee for further debate.

That committee is expected to gather more comprehensive cost figures and come up with a recommendation sometime this spring.

## Panel to study court reform

By PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

New concrete cells and steel bars won't be the only answer to fixing the county's jail's chronic crowding problem.

More than a year ago, consultants from the National Institute of Corrections told Kane County Sheriff Ken Ramsey and other county leaders that a broader approach was needed to streamline the entire criminal justice system.

On Wednesday, the county board's executive committee took a step toward that goal by authorizing the formation of a Justice Policy Advisory Committee.

The panel's goal is to think-up and recommend new procedures that can speed up the county's court system and help eliminate a backlog of cases that delays justice and ultimately crowds the county jail.

It will be made up of the county board chairman, the state's attorney, the public defender, the sheriff, the chairman of the county board's corrections and rehabilitation committee, the chief judge, the

district court clerk, a public defender.

The committee is expected to be up and running within two months.

Jim Mitchell, a North Aurora Republican and chairman of the county board's judiciary committee, said he sees this new panel playing an active role in the jail-building process.

The group likely will make recommendations as to what jail option to take and weigh in as to why it's best.

"They will need to be involved in the issues," he said.

But beyond that, members can build upon work already done by members such as Chief Judge Phillip DiMarzio.

Last year, DiMarzio asked the board to hire two additional public defenders.

The two extra public defense lawyers would help move criminal cases through the courts and relieve the jail of inmates as their cases are closed, he argued.

It's a recommendation that was accepted and appears to be working. As of Wednesday, the 398-bed jail was housing 506 inmates, according to jail chief Todd Exline. That's down from

# Consultant: Kane should build jail at Judicial Center

3/4/04

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

Beacon

GENEVA — A consultant Wednesday said constructing a new jail next to the Kane County Judicial Center will be more cost-effective than rebuilding the current county jail.

Consultant Jim Robertson, of Voorhis-Robertson of Colorado, presented the County Board Executive Committee numbers that show a new jail at the Judicial Center on Route 38 west of Geneva not only is cost-effective but possible.

"The driving force behind this was, how do we get the long-term staffing cost down, how do we get the jail over to the Judicial Center, and is there a way we can afford it?" said board member Karen McConnaughay, R-St. Charles.

"I'm surprised and happy to see that the construction costs make sense," said board member Gerry Jones, D-Aurora.

Robertson presented design ideas based on modular construction, which means the county could build as little or as much as it can afford, when it can afford it. McConnaughay, chairman of the Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee, said the board "can implement this in any portion we want."

Voorhis-Robertson based its evaluations on projections that jail population will increase to 735 inmates by 2018.

## Pay as you go

Robertson said if an entirely new jail were built, over time, by 2018, it would cost the county about \$48.8 million over 15 years. Staff cost during that time would be \$269 million.

If a renovated jail were built at the existing jail site on Fabyan Parkway on Geneva's east side over that 15-year period, construction cost would be about \$1 million less, but staffing would cost \$279 million, almost \$10 million more than at the Judicial Center.

Robertson said staffing costs would be higher due to the inefficient design on Fabyan Parkway and more staff needed to transport prisoners from the jail to court at the Judicial Center.

The key number Robertson cited was the inmate-to-staff ratio. On Fabyan, there would be 172 staff members needed, or 4.5 inmates to staff, and at the Judicial Center, there would be 164 staff members needed, or a ratio of 4.7 inmates to staff.

"We were very focused on staffing efficiencies," Robertson said.

The cost of building the first part of a jail at the Judicial Center, which would add 300 new beds and bring the total beds to 699, was estimated at \$11.4 million. The board has had about \$12 million set aside for a jail addition.

"We had to make sure you had a process where you could pay as you go," Robertson said.

## Logical site

Moving the jail to the Judicial Center would meet with approval from the judiciary. Philip DiMarzio, chief judge of the 16th Circuit Court, told board members moving the jail to the Judicial Center would save the time it takes to transport about 50 to 60 prisoners at least half an hour a day to court appearances.

"The board has a chance to take the first step to put the jail where it logically belongs, next to the courthouse," DiMarzio said.

County Board Chairman Mike McCoy, R-Aurora, suggested the next logical step would be for the board to pick which site it likes, the Judicial Center or Fabyan. The next step would be to hire an architect to get a definite design, based on the modular approach suggested by Voorhis-Robertson.

The Corrections Committee will take up making a firm recommendation, and board members will submit questions about the project in writing to Voorhis-Robertson.

# Judges support building jail at St. Charles site

By William Presecky  
Tribune staff reporter

Whether done in phases or all at once, the construction of any new jail in Kane County should be on the campus of the county's judicial center in St. Charles, Chief Judge Philip DiMarzio said Wednesday.

Backed by other court officials, including two of his most recent predecessors, DiMarzio told the County Board's Executive Committee that the Kane judiciary thinks any jail expansion should be at the 120-acre judicial campus at Illinois Highway 38 and Peck Road in St. Charles.

With two courthouses, the County Jail and circuit clerk's office all in different locations, DiMarzio described Kane's decentralized judicial system as "one of the most fragmented in the state."

As a result, he said, "The time loss is considerable, the risks are apparent and the travel costs immense."

"We are confident you will see the wisdom of centralization," DiMarzio told the committee.

DiMarzio made his comments before a presentation by a consulting firm that concluded the county has five options to meet its immediate and long-term needs for added jail capacity.

The committee reviewed the report by Colorado-based jail consultant Voorhis/Robertson Justice Services Inc. but took no action.

Board Chairman Mike McCoy (R-Aurora), head of the Executive Committee, described Voorhis/Robertson's report as "very preliminary."

McCoy, who is set to leave office Dec. 1, said he would be satisfied if the County Board can select an expansion site and hire an architect by then. McCoy said the earliest he could foresee the county having more jail capacity is 2006.

From a land-use perspective, McCoy said, the jail compound in Geneva is more isolated and

*3/4/04*  
*We should pick a site and move on. It's a long process designing a jail.'*

—Kane County Board Chairman Mike McCoy

compatible with expansion. For efficiency, the St. Charles campus is better, he said, "But I'd definitely want to have some citizen input."

"We should pick a site and move on," McCoy said. "It's a long process designing a jail."

Corrections Committee Chairman Karen McConaughay (R-St. Charles), who initiated the review of the options after working to stop a planned 200-bed addition to the 400-bed jail in Geneva, reiterated that she will press for an accelerated solution to the long-standing problem of jail overcrowding.

"We'll move as quickly as we can," said McConaughay, who supports building a jail at the judicial center.

Without funding to supplement the roughly \$12 million the county has to build a jail, expansion in St. Charles most likely would have to be done in stages, beginning with a 300-bed facility.

The county then would be faced with having added staffing costs to operate two jail facilities that are more than 7 miles apart.

Although acknowledging that there wasn't support on the board for asking voters for a sales tax increase, McConaughay said she plans to investigate whether there are "any funding methods we've overlooked." Those methods may include the possible use of riverboat grant funds.

Sheriff Ken Ramsey said he favors building a modular, 768-bed jail at the judicial center.

Voorhis/Robertson estimated it would cost about \$49 million to build a jail in St. Charles that would meet Kane's needs for at least 15 years.

# Budget cuts threaten regional police group

■ **Federal plan:** Grants to local departments would decrease by \$1 billion nationwide

By Gloria Carr  
and Mike Cetera  
STAFF WRITERS

Deep cuts in federal policing grants could spell the end of a local law-enforcement group responsible for numerous high-profile drug busts.

The cuts also could squeeze already lean local department budgets, a Fox Valley police official warned.

Algonquin Police Chief Russ Laine, who holds a leadership position in the International Association of Police Chiefs, was to travel to Washington, D.C., this week to lobby against the budget cuts proposed by President Bush.

"We are going to be losing out on significant dollars for law enforcement if this goes through," said Laine, fifth vice president of the organization.

Laine warned the proposed cuts could force the dissolution of the North Central Narcotics Task Force, a state consortium staffed by members of local law-enforcement agencies, including the Aurora Police Department.

The task force locally has participated in the federal investigation of the Latin Kings street gang in Aurora that netted dozens of arrests in 2002 and routinely conducts undercover drug operations throughout the Fox Valley.

Laine and others plan to speak with lawmakers, including U.S. House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Yorkville. The association also is starting a letter-writing campaign to congressmen and senators.

## Task forces hit

Such cuts "can and would have an impact if these task forces or initiatives were given up," said Kendall County Sheriff Richard Randall. Departments often rely on task forces to conduct major regional drug operations, he said.

The sheriff's department belongs to the multi-jurisdictional

Cooperative Police Assistance Team, which Randall said wouldn't be dramatically affected by federal cuts.

Law-enforcement agencies use three main federal funding sources: Community Oriented Policing Services, or COPS, grants; Local Law Enforcement Block Grants; and the Edward Byrne Memorial Grant, Laine said. The grants fund everything from additional police officers to technology to specialized task forces, he said.

Under Bush's proposed budget, funding for the three grant programs would be cut by more than \$1 billion, said Gene Voegtlin, legislative counsel for the International Association of Police Chiefs. The Byrne grant would be dismantled and absorbed by the block grant program, he said.

The Byrne grant helps fund anti-drug efforts, specifically by staffing regional task forces, Laine said. The Illinois State Police's North Central Narcotics Task Force is funded by a Byrne grant.

"We knew it generally wasn't going to be a good budget," Laine said. "We knew it would be bad but not quite that bad."

## High percentage cuts

The COPS grant alone would be cut by 87 percent, from \$756 million to \$97 million, Voegtlin said.

"Basically what these programs have done ... is allowed local police departments to improve their core capabilities and position them to better protect their communities," Voegtlin said.

Hastert spokesman Brad Hahn said it is important to remember the cuts are simply proposals and offer a starting point for further budget discussions.

The cuts would not affect department staffing, officials said, but could force departments to delay technological upgrades.

The Aurora Police Department, for example, is planning on upgrading its package of in-squad digital cameras, Chief William Lawler said. But, Lawler said, police agencies recognize governments are dealing with tighter budgets.

"The reality is the federal government is not different than the state government and the city government," he said.

# County OKs jail site, but financing still in question

*69-01 Chronicle*  
Board adopts resolution to build facility near Judicial Center

By TOM SCHLUETER  
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Now that the Kane County Board knows where it wants to build a new jail, the next question is how to pay for it.

The only way to know how much the jail would cost is to set a location for the building and search for an architect who will draw up an estimate, said Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee Chairman Karen McConnaughay, R-St. Charles.

The board on Tuesday supported a resolution 17-7 that calls the jail "a top priority," and dictates that it be built at the Judicial Center at Peck Road and Route 64.

"This is a major decision for the county board. It will be a significant change in how the judi-



**Weigand**

cial system works," McConnaughay said. But critics said a new 600-bed jail estimated to cost \$47 million would consume the county's reserves and siphon money from other projects.

Buying the circuit clerk's office building on Randall Road in St. Charles or relocating the office to the grounds of Judicial Center, upgrades to the coroner's office and repairs to county highways are goals that will not be met, said Douglas Weigand, R-Batavia.

"This is going to take everything we have. The capital fund is gone completely," Weigand said.

Questions about how the facility will be financed must be answered before a decision can be made on when construction would begin, Weigand said.

The county has been in need of a new jail for years because of overcrowding.

See JAIL, page 2

## Jail

Continued from page 1

The jail at 777 Fabyan Parkway in Geneva was built with a capacity of about 400, but typically about 500 inmates are in the county's custody.

The resolution's proponents say \$2.7 million now used each year to pay other counties to house the county's overflow of inmates can be used to pay off the bond. They also argue that no firm costs can be determined until a site is chosen.

The plan to build a jail calls for the project to use \$12 million set aside for the now-defunct 200-bed jail addition plan, and combine those funds with a possible bond issue and additional potential funds from county reserves and possible funding from grants and intergovernmental agreements.

"To borrow a phrase from one of my least favorite politicians, this is voodoo economics," said Paul Greviskes, D-Aurora. "This dog just ain't going to hunt. To use all this gobbledy gook frankly doesn't make sense."

While Greviskes and Weigand lambasted the plan, its supporters said nothing until after the meeting was adjourned.

"Those questions have been asked and answered," said James Mitchell, R-North Aurora, chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

"That was a great propaganda job," Jan Carlson, R-Elburn, said of Weigand's comments. "There were many distortions in that."

"The majority of board

members have participated in a wide variety of meetings (on the jail). It would have been beneficial for (the critics) to participate in those meetings," McConnaughay said.

The goal is to have an architect hired by the end of the year, she said.

"This isn't about building a new jail. This is about building an operationally efficient facility that saves the taxpayers money in the long run," she said.

Weigand, who served as chairman of the Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee for four years, said the county must continue to pay other counties to house Kane's inmates until the new building is finished.

That means the money cannot be used to make payments on the bonds until the new jail is open, Weigand said.

"You can't spend the same money twice," he said. "There are a lot of questions here. You have to be realistic about what you can afford."

In 1995, the county sponsored a \$76 million referendum for a 500-bed addition to the jail. Voters soundly rejected it by a 2-1 margin.

"The money is going to come from the taxpayers, and the last time we asked the taxpayers, they said 'no,'" said William Wyatt, R-Aurora. "I hope we have a Plan B and a Plan C, something we don't have to pay a consultant to find out."

Plan B would be an addition to the current jail, McConnaughay said.

"Until we have a firm dollar figure, we cannot say we are building at the Judicial Center," McConnaughay said.



# Building jail is now county <sup>6-9-04</sup> policy <sup>Daily</sup> <sup>Herald</sup>

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
*Daily Herald Staff Writer*

Despite continued objections from some members who call it financially unfeasible, the Kane County Board Tuesday made building a jail near the judicial center in St. Charles policy and a top priority.

The vote finally closes the door on plans to add on to the 28-year-old jail off Fabyan Parkway in Geneva, a concept that had been approved by the county board two years ago.

"The board has some work to do and that is to establish a commitment to make it work," said Karen McConnaughay, a St. Charles Republican and chairwoman of the board's corrections and rehabilitation committee. "It is a top priority."

Nearly a third of the board voted against the policy shift, however, arguing that some county officials may see the jail as a high priority but the public does not.

"The last time we asked the taxpayers if it was a priority, they told us no," said Bill Wyatt, an Aurora Republican, who voted against the new jail concept. "I hope we have a plan B and a plan C."

Wyatt was referring to the 1995 referendum asking voters to approve a tax increase to pay for a \$51 million, 576-bed addition to the existing jail. Only 36 percent of the voters said yes.

Several around the table said they hadn't seen any change in that bad feeling.

"I don't really understand this," said Paul Greviskes, an Aurora Democrat. "Sure it's a top priority along with all the county's other top priorities."

But supporters of the new jail plan, developed over the past year with the help of Colorado-based jail consultant Jim Robertson, maintain a new 608-bed facility can be built and paid for without a tax increase.

"One of the points that everyone needs to keep in mind here is we are not talking about building a new jail just for the sake of new jail," McConnaughay said. "We are building an operationally effi-

A  
at  
lo

1

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2004

## Jail: Some say tax hike not needed

*Continued from Page 1*

cient jail. That is the whole point of this. The old facility is operationally very inefficient."

To pay for the project, which she estimates at \$47 million, McConnaughay said she was exploring the possibility of using federal grants tied to prosecution of drug crimes and contracting with U.S. immigration services to hold federal prisoners. County offi-

cials also expect to save \$2.1 million annually by not having to ship overflow prisoners to a jail in McHenry County.

The county also has the \$12 million previously set aside from the 200-bed addition plan this week's action formally replaces.

From here, the board will solicit an architectural firm and work to get a tighter grip on the costs and a possible finance package by the fall.

See JAIL on PAGE 8

6-9-04 Beacon News

# Kane County Board picks Judicial Center site to build new jail

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — The Kane County Board Tuesday voted 17-7 in favor of a resolution that calls for a 608-bed jail to be built next to the Judicial Center on Route 38 in St. Charles Township.

The resolution also reallocates to the new jail project \$12 million previously set aside for a jail addition and commits the county into looking at other funding sources, including a bond issue, for the rest of the estimated \$47 million project.

The resolution says the new jail at the Judicial Center will be considered "a top priority" of Kane County government.

Board member Karen McConaughay, R-St. Charles, Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee chairman, has said the county will have to combine funding sources to pay the entire cost.

Most of the money would come from a bond issue, which the county would pay back with the more than \$2

million a year it now pays to house prisoners in other counties.

McConaughay said as soon as the board commits to the Judicial Center site, the next step is getting an architect.

But some board members said Tuesday they think costs need to be better defined before the county can decide if the Judicial Center site is the best one.

"I agree, the best place in the world for a new jail is at the Judicial Center," said Board member Doug Weigand, R-Batavia, one of the seven votes against the resolution. "But we live in the real world. You have to be realistic with what you can do, what you can afford."

Weigand said the estimated \$47 million project would take all the county's reserves and bonding authority. That means there would be no money for such possible projects as a new county clerk or coroner's building or for roads.

He also questioned the timing of the resolution. He said by the time hard numbers are available for the

project, it will be past the November election.

"I truly think we should wait until we have hard numbers," he said. "We need to have a Plan B."

Board member Bill Wyatt, R-Aurora, another vote against the resolution, said voters already turned down a referendum for a new jail in the mid-1990s.

"The last time we asked the taxpayers if this was a top priority, they said no," Wyatt said.

Weigand said the county might only be able to afford to add on to the current jail.

"We are throwing away 400 beds that are already paid for, in a building that is only 27 years old," he said. "Does that make sense?"

Board member Paul Greviskes, D-Aurora, said the financing is so confusing that he referred to it as "a mishmash," "gobbledygook" and "voodoo economics."

"Sure, it's a top priority, along with all the other top priorities," he said. "This dog just ain't gonna hunt."

OPINION

# Judges call for jail at Judicial Center

b-304 Chronicle

## Executive Committee vote agrees

By TOM SCHLUETER  
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — The county board's Executive Committee on Wednesday voted to put a 608-bed jail on the grounds of the Judicial Center. The vote came after the chief judge and two former chief judges spoke to the committee about the benefits of such an action.

"Siting the jail at the Judicial Center will be a large determining factor in the structure of the judicial system for decades to come," Chief Judge Philip

DiMarzio said.

Although the vote came as no surprise, it does represent a shift in philosophy. More than two years ago, the board appropriated \$12 million to build a 200-bed addition to the current 400-inmate capacity jail on Fabyan Parkway.

Nearly \$500,000 in architect fees had been paid and construction was set to begin on the two-year project in spring 2002.

Judge Michael Colwell said a master plan developed in the late 1970s for the Judicial

Center site called for the jail, circuit clerk's office and civil courts to be located out there.

The three facilities currently are on separate sites.

"For various reasons, we departed from that plan. It's time to return to that master plan," Colwell said.

Judge Eugene Nottolini said the county was in the similar dilemma 10 years ago when it built the Juvenile Justice Center.

"The same problems existed. We were fiscally challenged, we didn't have the resources," Nottolini said.

The judges favor a jail close to the courthouse to keep inmate travel time to a minimum. Delays affect victims,

witnesses, police officers and the public at large, DiMarzio said.

"We all have a legitimate interest in a court system that is efficient," DiMarzio said.

Wednesday's vote adopted a resolution that established a policy of siting the jail at the courthouse.

Although a rough estimate of a 608-bed jail hovers around \$47 million, county board Chairman Mike McCoy said the exact cost will not be known until an architect draws up the plans, and that cannot be done until there is a specific site.

Plans call for using money spent to house inmates in other counties to pay bonds to build the jail.

# 6-3-04 Chronicle Kane County officials agree on site for new jail building

By Tona Kunz  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Following the advice of leading judges, Kane County officials Wednesday decided to build a new 608-bed jail next to the judicial center off Route 38.

The decision ends months of debate on whether to expand the 28-year-old jail on Fabyan Parkway next to the landfill or build a new one on Route 38 near the youth home and several burgeoning subdivisions.

A consultant's report earlier this year put the cost of adding 200 beds to the old jail at \$12 million compared with \$47 million for a new jail.

A trio of current and former chief judges said centralizing the judicial system makes financial sense over the long haul because it will save money on transporting prisoners and increase efficiency of both the courts and jail.

The judges also said limiting movement of prisoners created a safer environment.

"I think in the long run it doesn't make sense to put (the jail) away from where everything goes on," said Kane County Circuit Judge Gene Nottolini at the county board's executive committee meeting Wednesday.

The county spent tens of thousands of dollars in the 1970s to design a centralized judicial system on county-owned land on Route 38, but somewhere along the line the plan ended up on the back burner.

"We need to return to the master plan and complete the centralization. It is in the best interest of the public," said Kane County Circuit Judge Michael Colwell.

The county will hold public hearings on the jail but not until design plans and cost estimates are available. An architect likely will be selected in the next few months.

Board members said it's too early to decide what will happen to the current jail.

Wt ha lai lai ie: ca its at Et pi s v s tu n r n d a s a  
6-3-04 Chicago Tribune  
Driver gets 30 months in DUI killing  
Assistant DuPage County State's Atty. Helen Kapas said that after the accident, Wise got out of his SUV, looked around at the accident scene, which was strewn with items Karsch had collected, and drove off.  
"He went to a McDonald's several blocks away, had a Coke and fries and called a friend," she said. The friend drove by the scene, reported to Wise what he saw, and Wise returned to the accident site, where he was arrested.  
Kapas said Wise's blood-alcohol level was .126, well over the .08 level at which someone is considered drunk in Illinois. He was charged with aggravated driving under the influence in-  
An Elgin man who was legally drunk last November when his SUV struck and killed a 70-year-old Geneva bicyclist was sentenced Wednesday to 30 months in prison.  
Matthew Wise, 25, was west-bound on North Avenue, east of Illinois Highway 59, at 8:15 p.m. Nov. 3 when his vehicle struck and killed Sebastian Karsch, who was riding his mountain bike on the highway.  
Karsch was often seen riding his bicycle with a small trailer in tow throughout the far western suburbs, picking up dis-

12-year maximum prison sentence.

Robert Kleeman, Wise's attorney, asked for probation and work-release, citing Wise's having pleaded guilty, lack of a criminal record and the "unusual facts" of the case.

Karsch had become well known in the St. Charles area over the years for his 3 acres piled with things he had saved over several decades. Local officials called the site a junkyard, while Karsch referred to it as a recycling center.

At sentencing, Judge Michael Burke said Wise "didn't set out to kill someone, but a person not under the influence would have been able to move around the

By Art Barnum  
Tribune staff reporter

# Kane County closer to putting new jail beside the courthouse

■ **Numbers needed:**  
Officials look to get more specific plans

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA – The Kane County Board has moved closer to building a new jail next to the Judicial Center on Route 38 in western St. Charles.

Members of the board's Executive Committee Wednesday endorsed a resolution that calls for the jail to be at the Judicial Center. The resolution also reallocates \$12 million previously set aside for a jail addition to the new jail project and commits the county into looking at other funding sources, including a bond issue, for the rest of the estimated \$47 million project.

The resolution must be approved by the full board June 8.

Board members Wednesday said picking the site is the next logical step because the board then can hire an architect to go ahead with plans that will provide more

definite project costs.

"That \$47 million is a rough number," said Board Chairman Mike McCoy, R-Aurora. "Until we get an architect, we won't know the exact cost."

McCoy said the \$12 million is a logical place to get the money to pay the architect because it was set aside for jail work.

Board member Karen McConnaughay, R-St. Charles, Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee chairman, said the county will have to combine funding sources to pay the entire cost.

Most of the money would come from a bond issue, which the county would pay back with the more than \$2 million a year it now pays to house prisoners in other counties.

But board members said even looking at the funding situation is premature.

"Until we know the costs, there's no sense in looking at how to fund it," said Board member Jim

Mitchell, R-North Aurora, Judiciary Committee chairman.

McConnaughay said as soon as the board commits to the Judicial Center site, the next step is "throwing a large net out there and seeing what architects exist."

The Judicial Center site seems to be favored with court officials. Chief Judge Philip DiMarzio, of the 16th Circuit, and former Chief Judges Michael Colwell and Gene Notellini, all appeared before the Executive Committee Wednesday to push for this location.

Colwell pointed out that, in the late 1970s, when the county purchased the Judicial Center land, there was a master plan that called for bringing all the judicial services to that site.

All three judges pointed out that having a jail at the Judicial Center will save money by making the operation between the jail and the courts more efficient.

"To put it where you need it; where the courts are, makes sense," Notellini said.

7/7/04

with grieving  
friends and  
loved ones.

When the death in-

"The jail is the most logical, present proposal has a new corner office piggybacking the project. The proposed \$47 million, 600-bed jail would have a 24-hour supervised site in the corner of the county," Barrett said. Barrett's deputies, often en-

100

**"This campus is not the right location for a coroner's of-**

but those plans were never followed. "If we were going to invest that kind of money for a coro-

1

The current office, circa

Karen McConaughy, R-St. Charles, has been leading the effort to move the jail from

[illegible]

McConaughay could not be reached for comment.

See CORONER, page 2

1. *Phragmites australis* (Cav.) Trin. ex Steud.

**\$1.9 million.**

Would remain on  
Parkway.

"The jail or sheriff's office, it doesn't make a difference to me," he said.

10

One would be a \$1.22

A new building of the same size on the Judicial square feet.

Center campus would cost:

# 5-20-04 Chronicle Jail proposal heads to committee

*County fund, grants  
and bonds would  
pay for new facility*

By PAUL ROCK  
Kane County Chronicle

A recommendation to build a new 600-bed jail at the judicial center site will go to the Kane County Board's Executive Committee on June 2.

The recommendation, by the county board's Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee, appears to put to an end to plans to add 200 beds to the current jail on Fabyan Parkway.

Instead, a new jail at the judicial center at Peck Road and Route 38 that connects to the courthouse could be built for roughly \$47 million.

The new jail would be paid for with \$12 million previously set aside for the expansion, \$10 million from grants and \$25 million from bonds.

The current jail has been overcrowded since it opened in 1976. It was built with a capacity of 400 inmates, but more than 500 inmates typically are in

county custody. Many of those inmates are housed in other county jails. The jail averaged 160 inmates over capacity last year.

Corrections Committee member Caryl VanOvermeiren, R-St. Charles, said the former expansion plans would have been a short-term fix.

She said the existing jail would require too many improvements to make an expansion viable.

Colorado-based jail consultant Voorhis/Robertson had said the current jail needs an upgrade to security, the kitchen, maintenance and the laundry. The design also needs an overhaul, VanOvermeiren said.

"I think you can be penny-wise and pound foolish," she said. "You can do patches and patches and patches. But sometime the tire is going to blow. We need to look to the future instead of just the next five years."

Sheriff Kenneth Ramsey said he is trying to control his excitement but prefers the plans for a new jail over the cost.

plans to add 200 beds at the Fabyan Parkway facility.

"It's wonderful," Ramsey said. "It's the most substantive movement I've seen. But I'm not getting too excited yet."

Ramsey has worked with the Corrections Committee since it was formed 18 months ago to provide suggestions about the jail.

"I have to give the Corrections Committee all the credit in the world," Ramsey said. "It shows what happens when you work together."

County board Chairman Mike McCoy said he is not convinced that the proposed \$47 million jail is a better option than the \$12 million expansion to the jail, which is 28 years old.

"I never felt we could afford an all-new jail without a tax increase," McCoy said. "Basically, this could be doable, but I don't think it would be smart financially. Newer is always better, but the existing jail is only 28 years old. You hope to get more out of a public facility. We definitely can't afford a new jail every 28 years."

The next step would be to use the current consultant or a new architect to design the new jail and estimate its cost.



**Ramsey**

5-19-04 Daily Herald F3

# Panel suggests new jail

600-bed facility in St. Charles recommended by group

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

In an attempt to establish a firm direction concerning the Kane County jail, a county board panel Tuesday recommended building a new 600-bed facility on the site of the judicial center in St. Charles.

"We are a long way from putting an inmate in a new jail cell," said Kane County Sheriff Ken Ramsey. "But this is a monumental step."

The recommendation, made at a joint meeting of the board's corrections and judiciary committees, came after the county's jail consultant, Jim Robertson, presented new figures that showed a 608-bed jail could be built for about \$47 million.

It could be paid for without a tax increase, Robertson's early analysis showed, using money set aside from a previously approved jail addition project, reserve funds and with the \$2.1 million Kane County pays annually to house its inmates in other county jails.

"This at least demonstrates there is a way to move this project to the next step," said Karen McConaughay, chairman of the county board's corrections committee.

As a matter of policy, the new recommendation, if approved next month by the full board, would officially change the county's ultimate jail construction goal. It also would push to have an architect in place by September.

That's an accomplishment McConaughay, the GOP nominee to replace outgoing county board Chairman Mike McCoy, and judiciary committee chairman Jim Mitchell have been working toward since early 2003.

In 2002, the county board approved a \$12 million project to add 200 beds to the 28-year-old jail in Geneva. When McConaughay, a St. Charles Republican, took over as chairman of the corrections committee in 2003, that group quickly shelved that project, believing the chronically crowded jail needed to be even bigger.

Since then, McConaughay and Mitchell, a North Aurora Republican, have worked to hire Robertson's firm to study and recommend changes to the county criminal

## Jail: Several design firms show interest in the job

Continued from Page 1

justice system. A new jail has been at the top of the priority list.

McCoy, who earlier this year pressed for a firm stance by the full board on the jail's future, said Tuesday he thinks the financial basis for the new jail push is flawed.

"In terms of long-term efficiency, the judicial center makes sense as a jail location," he said. "But in my mind, a \$47 million funding plan, I don't know how you'd put that together."

To make those numbers work, McCoy, an Aurora Republican, said the county would have to devote all of its financial contingency resources for the next five

years to the jail project. "That's a big decision the board would have to make," McCoy said.

McConaughay said she knows the numbers aren't final but also believes the county is in a position to do more than had been considered.

"What you have in front of you today says you can build more than \$12 million worth of jail," she said. The next step is getting design firms to compete for the job. McConaughay said there is an "extraordinary level of interest" from potential architects in the county's jail project. Once those designs come in, the cost estimates can be refined, she added.



# Kane officials back new jail

**\$47 million plan  
wouldn't require  
a tax increase**

**By William Presecky**  
Tribune staff reporter

Nearly 18 months after the Kane County Board halted plans to expand the county's chronically overcrowded jail in Geneva, its Corrections and

Judiciary Committees recommended Tuesday that a modular-type jail with about 600 beds be built at the Judicial Center in St. Charles.

Acting on advice from Colorado-based consultant James Robertson, the committees also voted to begin a search for a design team to restart a jail construction effort that was halted in December 2002. The outline of a financing scheme to pay for the estimated \$47 million jail without a tax in-

crease was advanced to the board's Executive Committee for review next month.

Kane appears to have the financial wherewithal—using bonds, capital reserves, grants and budget adjustments—to fully fund building a jail on its 120-acre Judicial Center campus. Under the proposal, the capacity of the jail could be increased to 768 beds as needed over the next 15 years.

The first phase of the pay-as-you-go plan would effectively

eliminate the need for the county's failing 400-bed jail on Fabyan Parkway in Geneva. It was built in the mid-1970s and expanded three times, and federal consultants suggest it be replaced.

A second 160-bed addition in St. Charles would get Kane to the size facility Robertson projects the county would need by 2018.

The final makeup of any fi-

PLEASE SEE JAIL, PAGE 7

## JAIL:

### County halted smaller plan for expansion

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

nancing package would be based on "policy decisions the board is going to have to make," said Corrections Committee Chairwoman Karen McConaughay (R-St. Charles), who shepherded Tuesday's vote. "There's a lot of different [funding] options that we will be pursuing."

"The goal is to have a [design] firm or team in place and voted on by the County Board in September," she said.

McConaughay is the GOP candidate for County Board

chairman in November. She

helped engineer a halt to the planned \$12 million, 200-bed addition to the existing jail on grounds that it failed to address Kane's long- and short-term jail needs.

That stalled 200-bed expansion was a product of more than two years of planning by the County Board, which spent more than \$600,000 on the project.

County Board Chairman Mike McCoy (R-Aurora), who urged the joint committee in May 2003 to revisit the prospect of building a jail at the Judicial Center campus with a direct connection to the courthouse, said he supported the latest concept. Any financing plan would have to be carefully scrutinized by the board, he said.

"It's a commitment of almost all of our [capital] resources for the next five years towards jail construction and that's going to be a board decision," McCoy

said.

Kane's judges, led by Chief Judge Philip DiMarzio, announced in March that jail construction logically should be at the Judicial Center, at Illinois Highway 38 and Peck Road, rather than at the existing jail. With two courthouses, the County Jail and circuit clerk's office in separate locations, Kane's judicial system is "one of the most fragmented in the state," DiMarzio has said.

Sheriff Ken Ramsey, who also has endorsed building a modular-style jail at the Judicial Center, praised Tuesday's action as "without a doubt a monumental step forward. I really have hopes," he said.

Even with the selection of a site and the hiring of an architect by September, the awarding of contracts and construction mean it will be two to three years before the county will have any additional jail capacity.

5-19-04 Beacon

Panel: *News*

# Put jail next to Judicial Center

■ **\$46.6 million project:** Facility would start with 608 beds, grow to 735

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Two Kane County Board committees Tuesday recommended building a new \$47.6 million jail next to the Judicial Center on Route 38 in St. Charles Township.

The Judiciary and Corrections and Rehabilitation committees voted in favor of a new 608-bed jail to replace the 400-bed jail on Fabyan Parkway on Geneva's southeast side. Under the proposal, the first phase of construction would be finished in about four years, with a new jail ready by 2008.

A second phase would expand the jail to 735 beds by 2018.

"What this says today is, yeah, we can build more than \$12 million worth of jail," said Karen McConnaughay, R-St. Charles, Corrections Committee chairman.

The recommendation was based on a proposal from consultant Voorhees-Robertson of Colorado. Jim Robertson, who has worked on the plan for Kane County, also included a funding mechanism that would mix existing money, possible grants, reserve funds and bonds to pay for the first phase of the project.

"You could potentially have a new jail without going to the taxpayers, or disrupting normal county operations," he said. "You now have an option before you."

The funding proposal, which committee members included in their recommendation, would mix the \$12 million the county already has set aside with an estimated \$25 million it could get in bonding power. To pay back the bonds, the county would commit about \$2.1 million a year to bond payments, from the about \$2.7 million it now spends to send prisoners to other counties, particularly McHenry County.

That money would no longer be needed with more beds in the Kane jail, officials said.

That would leave about \$10 million the county would have to get from other sources, perhaps a combination of additional money from state and federal grants for prison construction, Robertson said.

## Design team

In addition to recommending the project, the committees sent through a second recommendation to go forward with getting a design team together. The county would take in requests for qualifications from interested firms, then narrow that down to a short list of three companies that would make presentations to the County Board.

McConnaughay said she and board Chairman Mike McCoy, R-Aurora, already have fielded a number of phone calls from companies showing interest.

"I'd be expecting 20 or so, there's been such an extraordinary interest in this project," she said.

McConnaughay said officials hope to have the entire project approved by the full County Board by September.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 2004

## Daily Herald Ethically, Kane must not be Springfield

We have all heard about no-bid contracts in government, political appointments to boost a government pension and looking the other way when government officials violate the public trust. I am sure more will play out during the U.S. attorney's prosecution of former Gov. George Ryan.

But I was surprised by Kane County Board Chairman Mike McCoy's attempts to bully Kane County Board members when all they wanted was clarification to comply with state law.

I can understand McCoy's nervousness when it comes to ethics and county officials.

Only time will tell if a citizens group will be successful in getting Attorney General Lisa Madigan to investigate the Carpentersville financial mess.

Who can forget Kane County Recorder Sandy Wegman not complying with the public bid process regulations in procurement? She issued what was essentially a no-bid contract of \$29,300 to a company that had given her a campaign contribution only two weeks earlier.

Or what about Kane County Treasurer David Rickert's attempt to utilize taxpayers' money to boost his name recognition as he considered running for Kane County chairman? In the era of tight county budgets, he was able to find about \$6,000 for a tax reminder with his name on it. It is my understanding that the governor's recent ethics legislation doesn't permit that type of reminder.

There has been a lot of growth during Chairman McCoy's tenure, but no one expected Kane County to grow into Springfield.

Richard Landwehr  
Elgin

4-23-04 Daily Herald

# Kane County jail may look for renters

BY PATRICK WALDRON

Daily Herald Staff Writer

Someday, if the price is right, Kane County could be home to inmates from around the world.

Housing prisoners for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service has proved to be good business in other county jails, including McHenry County, and now Kane County leaders want to discuss creating a similar set-up for themselves.

Karen McConnaughay, chairman of the county board's corrections and rehabilitation committee, said Thursday she is seeking a meeting with immigration service leaders to see if

the agency needs more incarceration space.

Perhaps immigration officials could rent space at a new Kane County jail or take over the existing jail on Fabyan Parkway in Geneva if — and when — the local lockup moves a few miles to the west, according to the theory.

"I want to ask the question," McConnaughay said. "I can't offer it as anything but a shot. But I am looking at this process as you turn over every stone."

The bottom line and genesis of the proposal is money.

Today, Kane County spends

See **JAIL** on **PAGE 6**

## Jail: New lockup could be built

*Continued from Page 1*

\$2.7 million a year to send its prisoners to the McHenry County jail, a facility that also charges the immigration service to hold federal prisoners.

In fact, last year McHenry County struck a deal with the federal government to house prisoners for the next 10 years. That agreement will pay McHenry County \$6.4 million.

The deal was made possible because the McHenry County jail had an entire floor unused.

Meanwhile, Kane County officials have been struggling with a chronically overcrowded jail.

The jail built for 399 inmates had an average daily population of 559 last year, according to the Kane County sheriff's 2003 jail report.

For years, leaders have discussed additions to the jail or the possibility of a building a new jail at the judicial center in St. Charles. This year, building a

new jail has emerged as the preferred option if the money to build it can be found.

As part of that money hunt, McConnaughay is exploring if future income could come from the federal government.

Aside from the immigration service concept, other areas of funding being explored include federal grants and long-term financing paid for by the money now sent by Kane County to McHenry County.

Nearly 100 Kane County inmates are sent to the McHenry County jail each day at a cost of \$2.7 million a year.

Building a new jail in St. Charles with more beds would eliminate the need for that daily transfer.

McConnaughay wants to know if those savings can be used to finance a long-term construction project.

County finance officials say if \$2 million a year of that money could be set aside, it would pay for \$25 million building investment over the next 20 years.

4-23-04 Beacon news

# Kane County to seek fed funds for jail

**■ Long shot:**  
Officials will talk with  
immigration and  
Dennis Haster's office

**By Steve Lord**  
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — It might be a long shot, but Kane County officials have asked Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert to seek federal help to fund a new jail.

County Board Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee Chairman Karen McConaughay, R-St. Charles, speaking to other committee members Thursday, said she has asked for help from Hastert, R-Yorkville, in several

ways.  
One way is to have him arrange a meeting between county officials and officials of the former Immigration and Naturalization Service, now under the Department of Homeland Security.

It might be possible for the county to build a jail with more beds than needed, with the federal government paying the county to use those extra beds for immigration prisoners.

This option has been discussed many times before by county officials and is supported by Sheriff Ken Ramsey.

But officials have said there are some logistics problems associated with the option, most notably fronting the cost of building the extra beds. Also, immigration

prisoners need to be segregated in certain ways, which could relate to the design of the jail.

"I think it's important to at least explore that option," McConaughay said. "I know there are pros and cons about it, but we can at least explore it."

The second way officials have asked Hastert's office for help is to look for federal grant programs that can pay for jail construction. Kane corrections officials also are looking at the different federal programs.

Kane officials have been studying a new jail proposal that could add new beds in the near future and more beds looking ahead to 2018.

Consultant Jim Robertson of Voorhis-Robertson of Colorado has presented the board with three general proposals of how to proceed

for the near and far future.

The option that seems to have met with the most favor on the County Board is to build a new jail at the site of the Kane County Judicial Center, connected to the courthouse.

It would cost the county about \$48.8 million over 15 years. Staff cost during that time would be \$269 million. Those are rough estimates from Robertson.

## NYC possibility

Under that option, the board would build the new jail in stages, switching over from the current jail on Fabian Parkway in Geneva.

Officials still do not have a firm handle on how much money the county can raise. One source of revenue often quoted is the about

\$2.7 million the county spends each year to send prisoners to the McHenry County jail.

With a new jail, Kane would not have to send its prisoners to McHenry and would save that \$2.7 million.

But McConaughay said some of that would have to go toward paying for increased staff at a new, bigger jail. She said Thursday she wants to get firmer cost estimates from jail officials about how much of that \$2.7 million might go toward operation costs.

"We need to see if we can use any of that as a dedicated revenue stream (for construction)," she said.

As long as officials were talking about long shots Thursday, they also brought up the possibility that the current Department of

Corrections Illinois Youth Center on Route 38, just west of the Judicial Center, could be used for a new jail.

Gov. Rod Blagojevich has earmarked that juvenile jail for closing. While local officials still are fighting that, county officials said they have to consider what will happen to the property if it is closed.

More than one person has approached board members and asked if the county could take over NYC and run it as a jail.

County officials would like to tour the facility, McConaughay said, but have had trouble arranging it through the state.

"I think we need to do it," she said. "It's not very likely that it would meet our needs, but we owe the taxpayers to at least take a look at it."

# County looks to feds for jail funds

4-23-04 Chronicle

*Officials consider facility with space for federal inmates*

By TOM SCHLUETER  
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — County officials will seek federal help to build their new jail.

One idea that has floated in and out of the Kane's ongoing jail-building process is to build a facility with enough space to house Kane's inmates and federal immigration prisoners.



McConaughay

"I think we need to explore that," said Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee Chairwoman

Karen McConaughay, R-St. Charles.

McConaughay said she has met with U.S. House Speaker Dennis Hastert's office. She will put in writing the county's needs and submit them to his office.

"We need to do some additional clarification and start nailing down those numbers," McConaughay said.

"We're going to investigate the possibilities," said Bryan Harbin, Hastert's district director.

Sheriff's Cmdr. James McCurry, who has been investigating federal grants, said grants are available for drug and mental health courts.

Kane already has a drug court and is considering a mental health court.

## Jail

Continued from page 1

With those programs the county could be eligible for more grant money.

"It did not specifically say (the grant) could not be used for bricks and mortar," McCurry said. "The potential is out there."

Members of the Corrections Committee are leaning toward endorsement of a 768-bed jail built in phases at the Judicial Center at Peck Road and Route 38. The new facility would replace the 30-year-old jail on Fabvan Parkway.

Although the jail would be designed with modern corrections concepts, a plan that would make the facility more efficient to operate, the initial cost would be a major stumbling block.

The county would need at least \$50 million to build its new jail.

Committee members said they have had constituents ask them about using the Illinois

Youth Center-St. Charles if and when the facility is closed.

"We are all getting that question," said Caryl VanOvermire, R-St. Charles.

Gov. Rod Blagojevich proposes to close IYC-St. Charles as a cost-cutting measure.

McCurry said he started his career in corrections at IYC-St. Charles and worked there for five years.

He said the residence halls are built like houses, not like jails.

"The housing units at IYC-St. Charles are not secure construction," he said.

For example, the walls are built with drywall instead of concrete, he said.

"The public deserves an answer," Jan Carlson, R-Elburn, said.

McConaughay said county board members must tour the facility to have educated answers.

"We can't very well answer that without seeing it," she said.

# Jail report lists violent incidents

## Sheriff cites overcrowding at Kane facility

By William Presecky  
Tribune staff reporter

The overcrowded Kane County Jail experienced a "somewhat violent year" in 2003, jail officials said Thursday.

"Not a month goes by that there isn't an unusual occurrence," said Todd Exline, Kane's chief of corrections.

Exline released a 20-page annual report that includes a month-by-month account of more than 80 incidents. He said Sheriff Ken Ramsey is mandated to generate the report on "extraordinary or unusual occurrences" for the state Department of Corrections.

Last year, there were more than two dozen incidents involving an inmate who had to be disabled using a stun gun or chemical agent. More than 20 homemade weapons were confiscated and a dozen injuries to officers were recorded. There was one suicide and a dozen suicide attempts, according to the report.

The weapons confiscated from inmates included various shanks that inmates made by sharpening common items such as combs, toothbrushes, floor tiles and plastic screws.

Even as he talked to the Coun-

ty Board's Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee, Exline said a portion of the jail, on Fabryan Parkway in Geneva, was locked down following what he called a gang-related fight Wednesday night involving as many as 12 inmates. He said two guards were slightly injured.

"It was a very busy, somewhat violent year for Kane County Corrections, when you look at the numbers," Exline said.

Exline noted that the facility's average daily population was 559 inmates, or about 160 over capacity. In addition to spending about \$2.7 million last year to accommodate the overflow in other locations, the department also logged nearly 170,000 miles transporting inmates, he said.

Last year, more than 18,000 inmates came through the jail, Exline said. Of the roughly 3,000 inmates that were screened by Adult Corrections for mental-health problems about 800 met the criteria necessary to warrant further review.

The jail's food vendor served more than 438,000 meals last year at a cost of about 91 cents a meal, according to the report.

In his report, Ramsey underscored the critical need for a new or improved jail facility.

"Issues such as overcrowding, understaffing, poor facility design and crumbling infrastructure take a personal toll on the community, officers, and even the inmates," he wrote.

e-  
e-  
d-  
al  
n-  
ea  
m  
o-  
  
pa-  
in-  
  
out  
ise  
esi-  
m-  
aid.  
peo-

1-30-04 Beacon news

# Questions arise over rezoning church land

By Dave Parro  
STAFF WRITER

**AURORA** — A vote that will influence future development at Orchard Road and Galena Boulevard has been postponed while the city explores whether conditions legally can be attached to a pending rezoning request. Aurora Community Church, which once planned to build a new sanctuary and private school at the southwest corner of Orchard Road and Galena Boulevard, now is seeking commercial zoning for its 9.1-acre parcel. The land is zoned residential, but the church maintains it is better suited for retail use.

City planners disagree, citing surrounding subdivisions and open space on Jericho Road, Prairie Street,

Galena Boulevard, Illinois Avenue and west of Orchard Road. There are no other commercial uses at that intersection.

The Planning Commission unanimously recommended denial of the rezoning request earlier this month, agreeing with city staff that commercial is an inappropriate use for the corner parcel.

Aldermen on the City Council Planning and Development Committee were undecided Thursday but said they would be more comfortable with commercial zoning if the city had more control over how a retail development would look and what types of businesses would go there.

Aurora Community Church Pastor Dan Haas said he is willing to attach a set of conditions to the rezoning re-

quest, including a ban on predatory businesses such as liquor stores and pawn shops, access restrictions from residential Downer Place and Cherry Tree Drive and an agreement that would give the City Council control over details like landscaping, buffers and how the buildings look.

Bill Wiet, Aurora community development director, said he doesn't know how many conditions can be attached because the church came forward with a straight rezoning request. Normally, such conditions would require special-use zoning and a planned unit development agreement, which require a super-majority vote from the City Council for approval.

Attaching conditions to a straight zoning request could sidestep the more restrictive process and leave the

conditions open to a challenge from a developer who eventually buys the property.

Wiet will seek an opinion from the city's legal staff, and the committee will meet again Feb. 12 before sending the request to the full council.

"Unless these conditions can be placed on the rezoning itself, any developer can come in and say, 'I want to do it this way. It's mine,'" said Alderman Lynda Elmore, 10th Ward.

Haas and his attorneys are arguing the property is worth more as commercial and has not attracted interest from residential developers.

The church originally planned to build a sanctuary and school there but abandoned those plans because of opposition from residents and access restrictions imposed by the county.

1-30-04 Beacon news

# Consultant expected to call for new Kane jail

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

**GENEVA** — The latest in a long line of plans for the Kane County jail appears to be building a new one.

That, at least, will be the recommendation consultant Voorhis-Robertson Justice Services, of Colorado, eventually

makes to the Kane County Board. The consultant has given that recommendation to a special committee studying the county's jail and criminal justice system.

In so doing, the consultant apparently also is recommending the board scrap a 200-bed addition plan that already has been on hold for about a year.

Voorhis-Robertson said the

county's future lies either with building a new jail at the current site on Fabyan Parkway in Geneva, or near the Judicial Center on Route 38 west of St. Charles.

"Basically, that's what it comes down to," Judiciary Committee Chairman Jim Mitchell, R-North Aurora, told his committee. Mitchell, who is a member of the special committee as well, said

when Voorhis-Robertson makes its eventual presentation to the County Board, it will have more precise cost analyses for both locations.

Even the most ardent supporters of the 200-bed jail addition plan in 2002, when the board moved ahead with the proposal, considered it a stop-gap solution. But officials said building a new jail would be too

costly.

At one point, the board put a referendum on the ballot to ask for bonding authority to build a new jail, and it was overwhelmingly defeated. The 200-bed addition would have been funded with \$12 million from the county's landfill fund, although some questioned if that would have even been enough to pay for the addition.

1-28-04 Beacon news

# County Health Department may provide care at Kane jail

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Kane County officials will look at having the county Health Department provide health services at the Kane County Jail.

While the move might save the county money, however, it also might not be feasible, officials cautioned this week.

"The Corrections Committee has asked us to look at if the Health Department can take significant responsibility for the work at the county jail," County Board Public Health Committee Chairman Gerry Jones, D-Aurora, told his committee Tuesday. "But the Health Department is very busy, and we may need to ask the Corrections Committee where to get additional resources. Our executive staff is carrying about 45 different loads right now."

The idea came up last week at the Corrections and Rehabilitation Committee meeting as officials discussed problems with their contract for health care at the jail. The county pays \$1.36 million a year to Wexler Healthcare to provide required care for prisoners.

County officials said they have had trouble getting full accounting for hours worked from Wexler, even though the

contract requires the company to give jail officials those figures. Corrections Committee members said officials at the jail also need to be more diligent about monitoring hours.

"We need to monitor their time ourselves," said Corrections Chairman Karen McConaughay, R-St. Charles.

"We seem to have a contract that is not enforceable," said board member Lee Barrett, R-Elgin. "You don't pay for something you don't get."

McConaughay said the cost of the program is enough to warrant looking at alternatives. She pointed out that, in McHenry County, the county developed a partnership in a separate company with a local hospital to provide health care at their jail. She also mentioned the possibility of the Health Department doing the work.

"Can we administer it for less money than we pay now?" she said. "Can we be more effective? I would like to look at our own Health Department as a bidder, at least."

She pointed out that the DuPage County Health Department provides health service at the DuPage jail.

"I don't know if it will work, but that's the way they do it in DuPage, and they're very happy," she said.

SALE DATES:



# Jail plan draws interest of firms.

8-27-04 Daily Herald

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

At least a dozen companies have expressed interest in building a new Kane County jail, but selection of a contractor could come down to experience and philosophy, project leaders said Thursday.

"The more companies you have the better the price, and also people then have a tendency to sharpen their pencils," said Jim Robertson, the county's jail project consultant and a partner with Voorhis/Robertson Justice Services. "We want to make sure this a qualification-driven process."

County officials were pleased with the high interest and believe it can save taxpayers money on a project that could cost more than \$47 million.

A nice bid price won't be the only factor, said Karen McConnaughay, the chairman of the county board's corrections and rehabilitation committee.

"We are not just building a building," said McConnaughay, a St. Charles Republican. "We need to build a building that is operationally efficient so we can keep costs down."

To build that facility, McConnaughay said the county will be looking for a firm that has designed other smooth-running and well-managed jails around the country. As part of that, leaders don't want a company with just its name on the project, but a company that took the lead on those successful jails.

This summer the county board decided to build a roughly 600-bed jail next to the Kane County Judicial Center off Route 38 in St. Charles. A new lockup would replace the 30-year-old jail on Fabian Parkway in Geneva that has a capacity of 400 and routinely houses more than 500 inmates.

A jail construction project has been in the works for years and in 2002 the county board decided to build a 200-bed addition to the Geneva facility. That \$12 million plan was later scrapped only weeks was scheduled to start in 2003.

Now the county board is on the verge of hiring a designer for the latest jail solution. Companies have until Sept. 9 to submit

## Jail: Firms have until Sept. 9

Continued from Page 1

what amounts to a resume in the sweeps to win the contract.

So far 15 companies have been heard from, Robertson said.

Once the portfolios are in, the initial interest list likely will be trimmed by a special justice committee made up of two county board members,

including McConnaughay, the county board chairman, the chief judge, the sheriff and the jail chief.

That shorter list then goes to the county board's corrections committee for a hiring recommendation to be made to the county board.

The short list could go before the corrections committee as soon as next month.

See JAIL on PAGE 11

# Benzene dump, jail vote topped county news

12-27-04 Chronicle

*Impact fees also were  
a hot topic during 2004*

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

Benzene, bed space, impact fees and a confusing turnover marked 2004 for Kane County.

In February, Shell Oil Co. dumped 201 tons of benzene-contaminated soil in Settler's Hill landfill, which is not licensed to take hazardous waste. The soil came from a leaking Shell diesel pipeline in Kankakee County. Soil tests showed benzene levels as high as 1.4 parts per million, almost three times the regulatory limit. Shell notified the county in March.

"It appears they knew the day the last load came in and they waited 10 days to notify Waste Management," said Tim Harbaugh, director of environmental management for the county.

Shell executives claim that the dumping was accidental, but lawsuits filed by Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan's office in September and special prosecutors for the county in October alleged that Shell knew about the contaminants.

On June 8, the board voted to build a new county jail, rather than an addition to the current 400-bed jail. Chronic overcrowding and a dearth of bed space led to the decision.

The county is in the process of selecting architects



for the project. Three firms remain in the running. The Jail Steering Committee has scheduled research interviews for Jan. 10, 2005, and a meeting to discuss the results Jan. 13. The committee plans to ask the county board to make a selection on Feb. 8. A newsletter, a Web site and a Feb. 22 public information session are planned to keep the public up to date on the project.

Impact fees also were a hot-button issue in 2004.

An anti-sprawl measure, impact fees tax projects that would increase road traffic. The funds are used for road maintenance and improvements in the area where the money was collected. The board approved them Jan. 13 in an 18-7 vote. Batavia Mayor Jeff Schielke, St. Charles Mayor Sue Klinkhamer and Geneva City Administrator Phil Page initially threatened lawsuits against the county. Lord of Life Church in La Fox filed an appeal, claiming that churches should be exempt.

## County

Continued from page 1

The board is working on a standard reduction for churches and certain non-profits.

The November election gave Democrats four new seats on the county board, giving them 9 of the 26. Karen McConaughay defeated Tom Meadath to fill the chairman seat after incumbent Mike McCoy chose not to seek a third term.

McConaughay did not join the rest of the board at an induction ceremony Dec. 6. Three days earlier, she and representatives from the Kane County State's Attorney's Office were researching the procedure for the oath taking and found that a state law passed earlier this year pushed back the day that chairmen in certain counties could take office. McCoy had to stay in the office for two extra weeks, during which most meetings were canceled and business postponed.

McConaughay took her oath Dec. 20.

She said her top priority for 2005 is to develop a long-term strategic plan for the county government.

She said her next highest priorities are the jail project and to work toward the land-use goals set by the 2030 Land Resource Management Plan, which was approved in October.

See COUNTY, page 2

# Final decision on jail architect delayed

12-9-04 Chronicle

*McConaughay wanted to wait until after she is sworn in as chairman*

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

The field is down to three in the search for an architect for the new Kane County jail, but the final decision will be delayed.

Healy Bender Associates from Naperville, RQAW from Indianapolis and Wold Architects and Engineers, of St. Paul, Minn., which has an office in Elgin, were selected from a field of six to design a planned 600-bed jail, Kane County Board Chairman-elect Karen

McConaughay said.

McConaughay had planned to take office Monday, but a state law approved earlier this year pushed that date back. The law delays the induction date for board chairman in certain counties to allow more time to count provisional ballots. McConaughay will take office Dec. 20, and the timeline for the jail project has been altered accordingly.

"I wanted to make sure I was in a position where I could take part in the induction where I could take part in the interview process," McConaughay said.

The Jail Steering Committee was scheduled to present its architect recommendation during a Committee of the Whole meeting Dec. 16. Currently, no Committee of the Whole exists, although McConaughay has plans to create one upon assuming office.

The Jail Steering Committee will consider its picks in a meeting scheduled for 6 p.m. Jan. 13, following research interviews on Jan. 10. Those interviews were scheduled for today.

The interview process will ask representatives from the three competing firms a list of 13 questions created by the county board and Jail Steering Committee. The questions will not be released until after the firms have answered them.

McConaughay said the firms' past

jail design experiences will be a topic of discussion.

She said the questions will involve "issues dealing with past performance, how they handle overruns, what their track record is on these things."

Technology also will be an issue, said James Robertson, a consultant on the project.

"We've become over-reliant at times on technology," he said, citing incidents where cameras, rather than guards, have been used to manage inmates.

The Jail Steering Committee will ask the county board to make a final selection during a regular meeting Feb. 8.

"We were lucky in that all the firms were excellent firms," said James Mitchell, R-North Aurora.

A public information session tentatively scheduled for Jan. 27 has been moved to Feb. 22. That meeting will update the public on the status of the jail project, unveil an informational newsletter and Web site and outline a planned Citizens' Advisory Committee.

"We're going to do something," McConaughay said. "We're working through exactly how to coordinate that."

McConaughay unveiled the Jail Steering Committee's top three during a tour of the current jail at 777 E. Fabryan Parkway. The tour was scheduled to educate the new board members on chronic overcrowding at the 400-bed jail.

None of the seven new members attended.

# Local Focus

## Today's quote

"They are trying to pacify us."

Tom Schimone, Kendall County resident and Prairie Parkway opponent skeptical about IDOT's comments that the corridor plan could move

## News you can use

- Registration is due Friday for an informational meeting on volunteering with the Kane County Medical Reserve Corps. The meeting is at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the St. Charles Public Library, 1 S. Sixth Ave. Call Sally Williams at (630) 299-4221.
- The Geneva Park District and the Geneva Public Library present "Celebrate the Season" from 6 to 8 p.m. Friday at the library, 127 James St. in Geneva. This event features holiday music, singing, craft making and entertainment. Admission is free. Call (630) 232-4542.

## Contact us

**News tips:**  
(630) 587-8620  
**Fax:**  
(630) 587-8639  
**E-mail:**  
news@dailyherald.com  
**Letters to the editor:**  
foxletters@dailyherald.com

## Write:

Paddock Publications, Inc.  
3805 E. Main St., Suite A  
St. Charles, IL 60174-2400

**Missed paper? Vacation stop?**  
All subscription information:  
(630) 587-8660

12-9-04 Daily Herald

# Plan could increase judicial diversity

*Legislators considering creating sub-circuits, which would change how Kane, McHenry judges are elected*

BY TONA KUNZ  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

State legislators want you to tell them whether to demand that judges live in specific areas of the county.

Members of the state's House and Senate Judiciary Committee will be in Aurora this evening to hear what you think in the last of a series of public forums on creating judicial sub-circuits similar to those in Cook County.

Feedback from the hearings will help legislators determine whether to craft a law as early as next year to change how judges are elected in Kane, Kendall,

DeKalb, Will, Lake, McHenry and Winnebago counties.

In spring 2003, a bill was proposed to make sub-circuits in Will, Lake and McHenry counties, but it stalled in committee. Future legislation is expected to encompass all seven counties, officials said.

Locally, the sub-circuits would divide the 16th Circuit — comprising Kane, Kendall and DeKalb counties — into districts similar to those used by the legislature. Judges elected from those districts would have to also live there. Currently, judges are elected at-large by the entire three-county circuit in an initial

candidates."

Brown said the sub-circuits have worked well in Cook County since they were created by the legislature in 1989. Proponents of the change said the smaller voting districts were needed to encourage diversity on the bench. Cook is the only Illinois county to use sub-circuits along with full-circuit elections in some areas.

Although the change could give Democratic blocks in largely Republican suburban circuits a better chance at the ballot box, Brown said that is not the intention. The sub-circuits are intended to help minorities

and women onto the bench as well as judges from various towns.

Maps of possible ways to divide the circuit for elections may be on hand at the hearing in Aurora as well as most of the members of the state judicial committees, said Elizabeth Moe, spokeswoman for state Rep. Linda Chapa La Via, a Democrat from Aurora who will make the opening remarks.

The Aurora hearing is the last of five heard in the counties of Winnebago, McHenry, Lake, Will and Kane. So far, the highest turnout were in Winnebago and Will counties, which drew

## Deciding how to elect judges

- What: Public hearing on enacting judicial sub-circuits for election purposes
- When: 4 to 5:30 p.m. today
- Where: Illinois Math & Science Academy lecture hall, 1500 W. Sullivan Road in Aurora
- If you plan to testify, it is recommended you call ahead of time to Elizabeth Moe at (630) 264-6855.

about 40 people each.

Hearings in Springfield are likely but have not been scheduled yet.

12-9-04 Daily Herald

# Jail design firms down to 3

**BY PATRICK WALDRON**

*Daily Herald Staff Writer*

The list of probable design teams for a new Kane County jail has been narrowed to three, one of which should get a county contract in February.

"All three of these are excellent firms," said Jim Mitchell, a North Aurora Republican and member of the county board's jail steering committee.

That committee has selected Elgin-based Wold Architects and Engineers; Naperville-based Healy, Bender & Associates; and Indianapolis-based RQAW Consulting Engineers & Architects as

finalists in the competition to build a new jail.

For most of the year, county leaders have been working toward building a 600-bed or larger jail next to the Kane County Judicial Center in St. Charles. The new facility, estimated to cost at least \$42 million, would replace the county's 30-year-old, chronically overcrowded 400-bed jail off Fabryan Parkway in Geneva.

The three chosen finalists come from a group of six firms that presented qualifications to county board members last month in an attempt to land a design contract.

From here, the finalists will return for a more in-depth interview Jan. 10 to answer written questions from board members.

The finalists were supposed to have their final interviews Thursday, but the postponement of Karen McConaughay's swearing-in as county board chairman prompted the delay.

Three days after the rescheduled interviews, the results, including a ranking by members of the jail steering committee, will be presented to the entire board during a committee of the whole meeting.

By then, the firms are expected to present information

on fee estimates for their services. Those numbers will give board members an indication of costs to come but won't include construction figures, county officials said.

All of that information will be analyzed by board members before a contract is awarded at the board's Feb. 8 meeting.

The hired architect is then expected to play a key role in the first of what chairman-elect McConaughay said will be a series of public forums to engage residents in the jail project. The first public forum is set for Feb. 22, though an exact time and location hasn't been set.

12-9-04  
Chronicle



Bill  
Page

## Jail tour fizzles

Of all the major issues the Kane County Board will be facing in the next year or so, none will be as important as those concerning the county jail. A decision has to be made — and soon — about building a new facility, so it is vitally important that all the board members be up to speed on all aspects of the subject. Or so you'd hope.

This week Kane County Sheriff's personnel arranged a tour of the jail. Although it was open to all 26 people who serve on the board, it was specifically designed for the newest members, those seven men and women who were sworn in this past Monday. Care to guess how many new members showed up? Zero. Not one of the new members of the county board went on the tour. In fact, only four people came by: incoming chairman Karen McConnaughay and three board incumbents — and all but one of them had toured the jail before.

Well, this is just dandy. In a very short time the board will be asked to make decisions about the jail, but only three of them made the effort to better understand the situation. It's particularly appalling that not one new member could spare the time to see the jail up close and personal. How can they discuss the design of a new jail if they aren't aware of the old jail's problems?

It's amazing how fast this group has gone from earnest candidates, with a plan to fix everything wrong in the county, to just another bunch of politicians giving lip service. And I can't help but wonder what our corrections officers and deputies think when they see how little respect 23 members of the county board have for their working conditions.

Speaking of politicians, there are times when you could just kiss them for something they say or do. Kane County Clerk Jack Cunningham is this week's winner of a big wet one for announcing he's volunteered to help monitor the upcoming elections in Iraq.

Jack, in case you've forgotten, just "monitored" our November elections. That would be the ones marked by thousands of voters being given the

wrong ballots, polling place confusion, and glacial vote counting. Now he wants to use his skills in Baghdad?

Sometimes the jokes just write themselves. Thanks, Jack. Pardon me while I pucker up.

Attention Fox Valley families: Do you have a loved one in the armed forces who is on active military duty in the United States? Is it too expensive for you to be in touch as much as you'd like? If so, the generous folks at AMI Communications would like to hear from you.

Bob Buchta and his crew are offering 25 pre-paid calling cards so families can connect with their loved ones in the service. The cards will allow for five hours of free phone calls anywhere in the U.S., and AMI will have these ready for pickup at their Batavia office beginning Dec. 13.

Bob asks you call first, (630) 389-9000, and an AMI representative will fill you in on the details. Call now, and please remember the 25 cards are going to be given on a first-come, first-served basis.

Speaking of our kids in the armed forces, there's a great way for you to really help some of them. Jonathon Monken, a 1998 graduate of St. Charles High School and a 2002 graduate of West Point, is now a 1st Lt. stationed in Iraq, and in charge of a platoon of 30.

Jonathon looks out for his platoon, and he knows a few goodies from home brighten up the bleakest day. Unfortunately, too many of these GI's don't have mail or packages coming, so Jonathon would like us to adopt a few.

Jonathon's father, Jon, is the director of the Norris Recreation Center, and he is coordinating what I'm calling "Operation Adopt A G.I." Jon has all the details you'll need to make a lonely kid's stay in Iraq a little better. Call Jon at (630) 377-1405. This is something your whole family can get involved in, so call today.

• Bill Page lives in St. Charles and owns a marketing company. He also writes about local issues on Tuesday and Thursday. Calls and e-mails answered at (630) 584-0809 or [wpage@mediawerks.org](mailto:wpage@mediawerks.org).

# Barsanti: Major changes will wait

12-1-04 Chronicle

New state's attorney takes oath of office

By DAN CAMPANA

Kane County Chronicle

ST. CHARLES — Before he gets to business this morning, new Kane County State's Attorney John Barsanti took the oath of office Tuesday.

Barsanti, with his wife, Dawn, by his side, was sworn in by Kane County Circuit Judge Donald Hudson in front of a small gathering of attorneys and reporters.

"I'll be at work tomorrow, you'll know where to find me," Barsanti quipped shortly after the ceremony.

Barsanti, 52, defeated Democratic opponent Renee Robinson in last month's election to replace Meg Gorecki, who did not seek a second term as state's attorney.

Though the campaign trail was difficult, Barsanti admits the challenges are just beginning.

"Running for that office is completely different than running the office," said Barsanti, who previously spent 21 years as an assistant state's attorney. "Now, I'm faced with the reality of walking in that door."

Hudson, the 16th Judicial Circuit's new chief judge, said he looks forward to working with Barsanti for "many years to come."

"Today, I believe is a culmination of a lot of hopes and dreams," Hudson said of Barsanti being sworn in.

The Barsanti era begins today with a swearing-in of all the assistant state's attorneys and then a meeting with his courtroom personnel. On Thursday, he expects to meet with other support staff members for lunch.

As he said during the campaign, Barsanti vowed to hold off on major changes, such as personnel moves, for at least 90 days to evaluate his staff.

Barsanti did not foresee any additional changes other than the departures of First Assistant Bob Berlin to DuPage County and Assistant State's Attorney Joe Cullen to DeKalb County.

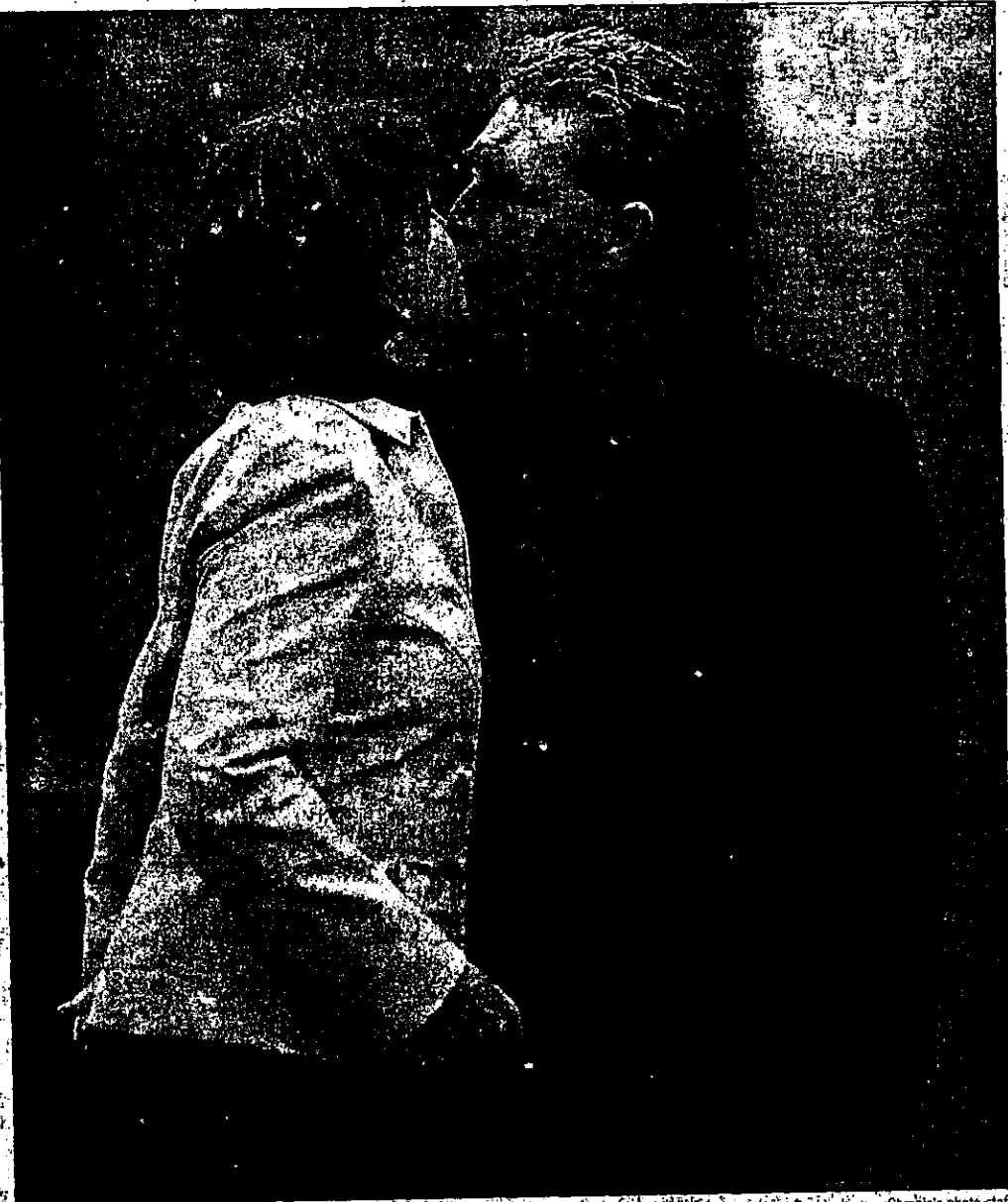
Among the early procedural changes expected by Barsanti will be to the felony review process, which is how charges are authorized by prosecutors to police.

"I'm going to simplify it immediately," Barsanti said.

The new process will involve the police more and depend on probable cause to uphold a charge, Barsanti said. He added that his top assistant, Clint Hull, will research how other counties handle felony review.

During an impromptu press conference outside the courtroom where he was sworn in, Barsanti repeated many of his campaign promises, including his vow to personally prosecute cases.

Specifically, Barsanti said he expects to handle at most three cases. He mentioned homicide cases involving Joseph Foreman Jr. and Edward Tenney as two cases he "had his eye on."



Newly elected Kane County State's Attorney John Barsanti gets a kiss from his wife, Dawn, after being sworn in Tuesday by chief Judge Donald Hudson at the Kane County Judicial Center in St. Charles. Ben Jenkins — Chronicle photo staff

## Gorecki ends her term in court

By DAN CAMPANA

Kane County Chronicle

ST. CHARLES

Looking comfortable and relaxed, Kane County State's Attorney Meg Gorecki began her final day in office where she promised voters she would be in court.

Her calm appearance Tuesday morning could be contrasted with the swirl of controversy that has hung

with the county's first female state's attorney since her election in 2000.

More than a year ago, the Illinois Supreme Court suspended Gorecki's law li-



Gorecki

cense for four months in connection with a 1998 state-bribe scheme involving outgoing County Board Chairman Mike McCoy. She also sued McCoy in an attempt to block the county from replacing her during the suspension.

Gorecki, 37, served the suspension this year, making her the first sitting state's attorney in Illinois to have his or her law license suspended. Gorecki on Tuesday lauded the work her office accomplished on several levels — fighting for the victims of crime in the courtroom, protecting Kane County's environment and re-establishing a connection with the community while, opting not to speak about her personal issues.

See GORECKI, page 2

ings were up 22 percent over the same period last time.

I missed something that I knew or didn't phrase it in the

missing, attending his sons' rugby games.

the continuation of holidays co- computers systems.

Federal Emergency Manage-

# Gorecki: State's attorney ready to enjoy holidays

Continued from page 1.

The lone area that Gorecki said the office fell short in four years related to improving technology and how that affects work with other agencies.

However, the positives outweighed any shortcomings, she said.

The office's biggest impact, in Gorecki's estimation, came by "returning the office to the community and removing politics from the halls of justice."

"Most importantly, I think quality of life has improved in many communities," she said.

Gorecki specifically pointed to the more than \$1 million in federal funding for a community-based prosecution program in the Aurora area.

In the courtroom, Gorecki tried nearly two dozen cases ranging from dumping violations in Batavia to the death penalty case of Elgin bar shooter Luther Casteel.

Gorecki worked to speed up the time a case is pending, made all assistants carry a caseload and implemented several task forces that dealt with issues such as sex crimes and arson.

Overall, Gorecki credited her assistants, including First Assistant Bob Berlin and Criminal Division Chief Jody Gleason, and other staff for the

office's success.

"The most dedicated and professional staff I have ever known," she said. "They all gave 100 percent over the last four years."

Despite the heavy load of administrative duties, Gorecki said she never lost sight of prosecuting cases. She said the eight cases she handled in one year were the most prosecuted by a state's attorney in the Chicago area.

"Being in the courtroom was a priority," Gorecki said Tuesday, shortly after the completion of sentencing for convicted murderer Joshua Minniti.

Gorecki said it was a priority to see Minniti's case to its conclusion, so as to bring closure for the family of victim Irma Braun. Minniti was sentenced to 79 years in prison for raping and killing Braun in October 2001.

Minniti's sentencing was one part of a busy final day for Gorecki. She also participated in an afternoon hearing in Aurora branch court before attending a homicide support group meeting that was scheduled to last until 9 p.m.

According to friend and former campaign aide Kay Catlin, Gorecki's work ethic always has been strong and unwavering especially while dealing with the scandal.

## More government changes

- New Kane County Board members and the Forest Preserve District Commissioners will take the oath of office in a ceremony at 8:30 a.m. Monday.
- Six incumbent and seven incoming board members will be inducted in the ceremony. Karen McConaughay, R-St. Charles, will be sworn in as board chairwoman.
- Chief Judge Donald Hudson of the 16th Circuit Court will officiate. The ceremony will be in the County Board Room in Building A of the Government Center, 719 Batavia Ave., Geneva.

"Whatever energy she had she put it toward the job," said Catlin, who has known Gorecki since 1999. "I don't know how she did it."

Even during the suspension, Gorecki continued to work hard, Catlin said.

"She was not sitting around feeling sorry for herself," Catlin said. "She spent those months working in service to others."

Catlin complained that Gorecki was held to a very high standard in the "witch hunt" that led to her suspension.

"Did she do something wrong? Yes. Was the punishment disproportionate? Yes," Catlin said. "What happened to her was unfair."

Though she did not specify how the scandal personally affected Gorecki, Catlin said it had an impact on everyone involved.

Despite his place in the ordeal, McCoy offered some praise for Gorecki.

"I don't think it affected her job performance other than the time she was off," McCoy said. "I think she was a good state's attorney."

With her term winding down, Gorecki also spent the last few weeks helping State's Attorney-elect John Barsanti preparing for his arrival today.

"She was very professional, very graceful about everything," Barsanti said.

It is too early to say whether another run for public office could be in Gorecki's future, simply because she never exactly expected to do it in the first place.

"If someone would have told me 10 years ago I would be Kane County state's attorney from 2000 to 2004, I wouldn't have believed them," Gorecki said.

For now, she said she has only two things on her mind.

"Enjoying the holidays with family and friends and returning to a private life," Gorecki said.

## Gorecki's statement

Statement by Meg Gorecki, whose last day as Kane County state's attorney was Tuesday.

"The last four years serving as Kane County State's Attorney have been the greatest of my life. It has been an honor and a privilege to work with all of the agencies and organizations which make Kane County a wonderful place to live."

"It is with tremendous appreciation that I thank my staff for diligently carrying out the grueling duties of the state's attorney's office. Their professionalism and dedication served the victims of crime well without exception."

"I would also like to thank my colleagues who made it a pleasure to try cases and administer justice. Together with police and fire department personnel, we were able to make a difference in the lives of thousands of people."

"I would also like to recognize the victims of crime. I will forever remember what they had to endure and take pride in the assistance we were able to provide in the most difficult time of their lives."

"And finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for their unyielding love and support. There are no words to adequately describe my gratitude."



### Chinese radio:



### Visit Our Drive-up!

IT'S YOUR WATCH THAT TELLS MOST ABOUT WHO YOU ARE.



# Kane's new chief judge takes reins today

12-1-04 Chronicle

Donald Hudson replaces

Philip DiMarzio

By DAN CAMPANA  
Kane County Chronicle

ST. CHARLES — Speeding case flow and exploring the creation of a mental health court top the priorities of the 16th Judicial Circuit's new chief judge.

Kane County Circuit Judge Donald Hudson assumes the chief judge's position today with an eye on improving efficiency in the courtroom. The circuit includes Kane, DeKalb and Kendall counties.

In Kane County, Hudson said he hopes to establish an "accelerated disposition" court to help ease jail crowding and would consider the creation of

a courtroom that specifically handles cases involving mental health issues.

"I intend to be progressive and proactive," Hudson said. "I fully recognize we're being asked to do more with less."

Hudson noted the need to work closely with the state's attorney's office and the county board to create programs and improve case flow.

Hudson, who first was appointed to the bench in 1993, replaces fellow Circuit Judge Philip DiMarzio as the circuit's top judge.

DiMarzio becomes Kane County's presiding felony judge; the position previously held by Hudson.

This week, Hudson announced a handful of changes among judges in the circuit.

"It's part of the normal procedural change," Hudson said. "I didn't make a lot of wholesale changes." Most notably, Hudson moved Circuit Judge Patricia Piper Golden to felony drug court, a spot held by Circuit Judge Grant Wegner for more than six years.

"That's a long time to be in particular courtroom," Hudson said.

In addition to his administrative duties, Hudson will preside primarily over probation violations but said he will

continue to handle a few cases that he already has made substantial rulings in.

DiMarzio will move up to the Judicial Center's third floor to handle felony cases.

Other changes:  
• Associate Judge James Hallock moves from DUI court to Domestic Violence Court, replacing Judge Richard J. Larson who was reassigned to DeKalb County.

• Judge Allen Anderson moves from the Elgin Branch Court to the DUI courtroom, where he also will serve as the county's misdemeanor jury trial coordinator.

• Judge Franklin D. Brewster goes from a family division courtroom to the Elgin Branch Court.

• Replacing Brewster in family court will be Judge William Weir, who most recently presided in DeKalb County.



Hudson

## Norris board seeks member

KANE COUNTY CHRONICLE

ST. CHARLES — The Norris

established by the late Dellora A. Norris.

To ensure that the greater

the fourth Thursday evening of each month. Members are required to attend a minimum of



# State police to use former FBI tower on forest preserve land

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

The Forest Preserve Utilization Committee will allow the Illinois State Police use of a former FBI communications tower on preserve land.

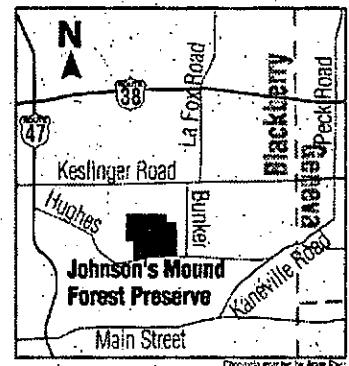
According to FBI Special Agent Spokesman Frank Bochte, the bureau is in negotiations with the Illinois State Police regarding the sale of the tower in Johnson's Mound Forest Preserve. Because the tower is on preserve land, the Forest Preserve Commission must approve the agreement, although it will not be involved in the negotiations or the maintenance of the tower.

"We have nothing to do with that building other than it sits on our property," Forest Preserve District Chief of Police Charles Budde said.

A communications tower has been in the Johnson's Mound Forest Preserve for decades. Formerly located directly on the mound, the tower was moved to its current location about 15 years ago, said Patrick McQuilkin, operations supervisor for the forest preserve district.

"It's been a flashing light on the horizon of Geneva for years and years," he said.

Although the FBI moved its operations out several years ago, Bochte said the bureau has not moved to a



satellite communications system. The FBI does have "complete coverage" in the area, he said.

While the former agreement with the FBI and the proposed agreement with the state police will allow local government organizations to share use of the tower, it is unlikely that many will.

In 2001, the Forest Preserve Police Department looked into using the tower as a way to improve reception in "dead zones" in radio in its jurisdiction. They received an estimate for the cost of running phone lines from Hughes Road to the tower.

"It was an ungodly fee," Budde said.

One difference in the new agreement will be the time between contract renewals.

"The FBI was a year at a time, this one will be five years," said committee Chairman Jan Carlson, R-Elburn.

WEDNESDAY  
December 1, 2004

Kane County Chronicle

# Community

INSIDE

## Former FBI tower

The Forest Preserve Utilization Committee will allow state police use of a tower on forest preserve land.

Page 2

12-1-04 Chronicle

# County clerk might launch Aurora mayoral bid

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

Kane County Clerk John "Jack" Cunningham said he might run for mayor of Aurora after a survey found him in the lead should the election be held today.

"I haven't thrown my hat in the ring yet," Cunningham said. "I have a great job here, and it's challenging, and I like the challenge."

The survey, conducted by McCulloch Research and Polling, asked "If the election for Mayor of Aurora were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were Angel Hernandez, Tom Weisner, Bill Wyatt, Richard Irvin or Jack Cunningham?" Of the respondents, 16.7 percent said Cunningham, 14.7 percent said Irvin, 10 percent said Wyatt, 12 percent said Weisner and 2.7 percent said

Hernandez. Forty-four percent were undecided.

"He wasn't a clear front-runner, he was just slightly ahead," said Rod McCulloch of McCulloch Research.

The margin of error was 4.2 percent.

The survey polled 300 random registered voters in Aurora by phone. In addition to asking about local issues, the poll also used questions about President Bush and Gov. Rod Blagojevich.



Cunningham  
McCulloch said.

as "control questions" to validate the sample. Results that fall to any extreme on national issues might indicate a flawed sample.

Aurora also reaches into Kendall and Will counties. A lifelong resident of Aurora, Cunningham has been Kane County clerk since 2002.

cent saying they would vote for him. Female respondents, however, supported Irvin, with 13.9 percent. Cunningham led DuPage County, with the support of 31.7 percent of the respondents. However, Irvin took chief concerns.

"It's the second largest city in the state, and there are problems with every big city," he said.

Aurora Mayor David L. Stover could not be reached for comment.

# 12-1-04 Beacon News Barsanti now state's attorney

■ **Few changes:** Top prosecutor says he'll take 90 days to assess effectiveness of office

By Mike Cetera  
STAFF WRITER

ST. CHARLES TOWNSHIP — On his final day as a criminal defense attorney, incoming Kane County State's Attorney John Barsanti offered a last wish to a client: I hope to never see you again.

The declaration was one of the final pieces of attorney-client advice, if only implied, given from a man now charged with being the county's top law enforcer.

Barsanti was sworn in as state's attorney during a noontime ceremony Tuesday, replacing fellow Republican Meg Gorecki, whose four years in office were marred by a bribery scandal that briefly forced her from the job and likely cost her any chance at a re-election bid. Barsanti was to officially take office at 12:01 a.m. today.

The ascension for Barsanti comes after a long court career,

much of which has been spent as a Kane County assistant state's attorney. He served as a prosecutor from 1979 until 2000, when he left and joined the law firm of Camic, Johnson, Wilson and McCulloch, with offices in Aurora and Elgin.

Barsanti said his experience has prepared him to run the office with need for little on-the-job education and promised few changes during his first 90 days in order to assess how things work.

"Running for that office is completely different than running

❖ Turn to BARSANTI, A6

## BARSANTI

From page A1

the office," Barsanti said.

### Revamping felony process

One change expected to occur immediately will come in how the office chooses to prosecute certain crimes. Police departments have complained under Gorecki that it became too difficult to press felony charges even, for example, in basic drug possession cases.

Barsanti said he plans to revamp the office's felony screening practice, a move designed to give police more authority in seeking charges. Prosecutors also will study how other nearby counties handle felony authorization, Barsanti said.

"I'm going to put the case back in the hands of the police, rather than the prosecutor's office," he said.

Barsanti said he expects few personnel changes during the early days of his leadership. Two of the top assistants under Gorecki have left, however, and Barsanti has recruited DeKalb County's first assistant state's attorney, Clint Hull, to take over the same job in Kane.

Barsanti said he will seek to add no new positions and plans to bring back into the courtroom four people

Gorecki had assigned full time to screen possible felony charges.

He also pledged to support popular programs begun during Gorecki's tenure, including the community prosecution units in Aurora and Elgin, which have been credited with using innovative strategies to solve community crime and quality-of-life problems.

### Handling cases

Barsanti said his role as head of the office largely will be administrative but promised to try some cases personally. He said he had made no decisions on existing cases but acknowledged the possibility he might lead the prosecution of Edward Tenney in his pending retrial on murder charges.

Barsanti led the first prosecution of Tenney for the 1993 murder of Aurora Township widow Virginia Johannessen.

Barsanti also said he would seek a special prosecutor for any pending cases being handled by the private firm he worked at to avoid any appearance of impropriety. He did not have an accounting of how many cases that would include but said the state should provide a special prosecutor free of charge.

Kane County Judge Donald Hudson, who swore Barsanti in

Tuesday, lauded the new state's attorney for "his ability, his integrity and his dedication to the legal community."

### Gorecki's last day

Gorecki, meanwhile, thanked supporters and the judicial community during her last day in office, recognizing in particular victims of crime, of whom she said she takes "pride in the assistance we were able to provide in the most difficult time of their lives."

Gorecki did not say what she will do now and made no mention of the four-month suspension of her law license, which ended several years of investigation into an answering machine message she left suggesting a friend offer a bribe to obtain a county job. Gorecki decided against seeking re-election about five months before the Illinois Supreme Court ordered the suspension.

Gorecki said the highlights of her tenure included implementing specialized units within the office — including task forces on sexual assault and animal rights — cutting administrative costs and personally prosecuting repeat offenders and rapists.

"The last four years serving as Kane County state's attorney have been the greatest of my life," Gorecki said in a statement.

12-1-04 Chronicle

# Kane requests new voting systems

*Officials hope to have new system in place by April election season*

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

To comply with federal election guidelines, the Kane County Elections/Voting Subcommittee has requested bids for new voting systems.

The Help America Vote Act of 2002 is a federal effort to encourage a move to voting machines that do not use punch cards. It was passed in response to ballot inconsistencies in the 2000 presidential election in Florida.

HAVA gives grant money to states, which decide how best to distribute the money to local governments. The local governments then choose and purchase appropriate machines. Should the local government not have an acceptable system in place by Jan. 1, 2006, it would lose the federal funds.

"We would like to have something in

place by the April election season," said Gerald Jones, D-Aurora, chairman of the subcommittee.

The consolidated election is April 5.

The grant money comes in two sections. The first section will be used for "punch card buyout," said Zeina Alame, director of elections/tax for the county. The county will receive \$660,000. The second section will be used to encourage that the machines comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1975. The state has not determined how those funds will be distributed, but Alame said each voting precinct should expect approximately \$5,000.

However, different requirements on the state and federal levels have made the process much more difficult.

Optical scan voting systems allow voters to cast ballots by filling in bubbles next to a candidate's name, similar to standardized testing. Direct record electronic, or touch screen systems, use computerized systems to tally votes.

Only optical scan systems have been approved by the state of Illinois, which requires a certifiable paper trail for voting. However, only touch screen machines are approved by HAVA as compli-

ant with the act.

"Unfortunately, Illinois has not taken the steps necessary to broaden the available selections," said G. William Richards, a member of the subcommittee and the Aurora Election Commission.

In addition, touch screen machines would allow votes to be tallied in the voting precinct, as required by HAVA. In previous elections, votes were tallied in the county clerk's office.

"The request for proposals is asking for a DRE system, an optical scan system or a hybrid," Alame said. "We're looking into all of them."

The subcommittee was formed this year to meet HAVA guidelines. In addition to including county board members and clerk's office staff, it also includes officials from Aurora. It was hoped that the city and county would find a common system, possibly buying the machines together to receive an economy of scale.

"At the very minimum, we would like them to know what we think are appropriate," Jones said.

The deadline for proposals will be Jan. 6, Alame said.

C. 12-1-04

12-1-04 Daily Herald

# Gorecki's programs speak for her on last day

BY TONA KUNZ  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Meg Gorecki didn't spend her last day as Kane County state's attorney packing boxes.

She spent her morning at the sentencing of a rape and murder trial. Her afternoon was spent arguing the case of an Aurora woman who was accused of neglecting dozens of cats. And after dinner, she talked to families in a homicide support group her administration opened up to surrounding counties.

The day was emblematic of her four years as top prosecutor: busy and diverse.

And guarded.

Gorecki declined to talk about her time as state's attorney, her four-month suspension by the Illinois Supreme Court for sug-

gesting a county job be bought with campaign donations, or where she's headed next.



**Meg Gorecki**

of her career, she let a prepared statement talk for her. Gorecki thanked residents for letting her serve as state's attorney and her colleagues for their dedicated work.

She, herself, garnered the thanks of incoming State's Attorney John Barsanti, who credits Gorecki's graciousness with making the changing of the guard almost seamless. He said she answered all his questions, offered her staff for help and prepared briefs on her litany of

a programs.

Those programs have earned her kudos from fellow attorneys and community groups. They also will serve as her legacy.

Under her reign, she started task forces to target sex crimes, arson, animal abuses and environmental violations. She set aside a courtroom to handle domestic violence cases.

She created a group to help guide senior citizens and people with disabilities through the legal system and protect them from fraud and abuse. She established a death penalty review committee to help prosecutors decide when to ask for the ultimate sentence.

Gorecki lists among her other accomplishments: cutting the department's administrative budget by 25 percent, prosecuting a record setting eight trials

in one year while still running the office, and returning all prosecutors, even department heads, to the courtroom.

"The last four years of serving as Kane County state's attorney have been the greatest of my life," she said.

Paid Advertisement

# FBI, State Police swap Kane tower

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

12-1-04  
Beacon news

GENEVA — Although it's not a natural feature, visitors to Johnson's Mound Forest Preserve near Elburn for years were aware of the large tower on the property.

What many people may not have known was the tower was a relay radio station for the FBI — a key cog in the communication network for the agency charged with federal investigation of everything from terrorism to gangsters.

But the FBI uses satellites now and no longer needs the relay station. Members of the Kane County Forest Preserve Utilization Committee Tuesday recommended transferring the easement allowing the tower from the federal government to the Illinois State Police.

"The FBI has had the tower for at least 40 years," said Bob Quinlan, Forest Preserve assistant secretary-treasurer. "The State Police wants to take it over. It would be a communication tower for them."

While committee members had no problem with the transfer — they moved it to the Forest Preserve Executive Committee agenda for Friday — they wondered if the county's Sheriff's Department could use it.

Quinlan said there is a provision in the contract that would allow any local agency to use the tower, too. He said the sheriff's office has rejected using it in the past.

Charles Budde, Forest Preserve public safety director, said the Forest Preserve police considered using the tower, but it was too costly to run cables to it.

"So, we put an antenna on the Elburn water tower instead," he said.

Quinlan said the only difference between the arrangement with the state is that the easement agreement would be for five years. The agreement with the FBI was always one year at a time, renewed by the county each year, he said.

The mound in the Johnson's Mound Forest Preserve is considered the highest point in Kane County. The tower actually is not on the mound, but in the preserve to the side of it.

12-1-04 Chicago Tribune

# New prosecutor on familiar turf

## Kane state's attorney is sworn in

By Rita Hoover  
Special to the Tribune

Veteran prosecutor John Barsanti was sworn in as Kane County state's attorney Tuesday, replacing Meg Gorecki whose tenure was marred by an ethics scandal.

Accompanied by his wife, Dawn, Barsanti, a 52-year-old Republican from St. Charles, took the oath of office in a modest ceremony in the county Judicial Center in St. Charles. He was sworn in by new Chief Judge Donald Hudson.

Barsanti's ascent to Kane's top legal post marks his return to an office where he worked for more than two decades, as a prosecutor and a top assistant.

"I wanted a low-key environment," he said after thanking a small group of well-wishers.

"I wouldn't have taken this job if I couldn't do what I love," said Barsanti. He said he expects to carry "about three cases" in addition to his administrative duties. Barsanti said that although no major changes are planned right away, he will immediately implement a streamlined procedure for felony review protocol.

He said he has chosen attorney Clint Hull, a first assistant in DeKalb County, to replace outgoing First Assistant Bob Berlin.

A 21-year veteran of the county prosecutor's office, Barsanti was chief of the office's criminal division and a first assistant for three of his five bosses.

In his quest for the job he

beat three other Republicans in the March primary and, with more than 60 percent of the vote, defeated attorney Renee Robinson, a Democrat from Aurora, in last month's general election.

Tuesday also marked the departure from office of Gorecki, who did not seek re-election.

Gorecki was the first woman elected state's attorney in Kane County. She also was the first state's attorney in Illinois to be disciplined by the state Supreme Court for professional misconduct while still in office.

As a result, the court suspended Gorecki's law license for four months, from Feb. 1 to June 1.

In a written statement, she lauded her staff and paid homage to the victims of crime, but said nothing of the ethics scandal that loomed over her term.

"The last four years serving as Kane County state's attorney have been the greatest of my life," she said. "It has been an honor and privilege to work with all of the agencies and organizations which make Kane County a wonderful place to live," said the 37-year-old Republican from Geneva.

In addition to recognizing her staff and the public safety officers who "together were able to make a difference in the lives of thousands of people," Gorecki also recognized "the victims of crime."

"I will forever remember what they had to endure and take pride in the assistance we were able to provide in the most difficult times of their lives," she said.

Wescott

sday.  
at the



12-1-04

## Beacon news

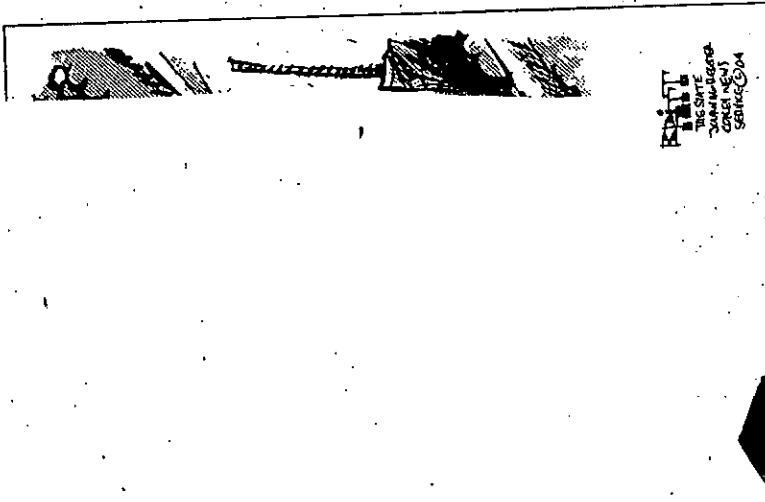
I felt then, as I do today, that a problem exists and needs to be addressed. The newest plan, adjacent to the Judicial Center on Route 38 in St. Charles, does have merit, but, at a significantly higher cost. Many of our local judges spoke before the board to urge us to build this new facility to bring those being judged nearer to the courthouse. However, this project is several years off. In the meantime, those who work at the jail will continue to "brave the elements" much as their Aurora counterparts have had to for several years.

The point is, expenditure of such large amounts of public funds takes a consensus of those entrusted with managing these funds. We live in a democracy, where votes are cast and majority rules. My willingness in 2003 to begin construction to solve current problems was overruled. While I don't have to like that decision, I do need to respect it.

My advice to you, Mr. Anderson, is to come before the Corrections and Rehabilitations Committee, the Executive Committee and the full County Board and explain your frustrations. I will sign you up to speak at these meetings and will join you in urging the board to take action.

You may sway enough county board members to re-examine the merits of the first plan and move forward. This is how the system works.

**Bill Wyatt,**  
**Kane County Commissioner,**  
**candidate for mayor of Aurora,**  
*Aurora*



with the County Board for not moving forward with a jail expansion program. In fact, the board did approve a plan in 2003 which called for an upgrade to the administration facility as well as the addition of 200 much needed beds. This project would have been built and occupied by now, but it was stopped, politically.

*Montgomery*

### Kane jail expansion in limbo

I completely understand Kane County Undersheriff Mike Anderson's frustrations

# State's attorney ponders changes

12-1-04  
Daily Herald

*But Barsanti says he's taking transition time*

BY TONA KUNZ  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

When John Barsanti took over the Kane County state's attorney's office Tuesday, he started paving the way to bring suspects more quickly into the courtroom.

His first act as the county's new top prosecutor was to start rewriting the protocol for having crimes found worthy of felony prosecution.



John Barsanti

Basically, Barsanti said, he's lowering the level of evidence needed to that of probable cause, in response to criticism that prosecutors ask for too much legwork too soon after a crime. Whether the charges will warrant a conviction is for later debate, in the courtroom.

But Barsanti's shake-up of the office stops there. At least for now.

"I have a lot of ideas, and there will be changes," Barsanti said. "You just have to have that transition period."

He promised a 90-day learning curve before he will consider changing any of the programs his predecessor, Meg Gorecki, started.

Barsanti also will wait to implement any new programs of his own. During his campaign, Barsanti said he wanted to create a cold-case unit, find a better way to review death penalty cases, implement community prosecutions and expand programs aimed toward rehabilitation rather than imprisonment.

Tuesday he said he also wants to improve retention among staff by creating more room for attorney advancement. Tapping top prosecutors to focus on

## Page 4

• Gorecki's legacy lies in her programs.

Continued from Page 1

## First: Prosecutor brings in veteran for second in charge

Continued from Page 1

high-profile cases, rather than manning an individual courtroom, should give their less-seasoned peers a chance to take the lead on cases more often, Barsanti said.

Keeping good attorneys is a main goal of the new administration. Barsanti brought in Clint Hull, from the DeKalb County state's attorney's office, to serve as his second in command. But he expects no other changes in the ranks. Hull had worked as a Kane County prosecutor off and on from 1992 until about 1999. He spent the last four years

working as the second in command in DeKalb County.

Both Hull and Barsanti are certified to handle death penalty cases. And Barsanti has his eye on possibly taking over a couple of those cases, including the Edward Terney murder case out of Aurora and the Joseph Foreman murder and kidnapping case out of Batavia.

"If I didn't take cases, I wouldn't run for this job," Barsanti said. "It's what I'm good at. It's part of what brought me back (to the state's attorney's office)."

Still, Barsanti said he realizes budgets and paperwork are part of running the office. He vowed

to limit his courtroom work to three criminal cases at a time, whereas some prosecutors juggle dozens of caseloads at a time. Those who have seen Barsanti tackle trials and man-

agement duties as a second in command under former Kane County state's attorney David Akermann think he has the right mix for the job. "I have always had every confidence he will be an exceptional state's attorney,"

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2004

ULD

# Kane delays Burlington horse trail

## ■ Master planning:

Equestrian use could find its way into preserve some day

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

12-1-04  
Beacon news

GENEVA — Kane County Forest Preserve officials are not necessarily against horse riders using the Burlington Prairie Forest Preserve.

They just want to guard against unbridled use of it.

For that reason, members of the Forest Preserve's Utilization Committee Tuesday held back on approving development of a horse trail for Burlington Prairie until an overall master development plan is finished for the preserve.

That might not be until next fall, according to Monica Meyers, Forest Preserve executive director. Meyers said making a master development plan for a new preserve would require input from the staff and public.

She said staff developed an idea for a horse trail in the preserve to try to shortcut that process because of a high number of requests from horse owners in that area. Kane County has one of the highest horse populations among all Illinois counties.

"It was a stopgap for this one use until we get a larger master plan done," she said.

But committee members decided to hold off, saying there are plenty of other horse trails and places in that area for people to ride. They said an equestrian trail can be developed in the master plan.

"We've gone more to using strategic plans as opposed to acting first, then planning," said board member Dan Walter, R-South Elgin.

Burlington Prairie was started in 1989 with a unique natural area that includes wetlands and untouched, original prairie. Drew Ullberg, planning director, said that part of the preserve, on the southeastern edge, is "a major environmentally sensitive area."

"We would want the trail to stay away from it," he said.

## Cautious approach

Burlington Prairie has been expanded three times since 1989, the last time in 2001, to its present size of 437 acres. It is that newer land, more on the northern edge of the property along Lenchow Road, where the equestrian trail is proposed. Most of that land still is old farmland and is in the form of crops, Ullberg said.

He said horse riders actually do use that part of the property now, riding along the fence lines of the different farm fields.

"It seems people have the ability to ride in that area," said board member Paul Greviskes, D-Aurora. "I'm concerned about those natural areas. Horses can be quite damaging. I'd like to be cautious."

Meyers said there is some dense growth between the sensitive areas and the proposed equestrian trail that would keep horses away. Ullberg said the county could add some features of its own to isolate the area, too.

The trail proposed would be a 2.25-mile, low-impact, low-maintenance amenity, Ullberg said. Ullberg said the trail would be no more than a mown grass trail, rather than gravel.

While no one keeps horse population figures by county, the Springfield-based Horseman's Council of Illinois has said the biggest concentration of the more than 219,000 horses in Illinois is north of Interstate 80 and east of Rockford. Kane County is right in the middle of that region.

"There is great interest in horse trails here," said committee Chairman Jan Carlson, R-Elburn.

12-2-04 Republican

# Development block grant applications are available

The Kane County Community Development Block Grant Commission has announced that applications for 2005 funds are available.

Units of local government and nonprofit organizations serving residents within the county's Community Development Block Grant program area may apply for funds. The program area includes all of Kane County outside the corporate limits of Algonquin, Aurora, Elgin, Hampshire and Huntley.

To be eligible for consideration, an applicant must propose a project that will either benefit low- and moderate-income residents, or eliminate slum or blight conditions in the program area. Applications will be evaluated by the commission, which will submit funding recommendations to the Kane County Board.

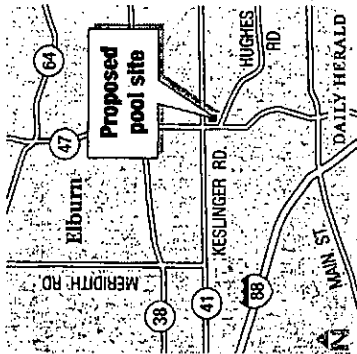
Those interested in obtaining an application can pick one up at the Kane County Development Department office, third floor, Building A, 719 Batavia Ave.,

Geneva. Those interested may call Scott Berger, community development program manager, at 208-5351. Applications must be received by the Kane County Development Department by 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 11, 2005.

12-2-84 Daily Herald

# Elburn dipping its toes in pool issue

BY TONA KUNZ  
Daily Herald Staff Writer



Since James Willey took public office in 1995 he's heard one constant refrain: "When will we have a community pool?"

The Elburn village board plans to get its feet wet Monday on the issue by looking at commissioning a \$2,000 study of what type of pool would best fit community needs.

Although the design could

change, officials currently are leaning toward a clam-shaped, zero-depth pool with swimming lanes, a slide and a diving area.

Some form of tube slide or lazy river has become a staple in modern municipal aquatic parks. Add both, and pool costs can rise to \$5 million.

Elburn officials don't have a price tag in mind yet but plan to keep things simple.

"This will not be a water park," Willey said.

Elburn likely won't reach the density needed to establish a park district for the next 10 to 20 years, so the village will have to shoulder the financial cost of the pool, officials said.

The village has solicited the help of Burbach Aquatics Inc. of Platteville, Wis., which has designed pools for Elgin, Freeport and Huntley. The 27-year-old company specializes in

See **POOL** on **PAGE 14**

## Pool: One possible site is near school in Blackberry Creek

Continued from Page 1

creating pools for municipalities and park districts in the Midwest.

The company has suggested the village look at marketing the pool to outlying areas as a way to make admission fees pay for the upkeep and operations, said trustee Jeff Metcalf.

Still, it would remain mainly

a small community pool on 4 to 6 acres.

Burbach will outline its services in helping the village get a pool during a presentation at village hall.

Officials are expected to vote that night on whether to have the company start a feasibility study, which would include scouting locations, polling the public, hosting a town hall meeting and producing an

artist rendering of the preferred pool.

Once a design, cost estimates and potential locations are selected, voters would have their say through an advisory referendum.

Willey favors putting the pool near the school in Blackberry Creek because land is available through a developer contribution, which would save taxpayers money.

# New chief judge takes the helm in 16th Circuit

**Court serves Kane, Kendall, DeKalb**

**By William Presecky**  
Tribune staff reporter

The new chief judge of the 16th Judicial Circuit, encompassing Kane, Kendall and DeKalb Counties, effectively will swap duties with his predecessor under a reorganization of judicial assignments set to take effect next week.

Judge Donald Hudson, who officially takes over as chief judge of the circuit Monday, said the new assignments do not contain any wholesale changes from the one set by Judge Philip DiMarzio, his predecessor.

With the exception of assigning DiMarzio to take his place as presiding judge of the court's Felony Division, Hudson's order does not call for any other presiding judges to be switched.

Hudson was elected by vote of the circuit's 16 full circuit judges in September. He succeeds DiMarzio, who said he would not seek re-election when he agreed to accept the post two years ago. Hudson's term as chief judge expires in December 2006.

Hudson is a former first assistant state's attorney in Kane County. He was appointed an associate judge in 1993 and elected to the bench four years ago.

In addition to his administrative duties and handling the court's probation call, Hudson said he expects to retain "a handful of [criminal trial] cases ... cases in which I've made some substantive rulings. I'm in the middle of some major felonies, and I'll probably take

those," he said.

Hudson said he plans to be "proactive and progressive in dealing with the problems that confront the court system" in the vast, fast-growing circuit.

In addition to Geneva and St. Charles, the circuit operates court facilities in Yorkville, Sycamore, Elgin, Aurora and Carpentersville.

"I realize that as judges we are being asked to do more with less, as most people that have to deal with the [court] system are, but I don't believe that a limitation on funding should become an impediment to improving the operation of the court system. That's my general philosophy," said Hudson.

Because of chronic overcrowding in the Kane County Jail in Geneva, Hudson said he is examining several options.

"I'm formulating plans to create what I would call an 'accelerated disposition court' where defendants who are charged with lesser felonies and remain in jail unable to make bond, we would have a specific court ... that we target the resolution or disposition of those cases," said Hudson.

"One of my overall goals is to establish my own good working relationship with the [County] Board," he said. "Also on the horizon, I want to finalize a long-range plan for the court system. We haven't had one here yet," said Hudson.

"Essentially, what it is designed to do is establish guidelines that will make the processing of cases through the court system more efficient and timely," he said.

Hudson said he hopes to have a final plan by mid-2005.

Daily Herald 12-2-04

## Fence Post

### County obligated to build animal shelter

In October, the Kane County Board approved \$835,000 for its Child Advocacy Center and broke ground the same month.

Last year the board approved \$175,000 for repair of the Fabyan windmill. Final cost of the project?

Almost \$1 million.

In August, the board approved construction of a county animal control facility, but ground has yet to be broken.

In 1998, county rabies tag fees were doubled with the understanding that the increase was needed for an animal control facility. The minutes of the board meeting where the increased fees were approved reflect that. Six years later, citizens are still awaiting its completion.

It is the only county department that is self-sustaining, with over \$750,000 already collected from tag fees, added to \$1 million of county capital funds approved last year for the facility's construction.

In light of the Nov. 25 Daily Herald article about homeless cats and numerous related articles of the past, I would hope county board members will soon realize that additional space is needed for area homeless animals, including dogs.

The unwanted reproduction of owned and stray animals has not been adequately addressed by those able to make a difference, including, but not limited to, government officials.

About 10 years ago, a very good overpopulation bill was introduced in the Illinois legis-

lature which would have provided low-cost spaying or neutering for low-income pet owners and caregivers who are trying to alter animals living in fields, behind businesses and in neighborhoods. The bill was defeated and never reintroduced.

The Child Advocacy Center and the proposed new jail, for which construction approval is a month or two away, are replacements for outgrown facilities.

A much-needed animal control building, not replacing any previous one, should be a county priority. Surrounding counties, such as McHenry, DeKalb, Cook, DuPage and Lake have had animal control facilities for decades.

Kane County is mandated by state law to have an animal control facility because of the its rabies tag fee collection. What does it take for people,

including members of the county board, to do the right thing? Or will it be politics as usual?

Susan Hess  
Kindness Inc.  
Elgin

12-2-04 Beacon News

# Growth placing demands for passage through forest lands

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — There is a side affect to the growth of land owned by the Kane County Forest Preserve District — a growth in easement requests.

Since a \$70 million referendum to purchase more open space passed in 1999, county officials aggressively have pursued buying land, trying to stay ahead of development in the county.

But with more preserve land, that means more land that utilities, developers and other entities want to cross to get to their own land. Forest Preserve President John Hoscheit, R-St. Charles, said there will be more and more easement requests, especially

across the growing trail system.

Just on Tuesday's Utilization Committee agenda alone, there were two easement requests, one for a developer to build a sewer system to serve a development in western Aurora near Barnes Road.

Easements always have been controversial, whether a short ComEd request to put electric service across a trail, or a bigger request by a gas pipeline to go across an entire forest preserve.

Officials are hoping to make the process less controversial with a new form that every entity will have to fill out when asking for an easement.

The form will include a place for detailed descriptions of the proposed project and research about exactly where the easement will be. It will

allow Forest Preserve staff to start researching the request immediately to bring to the Forest Preserve board.

"We think this will streamline the process, as well as provide more detailed information about the project," said Monica Meyers, Forest Preserve executive director.

Hoscheit said this is closer to having a "standard policy" for easements, for which some board member have asked.

Meyers said officials also will use the form for groups who might want to use soccer fields, or any other regular, recurring use in the preserves.

She said the district is developing another form for special uses, such as parties or one-time events people want to hold in a forest preserve.



12-2-04  
Chronicle



Bill  
Page

## E-mails from the edge

**E-MAIL:** I served as an election judge, and I happened to notice your column in which you speak of problems with this month's elections. You wrote about the inability of the county clerk's office to get the ballots counted in a timely fashion. I do not believe that you are being fair to the county clerk's office in this matter in light of the extremely high turnout for this election.

With such a great turnout in our county, you should be pleased with the efficiency that the clerk's office and the election judges throughout the county performed their tasks on election night. What I hear you asking for is instant gratification. Well you could have had instant gratification if less people voted.

If you have a better, faster way to count, then I ask you make suggestions to help speed the process rather than just complain that you had to wait until after midnight to get the results.

**BILL:** So the reason the vote count was slow was because there were too many of those darn pesky voters? Gee, we're sorry.

**E-MAIL:** I am the grateful fiancé of a graduate from the drug court program and I am very angry so many bad seeds get the publicity and the graduates like my fiancé never seem to be in the spotlight for taking advantage of what Judge Doyle is providing.

He has been clean coming on two and a half years. He works two jobs, SIX days a week, makes meetings, has a sponsor and keeps trying day after day in the name of recovery.

He is grateful for the opportunity that was given to him and mentions it to me quite often. He knows that if it weren't for Judge Doyle, we would not have anything that we have today.

If Judge Doyle has made mistakes, anyone can make them. He deals with people who made mistakes everyday in court. I thank him daily for allowing my fiancé to recover from his mistakes.

**BILL:** Thanks for the great letter. Unfortunately, if the lawyers that are going after Doyle and the Drug Rehabilitation Court have their way, it will be the end of success stories such as this. To those lawyers, a recovering addict who isn't committing crimes isn't something to celebrate; it's a lost legal fee.

**E-MAIL:** Your column about the fight to save two houses in Geneva misses the point. It is important for us to preserve our past. These houses were great examples of "worker homes" and have great historical value. If you had something as historically significant, wouldn't you want it preserved?

**BILL:** Somewhere in the attic I have a leisure suit... does that count?

**E-MAIL:** I see (Kane County Clerk) Jack Cunningham might be thinking about running for mayor of Aurora. What do you think about that?

**BILL:** After the way Jack and his staff botched the recent elections, let me be the first to wish him well in some other elected office. Preferably, one that doesn't involve counting.

**E-MAIL:** Please stop writing about how stores aren't allowing the Salvation Army to stand in their doorways to collect money. I'm glad I'm not being guilt-tripped by beggars with bells every time I go Christmas shopping. This is supposed to be a happy time, and I don't need them depressing me.

**BILL:** Thank you for reminding us what Christmas is all about: being able to shop for a Chia Pet in peace.

**E-MAIL:** Referring to toy safety experts as "nannies," was rude. These are people who have one goal: to keep dangerous toys out of the hands of children. You should apologize.

**BILL:** I would, but I can't keep a straight face talking to a grown man whose title is "toy safety expert."

**E-MAIL:** Your Thanksgiving slam at people who choose not to eat turkey was not funny in the least. At our house we had a wonderful meal of vegetables, breads, fruits and nuts. Not only was it better for us nutritionally, it was better spiritually. Unlike you, we did not murder a turkey for some primal urge.

**BILL:** By "primal urge," do you mean sandwich?

• Bill Page lives in St. Charles and owns a marketing company. He also writes about local issues on Tuesday and Thursday. Calls and e-mails answered at (630) 584-0809 or [wpage@mediawerks.org](mailto:wpage@mediawerks.org).

# Rockford wants Metra

12-2-04  
Daily  
Herald

Commuter train  
would extend  
past Elgin station

BY JON DAVIS  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

• **In short:** It's just a proposal so far, but Rockford and Belvidere are working for a rail link to Chicago and the western suburbs.

Rockford and Belvidere want Metra service to help fight growing traffic woes and appear willing to pay for it as the suburbs slowly and inevitably march toward the Rock River.

The Northern Illinois Commuter Rail Initiative — a coalition of civic groups plus local governments in Boone and Winnebago counties — is touting a plan to extend commuter trains from Elgin via Huntley, Marengo and Belvidere to downtown Rockford.

Doing so could alleviate growing traffic congestion on the Northwest Tollway by carrying an estimated 222,000 commuters annually from their

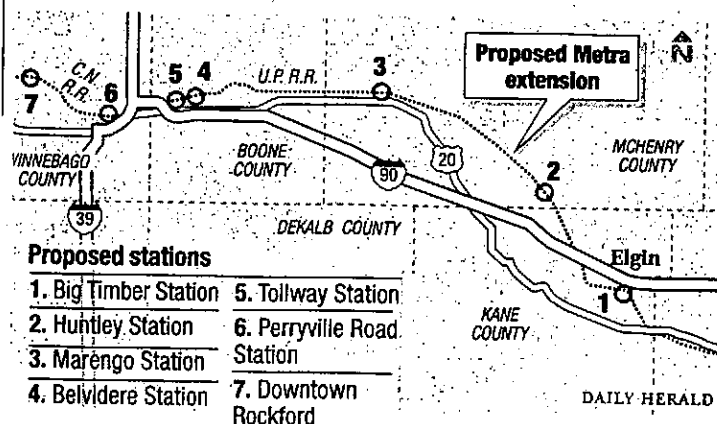
homes in the Rock River valley to their jobs in the Northwest suburbs or downtown Chicago.

"A lot of the growth that we're seeing there is from people that are commuting into the collar counties (especially to Elgin and the Hanover Park-Streamwood area)," said Jim Ryan, Rockford's point man in the rail initiative. "We need another option other than I-90."

The proposal is at the beginning of a process that could take perhaps a decade or more before the first train rolls west.

Nor is Metra necessarily eager to be an object of the cities'

See **METRA** on **PAGE 15**



# Metra: Officials seek an alternative to I-90

Continued from Page 1

affections. "At some point down the road, we would certainly be willing to talk to people and look at it," Metra spokeswoman Judy Pardonnet said Wednesday.

Metra's immediate expansion plans, like the STAR Line from O'Hare to Hoffman Estates and Joliet, won't go beyond the six-county Chicago area, she added.

"We're willing to look at anything to expand our system, but at this time, it's really just a concept," Pardonnet said.

That wait-and-see attitude isn't deterring the rail initiative group, however.

A \$200,000 feasibility study commissioned by the group said operating Metra trains from the Milwaukee District West Line's Big Timber Road terminal to Rockford via the Union Pacific and Canadian National railroads would cost between \$3.3 million and \$9.8 million per year.

The study by TransSystems Corp., released just before Thanksgiving, also said \$88 million will be needed to upgrade tracks, signals and bridges and build new stations along the 55½-mile route.

The study recommends seeking federal funding to help pay for more in-depth studies, and eventually cover the bulk of those costs.

As for ongoing operating expenses, the study suggests Boone and Winnebago counties either:

- Join the Regional Transportation Authority and charge the same 0.25 percent sales tax paid by residents of DuPage, McHenry, Lake, Kane and Will counties.

- Create their own transit district and contract with Metra for commuter rail service.

RTA spokesman Scott McPherson said extending Metra service to Belvidere and Rockford, and adding Boone and Winnebago counties to the RTA — which would require legislative approval — should both

be studied, thanks to the Chicago area's growth patterns.

"It would seem to be the natural extension of what is going on now," he said.

The idea makes sense for both suburb-to-suburb service along the Northwest Tollway corridor and for those taking the traditional commute to downtown Chicago, he added.

"We're in the transit business, trying to move as many people as cheaply and efficiently as we can. And if it makes sense, we should look at expanding service along those lines," McPherson said.

Belvidere Mayor Frederic Brereton said rail service will be required as more people move from the suburbs to his community. The 2000 census showed Belvidere's population grew to 20,820 from 17,722 in 1995.

While there's no way to determine how many of those new residents came from the suburbs, Brereton said rush hour provides all the anecdotal evidence he needs.

"The best gauge is the stream of traffic getting onto I-90 from 5 o'clock to 8 o'clock in the morning," he said. "And obviously the reverse is true from 4 o'clock to 6 o'clock (in the evening)."

Moreover, Belvidere and Boone County officials are trying to get the county a second tollway interchange near the proposed Metra line to concentrate new residential and commercial growth there.

That kind of transit-oriented development is the best way to ease congestion and control suburban sprawl, said John Norquist, president of the Chicago-based Congress for the New Urbanism and former mayor of Milwaukee.

Even though the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority plans to expand the Northwest Tollway from six lanes to eight, "there's no way they're going to build enough highways to solve the problem, and actually ... the more you expand it, the more

problems you create," Norquist said.

The more choices commuters have, the better off everyone becomes, he added.

Rockford officials hope Metra service would boost the city's growing east side and help revive its downtown, which hasn't had passenger rail service since 1982, when Amtrak aban-

doned the city.

"It is the second largest city in Illinois, and it's kind of ridiculous that it's not connected to Chicago by train," Norquist said.

The Northern Illinois Commuter Rail Initiative isn't the only group outside the Chicago area seeking Metra service.

The Southeastern Wisconsin Coalition for Transit Now wants

to extend Metra's Union Pacific North Line from Kenosha, Wis., north to Racine and Milwaukee.

Preliminary engineering and environmental impact studies are expected to begin next year, and service could begin as early as 2008, said Kerry Thomas, the coalition's spokeswoman.

We're willing to look at anything to expand our system, but at this time, it's really just a concept."

Judy Pardonnet,  
Metra spokeswoman

12-3-04 Beacon News

# Hearings on judicial districts begin

**Forum planned in Aurora: Hometown candidates could have a better chance**

**By Mike Cetera**  
STAFF WRITER

**AURORA** — Think judges should be forced to live in a particular community?

Some lawmakers are exploring local judicial boundaries that would accomplish just such a thing.

They say drawing a map akin to ward or

legislative boundaries would give cities like Aurora a better shot at having more hometown judges on the bench and could encourage racial diversity.

Critics say the push is a partisan effort designed only to ensure Democrats get elected in traditionally Republican areas.

Lawmakers have begun a series of public hearings on the matter in five counties, concluding next Thursday with a hearing at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy in Aurora.

The General Assembly previously approved judicial "subcircuits" for three of the

counties — Lake, McHenry and Will — while lawmakers say hearings in Winnebago and Kane counties are a prelude to legislation.

State Rep. John Fritchey, the chairman of one of the investigating committees, said subcircuits are a way to ensure geographic diversity on the bench, but acknowledged the push has partisan undertones.

"It would be disingenuous (to say) that politics is wholly unrelated to this matter," said Fritchey, a Chicago Democrat.

All 15 circuit judges in the 16th Judicial Circuit — which includes DeKalb, Kane and

Kendall counties — are Republican. The GOP is so dominant throughout the circuit that Democrats rarely slate candidates for judicial elections.

But by dividing the three-county district into smaller areas, Democrat-friendly communities — the East Side of Aurora, for example — could elect a judge all on their own.

State Rep. Linda Chapa LaVia, D-Aurora, said she doesn't buy the partisan argument, and added she hasn't committed to supporting local subcircuits (she voted in favor of

❖ **Turn to HEARINGS, A2**

## HEARINGS

From page A1

enacting subcircuits elsewhere).

Chapa LaVia said the Aurora forum will be held to allow stakeholders a chance to weigh in on the issue and give input on where boundary lines should be drawn.

"The Democrats simply want more Democratic judges," state Sen. Ed Petka said. "No ifs, ands and buts. I can say that with 100 percent certainty."

Petka, R-Plainfield, views the plan as payback by Democrats for the bipartisan effort to create subcircuits in Cook County more than a decade ago. Lawmakers hoped the 1991 plan to divide Cook County into 15 subcircuits for election would help put more African Americans, Hispanics and Republicans on the bench.

## Judicial hearing

■ A hearing on judicial subcircuits is scheduled for 4 to 5:30 p.m. Thursday at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, 1500 W. Sullivan Road, Aurora.

Petka said GOP committee members were given late notice of the forums and have seen no legislation proposing maps. Maps haven't been approved even in the three counties where subcircuits were authorized.

A spokesman for House Speaker Michael Madigan, D-Chicago, said legislation creating the smaller districts in Kane County and elsewhere hasn't been proposed. Spokesman Steve Brown said he wouldn't speculate if the General Assembly would take up the issue during the final days of the veto session in January.

# IDNR: 50 deer harvested in Kane

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

The results are in from Kane County's first gun deer hunting season just as the second is under way.

The first season was from Nov. 19-21 and allowed hunters to shoot deer in Kane County for the first time, although bow deer hunting has been allowed for many years.

Gayle Simpson, Illinois Department of Natural Resources spokeswoman, said 50 deer were harvested in the county. The second season began Thursday and will run through Sunday. Once again, the area west of Route

47 is included in the hunt.

Statewide, the first season harvested 72,137 deer, according to IDNR. This marks a 12 percent increase from the 64,181 shot in the first season of 2003.

"There's definitely a positive feeling so far about the deer season, as the harvest is better than it was last year," Simpson said.

Although hunters with proper permits will be allowed to shoot in the county, no firearm deer check stations will be in Kane County. Successful hunters must check their deer at a station in the closest adjacent county: Sportsman Choice in

## What's next?

- The decisions about whether to put a check station in the county and to continue firearm hunting will be made after the results return from the current season. Those tallies are expected within three weeks.

Woodstock in McHenry County, Shabbona State Park in DeKalb County and Silver Springs State Park in Kendall County.

The decisions about whether to put a check station in the county and to continue firearm hunting will be made after the results return

from the current season. Those tallies are expected within three weeks.

"They would be looking at the total number together before making a decision next year," Simpson said.

Hunting is not allowed in any forest preserve, a forest preserve spokesman said. Because Kane County has no designated public hunting areas, hunting only will be allowed on private grounds with the permission of the owner.

Unless specific permission is given by the owner to move closer, hunters must stay at least 300 yards from any occupied dwelling.

# Cleanup of lead to start Gilberts project set for next week

By Richard Wronski  
Tribune staff reporter

The long-awaited \$1.4 million cleanup of hazardous lead from a former dump site in Kane County is expected to begin next week.

Heavy equipment and dump trucks will start removing about 15,000 tons of contaminated soil from the former McNew Salvage Yard in Gilberts, said Mike Ribordy, on-scene coordinator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Federal Superfund cleanup money has been earmarked for the project, which is to start Monday.

Illinois environmental officials became aware of the site's contamination after a fire in October 2003. Acrid smoke forced evacuation of about 25 homes in Gilberts.

Workers have cleared brush from the 4-acre tract between



Tribune photo by George Thompson

The federal EPA is using Superfund money to clean up a lead-contaminated 4-acre site in Kane County. Officials said the lead came from a battery-recycling operation 30 years ago.

Galligan Road and the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad tracks in preparation for removing soil about three feet deep.

Ribordy said officials will create an access road for dump trucks off Galligan Road, a county highway, rather than use village streets.

Up to 750 trucks may be needed to haul away soil after it has been chemically treated on site to allow it to be safely handled. The work is expected to be done by February.

Lead is dangerous if ingested. High levels can cause damage to the brain and nervous system. Children and pregnant women face elevated risks.

EPA officials said the lead came from a battery-cracking operation about 30 years ago. Thousands of lead-acid batteries were broken open so the lead plates could be removed for recycling. The acid and battery casings were left.

Tests conducted last spring showed that many spots had

lead levels of 10,000 parts per million and one spot registered 226,000 parts per million. The EPA's hazard standard for lead in soil is 1,200 parts per million.

Illinois Atty. Gen. Lisa Madigan and Kane County filed suit March 9 against Glenn Kedzie of Algonquin and Ray L. McNew Sr., formerly of Genoa and now a Florida resident. Kedzie, who acquired the property in 2002 for a landscaping business, said he was unaware it was contaminated.

12-3-04 Beacon News

# Filing starts Monday for municipal elections

BEACON NEWS STAFF

Let the filing begin.

Candidates for city office in several area communities have been circulating election petitions over the past few weeks, and will begin filing the petitions on Monday.

In past years, the Aurora Election Commission has kept a list of names of people who have taken out petitions, giving an early indication of who might be running for office. That is no longer the practice, however, as potential candidates are now directed to the state election Web site to download petitions.

Filing for offices runs through Dec. 13.

In Aurora, in addition to the mayor's race, six of 12 aldermanic seats are up for election, including one of two at-large positions and seats in Wards 2, 4, 7, 9 and 10.

Mayor David Stover will not be seeking re-election. Four Aurorans — Angel Hernandez, Richard Irvin, Tom Weisner

and Bill Wyatt — have been campaigning for more than a year for the position.

To get on the ballot for mayor and at-large alderman, candidates must gather 434 signatures. Candidates in all but the 9th Ward must have 62 signatures, and 9th Ward candidates require 37. The number of signatures is based on the vote totals in the last election affecting each of the seats.

All but the 9th Ward were last up for election four years ago. Ninth Ward Alderman Leroy Keith was elected to a two-year term in 2003. All the positions this time are for four years.

A primary election will be held Feb. 22 for races with more than two candidates. The general election will follow on April 5.

Other area communities where filing takes place this week include Batavia (established party candidates only), Montgomery, Naperville and North Aurora.

Filing for other local government offices throughout the Fox Valley will be

Jan. 17 through 25.

In Montgomery, the positions of village president, village clerk and three trustee spots will be on the ballot. If more than six candidates file for one office, a primary election will be held on Feb. 22.

Montgomery Village President Marilyn Michelini has announced she will seek re-election, while North Aurora Village President Mark Ruby said he will not run for another term.

In North Aurora, the village president, clerk and three trustee spots will be elected.

Because of the way Batavia's elections are structured, some petitions may be filed this month, while others will be filed in January.

Candidates can file as an established party candidate, a new political party candidate or an independent candidate. Those who file as established party candidates must run in the consolidated primary in February and must file their petition between Monday and Dec. 13.

Independent and new party candidates file Jan. 17 to 25 for the April general election.

Traditionally, said Batavia City Clerk Hannah Volk, the candidates run as independents. There is a good reason for that, she said.

"Some (candidates) don't want to get into the partisan bickering. They just want to talk about issues."

In Batavia, seven four-year council seats — one in each ward — and two two-year council seats — in the 1st and 5th wards — will be up for election. The mayor, city clerk and city treasurer positions also will be on the ballot.

Jeff Schielke, who has served as Batavia mayor for more than 20 years, has not announced if he will seek re-election.

"I really haven't decided yet," he said, while confirming that an announcement would be at least a month away. "Historically, it's something I've waited to do until after the holidays."

## Outgoing Weigand offers some advice

I would like to congratulate the new members of the Kane County Board and share with them some thoughts and observations as I leave the board.

I could write on many issues, but there is one they will act on immediately: the new county jail. Of all the issues before them, this one will bear the greatest financial consequence to the taxpayers and county government.

The county board hired a consultant for a study of future jail capacities. The most current study's findings were in line with the population projections of past studies. In 2005, we should have jail capacity of 850 to 988 beds. By 2010, jail capacity should be 1,200 beds.

The county's response to the study?

A 740-bed jail was proposed and then later discarded for a new 609-bed option.

This is what the Kane County Board will be asked to approve in January — a jail 50 percent undersized when ground is broken. It will need to be doubled in size within a year of opening. The average daily population of the jail was already 637 in 2002.

This capacity shortfall most likely will mean we will have to

continue operating the existing jail and, therefore, bear the financial consequence of supporting two separate facilities.

If we were to follow the National Institute of Corrections procedures as we have claimed, the last item that should have been considered is setting jail capacity. Unfortunately, the county chose to set capacity first, without taking any study, diversion programs or documented facts into consideration. Rest assured, any future studies will somehow make the numbers support jail size conclusions reached long ago.

Many financing schemes have been announced for the proposed \$47 million jail. If one adds in things left out, such as infrastructure, parking and other requirements as well as other non requirements such as a new sheriff's department administration building at the judicial center, the tab will be closer to \$74 million.

Given that this was to be a "no tax increase" jail project, where will the extra \$27 million come from?

We could strip the cash reserves, but doing so also would strip the road transportation budget now being supplemented by those reserves.

One of the few ways we could make up for those jail-depleted road funds would be to increase the county gas tax — hardly a

popular plan.

Likewise, if we take money from the Grand Victoria Casino Riverboat funds, we end up cutting money for the Child Advocacy Center, domestic violence, drug prosecution, drug court, Kane Cares and other programs.

Jail plans we have. What we still don't have is a way to pay for those plans. At this point, there should be concrete information about what programs will be cut, what budgets will be slashed, how much will be saved and who, if anyone, will be fired. There are other facts to consider as well.

The Landfill Enterprise Fund used for capital projects ends in 2006. How will we make up that shortfall? Similarly, the Public Building Commission is no longer a viable funding source for county building repairs and improvements. Where will the money come from?

Also, the 2001 motor fuel tax bond funds will be spent by the end of FY 2005, necessitating a plan for funding future road improvements. What will the changes in the property tax cap mean to the entire county and future budgets?

Because it is significantly cheaper for us to outpace prisoners at McHenry County, our current outplacement budget will not fund the added costs to house the prisoners in Kane

County. Where will that additional funding come from? And so on, and so on.

Perhaps the best advice county leadership could follow comes from the book "The 48 Laws of Power" by Robert Greene and Joost Elffers.

Borrowing on lessons gleaned from the successes and failure of our predecessors over centuries of leadership and governance, Law 29 — Plan All the Way to the End — seems particularly prescient: "The ending is everything. Plan all the way to it, taking into account all the possible consequences, obstacles and twists of fortune that might

reverse your hard work and give the glory to others. By planning to the end, you will not be overwhelmed by circumstances and you will know when to stop. Gently guide fortune and help determine the future by thinking far ahead."

In this case, planning to the end and doing justice to the future means knowing how we will pay for the jail — before we build it. So far, that hasn't happened. Please make sure it does for the benefit of all taxpayers.

Douglas Weigand  
District 10  
Kane County Board  
Chairman  
Finance Committee  
Past Chairman  
Corrections Committee  
Batavia



12-3-04 Daily Herald

# Campton leader honored for preservation efforts

Neal Anderson has spent the last decade trying to maintain the rural character of Campton Township. The township supervisor was one of two local leaders recognized this week for their preservation efforts with the Fox Valley Land Foundation's 2004 Conservation Hero Award.

On the township board since 1993, Anderson was elected supervisor in 2001 — the same year voters approved funding the \$18 million open space plan Anderson helped craft.

With Anderson's help, the township has helped preserve more than 700 acres, including the 220-acre Corron Farm and 240-acre Headwaters conservation area.

Corron Farm and the township's Town Hall Community Center, both on Kane County's

register of historic places, make the township the largest owner of historic properties in the county.

Plans for Headwaters include a park with picnic shelter, park trails, dog exercise area and sledding hill.

Anderson also serves on the board of the Kane-DuPage Soil and Water Conservation District and operates Luau Coffee Shop in Wasco.

Also honored at Thursday's reception was Dundee Township Supervisor Sue Harney. Fox Valley Land Foundation is

a private, nonprofit organization formed to protect open land in and around Kane County.

**Bling-bling:** Residents of Wayne — including those of the equine variety — live in the ninth-most affluent community in the Chicago area, moving up the rankings in the annual list published by Crain's Chicago Business this week. The median income of Wayne's 2,689 residents is \$127,586 and the median home value is \$467,213. The publication ranks local communities by ZIP code; Wayne's 60184 ZIP code was ranked 18th last year.

The portions of St. Charles and Campton townships sharing the 60175 ZIP code came in at No. 16, with a median household income of \$115,794 and a

median home value of \$356,369. The area west of Randall Road and north of Crane Road includes 21,461 residents.

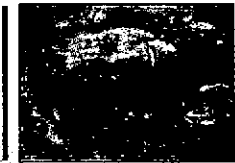
Those two communities were the only Kane County areas included in the list, except small portions of the Barrington communities that stretch across the Cook County border. Kenilworth, on the North Shore, again topped the list with a median household income of \$236,648 and a median home value of almost \$1.1 million.

**That's a lot of popcorn:** Bell-Graham Elementary School student Taylor Nunnery recently was recognized for selling the most popcorn of 38,000 local Boy Scouts. The fourth-grader, a member of Pack 801, sold \$5,700 worth of popcorn tins.

and microwave popcorn kernels during a fall fund-raiser. It was a close contest; sales of the second place finisher in the St. Charles-based Three Fires Council — which comprises Kane, DuPage, Kendall, DeKalb and parts of Will and Cook counties — totaled \$5,500, said Wayne Pancoast, the council's director of development and marketing.

Seventy percent of the popcorn purchase price benefits local Scouts. Popcorn maker Trail's End provides scholarships for Taylor and other Scouts who reach \$2,000 in sales.

• Lisa Smith covers St. Charles, Wayne and Campton Township. To contact her, call (630) 587-8626 or send e-mail to [lasmith@dailyherald.com](mailto:lasmith@dailyherald.com).



Lisa Smith  
St. Charles

12-3-04 Daily Herald

# County clerk still mulling Aurora mayoral bid

With a poll suggesting he could be competitive, Kane County Clerk Jack Cunningham says he's thinking of entering the race for Aurora mayor.

"I'm pondering," he said this week in his office, where he has headed the clerk's office for the last two years.



Patrick Waldron  
Kane County

The decision is whether to enter the crowded field, composed of Tom Weisner, Richard Irvin, Bill Wyatt and Angel Hernandez, less than three months before a February primary.

His interest in the race, besides deep roots in the city, has been bolstered by a poll he commissioned in early November that shows him winning a five-way contest.

According to the poll, conducted between Nov. 3 and 5, Cunningham led the pack with 16.7 percent of respondents saying they would vote for him for mayor. That's compared to 12 percent for Weisner, a former Aurora city department head; 14.7 percent for Irvin, a local attorney; and 10 percent for Wyatt, a county board member. Hernandez came in with 2.7 percent, with 44 percent undecided.

The poll, administered by Westmont-based McCulloch Research and Polling, was a survey of 300 registered voters. It had a margin of error of 4.2 percent.

If he ran and was elected mayor, Cunningham would have to give up his office this spring, two years before his first term expires. That's the point that has him preparing to enter the political fight but debating whether he should stay out.

"People have been after me for a long time asking me if I'd be running," he said. "But that's the hard part. I really enjoy this job."

Cunningham said he feels a sense of loyalty to the clerk's office staff and takes pride in the accomplishments so far in his term, including an overhaul of the tax extension system, updates of the voter registration system and ongoing efforts to get vital records imaged.

He dismisses any notion that recent stumbles by the office connected to the Nov. 2 election, notably the disputed results to the broadband referendum in St. Charles, have him looking for a new office.

To get on the ballot, for what would be Cunningham's third try for the mayor's office, nominating petitions are due by Dec. 13.

He's already gathering signatures and expect a decision in a matter of days.

**Need not apply:** Builders and utility company representatives have been lining up lately to ask Kane County Forest Preserve District officials for land to run wires, pipes and all the other infrastructure that makes things work.

They are called easements and are the topics of the most routine and frequent public-private deals made.

But as the forest preserve takes over more land, and private entities continue to try to build near that land, things are getting crossed over.

Every month forest preserve commissioners are listening to requests for new easements.

Most go smoothly, but some — such as Nicor Gas' request to run a line under the Prairie Path in Virgil — cause trouble.

Now the district is coming up with a universal easement request form that adds some bureaucracy to the process but simplifies it for the policy-makers.

The goal is to put those

See WALDRON on PAGE 3

## Waldron: County board changeover is Monday

Continued from Page 1

policy-makers in a better position to get more money or other concessions in exchange for taxpayer land.

**Raise your hand:** Karen McConaughay and 13 county board members will take their

oath of office at 8:30 a.m. Monday to mark the start of a new term in county government.

With the simple ceremony at the county government center in Geneva, McConaughay, a St. Charles Republican, will officially succeed outgoing county board chairman Mike

McCoy, an Aurora Republican.

Among the board members taking office, seven are freshman members of the panel.

• Patrick Waldron covers Kane County government and politics. To contact him, call (630) 587-8632 or send e-mail to [pwaldron@dailyherald.com](mailto:pwaldron@dailyherald.com).

# Officials push to widen Route 47

12-3-04 Chronicle

Traffic congestion  
is main concern

By KELLEY CASINO  
Kane County Chronicle

SUGAR GROVE — Regional officials want changes made to Route 47 sooner rather than later.

Letters from Yorkville city officials are circulating throughout Kane,

Kendall and Grundy counties asking governing bodies to approve resolutions that support the widening of Route 47 from Interstate 88 to Interstate 80.

"We're just working together. We feel that a couple squeaky wheels is better than going it alone," Sugar Grove President Sean Michels said.

"We're all trying to get the state's attention because we see a need for it right now and not 10 years from now."

The initial resolution, adopted by Yorkville in late October, states that

Route 47 is a local, regional, interstate and intrastate route that must be widened from two lanes as the region expands.

Congestion causes public safety issues, according to the resolution, and it is imperative to economic development in the region to keep traffic moving up and down the state route.

Yorkville Mayor Art Prochaska said Sugar Grove, Yorkville, Plano, Kendall County, the Yorkville Economic Development Corp. and the Yorkville

Area Chamber of Commerce all have

supported the initiative.

"I know it keeps getting overlooked, and at some point it just can't be anymore," he said. "I think the louder the voices are ... the better the chance we have of getting this put on the front fire."

Yorkville officials also have sent letters to the Illinois Department of Transportation and elected officials, including state Sen. Chris Lauzen, R-

Aurora, U.S. House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Plano; and state Rep. Patricia Reid Lindner, R-Sugar Grove.

IDOT is completing Phase 1 engineering for a portion of Route 47 south of Route 71 and has begun Phase 2 engineering on the same section.

Michels, however, said he does not believe expansive widening is part of IDOT's 10-year plan.

"Route 47 is so busy now we're starting to get nervous about what's going to happen when they finally tear it up to do the improvements," Prochaska said. "And the longer we wait, the more of a problem it's going to be."

# Cancer ends police dog's career, but treatments offer hope



Cpt. Bill Shreffler and his partner, Tess, before the dog became sick with a cancerous tumor and had to retire.

BY CHRISTY GUTOWSKI  
*Daily Herald Legal Affairs Writer*

This canine crusader has sniffed out drugs, brought closure to worried families awaiting word on missing loved ones, and endeared herself to thousands of children at suburban parades and fests.

But after eight years of

taking a bite out of crime, Tess' career has come to an abrupt end.

The affable German shepherd has an aggressive form of cancer that most likely will kill her. Sheriff's officials promptly retired Tess, and her handler, DuPage sheriff's Cpt. Bill Shreffler, assumed full responsibility for her continu-

ing care. Tess may live another six months if she undergoes a series of chemotherapy sessions. She completed her first of five treatments this week.

After learning Shreffler was paying \$1,500 for the dog's treatment, West Chicago citizens group 4 the People began raising money for Tess

and future canine crusaders like her who don't retire with a pension.

After all, they say, man's best friend deserves nothing less.

"This animal has brought so much goodwill to the community," said Robert Winkler, a 4 the People director, "if we

find out there's no hope, then there's no hope, but we have to try everything we can. We owe her that much."

## Sniffing out suspects

A Winfield family donated Tess to the sheriff's department.

See CANINE on PAGE 15

# Canine: Handler getting help with treatment costs

Continued from Page 1

ment in 1997 when she was just 12 weeks old.

She quickly endeared herself to Shreffler. "There's such a bond there. She's like family," he said.

Tess served dual functions; she was trained in both narcotic detection and the recovery of human remains.

Her keen sense of smell netted the sheriff's department an estimated \$150,000 in drug forfeiture funds. Her other talent also has helped solve murders, including one of Chicago's grisliest crimes, and helped earn her a reputation with the FBI.

A few years ago, Tess found the remains of missing flight attendant Traci Todd's dismembered body off a path in thick underbrush in the Beaubien Forest Preserve on Chicago's Far South Side. Todd had been

was a bit distended."

He took his partner to an emergency veterinarian. Doctors discovered Tess had a four-pound tumor attached to her kidney. She underwent emergency surgery Nov. 5 to remove both.

Then, on Nov. 16, Shreffler learned the tumor was cancerous. Doctors advised the sheriff's deputy the cancerous cells may have spread. The prognosis was not hopeful.

They prescribed five treatments of chemotherapy, which most likely would extend Tess' life just another six months. The cost was \$1,500, and Shreffler submitted a claim to the sheriff's department.

"My partner is sick," he said. "I just want to make her happy and comfortable and take care of her as long as I can. I owe that to her."

The claim was denied by Sheriff John Zaruba.

## Retirement

Shreffler took over full responsibilities for Tess — including her medical bills. Members of 4 the People immediately began soliciting funds for Tess. They're holding out hope that the ailing pooch will recover.

Zaruba, however, said it's his understanding that there's no hope. If there was, he says, he'd insist the department continue paying for her medical care. Any continued treatment would only cause Tess needless pain and suffering. So, he retired the dog.

"If any of our dogs get sick, we've spent thousands of dollars over the years to pay for their recovery," said Zaruba, himself a dog owner. "We don't get rid of dogs just because they're sick. They're deputies. They're part of the family."

"It was a very difficult deci-

sion, but the point is, you're putting the dog through a lot of unnecessary pain for something that's inevitable."

Nonetheless, Zaruba wrote a personal check Wednesday toward 4 the People's fund-raising efforts for Tess. He declined to reveal the amount. He also has set up a fund through his citizens police academy alumni association to help defray medical costs for future retired dogs who become ill.

"I feel bad," he said. "It's very emotional. But I don't know what other decision I could have made. ... Why have the dog suffer?"

It's Shreffler's hope that Tess will be well enough for at least one more public appearance. He hopes to bring her around some children's hospitals to cheer up patients. Shreffler said he thinks it'll do Tess a lot of good, too.

"I love her with all of my heart," he said with emotion. "And I'm going to miss her. She's been a phenomenal partner ... and friend."

## Hope for Tess

Some say the issue is larger than Tess.

Unlike their handlers, police dogs don't have continued medical benefits after retirement. Their handlers, as private pet



Illinois Department of Transportation

## PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING NOTICE

### PRAIRIE PARKWAY PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING STUDY

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) will hold two public information meetings on the status of the Prairie Parkway Preliminary Engineering Study that is evaluating the need for future transportation improvements in northeastern Illinois.

IDOT has scheduled two public information meetings on December 8 and 9 to present the transportation improvement concepts received during the June public workshops, and various stakeholder and local officials meetings. IDOT will describe its process for evaluating the concepts and explain the federal scoping process, which is the beginning of the environmental review process. An initial step in the scoping process is to define the purpose and need for transportation improvements in the study area. The public will have the opportunity to comment on the various improvement concepts, the evaluation process and the draft purpose and need.

The two public information meetings will be held at:

Date: Wednesday, December 8, 2004 Thursday, December 9, 2004  
Time: 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.  
Location: Kandand South Elementary School White Oak Elementary School  
85 West Main Street 2001 Dupont Avenue  
Sugar Grove, Illinois Morris, Illinois

\*Question & answer session at 6:30 p.m. each night

The public is invited and encouraged to attend at any time during the public information meetings. During the open house, the public will listen to a presentation, review exhibits and discuss the study with representatives from IDOT. A question and answer session with IDOT representatives will start at 6:30 p.m. each night.

Both meeting sites are accessible to persons with disabilities. Persons planning to attend the meeting needing a sign language interpreter or other special accommodations should notify the District Office three days prior to the meeting by telephone at 815-434-8435, or by Teletypewriter (TTY) at 815-434-6154.

For more information contact:  
the Illinois Department of Transportation  
700 East Morris Drive • Ottawa, Illinois 61350  
Telephone 815-434-8435

Is your child celebrating a birthday?

Wish them a Happy Birthday in  
the Neighbors Birthday Club!

Chronicle

12-3-04 Chronicle

## NOTICE OF PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX INCREASE FOR CAMPTON TOWNSHIP

I. A public hearing to approve a proposed property tax levy increase for Town of Campton for 2004 will be held on December 14, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. at Campton Community Center, 5N082 Old LaFox, St. Charles, Illinois 60175.

Any person desiring to appear at the public hearing and present testimony to the taxing district may contact Mr. Neal Anderson, Campton Township Supervisor, 4N498 Town Hall Road, St. Charles, Illinois 60175, 630-377-5705.

II. The corporate and special purpose property taxes extended or abated for 2003 were \$404,282.46.

The proposed corporate and special purpose property taxes to be levied for 2004 are \$435,000.00. This represents a 7.60% percent increase over the previous year.

III. The property taxes extended for debt service and public building commission leases for 2003 were \$0.

The estimated property taxes to be levied for debt service and public building commission leases for 2004 are \$0. This represents a 0 percentage increase over the previous year.

IV. The total property taxes extended or abated for 2003 were \$404,282.46.

The estimated total property taxes to be levied for 2004 are \$435,000.00. This represents a 7.60% percentage increase over the previous year.

## NOTICE OF PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX INCREASE FOR CAMPTON TOWNSHIP ROAD DISTRICT

I. A public hearing to approve a proposed property tax levy increase for Road District of Campton for 2004 will be held on December 14, 2004 at 7:15 p.m. at Campton Community Center, 5N082 Old LaFox, St. Charles, Illinois 60175.

Any person desiring to appear at the public hearing and present testimony to the taxing district may contact Mr. Neal Anderson, Campton Township Supervisor, 4N498 Town Hall Road, St. Charles, Illinois 60175, 630-377-5705.

II. The corporate and special purpose property taxes extended or abated for 2003 were \$1,089,555.55.

The proposed Road Fund and Equipment property taxes to be levied for 2004 are \$1,180,000.00. This represents a 8.30% percent increase over the previous year.

III. The property taxes extended for debt service and public building commission leases for 2003 were \$0.

The estimated property taxes to be levied for debt service and public building commission leases for 2004 are \$0. This represents a 0 percentage increase over the previous year.

IV. The total property taxes extended or abated for 2003 were \$1,089,555.55.

The estimated total property taxes to be levied for 2004 are \$1,180,000.00. This represents a 8.30 % percentage increase over the previous year.

See yourself in Neighbors ... neighbors@kcchronicle.com

# A new way to clear the road

**Products  
with molasses  
help melt ice,  
snow**

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

**T**ime for the snow. Time for the window scrapers and the mukluks. Time to break out the woolies and the rock salt and the molasses.

Molasses? That sugary, syrupy slow stuff?

That's right.

Central Kane County road crews increasingly use molasses-based compounds as weapons in the fight against ice and snow.

Kane County and Campton Township this season will salt their roads with a molasses-treated salt, although the county has been mixing molasses compounds with its salt for years. These products can help public works departments melt road snow at lower temperatures, with less corrosion and run-off and with a much better smell than traditional salt and calcium chloride.

But do not run to your pantry just yet.

"It's not what you're putting on your pancakes," said Gary King, president of Road Solutions Inc. and Correlated Products, which uses de-sugared sugar beet molasses in most of its products.

Agriculture-based liquid de-icers debuted in the mid-1990s, King said. Ice Ban, one of the best-known agricultural de-icers, was introduced in 1997. It is based on corn steep, a liquid left behind from the manufacture of products such as corn starch and ethanol, said Jamie Welch, vice president of operations for Earth Friendly Chemicals Inc. EFC has made Ice Ban since purchasing the patent from the defunct Natural Solutions Inc. in 2002.

Ice Ban products and Road Solution's De-Ice line can be used as de-icers on their own, but more often are sprayed on road salt before the salt is spread. Salt can melt ice and snow when it is as cold as 20 degrees.



Ben Jenkins — Chronicle photo staff

"It smells like we're baking cookies in here!" Highway Commissioner Sam Gallucci said, referring to the smell of molasses in one of Campton Township's winter salt sheds. The township is using a new kind of road salt that is mixed with molasses to improve its performance and protect the environment.

## Local crews were ready for first snow

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

**A**lthough the first measurable snowfall came earlier than expected, Kane County road crews were ready. Some public works officials even were excited.

"It shakes the gremlins out of the system," said Richard Babica, South Elgin's director of street operations.

The 4-inch snowfall the day before Thanksgiving served as a trial run for the county road crews, most of which had been prepared weeks ahead of time.

"We've been getting our plows in order since August," said Elburn Superintendent of Public Works Art Sanchez.

Others barely made it. Blackberry Township Highway Commissioner Rodney Feece said that the second half of the road salt ordered for the season did not arrive until Nov. 23, the day before the snow.

### Clearing Kane County's roads

Road miles given in lane miles, which means each lane counted as one mile; all budgets approximate; salt trucks also equipped with plows.

**Geneva**  
Miles of roadway: 204  
Budget: \$265,000  
Fleet: 11 salt trucks, 10 1-ton plow trucks  
Staff: 24

**St. Charles**  
Miles of roadway: 350  
Budget: \$400,000  
Fleet: 17 salt trucks, 8 plow trucks  
Staff: 32 full-time, 8 as needed

**Batavia**  
Miles of roadway: 240  
Budget: \$65,000 to \$75,000 for materials, labor under public works budget  
Fleet: 9 salt trucks, 4 plow

trucks available as needed  
Staff: 20

**Elburn**  
Miles of roadway: 60  
Budget: \$50,000  
Fleet: 7 salt trucks  
Staff: 5 full-time, 4 as needed

**Sugar Grove**  
Miles of roadway: 104  
Budget: \$85,000  
Fleet: 9 salt trucks, 7 plow trucks  
Staff: 10

**North Aurora**  
Miles of roadway: 60  
Budget: \$35,000 for materials, labor under public works budget, \$30,000 for contractors  
Fleet: 7 dump trucks, 2 pickup trucks (both can spread and plow)  
Staff: 7 full-time, 4 to 5 as needed, plus contractors for cul-de-sacs and some subdivisions

**South Elgin**  
Miles of roadway: 125  
Budget: \$105,000  
Fleet: 8 salt trucks, 2 plow trucks as needed, 6 additional salt trucks as needed  
Staff: 16

**Campton Township**  
Miles of roadway: 123  
Budget: \$160,000 to \$190,000  
Fleet: 9 salt trucks  
Staff: 7 full-time, 4 as needed

**Blackberry Township**  
Miles of roadway: 106  
Budget: \$30,000  
Fleet: 6 salt trucks  
Staff: 3 full-time, 3 as needed

**Kane County**  
Miles of roadway: 720  
Budget: \$1 million  
Fleet: 30 salt trucks  
Staff: 26 full-time, 6 seasonal ("snowbirds")

See MOLASSES, page 2

See SNOW, page 2

# Molasses

Continued from page 1

Salt treated with calcium chloride can go as low as zero degrees. De-Ice and Ice Ban both claim to bring that temperature well into the negatives. The additives also are biodegradable and leave a protective layer on the pavement to help prepare for the next snow.

"It's like the Teflon on an iron skillet," King said.

The creation of the first natural de-icers led to a scramble for newer, better ingredients. It soon was noticed that regular molasses had several ingredients that would make a good de-icer. Scientists looked for ways to extract these ingredients from the molasses or to synthesize them.

"Then someone had the idea, 'let's just test the molasses,'" King said.

Molasses itself worked very well. Todd Bloomer soon patented a de-icer made mainly of de-sugared sugar beet molasses, a byproduct of edible sugar. He marketed it through the now-defunct Mountain Products, before selling the patent.

The Kane County Division of Transportation has used Ice Ban and De-Ice 50 to treat its road salt for the past five years, Assistant Director Bob Skidmore said. This year, all of the 720 lane miles of county road will be covered with ClearLane Treated Salt, a pre-molassed rock salt from Minnesota-based Cargill Salt.

Last year, Campton Township tested ClearLane on about one-third of its arterial roads. Highway Commissioner Sam Gallucci was so impressed with the product that all 123 miles of township road will be salted with ClearLane this winter. Batavia also tested ClearLane and, while it did not make the switch, it will spread last year's leftovers as needed.

ClearLane is a mixture of molasses and magnesium chloride applied to sodium chloride, also known as salt. It is a pre-treated salt, as op-

posed to the earlier de-icers, which are applied to salt. It made its debut on the East Coast in 2001 and has been spread across the country since.

Advocates of ClearLane tout its biodegradability, its lower operating temperature and even its stickiness.

"The small amount of molasses has such a sticking quality that it sticks where it's applied," Cargill spokeswoman Laurie Johnson said.

This means that it will not bounce off the road when it is spread, so trucks need not reapply later.

Another advantage Gallucci saw was that the cane molasses coating on the salt spreads into snow. This will help melt snow in low-traffic areas such as subdivisions. Traditional road salt works better in high-traffic areas, where the large numbers of cars help pack the salt into the snow.

And there is another benefit.

"It smells like molasses cookies," Gallucci said.

It also is expensive. It costs \$10 per ton more than regular road salt.

"For a smaller operation, it probably makes sense," said Jacek Tyszkiewicz, engineer of operations for the Illinois Department of Transportation District 1, which covers McHenry, Lake, Cook, DuPage, Will and Kane counties. "But we buy 145,000 tons of salt. For the cost of putting it on, I don't see that much of a benefit."

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicts about 20 percent less precipitation and average temperatures this winter. This is within the temperature range in which salt treated with calcium chloride will work, leaving many wondering whether ClearLane's pros outweigh its cons.

"The jury's still out on its application," said South Elgin Director of Street Operations Richard Babica. "One of the primary disadvantages is that if a person walks through it, then walks on their clean carpet, they've got molasses on their carpet."

## Snow

Continued from page 1

"We would be 100 percent ready" even without the second half, he said.

Blaise Boscaccy, street foreman for St. Charles, said the snow had not been expected to accumulate on the streets. At approximately 3:40 p.m., he decided to send out the city's 25-truck fleet.

"By 4 o'clock, the trucks were on the road," he said.

Many townships and municipalities expect to handle the winter's snow removal with staff. St. Charles, North Aurora, Elburn, Campton Township and Blackberry Township maintain reserve

lists with people to call should an exceptionally heavy snowfall come. North Aurora also hires contractors to plow cul-de-sacs and certain subdivisions, such as Waterford Oaks and Orchard Estates, said Mike Glock, superintendent of public works.

County roads will be handled by 32 maintainers, six of whom are seasonal employees unofficially known as "snowbirds." The rest are county staff, said Bob Skidmore, assistant director of the Division of Transportation.

The trial run boded well for the county's preparedness.

"All our trucks are loaded, and all our personnel in place," Skidmore said. "We could be out on the road in 30 minutes."

See yourself in Neighbors ...



Tribune photo by George Thompson

County Board Chairwoman Karen McConaughay was not sworn in with board members who took the oath of office Monday.

# Kane chairwoman must wait for post

## Swearing-in pushed back 2 weeks

By William Presecky  
Tribune staff reporter

Monday was supposed to be historic for Karen McConaughay—her first day as chair of the Kane County Board and as the only woman to hold that post.

But history has been put on hold, at least for a couple of weeks.

McConaughay, 47, of St. Charles, played the part of board chairwoman as she met and greeted county staff, officials and well-wishers before and after a swearing-in ceremony at which the 13 board members elected on Nov. 2 took the oath of office.

She won't officially become board chairwoman until Dec. 20.

A minor change in state law that McConaughay said went unnoticed until Friday effectively pre-empted her from being sworn into office with her peers. She is the first elected Kane board chairwoman.

A statutory amendment that took effect in July, presumably to accommodate the counting of provisional ballots, according to McConaughay, pushed back the swearing-in of County Board chairmen to the third Monday in December from the first.

"It was fortuitous that we discovered this change," she said.

"As of today, I'm unemployed," quipped McConaughay, who met later Monday with retiring board Chairman Mike McCoy to map out an interim strategy for the unexpected two-week delay in making the transition.

Except for emergency or time-sensitive matters, McCoy said he does not plan to exercise authority over the next two weeks, with the exception of presiding over a meeting of the board's Executive Committee Wednesday and the monthly board meeting on Dec. 14.

McCoy had largely vacated the premises Friday when he was alerted that his term would be extended.

McConaughay said she will use the added time to "continue the transition" begun last month.

In deference to his successor, McCoy said he will call a special board meeting, "probably for the 20th, or shortly after, for the purpose of [McConaughay] setting her committees."

At ceremonies Monday in the Kane County Government Center in Geneva, Chief Judge Donald Hudson administered the oath of office to six incumbents and seven newcomers to the County Board.



# McConnaughay era delayed by new state law

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — A funny thing has happened to Karen McConnaughay on her way to being sworn in as new Kane County Board Chairman.

She's discovered she still has a couple more weeks to wait.

With everything in place for McConnaughay to be sworn in as chairman Monday, the St. Charles Republican now has discovered that a new state law which went into effect July 30 says she cannot be sworn in until the third Monday in December, which is Dec. 20.



Karen McConnaughay will be sworn in as Kane County Board Chairman on Dec. 20.

McConnaughay said the state's attorney's office discovered the new mandate as it was going over details of Monday's planned swearing-in ceremony.

"We were just getting things organized, doing the paperwork with the state's attorney's office," she said Friday. "I said, 'Well, it's good we discovered this now.'"

One of the reasons the new law requirement might have been overlooked is because it affects only a handful of counties statewide. The law applies only to counties that have a board chairman elected at-large, by county voters as a whole.

In Northern Illinois, that is only Kane, DuPage and Cook counties. But Cook has laws that affect it alone, and, in DuPage, board Chairman Robert Schillerstrom was re-elected unopposed, so his swearing in was a mere detail.

Kane was the only county that had a change in administration affected by the law. According to McConnaughay, the change means current board Chairman Mike McCoy, R-Aurora, will have to serve as chairman for another two weeks.

## Cleaning out office

Friday, McCoy was using what he thought was his last day in office to finish cleaning out his work area. Boxes and remnants of eight years were scattered everywhere.

"Well, I thought this was my last day," McCoy said Friday afternoon, after members of the news media informed him of the situation. "But I can continue to serve for another two weeks, that's no problem. Hey, I can run the place with my eyes closed."

He will preside over one more County Board meeting, on Dec. 14.

Despite the change in Monday's agenda, 16th Circuit Court Chief Judge Donald Hudson did not get his robes pressed for nothing.

Hudson will go ahead with swearing in 13 other County Board members as planned at 8:30 a.m. Monday at the Kane County Board Room, Building A, Government Center, 719 S. Batavia Ave.

## New faces on board

More than half of the board members to be sworn in Monday — seven — are newcomers to the board. They include: Linda Holmes and Bonnie Lee Kunkel, both D-Aurora; Mark Davoust, R-St. Charles; Marlana Fox, D-Elgin; Michael Kenyon, R-South Elgin; Holle Kissane, D-Carpentersville; and Thomas Van Cleave, R-Batavia.

The other six are incumbents who won re-election. They are: Jan Carlson, R-Elburn; Paul Greviskes and Rudy Neuberger, both D-Aurora; Jackie Tredup and Don Wolfe, both R-Elgin; and John Hoscheit, R-St. Charles.

All the County Board members are sworn in as Kane County Forest Preserve District Commissioners at the same time.

## Reason for law

McConnaughay said she has not had time to look into it, but she was "a little curious" about the motivation behind the change in state law.

She said some sources have told her the date was moved back to accommodate the possibility of a delay in counting provisional ballots in the November election. This was the first year provisional ballots were used, in an effort to make sure everyone who thought they were registered to vote got a chance to vote.

Officials were unsure how much of a role provisional ballots would play on election day and how many there would be. Although she will not take the oath Monday morning, McConnaughay said she will be there with a smile on her face.

"I'm excited for the new board members," she said. "I want to be there to welcome them on the board."

# McConnaughay must wait to be sworn in

Chronicle 12/4/84

State law will keep McCoy as county board chairman until Dec. 20

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

While reviewing statutes regarding Monday's county board induction, Chairman-elect Karen McConnaughay discovered something she cannot participate.

An Illinois law that went into effect July 30 requires that some county board chairmen be sworn in on the third Monday in December, not the first Monday as it had been in previous years. The rest of the board will take office Monday as planned. McCon-

naughay must wait until Dec. 20 to take the oath.

That means outgoing Chairman Mike McCoy will remain in the post until that time. McCoy chose not to seek re-election.

The gaffe was discovered early Friday afternoon, McConnaughay said, when she, Kane County State's Attorney

John Barsanti and State's Attorney's Office Civil Division chief Katherine Moran were preparing for the board induction ceremony.

The ceremony is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. Monday, and all the board members were expected to take their oaths of office.

"We were all being very thorough on



McConnaughay



McCoy

the swearing-in process, and that's when we discovered it," McConnaughay said. The "it" they discovered was the state law that moved back the dates of the chairman induction. The change was made to allow for more time to count provisional ballots after an election. It only applies to a few counties, one of which is Kane.

"We just thought it was very good that we were doing our job so well that we caught this," McConnaughay said.

See CHAIRMAN, page 2

## Chairman

Continued from page 1

McCoy, who will remain in office until Monday as the Big Rock village administrator. He said he had not been in contact with McCoy since the election.

McCoy said he had planned to take office Monday as the Big Rock village administrator. He said he had not been in contact with McCoy since the election.

McCoy said he had planned to take office Monday as the Big Rock village administrator. He said he had not been in contact with McCoy since the election.

McCoy said he had planned to take office Monday as the Big Rock village administrator. He said he had not been in contact with McCoy since the election.

McCoy said he had planned to take office Monday as the Big Rock village administrator. He said he had not been in contact with McCoy since the election.

McCoy said he had planned to take office Monday as the Big Rock village administrator. He said he had not been in contact with McCoy since the election.

McCoy said he had planned to take office Monday as the Big Rock village administrator. He said he had not been in contact with McCoy since the election.

business that needs to be taken care of, and we'll go from there."

On Wednesday, McCoy will lead the Executive Committee meeting that will set the agenda for the Dec. 14 meeting. McCoy said he was not prepared to resign until he is sworn in.

While McCoy continues his job with the county, McConnaughay will not have one. Her duties will be filled Monday when Mark Overstreet takes over as official public capacity until "I'm sworn in," she said.

McConnaughay said that her plans for the board and for the county have not been changed by this, but delayed.

McConnaughay's board campaign manager, Gary Blum, agreed.

"It's certainly not the end of the world," Blum said. As McCoy resumes the job he thought was over, the first duty will be to get the county back on its feet.

My duty is to get the county back on its feet. He had planned to clean out the other 5 percent today.

12-7-04  
Chronicle

Getting back to work



Chris Birtz — Chronicle photo staff  
Bonnie Lee Kunkel is congratulated by well-wishers after being sworn in during Monday's ceremony in Geneva for members of the Kane County Board and Forest Preserve District.

# County board begins new era

## Seven members sworn in for the first time

By TOM SCHLUETER  
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Seven of the 13 Kane County board members sworn in Monday morning took the oath of office for the first time amid hugs and congratulations. Friends and family attended the informal ceremony in support of the new members and those who were re-elected. Four of the new board members are Democrats who defeated incumbent Republicans, a development that increased to nine the number of Democrats on the 26-member board. Half of the board's membership is up for election every two years. Even-numbered districts were contested this year.

Kane County Chief Judge Donald Hudson conducted the ceremonies in the county board room.

Karen McConaughay, board chairman-elect, had been scheduled to take the oath of office Monday, but her ceremony was delayed until Dec. 20.

A new provision of the election law calls for the chairman of certain county boards, including Kane, to be sworn in on the third Monday of December. The amendment was inserted in July to allow time to count provisional ballots, which were implemented this year. Democrats who beat Republican incumbents in the Nov. 2 election were Linda Holmes of Aurora in District 2, Bonnie Lee Kunkel of Aurora in District 4,

Marlena Fox of Elgin in District 20 and Hollie Kissane of Carpentersville in District 24.

"I am looking forward to the next four years," Kunkel said. "The trust people put in me is awesome. I will do my best to represent everyone fairly."

With two Republican board members not seeking re-election, and McConaughay of St. Charles running for the chairman post, three new Republicans were sworn in. Thomas Van Cleave of Batavia in District 10, Mark Davoust of St. Charles in District 14 and Michael Kenyon of South Elgin in District 16.



Van Cleave

## Board

Continued from page 1

"It was real fun," Davoust said of the swearing-in ceremony. "I was pleased my wife and son could stand up there with me. I'm looking forward to getting to work."

Incumbents Rudolf Neuberget, D-Aurora; Paul Greviskes, D-Aurora; John Hoscheit, R-St. Charles; Donald Wolfe, R-Elgin; Jackie Fredup, R-Elgin; and Jan Carlson, R-Elgin, also took the oath of office.

VanCleave, who also serves as president of the Batavia school board, said that before the election, he had requested a legal opinion from the Kane County state's attorney's office on his ability to sit on both boards.

VanCleave on Monday said he had not seen the opinion. Assistant State's Attorney Joe Luves declined to comment on whether an opinion was forthcoming.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### What is AEC's purpose?

Why do we have an Aurora Election Commission? The AEC's function is largely duplicated by the Kane and DuPage County boards of elections, except that the level of service provided by the counties is far superior.

Want to find your polling place online? Most Kane County residents can go to the county's Web site, type in their name, and presto, their voter registration information, the name and address of their specific polling place, even a sample ballot appears. Similar information is available to DuPage County residents. Meanwhile, the Aurora Election Commission's Internet presence is almost nonexistent and provides no useful information.

Need to conduct some election-related business in person? The county offices have at least limited evening and weekend hours. The AEC? No way. You have to take off from work to do business there.

All of this is especially frustrating when one realizes that while Aurorans are also residents of Kane or DuPage County, the AEC's jurisdiction supersedes the counties' jurisdiction, meaning we receive a lower level of service than citizens of the communities around us.

When the city is strapped for cash and such an obvious opportunity to

reduce overall costs by merging this function with the county to create economies of scale exists, it makes no sense to increase the election commission's funding to duplicate services available from the county. What does make sense is to merge election responsibilities at the county level and to dissolve the Aurora Election Commission. How do we get that done?

**Steve Solarz**

*Aurora*

### Legislator thanks voters

Thank you so much for voting to reelect me as state representative for the 50th District. I am honored that I was chosen to serve another term. I will continue to keep an open-door policy in my office and invite anyone with questions, comments or concerns to contact me directly. I consider this position an extraordinary opportunity to serve my community and will always treat it as such.

A special thank you to all who helped with my campaign by walking precincts or putting up yard signs. I cannot tell you how much your friendship and support mean to me.

**Patricia Reid Lindner,**

*State Representative,*

**50th District,**

**Assistant Republican Leader**

12-7-04  
Beacon news



**openline**

(630) 801-5421

### COMPLIMENTS

#### Leaving thanks

Many thanks to Gary Mielke, Recycling Coordinator, for helping senior citizens with the disposal of the fall leaves.

**Gume Benavidez, Aurora Township**

*around the mosque*

12-4-04  
Beacon news

12-4-04 Chronicle

## Forest preserve committee says goodbye to two members

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

The Forest Preserve Executive Committee on Friday bid farewell to two members.

The county board seats of former forest preserve President Jack Cook, R-Elgin, and Douglas Weigand, R-Batavia, will be filled Monday by Marlena Fox and Thomas Van Cleave. Fox defeated Cook in last month's elections and Van Cleave defeated Howard Katz to take the seat Weigand vacated. The incoming board members will not necessarily join the committee.

Cook was elected in 1990, taking a seat once held by his father, Orlando E. Cook. The younger Cook served as forest preserve president for eight years. In 2002, he was challenged by the current president, John Hoscheit, R-St. Charles. Cook withdrew his name from consideration, and the county board elected Hoscheit by a 25-0 vote.

"In a period of three to four

years, the demands of the organization changed, and we had to manage the forest preserve more as a business than we had in the past," Hoscheit said.

Most of the changes came after the open space referendum of 1999, over which Cook presided. The \$70 million referendum passed, allowing the forest preserve to acquire thousands of acres of new land.

"I wanted to bring the forest preserve out of the dark ages and into the current century," Cook said. "Up to then, the for-

est preserve was just sitting there."

Weigand was elected in 1992, taking the board seat of former forest preserve President Phil Elfstrom, who retired. Weigand has served on the committee for the last six years. In 2000, he tried to challenge Cook for the forest preserve presidency, but withdrew from consideration when he realized he didn't have the votes. He did not seek re-election to the county board this year.

"Leave on your own terms when you're still getting the job done," he said.

Weigand plans to stay involved with preservation issues, although through private, non-profit organizations such as the Fox Valley Land Foundation. Cook is looking into further involvement with the Coalition of Forest Preserves and the Fox River Ecosystem Partnership.

"I don't consider him to be completely retired from the forest preserve," Hoscheit said of Cook. "I think he'll still be a contributor."



Cook



Weigand

12-6-04 Daily Herald

## *New chief's start means judges get new courtrooms*

Three of Kane County's felony courtrooms will have different judges on the bench today as part of a reshuffling that coincides with the start of Judge Donald Hudson's term as chief judge of the 16th Judicial Circuit.

Hudson says he will move from his third-floor courtroom in the St. Charles Judicial Center downstairs to the bench occupied by Judge Philip DiMarzio, the outgoing chief judge of the circuit, which includes Kendall and DeKalb counties.

DiMarzio, Hudson said, wanted to return to presiding over felony cases and will be back to the bench he vacated at the start of his 2-year term.

"In deference to his seniority, I thought it was appropriate to return him to his courtroom," Hudson said.

Hudson, who often presides over some of the county's most high-profile criminal cases, will continue to oversee some of his old docket while serving as chief judge.

The chief judge is responsible for court administration, probation and other departments, judicial assignments and policy decisions for special programs, such as Kane County's drug court.

Meanwhile, Judges Grant Wegner and Patricia Piper Golden, who also preside over felony cases, will move to different courtrooms on the judicial center's third floor.

Golden will move into the courtroom occupied by Wegner, who will take over in Hudson's old courtroom.

Hudson said Wegner had asked for a bench assignment that would give him oversight of a more variety of cases.

"And obviously, when I was leaving, somebody had to take over my court call," Hudson added.

Judge Timothy Sheldon, also a felony judge, will stay in his current assignment.

# Brother-in-law challenges

## Geneva mayor

BY LESLIE HAGUE  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

12-6-04  
Daily Herald

Geneva Mayor Kevin Burns has his first opponent for April's election, and it hits pretty close to home.

Burns' brother-in-law, Bill Christopher, has announced his intention to run. Christopher insisted his decision to run had nothing to do with the family connection.

"I've devoted my life to serving others, and this is a natural move for me," he said. "Kevin's record and my record should stand on its own."

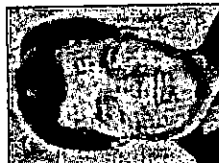
Burns echoed a similar sentiment.

"My pledge is to campaign on the issues," he said. "I'm not going to waste a minute of anybody's time talking about anything else."

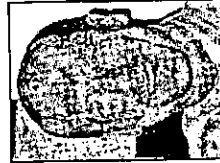
Christopher said he wants to bring a more structured approach to city budgeting and resident complaints.

His plans include adding a biking and jogging bridge over Randall Road, instituting ethical guidelines for all city employees and hiring four new police officers.

Christopher said the city could get the



Kevin Burns



Bill Christopher

## Challenge: Campaign focus will be issues, candidates say

Continued from Page 1

money to hire those new officers from cutting waste but isn't sure exactly where that would be yet.

He's requested three years of budget documents from the city and plans to go over them carefully, he said.

"We'll find a way to add four more police officers," he said.

Burns has said his platform centers on communication with every resident.

He also wants to work to attract development to the city's East Gateway and redevelop the Settlers Hill landfill when it closes.

Burns has been mayor since 2001. Before that, he served as alderman for the city's 1st ward and was a member of Geneva's plan commission and a library board trustee.

Christopher was a member of the Geneva school board from 1995 to 1999. He has coached youth baseball, basketball and soccer in the area.

Christopher graduated from Geneva High School, the University of Notre Dame with a bachelor's degree in economics, and from Northwestern University with an MBA.

He works for Sears Customer Direct as chief of customer care.

He also was a member of the Burns for mayor committee during the last election.

Regardless, Christopher stressed he wanted to run a campaign based on issues, not family politics.

"That may be an issue for the press, but I don't think it will be an issue for the citizens," he said.

Christopher is married to Maureen Christopher, who is the sister of Burns' wife, Terry. Christopher declined to comment on his marital status Sunday, but his Web site says he is a "single parent."

Christopher said he had challenged Burns to three debates, and Burns said he would be open to that. Specific times and dates had not been set.

See CHALLENGE on PAGE 4

# Three file petitions to run for village president

By ERIC SCHELKOPF  
Kane County Chronicle

**NORTH AURORA** — Village Trustees Dale Berman, Mark Guethle and John Hansen on Monday started the race for village president.

The three filed candidate petitions at village hall. Because North Aurora conducts nonpartisan elections, candidates can file their petitions through Dec. 13.

Because more than two candidates seek the post, a primary

will be conducted Feb. 22. The two candidates with the most votes will face off in the April 5 consolidated election.

Because Berman, Guethle and Hansen all filed at the same time, there will be a lottery after Dec. 13 to determine placement on the ballot.

In addition, five people so far are running for the three open village board seats. Incumbent Trustees Max Herwig and Mike Herlihy filed their petitions, along with former village clerk Linda Mitchell, Police

Commission Chairman Mark Gaffino and Michael Savini.

If seven candidates end up running for the three open seats, the candidates also would have to run in February's primary.

Village President Mark Ruby has said he will not seek a third term. Ruby is expected to announce when he will step down at the Dec. 13 village board meeting.

If he steps down before April, the board must appoint an interim village president to fill out the term.

Guethle, first elected in 2003, is wrapping up a two-year term on the village board.

Hansen and Berman have served long stints in North Aurora village government. Berman was village president from 1985 to 1989. Before that, he was a trustee for eight years. He again was elected to the board in April 2003.

Hansen first was appointed to the village board in the 1980s. He has been on the board for 17 years, though not in consecutive terms.



# Report: Health of Fox River deteriorating

12-7-04 Chronicle

*Friends of Fox River director urges immediate action*

By GRANT MILLER  
Shaw News Service

NORTH AURORA — The Fox River's health is deteriorating, and development over the next three decades could speed its decline unless action is taken quickly.

That is according to an annual report by Friends of the Fox River released on Monday. Director David Horn said the river's poor quality affects local economies and public health, but little is done to improve the system.

Horn pointed to a February outbreak of ammonia and coliform bacteria found in Aurora drinking water that forced a

boil order for two weeks. "The boil order resulted in the closure of restaurants and the distribution of bottled water at schools," Horn said. "(An investigation) indicated that the majority of the blame for the boil order could be placed on the deterioration of water quality in the Fox River."

The Fox River stretches about 185 miles from near Waukesha, Wis., south to the Illinois River near Ottawa. About 200,000 Illinois residents rely on the river for drinking water. The Fox River watershed is home to hundreds of animal and plant species, including more than 140 considered threatened or

endangered.

Friends of the Fox River is a nonprofit, citizens group that aims to protect and restore the river and its watershed.

Horn said the river suffers from pollution and farm runoff that raises bacteria levels. The pollution increases algae that hurts the taste and smell of drinking water. Horn also said the river's 15 dams in Illinois diminish plant and aquatic life via lower dissolved oxygen levels.

Horn said the draining of wetlands for development could pose significant problems in the future. He said residential growth could cause more flooding unless action is taken now.

"We can continue to pay for flood relief every time there is a flood or we can pay to restore and protect the watersheds now — either way, taxpayers are going to pay. It's just

a matter of priorities," Horn said.

State agencies must work more closely with local and county officials to address the river's problems, he said. Horn noted that local officials often make decisions that impact communities elsewhere along the river with insufficient oversight.

Horn recommended residents minimize the use of fertilizers and plant deep-rooted, native fauna to improve the river's health.

Although it might seem not seem like much, Horn said such gestures are needed.

"We really need citizens to be watchdogs in their neighborhoods," Horn said. "If that is done collectively throughout the watershed, the entire watershed would be protected."

For information on the Fox River, click on [www.friendsofthefoxriver.org](http://www.friendsofthefoxriver.org).

12-7-04  
Beacon News

# Kane Board members take office

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Seven new Kane County Board members took office Monday, about half of the total of 13 board members sworn in by Chief Judge Donald Hudson in the Board Room here where they will serve.

The ceremony made official what voters decided in November when the board members were elected or re-elected. For new members in particular, it was a day of relief and excitement.

"All the questions have been asked, and now we have some pretty interesting issues to deal with," said new board member Thomas Van Cleave, R-Batavia. "We can have some influence now."

New board member Linda Holmes, D-Aurora, called the swearing-in "sort of an honor."

"It's very gratifying after all the hard work of the campaign," she said. "There is a huge learning curve ahead."

New board member Bonnie Lee Kunkel, D-Aurora, said being on the board comes with "a lot of responsibility. The county has a lot of different facets to it, and I'm trying to get up to speed."

All the new members will get up to speed this week, with a series of orientations by county department heads and some elected officials.

In addition to Van Cleave, Holmes and Kunkel, the other new board members attending those orientations will be Mark Davoust, R-St. Charles; Marlena Fox, D-Elgin; Michael Kenyon, R-South Elgin; and Hollie Kissane, D-Carpentersville.

Board members re-elected who also were sworn in Monday were: Jan Carlson, R-Elburn; John Hoscheit, R-St. Charles; Rudy Neuberger and Paul Greviskes, both D-Aurora; and Jackie Tredup and Don Wolfe, both R-Elgin.

For Carlson, it marked 40 years of continuous service to Kane County, between his time on the board and his years as circuit clerk.

The one board member not sworn in Monday was the new chairman, Karen McConnaughay, R-St. Charles. McConnaughay was set to be sworn with the other board members until last Friday, when she and state's attorney's office members discovered a new state law passed in July that delays by two weeks when the chairman can take office.

So, there will be another two-week transition period before McConnaughay takes office, with former Board Chairman Mike McCoy, R-Aurora, serving an additional two weeks.

While McCoy will take care of necessary business, and preside over this week's Executive Committee and next week's full County Board meetings, one thing he will not do is appoint new committees and committee chairmen.

County Board rules say those new committees and chairmen must be approved by that December board meeting, but McConnaughay said board members will change the rules to fit the situation.

# Future of Bliss Woods up in air

Beacon

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

12/6/04

GENEVA - The future of camping at Kane County's Bliss Woods Forest Preserve is up in the air.

The popular 330-acre campsite along Bliss Road, near Route 47 in Sugar Grove, was closed at the end of October, as it usually is for the season.

But whether it will reopen, and if it does, how it will reopen, still is to be decided, according to Monica Meyers, Forest Preserve executive director.

"Right now, we're looking at all options," Meyers said Friday. "We're in the preliminary stages."

The preliminary stages means forest preserve staff is gathering information about the condition of Bliss Woods, particularly the septic system that has been causing problems at the site for several years.

During the 2003 season, there were complaints about the septic bubbling over after rain storms. The campsite has 40 pads for recreational vehicles, which can hook on to a sewage system that drains to the septic field. The pads also feature hook ups for electric and drinking water.

The Forest Preserve Commission reached a temporary solution in August 2003, by fixing some problems with the septic system and increasing the number of times the tank was pumped out. But that was seen as only a temporary solution.

For the 2004 camping season, officials installed special toilets so there would be facilities at the campsite that did not require the septic field.

Meyers said the district could reopen the campsite next year as it did this year, or it could be open

only to more-primitive camping, meaning only tents. Campers still could use the facilities there but would not hook up to the septic field.

"The question is, can we simply pump that system out, or will it strain it that much further," she said.

## Sugar Grove concern

The village of Sugar Grove wants the site reopened to the kind of camping that has been there in the past. The Village Board recently passed a resolution calling for the site to reopen in 2005. They sent the resolution to the Forest Preserve District.

Village officials see the campsite as economically advantageous to Sugar Grove. Also, they noted the Bliss Woods site is the only campsite in the southwestern part of the county.

Meyers agreed, and said that part of the information gathering will be to see if there is another forest preserve site in the general area where camping could be developed.

Part of Sugar Grove's concern also could be that the Forest Preserve District will transfer camping to the Hannaford Woods/Nickels Farm preserve, next door to Bliss Woods. Neighbors of the preserve, which faces onto Merrill Road, have been worried about having campsites there.

The only other campsites sanctioned by the Forest Preserve District are at Paul Wolff Forest Preserve on Big Timber Road west of Elgin, which has 48 vehicle sites and 18 primitive campsites for tents only, and Buffalo Park, on Route 31 near the county line with McHenry County, which has 54 vehicle sites.

# Surprised McCoy can't leave board yet

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Mike McCoy, the man most people expected to be leaving office as Kane County board chairman first thing Monday morning, may still have some business to take care of after all.

His departure, and the

swearing in of Chairman-elect Karen McConnaughay, have been delayed two weeks thanks to a law approved last summer that moves the installation date back to Dec. 20, the third Monday of the month.

"It was fortuitous that we discovered this change," McConnaughay said in a

written statement issued late Friday announcing the cancellation of her Monday swearing in. "We were working with the state's attorney's office, preparing for the swearing-in ceremony and preparing for the commencement of the new administration when we discovered this statute."

A state law, revised in July 2004, states a county board chairman is to take office on the third Monday of December. That goes against the Kane County ordinance that states the first Monday, and the 2004 State Board of Elections calendar issued last year also points to the first Monday.

Any hint of a change in plans was not apparent Friday morning as a steady line of well-wishers filed into McCoy's largely empty office to bid him goodbye.

Lucked in the county board's office, McCoy's headquarters were decorated with rapidly filling boxes and a desk scattered with items

ready to be tucked away. Late Friday after McConnaughay announced the change, McCoy said he hadn't been told of any postponement of his term's end or even any discussion about it. In fact, by the close of business Friday, McCoy already

See **CHANGE** on PAGE 9



Mike McCoy

F3

## Change: He'll preside at crucial meeting Dec. 14

Continued from Page 1

had left the building, and he said he disconnected his computer and signed the "termination papers" that leave him unemployed Monday.

"I don't know why they did that," he said. "That's fine. I'll work it out. It's not a huge inconvenience to me in any way. Whatever's proper under the statute."

McConnaughay said the 13 newly elected or re-elected board members will take their oaths Monday as previously scheduled and directed under state and county laws.

The installation of a new board and the holdover of McCoy means the outgoing chairman will preside over the Dec. 14 county board meeting. County rules dictate a vice chairman, committee appointments and the forest preserve president are to be selected at that meeting.

Friday's developments put McCoy in a place to select committee members and chairman — with the "concurrence" of the county board. McCoy said if those are the rules, he'll be there. McConnaughay could not be reached for comment late Friday.



Bill  
Page

## Now is the time for McCoy to do absolutely nothing

Talked about all dressed up and no place to go. Karen McConnaughay was a few days away from being sworn in as chairman of the Kane County Board when word came down that basically said, "Not so fast." An almost unnoticed provision in an obscure law held up the party. We all could have had a good laugh if it weren't for the implications that this mess has for county government.

The law that caused the problem went into effect in July. It sets the date for a county board chairman's swearing in as "the third Monday in the month following" the election, which this year is Dec. 20.

However, the same bill states that the board members are to be sworn in on the first Monday of the month after an election, which was this past Monday. In other words, the new board is sworn in two weeks before their new chairman. All of which means an outgoing chairman would have plenty of time for mischief, if that's what they wanted to do.

In the case of Kane County, outgoing Chairman Mike McCoy has two weeks in power that no one bargained for. In addition to presiding over the Dec. 14 board meeting where he could make committee assignments, he has plenty of time to conduct all sorts of county business, including letting contracts.

The right thing for McCoy to do is absolutely nothing. He shouldn't make any changes, approve any contracts or even answer the telephone in the office. On Dec. 14, he should open the county board meeting and close it in the same breath. His time as chairman is over, no matter what some incomprehensible provision of a goofy bit of legislation says. We all trust that McCoy will spend the next two weeks with his feet up on his soon-to-be vacated desk.

\*\*\*  
This week is field trip time for the county board, and the main attraction is the county jail. As hard as it is to believe, there are some members of the board who have served for years without popping by the county clink, so this should be an eye-opener.

The county jail is a rundown mess that needs a face-to-face with the wrecking ball.

Hopefully, the board members will come away understanding the need for a new jail and will reject any idea that the present facility can be added on to or rehabbed.

While they're in the neighborhood, they also should drop in on the offices housing the county's deputies. They should pay particular attention to the conditions in the old youth home, where dozens of deputies work. "Disgraceful" isn't a strong enough word to describe the state of this building. It is about what you'd expect when you take something designed as a jail and try and convert it into offices. Our deputies deserve better than this rat hole, but nothing is going to change without the county board's help.

Here's hoping this tour will help the board get off their collective duffs and make a new jail and new offices for our deputies a reality.

\*\*\*  
The news that Bill Christopher is going to challenge incumbent Kevin Burns in the Geneva mayoral race has raised more than a few eyebrows. Why would Christopher challenge Burns, especially in light of his past support of the mayor, and the family connections? It looks like the answer might have as much to do with a nose out of joint as a desire for public service.

Christopher is married to Burns' sister-in-law, but divorce papers have been served all around, and it appears from filings that this will be a rough court fight. It is not my intention to delve into anyone's personal life. However, it would be naive to believe that the subject won't come up if Christopher does in fact enter the race. It's also naive to think that the strained family ties aren't figuring into Christopher's decision.

It would be best for all involved if Christopher dropped the idea of running for mayor this time around. He's served his community in many ways over the years, and someday he'd make a good choice for mayor. Someday — just not now.

• Bill Page lives in St. Charles and owns mediawerks, a marketing company. He also writes a column on local issues on Tuesday and Thursday. Calls and e-mails answered at (630) 584-0809 wpage@mediawerks.org

# Old felony procedure often irked area police

■ **Changes coming:** Barsanti said he wants to change how county authorizes charges

By Mike Cetera  
STAFF WRITER

12-5-04  
Beacon News

ST. CHARLES TOWNSHIP — When Kane County State's Attorney John Barsanti took office last week, he vowed to change the way the county charges crimes, an announcement hailed by police departments angered by a process they said has bred distrust and contempt.

Some officials privately complained throughout the tenure of former State's Attorney Meg Gorecki that prosecutors demanded too much of investigators before authorizing charges. Local officials contacted said the system required extra unnecessary work, promoted delay to keep caseloads down and allowed potentially dangerous criminals to remain on the streets for longer than was necessary.

In an example cited by several law-enforcement officials, investigators were required in a drug possession case to re-interview a suspect caught with cocaine in his pocket. They were told to inquire about who owned the pants the suspect was wearing.

"If there was a case that was made, I don't need you to go back and find out who owned the pants," Barsanti said on the day he was sworn in. "I don't need that."

Barsanti suspended the felony screening protocol when he took office and put new First Assistant State's Attorney Clint Hull in charge of looking at how other counties' state's attorneys authorize charges. A new system is expected to be announced within 90 days.

Under the Gorecki system, several prosecutors were assigned to do nothing but take calls from police seeking charges. They were instructed to keep a "very high percentage of dismissed or continued" cases to maintain a smaller caseload, an attorney who formerly screened felonies said.

Screeners were required to ask officers a series of questions from a standard multi-page form about the validity of searches and witness credibility, as well as about the physical and circumstantial evidence collected against a suspect.

But mostly, prosecutors were anticipating possible court defenses before authorizing charges, Aurora Police Chief William Lawler said. Such anticipation became the genesis for questions about clothing ownership — prosecutors wanted to make sure a drug defendant didn't claim in court he was wearing someone else's pants.

"It seemed we were doing more and more to get the same felony charges we had obtained in the past; I think that is where the conflict was," said Carpentersville Police Cmdr. Michael Kilbourne.

Police officials said they don't fault a system designed to ensure proper charges are filed against suspects but claim the screening process had become so cumbersome that detectives felt they had to finish investigating a case before seeking charges. Felony screening was not created to have proof beyond a reasonable doubt before charges are filed, Lawler said.



John Barsanti, long-time prosecutor in the Kane County State's Attorney's Office is sworn in as Kane County State's Attorney on Tuesday at noon at the Kane County Criminal Justice Center.

ZACH DOBSON /  
SPECIAL TO THE  
COURIER NEWS

## BARSANTI

From Page A1

"The act of arresting someone by no means concludes the investigation," he said.

Moreover, some departments became wary of the screeners, whom they described as inexperienced, and grew angered that prosecutors often personally interviewed suspects before authorizing charges — sometimes asking questions about police

brutality in front of investigators.

"I understand the impetus behind what they wanted to do, but this system never got accepted in Kane County, and many took offense," Kane County Undersheriff Mike Anderson said.

Aurora Police Cmdr. Michael Fuller said Kane County departments want to see a system developed that encourages police and prosecutors to work together to ensure appropriate charges are filed against suspects.

"There's got to be some trust

there when we say this is what we have," Fuller said.

Barsanti said he plans to work with departments to develop a new system. He also plans to put the felony screeners back into the courtroom.

"I have full confidence that he will be able to carefully listen to all the concerns on all sides of this and will be able to direct his resources," Lawler said.

Staff writer Gloria Carr contributed to this report.

"Our aim:  
To fear God,  
tell the truth  
and make money."

H.C. Paddock  
1852-1935

# Opinion

**Daily Herald Paddock Publications Inc.**  
Founded 1872

DANIEL E. BAUMANN, Chairman/Publisher  
DOUGLAS K. RAY, President/CEO  
ROBERT Y. PADDOCK JR., Vice Chairman/Executive Vice President  
JOHN LAMPINEN, Senior Vice President/Editor  
M. ELLEN BROWN, Managing Editor

## Editorial Board

(847) 427-4300  
David L. Beery  
John Zimmerman  
Chris Bailey  
Jim Baumann  
Amy Mack  
Colin O'Donnell

## Adjunct Edit Board

Jerry Campagna  
Dave Heun  
James Kane  
Jennifer Kester  
Anna Marie Kukac

## Saturday Soapbox

*Some opinions require  
lots of words and  
elaboration. Some don't.  
This is Saturday  
Soapbox, briefly stated  
commentary from the  
Daily Herald's editors.*

### Do what we say, not what we do:

No sooner did the St. Charles Police Department issue a press release warning drivers they could be ticketed for leaving their unattended vehicles running than we saw an unattended sport utility vehicle — keys in the ignition, engine humming — outside department headquarters this week. The vehicle belonged to one of St. Charles' finest, apparently one who didn't get the memo.

### Hypocritical judgments:

One might think that multiple shootings, repeated serious brawls, a failure to feature live music as required, staying open beyond closing time, an underage party and open liquor being allowed out the door might have been enough for the Elgin Liquor Control Commission to shut down Anthony's Restaurant and Jazz Club. Apparently not. Instead, the downtown club will pay a \$5,000 fine and lose its liquor license for a week. But just a couple of weeks ago, at least some council members thought pictures on a Web

site were reason enough to shut down The Mission, which has had few problems requiring police. They must define a public threat differently than we do.

### Electronic degrees:

McHenry County College students can now earn online degrees in science, art or general education. Thanks to newly acquired accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission, MCC earned a seal of approval enabling students to turn those online class offerings into full degrees. Given the hectic lifestyles many of us live, it is great to see a local community college on the cutting edge. Better still, no fear of oversleeping for those 8 a.m. classes.

### Recounting the obvious:

Go ahead. Recount. But with a 145-vote margin between 7,994 "yes" voters and 7,849 "no" voters in Huntley School Dis-

trict's 55-cent education fund tax referendum, the affirmative position is likely to prevail. Still, no harm in being sure, if opponents are willing to pay the \$10 per precinct cost and it will make them feel better. We're betting it won't change either the result or how they feel, though.

### Out with the old ...

Two controversial Fox Valley state's attorneys — Kane County's Meg Gorecki and McHenry County's Gary Pack — left office this week, the one-term Gorecki with a typical written statement and a quick disappearance, and the three-term Pack with a typical last jab at his enemies. No surprises there.

### ... and in with the new:

Into their shoes stepped longtime assistant John Barsanti in Kane County and private practice attorney Louis Bianchi in McHenry County. Barsanti, known for his aggressive approach and disdain for Gorecki, nonetheless took office with an easy grace, thanking her for her help in

smoothing the transition and vowing to study her new programs before making changes. On the other hand, Bianchi, a man who practically oozes charm, eschewed diplomacy in his big moment. "We need to experience change, and we need to experience it quickly." Um, who are these guys?

### Good sense hunting?

Kane County Forest Preserve District officials recently have been showing evidence of a trait many taxpayers think is absent in too many public policymakers — common sense. First, the district declined a request for an official horse trail in the Burlington Prairie Forest Preserve, saying the preserves master plan should be finished first. And with growing acreage under its control, the district has been inundated with resulting easement requests. Now, it has actually created a standard form to deal with them. Well, duh, you might say. But such a logical approach is still novel enough to be worthy of note.

# 12-7-04 Daily Herald Paperwork begins: N. Aurora candidates on the run for 2005

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

North Aurora's 2005 election began to take shape Monday morning as the three declared candidates for village president filed papers to get their names on next year's ballot.

Five hopefuls for the village board, including only two incumbents, also handed in the nomination signatures required to get on the ballot. Three seats, all at-large representatives, are open on the village board.

For cities and villages with non-partisan elections, including North Aurora, Monday was the first day nomination papers could be filed at village hall.

The filing period runs through Monday.

The filing period for most other towns in central and southern Kane County plus school districts, library districts and all other local governments is next month.

As expected, the election

season started with current trustees Dale Berman, John Hansen and Mark Guethle entering the race for village president.

The three men are running to succeed village President Mark Ruby, who is not seeking re-election because he is moving outside the village.

The entrance of the three formalizes the need for what is believed to be the village's first primary election on Feb. 22.

The consolidated election is scheduled for April 5.

At the village board level, incumbents Max Herwig and Michael Herlihy have filed papers to run for new terms. Hopefuls Mark Gaffino, Linda Mitchell and Michael Savini round out the group running for one of three open seats.

Most of the candidates handing in nomination papers Monday, including all three for village president, arrived before the start of business. That means a lottery will be held to determine the order of names on the ballot.

## Election filing:

The following candidates filed nominating petitions Monday, declaring their intention to seek office in the April 5 consolidated election. For some towns, Monday was the first day of the filing period, which runs through Dec. 13. The village president candidates will face off in the Feb. 22 primary.

### North Aurora

#### VILLAGE PRESIDENT

(One 4-year term)  
Dale Berman  
Mark Guethle  
John Hansen

#### VILLAGE TRUSTEE

(Three 4-year terms)

Michael Herlihy\*  
Max Herwig\*  
Mark Gaffino  
Linda Mitchell  
Michael Savini

\*Incumbents

A date for that candidate lottery has not been scheduled.

## Teachers urged to give kids feedback

BY LISA SMITH

Highly effective schools feature leaders who institute major

asked to do too much with too little.



DAILY HERALD  
m. every  
ing offers



8-7-04 Daily Herald

# County board seated, but one left standing

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

*New state law delays Kane's chairman-elect from taking oath of office with others*

The campaign season ended for real Monday morning for seven new members of the Kane County Board, who along with six incumbents, took the oath of office during a simple ceremony in Geneva.

Now the real work begins.

"I am looking forward to getting into it," said Marlena Fox, an Elgin Democrat and one of the board's freshman.

County board Chairman-elect Karen McConnaughay, a St. Charles Republican, attended the swearing-in ceremony but did not take an oath herself. That formality has been postponed until Dec. 20 to comply with a newly passed state law that pushes back the start of her term.

The two-week gap created a feeling of incompleteness in the

county board room Monday as board members old and new learned that committee assignments and even some pressing business will be put on hold until McConnaughay takes office.

Chairman Mike McCoy, an Aurora Republican, is expected to continue overseeing county business for the next two weeks and preside over the Dec. 14

county board meeting. The agenda at that meeting is expected to be routine.

The bureaucratic gap extending the McConnaughay-McCoy transition has prompted McConnaughay to postpone a series of meetings scheduled for Thursday with architectural firms competing to build a new county jail. A new date had not been set.

Plus, from a practical perspective, with her county board seat term expired Monday and her installation as chairman delayed, McConnaughay, for the moment, has no public office.

For the sworn-in board members, Monday wasn't about terms and temporary delays. To them, the morning meant the end of their respective campaigns and the beginning of

their new jobs. "Taking the oath was a pretty amazing and gratifying process," said Tom Van Cleave, a Batavia Republican and freshman board member.

New colleague Mark Davoust, the St. Charles Republican who took over McConnaughay's old board seat, had similar feelings on the present and future.

"I look forward to meeting a lot of the staff and to familiarize myself with the day-to-day operation," he said.



DONNELL COLLINS / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Barbara Poku of the Aurora Election Commission helps Aurora candidates filing petitions Monday for the spring elections. Among the candidates are mayoral hopefuls Tom Weisner (second from left) and Richard Irvin, along with 10th Ward Alderman Lynda Elmore.

# LET THE

# BEGIN

*Mayor council positions  
up for election as the  
first day of filing arrives*

By Dave Parro  
STAFF WRITER

**AURORA** — Candidates lined up more than a hour early in the mist and fog Monday morning to get the first spot on the ballot in the 2005 city election.

The three main contenders in the Aurora mayoral race all showed up with their petitions outside the Aurora Election Commission, but only two filed when the doors opened at 9 a.m. Bill Wyatt, a West Side Kane County Board member, made an appearance but said he will be filing on the last day

to get the final spot on the ballot.

Mayoral candidates Richard Irvin and Tom Weisner both filed at the earliest possible time, so a lottery will be held Dec. 15 to determine whose name appears first. Announced mayoral candidate Angel Hernandez and possible contender Jack Cunningham, Kane County clerk, did not file Monday.

Candidates — mostly incumbents — also filed petitions in five of the six races for alderman.

The deadline for candidates to turn in petitions is 5 p.m. Monday. A Feb. 22 primary election will be held for races with more than two candidates, and a general election will follow April 5.

Wyatt said having last position on the ballot can be just as advantageous as being first.

"Jack Cunningham might come here next Monday at 4:30, and we'll have a lottery to see who's last," Wyatt said. "It's gamesmanship at its best."

Irvin filed his 695 signatures himself, while Weisner had three supporters — including his wife — turn in his 675 signatures. Mayoral candidates are required to have between 434 and 695 registered voters on their petitions.

Irvin said he sees no benefit to being last on the ballot.

"My interest is in being first — not last," he said.

Weisner, who was at the Election Commission Monday, said he will be filing on the last day.

Turn to ELECTION, A2

## Inside

- List of candidates who filed Monday.

Page A2

# Inside today's BeaconNews

Vol. 157 / No. 353

4 sections, 32 pages

**A:** News  
**B:** Daybreak  
**C:** Sports / Business  
**D:** Classified Marketplace

Business file / C7

Comics / B5

Crossword / B5

Dear Abby / B4

Dr. Gott / B4

Letters to the editor / B2

Lotteries / A8

Movies / B3

Obituaries / A6

Openline / B3

Police blotter / A5

Scoreboard / C2

Stocks / C7

Television / B4

Viewpoint / B2

Weather / A8

## The Beacon News



A Hollinger  
International publication

### Office

101 S. River St., Aurora, IL 60506

**Lobby hours:** 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Monday-Friday. Closed holidays.

### Newspaper delivery

Joe Weber, manager

### Customer service

(630) 844-5800 or (800) 244-5844; e-mail customerservice@scn1.com.

### Customer service hours

5:30 a.m.-6 p.m., weekdays

7-11 a.m., weekends

5:30-10 a.m., holidays

### Home delivery times

6:30 a.m., weekdays and holidays

7 a.m., Saturdays, 8 a.m., Sundays.

If you do not receive your paper by our delivery deadline, please call customer service before 10 a.m., weekdays (or 11 a.m., weekends) and we will deliver your paper by noon.

### Pricing

**Home delivery:** \$3.25 weekly; \$2.25 Friday-Sunday; \$1.50 Sunday (plus intermittent holiday issues). **Mail subscriptions:** \$4 weekly. **Newsstand prices:** 50 cents daily, \$1.50 Sunday.

### Advertising

Display advertising

Robert Wall, manager

## ELECTION

From page A1

Commission himself, said there was a reason his supporters turned in his petitions.

"It's symbolic of the support I have in the community," Weisner said. "You've seen endorsement ads that are filled with people who don't live in the city. My endorsements and my support, in general, come from people who live in the city."

The Irvin campaign has recently been running ads in The Beacon News listing endorsements from politicians at the county and state level. In addition to Marilyn Weisner, Tom Weisner's petitions were filed by Marge Schuler, president of the Pigeon Hill Neighborhood Association, and Theodia Gillespie, president of the Quad County Urban League.

### Aurora aldermen

Four incumbent aldermen filed their petitions Monday for ward races: David Marquez, 2nd Ward; Scheketa Hart-Burns, 7th Ward; Leroy Keith, 9th Ward; and Lynda Elmore, 10th Ward.

Juany Garza, a near East Side resident, filed to run against Marquez in the 2nd Ward. Marquez was elected to the City Council four years ago.

Georgine "Jill" Jenkins filed in the 4th Ward, where Alderman Chuck Nelson is not running for re-election after three terms. Several other residents have been circulating petitions there in the past few months.

In the race for at-large alderman, Bob O'Connor said he plans to seek a sixth term, but no petitions were filed Monday.

### Other communities

Three North Aurora trustees filed Monday to replace retiring Village President Mark Ruby: Mark Guethle, chairman of the Kane County Democratic Party; Dale Berman, who was village president from 1985 to 1989; and John Hansen. All three had previously announced their intentions to seek North Aurora's top office.

In Montgomery, incumbent Village President Marilyn Michelini was the only candidate to file for the

## Election filings

The following candidates filed election petitions Monday for 2005 municipal elections:

### Aurora

■ **Mayor:** Richard C. Irvin, 2701 Shetland Drive; Tom Weisner, 1822 Prairie St.

■ **2nd Ward:** Juany Garza, 725 E. Gale-na Blvd.; David Marquez, 214 S. Lincoln Ave. (i)

■ **4th Ward:** Georgine L. Jenkins, 318 N. View St.

■ **7th Ward:** Scheketa Hart-Burns, 246 N. Sumner Ave. (i)

■ **9th Ward:** Leroy Keith, 2582 Sagamore Circle (i)

■ **10th Ward:** Lynda Elmore, 2425 Legacy Drive (i)

■ **Alderman at large:** No filings

### Montgomery

■ **Village president:** Marilyn Michelini, 1105 S. Lincoln Ave. (i)

■ **Village clerk:** None

■ **Trustee (three seats):** Lloyd Mattingly, 1930 Springhaven Court (i); Bill Keck, 527 S. Main St. (i); Denny Lee, 104 Second Ave. (i)

### North Aurora

■ **Village president:** Dale Berman, 13 Chantilly Lane; John Hansen, 505 Pinewood Drive; Mark Guethle, 1566 Hartsburg Lane

■ **Village clerk:** No filings

■ **Trustee (three seats):** Max Herwig, 3 Candlewood Court (i); Mark Gaffino, 2881 McDuffee Circle; Linda Mitchell, 243 Ridge Road; Mike Herlihy, 445 N. Sycamore Lane (i)

village's top elected position.

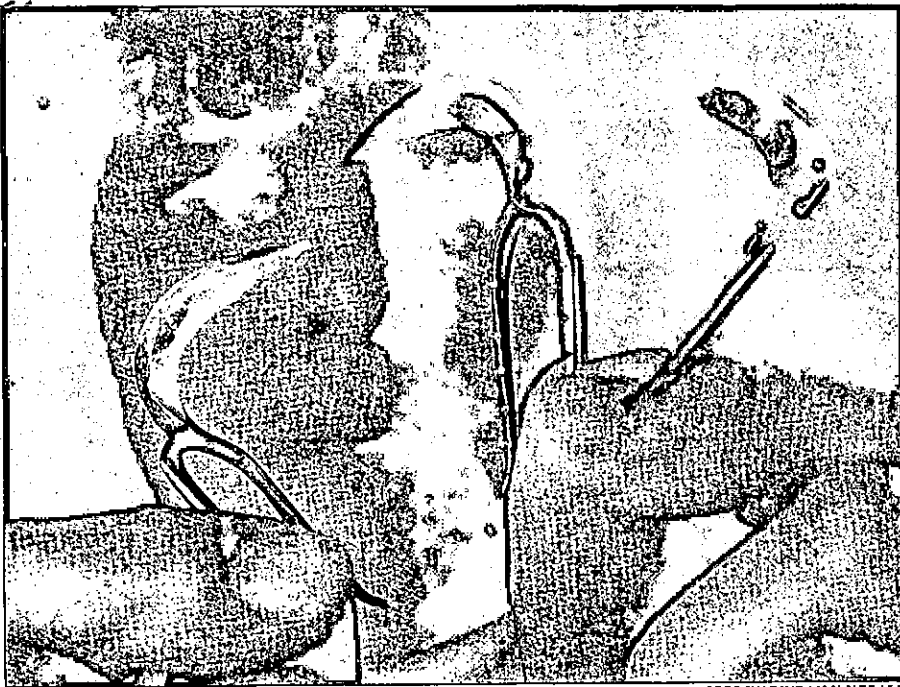
The three incumbent trustees running to keep their seats on the Village Board — Lloyd Mattingly, Bill Keck and Denny Lee — also filed petitions. Village Clerk Robert Watermann, who is also up for re-election, did not file a petition Monday.

Although no challengers for Michelini, Watermann, or the trustees have filed, Deputy Village Clerk Helen Prester said that nine other residents have obtained petitions.

No one filed on the first day in Batavia.

Filing continues through Dec. 13. In other area towns, filing is Jan. 17 through 25.

tax increase forward.



JEFF KNOX/DAILY HERALD

Metal spurs tinged with blood were worn by fighting roosters seized in Kane County by county animal control warden Carole Varentoni.

12-5-04 Daily Herald

# Arenas of cruelty

BY TONA KUNZ  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Dog fighting is widely regarded as a big-city gang problem, and cockfighting as a rural tradition of earlier days. But with the Fox Valley's secluded settings and the lure of fast cash, organized animal fights are steadily and silently increasing, authorities say. And residents may be in the best position to help stop them.

As Carole Varentoni walked on the small farm in southern Kane County, she could see signs others might miss.

At what seemed the center of the homestead, grass gave way to dirt. Dozens of boot prints crisscrossed, the tracks stopping at odd angles to form a faint yet noticeable octagon in the dust.

Boards were piled nearby, cut so they could easily slide into place to build a 3- to 4-foot-high ring — or be dismantled, as they were days before to dispel suspicion.

But there were more glaring signs of this farm's dark heart.

The rotting carcass of a dog lay barely concealed nearby. A fire pit mixed with garbage and animal remains. Three-inch-long razor-edged claws. Hypodermic needles for steroids and stimulants.

And then the telltale rows of barrels.

That, Varentoni knew, was where the fighting birds waited, tethered by their feet to the steel with dirty ropes. They were close enough to want to fight, but just out of one another's reach.

That made them frustrated and angry.

The farm owners liked that. It provided exercise. It also helped fill the air with adrenaline to mix with the smell of dirt and blood that would draw spectators from as far away as Chicago.

As she walked farther onto the farm, Varentoni saw the cages — up to 270 of them — filled with restless birds.

"If you have a bunch of roosters in cages, that's not pets. They are there for cockfighting, and they are there in Elburn, Hampshire and Aurora. It's everywhere," said Varentoni, a warden with Kane County Animal Control.

Fights have been investigated in Aurora, Elgin, Elburn, Montgomery, Plano, Carpen-

A northwest Aurora Township farm is filled with training barrels where gamecocks were tethered before fighting matches.



PHOTO FROM KANE COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL

See FIGHTS on PAGE 17

How to spot animal fighting and why it's worth it to try. Page 17.

# Fights: Officials combating animal battles with awareness

Continued from Page 1

tersville, and Hampshire, according to the Kane County Animal Welfare Task Force, which seeks to stop the fights through prosecution and education.

Animal experts estimate the fighting reported is only the tip of the iceberg because the fights generally occur in secluded areas or neighborhoods reticent to report crimes for fear of retribution.

Calls about cockfighting and dog fighting come in to Kane County, Elgin and Aurora officials most often.

Varentoni estimates she gets a reliable tip every other month. Her counterparts in McHenry County receive fewer tips but say that means little.

"Oh, it goes on," said Norma Spitzbart, McHenry County Animal Control manager. "I have no doubt about that."

Just last month, Varentoni was giving a talk at an elementary school in Elburn and one of the students piped up that he had been exploring the outlying edges of town and thought he spotted the signs of illegal fighting.

Like most of the tips animal activists and police get, the information came too late, leaving little evidence with which to take the ring leaders to court.

"A lot of times you get there and it's cleaned up and they won't open the door," said Linda Nass, manager of the Aurora Animal Control facility.

Other times cryptic information leaves officers struggling to find the fight site.

"I certainly do believe it is going on out there," said Elgin police officer Mike Bayard, acting animal control officer.

"The problem is proving it." In the past four years, only seven people have been brought up on animal-fighting charges in Kane County, and one has gone to court in McHenry County, officials said.

Animal fighting is part of modern gang culture, which

## Links

[dailyherald.com/ez](http://dailyherald.com/ez)  
Bookmark our Web page for hyperlinks to more information  
**Animal fighting prevention resources**

into the path of a street fight. Street fighting is most common in Elgin and Aurora in Kane County, but in McHenry County it's more widespread and the most common form of animal fighting, Spitzbart said. Elgin police increased officer training for dealing with aggressive animals after several impromptu bouts in Lord's Park on the city's east side in 2000. The fighting has since gone underground, but that doesn't mean the danger is gone.

The angry canines are trained to back down to people so that handlers remain safe, but experts say it's only a matter of time before one of the dogs attacks a child or owner of a smaller, weaker dog.

"They have attacked other pets, and if you get in the way ...," Varentoni said.

A few people, including children, have been bitten in Elgin by pit bulls, but it's difficult to prove whether the dogs were trained for fighting or were just vicious pets. At least one of the attacks occurred on Ann Street where police charged two men with running a dog-fighting ring in their back yard in 2000. The charges eventually were dropped for lack of evidence.

Also, seeing the dogs or roosters fight can leave emotional scars.

Many of the farms and homes investigated for animal fighting have children present, and officials say that continual exposure to brutality breeds insensitivity and a thirst for violence. National surveys in prisons and domestic abuse shelters show many people start out hurting animals but eventually expand to family members and acquaintances. "They get desensitized," Rice said. "They don't respect life."



Roosters were kept in this area in Aurora prior to cockfights. A ring of such fights was recently broken up.

That's where anonymous tips come in. "It is all done in secret, so we have to rely on the community," Bree said.

Prosecutors and police rely on sharp-eyed neighbors to point them in the direction of animal fighting rings. A felony conviction usually hinges on arriving during the fighting and betting, although sometimes a case can be built with a combination of circumstantial evidence including score sheets, stacks of cash, drugs and injured animals.

Still, officials would much rather make a case on animal fighting charges so they can tack on longer felony sentences and seize fighting assets under recent federal forfeiture regulations.

Still, officials would much rather make a case on animal fighting charges so they can tack on longer felony sentences and seize fighting assets under recent federal forfeiture regulations.

## How to spot animal fighting

- Loud animal noises and/or cheers
- Lots of cars but no sign of a party
- Discarded bandages, hypodermic needles
- Barrels with rope ties for roosters
- Backyard treadmills or neck weights for dogs
- Hanging knotted ropes or chains with chew toys for jaw strengthening
- Disappearance of small neighborhood pets
- Numerous roosters or attack-breed dogs in cages
- Burning pits for dead animals
- Short wooden or plastic boxing-style fighting rings

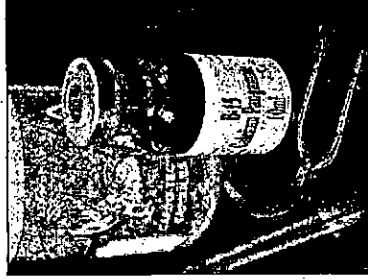
## Why it's worth your time

- The Humane Society of the United States offers a reward of up to \$2,500 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of anyone who organizes, promotes, participates or officiates a dog or cock fight. Call your police department or animal control facility to report the crime.

Source: Daily Herald interviews

"These are crimes that are done in silence," Bree said. "And by the time the police are able to gain access to the place, a lot of our evidence is gone."

Tipsters can earn up to \$2,500 through the humane



Performance-enhancing drugs and spurs, like these seized in an Aurora bust, are obvious signs of cockfighting.

JEFF KNOX/DAILY HERALD

society, but much more than money is at stake. "We need to change the view that it's just animal control's problem," Rogerty said. "I think we are just hitting the tip of the iceberg here."

considers owning powerful dogs a sign of machismo, police say. Experts claim top fighting animals can earn thousands of dollars in a weekend.

Gamblers looking to avoid taxes on their winnings seek out cockfights and dog fights, generating an interest that encourages others to start up more fighting rings.

It's a vicious circle. And a cancerous one.

"There is a lot of money changing hands in these instances," Bayard said. "It brings in the gang element. The gang element brings in the drugs and the guns."

In Illinois, the fighting crosses all ethnic boundaries. Small fights for money on rural farms existed well before suburban sprawl diversified Kane and McHenry counties, officials said.

The problem has simply grown in Illinois as it has across the nation as a side effect of a surging population and changing times, said Richard Rice, program coordinator for the regional office of the U.S. Humane Society.

Portable fighting rings with plastic surfaces that can be cleaned quickly reduced restrictions on fighting locations — and made it more difficult for police to find evidence to prove a fight had occurred.

Those rings have helped make the Fox Valley's more sparsely populated pockets very attractive fighting grounds.

Officials here say the problem has been rising for the past decade. While fights used to be most common in bigger cities like Elgin and Aurora, they have moved west where the sounds and traffic of fights go unnoticed, Rice said.

"It is definitely out there. You do hear things," Spitzbart said. "But there's not much you can do about it."

### The effects

Suburban animal fighting comes in two forms: impromptu street fighting and organized ring fighting. Both brands of gambling carry risks to more than the animals.

In organized ring fighting, officials say, thousands of dollars in illegal gambling money can trade hands during a series of fights called a derby. That amount of money attracts other vices, which can spill out into the community, including the stealing of innocent pets.

Pets that don't get swiped can still become casualties when they and their owners wander

### Fighting back

To stop animal fighting, officials are attacking the problem on several fronts.

Animal control wardens give educational talks to residents about how to recognize the signs of abuse and how to stop it.

The Kane County Animal Welfare Task Force offers seminars to law enforcement officers and hopes to branch out to a public forum later next year.

Elgin has speculated about the value of adding a section on animal cruelty laws to its DARE program in area schools.

In Aurora, animal welfare task force member Sue Sternberg has talked with aldermen about the problem and proposed creating another competitive outlet for teens who use dogs to street fight. The one she's eyeing currently is the East Coast trend of using the muscular rottweiler and pit bulls in dog-pull competitions. The dogs pull weighted sleds, kind of a mini-version of those used in truck pulls.

In every plan, the goal is awareness, first and foremost.

"The more educated our communities become regarding these issues, the better we can combat them," said Maureen Fogerty, member of the Kane County Animal Welfare Task Force.

Prosecutors rely on federal and state laws that make organizing fights, attending them or training the fighting animals a felony.

Two Aurora men are battling animal abuse charges in court after police following a tip found wounded and winded dogs locked in cages. Police did not witness a fight or see cash changing hands, however, which will make prosecution difficult.

Unfortunately, authorities often have little to work with and must settle for sending a warning and protecting the animals rather than making the owners do jail time.

Without catching a fight in action, prosecutors were forced in October to accept a deal from the owner of the cock-fighting farm in northwest Aurora Township that Varentoni toured.

The owner pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge of not having a firearm identification card in exchange for having the animal fighting charges dropped. In return, prosecutors got to tack on conditions regu-

12-8-04 Beacon news

### Neighborhood group responds

At a recent meeting of Aurora Council of Neighborhoods (ACON), it was decided our organization must respond to the negative press the city of Aurora is receiving regarding Lynda Smith's property on George Avenue.

ACON is extremely concerned about enforcement of quality of life ordinances. As a group comprised of neighborhood organizations throughout Aurora, we must be.

The city is not picking on her because of her disabilities. They have been more understanding with her over the past 20 years because of them. When is enough, enough?

For more than 20 years, this property has been a problem and burden to the neighbors and taxpayers of Aurora. Numerous court cases have been brought. Numerous orders have been entered. Numerous times the property has been cleaned. Sometimes by Lynda Smith, other times by volunteers, or, by the city at taxpayers' expense. Numerous fines have been assessed and unpaid. Problems continue to be an excessive number

of animals within her home, causing an unbearable stench; excessive animal waste in her back yard; lack of upkeep; and failure to comply with the city ordinance pertaining to the number of permitted animals.

The city had made a very fair offer to purchase Lynda Smith's house, considering the condition it is in. She refused the offer. As a last resort, the city has started foreclosure action, which ACON supports.

Maybe this will provide an ultimate relief for the neighbors, who have had to put up with the many problems she has caused to

the neighborhood over too many years.  
**Ken Griffin,**  
**Past Chairman, ACON**  
*Aurora*

editorials, letters and columns at [suburbanchicagonews.com](http://suburbanchicagonews.com)

12-8-04 Beacon news

## Kane clerk volunteers for Iraq vote

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Kane County Clerk Jack Cunningham might be part of running another election sooner than he anticipated.

Cunningham has volunteered to help monitor the planned free elections in Iraq, due to take place Jan. 30. Cunningham said his name is somewhere in the pipeline with an organization that will administer monitors.

"To me, it's like public service," Cunningham said Tuesday. "All these guys are over there dying for elections. I mean, it seems like it's the least I can do."

Cunningham, 65, a long-time Aurora resident, attorney and politician, recently said he might throw his hat in the ring for Aurora mayor. The mayoral primary will be in February, with the final election in April.

Filing for mayor began this week and ends next Monday. Cunningham said although he has nominating petitions prepared, he still has not decided if he will run or not. If he does run, he will not file until the

## CUNNINGHAM

From page A1

last day.

Cunningham said working in Iraq would not necessarily preclude him from running for mayor, but it could put him overseas during key campaigning time. When asked how long he would be in the Middle Eastern country, he laughed and said, "I'd be back in time to win a primary."

"It's just one of the variables I'm looking at," he said.

Cunningham volunteered for the duty with Dr. Richard Smolka, a Washington, D.C.-based election consultant who runs Election Administration Reports, a newsletter that keeps track of elections and election-related news. Cunningham

attended a Smolka seminar, and volunteered afterward.

Smolka said the monitoring effort will be international, with volunteers coming from a number of different countries. He said most likely there will be fewer Americans involved than people from other countries, because Americans "may be considered too partisan."

"The volunteers get some kind of local direction as to what to do, and usually they are assigned to polling places, to see if voters are getting in to vote, are being turned away, that kind of thing," Smolka said. "They might help with the count, too."

Several Washington, D.C., organizations assist with election monitoring, including the International Federation for Election Systems, the International Republican Institute and the International Democratic Institute.

❖ Turn to CUNNINGHAM, A2



# Elburn considers possibility of pool

By Linda Girardi

SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

ELBURN — Village trustees are keeping an open mind on the possibility of building a community swimming pool.

After receiving a presentation from a firm that specializes in designing pools for small towns in the Midwest, the Village Board this week decided to delay making a decision on a \$2,000 feasibility study to gain time to discuss the concept.

Mayor Jim Willey said Burbach Aquatics Inc. approached the village two years ago about conducting the study, knowing the expected growth of the village.

"We don't know if there is a will to make this happen. We can't make a decision without at least examining the information," Willey said.

Village officials said residents consistently over the years have questioned when Elburn would have its own swimming pool. About three years ago a group of teenagers and parents came to Village Hall complaining about the lack of recreation in town.

Roger Schamberger, director of marketing for Burbach Aquatics, presented aerial photographs of successful community swimming pools in small cities and towns throughout Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin.

He said the firm, based in Platteville, Wis., has been in business for 26 years. It also has an office in Keystone, Colo.

"We have a project load of approximately 65 projects," Schamberger said.

He said the first phase of the feasibility study would begin by gathering information pertinent to the proper size of a swimming pool, taking into account the village's current population and 25-year population projections.

"We want to make a recommendation for sizing that is a good fit for your town," Schamberger said.

The report would assist the village in financing, as well.

"We don't come up with a 'pool from a box,'" he said, suggesting a community group could be established to assist in the concept.

State grants are available for these types of community construction projects, as are charitable and fundraising opportunities to offset the cost, Schamberger said.

Retired businessman and former Village Trustee Jack Hansen said he is worried about reports of "swimming pool failures."

"I read that swimming pools are failing because there is a lack of funding to adequately support them," Hansen said.

Hansen, a longtime critic of Willey, said he also questions the timing and motivation for considering a community pool.

"What concerns me is that this is nothing more than a political ploy, a scam, a ruse to gain votes for the upcoming election," he said.

Board members took exception to Hansen's remarks.

"We have a situation in this community where kids don't have a place to go for recreational activity in the summertime," Trustee Jeff Metcalf said.

"This is the most requested idea I get from people. We need to be opened-minded about new ideas and concepts."

The board deferred the topic to the Committee of the Whole for further discussion Monday.

# Plan has no road to middle school

12-8-04  
Daily  
Herald

BY GARRETT ORDOWER  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Plans for the Geneva Flower Farm site call for 15 single-family homes but no access road to the south and to Geneva Middle School.

The 8.3-acre parcel at 37W563 Kaneville Road was one of two paths to the middle school site south of it, where the district expects to build a second middle school using a \$41.2 million bond issue approved by voters last month. School officials have said building a middle school on the site is contingent upon an access road to the south from Kaneville.

Developer's consultant Michael Donahue will present a concept plan for the area at Thursday's plan commission meeting on behalf of Silvestri Custom Homes. If all goes smoothly, Donahue said, Silvestri could break ground on the homes next year.

"It's a logical addition to the single-family neighborhoods," Donahue said.

The homes would be on 13,000-square-foot lots and resemble the Silvestri development in Fisher Farms across from Heartland Elementary School, Donahue said.

Bringing the development to the plan commission was actually delayed while the developer waited to hear whether the school district wanted to run a

from Page 1

DAILY HERALD SECTION 1 PAGE 17

F3

## Geneva: Study indicates possible extension of roads

Continued from Page 1

road to the middle school site through the development, which Arney Silvestri said he would agree to.

The results of a traffic study released last month showed the district would not want access through that area, Donahue said. According to land records,

the only remaining path for the road from Kaneville would be through the 10.5-acre McCormick family property.

The traffic study did indicate possible extensions of Fargo Boulevard, Blackman Road and Viking Drive through the site, as well as a road from Kaneville to the south.

The district repeatedly has

refused to discuss details of land acquisition for access to the school site.

The plan commission would still need to hold a public hearing and give its approval to a plan outlining specifics for the development, as would the city council. The meeting takes place at 7 p.m. Thursday at city hall, 22 S. First St.

See GENEVA on PAGE 17

12-8-04 Beacon News

# Batavia seeks input on traffic issues

By Jan Ramming

SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

**BATAVIA** — Dozens of people have expressed interest in Mayor Jeff Schielke's proposal to form a community task force on transportation.

The mayor announced a few months ago that he would like to form such a committee, and 33 people have called or emailed him with interest about it since then, he said.

The mayor and city staff are working on a meeting schedule to begin in January

with one or two meetings per month through spring.

Schielke said he would like the task force to look at the entire city and decide what the major traffic matters are that affect the community. The focus will be beyond the second bridge issue, he said.

"We want to ask the community to help us identify other areas of town that we should put into priority," he said. "For example, should we look into putting a traffic light at Prairie and Wilson Streets? Should we look into putting a light at Western Avenue and Wilson Street?"

The task force would not be asked where to locate a second bridge in town, he said, but rather whether the issue of needing a second bridge should be explored further.

The city's recent community survey showed that most residents are concerned about transportation issues. Schielke said he would like to develop a long-range transportation agenda for the community.

"Let's identify those things that we think we should do in the next five to ten years that really may enhance traffic movement in the city of Batavia," he said.

## West Aurora tax rate could be on the decline

### *Homeowners might pay less*

By ERIC SCHELKOPF  
Kane County Chronicle

AURORA — West Aurora school district homeowners could see their taxes drop slightly next year.

The owner of a \$250,000 house who paid \$3,100 in school taxes this year should see their taxes drop to \$2,900 next year.

"That could be the case if their house didn't increase in value and they get a \$5,000 homestead exemption next year," finance director Todd Drafall said.

The tax rate is expected to decrease to \$3.76 per \$100 of assessed valuation this year, compared to \$3.90 per \$100 of assessed valuation last year.

School board members were happy to see the tax rate continue to go down.

"It is lower than other school districts," board mem-

ber Neal Ormond said.

A public hearing for the 2004 tax levy will be Dec. 20 before the regular school board meeting.

The school district proposes to levy \$55 million this year, a 9 percent increase over last year's levy.

However, Drafall does not expect the district to collect that much.

"We anticipate a 4.7 percent to 4.9 percent increase over last year," Drafall said.

The district's tax rate has gone down consistently since 1991, he said.

"We have seen a considerable appreciation in property," Drafall said.

The district had an equalized assessed valuation of \$1.2 billion last year. Officials expect the EAV to increase to between \$1.3 billion and \$1.4 billion this year.

# West proposes new tax levy

12-8-04

By Matt Hanley  
STAFF WRITER

Beacon news

AURORA — The West Aurora School District presented the first version of its tax levy at a Tuesday morning committee meeting, although the final numbers are still months away.

Director of Finance Todd Drafall presented the board with a 9.6 percent levy increase, which could bring about \$45.6 million to the district next year.

However, due to the complicated guessing-game nature of the tax levy procedure, Drafall expect the levy to actually go up less than 5 percent.

"Because we don't know what our total value will be, we have to make an estimate where that will turn out," Drafall said. "It's not only a estimate in whole but in each fund."

Kane County will announce the property valuations and then set the district's levy. There is little harm in guessing too high, but if the district were to low-ball its estimate, it might have to settle for that amount, Drafall said.

"If you're under, you never get it back," he said.

The number is eventually dependent on the tax cap and what new construction has occurred in the district.

The tax levy is expected to be adopted at the Dec. 20 full board meeting and filed with the county before the Dec. 28 deadline, well before the spring tax bills.

12-8-04 Beacon News

# Batavia to pay back tax error

By Jan Ramming

SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

BATAVIA — Thanks to a correction by the city, residents will see a decrease in the city's portion of their tax bill next year.

Finance Director Peggy Colby said that the city's 2004 tax rate will be about a nickel less than last year — \$0.5674 this year compared to \$0.6236 last year.

Colby said she discovered an error in the county's tax extension used to figure the 2003 tax levy, so residents were charged at a higher rate than was necessary. The city's tax rate decreased an extra \$.03 for 2004 to pay back residents.

That means that the city's portion of residents' tax bills will be \$26 less than last year on homes valued at \$150,000. The tax will be \$82 less than last year on homes valued at \$450,000.

Mayor Jeff Schielke emphasized that, although the city's tax rate will be one of the lowest in the area, taxpayers still might see an increase in their total bill.

"This will be a good year for the taxpayers from the city of Batavia, he said. "But when your total tax bill comes in with charges from all the other taxing bodies, that may be a different story."

In other business, the City Council approved a budget amount for next year of \$72,529,380. City administrator Bill McGrath said that, although the city will operate with a \$260,000 deficit in the general fund, there will be \$4.5 million in city reserves.

12-8-04 Chronicle

## IDOT to host open house on Prairie Parkway

SUGAR GROVE —

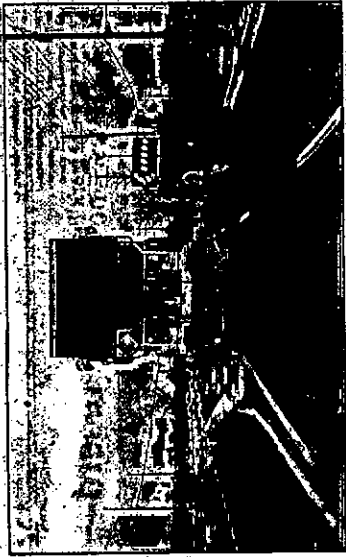
The Dupont Ave. Morris, Illinois Department of Transportation will host an open house on the Prairie Parkway from 5:30 to 8 p.m. today at Kaneland John Shields Elementary School, 85 W. Main St.

A second open house will be from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Thursday at White Oaks Elementary School, 2001

The open house will provide an opportunity to review exhibits and ask questions of IDOT representatives.

For information on the study area and proposals and to express opinions and concerns, visit [www.prairie-parkway.com](http://www.prairie-parkway.com).

— Kane County Chronicle



A paint crew lays down traffic lines Wednesday afternoon at the busy refurbished intersection of Galena Boulevard and Orchard Road. The Orchard widening project should be finished by Friday.

DONNELL COLLINS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

**AURORA** — Kane County Board member Bill Wyatt admitted it was "kind of a roll of the dice" when Department of Transportation officials said they could finish the Orchard Road widening project in Aurora this year. That was a year ago, and officials thought with a few breaks, they could

ADDITIONAL LANES COMPLETED

# Orchard Road finish Friday

Good weather helps move project along

get construction of the road done before breaking for the winter months. Still, the official end of the project was listed as summer 2005.

But Wyatt, Aurora's chairman of the Transportation Committee, said it appears the barriers will go down Friday, and drivers will be able to use all

Wyatt said good weather was the basic reason officials were able to finish construction early. In particular, milder temperatures through November allowed workers to pour concrete. The \$13-million project began in March. It was to widen the West Side Aurora road from two lanes to four lanes for about 2.2 miles between Indian Trail

Turn to ORCHARD, A2

## ORCHARD

From page A1

Road and Prairie Street. The road already had been four lanes between Randall and Indian Trail roads, and where the underpass was built several years ago.

The project included new traffic signals where Orchard intersects with Illinois Avenue and Galena

Boulevard. Eventually, the road will be widened all the way to Route 30.

Wyatt said landscaping along the road, including work on the median, will have to wait for the spring. This week, workers are sinking footings to install 12-foot-high noise suppression fences along Orchard where some houses are.

Wyatt said workers also will try to at least begin on a bike trail that will run along the east side of Orchard. He said they might have to finish that in the spring, too.

12-9-04 Beacon  
news

# Prairie Parkway: Options are many

■ **First review of ideas:**  
Choices range from  
new expressway to  
just widening roads

By David Garbe  
STAFF WRITER

SUGAR GROVE — State officials presented to the public for the first time Wednesday night a summary of all the options being considered under the Prairie Parkway study.

The study focuses on how and where to build some kind of major improvement to the north-south transportation infrastructure in Kane and Kendall counties.

Most of the focus so far has been on a proposal to build a new north-south expressway through the western portions of the two counties.

But at Wednesday's public forum, area residents got a chance to see the whole range of alternative projects that the Illinois Department of Transportation plans to analyze.

The collection looks rather chaotic.

On a map of the seven-county area covered by the study, more than 150 ideas for new or improved roads jostle for space in what looks more like abstract art than a regional transportation plan.

Despite all the complexity, most of the options fall into two categories.

First is the construction of an entirely new highway to connect Interstates 88 and 80. This would be a limited-access, multi-lane expressway of some type that would run through some portion of Kane and Kendall counties.

Ideas for what route such a new road would take are varied. One would place the road along the two counties' western borders.

## PARKWAY

From page A1

Another suggests that the road should go somewhere through the eastern portion of the counties, roughly along the Farnsworth Avenue corridor.

Even the original concept, a highway running mostly parallel to Route 47, had several possible variations.

Some suggest a direct parallel to Route 47, others a wide sweep west into the Big Rock area.

In the second category, ideas call not for a new highway but for the widening of existing roads.

Popular candidates for improvement under these proposals include Routes 47 and 59, as well as more local roads such as Randall, Orchard and Farnsworth.

IDOT representatives at the meeting stressed that the Prairie Parkway study remains in its early stages and that all of these different options remain on the table.

That process is set to begin early next year, officials said, as engineers begin to slowly reject or combine some of the ideas that have been collected.

"Right now, no one's really deciding anything except to rule

things out that don't work for whatever reason," said IDOT project manager Rick Powell.

Those reasons will include environmental impacts, land acquisition costs, engineering capabilities and a wide variety of other factors, he said.

"At the end of this process, we'll be left with a single plan or a very small number of alternatives that we can do some serious engineering on," Powell said.

At that point, which officials said would likely be years from now, the study will be complete and IDOT will recommend a single plan of action.

Asked when the public will be able to see any specific plan, Powell said, "That depends on how many viable candidate plans there are."

He added that any type of action is unlikely for the foreseeable future, as the study is funded only to collect and organize information.

No governmental agency has budgeted to provide the Prairie Parkway with funds for any construction or land acquisition.

For those who missed Wednesday's meeting, an identical session will be from 5:30 to 8 p.m. today at White Oak Elementary School, 2001 Dupont Ave. Morris.



# Residents sound off on beltway

*12-9-04 Chronicle*

*Another open house  
on Prairie Parkway is tonight*

By ERIC SCHELKOPF  
Kane County Chronicle

SUGAR GROVE — Paul Evans of Big Rock does not want to see fertile farmland being paved over for a road.

Evans on Wednesday spoke out against the Illinois Department of Transportation's plans to build a 35-mile beltway between Interstates 80 and 88. The proposed road would be built west of Route 47, near his parents' farm in Big Rock.

"We have all these roads in existence now. It would be far less of an impact to widen key routes to solve the so-called traffic problems. They should look at that first," Evans said during IDOT's open house on the proposed Prairie Parkway project.

Another open house will be from 5:30 to 8 p.m. today at White Oaks Elementary School, 2001 Dupont Ave., Morris.

IDOT has recorded a corridor from I-88 in Kane County to Interstate 80 in Grundy County in 191 property deeds.

However, IDOT officials stressed that the corridor is not set in stone.

"The corridor was pro-

## Send in comments

• Residents still can mail their comments about the project to IDOT. Deadline is Jan. 21. They can be sent to John Kos, district engineer, Illinois Department of Transportation, 700 E. Norris Drive, Ottawa, IL 61350. Comments can also be faxed to IDOT at (815) 434-8553. The study's Web site, [www.prairie-parkway.com](http://www.prairie-parkway.com), also accepts comments.

tected in July 2002 as a planning tool to preserve one possible path," IDOT project engineer Rick Powell said. "We do have the flexibility to change or remove the corridor if we find there is another solution. We still are trying to define what the Prairie Parkway is."

As part of the Prairie Parkway study, IDOT officials are looking at a variety of ideas, from widening roads such as Route 47 to light rail service. IDOT has compiled approximately 150 transportation improvement suggestions gathered from public workshops in June, as well as from stakeholders and local officials.

See BELTWAY, page 2

## Open house



Katy Mull — Chronicle photo staff

Sally Carr, left, and Nell Evans of Big Rock look at a display of the farmland that will not be affected by the Illinois Department of Transportation's proposals for the Prairie Parkway during an open house Wednesday at John Shields Elementary in Sugar Grove. "I think they should put the road where the traffic is already at," said Carr, who prefers the east option in the proposals.

## Beltway

Continued from page 1

IDOT is trying to address the growing traffic needs in the area. The three counties in the study area (Kane, Kendall and Will), are ranked on the list of the 100 fastest growing counties in the United States from 2000 to 2003.

But IDOT does not have the money to fund any traffic improvements.

"There is no money for anything beyond the study right now," Powell said.

The \$18 million study began two years ago, and Powell said there will be another four years of study before any decisions are made.

Brian Schiber of Sugar Grove said he is in favor of building a beltway west of Route 47.

"I like the idea of putting it further west. I am not sure how much benefit would come from widening Route 47.

We need new roads to handle the traffic," Schiber said.

Residents still can mail their comments about the project to IDOT. Deadline is Jan. 21.

They can be sent to John Kos, district engineer, Illinois Department of Transportation, 700 E. Norris Drive, Ottawa, IL 61350.

Comments can also be faxed to IDOT at (815) 434-8553. The study's Web site, [www.prairie-parkway.com](http://www.prairie-parkway.com), also accepts comments.

## Usher dominates Billboard Awards

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Usher might not want to ring in the new year. This one's been too good to him.

The R&B impresario dominated the 2004

## Boundary

Continued from page 1

"My concern is we will be forced to make a decision for a two- to three-year period, and I know we will be back here in two years making another decision and moving our children."

promoting its unincorporated subdivision as having a school "on site." While the school is in the subdivision, its capacity is 600, and it is already at 550 students.

"I feel very deceived," said parent Theresa Costa, who lives in Mill Creek.

David Patzelt, vice president of development for

# for OK to kill goats in suburb Hampshire mulls business request

By Carolyn Starks  
Tribune staff reporter

A Chicago-area man's proposal to reopen a slaughterhouse in Hampshire to kill goats has created an identity crisis for the tiny Kane County community, which would rather shuck its farm-town image.

For 40 years, farmers took cows, pigs and sheep to the Dreymler & Kray slaughterhouse, a brick building on Mill Street in the middle of town. It closed four years ago because business became scarce.

Developers have snatched up all the open farmland in town, and Mayor Bill Schmidt says his community of 3,800 residents is not looking back.

"The old-fashioned-type farm, with the red barns and white farmhouses, is disappearing around here," Schmidt said. "It has changed the whole social structure of the community."

But now a man identified in legal papers as Mohammed Ahmed wants to purchase and revive the Dreymler & Kray facility. According to Village

## HAMPSHIRE: Ordinance may prohibit business

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Board member Orris Ruth, Ahmed plans to use the slaughterhouse to kill goats in a manner meeting religious dietary laws and sell the meat to ethnic markets in the Chicago area.

As the number of immigrants arriving from the Middle East, Mexico and Asia grows, so has the demand for goat meat. Goat is the primary meat dish in many parts of the world. Many Muslims and Jews do not eat pork, and Hindus and Sikhs do not generally eat beef.

Ahmed could not be reached for comment. The Village Board plans to discuss his proposal at its meeting Thursday night.

Last month, Ahmed's attorney

ney requested an application for a zoning permit. Ahmed is negotiating to purchase the building and secure a license from the Illinois Department of Agriculture to slaughter goats, hopefully before January, said the attorney, Burton Grossman. The plan has run into opposition from several Village Board members, who said he would need a special-use zoning permit.

Two years before the Dreymler & Kray slaughterhouse closed, village officials rewrote an ordinance to say that "no building or structure shall be erected, altered or remodeled" for slaughtering animals.

Approval of the proposal could hinge on how the board interprets the ordinance, Schmidt said.

Ruth said he believes that the plan would not be considered a "new use" of the building and therefore should be approved.

"It's always been a slaughterhouse, and it still is. It's just a new owner," Ruth said. "I don't see why everybody is so excited about a slaughterhouse. I was

*'I was born and raised here in Hampshire, and there has always been a slaughterhouse in town.'*

—Village Board member Orris Ruth

born and raised here in Hampshire, and there has always been a slaughterhouse in town. "People moved out here to get out to the country. Well, what did they expect?"

Ed Reiser, president of Dreymler & Kray, which still operates a meat market in town, said Ahmed has come to town several times to look over the property and talk to business owners.

"He's the utmost gentleman, he's kind and cordial," Reiser said. "[The board] should be open and grateful that people want to come and spend money here. A business is a business, and they need all the business they can get to create tax dollars. Do they treat other people this way?"

12-9-04 Daily Herald

# IDOT says parkway's path not set in stone

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
*Daily Herald Staff Writer*

A future Prairie Parkway, if there is one, may not be the shape, size nor in the same place many residents in Kane and Kendall counties think it will be, state transportation officials said Wednesday.

Instead it could move west or east of a controversial state-designated expressway corridor cutting through southwestern Kane and Kendall counties and linking I-80 with I-88, under scenarios now being reviewed by the Illinois Department of Transportation.

For instance, the proposed

expressway could disappear, instead yielding to a larger Route 47. Or it could become a new main north-south route where there now is only a rural County Line Road.

"With a limited amount of information, a corridor was protected as a planning tool," said Rick Powell, a project engineer with the Illinois Department of Transportation. "We do have the flexibility to change or remove that corridor if we find something else."

Since state officials designated the expressway corridor in 2002 and put that news on

See **PARKWAY** on **PAGE 16**

## Parkway: Next meeting scheduled for tonight

*Continued from Page 1*

landowners' deeds, opposition to the road plan has been widespread.

That, and federal rules dictating such infrastructure projects, eventually led IDOT to seek public feedback and ideas for alternatives.

Those alternative concepts were collected during a series of workshops in June.

An overview of the 150 alternatives went on display Wednesday at John Shields Elementary School in Sugar Grove during the first of two public information meetings this week.

The IDOT presentation showed ideas for new expressway routes east and west of the current protected corridor, as well as suggestions for expanded existing roads. It also put forth plans for new local or arterial north-south roads the size of Route 59.

Calls for more mass transit options and bus lines also made the list.

Most of the 50 residents who turned out to view the alternatives were chiefly interested in where a future freeway could go.

The suggested corridors included one that runs a straight shot from I-88 to I-80 along the western borders of Kane and Kendall counties.

To the east, the alternatives included calls for an expressway parallel to the Eola Road corridor, essentially aligned with the eastern Kendall County border and south of Aurora.

State transportation officials told residents Wednesday that all of these options will be considered.

The problem state officials face is that few believe big changes are ahead for the project that in reality still has no money to build it but does have the strong backing of U.S. House Speaker Dennis Hastert, a Plano Republican.

Tom Scidmore, of Lisbon in Kendall County and a Prairie Parkway opponent, said he didn't buy any notion that the state will move the corridor.

"They are trying to pacify us," he said, of the so-called alternatives.

A second public meeting is scheduled from 5:30 to 8 p.m. tonight at White Oak Elementary School, 2001 Dupont Ave., Morris.

## Officials help make Randall Road safer

To the Editor:

One year ago, high school senior Samantha Joos was killed when her car went out of control in the S-curve on Randall Road. This accident was a terrible tragedy for her friends and family to lose such a vibrant young lady in the prime of her life. This stretch of 2.7 miles from Red Haw to Silver Glen has been the site of four fatal accidents, with cars and trucks regularly exceeding speed limits by 15 to 20 mph.

All too often there is a perception of lack of action by our elected officials in areas of public concern, which leave the public skeptical toward the political process. During the last 12 months, actions by the Kane County Board should lay to rest any concerns that many of us may have in our official's ability to act on our behalf.

Beginning in January 2004, resolutions were passed by the St. Charles CUSD 303 Board of Education, the St. Charles City Council of and the Campton Township Board of Trustees seeking increased safety on Randall Road. School administrators, students, PTO leaders and citizens appeared before the Kane County Transportation Committee supporting actions to improve safety.

And, lo and behold, as you read this letter, major actions have been completed on Randall Road to significantly improve safety. Speed limits have been reduced, a barrier island has been erected in the S-curve,

traffic lights have been installed at Crane Road and at Bolcum Road, and the sheriff's department is enforcing more stringently posted speed limits. The people's voice has been heard and, more significantly, remedies executed.

Four individuals should be recognized for their unending support and vigilance in seeing this project to completion. Paul Ragowski, director of the Kane County Department of Transportation, and Steve Pacinski, head of the engineering department, have used all their professional skills and expertise in the analyzation of the problem and the subsequent recommended action plan. Karen McConnaughay, whose District 14 encompasses this section of Randall Road, has been a staunch supporter of safety improvements throughout the county and, in particular, Randall Road. She was a major influencing factor throughout the process.

Last, but absolutely not least, is Bill Wyatt, chairman of the transportation committee, a county board member from Aurora. This project could never have been completed without his total commitment and professional management. From day one, back in January 2004, Bill made safety on Randall Road one of his top priorities. His attendance and discussion of the Randall Road safety issue at two CUSD 303 Board of Education meetings speaks volumes of his sincere desire to make safety happen. His leadership style and meticulous attention to the legislative process were instrumental in completing the road changes in eight months from the initial public input.

Karen McConnaughay now moves to her new responsibility, as Kane County Board Chairwoman. Bill Wyatt will probably assume new committee responsibilities in the new year. We, the public, thank both of them and the department of transportation for their energy and commitment for making it happen. We are all better off for their efforts.

Stephen D. Cole  
St. Charles

12-9-04 Daily Herald

# Kane County fills a top financial post

BY PATRICK WALDRON

Daily Herald Staff Writer

After three weeks without a financial officer, Kane County leaders have hired a new chief accountant to handle the county's day-to-day book-keeping.

Juliet Gaber started her duties Monday.

Her fast-track hiring came on the heels of the departure of former finance director Cheryl Pattelli and the resignation of Susan Snow, the woman who temporarily replaced Pattelli after being promoted from the chief accountant position.

"We are thrilled to have her," said county board chairman-elect Karen McConnaughay,

after Gaber was introduced to board members Monday. Gaber's placement brings some stability to the county finance office during a time of political transition and a time when the duties were left largely unattended.

Since Snow's last day on Nov. 12, the dormant finance office has been under the eyes of the

county treasurer and county auditor.

Gaber, who left an accounting position at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Evanston to come to the county, was hired by a three-member panel of board members put together to quickly fill one of the two main posts in the finance office.

With a chief accountant on

the job, McConnaughay said focus will shift to finding a new finance director. That task will begin on McConnaughay's first day in office, Dec. 20, she said.

McConnaughay said she'll rely on board members with financial backgrounds and members who have served as the finance committee chairman in the past to develop an updated job

description for finance director. Then a national search will begin, likely in January.

In the interim, McConnaughay said, former finance director Pattelli, who left in June for a job with the DuPage County Water Commission, has been contracted to assist Gaber in closing out the county finances for 2004.

12-9-04 Daily Herald

o'clock. These are considered off-peak hours and do not cause any traffic congestion.

At Lord of Life, we are finally able to add on to our current building that was constructed in 1992. We were overcrowded shortly after we began holding services there.

We have been planning for this addition for quite a while to meet the needs of our congregation, not in anticipation of a high influx of new members.

The transportation department says it has modeled this impact ordinance after DuPage County's.

Well, according to DuPage County's Traffic Impact Fee Ordinance, if the construction will not generate additional traffic, the development will be exempt from the impact fee.

Lord of Life, and I believe most churches, build because of current needs.

The amount of traffic going to and from Lord of Life peaked during the mid-1990s and has remained fairly constant since then. Our addition is not going to generate any increase in traffic, and our greatest amount of traffic is at off-peak hours anyway.

Let's face it, the traffic congestion in Kane County is not caused by churches.

Out in the LaFox area, the additional traffic may be generated from the new Metra Station, and the new housing developments that have been approved for LaFox, along with Elburn's continued expansion.

Please call, write or e-mail the Kane County Transportation Department and let officials know you are in favor of exempting churches from the traffic impact fee.

Patricia Plass  
St. Charles

## County impact fee is unfair to churches

I am a longtime member of Lord of Life Church and am writing to express opposition to the Kane County Board's and transportation department's traffic impact fee as it applies to churches.

According to the county, churches are now considered developers because they cause traffic, or do they?

The greatest amount of traffic caused by churches is on Sunday mornings and some weekday evenings after six

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

12-9-04 Beacon News

### Support for Judge Doyle

I have been following your articles in The Beacon about Judge Doyle's program. My brother was in this program for nearly three years. Recovery does not happen easily or overnight.

Judge Doyle's program is tough, but well worth the time these "kids" must spend in it in order to be successful. Recovery, as with any addiction like alcohol, food, gambling or sex, is an ongoing process. Addicts are never recovered, just recovering. However, the system works.

Critics argue that Judge Doyle takes away the addict's right to a fair trial. That is false. Critics argue that Judge Doyle is only in it for himself. That too is false. No one is forced to enter drug court. It is a choice made by the accused. Many enter his program, not seeking help initially, but rather to escape serious charges. They leave the program, if successful, with a new view of themselves and a brighter future. They might relapse along the way and spend some time in jail, but they — not Judge Doyle — chose most times, to re-enter the program.

As a sister, I spent many days blaming myself, trying to "make things better" for my brother. When he was dropped from one treatment center for violating rules, I kicked and screamed until I found another treatment center willing to work with him. When he was homeless, I begged shelters to bend their rules so that he could spend the night. I blamed everyone but my brother for the situation he was in.

His addiction was not about me and it took me nearly two years of his treatment to realize that.

We should be very alarmed that Judge Doyle's critics are attempting to ruin this man and this program. Drug addiction is a problem just as dangerous as any foreign terrorist threat and one that plagues us daily, right here at home.

Ellen Nottke  
Batavia

# Business

Do you have an item of interest for our Business section? Submissions should be sent via e-mail at [krmurray@heritysuburban.com](mailto:krmurray@heritysuburban.com) or regular mail at P.O. Box 3880, St. Charles, IL 60174. Deadline is 5 p.m. Thursday for publication in the following week's paper.

## Unemployed, not out of luck

Kane County Department of Employment and Education assists residents in job search

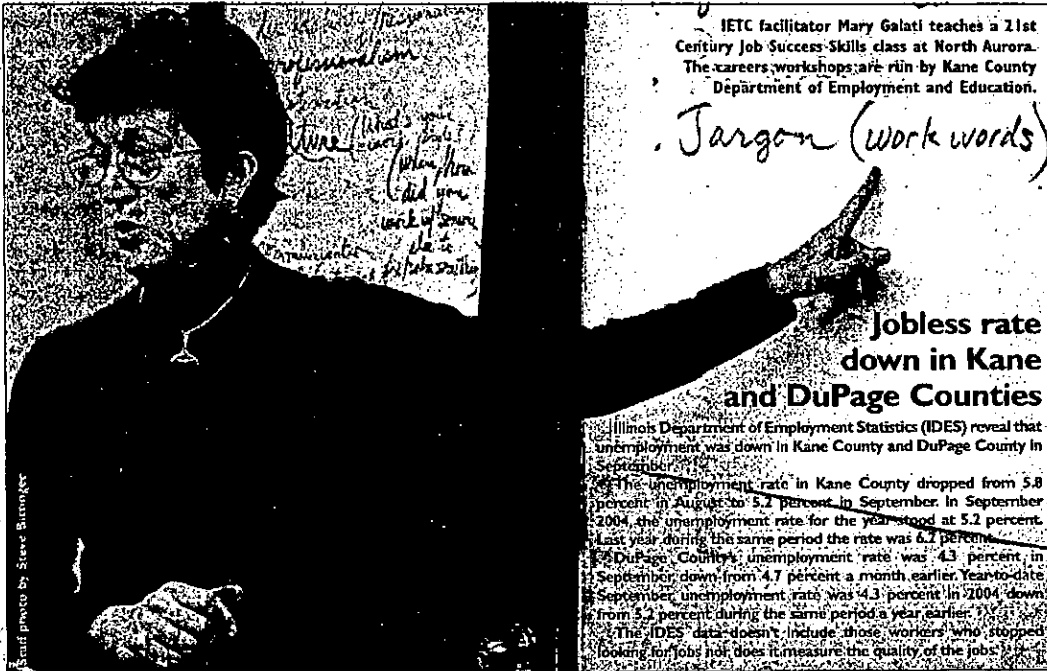
By Laura Cianci  
Correspondent

There were no golden parachutes, benefit packages or company-sponsored support systems when these area residents lost their jobs through downsizing and closures earlier this year.

These folks were on their own until they happened upon the services of the Kane County Department of Employment & Education (KCDEE) in Geneva.

"What we're finding is a lot more people are coming into the local centers for help in finding jobs or retraining to upgrade their skills than ever before," said Shelia McCraven, executive director of KCDEE.

The organization is funded under the federal Workforce Investment Act through the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunities.



IETC facilitator Mary Galati teaches a 21st Century Job Success Skills class at North Aurora. The careers, workshops are run by Kane County Department of Employment and Education.

Jargon (work words)

Jobless rate down in Kane and DuPage Counties

Illinois Department of Employment Statistics (IDES) reveal that unemployment was down in Kane County and DuPage County in September.

The unemployment rate in Kane County dropped from 5.8 percent in August to 5.2 percent in September. In September 2004, the unemployment rate for the year stood at 5.2 percent. Last year during the same period the rate was 6.2 percent.

DuPage County's unemployment rate was 4.3 percent in September, down from 4.7 percent a month earlier. Year-to-date September unemployment rate was 4.3 percent in 2004, down from 5.2 percent during the same period a year earlier.

The IDES data doesn't include those workers who stopped looking for jobs nor does it measure the quality of the jobs.

### HARRY SIMKINS

The promise of retraining is what finally drove 58-year-old Simkins of Batavia, who found himself jobless for the first time in 33 years, to KCDEE's classes.

After scouring local papers and job sites on the Internet and applying for every job he thought could handle to no avail, Simkins said his confidence was flagging. The few people he talked to about work told him the reason he couldn't find employment was that he had spent too many years on the same job.

"They said I should have changed jobs every five years," he said. "It made me feel pretty bad. Thirty-three years on the job and then someone tells you something like that. It makes you feel like you wasted your whole life."

After months of pounding the pavement and coming up empty, Simkins decided he had to try a different tack.

"The people at the Illinois Unemployment Insurance office held an orientation and talked about getting the basics and improving your knowledge," Simkins said during a telephone interview. "They told us we had to get more up-to-date."

So Simkins signed on for the classes. He recently completed customer service and teamwork, computer and resume building classes.

"The people were very nice, informative and encouraging. They sure try to build your confidence up and point you in

the right direction," he said.

Though he used computers on his former job, Simkins said the classes provided answers to a lot of questions. "I never worked with Word, Excel and the Internet," he admitted.

He began working in the pressroom at Strathmore Printing in Geneva 33 years ago earning \$3.75 an hour. As he gained skills, he took on more complex jobs. He gradually worked his skill level up to earn \$22.75 an hour and then a few years ago took a cut in pay to \$20 an hour when the company asked for concessions. At one point he was a supervisor. A pre-press plate maker, Simkins figured he would retire with the company.

When Strathmore laid him off in July, he said he was stunned. His only compensation was his earned vacation pay. "I never thought it would happen. I thought I was far enough in the work force I didn't have to worry about my job," he said.

### LAROYCE MOORE

With five years of employment under her belt, Montgomery resident Moore, 29, was asked to take a 60 percent cut in pay from her \$17.75 an hour job. She was laid off in September.

She studied the help wanted pages in the local newspapers for weeks and discovered almost all the jobs wanted people who were computer literate. Moore also real-

ized she didn't know how to approach employers or what to say when she did.

"I wasn't comfortable in that (job seeking) environment. It was kind of intimidating. I wanted to know what employers wanted from people and what to expect," she said.

She went to the KCDEE Resource Center and signed up for their computer and communication classes.

"Everyone wants Word and Excel," said Moore, who finished the KCDEE computer and resume classes last month. "This time when I go on an interview and they ask about Word or Excel I can demonstrate my knowledge. Before, I couldn't tell them what a dialogue box was or what it looked like."

The main support for two boys, ages 12 years and 14 months, Moore is looking for any kind of job that will help pay the bills. "I'm trying to stay positive and focused, but I'll take anything right now because the bills don't stop," she said.

### ROSALIND POSTLEWATE

West Aurora resident Postlewaite, 57, is a little fussier. She retired from Lucent Technologies after 30 years of service a couple of years ago, but rising prices and taxes pushed her back into the work force.

See **UNEMPLOYED**, Page 14



Business

# Jobless can upgrade their skills at a training center

By Laura Cianci  
Correspondent

Unemployment and potential job growth are forcing more people to take advantage of employment and retraining services offered by the Kane County Department of Employment & Education.

"Many people are taking advantage of our career skills workshops," said Shelia McCraven, executive director of KCDEE.

Workshops and seminars include everything from mastering new skills and developing an employment plan to how to communicate and keep the job after you get it.

**Illinois Employment Training Centers**  
ELGIN IETC: 10 DuPage Court, Elgin, IL 60120  
Phone: (847) 888-7900 Fax: (847) 888-4145  
NORTH AURORA IETC: 2 Smoke Tree Plaza, North Aurora, IL 60054  
Phone: (630) 844-6640 Fax: (630) 844-6698

KCDEE serves the local workforce investment Area 5, which includes Kane, DeKalb and Kendall Counties, and offers a host of services to job seekers including career information, education and training workshops, Internet access, interview counseling, job search assistance, resume assistance and self assessment tools.

"People who are seeking services either have been dislocated from jobs and believe

there is now an upturn in the job market and are either coming in to retool for the jobs out there or to seek assistance in getting employment," McCraven said.

All county residents are eligible to receive services at KCDEE's Career Resource Centers. Though the level of some services may depend upon eligibility criteria.

However, anyone is welcome to visit one of the career centers and use computers to write resumes, get help to write a resume, make telephone calls to follow up on jobs, access online job banks, copy resumes, register for jobs and even get help to prepare for an interview.

## UNEMPLOYED

Continued from Page 13



IETC Facilitator Sherri Nagy teaches a Basic Computer Skills Class at North Aurora.  
Staff photos by Steve Bittinger

more jobs, as does Simkins who is seeking any respectable full-time job. When asked what he meant by respectable, he said, "I feel like I'm trying but it's not going anywhere because there's not a lot out there. I just want a job where I work everyday and not flipping hamburgers or clearing dishes like I did when I was 16. I don't want to go back there, though in this job market I'll probably end up doing it."

He also worries about younger people in today's job market and the lack of loyalty it is breeding. "I feel sorry for those trying to come up now with the work force the way it is (People changing jobs every five years). I don't believe that I still believe you do the best you can for the company you work for," Simkins said.

She got a job at Medlab in Aurora as an electronic assembly worker earning \$9.50 an hour two years ago, but it went out of business in June.

When Postlewaite spotted a sign over the resource center at KCDEE's offices offering free computer classes, she decided it was time to brush up on her skills.

"I don't have a computer at home any more because I had to cut back," she said. "My skills got rusty... especially with Excel. When I worked at Lucent I used them every day. I thought the class would upgrade them."

Postlewaite expects the refresher course to open up

# Christopher to challenge Burns for mayor in 2005

By Christopher Petersen  
Staff writer

12-9-04  
Republican

The race for mayor of Geneva has become a race after all, as former Geneva Community Unit School District 304 Board of Education member Bill Christopher announced he will be running for the office against current Mayor Kevin Burns, who is also his brother-in-law.

Burns announced in October that he will be seeking his second term as mayor in the consolidated election Tuesday, April 5, 2005.

Christopher, a 40-year resident of Geneva, said he will be running on a platform of what he calls "the four values: family, financial leadership, fitness/fun and the future."

Christopher said he felt compelled to run for mayor because of a desire to serve people.

"My purpose in life has always been to serve," Christopher said. "I think my big strengths are leadership and stewardship."

Burns said while he welcomed the opportunity to run against another candidate, he was not planning on coasting his way through the election.

"My game plan hasn't changed," he said. "I have prepared and I look forward to a campaign based on the issues."

Christopher's vision for the city includes improving the operation of city government and employment through technology while promoting fiscal responsibility. He said one of his goals is to partner with a local university to create a high-technology incubator area that would bring more software and technology jobs to the city.

"I think we need to diversify a little bit in our employment here," Christopher said.

Another, technology-based goal Christopher has is to implement a system to document and quickly respond to residents' complaints.

In the area of fitness, Christopher said he wants to see bicycle lanes on city streets and a footbridge over Randall Road.

"If we're going to do this, we need safe streets," Christopher said, adding he wants to add four new police officers to the Geneva Police Department, if elected.

Christopher said he has invited Burns to a series of three debates to be held starting in January, but added Burns had not yet responded.

"We're certainly happy to consider opportunities to debate the issues," Burns said.

Christopher identifies himself as a "single parent" on his campaign Web site. He and his wife, Maureen, are going through a divorce. Maureen is the sister of Burns' wife, Terry. But Christopher said family connections will have very little to do with his campaign, no matter what others say.

"To me, this race is about issues," Christopher said.

Christopher is currently chief of customer care at Sears Customer Direct. He has a master of business administration degree from Northwestern University and holds degrees in business from the University of Notre Dame and Waubesa Community College. He is a 1976 graduate of Geneva Community High School, and served as a District 304 School Board member from 1995 to 1999. He has four children.

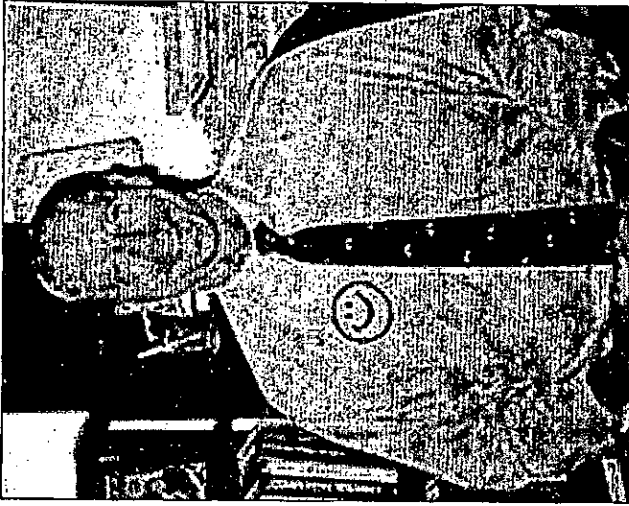


Photo submitted to Press-Republican Newspapers  
Geneva resident Bill Christopher, a former Geneva Community Unit School District 304 Board of Education member, announced he will oppose incumbent Kevin Burns in the race for mayor in April 2005.

# New jail funding plan a tough task for County Board

I would like to congratulate the new members of the Kane County Board and share with them some thoughts and observations as I leave the board. Of all the issues before them, the new county jail will bear the greatest financial consequences to the taxpayer and county government.

The County Board hired a consultant for a study of future jail capacities. The most current study's findings were in line with the population projections of past studies. In 2005 we should have a jail capacity of 850 to 988 beds. By 2010 jail capacity should be 1,200 beds.

The county's response to the study? A 740-bed jail was proposed and then later discarded for a new 609-bed option. This is what the County Board will be asked to approve in January — a jail that will be more than 50 percent undersized when ground is broken and will need to be doubled in size within a year of opening. (The average daily population of the jail was already 637 in 2002.) This capacity shortfall will most likely mean we will have to continue operating the existing jail and, therefore, bear the financial consequences of supporting two separate facilities.

If we were to follow the National Institute of Corrections' procedures as we have claimed, the last item which should have been considered is setting jail capacity. Unfortunately, the county chose to set capacity first, without taking any study, diversion programs or documented facts into consideration. Rest assured, any future studies will somehow make the numbers support jail size conclusions reached long ago.

Many financing schemes have been announced for the proposed \$47 million jail. If one adds in things left out such as infrastructure, parking and other requirements as well as other nonrequirements such as a new sheriff's department administration building at the Judicial Center, the total tab will be closer to \$74 million. Given that this was to be a "no tax increase" jail project, where will the extra \$27 million come from?

We could strip the cash reserves, but doing so would also strip the road transportation budget which now is supplemented by those reserves. One of the few ways we could make up for those jail-depleted road funds would be to increase the county gas tax — hardly a popular plan.

Likewise, if we take money from the Grand Victoria Casino Riverboat funds, we end up cutting money for the Child Advocacy Center (abused children), domestic violence (abused spouses), drug prosecution, Drug Court (jail diversion), Kane Cares (at-risk families and infants) and other programs. At this point there should be concrete information about what programs will be cut, what budgets will be slashed, how much will be saved (if anything) and who (if anyone) will be fired?

There are other facts to consider, as well. The Landfill Enterprise Fund used for capital projects ends in 2006. How will we make up that shortfall? What will the changes in the property tax cap mean to the entire county and future budgets? Because it is significantly cheaper for us to outplace prisoners at McHenry County, our current outplacement budget will not fund the added costs to house the prisoners in Kane County Jail. Where will that additional funding come from?

*Douglas Weigand*

*Kane County Board District 10*

*Finance Committee chairman*

*Corrections Committee past chairman*

12-9-04

# Change delays county Republican committee assignments

Chairman-elect McConaughay to be sworn in Dec. 20

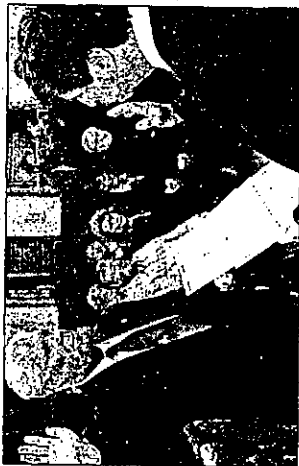
By Eric Walter  
Staff writer

The amendment of a state statute has forced a delay in the making of assignments to Kane County Board committees.

One of the clauses in House Bill 629, signed into law July 30 by Gov. Rod Blagojevich, changed the Counties Code in the Illinois Compiled Statutes to move the start of county board chairman's terms.

"There was a fluke in the law that was just (passed) that county board chairmen are to be sworn in on the third Monday of December," said Kane County Board member Jan Carlson, who managed Kane County Board Chairman-elect Karen McConaughay's campaign for the county's executive office.

That fluke means McConaughay can not take office until Monday, Dec. 20, nearly a week after the



Batavia resident Thomas Van Cleave is sworn in by 16th Judicial Circuit Court Chief Judge Donald Hudson as the new District 10 Kane County Board member during a ceremony at the Kane County Government Center in Geneva Dec. 6.

panel has its December meeting.

County Board committee assignments have been doled out at the December meeting for about eight

years, according to outgoing Chairman Mike McCoy.

See DELAYS, Page 5

## LOCAL ITEMS

### DELAYS

Continued from Page 4

But McCoy said Dec. 6 he did not want to make the appointments in light of his departure from the post in less than two weeks.

"I don't feel it would be appropriate for me to make the committee assignments," he said.

The appointment of members to the board's 12 standing and four ad-hoc committees are made by the county's chief executive. The election of seven new board members and the departure of their predecessors resulted in the need to reorganize the committees.

The conflict between the recently amended state statute and existing County Board policy resulted from a change instituted eight years ago.

"We used to (make assignments) in January. We changed it to December because, for a month, the new board members didn't have assignments," said McCoy.

House Bill 629, proposed by House

Speaker Michael Madigan of Chicago,

originally was treated to amend the state

Election Code to clarify the campaign-

finance article, according to the Illinois

Legislature's Web site. Forty-seven

changes, including moving the start of

county board chairmen, were introduced

in two amendments by the Illinois Senate.

The assignments are expected to be

made at a special County Board meeting

sometime before Friday, Dec. 31, added

McCoy. Whether a special meeting will be

called still was being discussed,

McCormack said shortly before press

time.

The chairmanship of the Corrections &

Rehabilitation Committee is up for grabs,

as McCormack moves into her new

position. McCormack, a St. Charles

Republican, has served as the District 14

County Board representative for the past

12 years.

A new chairman also will be chosen for

the Finance/Budget Committee following

the departure of Doug Weigand, a Batavia

Republican from District 10, who decided

not to seek another term.

Republican John Hoscheit of St.

Charles, who represents District 12, said

he hopes to retain chairmanship of the

Kane County Forest Preserve District

Board.

Thirteen of the 26 board members were

sworn into office Dec. 6 by 16th Judicial

Circuit Court Chief Judge Donald

Hudson. Those sworn in were: Linda

Holmes, an Aurora Democrat from

District 2; Aurora Democrat Bonnie Lee

Kunkel, District 4; Paul Greivakes, a

Democrat from District 6 in Aurora;

Democrat Rudolph "Rudy" Neuburger of

Aurora, District 8; Republican Tom Van

Cleave of Batavia, District 10; John

Hoscheit, Republican from District 12;

Mark Davoust of St. Charles, District 14;

South Elgin Republican Michael Keryon,

District 16; Don Wolfe, a Republican from

Elgin representing District 18; Elgin

Democrat Marlene Fox, District 20; Elgin

Republican Jackie Tredup, District 22;

Hollie Kissane, a Democrat from Elgin,

District 24; and Jan Carlson, a Republican

from Elgin from District 26.



St. Charles resident Mark Davoust is sworn in as the new District 14 Kane County Board member during a ceremony at the Kane County Government Center in Geneva Dec. 6.

Staff photos by Steve Bringer

Van Cleave, who currently serves as

president of the Batavia Public School

District 101 Board of Education, said he is

awaiting comment from newly installed

Kane County State's Attorney John

Barsanti about whether he can hold both

offices concurrently. Illinois Attorney

General Lisa Madigan declined to issue an

opinion on the issue, remanding it to the

state's attorney's office last week, said Van

Cleave. He plans to serve out his term on

the School Board, regardless of Barsanti's

decision, he added.

Van Cleave and Davoust said they both

look forward to performing their new

duties on the County Board.

12-10-04 Beacon news

## Kane Board sets special meeting

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Incoming Kane County Board Chairman Karen McConaughay said this week it appears she will make her committee appointments at a special County Board meeting Dec. 20 — the day she is sworn in.

McConaughay, R-St. Charles, said that decision was made after she talked to all the board members and asked them if they wanted a special meeting, or wanted to wait until the regular January meeting.

"Board members wanted to

know what their committee assignments would be as soon as possible," she said.

Under county rules, the new chairman is supposed to make committee assignments and appoint chairmen by the first regular meeting in December, which would be next Tuesday. The board then debates approval of those committees.

But because McConaughay, a St. Charles Republican, is not in office yet, the board will suspend its rules next Tuesday to delay committee appointments. Board members will adjourn the Dec. 14 meeting to Dec. 20.

The maneuvering is prompted by a change in state law that moves the swearing in of the new County Board chairman to the third Monday in December, rather than the first Monday.

Board Chairman Mike McCoy, R-Aurora, thus will serve an additional two weeks and will preside over next Tuesday's board meeting.

Board members said they are curious to see what McConaughay does with the board's committee structure. She has hinted at changes in some committees, combining some, such as Judiciary and Corrections and Rehabilitation.

## Mitchell charged with battery at jail

12-10-04 Chronicle

Woman allegedly  
sprayed guard with  
'cleaning solution'

By DAN CAMPANA  
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Already facing the death penalty for the murder of a West Dundee woman, Vivian Mitchell now finds herself in trouble for a jailhouse altercation.

"Basically, she had attacked a guard in the jail," Assistant State's Attorney Jody Gleason said Thursday.

Mitchell is charged with two counts of aggravated battery in connection to the Dec. 2 incident. She will appear in court Dec. 21 on those charges.

According to Lt. Al Swanson of the

Kane County Sheriff's Office, Mitchell was being removed from her cell to take a shower when she apparently sprayed a female corrections officer in the face with some type of "cleaning solution."

After spraying the solution, which likely was a mixture of shampoo and water, Swanson said, Mitchell then briefly attacked the officer before other officers broke up the altercation, Swanson said.

The officer, who has worked at the jail approximately three years, was treated for minor injuries at the jail before being taken to Delnor-Community Hospital for "precautionary" reasons.

Swanson said Mitchell apparently was upset about being held in segregation at the jail.

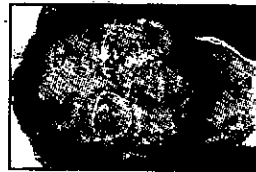
The 40-year-old Mitchell has been held in Kane County jail since shortly after her arrest in March 2003, when she was charged in the death of Lynn Weis.

Last month, Kane County Circuit Judge Patricia Piper Golden found Mitchell guilty but mentally ill of the March 17, 2003, homicide.

Police found 40-year-old Weis inside her burned-out West Dundee apartment and later arrested Mitchell, whose last known address is in Indiana, as she drove Weis' car.

Mitchell was convicted of first-degree murder, aggravated arson, home invasion, forgery and unlawful use of a credit card. A Jan. 28 hearing is scheduled on post-trial matters.

Despite the fact that Mitchell faces the death penalty, Gleason said, "We'll go forward with (the battery) case," as a way to deter other inmates from attacking jail personnel or starting fights.



Mitchell

---

---

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

---

12-10-04

Beacon News

**Drug program a good model**

I was appalled to read that the Kane County Bar Association's Evaluation Committee gave Judge James Doyle a "not presently recommended" rating for retention. I can't understand this decision. Doyle is the most honorable, fair and dedicated man I have ever met. He has established the Kane County drug program that has become renowned throughout the U.S. There are other counties and states developing drug programs using Doyle's program as a template.

His dedication is without bounds — not only in the hours spent each month with clients, but in dedication to these addicts. His honest concern for their welfare, lifestyles, families and futures, is exceptional. The bottom line is, he saves lives.

Does this committee feel these lives are not worth saving? Does it feel his methods are somewhat nontraditional? In the lives of those affected by addiction, it doesn't matter what the methods are, it is about results. Does this committee not realize that taking these addicts out of our communities and replacing them with hardworking, committed individuals is a positive result?

Has this committee ever spoken to any of the recovering addicts or family members? Has it ever attended a funeral of an addict that didn't make it? Of course this program is not a 100 percent fix. Is this committee negating Doyle's success because the help of a "higher power" is involved? The "higher power"

involved is one of the addict's lifelines.

I invite anyone who questions this program, whether it be an attorney, judge or individual, to call the drug program or sit in on Doyle's drug court. Thank you, Judge Doyle, for saving my daughter's life.

**Kathy Barkei**  
Batavia

**Anti-Am**

Read past ed

12-10-04 Daily Herald

# Politicians take issue with judge districts

BY TONA KUNZ

Daily Herald Staff Writer

Carving suburban counties into small judicial election districts has as much to do with creating a politically diverse bench as an ethnically diverse one.

At least that was the feeling at the last hearing for creating suburban sub-circuits held in Aurora Thursday.

"There is no doubt in my mind that the only reason this is being done is to get Democrats on the bench in the collar counties," said Sen. Ed Petka, a Republican from Plainfield whose district covers much of

Aurora Township.

Members of the state's House and Senate judiciary committees have been traveling to Will, Lake, McHenry and Kane counties to gather input on potentially creating election districts for judges similar to those for legislators.

Currently, all judges outside Cook County are elected by voters from the entire circuit, which for Kane County is the 16th circuit encompassing Kane, Kendall and DeKalb counties.

The sub-circuits are intended to create smaller pools of candi-

See JUDGES on PAGE 14

Continued from

## Judges: Democrats trying to take over, critics say

Continued from Page 1

dates for voters to get to know, as well as make it easier for minorities to win a spot on the bench.

If that also means it makes it easier for Democratic pockets in heavily-Republican circuits to elect one of their own, all the better, said state Rep. Linda Chapa LaVia, a Democrat from Aurora.

More Democrat judges would bring a fresh way of thinking to basically one-party circuits like Kane's, as well as give the county's Democrats someone to

connect with on the bench.

But Petka said the plan isn't about creating diversity like it was in Cook County, but is about Democrats trying to take over, otherwise sub-circuits would be advised for the entire state and not just the Republican strongholds in the collar counties.

Plus, unlike the Cook County division in 1991 which involved both parties, Republicans have had little involvement with this sub-circuit proposal started in 2003, Petka said.

Several judges and attorneys from Kane and Kendall counties

echoed his concern, advising against creating the sub-circuits for fear it would actually foster less diversity and less-qualified candidates.

Local bar and judicial associations recommend judges have at least 10 years experience practicing law, but very few minority attorneys in the circuit meet that criteria.

Without seeing a pool of minorities waiting to step onto the bench, Kendall County state's attorney Tim McCann said he fears the plan is grounded more in politics than creating a better legal system.

# County board members eager to learn committee posts

Reshuffling of the Kane County Board's slate of committees may have been pushed back a week, now set for Dec. 20, but that hasn't slowed down new and old board members alike from wondering where they will be working.

Like a new Senator or Congressman, many a board member hopes to get on high-profile and busy committees to do his or her thing.

In Kane County government, that normally means the development, transportation or corrections and rehabilitation committees.

Board chairman-elect Karen McConnaughay, who holds the authority to make committee appointments, has kept a pretty tight lid on information except to infer that changes are indeed coming when she takes office Dec. 20.



Patrick Waldron  
Kane County

group that oversees the Kane County jail.

That committee is expected to be merged with the county board's judiciary committee, now headed by Jim Mitchell, a North Aurora Republican. He is seen as the leading candidate to become chairman of such an expanded corrections committee.

The chief of the transportation committee, Bill Wyatt, an

Aurora Republican, also is expected by many to be replaced, though predicting his replacement — if one is needed — is difficult.

Cathy Hurlbut, an Elgin Republican, serves as the board's vice chairman and also as chairman of the development committee, which considers new development and construction. She has indicated her desire to keep that position, but when questioned insisted the decision is up to McConnaughay.

The finance committee will get a new chairman in wake of Batavia Republican Doug Weigand's retirement from the board.

Also, one of the unanswered political questions is whether McConnaughay will keep all committee chairmanships in the hands of Republicans.

Under the current committee lineup, Democrats hold the chairman job on the public health and administration committees.

McConnaughay has said she'll appoint the best and most qualified people to chairman jobs. She did not rule out Democrats nor did she guarantee members of the opposition party top posts.

At this week's swearing-in ceremony for the seven new board members, expectations were high.

Tom Van Cleave, a Batavia Republican, succeeding Weigand, said he requested a seat on the development committee. As a longtime Batavia

Plan Commission member, Van Cleave said that choice was easy, though he does have an interest in public health as well.

"That's where I think I would

fit the best," he said.

Marlena Fox, an Elgin Democrat taking over duties in Republican Jack Cook's former district, said she has an interest in community development block grants and would like a chance to work with that program.

Elsewhere, Mark Davoust, the St. Charles Republican elected in McConnaughay's old county board district, said he hopes he'll get a shot to serve on the corrections committee.

The new jail being considered would be built in Davoust's district.

"It's an important one to me," he said.

• Patrick Waldron covers Kane County government and politics. To contact him, call (630) 587-8632 or send e-mail to [pwaldron@dailyherald.com](mailto:pwaldron@dailyherald.com).



# Judges: *news* Don't cut circuit in pieces

## ■ Seeking diversity:

## Jurists say key is to help more minorities to become attorneys

**By Mike Cetera**  
STAFF WRITER

**AURORA** — Any plan to change the way judges are elected locally would not increase the likelihood more minorities would win seats on the bench, a group of sitting judges said Thursday.

Four judges have come out opposed to carving the 16th Judicial Circuit into smaller "subcircuits" for election purposes — an idea supporters say would give African Americans and Latinos a better shot at becoming judges.

The concept is similar to drawing a ward map for a city because it would require judges to live within small geographic areas. An area with a large minority population is more likely to vote for a minority candidate, supporters said.

But judges who spoke Thursday at a General Assembly forum called to measure support on the issue said diversity can best be helped by encouraging more African Americans and Latinos to become attorneys.

Lawmakers held a series of public hearings on the matter in five counties over two weeks, concluding with a forum Thursday at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy in Aurora. No legislation has been proposed that would create subcircuits locally, but the issue is law in four other counties.

Kane County Judge F. Keith Brown and other judges said the district needs to produce more minority attorneys who stay in the area long enough to gain experience to qualify for the bench.

Brown, the only African American on the bench in the 16th Circuit, said just two Hispanics and no African Americans have applied to become associate judges in his 13 years on the bench.

"We need to continue to develop a talent pool, and as that develops we're going to put them on the bench," Kane County Judge Michael Colwell said.

The judges contended drawing smaller, local boundaries would have the effect of reducing the pool of qualified judicial candidates.

Now elected in districtwide races, a judge can live anywhere within Kane, Kendall or DeKalb County.

Kane, Kendall of DeKalb County:  
Kane County Board Member

## JUDGES

From page A1

Gerald Jones, D-Aurora, spoke in favor of creating subcircuits, arguing they would help bring more minorities to the bench. He said African Americans and Latinos deserve to have "a judge of our peers."

Other judges said dividing the district would politicize the process even more, a feeling shared by some Republicans in the Legislature. State Sen. Ed Petka, R-Plainfield, said the Democrat-controlled General Assembly is trying to get more party members on the bench.

"If there is a problem, let the judi-

ciary handle it," Kendall County Judge James Wilson said of increasing diversity.

Judges also said most communities within the circuit are represented on the bench, arguing the creation of subcircuits to ensure geographic diversity is unwarranted.

Kane County Judge Grant Wegner said 11 different towns are represented, including seven judges from Aurora and four from Elgin.

After the hearing, state Rep. Linda Chapa LaVia, the Aurora Democrat who chaired the forum, said she believed the issue requires further input from the community. She said she hasn't decided if she will support any legislation.

# State's attorney: Van Cleave should drop a post

12-10-04 Chronicle

He now serves  
on county board,  
Batavia school board

By PAUL DALLING  
Kane County Chronicle

Tom Van Cleave might have one job  
too many.

The Kane County State's Attorney's Office has issued an opinion that states Van Cleave should not simultaneously serve on the Kane County Board and the Batavia school board.

There is no law relating to this issue, so Van Cleave must decide whether to follow the office's opinion and quit one of his two posts or to ignore the opinion altogether.

Van Cleave said he would announce his decision next week.

The state's attorney opinion is Batavia, said some form of compromise, merely that an opinion, said John Izzo,



Van Cleave

attorney for the Batavia school district, said Van Cleave requested the opinion from the state's attorney's office. It was issued Dec. 3. Van Cleave was sworn in on Monday to the county board.

Van Cleave began to campaign for the county board, said some form of compromise, merely that an opinion, said John Izzo,

my attorney and the state's attorney are working it out," Van Cleave said. Neither Izzo nor Van Cleave would comment on the nature of the discussion and the state's attorney's office could not be reached for comment.

Batavia School Superintendent Ed Cave said Van Cleave had discussed a possible conflict before he ran for the county board. "I don't know from the time that he started attorney and John Bausard, who was elected to the post last month. The issue was raised during the bid."

See VAN CLEAVE, page 2.

## Van Cleave

Continued from page 1

Van Cleave was elected to the county board the same day.

"I didn't want any potential problems to arise like someone raising it as a conflict of interest," Van Cleave said.

Izzo said that the state's attorney's office took the issue into review, even allowing him to submit some relevant information.

"They reached the conclusion that he could not hold both offices," Izzo said.

According to Izzo, the state's attorney's office followed the opinions set out by the Illinois Attorney General that no clear precedent exists.

"There's never been a court decision that's been right on the point to agree or disagree with that," he said.

However, opinions issued in 1993 and 2003 by the attorney general's office state that an individual should not hold both positions.

Izzo said the state's attorney's opinion

was influenced by the previous attorney general's opinions.

Van Cleave either can abide by the opinion and resign from one of the boards or simply ignore it and continue serving in both capacities, he said.

"There are risks within both decisions, and I'm weighing those risks right now," he said.

Van Cleave said he has not decided which position he would vacate should he abide by the opinion. In either case, the vacated position would have to be filled.

"The board of education has the authority to appoint a member for the remaining term of an unfilled office," Cave said.

The position of president is not elected by voters, but rather among school board members. That means Van Cleave's school board replacement would not necessarily be president.

Should Van Cleave resign from the county board, the board either would pick a replacement for his District 10 seat or the seat would be put on the ballot in January.

the next election, Chairman-elect Karen McConaughay said. Because the next election is not until April, McConaughay said the first option is more likely. However, she said she does did not expect him to leave the county board.

"I can't imagine that he would get himself sworn in just to turn around and resign," she said.

Van Cleave also could ignore the opinion and continue to serve on both boards.

However, such a move would risk alienating the state's attorney's office, the county's chief legal body, Izzo said.

"It's not binding, but it's very important," Izzo said of the office's opinion.

Also, Van Cleave's term on the school board ends in April. He said that if he were to keep both seats, the issue would "weigh heavily" on whether he would seek re-election to the school board. He said he was not ready to make a decision on this issue.

Nominating petitions are due in January.

# State still 'neutral' on Prairie Parkway

By William Presecky  
Tribune staff reporter

12-10-04  
CHICAGO  
Tribune

Three years after unveiling a controversial plan to protect a highway corridor through Kendall and southern Kane Counties from suburban sprawl, state planners say they are not committed to the Prairie Parkway and remain flexible on transit options for the booming area.

Although U.S. House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) and state Transportation Secretary Tim Martin have shown a preference for the parkway plan, an Ottawa-based project engineer for the Illinois Department of Transportation isn't so sure.

"At this point we are neutral on what works and what doesn't work," Rick Powell said during public meetings this week. "We're still open to suggestions" on plans for the area's current and future transportation needs, he said.

IDOT's quest to identify "a single alternative [solution] or a very small number of alternatives" is based on a needs analysis completed in April that shows the daily traffic volume in the area is projected to increase from 30 percent to 230 percent on various roads by 2030.

Despite moving to protect a 36-mile long, 400-foot wide highway corridor, IDOT is not bound to the concept, Powell said.

PLEASE SEE PARKWAY, PAGE 13

13

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

SECTION 2

W

METRO

FRIDAY  
DECEMBER 10, 2004

**"At this point we are neutral on what works and what doesn't work."**

—Rick Powell, IDOT project engineer based in Ottawa

The study area encompasses nearly 1,600 square miles and includes all of Kendall County and parts of six adjacent counties.

Though commending the agency's effort, a spokesman for Citizens Against the Sprawlway, a grass-roots group opposed to the Prairie Parkway transportation project for the state, acknowledged there continues to be "a healthy skepticism ... that IDOT and certainly Rep. Hastert are committed and focused on the Prairie Parkway as a single solution to transportation problems."

Still, group spokesman Jan Strasma credits IDOT planners "with a major effort to involve the public, to talk to the public and perhaps listen to the public."

Martin has identified the Prairie Parkway as a priority transportation project for the state.

Hastert has long been a proponent for construction of a north-south expressway linking I-55 and I-80 through his district.

ings over the summer that were designed to more directly involve the general public and local officials in the planning process. The agency gleaned more than 150 transportation improvement concepts that have been grouped into general corridors. They will be evaluated over the next year.

A complete project update is available at [www.prairie-parkway.com](http://www.prairie-parkway.com).

"We have the flexibility ... the freedom ... to change or re-move the corridor," said Powell, in response to a question he and IDOT's consultants have been asked repeatedly since December 2002. That's when the state announced plans for a five-year, \$18 million study of the area's transportation needs.

## PARKWAY: Plan identified as a priority state project

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"The protected corridor [between Interstate Highways 88 and 80] is a land reserved for one possible solution," he told a group of about 60 residents Wednesday at a Prairie Parkway Study meeting in Sugar Grove. A second session was set for Thursday in Morris.

IDOT organized a series of workshops and private meet-



Tribune photo by Terry Harris  
John Long and his son Michael, 10, of Big Rock look at Prairie Parkway plans at a meeting Wednesday in Sugar Grove.

# Former corrections officer pleads innocent

12-10-04 Chronicle

**Aurora man charged with sexual misconduct while working at jail**

By DAN CAMPANA  
Kane County Chronicle

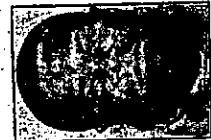
ST. CHARLES — A former Kane County jail corrections officer on Thursday formally denied sexual misconduct charges against him. Frederick Shead, 32, of Aurora, a year, removed the female inmate

from her cell without permission on at least two occasions between July 23 and Aug. 8.

Shead remains free on \$30,000 bond. He returns to court Jan. 6. Shead's attorney asked prosecutors Thursday for more specific information about the alleged acts.

The woman, identified in court documents as "A.G.," reportedly had her breasts fondled by Shead during the encounters, while she fondled his genital area.

She was transferred to the Lake County women's center, where inves-



**Shead**

Investigators have not disclosed how they learned about the incidents. Charges of official misconduct and

tigators from the sheriff's office interviewed her twice in September.

Shead's office officials placed Shead on administrative leave Sept. 7 as an internal investigation began.

Shead resigned 10 days later.

Investigators have not disclosed how they learned about the incidents. Charges of official misconduct and

custodial sexual misconduct are Class 3 felonies. If convicted, Shead could be sentenced to up to five years in prison.

At the time of the arrest, Kane County Sheriff Kenneth Ramsey said Shead had no previous disciplinary problems but called him an "apparent bad apple."

Ramsey also noted that such cases are very rare.

"I hold my employees to a very high standard," Ramsey said. "We take it very seriously when they violate that professionalism."

## Kane County Notebook

# McConnaughay waits to take oath

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

Kane County Board Chairman-elect Karen McConnaughay will take her oath at 8:30 a.m. Dec. 20. Her induction originally was scheduled for Dec. 6, but was delayed because of a state law passed earlier this year that pushes back chairman inductions in certain counties. The law was designed to allow more time for counting provisional ballots.

Kane County Chief Judge Donald Hudson will preside.

McConnaughay defeated Democrat Tom Meadath in the Nov. 2 election to take the seat of Chairman Michael McCoy. McCoy did not seek re-election.

\*\*\*

The Kane County Board will hold a special meeting to elect a vice chairman and consider committee appoint-

ments for 2005-06. The meeting will be held at 5 p.m. Dec. 20 in the county board room, Building A, Kane County Government Center, 719 S. Batavia Ave., Geneva.

\*\*\*

The Transportation Committee meeting scheduled for 9 a.m. Dec. 30 has been moved to 9 a.m. Friday.

\*\*\*

The following committee meetings have been canceled:

- Finance/Budget — Wednesday
- Executive — Thursday
- Human Services — Friday
- Public Services — Dec. 20
- Corrections and Rehabilitations — Dec. 23

\*\*\*

Quote of the Week:  
"This has been the screwiest turnover. No one knows who's on first and what's on second."  
— Catherine Hurlbut, R-Elgin.

# Van Cleave: Job decision to come Monday

12-11-04 Chronicle

## Kane County Board member also serves on Batavia school board

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

Tom Van Cleave will announce Monday whether he will continue to serve simultaneously on the Kane County Board and the Batavia school board.

The impending announcement comes after the Kane County State's Attorney's Office issued an opinion that said the two jobs are incompatible.

Although no state law exists that prevents a person from holding two elected positions, Assistant State's Attorney Joseph Lulves, who wrote the opinion in a letter to the school district's lawyer dated Dec. 3, agreed with similar opinions from the Illinois attorney general.

Lulves also wrote that taking the oath of office for the county board, which Van Cleave did Monday, amounted to a resignation from the school board.

At a press conference scheduled for 2 p.m. Monday at the school board offices at 335 W. Wilson St. in Batavia, Van Cleave will announce whether he will

resign from one of the boards or ignore the non-binding opinion and serve on both.

Van Cleave was elected last month to the county board's District 10 seat. His term on the school board expires in April.

He is paid \$16,000 annually to serve on the county board. The school board position is unpaid.

"The state's attorney opinion is merely that, an opinion," Batavia school district attorney John Izzo said Thursday.

Van Cleave, R-Batavia, would not comment on what he will say Monday, although he did address the issue when it was raised during the Republican primary.

"If it does prove to be a conflict, I would give up the school board," Van Cleave said in February.

In the letter written to Izzo, Lulves wrote that the office was in agreement with "numerous" Illinois attorney general opinions that found incompatibility in similar situations. Lulves cited examples from 1973, 1989, 1993, 1996 and 2003.

"Furthermore, we believe your reliance on the reasoning of the Dukes case cited in your letter is misplaced," the letter said.

## Van Cleave

Continued from page 1

Lulves wrote that a law passed in 1993 overrode any precedent set in the 1982 Dukes case. The 1993 law states that individuals can hold the two posts, but only in counties with a population less than 40,000. A U.S. Census Bureau estimate for 2003 put Kane County's population at 457,122.

The letter also cited Myers v. Haas, a 1908 Illinois court case that held that taking a second office amounts to resigning the first.

"On Dec. 3, my office personally handed this letter to his lawyer," Kane County State's Attorney John Barsanti said.

The letter also was mailed and faxed to Izzo's offices in Chicago Heights.

"It just happened that Mr. Izzo was in the neighborhood and was able to receive a copy of the letter," State's Attorney's Office Civil Division chief Katherine Moran said.

Van Cleave said he did not see the letter until after he took his oath of office Dec. 6. However, he also said he was informed of its contents on Dec. 3 by Chairman-elect Karen McConnaughay, who received a copy of the letter from the state's attorney's office.

"She supported me taking the oath of office and to go ahead," Van Cleave said.

Lulves said the decision to send the letter to McConnaughay came from the state's attorney's office and was not requested by an out-

side party.

"We thought it would be appropriate to share that information with her," he said. "That was our decision internally."

Barsanti said he did not think Van Cleave's status as a county board member would be affected in any way. He also said that the state's attorney's office does not represent the school board, so it has no direct effect on the board's decision.

"It's not for me to say," Barsanti said.

Batavia school board Vice President Kathleen Roberts did not agree with the office's opinion that joining a new board means quitting the old.

"I consider a resignation when I get a letter saying, 'I'm resigning the board,'" she said.

Should Van Cleave resign, the school board has the power to appoint his replacement, Batavia school Superintendent Ed Cave said. The replacement would not necessarily be president, as that position is not elected by voters, but among board members. Board members Jeff Glaser and Roberts said Roberts was the likely successor.

"If he were to resign, I would probably be president for at least one meeting, the meeting following the resignation," Roberts said.

Should Van Cleave decide to remain on the school board, his term will end in April. He said on Thursday that this issue would "weigh heavily" on whether he will seek re-election, but would not comment further. Nominating petitions are due in January.



Van Cleave

See VAN CLEAVE, page 2

12-12-04  
Chronicle



Greg  
Rivara

## No-show board members deserve criticism

Rumor has it that there was an election in November and seven new people were chosen to serve on the county board.

All agreed that one of the most pressing issues for Kane County in the near and distant future was the Kane County jail.

The jail has been overcrowded for more than 20 years. Kane County taxpayers spend thousands of dollars each year to house inmates elsewhere because there is no room here. The county jail is more dangerous than some state prisons.

And yet, when the county board is offered a tour of the jail so they can see first-hand the deplorable conditions and better understand the reports and speeches that they will hear in an effort to correct the problems, none of the newly elected county board members show up.

Amazing.

At best, this no-show performance displays a fundamental lack of understanding when it comes to political perception. At worst, it must break some world record by an elected official to publicly show how little they can be bothered with the heavy lifting of governance.

It does not matter what, if any, previous commitments were made that would have precluded the new county board members from attending. For nearly one year, these people proclaimed how they were going to right the wrongs of previous county board representatives. The first time they had a chance to gather critical, first-hand information that would have been invaluable as they spend multi-millions in tax dollars to correct the deadly jail situation, they disappeared.

What, not one of the Super Seven were smart enough to make sure at least a couple of them would show up with the cover story that they would make a

special report to the rest of their rookie class?

Free advice: Apologize for ignoring the invite. Arrange for a special tour of the jail. Emphasize how much you learned and express admiration for the jail guards toiling in such conditions.

And then, never again provide such an easy opening to be condemned by your critics.

\*\*\*

There is a local connection to the Richmond Hunt Club shooting.

In case you missed the story, a school bus passing by the Richmond Hunt Club in McHenry County last week was hit with buckshot. Nearby hunters on the property took aim at a turkey and instead hit the big, yellow school bus filled with children.

No one was hurt.

This is the same hunt club that local animal rights advocate Steve Hindi protested in an effort to stop what he called canned hunting. Canned hunting essentially means raising game in a quasi-tame atmosphere and then trucking the prey to a private club so hunters can enjoy the activity.

Apparently, such a practice makes it easier to hunt the birds.

Now, I'm not getting into the hunting debate here. But the incident will remind at least a couple of Kane County residents about similar dangers...

Such as the group of hunters who boat up the Fox River to the Valley View area, set out their geese decoys, and start firing their weapons toward the homes.

So far, only the peace of an early morning sleep has been disturbed.

So far...

• Greg Rivara is the Kane County Chronicle Managing Editor and co-host of Kane County News and Views each Wednesday at noon at WBIG 1280 AM. He can be contacted directly at (630) 845-5355 or by e-mail at [grivara@kcchronicle.com](mailto:grivara@kcchronicle.com).

# Batavian is advised not to hold two offices

## ■ Monday decision:

Van Cleave counseled  
that Kane, school  
boards incompatible

12-11-04  
By Steve Lord *Beacon  
News*  
STAFF WRITER

BATAVIA — Newly elected Kane County Board member Tom Van Cleave is set to announce Monday whether he will resign from the Batavia School Board.

Van Cleave, R-Batavia, was elected to the County Board from the 10th District in Batavia in November. He has served on the Batavia School Board for 12 years, part of that time as president.

Earlier this month, he received an opinion from the Kane County state's attorney's office advising him that Illinois State Statutes consider the two jobs incompatible, and that he must resign one of them.

Van Cleave said Friday he does not believe the jobs are legally incompatible, and said he would take the weekend to decide what to do. He is set to announce his intentions at a 2 p.m. Monday press conference.

"I want to think about it, do some praying on it," he said.

Van Cleave sought the state's

❖ Turn to BATAVIAN, A2

## ELECTION

From page A1

but because Americans have to believe that their votes are counted in our democracy," John Kerry said this week, after calling for a statewide recount in Ohio.

The nation's voting system, despite improvements since the 2000 Florida fiasco, remains a locally administered patchwork whose lack of national uniformity distinguishes the United States from many other democracies.

Although most complaints have come from Democrats and the third-party candidates, Republicans and bipartisan groups acknowledge problems. The Government Accountability Office is investigating election problems. Rep. Bob Ney, R-Ohio and chairman of the House Administration Committee, will oversee an inquiry next year.

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission, created in 2002, also is scrutinizing the outcome. It plans to publish in January the government's first report on the voting, which will serve as the basis for congressional recommendations and reforms.

"We definitely did not have a

glitch-free election," said EAC chairman DeForest Soaries Jr., a Bush appointee.

In the last five weeks, activists have documented thousands of voting problems across the nation. The citizens' lobby group Common Cause received 210,000 phone calls to a hot line that logged complaints.

Electronic errors were so grave in Carteret County, N.C., that election administrators will hold a special election in early January to determine the next agriculture commissioner. Paperless touch-screen voting machines there failed to retain 4,438 votes during early voting before Nov. 2. The Democratic incumbent lost by just 2,287 votes out of about 3 million cast statewide.

In six states, including Florida and Texas, about three dozen voters complained that they selected Kerry on touch-screen machines but were shown as having voted for Bush until they revised their electronic ballot. Equipment manufacturers blamed the problem on miscalibration.

In New Orleans, poorly trained poll workers told thousands of voters to come back later in the day because they couldn't turn on new electronic voting equipment when polls opened.



12-13-04 Beacon News

# 780-acre Campton development stirs conflict-of-interest debate

By Nathaniel Zimmer and Tom Polansek

STAFF WRITERS

ELGIN — When a controversial proposed residential development on the border of Campton and Plato townships comes before Elgin's planning commission, possibly early next month, one member won't be voting on the matter.

Longtime Commissioner Robert Siljestrom plans to abstain from weighing in on the approximately 780-acre project, which Campton residents and township officials vigorously have opposed as too dense.

For more than three decades, Siljestrom, who also chairs the city's comprehensive plan advisory committee, has owned 50 acres on the northeast corner of Crawford and McDonald roads in Plato Township. After fielding inquiries from potential buyers since the mid-1980s, he agreed earlier this year to a deal with the project's developer, the Residential Land Fund.

Anyone familiar with local government knows there is nothing unusual about council or commission members abstaining from a vote because they have a stake in

the matter under consideration.

Even in cities much larger than Elgin, individuals who serve on planning or zoning bodies often find they need to abstain from a vote to avoid a potential conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest.

Still, Siljestrom's position on the planning commission and his sizable stake in a major development have raised the question of precisely how involved he should be in deliberations about the project.

Siljestrom said he sees nothing wrong with attending planning commission discussions of RLF's proposal.

"I have to be there to answer questions" from other commission members, he said.

He believes his fellow commissioners will not be influenced by his presence.

"I think they are independent-minded enough to make their own decision," he said.

Dave Kaptain, a planning commissioner who is running for a spot on the Elgin City Council, said he has no problem with Siljestrom attending meetings where RLF's proposal is discussed.

But he does believe Siljestrom

should leave the room before final deliberations and should not be present for the commission's vote.

"My feeling is he shouldn't be in the room," said Kaptain, who is chief chemist for the Fox River Water Reclamation District.

Just how much money is at stake for Siljestrom is not known; he declined to discuss the subject.

Land prices vary widely, depending not only on location but on how much work must be done to make land buildable.

Campton Township Supervisor Neal Anderson said raw farmland in the area can fetch up to \$35,000 an acre, although some land is worth significantly less. The township recently purchased the 220-acre Corron farm, which RLF's development would border on two sides, for \$4 million, or a little more than \$18,000 an acre.

An opponent of the RLF proposal, Anderson said he believes Siljestrom should steer clear of the commission's discussions of the development.

"It's perfectly legal to own property and to sell property, but when he's a voting member of a board ... he would need to stay out of those discussions," Anderson said.

A. JOSEPH GILLETTE  
Editorial Writer

12-13-04  
Beacon News

How to  
participate



Signed

## Weather or not, we're glad for opening



Thank the seasonable weather or earnest construction crews, but whatever the case, **THUMBS UP** to any and all responsible for the early opening of 2.2 miles of a wider Orchard Road between Indian Trail and Prairie Street on Aurora's West Side. The prospect of moving traffic instead of traffic snarls during the upcoming winter months on that busy north-south stretch warms our heart.

# County fills chief accountant vacancy

*Juliet Gaber lives in St. Charles*

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

Kane County has found a new chief accountant, but the search for a new finance director must wait.

Juliet Gaber started as the new chief accountant Wednesday. The position had been vacant since Susan M. Snow left to accept a position as controller of Smith Engineering Consultants in McHenry. At the county, Snow also was the acting finance director, a position she took June 7, when former Director Cheryl Pattelli accepted a position with the DuPage Water Commission. The search for a finance director has been delayed until Chairman-elect Karen McConnaughay takes office Dec. 20.

"Data entry to us seemed the more important job to fill right away, and we can fill in the department head later," said board member Catherine Hurlbut, R-Elgin, who assisted with the hiring process.

Gaber has a bachelor's degree in language studies from the University of California at Santa Cruz and a master's in accounting from Illinois State University. She is not a licensed CPA, but received certification in 2000.

Gaber most recently was the manager of accounting and financial operations for the Northwestern Cancer Center operations group. Before that, she worked briefly for Arthur Andersen, the accounting firm convicted of shredding documents relating to its client, Enron. Gaber worked in data entry and was not involved in the scandal. "I'm not corrupt," she said with a laugh.

Gaber lives in St. Charles and said proximity was part of the job's appeal. "She's local, which of course we think is important," Hurlbut said.

Hurlbut also said that Gaber's background with nonprofit organizations and her knowledge of the issues of government accounting helped win her the job.

"She just kind of fit the bill," Hurlbut said.

Part of the reason the chief accountant position was filled before the finance director was that the chief accountant must deal directly with different department heads. "That's the one where everyone is going

to be looking for someone to be available," Hurlbut said.

McConnaughay said the former county board administration decided to leave the selection of the new finance director to the regime that took over after the election.

The current board took their oaths Dec. 6, except for McConnaughay. A state law passed earlier this year pushed back the inductions for board chairmen in certain counties. This gives more time to count provisional ballots and pushed McConnaughay's oath to Dec. 20. The search for the new finance director has been delayed accordingly.

"I'll start that as soon as I get sworn in," McConnaughay said. "It's the first order of business."

Until a finance director is found, Gaber will report to Chairman Mike McCoy. After Dec. 20, she will report to McConnaughay.

Snow and Pattelli both will be available to assist Gaber as she becomes accustomed to her new job.

"She's got really good contact people. She's not going to be out there swimming by herself," Hurlbut said.

Gaber said the former directors' advice will give her "a direction on where to go."

# Board rescinds rules on cameras

*Wasco Sanitary District learns  
restriction might be illegal*

BY LISA SMITH  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Video cameras and tape recorders now are welcome at Wasco Sanitary District board meetings.

The three-member board Thursday voted unanimously to nullify a controversial ordinance restricting the recording of its meetings after the Illinois attorney general expressed concerns that it violates the state's Open Meetings Act.

The ordinance, passed Nov. 18, required anyone who wanted to record or videotape a sanitary board meeting to give 10 days advance written notice, provide the district an unaltered copy of the tape within five days and pay the district to hire a court reporter to transcribe the meeting.

In a letter to the board's attorney, an assistant attorney general called the restrictions "a thinly veiled attempt to prevent a citizen from taping a meeting and thus, (it) collides with the letter and spirit of the Open Meetings Act."

The four-page letter goes on to say: "It is our view that this provision ... is designed solely to keep the public from participating in the workings of government. Consequently, such a restriction on a citizen merely fractures public confidence in a public body."

The letter was signed by Terry Mutchler, assistant attorney general in the public access and opinions division, and delivered Thursday to the sanitary district's attorney, Charles Muscarello.

Either rescind the ordinance or revise it to comply with the act, Mutchler advised in the letter. The board can tape its own meetings or adopt "reasonable rules," such as requiring residents to arrive prior to the meeting to set up video equipment or asking them to stay in one area of the room while filming to ensure recording does not disrupt the board's business, Mutchler suggested.

The board asked Muscarello to draw up the ordinance in response to "an unruly crowd that disrupted the district's monthly public meeting on Oct. 18, 2004—a disruption that was inflamed by the presence of a video recording device," Muscarello said in a letter to Attorney General Lisa Madigan's office.

He said board members also wanted an accurate version of each recording on hand in case an altered version was distributed to the public.

Lawyers from the Kane County state's attorney's office "also share our concerns," Mutchler wrote. A violation of the Open Meetings Act is a misdemeanor punishable

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2004

## Camera: Newest member happy to kill ordinance

*Continued from Page 1*

by a \$1,500 fine and 30 days in jail.

Board Trustee Raul Brizuela made a motion Thursday that the board postpone enforcement of the ordinance pending additional suggestions from the attorney general's office. But he withdrew that motion after Trustee Jeff Blankenship suggested the board rescind the ordinance instead.

Elected Nov. 2, Thursday was Blankenship's first meeting as a board member. He was not on the board when the ordinance was passed and spoke out against it when it was under

consideration.

"We serve the people," Blankenship said. "They're not responsible to us; we're responsible to them. And that's what we need to spend our time doing."

But the issue isn't dead. Muscarello said Friday he remains unsure on how the district can rewrite the ordinance to comply with the Open Meetings Act. He said the board has directed him to continue his discussion with the attorney general's office.

The sanitary district board "may or may not evaluate something in the future" to change the ordinance, Muscarello said.

12-11-01  
Daily Herald

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
*Daily Herald Staff Writer*

Freshman county board member Tom Van Cleave in effect gave up his job on the Batavia school board when he took the oath this week for his new position, the Kane County state's attorney said Friday.

Since announcing a year ago his intention to seek a county board office, Van Cleave, who has served the last four years as president of the school board, has dealt with questions about



• In short: Newly sworn-in Kane County board member Tom Van Cleave can no longer serve on the Batavia school board, the Kane County said Friday.

the legality of his desire to keep both public jobs.

State's Attorney John Bursanti essentially put the issue to rest this week by saying the offices of this school board member and county board member are

**See BOARDS on PAGE 10**

**Continued from Page 1**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2004

## Continued from Page 1

incompatible. Additionally, by taking office on the county board, as Van Cleave did Monday, state law automatically dismisses him from his school duties, Barsand concluded.

"Once you take the second job, you effectively resign the first job," Barsant said. "I don't think it requires (an official) resignation even. Technically, I think he's already done."

Although van Cleve declined to commit to any course of action Friday, he said he wouldn't oppose the guidance of the states attorney.

**Kathleen Roberts**, vice president of the school board, has not seen the state's attorney statement, but understands that it is an opinion not a

"I'm sure the legal counsel for the school district will give us his opinion, and at that point, Mr. Van Cleave will decide what he's going to do," she said.

Roberts expects the school board to address the issue in some capacity, but didn't know if would take place during an open meeting or behind closed doors.

If Van Cleave, a Batavia Republican, was compelled to step down, he would be sorely missed, Roberts said.

Superintendent Ed Cave also had not seen the statement Friday but knew an opinion was expected.

"I've known Tom for many years as a member of the board," Cave said. "He's very committed to public service with the best interests of the community and students in

**Excerpts from Kern County state's attorney opinion:**

• "For the following reasons, we believe those two offices are incompatible, and that the act of taking the oath and accepting the office as a county board member is *ipso facto* a resignation of the position on the school board."

• "Our office is in agreement with the reasoning of the numerous Illinois Attorney General opinions that have addressed this question, finding incompatibility. . . . The legislature specifically authorized the simultaneous holding of the two offices which are the subject of your

- "Our office appreciates the dedication that leads to the desire to serve through two offices but must advise that the serious legal consequences resulting from this decision warrant careful consideration."

flowing from this decision will  
Source: Kane County state's attorney

mind. 'Whatever decision he makes I know it will be on that basis, and I'll support it.' Cave did not address the potential legal problems that could develop if Van Cleave were to step on the board, and leave the school board, the panel would have to appoint someone to fill the vacancy until the upcoming April election, he said. The board also would have to elect a new board president.

Assuming Van Cleave does  
phone call seeking comment.

The issue of Van Cleave's legal ability to hold both posts was raised by one of his opponents in the Republican primary in March, based on a 1993 Illinois Attorney General opinion which said a school board member could not serve on a county board.

Then, as now, Van Cleave disagreed with that opinion. Van Cleave went on to win the primary and general election, always intending to hold both offices. But last month he sought one final opinion from the state's attorney's office to clarify the situation.

**"I wanted to be up front with things and not have anyone raise any issues," he said.**

The opinion from the state's attorney got delayed in that office's transition from former state's attorney Meg Gorecki to Barsanti, but finally reached Van Cleave's lawyer Dec. 3.

On Friday, Van Cleave said he

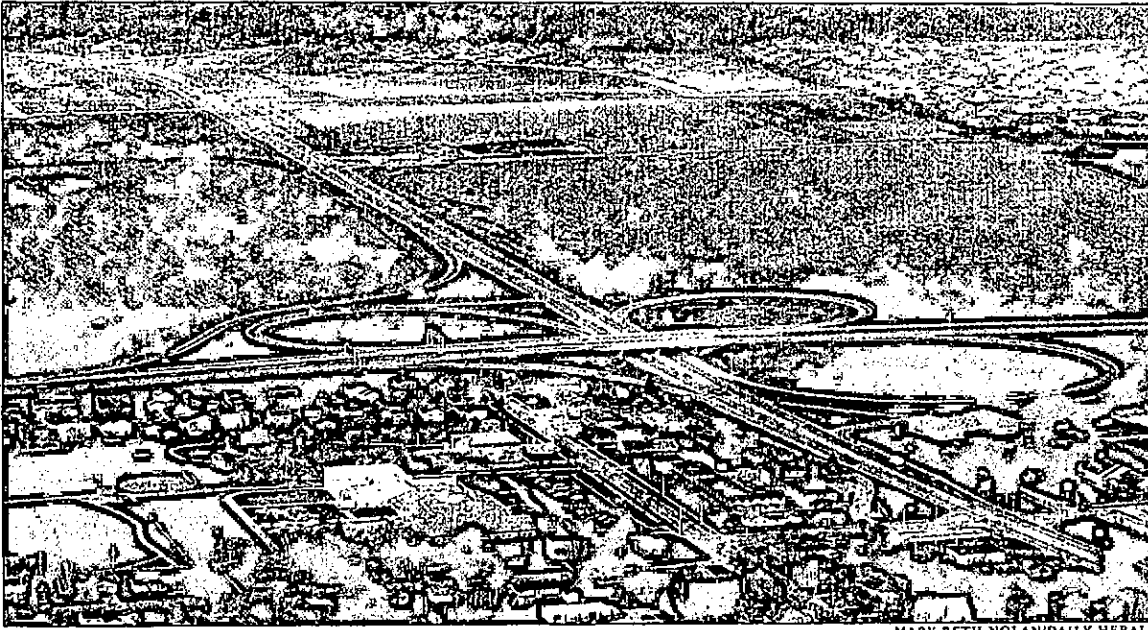
disagrees with Barsanti's interpretation as well, but added it's a judgment he will not dispute.

he would officially resign the school board job he has held since 1992. Van Cleave said he intends to think over his options this weekend and make an announcement next week.

Having ruled out further challenges to hold on to both jobs, two alternatives in his opinion remain: Van Cleave can resign the school board immediately or serve out his term, which expires in April and not run again.

As of Friday, Van Cleave said he had not taken out nominating petitions for another run for school board or collected a single signature needed to get on the ballot.

• *Daily Herald* staff writer Gala Pierce contributed to this report.



MARY BETH NOLAN/DAILY HERALD

Land remains open on each side of Route 47 north of routes 56 and 30 in Sugar Grove. There are several obstacles to the development of the land for commercial uses.

# Businesses slow to follow

*Stores aren't coming to Sugar Grove as fast as the people are*

BY LESLIE HAGUE  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Perry Clark is used to the first question.

Whenever he tells someone what his job entails — bringing commercial development to Sugar Grove — people want to know one thing.

"The first thing is, 'OK, great, where's the fast food? Where's the Applebee's? Where's the Kohl's?'" he said.

Despite new houses popping up all over the place, Sugar Grove has yet to see the new restaurants, shops and stores residents crave.

"We're probably at 9,000 (population) with Prestbury," said village Trustee Bob Bohler. "Any other community with 9,000, I bet at least they've got a restaurant I can sit down at."

To the continual "When is it coming?" question from residents — whether "it" be a sit-down restaurant, shopping or even a Burger King — village

## What it takes to get a Whopper

Sugar Grove is still short of the numbers most retail companies use to determine where to locate, according to the Sugar Grove Economic Development Corporation.

	Sugar Grove	Burger King	Jimmy John's	Cold Stone Creamery	Walgreens	Best Buy
Population within 1 mile	4,000	30,000	10,000	15,000	20,000	n/a
Population within 2 miles	7,000	50,000	25,000	35,000	n/a	100,000+
Household income	\$84,000+	\$35,000	\$40,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$40,000
Traffic count every 24 hours	16,000	30,000+	20,000	40,000	25,000	n/a
Favorable neighbors	routes 47, 56, 30, WCC, Aurora Airport	freeway locations, mail shopping	colleges, airports, train stations, offices	high-end retailers, movie theaters, coffee shops	grocery stores, shopping centers	major regional shopping center

Source: Sugar Grove Economic Development Corporation

DAILY HERALD

officials have adopted a simple refrain: "We need more rooftops."

Clark, who has been head of the village's Economic Development Corporation for almost a year, sees retail hitting the village big by the end of 2006.

Retail developers are likely waiting on the Jewel-Osco and its 13 outlots, at Route 47 and Galena Boulevard, to break ground and the two largest proposed residential developments — totaling more than 4,000

homes — to be approved before deciding to move in, Clark said.

Jewel representatives have said they would like to break ground in mid-2005 and be open by mid-2006.

"I really think once Jewel pulls a building permit and starts moving dirt, it will be like a shot in the arm," Village President Sean Michels said.

## What companies want

To seriously consider a loca-

tion, fast food and retailers often require between 20,000 and 40,000 people within a 2-mile radius of a proposed location, Clark said.

"These are hard numbers," he said. "We do not meet their site criteria right now."

A special census last year put the village's population close to 6,000, but specific amenities to Sugar Grove — Waubesa Community College and the

See **BUSINESSES** on PAGE 4

# Businesses: Village might have to offer incentives to developers

Continued from Page 1

## The waiting game

Aurora Municipal Airport in particular — boost the village's retail capital, Clark said.

Other towns' attributes — such as routes 47 and 34 and country business in like-sized Yorkville — have helped them get retail first, Clark said. And with one big store — a Jewel-Osco — in place there, it was easier for more to follow, like a Walgreens, he said.

Yorkville has multiple fast-food restaurants, while Elburn, with a smaller population, has a McDonald's.

That creates a problem for Sugar Grove, since companies don't want too many of their businesses too close together, Clark said.

Being so close to Aurora and West Plaza hasn't helped, either, he said.

"For some of these things, we're fighting the second-largest city in the state," he said.

Clark said the village will need to build up to the big retail development and, for now, focus right now on light industrial and smaller commercial development, like office parks, that are more attainable.

The latest business activity has been at the Waubensee Corporate Center near Wheeler Road and Route 47 across from the college, where the land is being bought up and developed. For offices, Clark said.

Looking into those incentives — whether it be creating a tax increment financing district, tax abatements or other incentives — will be a priority for the next year, Clark said.

Some of the primarily residential developments the village is considering have at least a small area of commercial development. But Trustee Bob Bohler wants to require it — or at least get money from developers who don't include it.

Bohler has proposed mandating at least 5 percent of any development be designated as commercial property, or having a set fee for that property paid to the village.

That money could be used to offer incentives for commercial development or to entice developers with mixed-use plans to develop commercial plans at the beginning, rather than the end, of the buildout, Bohler said.

"You can count on one hand the number of people who own commercial property in this village," he said. "We need to be able to establish an area for the mom-and-pops."

## State's intersection

One of the potentially most lucrative stretches of land in the village faces several obstacles to being developed.

The state now owns the "access rights" to the stretch of Route 47 from Galena Boul-

vard to Route 56. That means any business that would locate there can't have an entrance on Route 47 until someone buys those rights back.

That parcel of land to the east of Route 47 — commonly referred to as the "Town Center" property by village officials — is pegged as one of the more likely places where retail and big development could go.

The village shelled out \$15,000 — and got a matching \$15,000 from the county — to look into potential developments last month.

The state could sell those rights back to the village or a developer as long as the plans don't interfere with the traffic, said Pat Pechnick, engineer of program development at the Illinois Department of Transportation.

He guessed that bill could be in the half-million-dollar range. The village and different developers have been in negotiations to buy the rights back, but after a deal is made it has to be approved by the General Assembly, said Scott Buehner, the village's community development director. He hopes some kind of a deal can be worked out next year.

## Money for something

When three taxing bodies in Sugar Grove asked for tax hikes on the November ballot, they all cited growing numbers of resi-

dents to provide for without enough money to do it.

When Jewel representatives presented their case to the Sugar Grove village board earlier this year, they estimated at full buildout after seven years, the grocery store and all its outlots would generate \$810,000 a year in real estate taxes and more than \$450,000 a year in sales taxes.

Under an incentive agreement approved by the village, it will get only the first \$100,000 in sales tax each of the first seven years from the grocery store.

Over the first 10 years of operation, Jewel officials estimated the entire development would generate about \$4.5 million for the Kaneland school district, about \$500,000 for the fire district and \$1.5 million for other government entities in real estate taxes.

But while taxing bodies wait for those dollars to come in, the impact of new housing developments is felt immediately.

"It's just going to continue the stress we're under, or increase it," said Kaneland Superintendent Charles McCormick.

While smaller commercial development helps — and is preferred to residential — it isn't a windfall, McCormick said.

"What really helps us is something large-scale — commercial or industrial retail," he said. "The large facilities that bring in hundreds of thousands of dollars in property tax — that's faster," Michels said.

what we need."

## What's next

Attracting light industrial and small commercial, like office parks, is a priority now, Clark said.

"We're looking for anything from plastics companies to companies that manufacture widgets," he said. "Something that's privately owned and smaller. We don't feel we're ready for a major distribution center yet."

Once Jewel opens, he sees a domino effect in attracting bigger businesses.

"I can see a lot of retail — food, name-brand restaurants, that sort of thing — by the end of 2006," he said.

The corporation has also seen an interest for sports activity venues — something like a gymnastics facility, an archery range or an indoor soccer arena, Clark said.

That kind of facility could snowball as well — national tournaments could be held, triggering the need for hotels, he said.

Village officials are stressing planning, from water needs studies to development studies to transportation plans, to assess what will work for the village and what won't.

"We have to be open-minded, smart and sort of visionary as to what's going to make things go faster," Michels said.

12-13-04 Daily Herald

# Kane County farmers losing ground

*Subdivisions, age and low prices forcing many out*

BY LENORE T. ADKINS  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Each day this fall, Marvin Straub rolled out of bed around 5 o'clock, grabbed a cup of coffee and headed out to harvest corn and soybeans with Marilyn, his wife of 50 years.

The Straubs come from two generations of farmers and have been farming all their lives. The couple, who live outside Elgin, typically get to the fields in warm weather at 6:30 and stay out as long as it takes to get their chores done. It's just the two of them out on the open land.

"When the crops are good, it's very pleasing," Straub, 72, said. "When things don't go right, it's testy."

Straub owns some 400 acres of farmland south of Plato Center and rents 1,200 acres from home builders who've yet to build.

Straub cleared soybeans from land he rents on Bowes Road west of Randall Road for the last time this fall. That's because his landlords, a pair of high-profile developers, are ready to start building homes there.

"Right now, we're getting subdivided out," Straub said. "You can't compete with that."

## Our hands are tied

This year 400 acres of the land Straub has been renting will be farmed for the last time. He expects another 400 to 500 acres he's farmed will be built on.

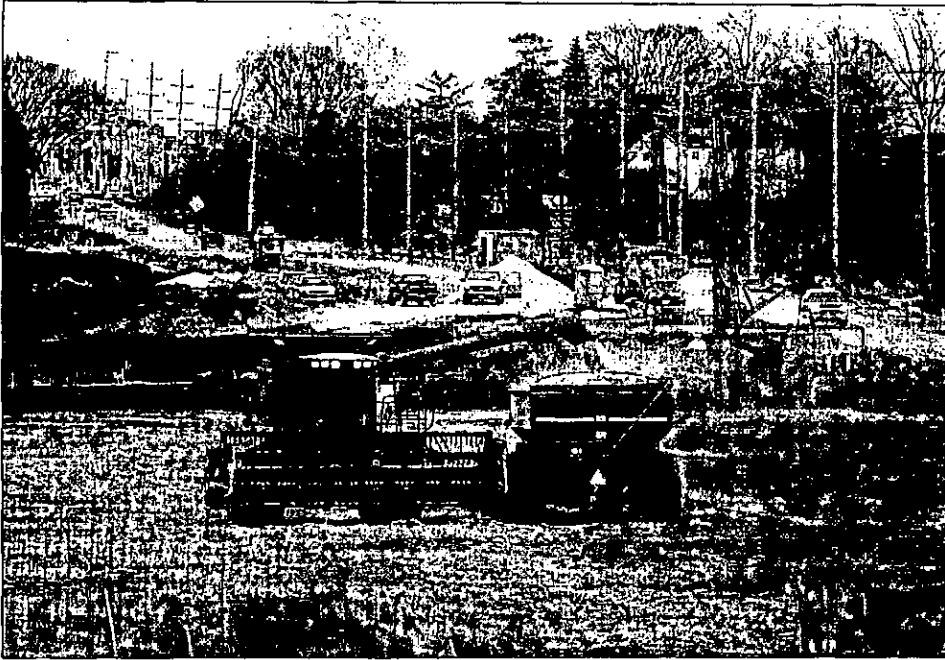
Straub is hardly alone.

Between 1982 and 2002, Kane County lost 42,000 acres of farmland, said Mark Thomas, information systems manager for the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission. While some of it was turned into forest preserves and parks, the majority of it has been snatched up for houses, roads and retail uses.

"There was an 18 percent change in the 20-year period on farmland in Kane County," he said.

In 1987, Kane County had 824 farms, said Don Fike with the Illinois Agricultural Statistics Service. In 2002, the most recent statistics available, the county had 619 farms.

Last year alone, between



Marvin Straub, 72, clears one of the last rows of soybeans from his last harvest of land along Bowes Road west of Randall Road near Elgin. A new crop of homes will be planted by Del Webb.

PHOTOS BY DAVE TONGE/DAILY HERALD

1,000 and 2,000 acres of farmland were being turned into residential developments and roads, said Bob Gehrke, president of the Kane County Farm Bureau, a watchdog group for farmers.

Gehrke, who has been a grain farmer for 30 years, had been renting 150 acres from an investor in Plato Township along Route 20.

But when the land was sold to a developer, Gehrke's lease was not renewed. Homes will be built on the land next year, he said.

"We can't do anything about that because developers have a right to buy property," Gehrke said. "On an issue like that, our hands are pretty much tied."

The farmland closest to Elgin

is the most desirable for developers, Gehrke said.

Land that's just east of Route 47 went for \$20,000 an acre two years ago, he said. Today, it's being snapped up for \$40,000 an acre. He's seen some developers pay up to \$100,000 an acre for farmland.

"You wonder how many years we can stay here and farm before we move away," he said.

But not all of the county's farmland is being gobbled up by builders.

By the end of the year, the Kane County Farmland Protection Program will have preserved 3,000 acres since it started the project in 2001, said Janice Hill, the program's coordinator.

The farmer maintains ownership of the land, but the county buys the development rights to the land — requiring that it be used for agricultural purposes ad infinitum.

"This tool is one more layer to protect farmland," Hill said.

## Why farmers get out

It is not just the developer potential of the land that is driving farmers out of business. It's also much tougher to make a profit.

Last spring, Gehrke's prices for soybeans, corn, wheat and hay were at a 10-year low. Now, grain prices are half that.

Soybean prices typically range between \$4.50 and \$5.00 a bushel, said Straub, who grows soybeans. According to the National Agricultural Statistics Service, soybeans went for \$3.50 a bushel in April 2004. But last month a bushel went for \$5.

"There's always going to be cases where people will leave farming because the developer has taken the land," Gehrke said. "But profitability having had years where it didn't make money is the real reason farmers leave the land. Some would rather have a guaranteed salary."

Many farmers, he said, are reaching retirement age and are ready to relax.

"You get to the point where you're 65 and 70 and don't need extra income," he said. "They'll rent land to other farmers, or if they're in developed areas, sell to developers."

For now, Straub is slowing down and has no plans to retire, saying he would "go on" if he had to sit here and do nothing.

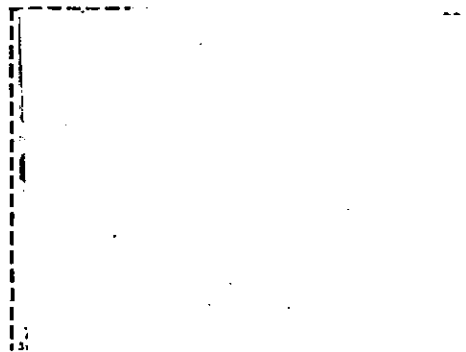
He said he is hoping to keep farming other land owned by developers until construction begins on those subdivisions.

As it is now, he doesn't make enough money from his crop to live on, but says he's saved a lot of money through the years for retirement. And said, he can always sell off some of his own land.

"It's just one of those things he said. 'You've just got to move with the times.'"



As development catches up to the land he farms in rural Elgin west of Randall Road, Straub has less and less land to rent each year for farming.



12-12-04 Chronicle

# Case could affect STC project

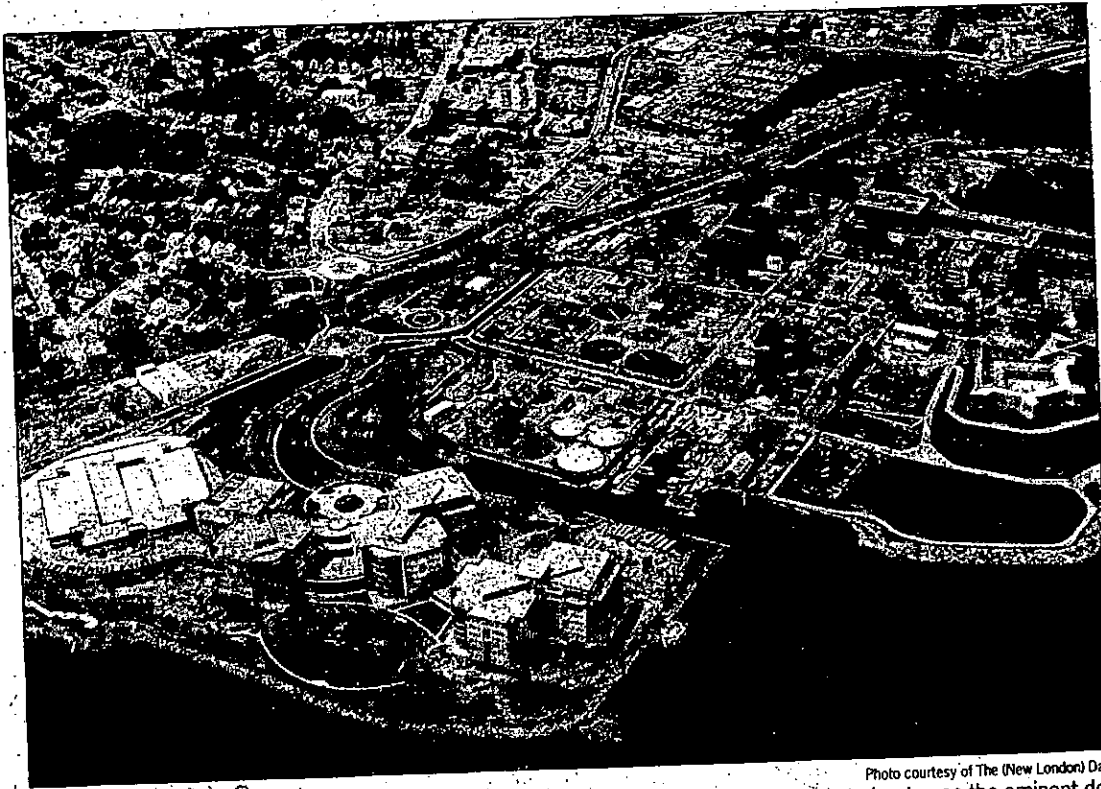


Photo courtesy of The (New London) Day

A quasi-governmental group called the New London (Connecticut) Development Corp. is trying to use the eminent domain clause for a proposed hotel and other commercial interests that they feel have a tie with the Pfizer Research and Development center, pictured in the foreground of this 2001 photo. The group would like a lot of the land behind the company, and resident Susette Kelo sued to stop them. That case will be heard by the U.S. Supreme Court.

## High court to examine eminent domain

### Connecticut case goes before Supreme Court this spring

By TOM SCHLUETER  
Kane County Chronicle

The U.S. Supreme Court next year will hear and rule on a case that could affect St. Charles' plans for its First Street redevelopment project.

Then again, the ruling could have no effect at all.

The high court in the spring will hear Kelo vs. New London, Conn., and in the summer is expected to issue a ruling that plaintiffs hope will curb a municipality's eminent domain powers as a way to achieve economic development.

St. Charles has used its power to condemn property on First Street as part of its plan to revitalize the area south of Main Street.

Municipalities use eminent domain to seize private property for public use. They can do so as long as they pay the property owner what is determined to

be fair market value.

St. Charles has filed eminent domain lawsuits against four properties on First Street. The lawyer handling the lawsuits for the city says he believes the facts of the Kelo case differ from those in St. Charles.

However, it all depends on whether the court wants to make a sweeping decision, said Nicholas Peppers, the attorney who handles the city's eminent domain cases.

"No one is going to know until they rule next summer," Peppers said.

The Kelo case will test the definition of the "public use" clause in the eminent domain statutes.

In St. Charles' case, Peppers cites several instances of how the redevelopment project fits the definition of public use.

The project will widen a public street, add a public plaza and build a public parking deck.

In New London, the city wants to acquire property for offices, condominiums and offices on property currently occupied by private owners.

Lawyers for the Institute for Justice, a Washington, D.C.-based public interest law firm that specializes in private property rights, filed suit on behalf of seven of the property owners against New London after the city filed its condemnation suits.

A lower court in 2002 ruled in favor of four of the seven owners, and both sides appealed. The Connecticut Supreme Court in March ruled against all the property owners, and the Institute appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which in September agreed to hear the case.



Kelo

"We're looking for the Supreme Court to guarantee every freedom in the Constitution," said Bert Gall, a member of the litigation team for the Institute of Justice. "The court needs to establish a bastion of protection for all property owners and businesses."

The "public use" clause in condemnation laws refers to the taking of private property for a public road or public building, Gall said, not for economic development.

The idea of condemning property for economic development is flawed because any property could be redeveloped into one that generates more tax revenue, Gall said.

See CASE, page 2



Our policy is to deliver your paper by 5:30 a.m. Monday through Friday and by 6:30 a.m. Saturday and Sunday. If delivery problems occur, call our customer service department before 10:30 a.m. and we will deliver your newspaper before noon.  
**Customer service: (630) 232-9239**

#### CONTACTING THE NEWSROOM

**Newsroom, direct:** (630) 845-5355  
**Sound Off:** (630) 232-9238  
**Main number:** (630) 232-9255  
**News tip line** Ext. 355  
**Business news** Ext. 355  
**E-mail:** [BUSINESS@KCHRONICLE.COM](mailto:BUSINESS@KCHRONICLE.COM)  
**Features** Ext. 355  
**E-mail:** [LIFESTYLES@KCHRONICLE.COM](mailto:LIFESTYLES@KCHRONICLE.COM)  
**Deaths, family album** Ext. 355  
**E-mail:** [EDITORIAL@KCHRONICLE.COM](mailto:EDITORIAL@KCHRONICLE.COM)  
**Opinion/editorials** Ext. 355  
**E-mail:** [EDITORIAL@KCHRONICLE.COM](mailto:EDITORIAL@KCHRONICLE.COM)  
**Neighbors items** Ext. 355  
**E-mail:** [NEIGHBORS@KCHRONICLE.COM](mailto:NEIGHBORS@KCHRONICLE.COM)  
**Night news desk** Ext. 355  
**Sports desk** Ext. 355  
**E-mail:** [SPORTS@KCHRONICLE.COM](mailto:SPORTS@KCHRONICLE.COM)  
**Newsroom fax:** (630) 232-4962

#### ADVERTISING

**Sales:** (630) 232-9222, Ext. 258  
**Classified:** (630) 232-9224  
**E-mail:** [CLASSIFIEDS@KCHRONICLE.COM](mailto:CLASSIFIEDS@KCHRONICLE.COM)  
**Fax:** (630) 232-4976  
**Legal notices:** (630) 232-9255, Ext. 219

#### INTERNET

Visit our Web site. We're at [www.kchronicle.com](http://www.kchronicle.com)

#### SPEAKERS AND TOURS

To schedule a speaker from the Chronicle, organizations should call (630) 232-9255, Ext. 307.  
 Available speakers include editors and managers.  
 Tours of our plant at 1000 Randall Road in Geneva may be arranged by calling (630) 232-9255, Ext. 307.  
 Groups must have fewer than 20 people and tour hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday.

**Sunday News Shows**

who led the Democratic effort for 10 years, lost the nation's Senate. She said she did not "only want to be a politician."

## Case: Thousands of cases since 1988

Continued from page 1

A house could be turned into an office building. A small business could be moved for a larger business. Courts at all levels have allowed the erosion of property rights, Gall said. Between 1988 and 2002, units of government around the country have filed an estimated 10,000 eminent domain cases against private property owners for economic development purposes.

This creates a situation where governments condemn private property on behalf of other private property owners, Gall said.

"It happens regularly," he said.

The city of New London created an entity known as the New London Development Corp. and designated to it its eminent domain powers.

In St. Charles, local businessmen have formed First Street LLC, which the city selected to be the lead developers on the project. However, unlike in New London, the city gave it no legal authority to condemn.

Another difference in St. Charles' case is that the area under consideration for redevelopment has been designated a tax-increment-finance district, Peppers said.

To create a TIF district, a city must hire a consultant to study the area in question, in this case, the area roughly between Main and Prairie streets, and the Fox River and Second Street.

### What is eminent domain?

Eminent domain (also called condemnation) is the power of government agencies to acquire property for public use so long as the government pays just compensation. Recognized public uses for which the power of eminent domain may be used include, among other things, schools, parks, roads, highways, subways, fire and police stations, public buildings and the elimination of blight through redevelopment. A key attribute of eminent domain is that the government can exercise its power of eminent domain even if the owner does not wish to sell his or her property.  
 Source: [eminentdomainlaw.net](http://eminentdomainlaw.net)

### For information

- [www.eminentdomainlaw.net/propertyguide.html](http://www.eminentdomainlaw.net/propertyguide.html)
- [www.cato.org/events](http://www.cato.org/events)
- [www.eminentdomainonline.com](http://www.eminentdomainonline.com)
- [www.hud.gov/offices/pih/centers/sac/eminent/index.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/centers/sac/eminent/index.cfm)

city declares a neighborhood ripe for redevelopment, it serves to depress property values even more.

"It really generates a self-fulfilling prophecy," he said.

Peppers said that the TIF process is long and detailed but hardly arbitrary.

The Institute for Justice hopes for a major decision next summer, but one of the lawyers working on behalf of New London thinks the institute might be disappointed.

Ed O'Connell, who represents the NLD, said the facts of individual eminent domain cases are unique, and it is unlikely Kelo will affect other cases, such as the one in St. Charles.

"Most of these cases, I'm finding, are not as similar as the Institute for Justice would like people to believe," O'Connell said. "Quite often, they are quite different."

The consultant determines whether the land meets all 17 criteria required for the establishment of the district. Once the district is in place, property taxes are frozen for a certain length of time as long as improvements are made to the property.

One of the 17 criteria necessary to establish a TIF district is that land must have depressed property values, Peppers said.

To property rights advocates, though, rising or declining values should not enter the equation.

"The whole issue of property values declining is beside the point," Gall said.

Gall said there have been cases of cities arbitrarily declaring a certain neighborhood or neighborhoods "blighted" for the purpose of acquiring them for redevelopment.

In fact, Gall said, when a



12-13-04  
Chronicle

## Board member responds to column

To the Editor:

Mr. Page decided to trash the newly elected Kane County Board members for not showing up for the jail tour. I would like to take the opportunity to respond to his little diatribe.

Before I was even sworn in, I attended the almost four-hour presentation on Nov. 16, by six architects discussing their qualifications and ideas for the county jail so I could learn more about this project. I informed our incoming chairman, Karen McConnaughay, that I would be unavailable for the tour on Dec. 8. I knew I was going to be out of town, with plans that had been scheduled back in August. She was extremely gracious and

## Letters

understanding of the scheduling conflict. I met with our incoming chairman on Nov. 29, to discuss committees, assignments and general information. On Dec. 6, I had the honor of being sworn in to my new position. On Dec. 7, bright and early at 7:30 a.m., I attended an informational breakfast meeting with the Forest Preserve Commission. I then spent some time at the human resources department. On Dec. 8, I had just gotten back from a three-hour Kane County Board department orientation meeting, and was perusing the paper, when I was slapped in the face with this bit of nonsense penned by Mr. Page.

While attending all these orientations, which as an aside, I will say I appreciate, as they will enable us to hit the ground running, I also worked my full-time job as a business owner, wrote my weekly newspaper column, attended neighborhood

meetings and even managed to squeeze in a lunch with my Mom.

I am new to this position, which I take very seriously. I also want my constituents to know I did not miss this meeting because I felt it was unimportant. Fortunately, Karen McConnaughay, who clearly understands the position we are in, knew some of us had scheduling conflicts and planned to reschedule the tour for those of us who were unable to attend on Wednesday.

Mr. Page, I and the other new board members would appreciate a little consideration, before you just blindly criticize. I am done for now; I need to go review several pages of board materials before the board meeting on Tuesday!

**Linda Holmes**

Kane County Board Member  
District 2

12-14-04 Daily Herald

# County clerk enters Aurora mayoral race

1 **BY PATRICK WALDRON**  
2 *Daily Herald Staff Writer*  
3

4 Calling it an opportunity he  
5 can't pass up, Kane County  
6 Clerk John Cunningham on  
7 Monday joined the crowded  
8 field of candidates running for  
9 mayor in Aurora.

10 "We have found a lot of sup-  
11 port throughout Aurora,"  
12 Cunningham said a couple  
13 hours before filing the required  
14 nominating petitions to get his  
15 name on the ballot. "We are  
16 looking forward to a spirited  
17 campaign, and I think it will be  
18 interesting."

19 Cunningham, a native of  
20 Aurora, former city commis-  
21 sioner and two-time mayoral  
22 candidate, entered the non-  
23 partisan contest that, for at  
24 least two of the candidates, has  
25 been going for more than a  
26 year.

27 He joins four others hoping  
28 to run the state's second largest  
29 city.

30 During the Feb. 22 primary, in  
31 addition to Cunningham, the  
32 ballot will list Tom Weisner, a  
33 former longtime city employee;  
34 Richard Irvin, a local lawyer; Bill  
35 Wyatt, a county board member;  
36 and Angel Hernandez.

37 The two with the most pri-  
38 mary votes will then face off in  
39 the April 5, consolidated elec-  
40 tion.

41 Cunningham, who won the  
42 clerk's office in 2002, commis-  
43 sioned a poll in early November  
44 to judge the field and his own  
45 chances in a mayoral run. That  
46 poll put him slightly ahead and  
47 helped convince him to start a  
48 campaign.

49 "Our survey showed that they  
50 have been running for months,  
51 and I came in ahead of them,"  
52 Cunningham said, adding that  
53 there doesn't appear to be signs  
54 of strong support around the  
55 city for the previously  
56 announced candidates.

57 His entrance prompted polite  
58 welcomes from the men who  
59 are now his opponents.

60 "I look forward to having  
61 another person to debate with  
62 as we go on," Weisner said.

63 Weisner and Wyatt said the  
64 new face isn't going to influence  
65 how they do things in the final  
66 months of the race.

67 "It won't change how we go  
68 about getting our message out,"  
69 Wyatt said.

70 Irvin and Hernandez could  
71 not be reached for comment  
72 Monday.

# N. Aurora mayor into new house, out of office

By Brian Shields

SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

**NORTH AURORA** — Even in his last official vote as mayor, Mark Ruby's style as a consensus builder came to the forefront.

Ruby announced at Monday's Village Board meeting that his last day as village president will be Monday, Dec. 20, because he will move into his new home outside of North Aurora.

The Board unanimously voted to appoint Trustee Max Herwig as interim president until the end of Ruby's term in April, but not without some discussion.

Trustee John Hansen read a motion asking the Board to vote on Herwig as the acting president, with a second from Trustee Michael Herlihy.

But trustees Dale Berman and Mark Guethle, who are both running for mayor this spring along with Hansen, said Trustee Paul Shoemaker should be named acting president

because Shoemaker is the only board member not running for office.

"There are five trustees running for re-election, and whoever is named acting mayor could be seen as having an advantage in the election," Berman said.

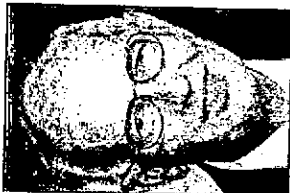
Shoemaker passed on the offer to be head of the board.

"I see the logic, but I have no desire to be mayor, not even for just three months," Shoemaker said to laughs.

"The only person I could see it hurting is Mike Herlihy, because he's running for trustee with Max. If it's all right with Mike, it's all right with me."

Herlihy had no objection, as his second of the motion to nominate Herwig would indicate, and the vote went through without a hitch.

Herlihy said Herwig was a good fit as acting president, because Herwig was the most senior trustee and because of Herwig's tireless commitment to improving the village over



**Mark Ruby's new home, outside the village, was finished early.**

the years.

Ruby said he appreciated the board being on the same page with the succession plan as an indication to the public of the trustees' togetherness on moving forward.

Earlier this year, Ruby announced he would not run for mayor again. The two-term mayor and his wife are moving four doors down from their grandchildren in an unincorporated area.

Ruby had hoped to stay in office until his term ended in April, but the house he and his wife are having built is already finished and ready to move into.

The rest of the meeting consisted

of a mix of village business, a statement by Ruby thanking residents, village staff and the board, and accolades from staff and trustees.

Ruby was lauded for his devotion to whatever needed to be done for the village, including taking on dual roles as mayor and village administrator for more than nine months before current Village Administrator Sue McLaughlin was hired.

Nothing he built a house in North Aurora almost 41 years ago and saw many changes within the village in that time, including a broad economic development plan and steady growth, Ruby said he still will visit from time to time and make sure he attends North Aurora Days.

"The things that we've done could not have been done without the cooperation of the community, or the hard work and cooperation of the board," Ruby said.

"I think the village is in good shape."

12-14-04 Daily Herald  
**County official vows  
 to finish school job**

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
 Daily Herald Staff Writer



Tom Van Cleave said Monday he intends to finish the four months left of his Batavia school board term despite a Kane County state's attorney opinion that he gave up that job by taking office last week as a county board member.

"During the campaign for the county board I made no secret of my desire to remain as a public servant on both boards," said Van Cleave, who has served

12 years on the school board, including the last four as president.

"With that knowledge the voters of my county board District 10 still chose me to be their representative."

Since entering the county board race he went on to win.

See JOB on PAGE 8

Continued from Page 1

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2004

# Job: Board member doesn't see a conflict

Continued from Page 1

opponents of Van Cleave, a Batavia Republican, have criticized him for wanting to hold both offices.

Earlier this year Van Cleave asked for an opinion from the Illinois attorney general as to whether a county board member in Kane County could also be a school board member. The answer was no.

After his victory Nov. 2, Van

Cleave asked the Kane County state's attorney's office to investigate the situation. Three days before Van Cleave took office, State's Attorney John Barsanti also said no.

Van Cleave disagreed and consulted his own lawyer and school district officials before opting to finish his term, which ends in April.

"I should emphasize, however, that the state's attorney has acknowledged that there is no

binding court decision or legislation on this important issue," he said. "I strongly believe that citizen volunteers such as myself should be encouraged rather than discouraged from serving on boards, commission and committees of more than one unit of local government."

Despite his strong beliefs, Van Cleave said he will not seek another term on the school board, something he did want to do, in part to avoid any possi-

ble legal challenges in the future.

"I now believe that it would not be in the best interests of my constituents to engage in a potentially long, protracted dispute which would be distracting from the key issues of the campaign," Van Cleave said.

Batavia school superintendent Ed Cave backed Van Cleave's decision and thanked him for his service Monday.

"Tom has a wonderful ability

to see the whole picture and be able to see the needs of the individual child in that big picture," Cave said.

As for the legal questions, Cave wouldn't address specifics and only said a decision has been made.

John Izzo, an attorney for Van Cleave and the school district, could not be reached for comment.

Regional School Superintendent Clem Mejia said he wasn't

asked for a formal opinion on the matter, but had offered his advice.

In his judgment, Mejia said, a conflict doesn't exist and Van Cleave should be able to fill out his term without a problem.

Mejia based his belief on the fact he's never seen a merging of what a school board member does and what a county board member does.

"I have never seen a conflict," he said.

12-14-04 Daily Herald

## Trustee selected as interim president on North Aurora board

BY JOHN JOHNSTON

Daily Herald Correspondent

North Aurora Village President Mark Ruby said his farewell Monday after 12 years of service, the last eight as the village's chief executive.

The board unanimously chose Trustee Max Herwig as interim president until the April 5 election.

Ruby said he was leaving the village next week after 40 years to be closer to his family. He said he will be moving to a new house near Geneva that is just down the block from his grandchildren.

"Extended families are really important when you can make them work," Ruby said.

Reflecting on his tenure, a time when North Aurora nearly doubled in population and landed commercial developments such as Woodman's and the possibility of a Target and Kohl's shopping center, Ruby said he was satis-

See PRESIDENT on PAGE 8

## President: Three to run for leader of the village

Continued from Page 1

fied with the work he has done and the new development he has seen since he became president.

Ruby said he was fortunate to have a staff that helped carry the load.

"The progress could not have been done without the cooperation of the community, staff and board," he said. "This is a 'we' situation."

Herwig, 58, and a trustee for the past 10 years, said a staff meeting Wednesday will help create a seamless transition so he can focus on the various commercial and residential developments in the village.

Trustee John Hansen, who nominated Herwig, said Herwig was the most senior trustee that was not seeking the presidency in April.

Of the six trustees, five are running on the spring ballot. Trustee Paul Shoemaker, the only trustee not running, said he did not want the president job, "even for a few months."

In addition to choosing the interim president Monday, the village also concluded the filing of nomination papers for the village board.

The deadline to file petitions was 5 p.m.

"The progress could not have been done without the cooperation of the community, staff and board. This is a 'we' situation."

Mark Ruby,  
North Aurora village president

Herwig and Trustee Mike Herlihy are seeking re-election to their trustee seats with challengers Mark Gaffino, Linda Mitchell and Mike Savini rounding out the field of candidates.

The five candidates will compete for three seats.

The third seat up for election belongs to Mark Guethle, who will seek the village president job along with Trustees Dale Berman and Hansen. The three-way race will prompt a primary in February.

Also, Joseph Lowery looks to become the village's next clerk. He was the only person to file nomination papers for the office before Monday's 5 p.m. deadline.

He is looking to succeed Lori Murray.

12-14-04  
Chronicle



Bill  
Page

## Across the board

When Tom Van Cleave announced his intention to run for a seat on the Kane County Board last year, one of the very first questions he was asked concerned the elected position he already held. If he were elected to the county board would he give up his seat on the Batavia School Board? Van Cleave finally answered that question Monday afternoon, but his decision does nothing to resolve a deeper issue.

Van Cleave has decided to keep both jobs, despite an opinion issued by the Kane County State's Attorney's Office, which said Illinois statutes consider the two positions to be incompatible. At least part of his reasoning seems to be based on the fact his school board term is up this April and he will not seek re-election. As he currently holds the position of president of the school board, Van Cleave believes resigning now would cause that body a lot of unnecessary problems. Maybe so, but sticking around might cause them even more.

Many observers are at a loss to explain Van Cleave's reluctance to step down from the school board. In light of the state's attorney's opinion it seems as though he is inviting trouble to stay on, particularly if he participates in any votes.

What will happen if Van Cleave is the pivotal vote on a crucial issue and it is later ruled he shouldn't have been on the board? How fast do you think that lawsuit will be filed? For that matter, if he persists in his present course of action, how soon before a lawsuit is filed that challenges his right to hold both offices?

The right thing for Van Cleave to do is resign from the Batavia School Board. Because he's not running for re-election he'd be gone by April anyway. Leaving 90 days ahead of schedule is no big deal and prevents a host of potential problems from ever surfacing. On the other hand, by not resigning Van Cleave is saying in effect he knows better than the state's attorney and he's going to do what he darn well pleases.

Frankly, Van Cleave's actions are an unpleasant mix of arrogance and petulance and may give a hint as to how he'll behave on the county board. Then again, given how many of the current board members act, he should fit right in.

\*\*\*

Speaking of the county board, it

appears several new members are annoyed with me for scolding them for missing last week's tour of the county jail. Although they all claim to have valid reasons for being absent, they should save their breath.

Every one of the newly elected board members mentioned the jail in their election campaigns and every one promised they'd make the issue a priority. Well the election has come and gone and the board will be deciding very soon on whether to build a new jail and if so what design to choose. No matter what excuse these new members trot out, the fact remains they will probably be making important decisions about a new jail without ever having seen the inside of the old one.

I'm not interested in hearing how they couldn't take the time to tour the jail because of other commitments or the pressures of their other jobs or businesses. They knew when they ran for office there would be demands on their time, so why are they taken by surprise now?

\*\*\*

At a gathering crowded with well-wishers last week, the county said goodbye to two of its top prosecutors, Joe Cullen and Bob Berlin.

Attorneys, cops, judges and courthouse employees all stopped by to wish Berlin good luck at his new gig in the DuPage State's Attorney's Office and the same to Cullen who's headed to the DeKalb office.

Cullen was with Kane County for 14 years, Berlin was here for four, and both are well respected by their peers. It's a loss for Kane and they'll be missed, but the move will be good for both men's careers.

It also bears mentioning that incoming Kane County State's Attorney John Barsanti made every attempt to keep the two. It was part of his attempt to make the office transition as smooth as possible. Even though the pair opted to move on, Barsanti showed a lot of class with his offers for them to stay. Very nicely done.

• Bill Page lives in St. Charles and owns a marketing company. He also writes about local issues on Tuesday and Thursday. Calls and e-mails answered at (630) 584-0809 or [wpage@mediawerks.org](mailto:wpage@mediawerks.org).



12:14:04 Beacon news

2004 The Beacon news

# Mayoral primary five-way contest

■ **Petition filing concludes:**  
Kane Clerk Jack Cunningham  
enters race in final hour

By Dave Parro

STAFF WRITER

**AURORA**—The field of candidates vying to be the next mayor here grew to five Monday on the last day of filing for the 2005 city election.

Kane County Clerk John "Jack" Cunningham turned in his petitions at about 4 p.m., making his candidacy official after pondering a run for weeks. His name will appear fourth on the Feb. 22 primary election ballot. Kane County Board member Bill Wyatt filed last in the mayor's race, just before 4:30 p.m., and will have the last spot on the mayoral portion of the ballot.

Cunningham said he doesn't think his late entry into the race puts him at a disadvantage, even though the other four candidates have been campaigning for more than a year. A recent poll by the Cunningham campaign showed him in the lead with all the candidates closely bunched together.

Voters have not been paying attention to the race because of the presidential election and won't become interested until after the holidays, Cunningham said.

"I thought they were all premature," Cunningham said of the other candidates announcing so early. "And I think by the results of the poll, they were working hard, but they weren't getting results for their hard work."

"People will probably not focus on the campaigns until after the first of the year, and people probably won't make up their minds until a week or two before the election."

Candidates Richard Irvin and Tom Weisner

◆ Turn to **MAYORAL, A2**

## Election filings

The following candidates have filed election petitions for 2005 municipal elections:

### Aurora

■ Mayor: Richard C. Irvin, 2701 Shetland Drive; Tom Weisner, 1822 Prairie St.; Angel Hernandez, 1316 Monomoy St.; Apt. F; John Andrew Cunningham, 218 LeGrande Blvd.; Bill Wyatt, 2590 Wyckwood Court

■ 2nd Ward: Juany Garza, 725 E. Gale-na Blvd.; David Marquez, 214 S. Lincoln Ave. (C)

■ 4th Ward: Georgine L. Jenkins, 318 N. View St.; Richard A. Lawrence, 27 S. Cahoon St.

■ 7th Ward: Scheketa Hart-Burns, 246 N. Sumner Ave. (C)

■ 9th Ward: Leroy V. Keith, 2582 Sagamore Circle (C); Gregg S. Peters, 3113 Lancia Lane

■ 10th Ward: Lynda Elmore, 2425 Legacy Drive (C)

■ Alderman at large: Jeffrey D. Donelson, 2073 Stephen St.; Robert J. O'Connor, 118 S. Commonwealth Ave. (C)

### Montgomery

■ Village president: Marilyn Micheline, 1105 S. Lincoln Ave. (C); Pete Heinz, 1955 Lakeside Drive

■ Village clerk: Robert Watermann, 1311 Royal Drive (C)

■ Trustee (three seats): Lloyd Mattingly, 1930 Springhaven Court (C); Bill Keck, 527 S. Main St. (C); Denny Lee, 104 Second Ave. (C); Andrew Koczmarek, 2538 Hartfield Drive

### North Aurora

■ Village president: Dale Berman, 13 Chantilly Lane; John Hansen, 505 Pinewood Drive; Mark Guethle, 1566 Hartsburg Lane

■ Village clerk: Joseph P. Lowary, 1001 Pinehurst Drive

■ Trustee (three seats): Max Herwig, 3 Candlewood Court (C); Mark Gaffino, 2881 McDuffee Circle; Linda Mitchell, 243 Ridge Road; Mike Herlihy, 445 N. Sycamore Lane (C); Michael P. Savol, 452 Hamilton Lane

## MAYORAL

From page A1

both turned in their petitions on the first day, and a lottery will be held Wednesday to determine the first name on the primary election ballot. Angel Hernandez filed Thursday, which means his name will appear third.

Cunningham, a frequent candidate who has lost mayoral elections twice before, said he decided to let Wyatt file last instead of fighting for the bottom position on the ballot.

Unlike the first day of filings, when the order of candidates who line up by 9 a.m. are determined by a lottery, the last position on the ballot is determined simply by who gets there last. There is no drawing; if two candidates both line up to be last, they have to decide among themselves who it will be.

"Somebody's got to walk through the door first," Carole Holtz, executive director of the Aurora Election Commission, said Monday morning. "At 5 p.m., we're locking the door and shutting the lights off."

The relatively few candidates running for aldermanic seats means only the mayor's race will require a primary election in Aurora. All the other city races, which have two or fewer candidates, will only require a general election April 5, when the top two vote-getters for mayor will also square off.

Holtz said that will likely mean low voter turnout for the mayoral primary election because township and school board elections also won't be held until April.

Two incumbent aldermen will face no opposition this spring: Scheketa Hart-Burns, 7th Ward; and Lynda Elmore, 10th Ward.

Alderman David Marquez, 2nd Ward, is being challenged by resident Juany Garza, a native of Mexico who came to the United States three decades ago and moved to Aurora in 1997.

A latecomer filed Monday to run against Alderman Leroy Keith in the 9th Ward. Gregg Peters, a Republican precinct committeeman in Naperville Township, said he decided only last week to gather signatures.

At-large Alderman Bob O'Connor, the longest-serving elected official in Aurora at 20 years, will be opposed by the Rev. Jeffrey Donelson, who lost two years ago to at-large Alderman Bob Shelton.

In the 4th Ward, where Alderman Chuck Nelson is stepping down, two residents filed petitions: Georgine "Jill" Jenkins and Richard Lawrence. Two other candidates who were circulating petitions, Hal Beebe and Mike Leonardi, decided not to run for the office.

### Other towns

Because three North Aurora trustees filed to replace retiring Village President Mark Ruby, a primary election will also be held for that race Feb. 22.

Mark Guethle, chairman of the Kane County Democratic Party; Dale Berman, who was village president from 1985 to 1989; and John Hansen all previously announced their intentions to seek North Aurora's top office.

In Montgomery, village Trustee Pete Heinz has filed to challenge incumbent Marilyn Micheline for village president.

In Batavia, no one filed as a party candidate. The filing period in other Fox Valley municipalities, and to run as an independent candidate in Batavia, will be from Jan. 17 to Jan. 25.

# Van Cleave to serve out School Board term

**■ Defying opinion:** County Board member disagrees with legal assessments about holding dual offices

**By Mike Cetera**  
STAFF WRITER

**BATAVIA** — New Kane County Board member Tom Van Cleave will not seek reelection to the Batavia School Board, but said Monday he will serve out his term, defying a suggestion by the state's attorney's office that holding both positions is

"incompatible."

Van Cleave, a longtime member of the School Board, won election in November to the County Board.

He said he disagrees with legal opinions rendered by the offices of Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan and Kane County State's Attorney John Barsanti that advise people cannot serve simultaneously on two elected boards. But, noting his belief there has been no court opinion on the matter, Van Cleave said he would serve until a School Board successor is elected next year so he can assist in the transition.

"I now believe that it would not be in

the best interests of my constituents to engage in a potentially long, protracted dispute which would be distracting from the key issues of a campaign," Van Cleave said Monday in addressing supporters and School District officials.

Van Cleave has served on the School Board for 12 years and currently serves as board president. The Batavia Republican was sworn in earlier this month to a first term on the County Board.

He pledged to remain active in school affairs by joining resident advisory committees, saying "community service as time developed" became a passion, and I hate to give it up.

## Quick Poll

■ Should Tom Van Cleave remain on the Batavia School Board while he also serves on the Kane County Board?

Turn to **Page B3** for how to cast your ballot online or by phone.

❖ Turn to **VAN CLEAVE, A2**

Van Cleave said the timing of his announcement should allow residents an opportunity to mount campaigns for the vacant School Board seat. The election filing deadline is next month, and Van Cleave's term ends in April.

## VAN CLEAVE

From page A1

Van Cleave said he was aware of potential conflicts while running for the County Board, and, in fact, asked for advice prior to the Nov. 2 election from the attorney general's office. He contacted the state's attorney's office after the election.

In a Dec. 3 opinion, Assistant State's Attorney Joseph Luvette wrote that "accepting the office as a County Board member is ... a resignation of the position on the School Board."

The state's attorney's office cited a 1993 Illinois law in which the Legislature specifically authorized holding the two offices in counties with a population less than 40,000 people. The General Assembly has not authorized holding simultaneous posi-

tions in larger counties.

State's Attorney John Barsanti said Monday he had made no conclusions about what steps his office might take.

Van Cleave said he decided not to resign because it would be unfair to appoint someone and expect them to immediately campaign for election.

He said he would speak with local lawmakers about seeking legislation that would explicitly allow people to hold simultaneous positions on local elected boards where there is little or no compensation for service, such as school boards, whose members are not paid.

"That would best serve the public by enabling voters to draw upon those leaders who are most willing and qualified to give of their private time and most knowledgeable about community issues to serve," he said.

# Ruby steps down

*Over the  
Herwig named  
N. Aurora's interim  
village president*

By ERIC SCHALKOPF  
Kane County Chronicle

NORTH AURORA — Village President Mark Ruby on Monday stepped down from his post because he is moving his home to the next town to the north.



Ruby, 71, was on the village board for four years before being elected village president in 1997. He was re-elected in 2001. Ruby's son, Paul, lives in Mill Creek and Ruby said he wants to live closer to his grandchildren. Ruby's term expires in April. Trustees unanimously appointed Village Trustee Max Herwig as interim village president, and he will hold the post until the April 5 consolidated election.

## Ruby

Continued from page 1

"I want to keep it as seamless as possible," Herwig said. "I will try to keep things status quo."

Herwig said he wants to make sure that proposed residential and commercial projects continue to move forward.

But Herwig was not Trustee Dale Berman's first choice for interim village president. He wanted Trustee Paul Shoemaker to fill the post.

"He is the one member who is not running for election," Berman said.

Herwig and Trustee Mike Herlihy are running for re-election, and Berman, Trustee John Hansen and Trustee Mark Guethle are running for village president.

two candidates with the most votes will face off in the April 5 consolidated election.

The new village president could have a vastly different board after the election.

Three trustee spots are open on the village board. Incumbents Herwig and Herlihy, along with former village clerk Linda Mitchell, Police Commission Chairman Mark Gaffino and resident Michael Savini have filed petitions to run for the board.

Joseph Lowery has filed to run for village clerk. Village Clerk Lori Murray is not running for re-election.

Guethle, first elected in 2003, is wrapping up a two-year term on the village board.

Hansen and Berman have served long stints in North Aurora village government. Berman was village president from 1985 to 1989. Before that, he was a trustee for eight years. He again was elected to

"I see the logic, but I have no desire to be mayor, not even for three months. I think Max will do a fine job," Shoemaker said.

In the end, Berman and Guethle went along with Herwig's appointment. Ruby said he was happy to see the unanimous vote.

"I am glad to see we have a board together on that," Ruby said.

Ruby thanked trustees, staff and community members for their help.

"I really feel I have had the opportunity to work with some people who have been some great contributors," Ruby said.

In turn, trustees and staff members showed their appreciation to Ruby.

"I saw you take on whatever role was needed," village attorney Kevin Drendel said. "You did it without a lot of fanfare. And it with the heart

# Land buys remain top priority

■ **Preserving open space:** Possible tax referendum on Kane County agenda Jan. 12

By Brian Shields

SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

GENEVA — John Hoscheit didn't waste much time Tuesday once he was retained as president of the Kane County Forest Preserve Commission.

Hoscheit, R-St. Charles, wants to keep land acquisition for open space as the county's first priority, particularly because the fight for prime land with developers is becoming as contentious as ever.

One of the first things the committee will talk about when it meets again on Jan. 12 is the possibility of another referendum to fund Kane County's land acquisition efforts, Hoscheit said at the year-end meeting of the County Board and Forest Preserve Commission.

Hoscheit said there is about \$4 million in the land acquisition fund, but the cost of parcels the county has been eyeing is much more, and the fund needs to be replenished.

"If we don't stay out in front of it now, that land will be gone," said Hoscheit, who estimates between 500 and 1,000 acres per month are snared by developers. "This would help us acquire land in some critical areas of the county."

There appears to be some consensus among

## LAND

From page A1

board members that the county needs to continue buying desirable parcels, and that residents wary of any talk of a new tax or tax increase might soften when it comes to preserving available land.

Residents approved a \$77 million referendum in 1999, and the county has been aggressive in securing several thousand acres of open land for preserves. There is no specific amount board members are discussing yet.

Board member Jan Carlson, R-Elburn, agreed land acquisition should continue.

"Most of our citizens realize the open space is going to be there forever. The Forest Preserve District couldn't sell it, even if they wanted to," said Carlson, who nominated Hoscheit to remain as Forest Preserve president.

"The Catch-22 of it is, it's becoming more expensive to buy the land, and the prices are going up because we're buying the land."

Hoscheit said money invested in open space would pay off in keeping the land available to develop as forest preserve land, as well as lessen the burdens on schools and other services that result when land is used for residential development.

Incoming County Board Chairman Karen McConaughay, R-St. Charles, who will be sworn in Dec. 20, said she has seen the often negative reaction of taxpayers when tax proposals are brought up, but land acquisition for open space might be different.

"I really sense the one referendum the citizens would be willing to support is for open space," McConaughay said. "I think they would be able to sacrifice for a legacy of the county's history."

Hoscheit also said he would like to continue the county's good relationship with the Kane County Cougars minor league baseball team and to keep up the quality of Settlers Hill Golf Course.

The lease agreement for the Cougars at Elfstrom Stadium and revenue from Settlers Hill bring in about \$1 million per year for the county to use for general expenses, Hoscheit said.

❖ Turn to LAND, A2

### Drug court's work is commendable

We are writing in response to your two-part series that is critical of the Kane County Drug Rehabilitation Court (DRC) of Judge James Doyle. We are surprised by the negativity in the series because by every measure, the Kane County DRC has been a tremendous success.

DRC provides an alternative to the penal system and treats the source of the offender's behavior, their addiction to alcohol and drugs.

By dealing with nonviolent drug offenders through a mix of treatment and sanctions, Kane County has reduced substance abuse, recidivism and costs.

Drug courts throughout the country succeed by saving taxpayers millions of dollars and by saving lives. Incarceration costs taxpayers \$25,000 per year, while rehab costs an average \$4,000 per person. DRC has helped to reduce Kane County crime 25 percent over the past three years, and has given thousands of kids back their moms and dads. It saves lives by taking substance abusers off the roads, and by providing them an opportunity to break from addiction and abuse.

Gateway Foundation, which has recently merged with the Community Counseling Center of Fox Valley, has helped hundreds of thousands of people to overcome their addictions in the past 35 years.

We are proud to be part of the solution to preventing recidivism in Kane County and applaud Judge Doyle for the accountability that he demands of the clients in the program and of us in providing these services to those suffering with substance abuse problems.

**Michael J. Darcy**

**President, Gateway Foundation**

**Carole Arliskas, Executive Director, Community Counseling Center of the Fox Valley in Aurora**

Read past editorials, letters and columns at [suburbanichicago.com/beaconnews/opinions](http://suburbanichicago.com/beaconnews/opinions)

12-15-04 Beacon News

12/15/04 Daily Herald

# Christian retreat proposed

BY JOHN JOHNSTON

Daily Herald Correspondent

Developers seeking to build a Christian retreat on the Miller farm near Campton Hills Road brought their idea before the Campton Township Board Tuesday in order to get public and board opinion before purchasing the land.

The interdenominational, nonprofit builders said the main function of the camp would be a weekend retreat for kids during the summer.

Ravi Dyer, who presented the information to the board, said he envisions between 100 and 150 kids using the camp during the summer.

He said the all of the existing buildings on the 6.2 acre farm would be replaced except the

barn, which would be converted into a retreat center.

Dyer said the property could be used for conferences or leadership training, with groups of 50 to 75 people, during the winter.

Architect Tom Mahaffey of Anderson and Mahaffey in St. Charles said the project would require 40 parking stalls and would build dorms, a cafeteria and a recreation room where buildings already exist. He said most buildings on the farm are not in good condition and would need to come down, but that the plans are "very preliminary."

"We love the character of the area," Mahaffey said. "The farm would be given a new life that it might not have in its current state."

Dyer, who settled in St. Charles after moving from India, said his dream has a Christian foundation. He said the 100-year-old barn, currently located on the property, felt like a church when he first entered it.

"I want to use the barn for a good purpose and keep it from destruction and building houses," Dyer said.

Several residents at the meeting said they liked the idea of keeping the land rural, but had concerns about added traffic and noise.

Trustee Donna Gillen, who lives near the farm, said the traffic in the area is already bad and she was reluctant to change the zoning, which would be required for the camp.

## A sincere effort

To the Editor:

I have read the editorials in the *Kane County Chronicle* concerning new county board members not being in attendance at the county jail tour, insinuating that we failed to attend due to lack of interest.

I was informed of the tour weeks after the election and already had a work commitment on the day scheduled. I was hosting a program at the Holmstad (my place of employment) that had been on my calendar since October. I informed Karen McConnaughay that I had this conflict, and that I had already toured the jail during the primary campaign. I met with Sheriff Ramsey in December, and he was gracious to take me on a personal tour of the jail. I saw the broken-down washing machines, the overcrowding of cells, the inadequate kitchen facilities and much more. I visited with guards in their break room. I saw the small prisoner visiting area. I learned the history behind the selection of the architects and the rationale of dumping the old plan for a new direction in the planning process.

I am not saying that I do not have much to learn on this issue in a short time period. I made a sincere effort to become familiar with the jail situation early in the campaign and feel that I have an initial good understanding of the issue. I will do my homework to become familiar with the new plans for the jail.

I am a firm believer in not

making excuses. I am not writing this letter as an excuse for not attending the jail tour on Dec. 8, but rather to clarify that I did in fact tour the jail prior to the election. I also believe that if none of the new members could attend — and they knew that in advance — maybe it was a bad date for everyone and another date could be selected, rather than just going ahead with the tour and casting blame on those members who had prior commitments. Last week was very busy for all the new members. I attended all new member orientation meetings. They were all very informative and helpful.

Free advice: Mr. Rivara offered some free advice. Free advice is always welcome. I would offer this free advice to Mr. Rivara: Call me if you ever have a question about my familiarity with an issue. I may be ahead of you.

**Thomas Van Cleave**

Member  
Kane County Board

12-15-04  
*Chronicle*

12-15-04

# Open *Daily Herald* space coffer is empty

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

With the kitty nearly empty, Kane County Forest Preserve District leaders are looking for a new deposit from taxpayers to carry on a popular land acquisition program that has added thousands of acres to the district's holdings.

That being so, district president John Hoscheit, fresh off his unanimous election Tuesday to a second 2-year term as the forest preserve commission's chief, said the panel would immediately consider putting a new open space initiative on the April ballot.

**• In short:**  
Motivated by the success of a 1999 referendum, the Kane County Forest Preserve District is considering asking taxpayers for more money to preserve open space.

"Quality of life is really a No. 1 issue," Hoscheit said, referencing district surveys that show the topic as a favorite among residents. "Preservation of open space is tops on the list of what they want us to accomplish."

In 1999, the district asked county voters to support a tax increase to buy land and save it from development. The \$70 million question won in a landslide, by a nearly 2-to-1 margin. It meant an extra \$32 in taxes a year for the owner of a \$150,000 home.

The result brought 5,649 acres of

See **FOREST** on PAGE 15

## Forest: Tax payers still approve buying up land

Continued from Page 1

new land into the forest preserve system paid for by the \$70 million and a second \$36 million bond sale made possible because of the original tax increase.

At an average of \$20,500 per acre, the forest preserve purchased more than 75 parcels ranging in size from a half-acre to 533 acres.

Add it all up and today the forest preserve system includes more than 14,000 acres.

Hoscheit, a St. Charles Republican, said about \$4 million remains for land purchases, and that money won't cover all the property currently under negotiation. There are willing sellers, officials say, and the question now is are the taxpayers still willing buyers.

Karen McConnaughay, the county board's chairwoman-elect, said Tuesday that polling she did this year during her campaign suggests an open space referendum is the only kind of tax hike with a chance of

getting voter approval. Her survey results show a public safety tax, a transportation tax or a senior citizen services tax — three proposals talked about in Kane County but never posed to voters — would be rejected.

An open space tax, however, would win support, the McConnaughay numbers show.

Just how large a new tax rate would be remains in the air. Hoscheit said it would probably be similar to 1999 and likely be discussed and decided at the January forest preserve commission meeting.

Local governments have until Jan. 31 to call for a referendum. The next chance won't come until 2006 because there is no election in November.

To wait that long will only mean more land will be built upon and the available land will cost more, Hoscheit said.

"It will be another year and with open space prices increasing at 20 percent a year two things will happen," he said. "Prices will go up and we will lose opportunities on property."



# North Aurora mayor quits; successor named

By Amy Fischer Roth  
Special to the Tribune

North Aurora will have a new village president as of Monday, and then it will be up to voters to seat a new mayor in April.

Mark Ruby announced at a Village Board meeting Monday that he and his wife will be moving into a newly built home in unincorporated Kane County. The home, which has a Geneva address, is close to his son's home.

It was up to Village Board members to appoint an interim village president, and after a few moments of discussion, they unanimously approved the appointment of Max Herwig, a trustee for the last 10 years.

Trustee Dale Berman said he believed Trustee Paul Shoemaker should be appointed, because he is the only board member not running for re-election.

"I see the logic," Shoemaker said. "But I have no desire to be mayor; not even for three months. I think Max would do a great job."

Herwig is running for re-election to his seat.

Dale Berman, John Hansen and Mark Guethle are mayoral candidates.

Ruby said Tuesday that he is endorsing Hansen as the next village president.

**Mark Ruby announced that he and his wife will move into a newly built home in unincorporated Kane County.**

"John has worked quietly to bring economic growth to the village and to ensure financial stability," he said. "I appointed John and (Trustee) Mike Herlihy to conduct the successful negotiations that brought the new Woodman's store to town." Ruby also likes the fact that Hansen has "never been obligated to any political party."

Hansen, 50, is a pharmacist by profession who manages 21 pharmacies in nine states. He has lived in the village since 1978 and has spent more than 17 non-consecutive years in office.

Guethle, 45, works for the International Union of Painters. He has lived in the village for five years and was elected to the board in 2003. He is chairman of the Kane County Democratic Association.

Berman, 70, who served as village president from 1985 to 1989 and as a trustee from 1977 to 1985, was again elected as a

trustee in 2003. He has been retired since 1996 from First Alert. He was the chairman of the Planning Commission, was on the Zoning Board of Appeals and was chairman of the Police Commission. He has been on the Fox Valley Park District Board for 11 years, serving as president for the last two years.

Five candidates will compete for three seats on the Village Board: incumbents Herwig and Herlihy and challengers Mark Gaffino, Linda Mitchell and Michael Savini. Shoemaker's seat is not up for re-election.

Gaffino, 44, who is chairman of the Board of Police and Fire Commissioners, served four years on the village's Plan Commission. He has lived in North Aurora for 43 years and owns a landscaping business. This is his first race for public office.

Mitchell, 59, was elected as village clerk for three terms and served from 1985 to 1997. She was executive secretary to the village's first administrative assistant until 2000, when she was employed with the West Aurora School District 129 until her retirement in July. Her last position was construction finance manager.

Joseph Lowery is running unopposed for village clerk to succeed Lori Murray, who is not seeking re-election.

12-15-04  
**Elburn Daily Herald**  
wants  
a classy  
train stop

BY AUBREY TRIPLETT  
*Daily Herald Correspondent*

Elburn wants its train station to be more than just a warming shelter.

Metra provides a basic shelter for train stops, but the village is interested in turning its station into an attractive building, said Village Administrator Dave Morrison.

"We want it to set Elburn off as an attractive destination to those people coming from Chicago," Morrison said.

Elburn's village board met with Metra planners Monday night to discuss alternative plans for the train station, scheduled to be constructed next summer in time for the December 2005 start of train service.

Since the decision needs to be made soon, the board reviewed photos of existing Metra stations and selected those they liked, like Glenview's north station, and went over ideas with officials, including Metra project manager Andy Roth.

For now the village board is hoping to build an attractive smaller structure and reserve land nearby for a larger building with more amenities, like a coffee shop.

Since the station will sit on a high embankment, village trustees agreed that its architecture should be taken into account. Village President Jim Willey said the board has looked at the designs of Arthur Gerber, a Chicago prairie-style transit architect from the early 1900s.

"It's like, 'what do you like?'" Willey said. "How do you get seven people to like the same thing?"

Village trustees did agree on some possible structures, such as a metal roof, a definable entrance and historic globe lighting. Metra will give \$165,000 toward the new building that would have been used for the warming shelter. Metra would then maintain ownership of the station and the village would own the larger building.

Metra architects and Roth planned to take the board's

METRO

12-15-04

W

SECTION 2

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

3

# Kane may seek open-space funds

## Forest preserve bond issue urged

By William Presecky

Tribune staff reporter

Kane County voters are likely to be asked in April whether to authorize a forest preserve bond sale similar to the \$70 million issue to preserve open space they overwhelmingly approved nearly five years ago.

John Hoscheit (R-St. Charles), who was unanimously re-elected to a second two-year term as president of the Kane County Forest Pre-

serve Commission, said Tuesday that the need to reinvestigate the aggressive land acquisition plan approved by voters in April 1999 appears to be understood and has the continued support of taxpayers.

"It appears from the information we've received, 'quality of life' is the No. 1 issue in a lot of people's minds," said Hoscheit.

Growth pressures and the rapid escalation of land prices in Kane County make it incumbent on the district to act decisively to expand its holdings in a strategic way as long as the opportunity exists and before the cost of acquiring open space becomes prohib-

itive, he said.

"We have to do it in a way that is affordable," said Hoscheit, who estimated "conservatively" that the cost of acquiring open space in Kane County is increasing at a rate of about 20 percent a year.

"The prices are bound to go up," he said. "The development pressure has increased greatly."

"We have a number of properties that we've targeted... and we need to be in a position to act," said Hoscheit.

In order to place a binding referendum question on the April 5 ballot, the Forest Preserve Commission must adopt a resolution to that effect by

Jan. 31.

Hoscheit said he plans to put the bond issue proposal up for discussion next month.

The next opportunity to have a referendum after April will be the March 2006 primary election.

Including bond proceeds from the 1999 referendum question, approved by more than 66 percent of Kane voters, a \$36 million bond sale last year that did not require voter approval, as well as \$4.5 million in county, state and federal grants, the district has raised \$11 million over the last five years to buy open space. All but about \$4 million of the total has been spent ac-

quiring 5,649 acres, expanding forest preserve holdings to more than 14,000 acres or roughly double what they were in April 1999.

Among the other goals outlined by Hoscheit for his second term is completion of a master plan "in the next calendar year" that outlines concepts for how all the preserves should be used.

"It will make it easier to prioritize the dollars we set aside for development of our preserves," he said.

In considering an April tax referendum proposal, Hoscheit said the district is sensitive to the financial needs of the county's school districts.

12-15-04 Daily Herald

# Elgin supervisor has company in primary

## ***Incumbent Johnson will face former township Trustee Wegman in February***

BY TOM O'KONOWITZ  
*Daily Herald Staff Writer*

Elgin Township Supervisor Doug Johnson will face a challenge for his seat from former township trustee and perennial candidate Larry Wegman.

Both men filed nominating petitions to be the township supervisor and will face off in the February Republican pri-

mary. The Democratic Party will hold a caucus at a later date to place one of its candidates on the April ballot.

Six people filed petitions for the four trustee seats that will be on the ballot, including the four incumbents and two challengers.

The incumbent township Assessor Shirley Miller, Clerk Harold Bowen Jr. and highway

Commissioner Richard C. Burnidge all are unopposed by Republicans. No others had filed nominating petitions by Monday's deadline.

The contest for township supervisor matches three-term veteran Supervisor Johnson against Wegman, who has run five unsuccessful campaigns for a seat on the Kane County Board.

Wegman, who could not be reached for comment Tuesday, previously said he wanted to represent the east Elgin district because he believed county government should be better

controlled by its leaders.

A local contractor, Wegman served as township trustee from 1994 to 1998.

In the race for four township trustee seats, incumbents Jon P.

Hudgens, Robert Johnson, Vicki Pelock and Roger Wulleumier all filed petitions to be re-elected. Challengers Kurt Kojzarek and Thomas Conro

also filed the necessary paper-

work. Kojzarek previously ran for a seat on the Elgin Community College board. Conro last year applied to fill the Elgin City Council vacancy created by the death of Marie Yearman.

# Hoscheit to lead forest preserve district for 2 more years

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — Kane County Forest Preserve President John Hoscheit has the job for two more years.

Hoscheit, R-St. Charles, was unopposed in his bid Wednesday for re-election. He has held the position since 2002, when he challenged incumbent Jack Cook. In his second term, Hoscheit said he will continue open space initiatives and possibly seek a referendum for more money to purchase open space.

"I think we've made some significant progress in every area," Hoscheit said.

Hoscheit said he wants to solidify a long-term relationship with the Kane County Cougars in his second term. Elfsrom Stadium and the Kane County Events Center are owned by the preserve.

He also said "continuing aggressively with open space initiatives" was a priority. The preserve has acquired thousands of acres after a \$70 million referendum in 1999 under Cook's reign. That, combined with a \$30 million bond refinancing in 2003, was used to bring the district's holdings to 13,500 acres, up from 7,000 acres in 1999.

Hoscheit said he will continue to acquire land before rising real estate

prices become prohibitive.

"If we wait, that open space will be gone," Hoscheit said. "I don't see any end to that process in the near future."

Hoscheit has been criticized for using too much of the open space for "revenue streams," such as sports facilities.

"Do not allow the forest preserve to become everyone's park district," said former Forest Preserve Executive

Committee member Doug Weigand, who did not seek re-election to his District 10 county board seat.

Weigand said he was concerned that the land acquired for open space preservation would become a "sea of ball fields and soccer fields."

Hoscheit said that approximately 5 percent of the forest preserve land is used for recreation, which is much less than the 10 percent he said is standard in other districts.

"We're lucky in that we have park districts that provide a lot of that," Hoscheit said.

Hoscheit said he will encourage the board to consider a referendum April 5.

The deadline for filing is January. Most of the \$100 million acquired in 1999 and 2003 has been used.

"We've got about \$3 million left," Hoscheit said.

Hoscheit's first official act of his second term was to postpone committee assignments until the Jan. 11 meeting.

"Historically, we've waited until after the committee assignments for the county," Hoscheit said.

The Kane County Board has delayed its committee assignments until after Chairman-elect Karen McConaughay takes her oath of office on Monday.



**Hoscheit**

# Time to think spring (elections)

12-15-04 Daily Herald

*Want to make a difference on your village, school or park board? Now's the time to start*

Who decides whether to ask voters for a tax increase, to approve a new development, to buy land for new parks or to set new school boundaries? People like you.

Every two years, a raft of municipal, park district, library district and township boards have open seats decided by an election.

On April 5, 2005, these local elections will occur again. If you want to be on one of the boards, the time to act is now.

Today we are providing a list of all local boards with seats open for election in April and all the basic information you need to know before running.

A few boards have already started — or even completed — the election filing process. And some of those also have primaries on Feb. 22, 2005.

But the large majority have later filing times and no primaries.

In most cases, you still have about a month to pick up nominating petitions. That's the first step to running for office. If you meet the requirements of the office you seek, you can file during a one-week period in mid-January.

And if all goes well, you'll be looking at your name on the ballot April 5.

## St. Charles school board

**What it does:** Sets budget, approves building renovations and improvements, purchases land for new schools, decides student discipline cases, approves curriculum, hires staff

**Annual budget:** \$106 million

**Meetings:** 7:30 p.m. second and fourth Mondays of the month

**Total on board:** Seven board members

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Four, 4-year terms

**Nominating petitions:** Available at school district office, 201 S. Seventh St.

**Requirements:** U.S. citizen, at least 18 years old, registered voter, resident of the school district for at least one year immediately preceding the election, 50 petition signatures  
**Info:** (630) 513-3030 or [www.c303.org](http://www.c303.org)

## St. Charles city council

**What it does:** Sets budget, approves liquor licenses, approves mayor's committee appointments, renews department leaders' contracts, approves land and property acquisition, annexes land

**Annual budget:** \$141.7 million

**Meetings:** First and third Monday of each month and several monthly committee meetings **Total on council:** 10 aldermen, mayor, clerk

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Five aldermen (one from each ward), mayor, clerk, treasurer, four-year terms

**Nominating petitions:** Available at city hall, 2 E. Main St.

**Requirements:** Resident of city or ward (if alderman), registered voter, number of signatures vary by position sought

**Info:** Susan Kempf, city administrator's assistant, at (630) 377-4422

## St. Charles Public Library District board

**What it does:** Appoints library director, approves budget, forms policies

**Annual budget:** \$6.5 million

**Meetings:** Second Wednesday monthly (except August)

**Total on board:** Six trustees

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Four trustees; two 6-year terms, one 2-year term, one 4-year term

**Nominating petitions:** Available at the library, 1 S. Sixth Ave.

**Requirements:** 50 signatures, registered voter, resident of district

**Info:** (630) 584-0076 or [www.stcharleslibrary.org](http://www.stcharleslibrary.org)

## St. Charles park board

**What it does:** Acquires land, approves park development and improvement projects

**Annual budget:** \$14.3 million

**Meetings:** Second and fourth Tuesdays of the month

**Total on board:** Seven trustees

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Four, 4-year terms

**Nominating petitions:** Available at the Baker Community Center, 101 S. Second St.

**Requirements:** Resident of the district for at least a year; at least 18 years old; 235 signatures

**Info:** [www.st-charlesparks.org](http://www.st-charlesparks.org) or (630) 584-1055

## St. Charles Township

**What it does:** Establishes township policy, certifies township and road district's tax levies, adopts budget, appropriates funds, approves expenses, audits bills

**Annual budget:** \$2.4 million

**Meetings:** Second Wednesday monthly

**Total on board:** Four trustees, supervisor

**Seats up for election in 2005:**

Municipalities struggle with development, growth

Township services under budget strain

Class size, funding and tests challenge school resources

Libraries debate impact of Internet and civil liberties

Park districts work to address evolving recreation demands

Four trustees, supervisor, assessor, clerk and highway commissioner; four-year terms

**Nominating petitions:** Available at township office: 1725 Dean St., St. Charles

**Requirements:** Registered voter, township resident, 304 signatures

**Info:** (630) 584-9342 and [www.stcharles-township.org](http://www.stcharles-township.org)

## Batavia City Council

**What it does:** Sets budget, approves liquor licenses, approve mayor's committee appointments, renew department leaders' contracts, approve land and property acquisition, annexes land

**Annual budget:** \$74 million

**Meetings:** 7 p.m. the first and third Monday of each month and several committee meetings Mondays and Tuesdays

**Total on council:** 14 aldermen, mayor, clerk

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Mayor, clerk, treasurer, aldermen in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th and 7th Wards, all 4-year terms; 1st Ward alderman, one 4-year and one 2-year term; and a 5th Ward alderman, one 4-year and one 2-year term

**Nominating petitions:** Available at the Batavia Government Center, 100 N. Island Ave.

**Requirements:** Resident of city or ward (if alderman), registered

voter, number of signatures vary by position sought

**Info:** City Clerk Hannah Volk at (630) 406-7900, ext. 108 or [mhwolk@cityofbatavia.net](mailto:mhwolk@cityofbatavia.net)

## Batavia park board

**What it does:** Sets budget, makes policy, supervises staff

**Overall budget:** \$6.28 million

**Meetings:** 7:30 p.m. the third Tuesday of the month at the Civic Center, 327 W. Wilson St.

**Total on board:** Five commissioners

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Two seats, which carry six-year terms

**Nominating petitions:** Available at the park district administration office at the civic center

**Requirements:** Live in the district for at least one year prior to the election

**Info:** Executive director Mike Clark at (630) 879-5235, ext. 15

## Batavia school board

**What it does:** Oversees Batavia public schools

**Annual budget:** \$52.8 million

**Meetings:** Generally, the 7 p.m. the second and fourth Tuesday of every month at the Rosalie Jones Administration Center, 335 W. Wilson St.

**Total on board:** Seven

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Four seats, 4-year terms

**Nominating petitions:** Can be picked up between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. weekdays at the administration center, 335 W. Wilson St.

**Requirements:** At least 18 years old, a resident of the school district for at least one year immediately preceding the election and a registered voter

**Info:** Superintendent Ed Cave, who serves as the board's secretary, (630) 879-600, ext. 4004

## Batavia library district

**What it does:** The board is responsible for the district's finances, staff and policies

**Annual budget:** \$2.5 million

**Meetings:** 7 p.m. the third Tuesday of the month

**Total on board:** Seven trustees **Seats up for election in 2005:** Three trustees will be elected to four-year terms; and a fourth trustee seat is open for a two-year term.

**Nominating petitions:** Available at the library, 10 S. Batavia Ave.

**Requirements:** Resident of the library district and at least 50 signatures from voters registered in the district.

**Info:** Director, (630) 879-1393.

## Batavia Township

**What it does:** Manages the affairs of the township.

**Annual budget:** \$303,185

**Meetings:** 7:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of the month in the alderman's room behind city council chambers at the Batavia Government Center, 100 N. Island Ave.

**Total on board:** Four trustees. Other township officials include the supervisor, highway commissioner, assessor and clerk. The last three do not vote but have a voice on the board.

**Seats up for election in 2005:** All of the trustee seats, which carry four-year terms.

**Nominating petitions:** Available at the township office, Batavia Government Center, 100 N. Island Ave., Batavia.

**Requirements:** Resident of the township. The assessor needs certification as well.

**Info:** Clerk Howard Katz at (630) 879-5818.

## Geneva City Council

**What it does:** Oversees city of Geneva

**Annual budget:** \$64.2 million

**Meetings:** Mondays at 7 p.m.

**Total on board:** Mayor and 10 aldermen.

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Mayor, clerk, treasurer and five aldermen, all for four-year terms.

**Nominating petitions:** Can be picked up at city hall, 22 S. First St. Candidates for alderman must have 150 signatures. Candidates for citywide positions must have 375 signatures.

**Requirements:** Aldermen have to live within the ward whose seat they represent for one year prior to the election, and citywide candidates must have lived within the city for one year prior to the election.

**Deadline:** Packets can be filed Jan. 17 to 25.

**Info:** Visit [www.elections.state.il.us](http://www.elections.state.il.us) and click on "Election Information"

## Geneva library board

**What it does:** Oversees the operation of the library for the district, which extends beyond the boundaries of the city

**Annual budget:** \$4.2 million

**Meetings:** Fourth Thursday of the month at 7 p.m., except November and December

**Total on board:** Seven trustees

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Three, four-year terms

**Nominating petitions:** Petitions can be picked up at the check-out desk on the upper level of the library at 127 James St. from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Need 50 signatures.

**Requirements:** Candidates must be registered voters who live in the district

**Deadline:** Petitions must be dropped off Jan. 17 to 25 during regular business hours

**Info:** Call the library director at (630) 232-0780, ext. 224

## Geneva park board

**What it does:** Oversees more

than 50 parks and park facilities. Acquires and manage the open space that makes up Geneva's western boundary, although its boundaries extend beyond the city.

**Annual budget:** \$5.5 million

**Meetings:** Third Monday of every month at 7 p.m., except December, when meetings are second Monday at 6 p.m.

**Total on board:** Five commissioners

**Seats up for election in 2005:** One, 6-year term

**Nominating petitions:** Can be picked up at the park district main offices at 710 Western Ave. Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to noon. Need 59 signatures.

**Requirements:** Must be a Geneva Park District resident

**Deadline:** Packets can be dropped off Jan. 17 to 25.

**Info:** (630) 232-4542

## Geneva school board

**What it does:** Runs the Geneva school district, oversees its administration and plans for its future.

**Annual budget:** \$62.2 million

**Meetings:** Second and fourth Monday of every month at 7:30 p.m., except in December

**Total on board:** Seven

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Four, 4-year terms

**Nominating petitions:** Can be picked up Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the district's central office, 227 N. Fourth St., Geneva

**Requirements:** Must be a U.S. citizen 18 or older, a registered voter and a resident of the school district for one year prior to the election

**Deadline:** Petitions must be dropped off between Jan. 18 and 25 with the board secretary. The last day for candidates to withdraw is Feb. 3.

**Info:** (630) 463-3000

## Geneva Township

**What it does:** Oversees unincorporated areas of Geneva Township, responsible for senior services, assessments and highway maintenance

**Annual budget:** \$773,584

**Meetings:** Third Thursday of every month at 7 p.m.

**Total on board:** Four trustees, supervisor, clerk, assessor and highway commissioner

**Seats up for election in 2005:** All

**Nominating petitions:** Can be picked up at township offices, 2202 Gary Lane, Geneva. Need between 304 and 486 signatures depending on office.

**Requirements:** Must be a resident of Geneva Township. Assessor must be certified by the state.

**Deadline:** Packets must be dropped off from Jan. 17 to 25

**Info:** Contact Clerk Barbara Olson at (630) 232-3604 or (630) 232-0123

## Messenger library board

**What it does:** Oversight panel for the public library serving North Aurora

**Annual budget:** \$870,000

**Meetings:** 7 p.m. on second Thursday of the month at the library, 113 Oak St., North Aurora

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Four

**Total on board:** Seven members

**Nominating petitions:** Available at the library, but must be turned in at North Aurora village hall, 25 E. State St.

**Requirements:** Must have 50 signatures and be a legal North Aurora resident

**Deadline:** File between Jan. 18 and 4:30 p.m. Jan. 25

**Info:** Call (630) 896-0240

## Wayne village board

**What it does:** Oversees maintenance of village streets, utilities and development

**Meetings:** 7:30 p.m. the first and third Tuesdays of each month at

village hall

**Total on board:** Six trustees elected at-large

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Three 4-year trustee positions

**Nominating petitions:** Available at village hall, 5N43D Railroad St.

**Requirements:** Live in Wayne and a registered voter. Petitions must be signed by 20 to 30 registered voters.

**Deadline:** 2 p.m. Jan. 25 at village hall

**Info:** (630) 584-3090

## Lily Lake village board

**What it does:** Plans budget, makes final decisions on developments and deals with other village-related issues.

**Annual budget:** \$301,441

**Meetings:** Usually third Monday of every month

**Total on board:** Six trustees, plus village president

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Three trustees, 4-year terms

**Nominating petitions:** Pick up at village office, 43W870 Empire Road, from 8 to 11 a.m. Monday-Thursday

**Requirements:** Minimum of six signatures

**Info:** Call (630) 365-9677

## West Aurora school district 129 board

**What it does:** Oversight and policy-making panel of public school district covering parts of western Aurora, North Aurora and Montgomery.

**Annual budget:** \$99 million

**Meetings:** Third Monday of month

**Total on board:** Seven members

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Three, 4-year terms.

**Nominating petitions:** Available at administrative office, 80 S. River St., Aurora

**Requirements:** Resident of school district for a year prior to election, U.S. citizen, at least 18 years old

**Deadline:** 5 p.m. Jan. 25

(630) 301-5033

## Blackberry Township

**What it does:** The board oversees brush pickup and senior and low-income assistance programs. The highway supervisor oversees maintenance of rural roads

**Annual budget:** Operating budget, excluding the highway budget, is \$350,000

**Meetings:** At 7 p.m. the second Tuesday of every month

**Total on board:** Four trustees and one supervisor

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Four trustees, supervisor, assessor, road commissioner. All posts are 4-year terms.

**Nominating petitions:** Available at the township office, 43W390 Main Street Road in Elburn, or the county clerk's office at 719 S. Batavia Ave. in Geneva

**Requirements:** Must be a resident of the township and a registered voter. To allow for a margin of safety in case some signatures don't qualify, officials recommend petitions be signed by at least 50 registered voters.

**Deadline:** File by 5 p.m. Jan. 25

**Info:** (630) 365-9109

## Campton Township

**What it does:** Oversees maintenance of rural roads, brush pickup and senior and low-income assistance programs

**Annual budget:** Operating budget is typically between \$400,000 and \$430,000

**Meetings:** At 7:30 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month

**Total on board:** Four trustees and one supervisor

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Four trustees, supervisor, clerk, highway commissioner and assessor. All terms are four years and trustees are elected at large.

**Nominating petitions:** Available at the township office, 4N498 Town Hall Road in St. Charles

**Requirements:** Must be a resident of the township and a registered voter. Petitions must be signed by 200 to 315 of the registered voters of the township depending on the office.

**Deadline:** File by 5 p.m. Jan. 25

**Info:** (630) 377-5705

## Watsonsee Community College board

**What it does:** Oversees college business, approves budget, building plans, sets policy

**Annual budget:** \$38 million

**Meetings:** Third Wednesday of the month, 5:30 p.m.

**Total on board:** Seven

**Seats up for election in 2005:** Three 6-year terms

**Nominating petitions:** Call (630) 466-7900 ext. 2900

**Filing period:** Jan. 17 to 25

*12-15-04 Chronicle*  
**Kane County schools make the grade**

Despite growth and school overcrowding, a lack of state funding and increased proficiency demands, most central Kane County students meet or exceed state testing standards. The 2004 school report cards, released today by the Illinois State Board of Education, show random increases and decreases in student performance on state tests, which were

and St. Charles school districts met or exceeded the state average on all state tests. See SCHOOLS, page 2.

See SCHOOLS, page 2.



A complete list of scores for central Kane County schools.

## Continued from page 1

Growth and funding issues aside, Mejia said he has confidence in the students, parents and educators of Kane County.

"We have good schools, and we continue to have them," Mejia said. "That's why people are moving here because that's what sells houses; I think that's a testament that people want to move here and educate their kids here."

# McCoy ready to pass the torch

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

Mike McCoy finally is done as the Kane County Board chairman.

He thinks.

"There may be something else cooking. I don't know," McCoy said after Tuesday's

county board meeting. "I thought I did my last meeting one other time."

## Forest preserve

• John Hoscheit re-elected as president.

Page 3A

After eight years as chairman, McCoy oversaw his last county board meeting Tuesday. He planned to lay down his gavel Dec. 6, when Chairman-elect Karen McConnaughay was scheduled to be sworn in.

However, the last-minute discovery of a new state law delayed his plans. The law moved back the induction dates for county board chairmen in certain counties. Unfortunately, no one told the Kane County Board.

"You would think somebody would have notified the county," Kane County State's Attorney John Barsanti said. "Unless you're actually interested in watching such things, it can pass you by."

McCoy did not seek a third term and is looking forward to a new part-time job as village administrator for Big Rock.

See McCoy, page 2

## McCoy: McConnaughay will be sworn in Monday

Continued from page 1

On Dec. 3, three days before McConnaughay was to be sworn in, she and representatives from the state attorney's office found the new law while checking on the procedure for the oath. The law pushed the induction of board chairmen to the third Monday of the month from the first to allow more time to count provisional ballots. So three days before he thought he was done, McCoy said he learned from reporters that he still had more work.

"I wish I had been in the loop, but that's no problem," he said Dec. 3. "It's no imposition on me. I'm happy to serve for two more weeks."

Bill Wyatt, R-Aurora, said

the reaction was typical of McCoy.

"He wanted to do it right," Wyatt said. "If they told him he had to stay, he stayed."

McCoy appointed Wyatt to the seat he vacated when he was elected chairman.

"While some will miss him, I won't miss him. I'm still going to see him," said Wyatt, a longtime friend of McCoy.

Wyatt also could leave the board soon. He is an Aurora mayoral candidate.

McCoy's reign as chairman marked a period of unprecedented growth. In 1996, when McCoy was elected chairman, the county had a \$2 million deficit. The county currently has a surplus of

more than \$20 million. During that time, Kane County in-



McCoy

groundwater study and a rustic roads program.

There also was controversy.

During the 2000 primary, Meg Gorecki, then a candidate for state's attorney left a message on a friend's answering machine implying that the friend could obtain a

county job by contributing to McCoy's campaign fund.

A probe by the FBI and a special prosecutor cleared McCoy of all wrongdoing. Gorecki was elected state's attorney, but lost her law license for four months.

McCoy also broke party lines, appointing Democrats Paul Greviskes and Gerald Jones as committee chairmen.

"He didn't really care about 'Republican,' 'Democrat,'" Wyatt said. "He was very much focused on serving people."

McCoy said he plans to start his work Jan. 1 in Big Rock. "They're real anxious for me to start," he said. "They'll have to wait."



# 12-16-04 Beacon News quickpoll

## Tuesday's question

Should Tom Van Cleave remain on the Batavia School Board while he also serves on the Kane County Board?

**44%**

**YES: 16 votes**

**56%**

**NO: 20 votes**

This is a nonscientific poll.

## Your comments

■ "I believe Tom could do both jobs well."  
■ "As long as there is no apparent conflict schedule for Mr. Van Cleave as he recuses himself in situations where there could be a conflict between the county board and school board, I see no reason why he can't. If he's good and he's qualified for both slots, he ought to be able to fill both, at least finish out his term, that he was elected to on the school board without any trouble."  
■ "As long as there's no conflict I can't see why he shouldn't remain on both."  
■ "Had he quit the board right away, they wouldn't have had to

wait another month to find somebody else."  
■ "No, you cannot serve two different bosses. He should give up either the county board or the Batavia school board. I don't see how anybody can serve the school board and the county board at the same time. You have to devote all your time to the right job."  
■ "I feel holding two positions is definitely a conflict of interest. No, he should not hold two offices."  
■ "He should not have run for the county board in the first place until he fulfilled his elected obligation to the Batavia school board."

# 12-16-04 Beacon News Irvin secures top ballot spot

BEACON NEWS STAFF

AURORA — Mayoral candidate Richard Irvin will be listed first on the Feb. 22 primary ballot after winning an Aurora Election Commission lottery for the top ballot spot Wednesday.

Positions on the ballot are determined by the order in which candidates file their election petitions. Irvin and fellow mayoral candidate Tom Weisner both filed their petitions at 8 a.m. Dec. 6, the first day of filing. That necessitated Wednesday's lottery.

The other candidates for mayor on the Feb. 22 primary ballot are, in the order they will be listed on the ballot, Angel Hernandez, Jack Cunningham and Bill Wyatt.

The top two finishers will advance to the general election on April 5. Also on Wednesday, 2nd Ward aldermanic candidate Juany Garza won a lottery to be listed ahead of incumbent Alderman David Marquez on the April 5 ballot.

12-16-04 Chronicle

# Gilberts subdivision proposal could mean \$6 million in fees

By MEGAN EDWARDS  
Shaw News Service

GILBERTS — Local government officials could get more than \$6 million in fees from a 600-home project north of Route 72, Gilberts Trustee Sam Boytor said.

Gilberts village board members worked out specifics of an annexation agreement between the village and Ryland Homes on Tuesday night, and plan to pass the agreement at their next meeting, he said.

"Hopefully, we can pass it on (Dec.) 21st," he said. "If not, we're going to meet on the 28th to do it."

The firm has proposed Gilberts Town Center, 622 homes on a 330-acre site east of Galligan

Road and north of Route 72. The plan includes about 60 acres of commercial space.

The site also includes a plan to extend Tyrrell Road north of Route 72 and join it with Galligan Road.

Board members still have to work out an impact fee schedule, Trustee Gordon Mueller said. They also have not worked out how the funds could be used by the village, schools and other governments.

"The bottom-line number is not there yet," he said. "The development fees, they have to be adjusted."

But developers and village board members are working toward finalizing an agreement soon, he said.

"We're pretty close," he said.

"It won't be long now."

The board discussed imposing development fees per home that would add up to \$6,067,920, Boytor said. District 300 would get \$1,258,500 of those fees, he said.

Village officials still are negotiating the proposed recreational center. Boytor said though Ryland has said before that they would pay to build a \$6 million YMCA facility, now they may only donate \$2 million.

Boytor has proposed asking Ryland to loan the village the remaining \$4 million needed for the building, which would include a day-care center.

"I don't want to wait," he said. "Gilberts needs a rec center."

12-16-04 CHICAGO TRIBUNE

# Ex-alderman faces new charges

## Indictment says Aurora official accepted \$6,000 bribe

By Matt O'Connor  
Tribune staff reporter

New charges against a former Aurora alderman say he pocketed bribes from a real estate developer while still in office in return for supporting three of the developer's projects.

The new indictment, made public Wednesday, charged that former Ald. John Meisch accepted about \$6,000 in cash payoffs from developer Gerald Anderson, a co-defendant, between 2001 and 2003.

At the time, Meisch was chairman of the City Council's Planning and Development Committee. He stepped down as an at-large alderman in April 2003.

Meisch first was charged in October with offering to pass a \$10,000 bribe from Anderson to Robert Rieser, the city's director of public works, to obtain Rieser's backing of a dormant development project.

The new indictment says Meisch also improperly used his public office to promote and win council approval for

two other Anderson developments—Grand Pointe Trails and Misty Creek.

The charges say for the first time that Meisch illegally profited from the scheme, collecting \$6,000 from Anderson at a restaurant in Montgomery, Ill., over a two-year period. Anderson, 70, lives in Montgomery.

Attorney Fred Morelli, who said he's representing Meisch, 70, of Davis, Ill., defended his client as a good public servant

PLEASE SEE ALDERMAN, PAGE 9

## ALDERMAN: He pleaded not guilty on the 1st charge

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

for two decades.

"He did a lot of good things," Morelli said. "Nobody's perfect."

Michael Nash, Anderson's lawyer, denied any wrongdoing on his client's part.

Both are scheduled to be arraigned Friday on the new charges in U.S. District Court in Chicago. They have each previously pleaded not guilty.

Authorities hadn't previously disclosed Rieser's identity, but Nash had let the name slip during a court appearance for Anderson in October.

After Meisch relayed the \$10,000 bribe offer, Rieser immediately reported it and agreed to wear a hidden recorder as he met with Meisch and Anderson in a Geneva restaurant Feb. 17.

Rieser was able to confirm the \$10,000 offer, but no money ever exchanged hands, authorities said.

12-16-04  
Sugar *Daily Herald*  
Grove  
expects  
to grow

*Planners see expansion  
with development, hope  
for central downtown*

BY LESLIE HAGUE  
*Daily Herald Staff Writer*

Sugar Grove is planning big.  
In the draft of its new land use  
plan, about 70 percent of the  
land included is outside of the  
village's boundaries, estimated  
Scott Buening, the village's com-  
munity development director.

The long-term plan is not  
binding and  
does not  
change  
zoning, but is  
used in plan-  
ning decisions.  
The village's  
plan commis-  
sion started  
discussing the  
outline on  
Wednesday  
night, but did

not vote on it.  
Just because so much land is  
included in the plan — it  
extends almost a mile north of  
the Interstate 88/Route 47 inter-  
change and as far as  
Dauberman Road to the west —  
doesn't mean the village will  
look to expand there, Buening  
said.

"You can't predict where  
development is going to go," he  
said. "So we have to think about  
it and plan."

A committee of community  
members, village officials and  
others have been working on  
the plan for about two years. It  
includes land use suggestions,  
transportation plans and a vil-  
lage vision statement.

When working with commu-  
nity members, several points  
that were stressed included  
making sure infrastructure was  
adequate for growth, adding a  
pedestrian-friendly village  
center or downtown area and  
maintaining the rural character  
of the area, said John Houseal, a  
consultant who worked with the  
committee.

The "Town Center" concept

See SUGAR GROVE on PAGE 14

## Sugar Grove: Master plan gives development direction

*Continued from Page 1*

Geneva Commons, Houseal  
said.

"Something where you can  
park your car, walk around, go  
shopping, get something to eat  
and see a movie — something  
like that," he said.

The plan does not include  
any zoning for agricultural land,

go to the village board for  
approval.

Copies of the plan are avail-  
able for viewing at the  
Municipal Building, 10 Muni-  
cipal Drive, and at the Sugar  
Grove Public Library, 54 Snow  
Street. It is also available  
through the village's Web site.

The village plan commission  
will consider the blueprint  
again in January, and then it will

**Kane chairman thanks voters**

Thank you so much for the confidence and support you have shown me throughout my campaign for Kane County Board chairman. Our victory on Nov. 2 could not have been possible without the hard work and team effort of these past 18 months.

- I'm humbled by the trust you have placed in me, not only with
- your vote, but with your continuous support of my candidacy. Your willingness to walk precincts, put up yard signs, send friend-to-friend cards, make a financial contribution or host an event in your home was truly inspirational.

I look forward to taking on the challenges and opportunities that face Kane County in the next four years. During my tenure on the County Board, I have learned that the privilege of public service is best practiced by listening to the community, providing a plan and building consensus that not only promotes, but executes the possibilities for the future of our citizens and county, as we continue to be the best place to live and raise a family in the state of Illinois.

**Karen McConaughay**  
Kane County Board Chairman-Elect  
St. Charles

**Only endorsement that counts**

I have been actively campaigning for several months now. I have tried my absolute best to meet the voter on his turf — in the neighborhoods, at churches and in schools. As I have traveled this diverse city, I have been asked very specific questions about what I would do as mayor of Aurora to fight crime, lower taxes and improve neighborhoods. I have been asked to explain my goals for downtown development, for attracting jobs to Aurora and for promoting Aurora as the powerhouse it is.

I have tried my best to offer detailed plans to address these concerns. I have not given the easy answer or the politically expedient answer. I have not offered broad, general philosophies dressed up as real solutions to real problems.

In all this time, I have never been asked, "Who is endorsing you?" I can only surmise that voters have more serious issues on their minds.

While dealing directly with the average Auroran, I have learned the citizens are unsatisfied with the

voice in its future. They don't want political window dressing or candidates carrying a lot of political baggage; they want hard-working, independent elected officials who will always hold the needs of the average citizen in the highest regard.

I am more focused on meeting the needs of the citizenry, than those of a few specified interests. The only endorsement I will work diligently to get is that of the voters. For questions about this letter, call (630) 906-7996.

**Bill Wyatt**  
Aurora mayoral candidate  
Aurora

**Showing support for troops**

Recently, the Girl Scout troops of Big Rock held a Support Our Troops drive in our school. My car is not large, by any means, but I was able to deliver two big loads of donations to the Sugar Grove American Legion.

I want to personally thank every one, young and old in the school and in the Big Rock communities, who took the time to consider our men and women overseas and donate much-needed items. Whether your donation was big or small, your compassion and caring for someone you will probably never know or meet during this time of war is what true patriotism is all about.

I ask that you all continue to keep these men and women in your thoughts and prayers when you sit around your holiday meals with your beloved families, some of which will have empty chairs. Remember that the price of freedom isn't free. The sacrifices that are being made are for all of us here on American soil.

As long as this war continues, our soldiers will continue to need various items and there will continue to be drives and collection boxes through various organizations. Please consider on your weekly shopping trips, purchasing an extra item or two that can be sent to those who are overseas fighting for us.

**Rose Marie Diedesch**  
Big Rock Brownie Troop 817  
Big Rock

**Local support saved lives**

We would like to thank The Courier News, Elgin — most especially Karen Truemper,

For Women with a special advertising section during Breast Cancer Awareness month. We'd also like to thank The Beacon News as well as all the advertisers who participated. Your collective generosity has been nothing short of overwhelming.

When we started the Two Women program, to provide free mammograms for uninsured and underinsured women, we did so with a few dollars and a giant leap of faith. We thought if we could just get the program up and running, the community would support us.

As it turned out, our optimism was well placed. Thanks to people like Karen, publications like the Courier News, Beacon News and countless advertisers who care, we have been able to send more than 750 needy women for mammograms and various follow-up tests. Perhaps best of all, we have found numerous breast cancers when they were still curable.

There are no words of thanks grand enough to express what that means to us or to the women whose lives were saved. We just hope everyone who has supported our program takes personal pride in the results. Without a doubt, there are Kane County women walking around today who owe their lives to your compassion.

**Kay Catlin, President**  
**Sharon Lough, Vice President**  
**Two Women, For Women**  
St. Charles

12-16-04 Chronicle

# Sugar Grove panel gets first look at comprehensive plan

By KELLEIGH CASINO  
Kane County Chronicle

**SUGAR GROVE** — Richard DeFamble on Wednesday questioned what kinds of buildings the village's proposed comprehensive plan will put next to his home on Wheeler Road in coming years.

The comprehensive plan, which makes recommendations for future physical growth and development, was presented to the plan commission during a public hearing Wednesday.

The plan has designated the land north of DeFamble's property a business park, and Barb Hollmer's farm, on the northwest corner of Scott and

residential, commercial and corporate layouts for the village. It also includes transportation and green space plans for officials to consult as developers approach the village.

"It's not 100 percent, but it's acceptable," Community Development Director Scott Buerling said. "It looks better than the first few versions."

Much of the land west of Route 47, around the Aurora Municipal Airport, has been designated business park material, while the northeastern and southeastern portions of the planning area are best suited for single-family residential development.

The plan put town center commercial business in the area south of

Galena Boulevard and north of Route 56, as well as along the west side of Route 47, south of Route 56.

Estates are best suited for the areas to the northwest and southwest where the environmental protection is key.

Of the land studied as part of the planning area, only 30 percent currently belongs to the village.

"We can't predict where development's going to happen, so we have to look at what all the possible land uses would be," Buerling said. "With our boundaries, every time we annex something, it's like a moving target. Our boundaries keep expanding."

Transportation plans call for additional arterials running both north-

south and east-west through the area. Several other roads, including the proposed Prairie Parkway, also were included in the plan, which has been two years in the making.

Plan commission members voted to keep the public hearing on the comprehensive plan open until their next regular meeting on Jan. 19. The plan commission is expected to give additional input to the suggestions made Wednesday and then vote on whether or not to recommend the plan to the village board.

"It's been a long process, but we feel we're getting near the end," Buerling said. "We can see light at the end of the tunnel."

12-16-04 *Republican*

# Van Cleave to keep school post... for now

**Barsanti: County Board member can't hold two offices**

By Eric Walter  
Staff writer

remain as a public servant on both boards," Van Cleave said. "While I disagree with the opinion issued by the state's attorney regarding the compatibility of the two offices I currently hold, his opinion was not unexpected."

Van Cleave had requested an opinion from the state's attorney after the election to resolve the question, but former State's Attorney Meg Gorecki's administration did not address the issue before she left office, he said. His request fell into Barsanti's lap after Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan declined to issue an opinion, saying it was more appropriate for the county's top prosecutor to decide the matter.

The new District 10 County Board member's decision to retain his position on the School Board stemmed from his obligation to the voters who re-elected him to the panel in 2000, and his desire to avoid a lengthy court battle to retain both positions.

"I do believe... that it is in the best interest of my constituents in Batavia to continue as a member of the School Board for the short time remaining in my term in order to assist the transition until my replacement is chosen by the voters in April of next year," he said. "I'm real(fy) torn by it."

Thomas Van Cleave plans to fulfill his duty to the residents of Batavia Public School District 101, despite a potential conflict with his new position on the Kane County Board.

During a press conference Dec. 13, Van Cleave said he would retain his position as District 101 School Board president until the April 5, 2005 election and would not seek re-election. This follows the release of a legal opinion by the Kane County State's Attorney's Office stating he could not currently hold seats on both the school and county boards.

Kane County State's Attorney John Barsanti drew up the opinion after assuming office Dec. 1, in order to settle the question that lingered during Van Cleave's campaign to succeed former District 10 County Board member Doug Weigand.

"During the campaign for County Board, I made no secret of my desire to



Thomas Van Cleave

It was one of those positions I came onto to be part of a great district. It became a strong passion."

If Van Cleave were to resign from the School Board, the panel would have to replace him within 30 days or face having

a new board member appointed by Kane County Regional Superintendent Clem Mejia within the next 30 days, according to Superintendent Ed Cave. That scenario would put the new appointee in a difficult position.

"I didn't think it was appropriate to appoint someone because as soon as they get in, they're facing an election," said Van Cleave.

Former District 101 School Board member John Malkowski, who attended the press conference, said Van Cleave's decision to complete his term will make for a smoother transition for the panel.

Van Cleave also said his decision may encourage potential candidates to enter the School Board race without questions lingering over whether he would run again.

Van Cleave had picked up a petition package to collect signatures to seek re-election prior to his announcement, said JoAnne Walker, Cave's secretary.

Four seats on the District 101 School Board are up for election next spring, including the seats held by Van Cleave and fellow board members Ron Link, Jayne Resek and Fred Webber. The other three members also have picked up petitions to run for re-election, Walker said.

# Feds add to Meisch bribery charges

12-16-04 Beacon News

**Revised indictment: Developer paid \$6,000 for help with two other projects, prosecutors say**

**By Dave Parro**  
STAFF WRITER

**AURORA** — Former Alderman Jim Meisch has started cooperating with authorities in the bribery case against him and a local developer, and prosecutors are now alleging he was paid off over several years in exchange for help with two developments on the south end of town. The new information led to a revised

indictment this week against Meisch and Montgomery real estate developer Gerald Anderson, who already face federal bribery charges related to a \$10,000 offer they allegedly made to Aurora Public Works Director Bob Rieser earlier this year.

The new round of charges broadens the scope of the investigation to include developments that were approved while Meisch chaired the City Council Planning and Development Committee. The former alderman headed the committee for the last 13 of his 20 years on the council.



**Ex-alderman Jim Meisch has pleaded innocent.**

A federal grand jury returned the latest indictment Tuesday night. The charges allege Anderson made cash payments to Meisch totaling \$6,000 in exchange for the alderman's support on two Aurora projects: the Misty Creek subdivision near Halenrichter Road and Route 34, and the nearby Grand Pointe Trails development at Farnsworth Avenue and Route 34.

Anderson held ownership interests in the property for both projects, and Meisch chaired the Planning and Development Committee when both were approved by the City Council. The indictment alleges

the cash payments were made between 2001 and 2003 and exchanged hands at a restaurant in Montgomery.

## 'Everyone makes mistakes'

Authorities would not confirm the new information came from Meisch, but his attorney said the 70-year-old is "cooperating with the government in this investigation." Meisch, now a resident of Davis, west of Rockford, was in Chicago on Tuesday, but neither side would say whether he testified before the grand jury. "Meisch served the city well for 20 years," said attorney Fred Morelli. "Everyone makes mistakes."

❖ **Turn to MEISCH, A2**

## MEISCH

on page A1

Assistant U.S. Attorney Anderson Fox would not say whether Meisch was working toward a plea deal, and Morelli said it's "way too early" to talk about such a deal.

Both Meisch and Anderson, 70, added innocent to the bribery charges announced in October. They are scheduled to be back in court Friday, when they will be signed on the new charges.

Anderson's attorney, Michael Shih, said his client will be pleading innocent again. Morelli said Meisch will also be pleading innocent.

We dispute any allegations of wrongdoing," Nash said. "We did nothing wrong."

## Revised indictment

In the previous indictment, Meisch and Anderson were used of offering Rieser cash for help in resolving a storm water issue for a proposed development on New York Street and Eola Road. Rieser instead went to the mayor and agreed to cooperate in an FBI investigation that included ordered meetings and phone conversations.

The revised indictment includes the new counts of wire fraud and best services fraud against both, as well as the previous count of offering payment to a public official. It also accuses Meisch of making false statements to the

prosecutors are including the cash made or offered in all three developments as part of an ongoing "scheme and artifice to defraud the city of Aurora and the people of the city of Aurora of money, property, and the inalienable right to the honest

services of city of Aurora employees and elected officials," the indictment says.

"The payments deprived the city of Aurora the honest services of Meisch and Bob Rieser," Fox said.

## Land deals

The investigation started in January 2004 when Meisch allegedly approached Rieser with an offer of \$10,000 if he could help Anderson with the Eola Road land project. Meisch, who left office in April 2003, said Anderson had been "very good to me in the past" and could do the same for Rieser, according to federal documents.

The proposed commercial project Anderson was pursuing eventually died, and the land was sold to another developer.

Misty Creek and Grand Pointe Trails, however, both received City Council approval. Grand Pointe Homes of West Dundee has already built out Misty Creek and is currently building out Grand Pointe Trails. Both mix single-family homes and townhouses.

While the indictment does not go into specifics of how Meisch influenced the projects as chairman of the Planning and Development Committee, it does say Meisch "used his official position to promote and support the annexation and development" of both subdivisions.

Misty Creek, a 55-acre development, was approved in the late 1990s. The 60-acre Grand Pointe subdivision, which will include 50 single-family homes and 165 townhomes, was given final approval in February 2003.

The indictment alleges the profit on the projects exceeded \$400,000. If convicted, both Meisch and Anderson could be liable for paying back all proceeds from the land deals.



12-17-04  
**Beacon News**  
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Safety steps on Randall Road

One year ago, high school senior Samantha Joos was killed when her car went out of control in the S-curve on Randall Road. This accident was a tragedy for her friends and family to lose such a vibrant, young lady in the prime of her life. This stretch of 2.7-miles from Red Haw to Silver Glen has been the site of four fatal accidents, with cars and trucks regularly exceeding speed limits by 15-20 miles per hour.

During the last 12 months, actions by our County Board should lay to rest any concerns that many of us may have had in the body's ability to act on our behalf.

Beginning this year in January, resolutions were passed by the District 303 Board of Education, the St. Charles City Council and the Board of Trustees of Campton Township seeking increased safety on Randall Road. Speed limits on Randall Road have been reduced, a barrier island has been erected in the S-curve, traffic lights have been installed at Crane Road and Bulcom Road and the sheriff's office is enforcing more stringently posted speed limits.

Four individuals should be recognized for their support and vigilance in seeing this project to completion: Paul Ragowski, director of the Kane County Department of Transportation; Steve Painski, head of the engineering department; Karen McConnaughay, whose District 14 encompasses this section of Randall Road; and Bill Wyatt, a County Board member from Aurora and chairman of the Transportation Committee. From day one, back in January, Bill made safety on Randall Road one of his top priorities. His attendance and discussion of the Randall Road safety issue at two District 303 school board meetings speak volumes of his sincere desire to make safety happen.

**Stephen D. Cole**  
St. Charles

12-17-04 **Beacon News**  
**North Aurora gives OK  
to development along river**

**By Brian Shields**

SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

**NORTH AURORA** — After two revisions and lots of haggling on what the project would finally look like, Wyndham Deerpoint and R.A. Faganel will now get to implement their plans for the former Sperry property.

The Village Board approved a building plan and zoning change from industrial to residential for the development, along the Fox River adjacent to Village Hall. The plan calls for 44 townhomes starting at about \$300,000.

Trustees voted 5-1 to approve the plan this week, with Trustee Dale Berman opposing it.

Berman has praised the de-

velopers recently for trying to work with the village to develop what has always been a difficult piece of property to work with, but was steadfastly against the plan because he believed it was better suited for open space instead.

In the last week, some minor revisions needed to be made to the plan, but the main segments were accepted enthusiastically by the Village Board when Wyndham Deerpoint co-owner Richard Guerard came back with major changes from a previous plan that was deemed unsuitable.

Wyndham Deerpoint and R.A. Faganel hope to start construction on the townhomes sometime in the spring. Environmental cleanup on the site is ongoing.

12-17-04 Beacon News

# Report warns of potential groundwater shortages

■ **Regional survey:** Outlying areas like western Kane, Kendall, DeKalb most at risk

By Ed Fanselow  
STAFF WRITER

The suburban sprawl that has now reached Chicago's furthest outlying areas has taken its toll on local groundwater supplies and could eventually result in a widespread water shortage, according to a new report released Thursday by a prominent non-profit planning group.

The report, entitled "Changing Courses," looks specifically at the state of water resources in farflung areas like western Kane County and Kendall, LaSalle and DeKalb counties, where piping in Lake Michigan water has proven too costly and groundwater is the only real option. The groundwater supply in those areas is at

risk, according to the report, not only because of increased demand brought on by population growth but because roads, parking lots and other "impervious surfaces," decrease the amount of rainwater that can be reabsorbed into underground aquifers.

Such aquifers are already overdrawn, and as development continues, "the stresses promise to worsen and shortages are projected to occur," the report warns.

To stem the tide, the report calls on county and municipal governments to incorporate watershed planning into their zoning ordinances and to permit narrower streets and smaller parking lots.

In recent years, many communities have been pushing developers to pay for wider roads and oversized parking lots in order to help reduce congestion.

"It is critical for our local and state officials to make sound land use decisions that sustain our water resources," said Scott Goldstein, the Metropolitan Planning Council's vice president

for policy and planning. "It can be done."

Multi-year groundwater studies are already under way in Kendall County and in Kane County — where the County Board is spending \$2.2 million to study groundwater reserves and the best ways to safeguard them.

The MPC also recommends new state legislation to better protect wetlands throughout the state and calls on the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to improve water-quality monitoring.

Other recommendations include paving parking lots with permeable substances, incorporating so-called "green roofs," and clustering new homes to preserve more open space.

The report was produced by the Metropolitan Planning Council and The Openlands Project, non-profit groups that operate under an umbrella organization called The Campaign for Sensible Growth.

# Elburn expects information on pool by summer

Village approves  
contract for  
feasibility study

12-17-04  
Chronicle

By KELLEY CASINO  
Kane County Chronicle

ELBURN — Six months and \$2,000 will put the village in a much more informed position when it comes to community pools.

By mid-summer, Elburn residents should have a good idea what a family aquatic center in Elburn might look like, how much it would cost and what it would bring to the village.

"They will have a smorgasbord of information," said Roger Schamberger, director of marketing for Burbach Aquatics Inc.

Village officials this week approved a \$2,000 contract with Schamberger's Platteville, Wis.-based company for a feasibility study. Company representatives will determine possible construction and operating costs, sites, size options and more.

Schamberger said he had not heard a final decision on the feasibility study from the board, but Village President Jim Willey said the village board definitely would go ahead with it.

"This feasibility study is step one of about a three-phase, 50-step process," Willey said. "I wanted to make it clear there wouldn't be a pool next summer, but it's very much worth taking a look at for the future."

The fastest Burbach Aquatics has finished a similar study is two months, but Schamberger said six months is a typical average.

"We start from scratch," he said. "We would start on it right away, as quick as their committees can get together, we'll take off from there."

The desire for a community pool has been a resounding request from residents for years, village board members said.

"We're not trying to promote a pool," Willey said. "We're trying to determine if a pool is feasible."

The study will examine the village as it is now and how it is expected to look in 25 years. An important part of the project is determining the pool's size based on population projections, Schamberger said.

Location and cost, however, are two issues Willey said he particularly will be interested in when the study comes back in May or June.

He said village officials had thought of possible locations and were interested to see if they were the same as those that Burbach representatives would present.

"I'm also interested in the project cost to kind of get my arms around how big a project we're looking at here," Willey said, adding that it could be anywhere between a \$2 million or \$5 million project.

# Long-range planning on the mind of forest preserve chief

12-17-04 Daily Herald

In his two years as president of the Kane County Forest Preserve District, John Hoscheit has overseen a shift in how the growing preservation system does its business.

After winning another 2-year term as president earlier this week, Hoscheit quickly called for exploration of a new open space initiative to replenish the \$70 million allocation approved in 1999.

But beyond pushing for the renewal of that popular program, Hoscheit, a St. Charles Republican, delivered Tuesday a brief overview of the past two years and a vision for what he sees immediately ahead.

The most pride comes with the hiring of Monica Meyers as the district's executive director, an administrative move that from the start had long-range

planning in mind. The arrival of Meyers also completed the reorganization of the district's top administrative staff.

By the end of 2005 and under Meyers' leadership, Hoscheit said the district expects to complete a master plan that will guide the development of old and new forest preserve properties.

"Every month that goes by we see improvements to our preserves," he said. "That process is ongoing."

Hoscheit praised all the district's employees for doing "a

fantastic job" and singled out members of the executive staff. He thanked them for working hard on the district's first annual report and improved quarterly newsletters that anchor the district's relationship with the public.

Finally, Hoscheit reflected on the record successes of the forest preserve's golf courses and, in particular, the Events Center "used by the Kane County Cougars."

A priority of Hoscheit's next term, he said, will be to nail down a new long-term lease with the minor-league baseball team to keep it at Elkstrom Stadium. The district is now halfway through a 10-year contract with the Cougars.

**No. 2:** On Monday, Karen McConaughay will take over

as chairman of the Kane County Board, following a two-week delay, compliments of a new state law.

One of her first orders of procedural business: oversee the board's election of a vice chairman, a post now held by Elgin Republican Cathy Hurlbut.

Two years ago Hurlbut's election came after months of political squabbling and more than a half-dozen votes that initially failed to find a winner.

This term's race has yet to draw much attention, but at least one board member, Elgin Republican Don Wolfe, is pushing for the job.

He didn't want to talk about his silent run for the post this week, opting to wait until Monday.

The meeting to install a vice chairman and new committee chairman is scheduled for 5 p.m. in Building A of the county government center, 719 S. Batavia Ave., Geneva.

**Check the mail:** Rural residents with an address along state routes, such as Route 47 or Route 64, may have noticed something missing from their mailboxes.

It seems a few people in western Kane County and other fast-growing rural areas in the state have not been getting their mail from the Illinois Secretary of State's office.

It's a problem that has gotten the attention of the postmaster in Elburn, along with other small towns, and Jesse Whites office in Springfield.

The problem seems to be a computer system that sorts addresses. In cases where "state" is supposed to be there but isn't — such as if it's Route 47 instead of State Route 47 — the mail isn't getting through.

"It's a very small problem considering how many renewals we send out every year," said White spokeswoman Beth Kaufman, noting that number is 11.5 million.

If a resident is not getting mail, Kaufman said, they should contact the nearest secretary of state facility and correct his or her address.

• Patrick Waldron covers Kane County government and politics. To contact him, call (630) 587-8632 or send e-mail to [pwaldron@dailyherald.com](mailto:pwaldron@dailyherald.com).



Patrick Waldron  
Kane County

# Geneva mayoral challenger proposes debates

12-17-04 Chronicle

## Burns said he prefers traditional candidate forums

By BRENDA SCHORY  
Kane County Chronicle

The two are vying for the mayoral post in the April 5 election.

GENEVA — Mayor Kevin Burns will not participate in challenger Bill Christopher's proposals about debates and their format.

Burns hosted the League of Women Voters and the Geneva Mothers Club.

My campaign manager, Douglas Cuscaden, sent him a letter indicating that civic organizations around town traditionally



Christopher

Burns

hold forums, and we will be awaiting notification about those respective groups and will participate in them a c o r d -

ingly," Burns said. Cuscaden, a Geneva plan commissioner, also is a brother-in-law to Burns.

Cuscaden and Christopher served on the Kevin Burns for Mayor Committee in 2000 and 2001.

No other candidates have said they plan to seek the post.

Christopher's three proposed debates:

- Jan. 18 at Geneva High School with a theme of people who influenced their lives. Moderators would be the high school student body president and vice president.

After 15 minutes each to discuss people who influenced their lives, the candidates would take questions from students.

- Feb. 22 at Harrison Street School with a theme he called the "hard concepts" of city government, such as economic development, taxes, and financial leadership.

It would be moderated by news reporters.

See MAYOR, page 4

## Mayor

Continued from page 1

Candidates would spend 15 minutes each on their favorite presidents and platform, followed by an hour for questions.

- March 17 at Geneva High School with a theme he called "soft concepts" of city government, such as values, culture, leadership, stewardship, vision and the future. It would be moderated by news reporters. It would include 15 minutes for each candidate to state his platform, followed by an hour for questions.

Christopher said he had not received Cuscaden's letter, but was disappointed to hear that the Burns campaign turned down his request. He said he would talk to the League of Women Voters and the Geneva Mothers Club

about his ideas for structuring the debates.

"I thought the high school idea was excellent," Christopher said.

"We are both Geneva High School graduates, and to have the debate before the student body — I think that's very creative and would give good value in terms of students," Christopher said.

Cuscaden replied to Christopher's e-mail through regular mail because Burns cannot use his mayoral e-mail for political purposes, Burns said.

"We are precluded by state ethics laws and our own ethics law from using city equipment to conduct personal business," Burns said.

Christopher, a former school board member, is married to Maureen Christopher, a sister of Burns' wife, Terry. The Christophers are in the midst of a divorce.

# Projects in bribe case not unique

■ **Two of many:** Aldermen vaguely remember subdivisions in question in Meisch case

By Dave Parro  
STAFF WRITER

12-17-04  
Beacon News

AURORA — On the surface, nothing seemed unusual about the two developments approved by the City Council that are now part of a federal bribery investigation involving former Alderman Jim Meisch.

Mixed single-family and townhome subdivisions popped up at such a rapid pace in the area near Routes 30 and 34 that they all seemed to blend together. When the Misty Creek and Grand Pointe Trails developments came through the City Council process, they didn't stand out enough to be memorable to other aldermen.



Jim Meisch was chairman of a key committee for 13 out of 20 years.

Alderman Chris Beykirch, whose 8th Ward included both developments when they were approved, said he doesn't remember either project being even somewhat controversial, let alone contentious enough to require bribes to get them passed.

Misty Creek was approved in the late 1990s, and Grand Pointe Trails was given final approval in February 2003.

"I don't remember anything," he said. "I recall it not being all that eventful, really. I don't recall anything about Misty Creek being contentious at all. It was kind of one of those cut-and-dry ones."

Beykirch said he doesn't even remember Grand Pointe Trails, because so many similar developments were approved around the same time.

## Routine projects

When aldermen heard in October that their former colleague Meisch allegedly offered Aurora's public works director \$10,000 to resolve a water detention issue for a dormant land project on Eola Road, they were surprised. But the new allegations revealed this week in a revised indictment are even more perplexing because the subdivisions are similar to so many others already in the area.

No one seems to be able to figure out what Meisch did to earn the \$6,000 in bribes he is alleged to have taken in exchange for help with Misty Creek and Grand Pointe Trails — or even why payoffs would have been necessary.

Meisch and Montgomery real estate developer Gerald Anderson are both accused in the bribery scandal and have pleaded innocent

## MEISCH

From page A1

to the charges.

Alderman Mike Saville, who sat on the council Planning and Development Committee at the time and now chairs the committee, said there was nothing unusual about either development. Any issue related to either of them would have come up at committee, he said.

"We've had much more controversial issues that have come before the council," said Saville, 6th Ward. "These ones were just routine."

## Influence as chairman

Meisch's influence as chairman of the Planning and Development Committee for 13 of his 20 years in office would have been greatest when it came to things like density and number of lots. Many of those negotiations happen behind the scenes.

Rick Zirk, vice president of land resources for Grand Pointe Homes, said his company bought the land for Misty Creek and Grand Pointe Trails from Anderson on a per lot basis after plans had already been approved. Meisch seemed to be the point person on the City Council, so his involvement was never questioned, Zirk said.

"We were buying approved lots from someone," Zirk said. "What they do to get their approved lots is their gig."

## Grand Pointe questions

Behind the scenes, there was more going on than aldermen could see, at least when it came to Grand Pointe Trails. By the time plans came before City Council, nothing seemed out of place.

City development files, however, show that the approval process for Grand Pointe Trails was unusual and cumbersome. From start to finish, it took almost three years and was plagued by problems and long periods where nothing seemed to happen.

Most developments take about six months to go through the entire approval process.

The annexation agreement for Grand Pointe Trails went before the city's Planning Commission in May 2000, when it was unanimously rejected. At the time, the plan called for 85 single-family homes and 89 townhouses.

The city's development staff also recommended denial because the proposal did not meet criteria established for the south end of town, which included single family homes on larger lots, plus open space. One of the concerns was introducing a significant number of townhomes to the area.

Instead of moving forward to the Planning and Development Committee right away, as it normally would have, the plan was put on a pending agenda until Meisch requested it be moved forward in December 2000.

By the time the City Council approved the annexation agreement in January 2001, the number of single-family homes had been decreased to 50, and the number of townhomes had increased to 165, making the overall density higher.

## Final approval

When a more detailed plan came before the City Council in September 2002, it was approved on a day when Meisch was acting as mayor pro tem. The final plan was approved by the Planning and Development Committee in February 2003.

City officials said they remember Meisch being more involved in the Grand Pointe Trails project than he normally would have been, sitting in on behind-the-scenes meetings. The federal indictment alleges Meisch agreed to schedule meetings so Anderson would meet with city officials and employees to obtain support for the projects.

Misty Creek, on the other hand, was much more routine, even behind the scenes.

"The whole thing is weird, as far as I'm concerned," Saville said. "It's unexplainable, actually."

# Kane's gun deer hunting boosted record

*IDNR to look at first seasons, decide whether gun hunt continues*

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

Kane County's first year of gun deer hunting helped set a record harvest statewide.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources opened sections of Kane County to gun deer hunting this year. Properly licensed hunters were allowed to shoot deer west of Route 47. Bow hunting has existed in the county for many years. In March, the IDNR will decide whether to continue the gun hunt next year.

"We have to look at how the herd

winters over, how many were taken, herd strength, that sort of thing," said DNR spokesman Joe Bauer.

According to the DNR, the preliminary Illinois total for this year is 114,113 deer killed. The previous record was 103,961 and was set last year. Hunters in Kane killed 87 deer—50 in the first season (Nov. 19-21), 37 in the second (Dec. 2-5).

"It seems to have gone quite well, and we're pleased with how everything went with the harvest from Kane," Bauer said.

If in March the DNR decides to continue the hunt next year, it also must decide how many hunting permits to issue

for Kane County and whether to set up check stations in the county. No firearm deer check stations exist in Kane County. Successful hunters checked their deer at stations in the closest adjacent county.

Hunting licenses allow people to hunt only in one county. The counties are determined by lottery, with hunters listing their first and second choice. The lotteries start on the last Friday in April and run through November.

Many hunters who reside in Kane County had permits for other counties.

Richard Herra hunts in Bureau County.

"Basically, before I apply for a permit, I have to have land permission from a land owner so I have a place to hunt," he said. "If I could find somebody in Kane County, I would probably try for it."

Statewide, it was a safe season with only minor injuries or hunting accidents reported, Bauer said.

Illinois Conservation Police Sergeant Brett Scroggins said no injuries or accidents were reported in Kane County.

"I was sort of wondering myself how it would be, but it was very quiet. No calls," Scroggins said.

Although the decision will not come until March, Bauer said gun hunting is likely to continue in Kane County.

"I fully expect to see it remain," he said.

# Elburn officials expected to OK impact fees

12-20-04 Chronicle

## New schedule sets minimums, maximums

By KELLEY CASINO  
Kane County Chronicle

ELBURN — Village officials are expected to approve a new developer impact fee schedule for the Kaneland school district today.

Under the new table, developers will be

forced to pay a specified amount, regardless of the value or type of home being built. A minimum and maximum fee amount will be set for multi-family, detached and attached units.

For example, the floor for a multifamily unit would be set at \$500, and the ceiling at \$1,200. Similarly, the fee for a detached unit

would be a minimum of \$1,500 and a maximum of \$6,000. Fees for an attached unit would range from \$1,000 to \$2,500.

"That's really the only new wrinkle," Village President Jim Willey said of the floor and ceiling model. "The idea was to get a little bit from every unit and to make sure that no one unit has to pay a disproportionate share."

Committee of the Whole members consented to send the revised impact fee table to the board for approval last week.

If approved today, the updated fee

schedule would go into effect Jan. 1, 2005. The change is in response to the school district's request this fall that municipalities within its boundaries increase the impact fees.

The model is the same schedule provided by Kaneland officials. The same schedule was passed by the Sugar Grove Village Board on Nov. 16.

"The capital needs (of the school district) have changed from five years ago," Willey said of the need to increase the fees, which last were set five years ago.



12-19-04

Beacon news

# North Aurora mayor endorses a successor

By David Garbe  
STAFF WRITER

**NORTH AURORA** — Village President Mark Ruby said he believes the strongest of the three candidates seeking to replace him is John Hansen.

Ruby, who has held the village's highest office for the last eight years, is stepping down Monday when he plans to move into a new home near Geneva.

Three current members of the Village Board have started campaigns to replace Ruby in elections this spring: Dale Berman, Mark Guethle and John Hansen.

"I strongly endorse John Hansen," Ruby said. "I think John's running for all the right reasons."

The endorsement is a reversal of Ruby's earlier intention not to get involved in the three-way contest. He said he changed his mind because, "although I'm not going to be living here, I really am interested in how this town turns out."

The three-way race is a first for the village, which has more than doubled in size over the last decade.

Ruby said his endorsement of Hansen is partially motivated by concern that, as the village grows, local government might become more politicized.

"John has never been affiliated to any political party," Ruby said.

Guethle, a political organizer for a local painters union, is the chairman of the Kane County Democratic Party.

Berman, who served a term as North Aurora village president in the 1980s, has held Republican offices in Aurora Township.



**Village President Mark Ruby has endorsed John Hansen to be his successor.**

Hansen is a former North Aurora firefighter and is a pharmacist and interim vice president at the NeighborCare pharmacy supply company.

Ruby said Hansen also has a long record of getting things done on the Village Board.

"John has worked quietly, out of the public eye, for many years," Ruby said.

Hansen negotiated the placement of the

Auto Mall in North Aurora rather than other possible locations in the Fox Valley and was the driving force behind the village's current road improvement plan, he said.

"I'm very pleased to hear that (Ruby) endorsed me," Hansen said Friday night. "I hold that in high value."

Because three candidates are running for the office, a primary election will be held on Feb. 22.

The two top candidates then will face off in the regular April 5 village elections.

12-20-04 Chronicle

# N. Aurora approves townhomes on Fox

By ERIC SCHELKOPF  
Kane County Chronicle

**NORTH AURORA** — Developers have been given the green light to demolish the dilapidated D.R. Sperry factory along the Fox River and build luxury townhouses.

Village trustees this week approved a redevelopment agreement with Riverwoods North Aurora L.L.C. They also approved rezoning the approximately four acres from industrial use to residential use.

North Aurora-based Wyndham Deerpoint and R.A. Faganal Builders of Batavia plan to build 44 townhouse units selling for \$300,000 on approximately 4 acres.

Trustee Dale Berman voted against the project. Berman wanted the land preserved as open space.

Richard Guerard, a partner with Wyndham Deerpoint, said the project is an upscale development.

"The product includes the gables, multiple building surfaces, columns, ... windows and distinctive architectural details expected in a high-end townhome project," Guerard said. Trustees this year approved a tax-increment financing district to spur redevelopment of the industrial complex.

The project will be eligible for \$2.5 million in TIF funds. Site development costs alone are expected to total \$2.5 million.

The developers would be reimbursed for those costs, receiving TIF funds over a period of 15 years.

A TIF district allows the amount of tax revenue a taxing district receives from the area to be frozen at current levels. A TIF district can be in place for up to 23 years. The way a TIF district generally works is that any increases in taxes resulting from an increase in the district's assessed property values go toward funding improvements within the area.

12-18-04  
**Fire them Chronicle**  
If I were the Kane County Board president, Mrs. McConnaughay, I would fire all the new members for not fulfilling their position by not attending the tour of the jail. What a slap in the face to her.

12-19-04 **Chronicle**  
Kane County Notebook

# McConnaughay to be sworn in as chairman Monday

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

Kane County Board Chairman-elect Karen McConnaughay will take her oath at 9 a.m. Monday. Her induction originally was scheduled for Dec. 6, but was delayed because of a state law passed earlier this year that pushes back chairman inductions in certain counties.



McConnaughay

The law was designed to allow more time for counting provisional ballots.

Kane County Chief Judge Donald Hudson will preside. McConnaughay defeated Democrat Tom Meadath in the Nov. 2 election to take the seat of Chairman Michael McCoy. McCoy did not seek re-election.

\*\*\*

The Kane County Board will hold a special meeting to elect a vice chairman and consider committee appointments for 2005-06. The meeting will be at 5 p.m. Monday in the county board room, Building A, Kane County Government Center, 719 S. Batavia Ave., Geneva.

\*\*\*

A Corrections & Rehabilitations Committee meeting scheduled for 9 a.m. Thursday has been canceled.

# Fabyan bridge renovations to start next year

12-18-04 Chronicle

Bridge will be shut down for a total of 10 days during work

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

Resurfacing and other planned repairs will shut down the Fabyan Parkway bridge for 10 days next year and reduce traffic to one lane in each direction from April to November. The Kane County Transportation

Division will open bids next week and plans to select a contractor in January. The estimated \$2.3-million renovation has been planned for two years, division Director Paul Rogowski said.

Fabyan Parkway is the dividing line between Geneva and Batavia and is the only bridge over the Fox River maintained by the county.

Rogowski said the project is planned to start April 1 and is ex-

pected to take seven or eight months. "It's going to be one lane of traffic for most of the time," said Transportation Committee Chairman Bill Wyatt, R-Aurora.

The bridge twice will be completely closed. Each period will last five days.

"We'll shut down the bridge so we can do the pour of the bridge on the eastbound, and we'll close it again to do the pour on the westbound,"

Rogowski said. County board member Lee Barrett, R-East Dundee, said the renovation is badly needed.

"The whole bridge moves when traffic goes over it," he said.

The main repairs to the bridge will be to rebuild the bridge overlay, a thin, protective layer of concrete on the bridge's surface.

See BRIDGE, page 2

## Fabyan bridge detours

### Westbound detour

- Route 25 north to Route 38
  - Route 38 west to Route 31
  - Route 31 south to Fabyan Parkway
- ### Eastbound detour
- Route 31 south to Route 56
  - Route 56 east to Route 25
  - Route 25 north to Fabyan Parkway

Detours will be in effect only during bridge closures. For the majority of the project, the bridge will be open with one lane in each direction.

## Bridge

Continued from page 1

In addition, workers will conduct joint work, repairs as needed, some patching on the parapet wall and will replace the entire light system, Rogowski said. He said this type of work is typical for a bridge of that age.

Rogowski said plans for the renovation began two years ago but were delayed because of Illinois Department of Transportation renovations on Route 56, which is board meeting

part of the Fabyan bridge detour route.

"We didn't want our detour to detour into another detour situation," Rogowski said.

Routing traffic around the thoroughfare has been a major concern.

"It's not going to be easy to get around that," Barrett said.

The Transportation Department will open contractor bids Tuesday. Rogowski said he plans to present the department's choice for contractor at the January county board meeting.

12-18-04  
Chronicle

# Protecting the air EPA tells counties to clean up their act

## Kane County among those that aren't meeting standards

By JOHN HEILPRIN  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Environmental Protection Agency on Friday identified 224 counties in 20 states that don't meet new clean air standards designed to protect against one of the tiniest but most harmful pollutants — microscopic soot.

The counties and the District of Columbia will have to move quickly to come into compliance. They have three years to devise a pollution-reduction plan for fine particles and then must meet federal standards by 2010.

Failure to comply could mean a county will have to limit development and its state could lose federal highway dollars.

EPA Administrator Mike Leavitt announced the list, which included 19 fewer counties than the agency identified in a preliminary report in June. He emphasized that the agency was for the first time specifically regulating for fine particles, or soot, that are 2.5 micrometers in diameter — 1/30th the width of a human hair. Such pollution comes from power plants, car exhaust, diesel-burning trucks, wood-burning stoves and other sources.

EPA considers it potentially the most significant air-quality

health standard because soot can penetrate deeply into the lungs.

"This is not a story about the air getting dirtier," Leavitt told a news conference. "It is a story about higher, more stringent standards and healthier air."

About 95 million people live in the 224 counties and the nation's capital. EPA estimates the new standard, once met, will prevent at least 15,000 premature deaths, 95,000 cases of bronchitis and 10,000 hospital admissions for respiratory and cardiovascular diseases.

All but three of the states are east of the Mississippi River. The counties and states at issue might modify transportation plans, require new pollution controls when factories expand or impose stricter vehicle emission and inspection programs.

"We're going to implement over the course of the next few months new national tools," Leavitt said. "In essence we're going to do the same thing for smokestacks that we have done for tailpipes."

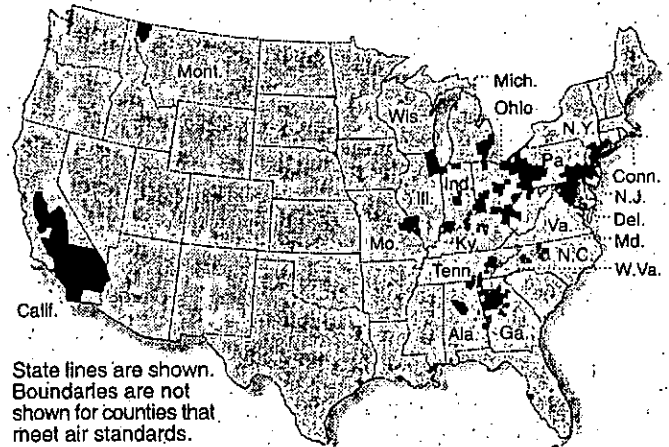
In some cases, the EPA could grant extensions, letting jurisdictions take up to 2015 to comply with the new rule.

Environmentalists say states will find it tough to impossible to meet the standard without accompanying action

## Counties fail air-quality standards

The Environmental Protection Agency said 224 counties do not meet national air quality standards because of airborne microscopic soot from diesel trucks, power plants and other sources.

■ Counties failing or partially failing ■ Previously listed



SOURCE: Environmental Protection Agency

AP

to reduce soot pollution from power plants. President Bush decided last week to delay at least until March putting in place a companion regulation he promised on the campaign trail that would address pollution drifting among states.

"This is also a story about EPA failing to finalize rules to clean up power plant pollution," said Michael Shore, an air policy specialist at Environmental Defense, an advocacy group. "The Bush administration frankly deserves a lump of coal for its failure to protect the health of our children from power plant pollution."

The largest concentrations

of counties in noncompliance with the new soot standard are in the Los Angeles basin and interior central California; the urban corridor from New York City to Washington; the Ohio River Valley; Atlanta; St. Louis; Chicago, and Detroit. The only other Western area was a small corner of Montana.

In May, governors gave EPA a list of 141 counties they viewed as failing to meet the soot requirements. EPA broadened that to include many other counties, not because their air is too dirty but because their pollution contributes to nearby areas that are out of compliance.

12-18-04 Daily Herald

# Avoid Fabyan come spring

*Rebuilding bridge to  
limit traffic, close road*

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
*Daily Herald Staff Writer*

Enjoy the regular evening rush-hour backups on the Fabyan Parkway bridge this winter because when construction season starts again in a few months drivers may long for today's brake lights.

Fabyan Parkway between Route 31 and Route 25 in Geneva will be reduced to one lane in each direction for most of the time between April and September 2005. Aggravating the traffic situation even more is that for two five-day stretches the overpass will be completely shut down. "A warning," said Paul Rogowski, Kane County's transportation department director. "It is going to be a mess."

The \$2.3 million bridge reconstruction project originally was scheduled for this fall but county transportation officials decided to postpone the project because of conflict with a detour route.

During the project, drivers will be directed to two primary alternatives to cross the river — Route 38 in Geneva and Route 56 in North Aurora. The problem this year was that sending traffic through a still ongoing construction project at the intersection of Route 25 and Route 56 just east of the river, would have complicated traffic even more.

County engineers say that project will be completed by the spring, which will allow it to become a suitable detour route.

Another project delay is unlikely because officials want to have the Fabyan bridge repaired and reopened before Batavia gets to work on the Wilson Street bridge in 2006. Its construction may also prompt temporary full closures of Wilson Street.

Fabyan will have to be fully closed to allow workers to pour new concrete. Rogowski said if traffic were allowed on the bridge the structure would shake and not allow the new concrete to dry properly.

Work on the project should start on or near April 15 and finish by Sept. 1. Exactly when the total closures would be scheduled hasn't been decided.

"Our aim:  
To fear God,  
tell the truth  
and make money."

H.C. Paddock  
1852-1935

# Opinion

**Daily Herald Paddock Publications Inc.**

Founded 1872

DANIEL E. BAUMANN, Chairman/Publisher  
DOUGLAS K. RAY, President/CEO  
ROBERT Y. PADDOCK, Jr., Vice Chairman/Executive Vice President  
JOHN LAMPNER, Senior Vice President/Editor  
M. EILEEN BROWN, Managing Editor

## Editorial Board

David L. Beery  
John Zimmerman  
Chris Bailey  
Jim Baumann  
Amy Mack  
Celia O'Donnell

## Adjunct Edit Board

Jerry Campagna  
Dave Heim  
James Kane  
Jennifer Kester  
Anna Marie Kukuc

12-18-04 Daily Herald

## Our View

### Better ideas appear:

Odd, isn't it, how ideas can pop up when taxpayers aren't made the first funding resort. In an attempt to raise road repair cash, Carpentersville first considered a sort of double fee on garbage. It wisely gave that up to ponder other possibilities. Among those raised since then are corporate sponsorships, a vehicle sticker fee increase, use of motor fuel tax revenue and having public works employees do some of the simpler projects in-house. All of those sound like far sounder ideas than the initial double-whammy proposal.

### Restored, sort of:

Sounds like Elgin firefighters may have to put their hearts where their mouths have been. Long adamant about the importance of school fire-safety classes, they argued vociferously when the city axed the classes in cost-cutting moves last year. The classes in local schools had cost \$30,000 per year, most of it going to pay firefighters' overtime pay.

## Saturday Soapbox

Some opinions require lots of words and elaboration. Some don't. This is Saturday Soapbox, briefly stated commentary from the Daily Herald's editors.

"love conquers all," too.

### You call this rigor?

Forgive our obtuseness, but how does reducing graduation requirements at two of three high schools add up to "trying to make rigorous and achievable goals"? That was the argument made by board member Mary Warren in regard to the differences in graduation requirements at Jacobs, which requires 27 credits, Hampshire, which requires 26, and Dundee-Crown, which requires 24. While we're not sure why the differences should matter so much, wouldn't the "rigorous" thing be to raise everybody to the highest standard rather than the other way around?

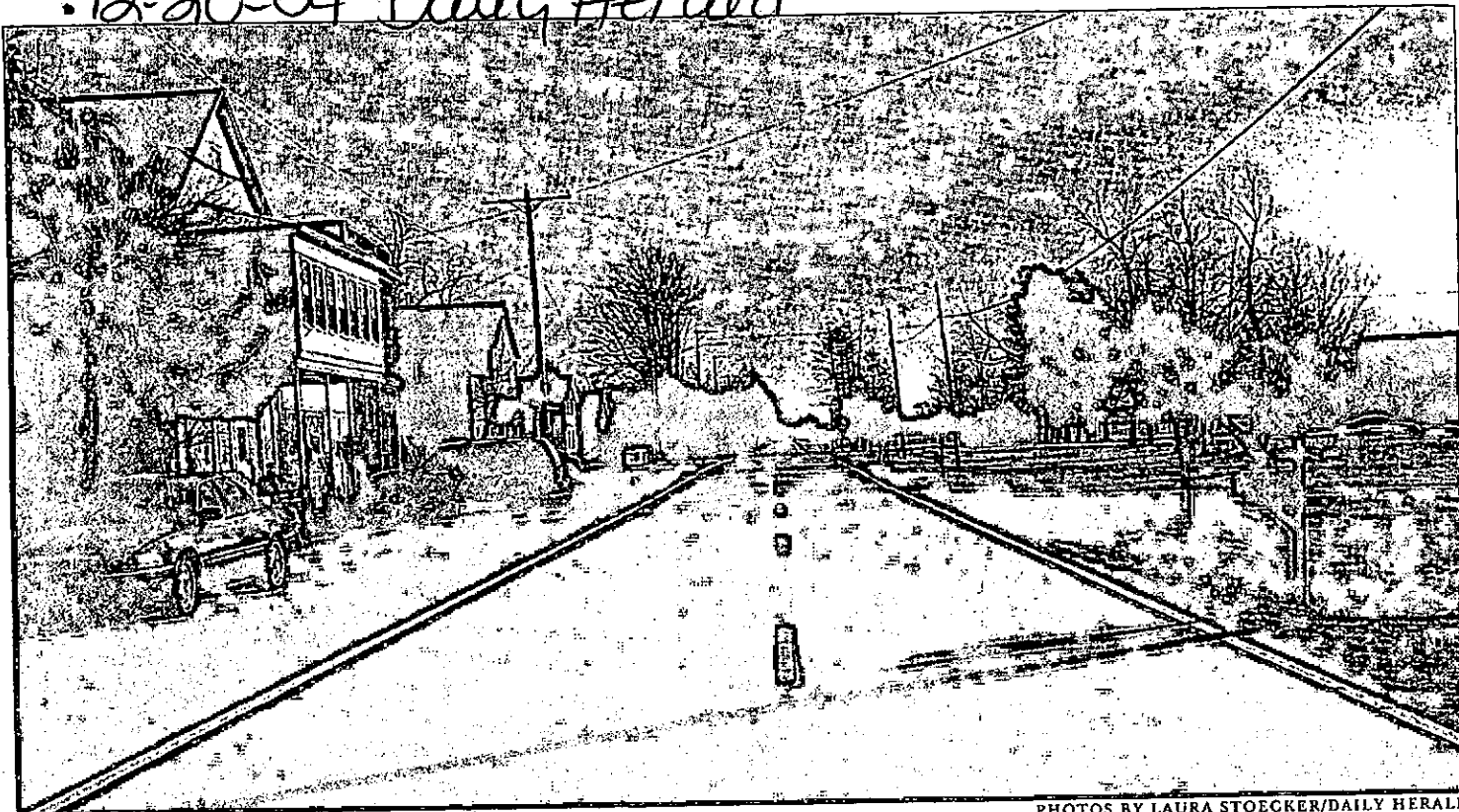
### Take him, please:

We can't help thinking many Kane County residents would be happy to give Kane County Clerk John Cunningham to Aurora. Slow election returns and ballot errors have left him with less than a stellar reputation for efficiency,

but he has declared himself a candidate for Aurora mayor, making the field of candidates five in number. Just guessing, but Cunningham might be overrun by eager volunteers hoping to push his mayoral campaign along to victory — and to free the county of its recent election night chaos.

### Into the breach ...

We're not quite sure if being membership services coordinator of a sports complex in Orland Park actually qualifies you to run a controversial, multimillion-dollar, money-losing facility like The Centre in Elgin, but after a year without leadership, at least someone now will be in charge. Teena Mackey is the city's choice to try to turn around The Centre, which has been bleeding cash for two years straight. And even if it doesn't help her run the place, at least her undergraduate psychology major should help her handle a job that comes preloaded with pressure and politics.



PHOTOS BY LAURA STOECKER/DAILY HERALD

Downtown Virgil takes up only a block or two of Indian Creek Trail, a local road that runs parallel to Route 64 in western Kane County, and is largely devoid of business. Economic development, village leaders say, is key to Virgil's future growth.

# Will it be sprawl or nothing?

*Tiny Virgil grapples with prospect of development*

BY PATRICK WALDRON

Daily Herald Staff Writer

With a population barely larger than Kaneland High School's senior class, Virgil sits just beyond the reach of urban sprawl.

A rural community of 287 in western Kane County, it is little more than a collection of buildings bordering the Great Western Trail.

Residents there don't pay taxes to the village. Village business is based in a room inside a former Catholic school.

Its economy moves with a single com-

pany: Sauber Manufacturing, a truck equipment and parts maker.

To some, that's Virgil's charm. But to others, that's Virgil's problem.

Since its incorporation in 1992, Virgil has been left out of the Kane County boom.

The general store closed, as did the bank and the post office.

Now developers are knocking on the door, and village officials are struggling to see if developers will control Virgil or help it.

"They need something out here," Village President Mark Marion said. "It's going



One recent proposal would transform Virgil from a rural village with less than 300 people to a burgeoning suburb with more than 6,000 new residents by 2015.

downhill. We need to do something. Whether what we need is B&B Enterprises remains to be seen."

## One vision

Last month, B&B Enterprises, a St. Charles Township-based residential devel-

See **DEVELOPMENT** on **PAGE 4**



# Development: 'If we lose Virgil, we lose our voice'

Continued from Page 1

oper, outlined one vision. It forms the basis of a new Virgil closer in size to Sycamore across the county line.

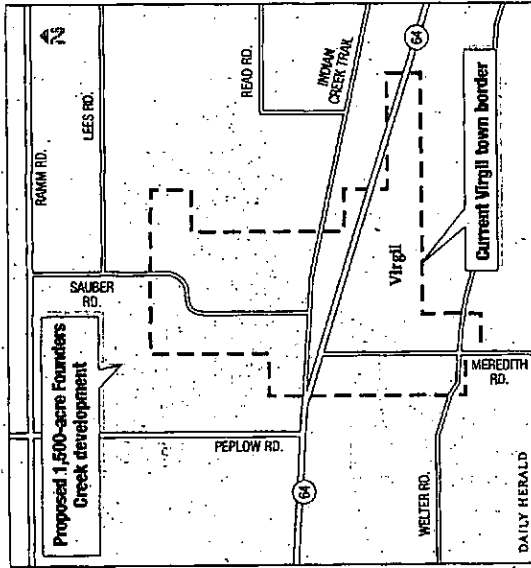
The new plan has room for as many as 3,000 new homes. That many addresses easily would up the village's population to more than 6,000 people in the next 10 years.

"It's going to be a nice community when it's completed," said Janet English, a spokeswoman for B&B Enterprises. "Virgil is a charming little village, and there is a lot of potential there."

A new Virgil also is contingent on village board approval, which could take months to secure. All that's certain now is seven property owners want to sell their farmland, and that group includes one representative from the influential Sauber family.

B&B Enterprises' initial plans would cover 1,571 acres according to its present shape. How many homes, what style of houses, and the layouts of the neighborhoods are details not yet completed. English said single-family homes, townhouses and apartments are all under consideration.

Developers are eyeing a con-



figuration that would produce at least 2,600 homes.

Put together the pieces, and it all surrounds today's Virgil, with half north of Route 64 and the parallel Great Western Trail and half south. Part of the eyed property falls within the 1.9-square-mile village and some outside. The project area also sits on a school district border, breaking into the

Kaneland and Burlington school districts.

Those are the details driving scores of Virgil and unincorporated township neighbors to fight the plan.

"They should scrap this whole project and start with a smaller project," said Roxanne Stover, a Virgil Township resident active in the new group Virgil Citizens for Responsible Growth.

## Differing opinions

Opponents to the B&B Enterprises plan say they are not against new homes in town. Instead, they believe allowing too many to annex into the city will create new tax burdens and stick older residents with the bill.

Stover points to Sycamore and its more than century-long history of growth that brought it to 12,000 residents. By comparison, Virgil has been an incorporated village for only 12 years.

Generating enough money to create a community 2,000 percent greater than what exists now cannot be done in a decade, even with developer-paid for streets, sewers, school land and village hall space, Stover argues.

"Just because B&B puts those things on a map doesn't mean they are going to give them to you," she said.

But it's those same features and numbers many are complaining about that, if done right, could bring new life to Virgil, project supporters say.

"There are different opinions on how much Virgil should grow and if it should grow at all," said Paul Bednar, an Elgin-based land planner hired by the vil-

lage. "My job as a planner is to see how much is appropriate and to control it."

Part of curtailing sprawl, Bednar said, is using development principles that promote open space and a mix of neighborhoods with small local shops or general stores people can walk to.

"There is going to be a lot of infrastructure we are going to have to incorporate here," English said.

Ask Marion and he'll say Virgil needs the sewage system, sewers, water infrastructure and roads. That wish list is central to an economic development plan plan the village has been working on for more than three months. Those long-term blueprints were under way before B&B Enterprises arrived, village leaders say.

Sandi Yockey, a trustee and the village's economic development director, said her job is to get residents to disconnect B&B Enterprises from the overall efforts to steer growth.

The specifics come later, she said. Right now the goal is to set a roadmap for the future that at the center includes economic revitalization.

"It would be nice to see Virgil come alive again," she said.

## Money problems

With Sauber Manufacturing the only substantial taxpayer in town, the village government runs on \$3,000 a month. Past tax producers like the town's general store closed. Even the town bank and post office blew away.

Needless to say, Marion said, the bills are tight and a simple snowstorm can stretch the budget of this village that incorporated a decade ago to fight a landfill proposal.

Without some new strength, Yockey fears the growth that is headed to western Kane County will someday swallow up Virgil.

"None of us would be screaming if they would grow responsibly," Stover said.

B&B Enterprises believes it can provide all that, plus land for two schools, public park space, a new downtown and area for a municipal center to serve a growing village. Getting it done won't be easy because many don't want the term "growing" associated with their village.

A survey presented this week end by Bednar shows 44 percent of Virgil residents want no new residential development.

"Growth is coming," she said. "If we lose Virgil, we lose our voice."

Life 12-20-04  
Beacon  
news

# without 'town father'

■ **New era in North Aurora:**  
After 8 years, Ruby ends  
eventful career as mayor

By David Garbe  
STAFF WRITER

**NORTH AURORA** — Today, for the first time in eight years, Mark Ruby no longer stands at the helm of the village.

Ruby earned a reputation as a respected and popular "town father" figure in a community that doubled in size during his two terms as village president and one as a leading trustee.

From ironing out contentious boundary disputes between the village and its larger neighbors to pushing the village forward on critical infrastructure projects, Ruby racked up a long list of victories during a period of unprecedented change in North Aurora.

He surprised many when he announced this summer he would not seek another term and said last week that he would step down three months early.

The sudden departure stems from the early completion of the new house Ruby and his wife built in an unincorporated area near Geneva. The couple are moving to be a few doors away from their son's family, including their two young grandchildren.

Under North Aurora law, the mayor must live within the village.

"He is going to be a very hard act to follow," said Public Works Commissioner DeWayne Williams, who has worked with Ruby for more than a decade. "He represented the village really well, not just in local affairs but also in regional affairs. He will be missed."

Ruby said he will miss the "fun and challenge" of heading the village, but he is confident that he leaves his town well on track for continued improvements.

"I think the future of North Aurora is looking great," Ruby said. "I feel very good about leaving the village in excellent financial shape."



**North Aurora  
Mayor Mark Ruby**  
"is going to be a  
very hard act to  
follow," says  
Public Works Di-  
rector DeWayne  
Williams.

viewpoint / B2  
Weather / A8

## FACES

From page A1

### The Beacon News



A Hollinger  
International publication

#### ice

S. River St., Aurora, IL 60506  
by hours: 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Monday-Friday. Closed holidays.

#### Newspaper delivery

Weber, manager

#### Customer service

(312) 844-5800 or (800) 244-5844; e-mail: customerservice@scn1.com.

#### Customer service hours

7 a.m. - 6 p.m., weekdays  
1 a.m. weekends  
7-10 a.m. holidays

#### Free delivery times

7 a.m. weekdays and holidays  
8 a.m. Saturdays, 8 a.m. Sundays.

If you do not receive your paper by our delivery deadline, please call customer service before 10 a.m. weekdays (or 11 a.m. weekends) and we will deliver your paper by noon.

**Subscription rates:**  
Home delivery: \$3.25 weekly; \$2.25 day-Sunday; \$1.50 Sunday (plus intermittent holiday issues). Mail subscriptions: \$4 weekly. Newsstand prices: 50 cents daily, \$1.50 Sunday.

#### Advertising

##### Display advertising

Robert Wall, manager  
(630) 844-5858 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

##### Classified advertising:

(630) 844-5811 from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

##### Online advertising:

Robert Albrecht, manager  
(815) 439-4377 from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

Ruby's role expanded dramatically in 2003, when the Village Board unceremoniously fired its professional administrator.

For the next year, Ruby found himself working 30-hour weeks running many of the village's day-to-day affairs while he and the trustees sought to hire a new manager.

Ruby said that added workload was not a factor in his decision to leave public office.

"The only reason I'm not staying in North Aurora is for family," he said.

All the same, he said he is looking forward to a quieter life.

"Since retiring from teaching, I haven't really retired yet," joked the former West Aurora High School history teacher about the last decade since he retired from the school district.

"I'm going to enjoy being able to have a day to myself," he said. "I can

go for a bike ride and not have to worry about coming back to a meeting."

Looking back over his second career, he said, "I found it rewarding. I feel good about what I've done, and I have the feeling that most people think I was doing a good job."

"I never thought of myself as a politician," he said, even back in the days when he campaigned by walking every street in what was then a town of less than 6,000 people.

"If the community would like me to do this job, I'd do it. That's how I felt about it," he said.

Ruby is officially relinquishing his title this morning, when Village Trustee Max Herwig will take over as acting village president until elections this spring.

Three trustees are seeking to replace Ruby: Dale Berman, Mark Guethle and John Hansen. The trio will face off in a primary election on Feb. 22, and the two finalists will go on the ballot April 5.

Ruby has endorsed Hansen as his favored replacement.

For many, their debts cause stress; 20 percent of all adults the poll said they worry about their debts most of the time.

"We live in an age of easy money and people pull out the plastic to medicate their pain," said Chris Packard, a mental health therapist from Gilbert, Ariz.

"I have had patients who use their credit cards to punish spouses, to appease depression or anxiety or to try to satisfy an out-of-control child," Packard said.

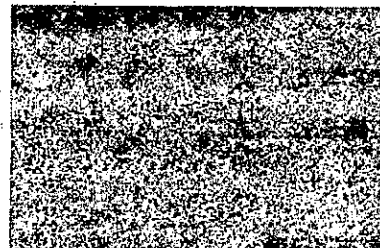
Experiencing the highest levels of stress from debts were people whose credit card spending limited those who are unmarried and have children; those without jobs; and minorities.

Those with the lowest levels of stress from debt were retirees, Republicans, married people, college graduates and people between ages 30 and 49.

Those groups' stress levels were measured based on their responses to a series of questions asked of 1,000 adults about debt and stress.

Paul Lavrakas, a research psychologist, developed those questions on debt stress in the 1990s when he was faculty director of the Ohio State University Center for Survey Research.

Many people asked about the



# Judicial leaders in the 16th circuit say subcircuits not answer to creating diversity

Judicial leaders in the 16th circuit say they have done as much as they can right now to infuse diversity into the legal system.

Bringing politics into the mix by creating subcircuits where judges are elected from small geographic areas instead of at large by voters from all of Kane, Kendall and DeKalb counties is an attempt to fix a system that isn't broken, they said recently during a public hearing on the idea.

"The reasoning behind (sub-



Tona Kunz & Adam Kovac  
Kane County Crime & Justice

## Where judges in the 16th circuit live

- Aurora: 7
- Batavia: 3
- DeKalb: 2
- Elgin: 4
- Geneva: 3

- South Elgin: 12
- St. Charles: 5
- Sycamore: 2
- Watertown: 1
- West Dundee: 1
- Yorkville: 2

Source: 16th Circuit Court Judges

circuiting) in Cook County does not apply to Kane and DeKalb counties, and I can tell you par-

ticularly in Kendall County," said Jim Wilson, the presiding judge of Kendall County.

attain diversity by bringing on the first female judges and encouraging attorneys with ethnic backgrounds to apply and seeking out bilingual attorneys to serve in courtrooms. Today, 31 of the circuit's judges are women.

"There is no justification that I can see in any way shape or form that justifies the subcircuting," Wilson said.

When the change was made in Cook in 1991, it was to fix a

See **CRIME** on PAGE 2

## Crime: Lack of minority attorneys cited as reason

Continued from Page 1

system that didn't let diversity reach the bench.

"We have women. We have minorities. We have judges elected from every geographic region of the three counties," said Kendall state's attorney Tim McCann.

Some judges said it's impossible to up the number of minorities because there aren't enough minority attorneys with the recommended 10 years of experience to draw from in the three counties.

Kane County Board member Gerald Jones, a Democrat from Aurora, said creating subcircuits could fix that. He thinks subcircuits would make it easier for minority judges to get elected, which in turn would draw minority attorneys to the area.

Kane County Judge F. Keith Brown, who is black, has been on the bench for 13 years. But no black attorneys have followed in his footsteps and only two Hispanic attorneys have

applied to become judges.

That is not enough, Jones said, with Hispanics making up about 33 percent of both Elgin and Aurora and blacks about 9 percent of both towns.

"As it stands now (minorities) as they go into a courtroom suffer from a lack of cultural sensitivity on the bench," he said.

Currently, Brown is the only minority judge in the 16th circuit. Although that isn't ideal, Brown said it isn't because of a lack of voter support for minorities like was found in areas of Cook County. He won the judge seat with the largest vote total of the three judges running at the time.

Aurora Attorney Sandra Parga, a first-generation Mexican-American, blamed the lack of minority judges on minority attorneys who refuse to stay in the area, limiting the selection for voters.

"If we don't take an interest and become involved it makes it difficult to complain," she said.

Parga and the judges said they think that will change. Already, people see more minorities in law school and more staying longer in suburbs before heading to Chicago.

"Greater representation can't be done overnight," Brown said.

**Judge considers request:** A Kane County judge's ruling could throw a cog in a home-invasion slaying case that has turned into a complex legal battle for prosecutors and defense attorneys alike.

Judge Patricia Piper Golden is considering whether to grant a request for a directed finding on behalf of Kineka Bell, a ruling that could throw out the Elgin woman's confession.

While defense attorneys almost automatically ask for such a ruling — in which the judge could say that prosecutors didn't prove their case — Bell's is interesting because of the time Golden is devoting to the decision.

Bell's lawyer, Kathleen

Colton, made the request last week at a hearing to suppress the statements. But before Golden can issue her ruling on Jan. 5, she said she must review a tape of Bell's interview with police and other documents.

Some of those documents include cases similar to Bell's, in which statements were dismissed because of police interviewing tactics, Colton said.

In Bell's case, she says Elgin detectives duped her into confessing by telling her she could go home if she cooperated.

The promises aren't on a recording of Bell's interview and the officers maintain they did nothing wrong, according to Assistant State's Attorney Greg Sams.

The outcome also is significant because the motion could affect a related decision on whether Bell, 21, will contest her charges at a dual trial with another man accused in the crime.

In what would be the second such trial in Kane County his-

tory, prosecutors want Bell to stand trial at the same time as Getino Robinson — with two juries seated in the same courtroom.

Bell and Robinson, 25, of Rockford, have pleaded innocent to murder, home-invasion and other offenses for the Feb. 11, 2003, death of Kyle Juggins, who was stabbed and shot in his apartment.

Although Bell did not participate in the killing, prosecutors say she is responsible because she led Robinson and two other men to the home to rob Juggins, 32, of guns and drugs.

**Scheduling note:** Kane County courts are closed Friday and Dec. 31.

• Tona Kunz and Adam Kovac cover Kane County courts. To contact Tona, call (830) 587-9631 or send e-mail to [tkunz@dailyherald.com](mailto:tkunz@dailyherald.com). To contact Adam, call (847) 608-2728 or send e-mail to [akovac@dailyherald.com](mailto:akovac@dailyherald.com).

12-21-04 Beacon news

# Kane chairman reshuffles committees

**■ Potential political conflict: Wyatt will oversee work of Cunningham's office**

**By Steve Lord**  
STAFF WRITER

**GENEVA** — As the era of Karen McConaughay, Kane County Board chairman, began here Monday, there was but one surprise.

And board member Bill Wyatt, R-Aurora, was the recipient.

Meeting for only the second time since the November election, the board voted on new committee assignments. Wyatt discovered that not only did he lose his Transportation Committee chairmanship, but McConaughay, R-St. Charles, had made him chairman of the Public Service

Committee.

Wyatt said he did not expect to be named to Transportation again, and had told McConaughay he would go wherever she needed him.

But as Public Service Committee chairman, he will oversee the County Clerk's office — a position held by Jack Cunningham. The last time Cunningham and Wyatt shared a room was at the Aurora Election Commission, when both were filing to run for mayor of Aurora.

"Mr. Cunningham and I may have some political dealings," Wyatt told the board. "There could be a conflict."

Wyatt initially withdrew his name from consideration for chairman. But McConaughay and other board members said Wyatt could convene his committee, name a chairman pro-tem, and that person could chair the committee until after he and Cunningham are no longer election

Committee. That committee will now oversee courts, corrections and public safety.

But by knocking out those committees, McConaughay also knocked out Board member Lee Barrett, R-Dundee, as a committee chairman. He was chairman of Public Safety. Another board member with some seniority that lost a chairmanship was Board member Barb Wojnicki, R-St. Charles, who was replaced as Human Service Committee chairman by Board member Rob McConaughay, R-Geneva. He had been Public Service Committee chairman.

Wojnicki became a member of a higher profile committee, Public Health. She remained a member of the Development Committee.

One board member who jumped into a chairmanship with only two years seniority was John Noverini, R-Carpentersville, who was appointed Finance Committee chairman. McConaughay also left intact the two

Democrats who previously held committee chairmanships. Board member Paul Greviskes, D-Aurora, was appointed Administration Committee, and Board member Gerry Jones, D-Aurora, was appointed Public Health Committee chairman.

Those two chairmanships were not enough for Democrats. Jones also made a case for Greviskes as vice chairman. But he ended up losing to board member Don Wolfe, R-Elgin.

Jones said on a day when McConaughay was sworn in as the first female board chairman in Kane history, the board could make more history by electing the first Democratic vice chairman.

"In your heart, you know I'm right," Jones said. "We could send a message to the legislature in Springfield and even the halls of Congress that there is a new day in Kane County."

12-21-04  
Chronicle

Taking her oath



Karen McConaughay is congratulated by friends after she was sworn in Monday as the new Kane County Board Chairman at the government center in Geneva.

## Chairman, at last

After a two-week delay, McConaughay finally sworn in

By PAUL DALLING  
Kane County Chronicle

"It's been a long time getting here."

Karen McConaughay said, to the laughter of the audience, McConaughay took her oath of office at 9 a.m. Monday. Kane County Chief Judge Donald Hudson officiated the ceremony, which originally was planned for Dec. 6, when the rest of the board was inducted. A state law approved this year pushed back McConaughay's oath and delayed her plans.

For eight years, Mike McCoy had held

### Getting down to business

County board members received committee assignments on Monday night. **Page 6A**

the position of chairman. In June 2003, he announced that he would not seek re-election.

Jan Carlson, R-Elburn, said, McConaughay asked him to be her campaign manager 18 months before the election.

"I probably wouldn't have taken that job for anyone else," Carlson said. She announced her candidacy five

months later.

McConaughay defeated Democratic challenger Tom Weadash on Nov. 2, 12 years, with the exception of the two weeks after Dec. 6. That was the day Mark Davoust took the oath for McConaughay's old District 14 seat. From then until her oath Monday, McConaughay held no position with the county.

On Dec. 3, McConaughay and representatives from the Kane County State's Attorney's Office were reviewing procedures for the Dec. 6 oath-taking ceremony.

See CHAIRMAN, page 2

## Chairman: Plans for new jail on agenda

Continued from page 1

They found a state law that pushed back the date McConaughay could take her oath. The law moved the induction for board chairman in certain counties from the first Monday of December to the third day of December.

Monday, it was designed to allow more time to count provisional ballots. McCoy had to remain in office, and committee assignments were delayed until 5 p.m. Monday.

"This has been the scariest turnover. No one knows who's on first and what's on second," Catherine Hurlbut, R-Elgin, said during the confusing transition.

McConaughay said her first priority will be to create a strategic plan for "the growth

that's coming our way." She said Kane County is the third- or fourth-fastest growing community in Illinois and the 35th-fastest growing in the country. Plans for a new county jail also are high on her agenda.

McConaughay must push her plans through the most bipartisan board in recent years. The election gave Democrats nine seats on the 26-member board, an increase of four seats.

Linda Holmes, D-Aurora, defeated incumbent Republican Mary Richards. Holmes said she is not concerned about working with a board led by and mostly consisting of Republicans.

"If we're all here working for the good of the county, I don't know if the whole

Republican/Democrat thing is that important," she said. McConaughay praised the entire board.

"It's the best bumper crop of county board members we've ever had," she said. Originally entering the

board in 1992 as a grass-roots outsider, McConaughay has been criticized for the party ties she developed during her tenure, most notably with U.S. House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Plano.

Hastert spokesman Brad Halin said the ties are an example of McConaughay's skill at working with people, and not political collusion. "Certainly, her relationship with the speaker will help her, as will her relationships with the municipal leaders," he said.

# Committees, chairmen appointed at special county board meeting

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

## 2005 standing committees

Consolidated committees, juggled committee chairmen and a new vice chairman were named at a special Kane County Board meeting Monday.

The meeting, held at 5 p.m. Monday, was the first run by Chairman Karen McConnaughay, who took her oath of office earlier in the day. She had planned to take her oath with the rest of the board on Dec. 6, but a state law passed earlier this year delayed her induction. She had scheduled committee assignments and the vice chairman election for the county board meeting Dec. 14. Former Chairman Mike McCoy officiated that meeting and postponed those actions until Monday, when Karen McConnaughay would be in office.

Traditionally, the vice chairman election and committee assignments would wait until a regular meeting. Karen McConnaughay said she moved the day up at the request of several board members, many of whom would have to plan around committee schedules.

Don Wolfe, R-Elgin, was elected vice chairman of the Kane County Board in a 16-9 vote split exactly down party lines. He defeated Paul Greviskes, D-Aurora. Wolfe and Greviskes said the election of a vice chairman was one of the few county board issues divided by party.

"This is nuts and bolts government," Wolfe said. "Not much that we do that you can put a partisan tint on."

The November election gave nine seats to Democrats, up from five after the 2002 election.

The Corrections and Rehabilitations, Judiciary and Public Safety committees were combined into one committee. James Mitchell, R-North Aurora, was named chairman. He was chairman of the Judiciary Committee before the consolidation. Karen McConnaughay announced her intention to combine the committees in November. Although his still needs to be approved by the county board as a whole, it is expected to pass.

"It's something that I've wanted for a long time," said Caryl Van Overmeiren, R-St. Charles.

Robert McConnaughay, R-Geneva, was named chairman of the Human Services Committee, replacing Barbara Wojnicki, R-St. Charles. Karen McConnaughay said she made this selection because he was a good fit for "some aggressive things" she plans for Human Services. She would not comment on those plans.

Karen McConnaughay's campaign manager, Jan Carlson, R-Elburn, was named chairman of the powerful Transportation Committee.

"In the case of transportation, it was time for a change," she said.

Some concerns about conflicts of interest were named.

Former Transportation Committee Chairman Bill Wyatt, R-Aurora, was named chairman of the Public Service Committee. Ballot errors and delays in voter tallies during the November election will be examined by this committee. Wyatt said he was concerned about possible accusations of

(First name is chairman)

• **Administration:** Greviskes, Allan, Barrett, Holmes, Jones, Keryon, Wolfe

• **County Development:** Hurlbut, Greviskes, Keryon, R. McConnaughay, Sanchez, Wojnicki, Wolfe (ex-officio: Carlson, Hoscheit)

• **Executive:** K. McConnaughay, Carlson, Greviskes, Hurlbut, Jones, R. McConnaughay, Mitchell, Noverini, Wyatt, Legislative Liason Van Overmeiren (ex-officio: Hoscheit, Wolfe)

• **Finance:** Noverini, Carlson, Griffin, Mitchell, Sanchez, Van Overmeiren, Tredup

• **Human Services:** R. McConnaughay, Allan, Holmes, Kudlicki, Kunkel, Wolfe, Van Cleave

• **Judiciary/Corrections/Public Safety:** Mitchell, Allan, Davoust, Griffin, Neuberger, Noverini, Tredup

• **Public Health:** Jones, Barrett, Fox, Kunkel, Tredup, Wojnicki, Wyatt

• **Public Service:** Wyatt, Fox, Kissane, Kudlicki, Van Cleave, Neuberger, Van Overmeiren

• **Transportation:** Carlson, Davoust, Hoscheit, Kissane, Wolfe, Jones, Van Overmeiren (ex-officio: Hurlbut)

"This planned committee consolidation must be approved at the next county board meeting

using the chairman position for political gain, as Kane County Clerk Jack Cunningham is running against Wyatt for mayor of Aurora.

"I've heard so many criticisms of the election and they're going to fall under that committee," he said.

Wyatt said he plans to ask the committee to appoint a chairman pro tempore to run the meetings until after the April elections. He said Van Overmeiren was his first choice.

Karen McConnaughay also posed a possible conflict of interest.

Although the board chairman traditionally chairs the Liquor Control Commission, Karen McConnaughay said she plans to appoint someone to the position at the January meeting. Karen McConnaughay's husband is a liquor distributor.

Van Overmeiren was named Legislative Liason, replacing Penny Cameron, who was not re-elected to the board. Van Overmeiren was vice chairman under McCoy for six years until Catherine Hurlbut, R-Elgin, won the position in 2003.

"I'm so pleased that we got this over with in one vote," she said.

It took three months for the board to come to a consensus when Van Overmeiren, Hurlbut and Lee Barrett, R-East Dundee, vied for the post.

John Noverini, R-Carpentersville, will chair the Finance Committee, replacing Douglas Weigand, who did not seek re-election. Greviskes, Hurlbut, and Gerald Jones, D-Aurora, will retain their positions as chairmen of the Administration, County Development and Public Health committees, respectively.

12-21-04 METRO  
Chicago Tribune

# Kane swears in new chairman

## McConnaughay plans to change some departments

By William Presecky  
Tribune staff reporter

Among her first official acts after becoming the first woman sworn in as Kane County Board chairman, Karen McConnaughay moved as promised Monday to streamline the board's committee structure.

Several committee chairmen from the regime of her predecessor, Mike McCoy, including two veteran Democrats, retained leadership posts under the committee assignments outlined by McConnaughay, a Republican from St. Charles.

In a perfunctory demonstration of their increased voting power, to nine members from five previously, board Democrats voted as a block in support of 14-year board member Paul Greviskes (D-Aurora) for vice chairman.

After the 16 of 17 board Republicans present Monday voted to elect Don Wolfe (R-Elgin) vice chairman, all nine Democrats, including Greviskes and Gerald Jones (D-Aurora), who had placed his name in nomination, voted to elect Wolfe by acclamation.

"We want to raise the flag to let people know we're here and we're growing," said Jones.

"It's a matter of pride in the Democrats and the fact that we represent a fairly large constituency in the county. We need to show we are a group," said Greviskes.

After the brief board meeting called to set committee assignments, McConnaughay said in the next few weeks she also plans to restructure several administrative offices under the board's control.

She will begin, she said, by transferring oversight for the county's transportation division to longtime Development Department Executive Director Phil Bus.

McConnaughay, 47, said the move is designed to "strengthen

the county's ability to advance the 2030 [land use and transportation] plans.

"Our financial ability is becoming stretched in all of those planning areas," said. By having the same oversight for both land use and transportation planning, McConnaughay said, she expects the county will be better able to utilize resources.

Chief among the committee changes announced by McConnaughay was the consolidation into one committee of the responsibilities formerly assigned to the board's Judicial, Corrections and Public Safety Committees.

Devising a comprehensive plan to address the long-term as well as immediate problems of an overloaded criminal justice system is a top priority for the McConnaughay.

"I'm very excited to start strategic planning for the county next year," said McConnaughay after being sworn into office at a brief ceremony Monday morning.

"The board and [the county's] elected officials collectively need to develop some long-term priorities as to how we are going to continue to meet the demand for increased levels of service," she said.

Harking back 14 years ago, to the day she first entered the County Board Room in Geneva as a community activist, McConnaughay said she never had foreseen where it might lead.

"I never dreamed I would be standing here as Kane County Board chairman," she told a crowded boardroom that overflowed with family and friends.

McConnaughay was elected to the County Board three times, beginning in 1992. She began her political career as a leader of a citizens group that opposed attempts by the county Forest Preserve Commission to seize private land for bicycle paths in her neighborhood.

After running without opposition in the GOP primary, McConnaughay won election to the \$82,000-a-year post in November by defeating retired businessman Thomas Meadath, 62, a Democrat from St. Charles.



# Aurora resident: Candidate doesn't live here

BY PATRICIA WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer 12/21/04

Kane County Clerk Jack Cunningham's young race for mayor of Aurora took a hit Monday when a west side resident claimed his campaign is illegal because he does not live in the city.

The woman, Joan Horvath-Kruger, who lives a block away from Cunningham's reported home at 218 LeGrande Blvd., filed paperwork with the Aurora Election Commission

challenging Cunningham's nomination forms.

"That is the address he is using to run for mayor and that is wrong," Horvath-Kruger said. "He doesn't live in the house he says he lives in."

Cunningham filed paperwork last week to get his name on the ballot for the Aurora mayor's race. He is one of five candidates seeking to succeed outgoing mayor David Stover.

Cunningham announced his intentions to run just last week, months after his oppo-

nents Tom Weisner, Richard Irvin, Bill Wyatt and Angel Hernandez started their campaigns. Cunningham decided to seek the job after a private poll he paid for in November predicted he would win.

The candidates square off in a nonpartisan primary Feb. 22. The top two vote-getters then move on to the April 5 consolidated election.

The paperwork objection against his address and even the validity of the required sig-

natures he collected prompted a quick denial of wrongdoing from Cunningham, who has run for mayor twice before and was elected county clerk two years ago.

"I don't know what the motivation is," Cunningham said. "They are obviously scared."

Cunningham said he has lived in that house since 1971, though he does own other residences outside Kane County. The LeGrande address is listed on his license and he is the payer of the home's utility bills.

Horvath-Kruger, who describes herself as an "undecided voter," said it's a well-known fact on the street that Cunningham lives elsewhere.

Horvath-Kruger said she is one of several residents on her street that worked on the objection. She said she is not connected to any candidate, though her husband volunteers for Weisner.

"This is not about that," she said. For his part, Weisner said he

knows he has supporters on that block and is pleased to see the issue exposed. "The truth should be sought," he said. Carole Holtz, Aurora Election Commission executive director, said the Horvath-Kruger complaint was the only one to come in by midday Monday, the last day to file such an objection.

A hearing will be held, likely on Dec. 28, to determine the validity of the complaints and Cunningham's future on the ballot.

12-21-04 Beacon News

# Neighbor: Cunningham not city resident

By Ed Fanselow  
STAFF WRITER

AURORA — A West Side woman who has voiced support for Tom Weisner's mayoral campaign is fighting to have opposing candidate Jack Cunningham's name removed from the ballot, claiming that he doesn't actually live in Aurora.

Joan Horvath-Kruger — who lives in the same block as the home at 218 LeGrande Blvd. that Cunningham says is his residence — contends that Cunningham hasn't

## Auroran files objection to his nominating petitions

lived there for at least three years and that he had rented the home to another family until late last month.

She filed a formal objection to Cunningham's nominating petitions with the Aurora Election Commission on Monday, the last day to do so.

"Everyone knows that Jack doesn't live in Aurora — it's an open joke on our block," she said. "It's really a sad joke when some-

one can make a mockery of our mayoral race by pretending to live here only because he wants to stroke his own ego in another run for office."

Cunningham, a frequent political candidate who has run twice before for Aurora mayor and who is

the incumbent Kane County clerk, called the allegations "frivolous," and "politically motivated," noting that Horvath-Kruger's husband, Brooke Kruger, volunteers for the Weisner campaign.

Although she claimed Monday to be an "undecided" voter, Horvath-Kruger previously endorsed Weisner's candidacy in The Beacon News' Openline section.

"When you're the front-runner,



**"When you're the front-runner, you've got to expect these kinds of attacks."**

*Jack Cunningham, Aurora mayor candidate*

◆ Turn to CUNNINGHAM, A2

you've got to expect these kinds of attacks," Cunningham said. "But I give the people of Aurora enough credit to see this as what it is."

Weisner said he played no part in lodging the complaint, but applauded Horvath-Kruger for doing "the right thing."

"If (Cunningham) wants to be a bona fide candidate for mayor of Aurora, then he ought to live in the city of Aurora," Weisner said. "And he ought to be able to prove it."

content of Horvath-Kruger's objection, which also alleges that more than 50 signatures on Cunningham's petitions are invalid.

Daniel White, a spokesman for the Illinois State Board of Elections, said that objections to candidacies based on residency requirements are not uncommon.

Determining someone's actual residence, he said, hinges on two factors: their "physical presence" at a home and their "intent to live there."

"Both of those things, though, are hard to quantify," he said. "So the local election (commissions) have a lot of discretion."

Also on Monday, objections to two Aurora aldermanic candidates' election petitions were filed.

The challenges were made against incumbent Second Ward Alderman David Marquez and Georgine "Jill" Jenkins, one of two candidates seeking to replace outgoing Fourth Ward Alderman Chuck Nelson.

## CUNNINGHAM

From page A1

Cunningham, a lawyer and businessman who maintains several other residences — including a houseboat in the marina he owns along the Illinois River in Seneca — admits that he doesn't stay at his Aurora home every night.

He said he also has rented bedrooms in the home to friends who have stayed there along with him.

"The bottom line, though, is that the Aurora house is my home," he said. "My voter registration says so, my driver's license says so and anybody who knows me well enough will tell you so."

Aurora Election Commission Director Carole Holtz said the city's three election commissioners will rule on the objection during a hearing next Monday.

She would not comment on the

# Aurora neighbor doubts candidate's residency

By Amy Fischer Roth  
Special to the Tribune

An Aurora PTA vice president who lives on the same block as mayoral candidate and Kane County Clerk John "Jack" Cunningham filed a challenge to Cunningham's nominating petitions Monday on the grounds that he is not an Aurora resident.

Two aldermanic candidates' petitions also have been challenged.

Cunningham, who owns a home in the 200 block of Le-Grande Boulevard on Aurora's west side, said he began sharing the home with other people for help with expenses after his divorce.

"All the utilities are in my name," he said. "I have a bedroom there. I have furniture there. I don't sleep in the house every night, nor do I have to establish residency."

"I'm sure I'm in conformance with all the laws in the state as far as my residency is concerned. I expect objections from people when they feel I can beat them."

Joan Horvath-Kruger, whose husband, Brooke Kruger, has volunteered for Tom Weisner's campaign, said "everyone on our block knows that Jack doesn't live in Aurora. It's an

*'I have a bedroom there. I have furniture there. I don't sleep in the house every night, nor do I have to establish residency.'*

—Aurora mayoral candidate John "Jack" Cunningham

open joke on our block."

Cunningham said he owns a cabin on the Illinois River and a boat that has bedrooms. Where he sleeps is "nobody's business," he said.

Attorney Peter K. Wilson Jr., who represents the Aurora Election Commission, said the commission will hear the evidence and decide whether Cunningham's name will remain on the February primary ballot. "To say he pays the bills there, I can't say if that will be sufficient," Wilson said.

Weisner said he "didn't urge anybody" to challenge Cunningham's petitions.

Horvath-Kruger also alleged that Cunningham's petitions contain names or signatures that are invalid, including petitions signed by Naperville residents.

Cunningham said he isn't worried about the challenge. "I look at it as a compliment," he said. "When you're the front-runner, you anticipate attacks such as this."

Two other challenges were filed before Monday's 5 p.m. deadline, said Election Commission Director Carole Holtz.

The petitions of aldermanic candidates David Marquez and Georgine Jenkins were challenged, but Holtz said she hadn't read the objections.

Aurora resident Gregorio Salgado filed the objection to Marquez's nominating papers.

Salgado said Marquez's petitions contain errors, including signatures of non-registered voters, multiple signatures by one person and signatures that do not match those on record at the Aurora Election Commission. Marquez is the incumbent running for Ward 2 alderman. He is opposed by Juany Garza. Jenkins is running for Ward 4 alderman, where incumbent Chuck Nelson is not seeking reelection. Richard Lawrence is the only other candidate in that race.

All the challenges will be heard by the Election Commission at 9:30 a.m. Monday.

# Objection filed to Cunningham's petition

*Neighbor says  
Cunningham doesn't  
live in Aurora*

By ERIC SCHELKOPF  
Kane County Chronicle

William Wyatt, along with Richard Irvin, Tom Weisner and Angel Hernandez in the Feb. 22 primary.

The top two voters will vie for the job April 5.

Joan Horvath-Kruger filed the objection.

She said that Cunningham has not lived at 218 LeGrande Blvd., which he lists as his address, for more than three years.

AURORA — A neighbor of John "Jack" Cunningham on Monday filed an objection to his nominating petition for Aurora mayor, claiming he does not live in the city.

Cunningham, the Kane County clerk, will face Kane County Board member



**Cunningham**

cause he wants to stroke his own ego in another run for office," Horvath-Kruger said in a statement.

Cunningham said 218 LeGrande Blvd. is his legal residence, although he does not sleep there every night.

"I am confident the Aurora Election Commission will uphold it as my legal residence," Cunningham said.

The commission will conduct a hearing on the objection at 9:30 a.m. Monday at its office at 77 S. Stolp Ave., Aurora.

If Cunningham or Wyatt wins, the county board would have to appoint a replacement.

Both candidates will remain in their county posts during the campaign.

"It's really a sad joke when someone can make a mockery of our own mayoral race by pretending to live here only be-

# North Aurora president picks his successor

Daily Herald

BY GARRETT ORDOWER  
Daily Herald Staff Writer 12/21/04

*Ruby endorses trustee he considers party-neutral to take on two other candidates*

Outgoing North Aurora Village President Mark Ruby may be leaving the village, but he's not saying goodbye to its politics. Ruby has endorsed Trustee John Hansen as his successor.

Ruby and Hansen have worked together for the better part of two decades.

"He's never been one to seek the spotlight, but he's always worked very hard behind the

scenes," Ruby said.

Hansen, 50, faces former Village President Dale Berman and Kane County Democratic Party Chairman Mark Guethle in the February primary race. Both his opponents are also trustees.

Ruby has been village president for the past eight years, and he served as a trustee for four years before that.

Ruby said Hansen has proven

himself through hard work on commercial projects, such as establishing the North Aurora Auto Mall and luring Woodman's megastore to the village.

At the same time, he's been a steward of the less visible aspects of the village, like its street maintenance program,

Ruby said.

He also helped found the Route 31 committee, which has

been trying to breathe new life into the village's downtown.

"I feel very honored and very pleased," Hansen said. "I certainly consider that a very high endorsement."

Hansen said his four-part platform involves being fiscally prudent, continuing infrastructure improvements, attracting more commercial development and ensuring the village is a safe

place to live.

Aside from Hansen's experience and personal traits, like being a good listener and non-confrontational, Ruby also chose the trustee because he believes it's important the village's highest office remain party-neutral, as voters overwhelmingly decided in a ballot question last year. Guethle has strong ties to the Democratic

party and Berman is active in the Republican party.

But Guethle disputes that political affiliations are a bad thing for the village. He points out that to get things done for the village, having the ear of the Democrats who control the state can be essential.

"Do I think it's bad for our community? No, I think it's a positive," Guethle said. "How could it be bad?"

Berman could not be reached for comment.

## Eye for detail gives grad her edge

BY CHRISTINE BYERS  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

It's through her eyes that Joanna Bixby interacts with the silent world around her.

Whether it was, as a 10-month-old, watching her mother sign the word "mom" and mimicking the motion, or studying the lips of those who don't use sign language, the St. Charles resident has relied on her hazel eyes to do what her ears can't.

And for the past three years, the 19-year-old has parlayed her reliance on visuals into a degree in graphic arts at Elgin Community College. Today, she'll accept her diploma. She hopes to continue her education at the Illinois Institute of Art in Schaumburg next year.

It's her attention to detail that



JOANNA BIXBY OF ST. CHARLES USED HER DESKTOP PUBLISHING SKILLS TO CREATE THIS MODEL OF THE COCHLEAR IMPLANT SHE WEARS. SHE GRADUATES TODAY FROM ELGIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

and wondered how her family could cope with the news.

"Then I thought, 'She's only deaf,'" she said. "We just need to learn another language."

Susan Bixby learned sign language in time to be an interpreter during some kindergarten classes. That's when she noticed Joanna's artistic talent.

At age 7, Joanna drew a picture of a fish. But instead of drawing a simple tail, fins and eyes, Joanna drew scales, the lines on the fish's fins and gills.

Her ability to see detail that others may miss comes from how hard she concentrates to keep up with the hearing world.

Joanna Bixby of St. Charles used her desktop publishing skills to create this model of the cochlear implant she wears. She graduates today from Elgin Community College.

don't completely understand it," Joanna said. "Signing is my first language, so (hearing English) is like a foreign language to me."

"It's like her ears are only 3 years old," Susan Bixby said.

So, imagine the fear Joanna felt when she learned she'd be a graphic arts tour guide at ECC as part of her scholarship requirements. "I was like, 'Hello? I'm deaf,'" Joanna said, her face lighting up with laughter. "What they just pretend?"

But students paid more attention to her than any other tour guides, she said.

## Geneva to look at home rule as one of its upcoming goals

BY GARRETT ORDOWER  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

As the residents of Geneva mull over their resolutions for the new year, the city council on Monday approved its own set of resolutions — the annual goals that guide it through the budget process.

The goals serve as a rough guide for the city council and generally remain consistent from year to year. They do not usually get into specifics, but offer broad statements to direct the city's policies.

This year, the two additions to the 11 goals advanced last year deal with ways the city can help control its own destiny, including working closer with other governments and the possibility

it can attain greater autonomy by becoming a home-rule community.

"As the city of Geneva reaches build out, more of our attention and energies will be focused on how to preserve what we have," Mayor Kevin Burns said.

A town automatically achieves home-rule status in Illinois once it has 25,000 residents, which is unlikely to ever happen in Geneva.

However, the city can also become home rule through a referendum, or possibly by other means.

Once it becomes home rule, it has greater control over a wide range of municipal functions, from property code enforcement to additional taxes. Those extra powers, however, also

make some leery of home rule.

For now, the city has only committed to exploring the option.

"There's a number of things that we face that we may be in a better position to deal with if Geneva is a home-rule community," said Alderman Craig Maladra, who has led the charge to explore the idea.

For example, Naperville has imposed a tax on dining to pay for cultural arts. Maladra said. Being home rule has also given Wheaton, Hinsdale and Glen Ellyn more control over inflation issues.

The city will continue exploring the idea as it moves forward with its budget process, Burns said.

## Elburn approves higher fees

## Developers must pay to Dist 309

# First Kane chairwoman begins post with land deal

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer 2/21/04

Only hours after taking her oath of office as the new Kane County board chairwoman, Karen McConaughay signed a piece of paper finalizing a land deal that brings a future Stearns Road bridge closer to reality.

Not bad for the first day, or hour, really.

"It was great," McConaughay said late Monday after leading her first meeting of the county board.

Seven weeks after making Kane County history by becoming the first woman elected board chairwoman, McConaughay, a St. Charles Republican, was sworn-in Monday morning before family, friends and public officials.

Her first day in office, which was highlighted by the \$11.5 million land deal that has been in the works for years, ended with a board meeting to handle the procedural matters of electing a vice chairman and setting committee assignments.

Don Wolfe, an Elgin Republican, won the vice chairman job in a party-line vote, 16-9, that put him up against Aurora Democrat Paul Greviskes.

In nominating Greviskes, fellow Aurora Democrat Gerry Jones said, if party politics were removed, the choice would be clear.

"Vote for the most qualified candidate," Jones said, pointing out that, at 12 years in office,



MARY BETH NOLAN/DAILY HERALD

**Kane County Board Chairwoman Karen McConaughay, a St. Charles Republican, visits with board members Monday after chairing a special meeting on her first Monday in charge at the Kane County Government Center.**

Greviskes was the most senior member of the board.

Jan Carlson, an Elburn Republican, nominated Wolfe for the post by listing his work on various county committees and highlighting his efforts in economic development. After the vote, Wolfe thanked the board for the chance to take on a new role.

"I'm glad to have the opportunity to take this position," he said. "I'm just here to do the people's business."

With the board committees, as was expected, McConaughay combined three — the judiciary, corrections and public safety committees — into one panel that will oversee all aspects of criminal justice.

It will be headed by Jim

Mitchell, a North Aurora Republican and chairman of the old judiciary committee.

As for other changes, Bill Wyatt, an Aurora Republican, was moved from chairman of the transportation committee to the public service committee. Carlson, who ran McConaughay's campaign, was named chairman of transportation.

John Noverini, a Carpentersville Republican, was named finance committee chairman, replacing Doug Weigand, a Batavia Republican who did not seek re-election.

In a bipartisan display, Democrats Greviskes and Jones got to keep their committee chairmanships heading the administration and public health committees, respectively.

# Couple hopes to turn Wright farmhouse into business

12-22-04 Chronicle

County board panel OKs bed and breakfast

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — If you want to stay in a Frank Lloyd Wright house, you might have the chance next year.

Plato Center couple Mike Petersdorf and Sarah Muirhead-Petersdorf are converting a 1950s Frank Lloyd Wright farmhouse into a bed and breakfast.

Their plans were approved Tuesday by the Kane County Development Committee. If the plans are approved by the Kane County Board at the Jan. 11 meeting, the bed and breakfast could open as soon as summer 2005.

"It's really going to be something when it's completed," said Phil Bus, the Kane County Development Department's executive director.

The forest preserve bought the land surrounding the property last year for prairie restoration.

The one-story, 3,200-square-foot farmhouse was completed in the early 1950s for Muirhead-Petersdorf's grandfather, Robert Muirhead, and has stayed in the family. This summer, the couple moved to the home from Minnesota, where they had lived for 20 years. Muirhead-Petersdorf said they moved because of job opportunities and a chance to renovate the house.

"The house was in a state where basically it needed to be bulldozed down or have a lot of work put into it," Muirhead-Petersdorf said.

The Robert Muirhead House, as it is called, is an example of Wright's later Usonian style, which he created to design affordable houses for the typical American family. "Usonian" is a play on USA. The style is typified by flat roofs, wooden walls and concrete floors.

"Anyone who's familiar with his work will recognize some of the features," Petersdorf said.

Some of those features have made the renovation necessary.

## About the house

- Frank Lloyd Wright designed the Plato Center home, which was completed in 1950.

- It is an example of Wright's Usonian design, which was intended to be affordable for typical American families.

- Sara Muirhead-Petersdorf, whose grandfather built the home, said it might be the only farmhouse Wright ever built.

## House

Continued from page 1

The flat roof collects water. Some of the cypress exterior must be replaced. The red concrete squares have sunk two to three inches, separating from the walls in some sections.

Muirhead-Petersdorf said they have had to remove several walls, repour the cement and build new walls.

"(Wright) was more into the look as opposed to the structure," Muirhead-Petersdorf said.

In the early 1950s, the expanding Muirhead family outgrew the farmhouse on their property. Muirhead-Petersdorf said they happened to drive up to Wright's Spring Green, Wis., studio.

"They were looking for ideas and one of his assistants approached them and asked if they would like to speak to Mr. Wright," she said.

Wright designed for them a farmhouse with a master bedroom and a room for each of Muirheads' five children.

"As far as we can determine, it is the only farmhouse he ever built," Muirhead-Petersdorf said.

Turning the house into a bed and breakfast has required major structural changes.

"With the remodeling and everything, we've taken a six-bedroom home and turned it into a four-bedroom home with more baths," Petersdorf said.

The couple also plans to build furniture designed by Wright for the home. He gave the plans to the Muirhead family but they never built the furniture. This thoroughness was typical of Wright.

"I know there's a home in Iowa where he picked out their pots and pans," Muirhead-Petersdorf said.

Locally, Wright designed the William B. Greene House in Aurora, the A.W. Gridley House in Batavia, the P.D. Hoyt House in Geneva and oversaw remodeling for the Col. George Fabyan Villa in Geneva. In total, he designed 532 homes, museums and office buildings. More than 400 remain.

See HOUSE, page 2

# N. Aurora considers mixed-use development

12-22-04 Chronicle

Village does not have ordinance  
on the books

By ERIC SCHELKOPF  
Kane County Chronicle

NORTH AURORA — More than 300 townhouses could be built as part of a proposed shopping center development between the North Aurora Auto Mall and Randall Road.

However, the village does not have an ordinance that addresses mixed-use developments. But that soon could change.

Plan commissioners this week reviewed a proposed ordinance drafted by village attorney Kevin Drendel. The ordinance would only apply to devel-

opments of at least 90 acres. "It has to be a sizable piece of land," Drendel said.

The ordinance would limit what could be built. Drendel suggested that the underlying zoning should be the predominant use in any mixed-use planned unit development, and that the predominant use should be at least 51 percent of the net buildable area of the development.

"All other uses must be divided equally," Drendel said.

Commissioner Vince Mancini said

he liked the proposed ordinance.

"It puts developers on notice," Mancini said.

At the same time, he said he wants flexibility in the ordinance.

"I like parameters, but I like flexibility, too," Mancini said.

Hoffman Estates-based Rubloff Development wants to build the 600,000-square-foot North Aurora Towne Centre on 330 acres between the North Aurora Auto Mall and Randall Road.

Target and Kohl's would anchor

the center. Other stores committed to the project include TJ Maxx, Michaels, Arts and Crafts, Pier 1 Imports, Famous Footwear and Petco Superstore.

Wetlands make up 110 acres of the property.

Plan commissioners will review the plans during a special meeting at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at North Aurora Village Hall, 25 E. State St.

The developer is seeking village approval by January 2005 so the project can begin by March or April.



# 12-22-04 Chicago Tribune County warns of bridge 'mess'

## Fabyan Parkway rehab will close lanes, official says

By William Presecky  
Tribune staff reporter

Kane County highway officials are warning area motorists to expect a mess next year with the periodic closure of busy Fabyan Parkway over the Fox River.

Construction bids were opened Tuesday on the estimated \$2.3 million Fabyan Parkway Bridge rehabilitation project.

About 30,000 vehicles a day cross Fabyan Parkway, a four-lane artery that runs through the eastern third of the county between Geneva and Batavia.

"It'll be a mess," said Paul Rogowski, director of Kane's Division of Transportation.

The project is scheduled to begin in mid-April and be completed by Sept. 1.

The bridge will remain open but restricted to one lane of traffic in each direction for most of the project. It will close entirely for two five-day periods when concrete is being poured, according to Rogowski.

A detour that utilizes a combination of roads, including Illi-

nois Highways 25, 31 and 56, south of Fabyan Parkway, has been devised and will be clearly marked, he said.

The state Department of Transportation has approved the detour, he said.

With the recent approval of the County Board's Transportation Committee, a contract for the bridge project is expected to be awarded in January. The seven bids that county engineer Carl Schoedel said he has under review range from about \$1.8 million to \$3 million.

Rogowski said work on the Fabyan Parkway Bridge includes replacement of the expansion joints and surface, parapet and structural steel repair and the installation of new lights.

The 30-year-old bridge was scheduled to be rehabbed this year, but construction was postponed until 2005 because of the potential traffic conflicts the detour necessitates for other road construction, particularly on Illinois 56 at the Fox River in North Aurora.

**FOR HOME DELIVERY,  
CALL 1-800-TRIBUNE**

**Chicago Tribune**

12-22-04 Daily Herald

## County's rural areas growing at even pace

By PATRICK WALDRON  
*Daily Herald Staff Writer*

The number of homes being built in unincorporated parts of Kane County throughout the last decade has remained fairly constant; county development department statistics show.

"The most amazing thing to me is how flat the line really is," said Phil Bus, the county's development director. "It's been steady."

Since 1995, the county has issued permits for 5,036 homes, classified as single-family homes for record-keeping purposes. Those figures do not include any apartments or townhouses, which are categorized as multi-family residences.

During that time the average has been 504 home permits per

year. Building peaked in 1999 with 584 homes built in unincorporated areas, which officials have repeatedly said historically represents roughly 10 percent of the residential development in the county.

The numbers are not broken down by township or development, but Bus said most of the county's home permits have gone to large developments such as Fox Mill and Mill Creek.

By comparison, building departments across the entire county issued a total of 4,807 single-family home permits in 2003, according to statistics kept by the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission. That number has risen steadily since 1997, when 3,233 permits were issued.

Bus focused on the unincor-

porated area's consistency to make a contrast with various Kane County cities and villages that have experienced a drop-off or spike in residential building. In the last decade, for example, Elgin's permit statistics for single-family homes have ranged from a low of 126 in 2001 to 428 in 1998.

Looking to future growth, Bus said the development department likely will create a new multi-family building permit category to track the number of permits issued for townhouses and apartments.

The proposed Settlements of La Fox subdivision, the newest version of the old Grand Prairie proposal, could bring hundreds of townhouses or duplexes to unincorporated Kane County by itself.

# Batavia OKs Prairie Commons subdivision

By GRANT MILLER  
Shaw News Service

BATAVIA — City officials have agreed to annex 56 acres for an east-side townhouse and commercial development.

And the development likely will represent the last residential growth on the city's far east side.

Plans for the Prairie Commons development began in 1999 but finally were approved unanimously Monday night.

Many city officials appeared pleased to finally be done with the annexation agreement.

Mayor Jeff Schielke said the

agreement was worth the wait.

"It's been very strongly considered for many years,"

Schielke said. "I don't think any-

one can say we just flew by this one."

Monday's decision allows developers to build 242 town-

houses on the property and to use 20 acres for re-

tail development. The property

also will have a detention pond

and a water tower.

The subdivision likely will be one of the last large, new residential developments on

Batavia's east side. It will be

built on the east side of Kirk Road across from Wind Energy Pass, which will be extended across Kirk Road to the development.

Schielke said remaining undeveloped, residentially zoned areas are considerably smaller than the Prairie Commons project. He said the townhouses will vary Batavia's housing market and estimated that the property's location would attract buyers.

"We're kind of closing the

door on residential development on the east side," Schielke said.

Fifth Ward Alderman Ron Brown said the retail development will help the east side immeasurably. He noted that the plan has changed considerably since 1999.

"This was a totally different project — apartments," Brown said.

Developers will need further approval from the city for final plans on the residential development. Another public hearing and additional city review will be needed for the retail area.



**Schielke**

# Batavia Park District to buy playground equipment

*1222-001 Chronicle*

By ERIC SCHELKOPF  
Kane County Chronicle

**BATAVIA** — Children in the Mill Creek subdivision could have a new park to play in by this summer.

Batavia Park District commissioners on Tuesday approved purchasing \$24,957 in playground equipment from Missouri-based Miracle Recreation

Equipment Co. and a \$6,205 shelter from Michigan-based Porter Corp.

Commissioners also voted to seek bidders for development of the 2½-acre park, which would front Mallory Drive. Planning and Development Director Jim Eby said the park could be ready for use by late July or early August.

"It could be ready sooner if the weather is good," Eby said. "This is the

first park we are doing in Mill Creek. There are a high concentration of youngsters in the subdivision."

Geneva Park District also has built parks in Mill Creek, Eby said.

The playground equipment would consist of a swing set, a small play area for children ages 2 to 5, a larger play area for youngsters ages 5 to 12 years old, a see-saw toy and a mini merry-go-round.

Mill Creek residents chose that playground after looking at equipment offered by eight manufacturers.

"They chose this particular playground design. They liked the different play events," Eby said.

In other business, Batavia Depot Museum Director Carla Hill received a recognition award from Batavia Community Chest/United Way.

# Cemetery planned near <sup>12-22-04</sup> Elburn <sup>Daily Herald</sup>

*Rockford Diocese  
scopes out 43 acres*

BY AUBREY TRIPLETT

*Daily Herald Correspondent*

The Rockford Diocese plans to build a cemetery on 43 acres just south of Elburn.

The plans were brought up at an Elburn village board meeting this week and will be previewed by the planning commission at a future meeting.

The cemetery, which has been temporarily named Rosary Cemetery, would be near the northeast corner of Route 47 and Kenmar Drive in unincorporated Elburn.

Carol Giambalvo, director of cemeteries for the diocese, said the cemetery plots will be open to any Catholic in the diocese.

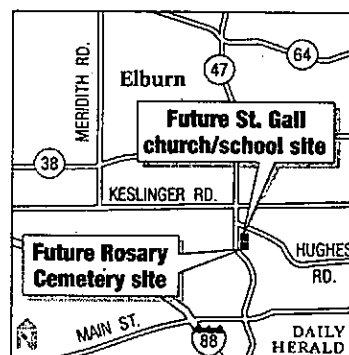
"We're creating this because we have a need for cemetery space in the east," Giambalvo said. "We have a cemetery in Elgin and one in Aurora that are almost full. We have this property and want to offer Catholic burial."

Village Administrator Dave Morrison said the town has 45 days to comment on the plan while Kane County's Zoning Board decides on a special use permit for the land.

Village Trustee Bill Grabarek said the planning commission needs to look at the overall picture.

"They need to figure out how consistent this is with our plan for Route 47," Grabarek said.

The cemetery will be adjacent to 31 acres of land owned by St. Gall Catholic Church of Elburn, which is not scheduled to begin



## Cemetery: Theme to be based on rosary

*Continued from Page 1*

development for at least another five years. The St. Gall land is for a church and school.

Cemetery plans include an office and chapel, burial gardens and an access road off of Route 47. A private residence located at the southwest corner of the lot will remain there.

Giambalvo said the cemetery will go before the zoning board in January and plans have already been drawn up. If the plans are approved by the county and Elburn, landscaping will begin in the summer.

The theme of the development will be based on the rosary, with the burial gardens and cremation named after the mysteries of the rosary.

See CEMETERY on PAGE 10

12-22-04 Beacon News

# New board chairman seeks tighter accountability

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — Karen McConaughay has taken over the reins of Kane County government at a time when the county is facing a growing population with shrinking resources.

That is the main motivation behind two sweeping changes in organization McConaughay, R-St. Charles, announced in her first week as County Board chairman.

McConaughay confirmed the changes Tuesday, saying she has created a new executive position overseeing development issues and appointed another county employee

to examine strategic planning.

McConaughay said she appointed Development Department Executive Director Phil Bus to oversee both development and the Transportation Division. In doing that, she also has drawn the water resources and environmental divisions, which have been functioning as their own departments, into development, which means Bus will oversee them, too.

She also appointed Maureen Anderson, Environmental Services administrative director, to coordinate a massive strategic-planning project that will examine departments and elected offices within county government. McConaughay said she

also will recommend hiring a facilitator to work on the project.

The most immediate change will be Bus' promotion and the reorganization of the county's land-use, transportation and resources departments.

McConaughay said the move will link up departments and give the county a better way to communicate with municipalities its beliefs on how to handle growth.

"It's continuity of effort," McConaughay said. "We have to start by being on the same page ourselves. Then, we will be better prepared to bring our message to the municipalities." Bus said that about 60 percent of the county's land is un-

incorporated, but that will decrease to between 50 and 45 percent in the next 10 to 15 years.

"So the ability of the county to affect its policies on transportation, land-use and resource management becomes more important," he said.

"The county is facing its most challenging period of growth ever, not just numerical, but in the changing nature of the population."

McConaughay also said she wants more oversight in transportation to help increase the county's share of state funding.

She pointed out that the fall legislative session in Springfield ended with Kane County ranked between 20th or 30th among counties for

funding from the Illinois Department of Transportation, even though the county is the third or fourth largest in the state.

Meanwhile, the strategic planning project will look at four major things: services the county is mandated to do versus the optional ones; the amount of service that will be needed in five, 10 and 15 years; the amount of workers that will be needed to do those services; and the money the county will need to do them.

McConaughay said every department and all the elected offices will be examined. She said it most likely will take at least a year, after which the County Board will have to set priorities.

"You must have your act together to achieve your objectives," McConaughay said.

"Absolutely, there is blame to go

# Golf tourney could bring \$30M to Sugar Grove

12-22-04 Chronicle

## Rich Harvest Farms to host Solheim Cup

By KELLEY CASINO  
and BRIAN SCHAUMBURG  
Kane County Chronicle

**SUGAR GROVE** — The 2009 Solheim Cup will put the growing village on the map nationally and internationally.

American and European women golf professionals will descend upon Rich Harvest Farms in fall 2009 for the three-day competition. Nearly 100,000 spectators are expected to follow.

The event is expected to generate about \$30 million for the local economy and will force village officials to begin thinking about hotels, restaurants and retail space for the village, Village President Sean Michels said.

"It's like the Olympics," he said. "I'll give us plenty of time to build the venues for it."

The LPGA on Tuesday said Rich Harvest Farms, off Dugan Road and Route 30, would host the 2009 event.

The Solheim Cup is the women's golf equivalent to the men's Ryder Cup. The matches are played biennially, usually in September, and pit a team of U.S.-born players against a team of European-born players.

Locally, the tournament will be more about crowd management and economic impact than birdies and bogeys.

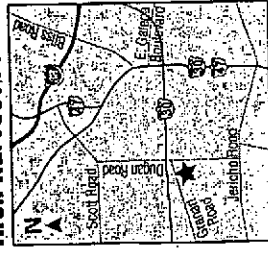
Sugar Grove Police Chief Brad Sauer said he has no idea what to expect from the competition or the anticipated crowds and hopes to attend the 2005 competition in suburban Indianapolis for a few days to get a feel for it.

"I hope to get over there and see what they're doing and see what this is going to entail," he said. "It's also five years away. We've got a little time to find out where we're coming from."

Michels said he anticipates that a hotel will be built by then, as well as enough retail and restaurants to accommodate the anticipated visitors.

See SOLHEIM, page 2

### Rich Harvest Farms



Chronicle graphic by Anne Rao

## Solheim

Continued from page 1

He said the village will work closely with the Aurora Tourism Council, neighboring towns and Kane County to host the event.

"That will be a good time to showcase Sugar Grove with the growth we're seeing and the development that's coming," he said.

It also will showcase what might be the area's most exclusive golf course.

Rich Harvest Farms was built in 1989 by Jerry Rich, who designed and owns the course. Golf Digest magazine in 1999 named the course the fifth-best private course in the United States.

In 2003, Rich Harvest Farms debuted in Golf Digest's Top 100 American Golf Courses.

"It's a fantastic facility and one of the best golf courses I have ever played," said Beth Daniel, a LPGA Tour Hall of Famer and seven-time member of the

U.S. Solheim Cup team. "The players are the finest from the United States and Europe, and this course will challenge them to bring their best game."

The course, which also features two driving ranges, plays between 6,334 to 7,600 yards, depending on the location of tee boxes. It will play closer to the 6,334 for the Solheim Cup.

"I am more than pleased that the LPGA has chosen Rich Harvest Farms to host the 2009 Solheim Cup," Rich said. "Players and staff alike will experience one-of-a-kind hospitality and accommodations during their stay and will equally enjoy playing, what I think, is one of the best and most pristine new courses in the nation."

The 2009 event will mark the 11th time the tournament has been played. The 2005 Solheim Cup is scheduled to be played Sept. 9-11 at Crooked Stick Golf Club in Carmel, Ind. The 2007 event will be played in Sweden.

The United States leads the Europeans 5-3 and has never lost when the competition has been played on U.S. soil. Europe won the 2003 Solheim Cup with a 17½-10½ victory in Sweden.

Each team for the competition consists of 12 players.

The U.S. team is selected over a two-year qualifying period with players earning points for wins and top-20 finishes.

The top 10 players make the team. The captain selects the final two players. The European team is selected by taking the top seven players on the Ladies European Tour points standings and five captain selections.

The LPGA Tour had an event at Stonebridge Country Club in Aurora the last three years. The LPGA was unable to find a new sponsor after Kellogg-Keeler did not renew its sponsorship agreement, leaving the Chicago area without an LPGA event for 2005.

12-22-04 Daily Herald

F3

# Sugar Grove golf course gets LPGA tournament

BY LESLIE HAGUE  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

 [Links](http://dailyherald.com/ez)  
dailyherald.com/ez

Bookmark our Web  
page for hyperlinks  
to more information  
**Solheim Cup**

the top American golfers against  
the top Europeans, will be held at  
Rich Harvest Farms, a private club  
owned by Jerry Rich, in the fall of  
2009.

One of the most prestigious  
events in women's professional golf  
will come to Sugar Grove in 2009.  
The Solheim Cup, the LPGA's  
equivalent of the Ryder Cup pitting

Harvest Farms.  
Alcala said organizers have been  
working to get the competition for  
about 3½ years. About half of the  
profits from the event will go to the  
foundation, which teaches children  
about golf and sportsmanship, and  
other charities, she said.

"We're thrilled with the news,"  
said Holly Alcala, program director  
for the Hook A Kid on Golf Founda-  
tion of Illinois, based at Rich

"We're operating in break-even  
mode," said Dan DeBruycker, gen-  
eral manager of Rich Harvest  
Farms.

Organizers put together a book  
and video of information about a

See **TOURNAMENT** on **PAGE 11**



# Tournament: Event could bring others to the area

Continued from Page 1

year ago on the golf course and the area that included area mayors, hotels, restaurants, visitors bureaus and potential corporate sponsors saying they supported the idea and would help with its implementation.

"The whole community made it successful," DeBruycker said. Rich Harvest Farms had all the criteria the LPGA was looking for, plus a large base of community support — and part of the proceeds going to charity — said Chris Higgs, LPGA senior vice president and chief operations officer.

Rich designed the private course and uses it personally with about 50 associate members, but it is also used for charity events. Those who have played there said the facilities will amaze golf fans.

"It's a fabulous golf course," Higgs said. "It's a secret that we're about to let out."

Rich said he was confident the course would live up to expectations.

"The Solheim Cup and 2009 cannot get here soon enough," he said in a press release.

Some of the surrounding farmland that Rich owns will be converted to grassland for parking, DeBruycker said. Other than that, other changes would be minor or temporary, he said.

Alcala anticipated planning several special events for the community in the years leading up to the tournament to build up interest, support and volunteers.

"This is a major effort on our part and on the community's part," she said.

Sugar Grove Village President Sean Michels said the event could bring more tournaments or competitions to the area in the future.

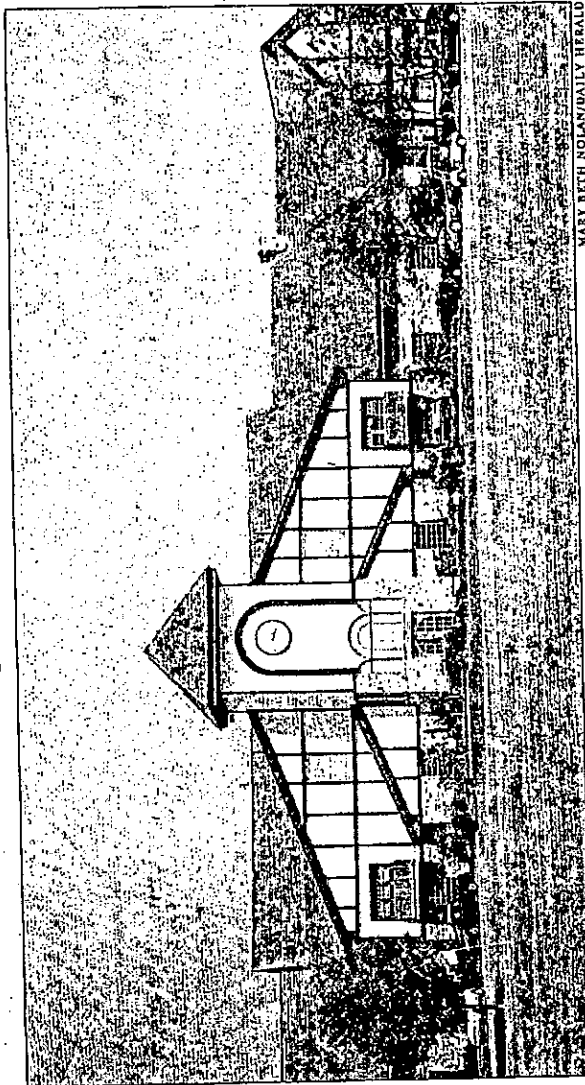
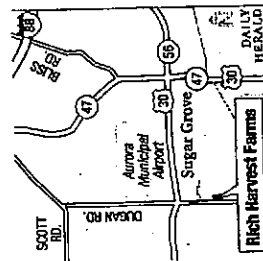
"It's real exciting to be put on the national and international stage," he said.

Several people involved with the planning said they are inter-

## Solheim Cup

- The first Cup competition was held in 1990 and it is played every two years.
- There are three days of match play competition where scoring is cumulative and based on a point system (one point for a win, half a point for a tie).
- The first two days of competition are team matches, and the third day is singles competition.
- The U.S. Team leads the competition 5-3, but the European team won the most recent competition in 2003.
- American women qualify for the team by gaining points in tournaments over a two-year period.
- European women qualify for the team by earning points in the Ladies European Tour.
- The 2005 event will be played from Sept. 9-11 in Carmel, Ind.
- The 2007 event will be played in Sweden.
- American women in the lead for the 2005 team are Cristie Kerr, Meg Mallon and Christina Kim.

Source: LPGA



The clubhouse of the golf course at Rich Harvest Farms, which will play host to the 2009 Solheim Cup. The event features some of the world's top female golfers.

ested in going to Carmel, Ind., next year to watch the 2005 Solheim Cup for research and ideas.

## Force him off

Mr. Van Cleave ran for the county board and said that he would resign from the school board if it was determined he could not serve both boards at the same time. Now he has gone back on his word. Not only has he gone back on his word, but he's saying "I will stay" and "I will join the citizens' facilities committee and I will do this." No person should be serving on a school board or a county board or double boards. It's not right. I understand that people want to give the idea that they are committed, and maybe Mr. Van Cleave is committed, but the fact of the matter is when a person seems to want to stay around and stay around and go back on his word, how can you trust him? If you can't trust him to do what he said he would do to begin with, how can you trust him to do what's right in the future?

# Public hearing set for shopping center

## Site is on Randall Road in North Aurora

By ERIC SCHELKOPF  
Kane County Chronicle

**NORTH AURORA** — Residents on Tuesday will have the chance to voice their opinions about a 600,000-square-foot shopping center being proposed for the village's west side.

Hoffman Estates-based Rubloff Development Group wants to build the North Aurora Towne Centre on 330 acres between the North Aurora Auto Mall and Randall Road.

A public hearing on the plans will be at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday during a plan commission meeting at North Aurora Village Hall, 25 E. State St. Target and Kohl's would an-

chor the center. Other stores committed to the project include TJ Maxx, Michaels Arts and Crafts, Pier 1 Imports, Famous Footwear and Petco Superstore. Wetlands make up 110 acres of the property.

Rubloff seeks village approval by January 2005 so the project can get under way by March or April. Village trustees will consider an annexation agreement for the development at a committee-of-the-whole meeting on Jan. 4.

"If this doesn't happen now, the land won't be developed as a shopping center," said Bob Brownson, one of the owners of Rubloff Development Group. "Without this development, the site will sit as a farm for the next 20 years."

To pave the way for the development, village officials are eyeing an amendment to the village's zoning ordinance that would allow for mixed-use developments.

More than 300 townhouses

could be built as part of the proposed development.

Plan commissioners recently reviewed a proposed amendment drafted by village attorney Kevin Drendel. The amendment would apply only to developments of at least 90 acres.

The amendment would limit what could be built. Drendel suggested that the underlying zoning should be the predominant use in any mixed-use planned unit development, and that the predominant use should be at least 51 percent of the net buildable area of the development.

Rubloff has not been able to find commercial tenants for about 65 acres of the property, part of the development's second phase.

However, Rubloff plans to continue to market the land commercially for about three more years. If it still does not get bites, it wants to build more than 300 townhouses that would sell for between \$150,000 and \$250,000.

Pizza & Pasta from the Old Neighborhood

12-23-04 Daily Herald

# County targets bureaucracy

*Kane planning chief given broad new role overseeing land, water and road issues*

By PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

In a move aimed at tightening coordination of Kane County's growth, the county's longtime development director has been given broad new powers to supervise planning for the county's land, water and roads.

As a sort of planning czar, Phil Bus, who has served as development director since 1982, becomes the head of the newly created transportation and development group, a designation that includes what was once four county departments.

"It all comes down to coordination," said county board Chairman Karen McConaughay, saying the move is meant to cut down internal and external bureaucracy. "We all have to be on the same page." Technically, the change doesn't combine existing departments.

Instead it places Bus at the top of a new reporting structure designed to bring the transportation division, the water resources department, the development and zoning department, and the environmental management department closer together.

"This is a recognition that the relationships between land use, transportation and resource management are important as we face the next 25 years of growth," Bus said.

For example, today when a developer comes in to build a new subdivision or industrial park, representatives from across the county must enter into the conversations.

The development department reviews the plans for building size and routine matters such as zoning. Development then works with the transportation division to determine where roads and entrances need to go.

The water resources and environmental management departments team up with everyone to focus on drainage regulations and the stress on drinking water.

Bus and McConaughay believe that in order for the county's 2030 Land Use Management Plan — which lays out a vision to keep half of the county as open space or agricultural and plots what should go where — to work, all the county's departments must be unified.

That cohesive strategy is the only way to work with municipalities and convince their leaders to follow the county policy, county officials said.

"If we are better coordinated in how we provide our resources we have a better chance of having them buy in," McConaughay said.

At the same time, McConaughay said, the move is

geared to add accountability to the county's transportation division. Bus has supervised all or pieces of this new planning group in the past, besides transportation.

McConaughay is concerned the transportation division in the recent past has been unable to push hard enough for state and federal funding for the millions of dollars worth of projects on its drawing board.

In his new capacity, Bus will have better opportunities to identify and lobby for key projects, McConaughay said.

This reorganization is the first major move of McConaughay's administration but may not be the last.

Over the next year to 18 months McConaughay plans to implement a comprehensive review of every county department.

# 12-26-04 Beacon News Elburn adopts impact fees to help Kaneland schools

By Linda Girardi

SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

ELBURN — The developers of the Blackberry Creek subdivision will be required to pay higher impact fees to the Kaneland School District.

The Elburn Village Board has adopted a revised fee table, which specifies how much the developer must pay and for what types of housing.

Mayor Jim Willey said the most significant change in the revised schedule is that it provides a floor and ceiling on fees.

For detached single-family dwellings, the floor will be \$1,500 and the ceiling will be \$6,000. For an attached single-family dwelling, the range will be \$500 and \$1,200.

In the resolution setting the new school impact fees, village trustees said "housing growth is causing significant cost to the School District and its taxpayers for new classrooms." The resolution further states that the district itself by law cannot impose impact fees on new housing developments.

Village Trustee William Grabarek, who served on Kaneland's citizens finance advisory committee, emphasized the impact fees could only be used for the construction of new schools and not to pay for the cost to operate the facilities.

"It will help soften the blow of building schools as the growth con-

tinues in municipalities across the school district," Grabarek.

"It will lessen but not eliminate the impact — we're continuing to build schools to educate the students coming in. People must realize the schools will be playing a constant catch-up game as the growth continues."

Willey said the municipal impact fees only address subdivisions within municipal corporate limits, and not in the unincorporated areas of Kane County where there are no impact fees.

"This in and of itself does not cover the whole growth dilemma, but it helps," Willey said.

The new fees go into effect Jan. 1.

In other action, the board approved the purchase of a new squad car to patrol the commuter parking lot for the Metra rail station, which is scheduled to open a year from now.

"I am told this may be the last local block grant available," Police Chief James Linane told the board.

The \$20,000 grant would require 10 percent as the village's share.

In addition to responding to lock-outs and vehicle-related calls at the Metra commuter lot, Linane said the vehicle also could be used for transporting evidence to the Rockford crime lab.

Metra plans to extend commuter rail service to Elburn by December 2005.

12-26-04 Beacon News

# Kane faces changes in housing market

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

**GENEVA** — Growth in the unincorporated part of Kane County has been just like the rest of the county — steady.

But in reviewing unincorporated building permits for the past 10 years, Phil Bus, Kane County Development Department director, said he is already looking at what happens in the next 10 years, when that steadiness could be shaken.

The county, in both the municipalities and unincorporated areas, is facing unprecedented growth in the next 10 years, a growth that not only will be big in numbers, but will be different demographically.

"We will see the challenge of housing diversity, to meet the demands of a changing population," he said.

Bus pointed out that three main trends in population across the nation have their sights set on Kane County.

- The graying of the baby boomers.
- The "browning" of the county, with more minorities, particularly Hispanics, moving to Kane.
- The coming of age of the so-called "echo boomers," the children of the baby boomers who are starting to buy homes, work full-time jobs and move up in the workplace.

Echo boomers are those born between 1982 and 1995. The oldest are barely out of college, and the youngest are still in grade school.

Also known as "Generation Y" or "millennials," they already make up nearly one-third of the U.S. population, and already spend \$170 billion a year of their own or their parents' money, according to CBS News.

Bus pointed out that all three of those differing populations will be looking for, and needing, different kinds of housing. Kane County's municipalities will meet some of those needs with changes in existing neighborhoods, and infill redevelopment.

Much of that will include more apartments, townhouses and other forms of multi-family housing, Bus said.

For the unincorporated part of Kane County, it could mean an end to the dominance of the single-family detached home, and more single-family attached and clustered housing.

"It's becoming more desirable to see a greater mix and diversity of housing," Bus said.

He pointed out that the two dominant subdivisions in unincorporated Kane during the past 10 years have been Fox Mill, west of St. Charles, and Mill Creek, west of Geneva.

Both have some smaller, attached homes, but are predominantly single-family developments.

But if the Settlements of LaFox comes in west of Geneva where the new LaFox train station is being built, it could feature more townhouses, Bus said. He also said a greater mix of housing affordability could be seen

in developments near Udina, proposed by Elgin, Elburn and Sugar Grove.

Kane development officials see the new housing changes as so important that they are going to use their yearly seminar, which the county sponsors each March for all government officials and staff members in Kane, to focus on housing during each of the next three years.

Bus said this year's seminar will feature speakers from Fannie Mae, the National Association of Homebuilders and the Brookings Institute, as well as some local Realtors.

Meanwhile, the numbers for the past 10 years show that unincorporated Kane County gained an average of 504 single-family homes each year. The biggest year was 1999, when 584 single-family permits were issued, and the slowest was the 419 issued in 1997.

"It reflects a steady stream of growth in the unincorporated areas," Bus said.

12-23-04 Chicago Tribune

# Kane starts new workshop series

## Housing 1st topic in land-plan effort

By William Presecky  
Tribune staff reporter

Housing that meets the needs of a changing population will be the focus of the first in a new series of Kane County land-planning workshops in March.

"The workshop will be devoted strictly to the challenge of housing," said county Development Department executive director Phil Bus.

Based on an analysis of housing permits issued in un-

incorporated Kane County between 1995 and 2000, Bus reported this week that traditional, single-family homes in unincorporated areas are being built at a pace of about 500 a year, or roughly 10 percent of all single-family home construction annually in the county, he said.

About 90 percent of all new housing in the county is being built in its municipalities, he said.

Some fast-growing municipalities show large annual increases over the 10-year period, but others, such as Geneva, show reduced permit activity, Bus said.

A variety of housing options

is critical to the county's long-term aim of directing half of all future development to the "urban corridor" along the Fox River.

The county's 2030 Land Resource Management plan advocates that half of all new population growth occur in the urban corridor.

The plan presumes that municipal decision-makers in the "critical growth area," which runs north to south through central Kane County, will respond to the challenges of reducing traffic congestion, maintaining a sustainable water supply and providing more diverse, affordable housing, Bus said.

The county concluded its "Making It Work" series of annual conferences, which began in 1999, with a workshop last year on where growth should be focused.

Over the years, various workshops considered planning issues such as stormwater management, water supply, transportation and "priority places" for growth.

Bus said it followed naturally that a new round of workshops should begin with housing.

The challenges facing the county are how and where to accommodate an estimated 300,000 new arrivals by 2030 while maintaining the coun-

ty's character.

Kane County, with a population of more than 400,000, grew by an average of about 5,000 people a year between 1970 and 2000, but the annual growth rate being projected through 2030 is double that, or about 10,000.

Bus said the March 22 workshop will feature a representative of the Brookings Institution, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank, and will include presentations on the Federal National Mortgage Co., or Fannie Mae, and by local real estate experts.

The conference is scheduled to be held at the Q Center in St. Charles, he said.



Tribune photo by Terry Harris

Sarah Muirhead-Petersdorf and John Petersdorf want to turn her grandparents' Wright-designed house into a bed and breakfast.

## '50s Wright house may get new use

### Kane County panel backs turning landmark into a bed and breakfast

By Rita Hoover  
Special to the Tribune

Growing up, Sarah Muirhead-Petersdorf took her grandparents' original Frank Lloyd Wright farmhouse across the street in Plato Center for granted.

But last fall, a decision about the fate of the house, designed and built in 1951 by the famed architect, had to be made and "all the pieces of the puzzle came together," she said.

She and her husband, John Petersdorf, an Elgin native, are working to turn the six-bedroom home into a bed and breakfast, planning to preserve its historic significance while honoring their family heritage as well, they said.

Their plans passed yet another hurdle Tuesday with approval by the Kane County Development Committee. If the Kane County Board gives its approval at a Jan. 11 meeting and renovations are completed, the inn could open in summer.

The family sold about 500 acres of surrounding farmland last year to the Kane County Forest Preserve District, which plans to restore the area to a tallgrass prairie, said Scott Berger, of the Development Department staff. The home is an example of Wright's Usonian style of architecture.

"This is a type of house that Wright developed late in his career," Berger said, as building trends headed toward efficiency and affordability. "This was more of an effort to design for the middle class."

Berger is preparing to nominate the building for the National Register of Historic Places and said research indicates this may be Wright's only

farmhouse.

Wright's Usonian designs, of which about 35 are known, featured flat roofs and natural wood siding, which has a tendency to deteriorate over time in the Midwestern climate. Muirhead-Petersdorf and her husband have had to make many repairs and are converting two of the six bedrooms into bathrooms.

She said her grandfather's

*The house is an example of Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian style of architecture. Research indicates this may be Wright's only farmhouse.*

interest in engineering and architecture led him to visit Wright's home Taliesin in Wisconsin, while waiting for a consultation with a local architect about building a larger house for his growing family.

On that visit, her grandfather was approached by one of Wright's assistants, who asked if he'd like to meet with the architect in person. "What will that take?" her grandfather asked. "About 10 minutes," was the unexpected reply, she said.

Her grandparents' house felt "overwhelming" when she was a child, Muirhead-Petersdorf said. "It's a very long house; it just has hallways that go on and on. My 6-year-old son calls it the maze house."

The layout was put to good use. "My grandmother used to walk lengths of the house for indoor exercise in the winter," Muirhead-Petersdorf said.

## Results stand in 43rd District

By CHRISTOPHER NELSON  
Kane County Chronicle

GENEVA — A recount Wednesday of the Kane County ballots for the 43rd District seat in the state House, will not change the outcome.

State Rep. Ruth Munson, R-Elgin, was the winner and will retain the seat she won Nov. 2.

Michael Noland, the Democrat and Elgin lawyer who challenged her, said that even if the results were changed to favor him in Kane County, Munson's 362-vote margin in Cook County likely would not be surpassed.

He said he simply was looking at the 25-vote margin in Kane County and hoped to find enough discrepancies to give him a victory in Kane County.

"Hollering rights in Kane County," Noland said. "The Democratic Party is the growth party, and people can count on Democrats winning in the future."

The final count in Kane County, according to Joan Rennie, the chief deputy to Kane County Clerk Jack Cunningham, was 9,695 votes for Munson and 9,670 votes for Noland, a difference of 25 votes.

"Nothing has changed," Rennie said. "The results stand."

Noland did not challenge the vote in Cook County, where the margin was much higher: 2,991 votes for Munson and 2,629 votes for Noland.

The 43rd District covers Elgin and part of South Elgin in Kane County and far northeast Cook County.

Munson said she did not object to Noland's challenge.

"The process is there to answer questions, and it's a good process," she said.

The ballots were run through tabulating equipment, and then inspected for the initials of the election judges. Each ballot must be initialed by a judge, Rennie said.

Provisional ballots also were counted Wednesday.

Noland said he did not trust the results from the Kane County clerk's office.

"It's a terrible counting system," he said. "When you take the ballots from a precinct to a central counting area, there are possibilities for problems. We need a new system."



Munson

# New County Board chairman sworn in

By Eric Walter  
Staff writer

Taking on the challenge of being Kane County Board chairman is something Karen McConaughay has been looking forward to. It is also something she had not thought about when she first entered the political arena almost a decade and a half ago.

"I first walked through these doors (into the County Board room) 14 years ago as a community activist. I never dreamed that I'd be here as County Board chairman," said the Republican from St. Charles, who was sworn in Dec. 20.

McConaughay succeeds Aurora Republican Mike McCoy, who did not seek re-election. She defeated St. Charles Democrat Thomas Meadath for the chairman seat in the Nov. 2 general election.

McConaughay is looking forward to the challenges facing her and the county in the coming years. But she is no stranger to taking on challenges, something she dealt with during the 12 years she served as the County Board member from District 14.

"As we look forward ... I'm very excited to get started on strategic planning ... so we can handle the growth that's heading our way," she said.

McConaughay thanked supporters from the community, but added a special thank you to her family, who helped with her political career.

"I think she's going to be a good chairman," said her husband, John. "She's always been good at it."

McConaughay's daughter, Kate, said it was "really exciting" to see her mother sworn into the county's executive office.

John McConaughay said Karen's job will demand more of her time, but the family is prepared to deal with that.

"She's been a board member, which is a part-time job, but this is full time," he said.

Community support showed through the



New Kane County Board chairman Karen McConaughay, a Republican from St. Charles, addresses the crowd after she was sworn in at the Kane County Government Center in Geneva Dec. 20. McConaughay credited support from her family and the community to her winning election to the county's executive post last month.

Staff photo by Steve Bittinger

board chairman is sworn in to the third Monday in December.

The amendment also forced the delay in committee assignments for the entire County Board, since the chairman makes the appointments. The County Board met late Dec. 20 to discuss the appointments. Results were not known as of press time.

amended the Counties Code in the Illinois Compiled Statutes in July.

During the past eight years, the county constitutional officers were sworn in on the Dec. 1 following their election, and board members and the chairman were sworn in the first Monday in December. But the state Legislature changed the date that a county

standing-room only crowd who attended her inauguration. County Board member Jan Carlson, an Elburn Republican, joked about how the attendance at McConaughay's ceremony was higher than when the board members were sworn in Dec. 6.

"You see who's got all the clout," he said.

St. Charles Mayor Sue Klinkhamer said she looks forward to working with McConaughay even more than during her tenure as a County Board member.

"We've been very well-treated working with the county, but to be able to work with her on a leadership basis is (even better)," she said.

McConaughay's inauguration took place two weeks after 13 of the 26 County Board members were sworn into their respective offices after the state Legislature



12-26-04 Beacon news

# Willey says water, rails top goals for Elburn

By Linda Girardi

SPECIAL TO THE BEACON NEWS

ELBURN — An inscription on the mayor's desk reveals the truth of public office.

*Nullum Bonum Factum Erit Impunitum* — No good deed goes unpunished.

Whatever you do, you're going to draw criticism, Mayor Jim Willey says of his eight years as mayor of Elburn. Elected in 1997, Willey recently announced he will seek reelection in April 5.

While Willey cannot claim Elburn as his boyhood hometown, he is not far from his roots.

"Elburn today reminds me of the Batavia I grew up in. I feel it is 'deja vu' all over again," he said, adding he remembers when his hometown had a population of 6,000.

"I feel that affinity to that kind of community."

Serving as mayor has become a part of Willey.

"It's not a drudgery to me. I enjoy the job and want this to be a great community for everyone," he said.

With a checklist of accomplished goals from the 2001 campaign, Willey can speak with confidence of his record.

"Did we actually complete the tasks we set out to accomplish? I think people can judge us and say yes, we did."

A turning point came when Elburn agreed to leave the door open for commuter rail service to return to the village, and successfully negotiated with Metra.

"The residents were ready," Willey said.

"There was a window of opportunity for Metra to capture federal funding and make it happen. If the village changed plans, Metra would have gone west of town."

This year the Elburn Village Board also chose to re-examine its approach to complying with federal Environmental Protection Agency standards mandating communities to remove trace levels of radium from drinking water supplies.

Willey credits village trustees for being receptive to another solution, brought in by Water Remediation Technology, that will result in a water rate increase of 17.5 percent, far lower than with other methods.

"We changed horses midstream," Willey said.

"There will be significant savings to our taxpayers."

Combined with a \$500,000 grant through U.S. House Speaker Dennis Hastert's office and money set aside to address the EPA mandate, Willey said the village will not be required to borrow funds for the technology.

In addition to saving the village an estimated \$3 million to \$11 mil-

lion compared with other alternatives, Willey said the radium-water treatment method is also more responsible to the environment.

"We're on the cusp of towns now realizing they have two problems, in having to treat the water and sludge. We have been proactive and willing to consider new technologies," he said.

On growth, Elburn this year was selected by the Urban Land Institute to host a "campaign for sensible growth" technical assistance program stretched over the course of several days.

"They had ideas for us, but also reinforced that we are doing a good job," Willey said of the Urban Land Institute.

Willey said Village Board is committed to making sure growth does pay its own way and is not subsidized by current residents.

"It's a constant challenge of adjusting impact fees — we do want to work with the school, library and fire protection districts to implement the model needed to cover the cost of their growth."

"With each annexation agreement, we get better," he said.

In the time Willey has been mayor, Elburn has passed two annexation agreements involving housing units — Williams Ridge and Blackberry Creek, and the mayor points out neither are fully built out.

"We're still controlling the growth," he said.

On the subject of restoring the community's faith in the Elburn Police Department, Willey said, "I can't say enough for how much Chief Jim Linane has done for our police department. He's taken it to a completely new level of professionalism."

On taxes, the village's tax rate has consistently dropped since the state tax cap and since Willey began serving as a village trustee in 1995, the level fell from \$1.20 per \$100 of assessed valuation to 50 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation.

"More people are putting in fewer dollars to create our tax levy," Willey said.

Willey said his primary goals for 2004-2005 include seeing through to the finish the village's plan to eliminate trace levels of radium from the water supply, the arrival of Metra in December 2005 and establishing a railroad quiet zone, as well as securing federal funding to make the Anderson Road overpass a reality.

"I want to finish these projects," Willey said.

"I want to get the radium out of the water and get passengers on a train going to Chicago and stop the train whistles — those are the cornerstones."



Mayor Jim Willey will run for re-election.

# Willey voices frustrations about Sugar Grove

12-26-04 Chronicle

Elburn village president uses Web log to talk about growth, border agreement talks

By KELLEY CASINO  
Kane County Chronicle

Boundary disagreements between officials from Elburn and Sugar Grove are stirring up heat relative to how the two villages approach growth.

Sugar Grove's alleged "go-get-'em" attitude when it comes to development has Elburn Village President Jim Willey

feeling as if Sugar Grove is exploiting its smaller, more conservative neighbor to the north.

After a boundary agreement meeting with Sugar Grove officials a few weeks ago, Willey posted two Web logs linked to Elburn's Web site expressing his disapproval of Sugar Grove's tactics.

"In Elburn, the topic of growth is

painful," he wrote in the first log. "We're trying every tactic we can think of to 'keep a lid' on the growth coming to Elburn."

In a second log, he continued his argument.

"The Sugar Grove officials I talked to last week perceive Elburn's desire to control growth as a weakness for Sugar Grove to exploit. They say they are 'not afraid' of Elburn, and that they don't think Elburn has the ability or the



Willey

## On the Net

• To read Willey's Web logs, visit [www.elburn.il.us/mayorsblog.html](http://www.elburn.il.us/mayorsblog.html)

'desire' to counter their plans to cross the I-88 tollway."

Willey said he posted his comments to express his frustration with the boundary agreement meetings and the villages' opposing philosophies.

Willey said the views are his and not necessarily those of other village officials.

See WILLEY, page 2

## Willey

Continued from page 1

"They (Sugar Grove leaders) don't see anything to be gained (by the boundary agreement) and they want to keep their options open, and they basically want to take advantage of Elburn, maybe there should be a blog or two about this," Willey said.

"I look at it as one man's opinion in cyberspace."

The latest boundary proposal by Sugar Grove would draw the boundary line at Main Street as opposed to just north of Interstate 88.

Willey said Elburn's offer to let Sugar Grove have all four corners of the tollway was a "magnanimous" offer. He added that Sugar Grove's latest proposal to Main Street was "a little tough to take" and just another example of Sugar Grove's desire to take advantage of Elburn, which plans to grow more slowly.

Sugar Grove Village President Sean Michels said the village and Fox Metro Water Reclamation District have been approached by developers that would take the village farther north than the tollway.

Sugar Grove Village Administrator Brent Eichelberger said even if there is a boundary line, it does not mean the village

will grow right up to it.

"We're not growth-mongers," Michels said in response to Willey's logs. "We think we do development right, and we're preparing for the next 25 years. I think we're realists."

Michels said Sugar Grove's way is not the only way to operate, but added that he has not heard a good argument on why to stop development if it is coming.

Between 600 and 900 building permits per year could be approved in Sugar Grove, Eichelberger said, adding that the number and the developments are closely monitored by the board.

"Yes, Sugar Grove has been growing, but Sugar Grove is not growing out of control," he said. "The board is very deliberate and thoroughly reviews every development and subdivision."

The philosophical differences between the two villages would not matter, Willey said, if the two did not reside in the same school district — Kaneland.

Willey wrote that Sugar Grove officials refuse to take responsibility for their growth, which puts pressure on the school system. Both villages recently approved the updated school impact fee schedule proposed by Kane-

"I think we've been responsible with the school district," Eichelberger said. "As far as I know, we were the first to pass the new impact fee table, and as far as I know, we're the only ones looking at a transition fee."

"We've been taking the lead with the fees, and we'll continue to."

Willey admitted that he does not expect Sugar Grove officials to listen to his beliefs about growth or to follow Elburn's example. He did write, however, that he believes that the political will of Sugar Grove residents could turn things around.

"We've got to do better; we can't just leave our kids subdivisions and traffic jams and crowded schools with no sports," Willey said. "And we have to be able to think regionally and not as much about our own little fiefdoms; it's got to be bigger than just what Sugar Grove wants."

AL CAPONE'S  
HIDEAWAY &  
STEAKHOUSE

NEW YEARS EVE  
CAPONE STYLE

HUGE STEAKS • FULL SIZE COCKTAILS  
ROARING 20'S CIGARS  
AND FEATURING...

# Final turns for the land

BY PATRICK WALDRON  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Kane County leaders are rushing to secure the final pieces of property needed to clear the way for a massive road construction project that effectively will double the size of the Randall Road-Route 64 intersection in St. Charles.

"We are into the home stretch," said county board Chairman Karen McConaughay after a 90-minute closed-door meeting Thursday with county transportation officials negotiating final land deals.

For years, Kane County and Illinois Department of Transportation representatives have been working to buy up land along Randall Road and Route 64 needed for new turn lanes at the intersection, which handles more than 44,000 vehicles per day.

The \$22 million joint state and

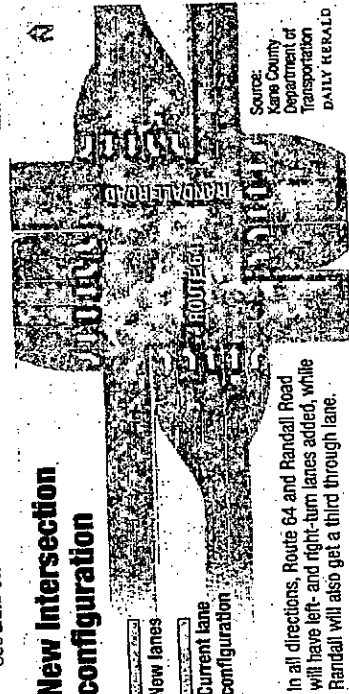
See LAND on PAGE 7

## New Intersection configuration

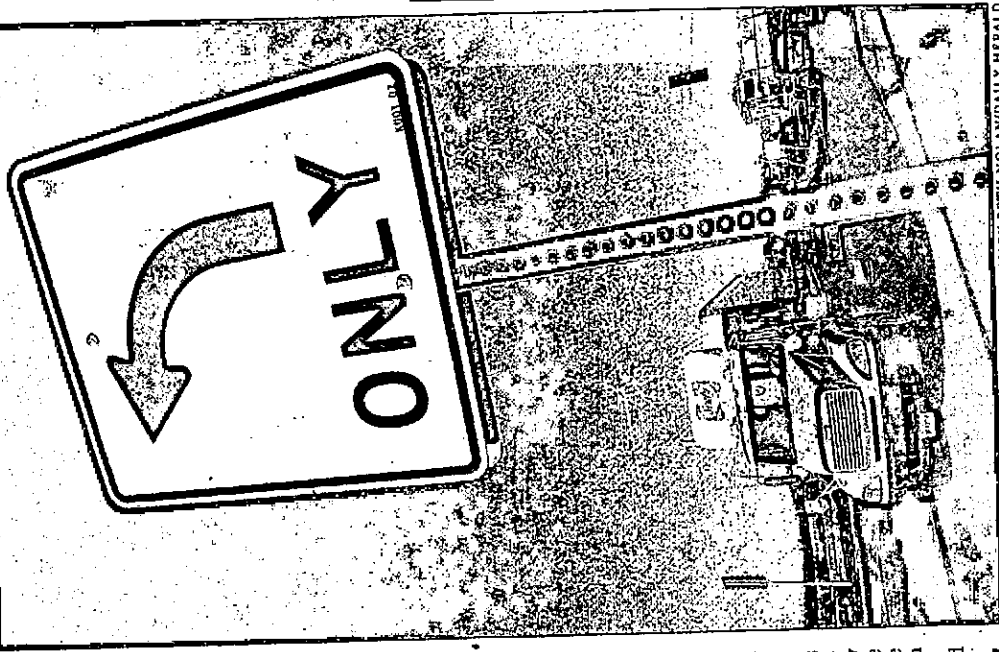
**In short:** The county is facing a late-January deadline imposed by the state to buy up the last pieces of land needed to expand a busy St. Charles intersection.

**New lanes**  
Current lane configuration

In all directions, Route 64 and Randall Road will have left- and right-turn lanes added, while Randall will also get a third through lane.



Source: Kane County Department of Transportation  
DAILY HERALD



MARY BETH NOLAN/DAILY HERALD

The intersection of Randall Road and Route 64 in St. Charles handles more than 44,000 vehicles per day, so transportation officials have been wanting to add turn lanes there for years.

## Land: State aims to start seeking bids in March

Continued from Page 1

"I just wish it was over," Sipos said.

Fox River Tire has since moved a few blocks to the east. The Amoco gas station to the south, owned by petroleum giant BP, also is on the state's list, but the status of those talks was unknown Thursday.

BP officials could not be reached for comment Thursday. IDOT spokesman Matt Vanover could not provide specifics but said negotiations are ongoing.

Kane County Transportation Director Paul Rogowski said the January cutoff date is in place so the county can take the project out to bid by March. If that happens on time, the work, which would last two full construction seasons, can start around May 1, he said.

If the land deals as well as the promised state funding come through, the overhaul will create an intersection with dual left-turn lanes in all directions, single right-turn lanes in all directions and a third through lane on Randall Road stretching from Oak Street to Dean Street.

Sipos said he and the state have been talking for more than a year, but a sale has not been finalized and it all could be headed toward eminent domain proceedings.

# Willey voices frustrations about Sugar Grove

12-26-04 Chronicle

## Elburn village president uses Web log to talk about growth, border agreement talks

By KELLEY CASINO  
Kane County Chronicle

Boundary disagreements between officials from Elburn and Sugar Grove are stirring up heat relative to how the two villages approach growth.

Sugar Grove's alleged "go-get-'em" attitude when it comes to development has Elburn Village President Jim Willey

feeling as if Sugar Grove is exploiting its smaller, more conservative neighbor to the north.

After a boundary agreement meeting with Sugar Grove officials a few weeks ago, Willey posted two Web logs linked to Elburn's Web site expressing his disapproval of Sugar Grove's tactics.

"In Elburn, the topic of growth is

painful," he wrote in the first log. "We're trying every tactic we can think of to 'keep a lid' on the growth coming to Elburn."

In a second log, he continued his argument.

"The Sugar Grove officials I talked to last week perceive Elburn's desire to control growth a weakness for Sugar Grove to exploit. They say they are 'not afraid' of Elburn, and that they don't think Elburn has the 'ability or the



Willey

### On the Net

• To read Willey's Web logs, visit [www.elburn.il.us/mayorsblog.html](http://www.elburn.il.us/mayorsblog.html)

desire' to counter their plans to cross the I-88 tollway."

Willey said he posted his comments to express his frustration with the boundary agreement meetings and the villages' opposing philosophies.

Willey said the views are his and not necessarily those of other village officials.

See WILLEY, page 2

## Willey

Continued from page 1

"They (Sugar Grove leaders) don't see anything to be gained (by the boundary agreement) and they want to keep their options open, and they basically want to take advantage of Elburn, maybe there should be a blog or two about this," Willey said.

"I look at it as one man's opinion in cyberspace."

The latest boundary proposal by Sugar Grove would draw the boundary line at Main Street as opposed to just north of Interstate 88.

Willey said Elburn's offer to let Sugar Grove have all four corners of the tollway was a "magnanimous" offer. He added that Sugar Grove's latest proposal to Main Street was "a little tough to take" and just another example of Sugar Grove's desire to take advantage of Elburn, which plans to grow more slowly.

Sugar Grove Village President Sean Michels said the village and Fox Metro Water Reclamation District have been approached by developers that would take the village farther north than the tollway.

Sugar Grove Village Administrator Brent Eichelberger said even if there is a boundary line, it does not mean the village

will grow right up to it.

"We're not growth-monsters," Michels said in response to Willey's logs. "We think we do development right, and we're preparing for the next 25 years. I think we're realists."

Michels said Sugar Grove's way is not the only way to operate, but added that he has not heard a good argument on why to stop development if it is coming.

Between 600 and 900 building permits per year could be approved in Sugar Grove, Eichelberger said, adding that the number and the developments are closely monitored by the board.

"Yes, Sugar Grove has been growing, but Sugar Grove is not growing out of control," he said. "The board is very deliberate and thoroughly reviews every development and subdivision."

The philosophical differences between the two villages would not matter, Willey said, if the two did not reside in the same school district — Kaneland.

Willey wrote that Sugar Grove officials refuse to take responsibility for their growth, which puts pressure on the school system. Both villages recently approved the updated school impact fee schedule proposed by Kaneland officials.

"I think we've been responsible with the school district," Eichelberger said. "As far as I know, we were the first to pass the new impact fee table, and as far as I know, we're the only ones looking at a transition fee."

"We've been taking the lead with the fees, and we'll continue to."

Willey admitted that he does not expect Sugar Grove officials to listen to his beliefs about growth or to follow Elburn's example. He did write, however, that he believes that the political will of Sugar Grove residents could turn things around.

"We've got to do better; we can't just leave our kids subdivisions and traffic jams and crowded schools with no sports," Willey said. "And we have to be able to think regionally and not as much about our own little fiefdoms; it's got to be bigger than just what Sugar Grove wants."

**AL CAPONE'S  
HIDEAWAY &  
STEAKHOUSE**

CHICAGO

**NEW YEARS EVE  
CAPONE STYLE**

**HUGE STEAKS • FULL SIZE COCKTAILS  
ROARING 20'S CIGARS**

**AND FEATURING...**

# County looks to buy land on Route 64, Randall Road

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

The county wants to reach an agreement on a strip of land before a January deadline.

The Kane County Board Transportation Committee is in negotiations to acquire 2.5 acres on the northwest side of the Randall Road-Route 64 intersection.

The county wants to use the land for drainage and intersection improvements.

It is the last bit of land in an acquisition process that began approximately six years ago, said committee member Caryl Van Overmeiren, R-St. Charles. Committee members said they are trying to get plans finalized by Jan. 26, the deadline for receiving state funds.

"Most of these projects come in at 80 percent federal funds, 10 percent state and 10 percent county," Van Overmeiren said.

If an agreement is reached, the plot, which runs from Route 64 to the south and a set of train tracks to the north, would be the last of 12 plots to be acquired along the Randall corridor, county board Chairman Karen McConaughay said.

"We're into the home stretch," McConaughay said.

Much of the property along that stretch of road is or will be vacant, Van Overmeiren said, including a bus storage area for the St. Charles school district. The district is building a new bus barn on Peck Road.

"We just need the strip that goes along Randall Road," Van Overmeiren said.

Van Overmeiren said the county wants the land for traffic purposes and not to develop commercial space. The property behind the strip of land falls under St. Charles jurisdiction.

"Our goal is to move traffic as nicely as we can and still make the municipalities seem comfortable with their goals on it," she said.

McConaughay said the location of the project led to its importance.

"The Randall Road corridor is a very valuable corridor," McConaughay said.

No one on the committee would comment on the state of the negotiations, which the committee discussed Thursday in closed session.

"You don't like to show your hand," Van Overmeiren said.



Van Overmeiren

12-26-04  
Chronicle



Greg Rivara

## When the cold overtakes common sense

If you happen to be one of those brave souls who enjoy the bloodsport that is Dec. 26, at least take a moment to enjoy the hilarity of it all.

By that, I mean the new version of the mini-me.

With fashion trends going skimpier and skimpier, the low-rise jeans and skin-tight half-shirts apparently are the apparel that best defines the "in" crowd.

Certainly, the thin, leather jackets keep the body warm.

But I just had to laugh when I recently saw a shopper brave the cold. She quickly was tip-toeing down the sidewalk at Geneva Commons because the 4-inch heels on her boots prohibited a full gallop. She pulled her jacket's collar up about her ears, only exacerbating how much of her belly was exposed to the frigid air.

Her daughter, dressed the same way, matched her stride-for-stride.

Hospital officials cannot confirm that there has been an increase in frostbitten midsections this year.

Speaking of comical, we are in the midst of our annual review of our Sunday comics pages.

We are considering a couple of changes — some significant — which we plan to debut on Sunday, Jan. 2. That is why we need your feedback.

Let me know which comics you like, which you don't, and which you would like to see. Drop me an e-mail at [grivara@kcchronicle.com](mailto:grivara@kcchronicle.com) or at snail mail at 1000 Randall Road, Geneva, IL, 60134.

Even though we already have the best comics section in the Chicago area, we always are looking to improve.

Truthfully, the holidays are a time of reflection and expressing gratitude. And there still is time to honor that special someone who simply helps others because it is the right thing to do.

Nominations are due Jan. 3 for the third annual Hometown Heroes Awards, sponsored by the Fox River Chapter of the American Red Cross.

The awards will be announced at the Hometown Heroes Breakfast at 7:30 a.m. March 11 at Eagle Brook Country Club in Geneva.

In addition to a military hero, nomina-

tions are sought in the areas of medicine, community safety, community impact, youth good Samaritan, adult good Samaritan and education.

Nominees must live or work in Wayne, Elburn, Geneva, Kaneville, La Fox, Maple Park, St. Charles, South Elgin, Virgil, Wasco, Batavia or Mooseheart.

Nomination forms are available at the Fox River Chapter of the American Red Cross, 121 N. Second St., Suite G, St. Charles. Forms also can be submitted on the Internet at [www.redcross.org/il/foxriver/heroes](http://www.redcross.org/il/foxriver/heroes).

For information, call (630) 443-8844.

Speaking of public service, I'm still scratching my head on all of the hand-wringing about Tom Van Cleave.

Van Cleave has been a stalwart on the Batavia school board for 12 years, most recently serving a term as school board president. He also was just elected to the county board.

However, there are legal opinions out there based on misguided state laws that say serving both capacities creates some sort of a conflict of interest because there are more than 40,000 people in Kane County. Therefore, Van Cleave will not seek re-election to the school board.

Now, before the general rants against government begin, consider that Van Cleave is paid nothing for the school board work, so there cannot be any harumphs about double-dipping.

And exactly what conflict of interest exists? That someone with outstanding experience on a school board might be in a position to influence another taxing body about the hidden costs of growth?

If you need more reasons that such thinking is folly, consider that the state of Illinois does allow other elected, well-paid officials to simultaneously serve as a county board representative, such as township officials.

All Van Cleave wants to do is continue his track record of public service. How can that be bad?

Greg Rivara is the Kane County Chronicle managing editor and co-host of Kane County News and Views each Wednesday at noon at WBIG 1280 AM. He can be contacted directly at (630) 845-5355 or by e-mail at [grivara@kcchronicle.com](mailto:grivara@kcchronicle.com)

# 12-23-04 Campton residents to give Elgin a final fight

Group getting ready for meeting over annexation

BY LISA SMITH  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

It's crunch time for a group of Campton Township residents trying to stop a 940-home development from moving forward.

Residents near the proposed development on both sides of Corron Road between McDonald and Silver Glen roads are working the phones and knocking on doors inviting neighbors to stand in opposition to the proposal at a Jan. 18 public meeting.

"We're going to pack the place," said Jim Kopec, a member of the board of directors of the Preserve Campton group.

The place is Hemmens Cultural Center in Elgin, where Elgin's planning and development commission meeting was moved from Elgin city hall to accommodate the expected crowd.

It's the first public meeting on the annexation proposal filed by developer Residential Land Fund/Terrestris RLM for the Stony Creek development.

Preserve Campton, which now boasts 150 members who have paid \$25 dues, formed in response to the project. The group is encouraging residents to attend the upcoming meeting.

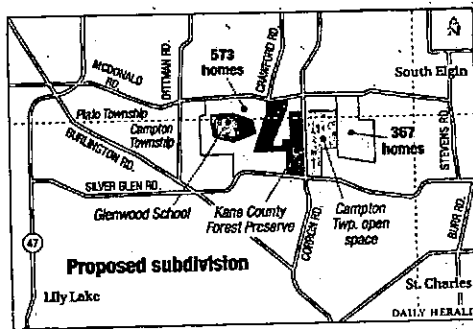
"Our purpose right now is try to get residents aware," Kopec said. "We have organized the community ... but it's a slow process, especially with the holidays making it more difficult to reach people."

Barb Wojnicki, Campton Township's representative on the Kane County Board and a 15-year resident, calls the development proposal "the biggest issue that Campton has ever faced."

"Virtually, Elgin is dropping a city in the country," Wojnicki said.

Stony Creek opponents argue the development's high density will permanently alter the rural character of the surrounding

See FIGHT on PAGE 9



## Fight: Developer says plan is good for the area

Continued from Page 1

area. It also will place a burden on two growing school districts, the St. Charles district and Burlington-based Central School District 301.

The development would cut "a swath of high-density housing and commercial development through a semi-rural countryside," warns a flier circulated by Preserve Campton. "Rustic roads will become four-lane major arteries. Resources will be stressed, and woods and prairies will fight to exist alongside chockablock construction."

Stony Creek East and Stony Creek West would be separated by an estimated 400 acres of open land owned by Campton Township and the Kane County Forest Preserve that straddles Corron Road.

As proposed, 940 homes would sit on 602 acres — 367 homes on 229 acres to the east and 573 homes on 373 acres to the west. The average lot size is 13,500 square feet, or 1.6 homes per acre, according to plans filed with the city of Elgin.

Campton Township's comprehensive plan for that land depicts residential development with 1.25-acre lots — similar to existing adjacent homesteads.

The development lies in both Campton and Plato townships. Annexation by the city of Elgin would mean the city would provide water, sewer and other municipal service to Stony Creek residents.

Environmental groups have stressed the need to protect adjacent wetlands and other natural areas that could be harmed by increased road salt, lawn chemicals and other contaminants in storm water runoff caused by the development.

"We urge you to consider and require protection of these high-quality, sensitive wetland resources located in and around this proposed development," a field supervisor with the federal Fish and Wildlife Service wrote in a letter to the city of Elgin. "Site design should consider sustainable development principles that will enable development to proceed with less impacts to the natural resources and the watershed."

The Kane County Board, Campton Township board and St. Charles Countryside Fire Protection District have passed resolutions opposing the development. The St. Charles school district has asked that fewer homes be built.

"We're trying to look out for our residents," said Campton Township Supervisor Neal Anderson.

Even though he already has shared his concerns with Elgin officials, Anderson plans to speak at the public hearing with Jack Schouba, the township's open space development coordinator, to keep the dialogue going.

"I'm optimistic that they'll listen to us," Anderson said of

### The big meeting

The city of Elgin's planning and development commission will meet at 7 p.m. Jan. 18 at the Hemmens Cultural Center, 45 Symphony Way, to discuss the Stony Creek annexation proposal.

### Links

[dailyherald.com/ez](http://dailyherald.com/ez)  
Bookmark our Web page for hyperlinks to more information  
Preserve Campton

Elgin officials. "We're definitely worried about the density. We've got (existing) large lots along the borders of this property. We'd like larger lots (built) on the perimeter of the project. We're hoping they listen to that. They've listened a little bit so far."

The number of homes has been reduced slightly since the proposal was brought forward earlier this year.

Although he isn't happy about Stony Creek, Plato Township Supervisor Gerald Regan has not taken any action to try to stop the development.

"I know that's rather futile," Regan said. "The cities have all the clout. I don't know that Campton (Township) could stop them from doing anything. We're kind of like lambs to slaughter."

A spokeswoman for the developer called the project "a real asset for the tax base of Elgin and the school district" because of the developer-generated impact fees that will be paid to the city and school districts. The homes will be priced at about \$500,000.

"Good, high-end homes will be a real improvement for Elgin and the school district," spokeswoman Marilyn Katz of Chicago-based MK Communications said. "Development is going to occur in that part of the world because it's an attractive place. The fact that these are high-end homes will add to the overall economic health of the area."

Elgin officials point out that Stony Creek is compatible with the revised comprehensive plan they are considering. In the works since 1983, the plan extends Elgin's planning boundary south to Silver Glen Road and west past Route 47 to Tower Road.

Stony Creek East is included in a section of land dubbed "immediate growth area" and Stony Creek West in "pressured growth area," according to one map in Elgin's draft comprehensive plan.

Elgin's planning and development commission on Monday recommended the city council approve the comprehensive plan. The council is expected to vote on it at either the Jan. 12 or 26 regular meetings.



Chronicle photo by Katy Mull

Batavia residents and millers Don Arneson, left, and Jim Nies push a blade to start the Fabyan Windmill in Geneva. Although the mill was built in 1848, there is a 500-year-old Dutch tradition to running it that the Kane County Forest Preserve is trying to maintain.

## Winds of change

### Massive reconstruction project returns Fabyan Windmill to previous grandeur

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

**I**t is more crushing than a bad report card. It has more century-old parts than Joan Rivers. It blows in the wind more than the answer, my friends.

And, like Tony Danza, it is working for the first time in years.

The Fabyan Windmill restoration was completed this summer, and plans are under way to have it crushing wheat into grain by spring. Weather permitting, 12 volunteer millers-in-training spend their Saturdays learning to operate the complex, wind-powered machinery.

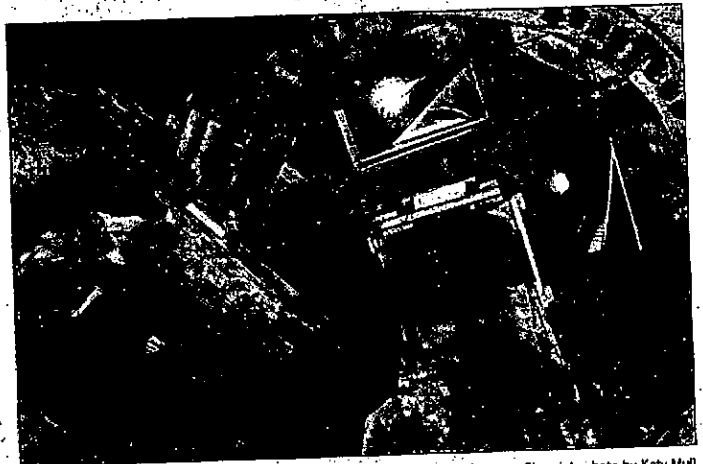
The windmill dates to the 1850s and has been in the Fabyan Forest

Preserve on Route 25 since 1914. After extensive renovation, the sails were turning again this summer, something that had not happened in 60 years. A grand opening is scheduled for the spring.

Fourth-generation windmill builder Lucas Verbij was contracted by the Kane County Forest Preserve District to oversee the renovation. He said the 68-foot, five-story mill was in poor condition.

"When I was there in 1997, the old sail-stock were still there, but very rotten, especially the main shaft to the windmill was very rotten and the sails could actually fall down any moment," he said.

See WINDMILL, page 4



Chronicle photo by Katy Mull

Jim Nies of Batavia looks at one of the gears in the Fabyan Windmill. The gear moves as the wind moves the blades on the mill outside and gives the power necessary for grinding grain into flour.

# Windmill

Continued from page 1

Verbij also said all eight main cant-posts were rotten.

"By using a special technique, we opened the cant-posts from the outside, cut out all the rot and reinforced them again with fiberglass, new wood and epoxy," he said. "This is a common restoration way in Europe but new in the U.S."

This allowed the windmill to keep much of its original wood, some of which was cut from the North Woods and might be 300 to 400 years old, said AnnMarie Fauske, director of community affairs for the forest preserve.

"The timber as it was is better than something you're going to find today," she said.

The forest preserve spent \$916,020 on the renovation, which included restoring the cant-posts, two sill plates atop the cant-posts, all the doors and windows and their frames, Verbij said. The basement had to be restored and waterproofed; the entire windmill had to be painted, the balcony needed new timbers and new floors, the tower and cap had to be reshingled, and those shingles needed copper flashing.

Also, a new windshaft, a new tail pole, new wooden sailstocks and new shore beams to connect the new tail pole to the cap were installed. Verbij said the majority of work took a year on site and six months for the restoration plan.

Verbij has built or restored windmills in the United States, Canada, Japan and in his native Netherlands. He was impressed by the Fabyan Windmill, calling it "very unique."

"For him to say that was a real eye opener," Fauske said.

She said that the mill has an international flavor not found in many other mills.

"We call it the Fabyan Dutch Windmill, and Dutch was a big influence, but there's also a lot of French, English and German influence on the millwright," she said.

Roman numerals adorn the windmill, marking where separate parts join. This was done so the workers, no matter what language they spoke, could see how the parts fit, Fauske said.

The mill was built by German craftsman Louis Blackhaus between 1850 and 1860. It sat on Luis Reinke's property by York Road near Oak Brook until Col. George Fabyan bought the mill from Reinke's widow for approximately \$8,000. In 1914, Fabyan moved the mill to his estate, Riverbank. Today, that site is known as the Fabyan Forest Preserve.

The windmill has been a part of the memories of generations.

"We've been trying to sort out the lore associated with the mill and what really happened there," Fauske said.

Area residents have told Fauske their stories of smelling the bread Fabyan baked at the mill. Although the mill does have an oven, Fauske said it had no openings and was unworkable.

Despite the renovation, there are no plans to make bread now, either.

"If we do make grain, we'll probably just sell bags of it or give it away as novelty items," Fauske said.

She said the final decision will be made by the Forest Preserve Commission.

The date of the grand opening has not been set, but probably will be in late May, Fauske said. The final stage of the project will be to complete the landscaping. Ball Feed Co. in West Chicago will donate an array of flowers for the site, including the perfect display for a Dutch-style windmill: tulips.



12-28-04 Daily Herald

# Panel won't dispute clerk's residency

BY TONA KUNZ  
Daily Herald Staff Writer



Jack Cunningham

Jack Cunningham won a residency battle in his bid to be mayor of Aurora, but in doing so, he raised questions about how much time the current county clerk actually spends in Kane County.

During a hearing Monday before the Aurora Election Commission, Cunningham refused to estimate how many days he lives at 218 LeGrande Blvd. in Aurora.

"I'll just say I stayed there when I wanted to," he told commissioners.

That was good enough to get his name removed

for commissioners.

In a written decision, they said state law does not require candidates to spend all of their time in the district as long as residency is maintained.

They rejected the bid of Joan Horvath-Kruger, a neighbor of Cunningham,

from the February mayoral primary ballot. Horvath-Kruger's husband does volunteer work for Tom Weisner, who is running against Cunningham.

Commissioners said that while there is evidence Cunningham may spend

See **RESIDENCY** on PAGE 5

## Residency: Neighbors say they see clerk only at election time

Continued from Page 1

extended periods of time elsewhere, Horvath-Kruger didn't prove that Cunningham never calls Aurora home.

The state board of election requires residency for at least one year before the election. But the board leaves the definition of what constitutes residency up to local election commissions.

Elected in 2002, Cunningham is in his first term as county clerk. Although that post also requires proof of residency, if he had been taken off the Aurora ballot, he would not have lost his county job.

A separate residency objection must be filed before the county election board, which could interpret the definition of residency differently, said Pat Freeman, director of election information for the state.

Cunningham admitted he owns a boat and trailer in Seneca, where he spends time, but said he also has maintained a bedroom in the Aurora house since 1971.

Cunningham told commissioners there are various tenants that share the house with him for \$1,200 a month.

The most-recent tenant, James Gibson, who moved out about a month ago, sent commissioners an affidavit that Cunningham kept his furniture, clothes and mail at the home and stayed there at times.

But five neighbors from Cunningham's block said they have rarely seen him in the last few years.

"I noticed that the only time I would ever see him or his car on the block was shortly before or after an election he was involved in," neighbor Shari Weakman wrote to commissioners.

Still, Cunningham was able to show that his bills, mail and paychecks go to the Aurora address regularly. It's the address listed on his work forms, property taxes, driver's license and voter registration card. The 10-year Republican precinct committeeman has voted in that district since 1971.

"This (the challenge) is just a

12-28-04 Daily Herald

# River not damaged by oil spill in Huntley

BY LISA BALDE

*Daily Herald Staff Writer*

The mixture of oil and water that seeped out of the ground in Huntley on Sunday did little damage to the Kishwaukee River, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency officials said Monday.

An assessment of the river on Monday concluded the absorbent booms that Huntley firefighters set up after the spill had soaked up much of the liquid before it leaked into the Kishwaukee, IEPA spokeswoman Maggie Carson said.

Although a scummy residue can be seen in some spots, most of the petroleum sitting on top of the river already had been cleared off. No animals were hurt by the substance, which contained 10 percent oil.

Between 500 and 1,000 gallons of an oil-based substance flowed out of a manhole Sunday morning, near Kreutzer Road and Route 47. The spill apparently occurred when a petroleum-filled holding tank overflowed, Carson said.

Sometime during the holiday weekend, the sprinkler system malfunctioned at Chicago International Trucking, a truck dealership on Route 47.

The sprinklers flooded the building with water, which drained into the underground holding tanks the business used to store old petroleum. The tanks overflowed with a mixture of oil and water that eventually seeped out of a manhole on Chicago International's property.

The owners of the business hired a contractor to begin cleaning the substance Monday. The EPA will oversee the cleanup.

"It sounds like they're in pretty good shape," Carson said.

12-28-04 Daily Herald

# Attempts to limit recordings called 'troubling'

BY LISA SMITH  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

## Attorney general's office responds to Wasco Sanitary District board's question

The Illinois Attorney General's office has called a local government board's continuing efforts to restrict the public's right to record open meetings "deeply troubling."

The comment came in response to Wasco Sanitary District attorney Charles Muscarello's request for advice on how to lawfully restrict the video and audio recording of district board meetings by the public. Muscarello sought the advice on behalf of the three-

member board, which earlier this month nullified controversial limitations after the attorney general expressed concerns that they violated the Open Meetings Act.

In a Dec. 23 letter responding to Muscarello, Terry Mutchler, the attorney general's public access counselor, commends district officials for moving quickly to rescinding the Nov. 18 ordinance that allowed residents to record a meeting only if that resident gave the district 10 days'

"prescribe reasonable rules" — as opposed to restrictions — on the recording of meetings, Mutchler explains.

In her letter, she also includes an excerpt from a 1980 opinion issued by the office stating that the "reasonable rules" referred to in the act are designed to help a public body maintain order at meetings.

"The goal is to establish rules ... not to deprive the public of its right, granted in law, allowing them to tape a public meeting."

Muscarello said Monday he had yet to receive Mutchler's most recent letter but would pass her advice along to the sanitary district board at its Jan. 13 meeting.

The board asked Muscarello to draw up the ordinance in response to concerns over a resident who videotaped the board's October meeting and distributed copies of the tape to neighbors. Board members were concerned the tape could be altered to inac-

curately reflect what occurred at the meeting.

When Attorney General Lisa Madigan's office caught wind of the restrictions, Mutchler sent the district a letter asking the board to rescind the ordinance or revise it to comply with the Open Meetings Act. The board rescinded it Dec. 9 but directed Muscarello to ask Madigan's office for legal ways the district can restrict recordings.

The district supplies water and sewer service to 1,050 residential and business customers, including residents of the 750-home Fox Mill subdivision.

12-28-04 Chicago Tribune

# Aurora hopeful still on mayoral ballot

## Election board rejects challenge

By Amy Fischer Roth  
Special to the Tribune

After hearing from residents who alleged Aurora mayoral candidate John Cunningham does not live in town, an electoral board decided Monday that his name will remain on the Feb. 22 primary election ballot.

The three-member Municipal Officers Electoral Board ruled in favor of Cunningham in the challenge to his nominating petitions made by LeGrande Boulevard resident

Joan Horvath-Kruger, who said Cunningham did not live in the LeGrande home he owns.

Cunningham, who is the Kane County clerk, testified he owns "extensive property" along the Illinois River in Seneca as well as a houseboat and a side-by-side trailer with sleeping rooms. He said that since his divorce in 1989, he has rented out his LeGrande home but always maintained a bedroom there.

Cunningham said he believes mayoral candidate Tom Weisner was behind the challenge and noted that Horvath-Kruger's husband, Brooke

PLEASE SEE AURORA, PAGE 4

## AURORA: Challengers doubt man lives in town

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Kruger, has volunteered for Weisner's campaign.

In a prepared statement distributed after the board's findings, Cunningham said, "I am disappointed in Tom Weisner's decision to use the family of a campaign volunteer to try and take away the voters of Aurora's right to a free and fair election."

In response, Weisner said: "I'm not surprised that Jack would try to divert attention toward me when in fact it was five indignant neighborhood residents, three of whom don't know me from Adam, who offered testimony to the fact that Jack has been virtually absent from the neighborhood for several years."

Fourth Ward Ald. Chuck Nelson testified Monday that although he saw Cunningham shoveling snow on Christmas Day at 218 LeGrande, he seldom has seen him in the neighborhood in the last several years.

Wendy Cornell, a LeGrande resident since Aug. 1, 2003, testified that she has "never seen" Cunningham at his address. She said she has seen a young woman living in the home.

Horvath-Kruger also submitted letters from three other LeGrande residents who wrote that they rarely saw Cunningham in the neighborhood.

Cunningham's attorney, John Duggan, submitted a binder of documents he said showed Cunningham has lived in the Le-

*It was five indignant neighborhood residents . . . who offered testimony to the fact that Jack [Cunningham] has been virtually absent from the neighborhood for several years.'*

—Mayoral candidate Tom Weisner

Grande home since he bought it in 1971.

He produced copies of paychecks with the LeGrande address and copies of Cunningham's real estate tax bills, medical bills, bank statements, utility bills, Christmas cards and a parking ticket.

The commission ruled that "while there is evidence that [Cunningham] has acquired other property, and may even stay at such other property for extended periods of time, the record is replete with evidence that he considers the house at 218 LeGrande in Aurora as his residence."

About 30 people attended the proceedings in the Aurora Election Commission office.

Also, the electoral board decided that the names of two aldermanic candidates, David Marquez and Georgine "Jill" Jenkins, will remain on the April 5 general election ballot.

Marquez's opponent for Ward 2, Juany Garza, said Marquez failed to designate the office he was seeking on his nominating papers.

Jenkins' opponent for Ward 4, Richard Lawrence, said Jenkins did not number her nominating papers correctly.

# Cunningham will stay on mayor ballot

■ **Challenge rejected:** Board says evidence ample that his residence is in Aurora

By Dave Parro  
STAFF WRITER

AURORA — A neighbor who challenged the residency of mayoral candidate Jack Cunningham made an emotional appeal Monday to keep him off the ballot, but she presented few facts to prove Cunningham doesn't live on the city's West Side.

The lack of solid evidence led the Aurora Electoral Board to rule against Joan Horvath-Kruger's challenge to Cunningham's candidacy. The three-member board heard arguments Monday morning and then issued a unanimous written ruling in his favor.

Cunningham, the Kane County clerk, will remain on the Feb. 22 primary election ballot along with four other candidates for mayor. The general



Jack Cunningham produced many documents to prove his residency.

election will be held April 5.

"While there is evidence that (Cunningham) has acquired other property, and may even stay at such property for extended periods of time, the record is replete with evidence that he considers the house at 218 LeGrande in Aurora as his residence," the electoral board wrote.

While Cunningham refused to say how often he actually stays in Aurora, he showed that his LeGrande Boulevard home is his primary residence, even though he has a home and business in Seneca in LaSalle County.

♦ Turn to MAYOR, A2

## Inside

■ Council candidates survive challenges, Page A6

## MAYOR

From page A1

### Neighbors question residency

Horvath-Kruger, who has lived in the 200 block of LeGrande for 16 years, testified that Cunningham hasn't been seen around the neighborhood for years. She called two witnesses who live on the block, including Aurora Alderman Chuck Nelson, who also said they have rarely, if ever, seen Cunningham around.

Two other residents sent letters questioning his residency.

"I noticed that the only time I would ever see him or his car on the block was shortly before or after an election he was involved in," wrote resident Shari Weakman, referring to Cunningham's previous runs for public office.

Cunningham and his attorney responded by presenting an avalanche of documents that showed the candidate has been a resident at the home since 1971. Some of the evidence included voter registration, driver's license, vehicle registration, house deed, tax bills, income tax statements, Social Security documents, medical and utility bills, and previous nominating petitions.

Cunningham admitted he has rented out the house for years, most recently at \$1,200 a month, but he said it has always also been his primary residence. He said he does not always stay there, however, and spends time at his houseboat in the marina he owns along the Illinois River in Seneca.

The burden of proof in the challenge fell on Horvath-Kruger, who said from the start that Cunningham might legally reside in Aurora. Her challenge was based largely on anecdotal evidence and the feeling among neighbors that Cunningham is not a true resident.

"There is a legal definition of residency that Mr. Cunningham would like to prove," she said. "Then there is the definition of someone actually living in the house. We are looking at two different definitions of residency."

### Weisner ties

John Duggan, Cunningham's attorney, portrayed Horvath-Kruger as a supporter of one of his opponents who was motivated by

political allegiance. Horvath-Kruger has publicly supported candidate Tom Weisner in the past, and her husband has done volunteer computer consulting work for Weisner's campaign.

Horvath-Kruger tried to avoid questions about her support of Weisner, saying it is "irrelevant," but the commission insisted she answer the questions. She admitted that she had signed election petitions for Cunningham when he ran for other offices in recent years and only recently became concerned about his residency.

Cunningham accused Weisner of secretly backing the challenge and said he was disappointed that his opponent "didn't have the courage to file the complaint himself."

"I think she was used politically," Cunningham said. "... I think Tom's (Weisner) footprints and fingerprints were all over this."

Weisner said the challenge actually came from "five irate neighbors who gave testimony that Jack has been virtually absent from the neighborhood for several years."

"What Jack proved today is that he's a smart enough lawyer to create a paper trail to satisfy the concept of legal residency, which apparently has nothing in common with actually living somewhere," Weisner said.

### Determining factors

In its ruling, the electoral board said two elements are important in determining residency: intent and physical presence. Intent is the most important and is determined by facts that support residency, such as where mail is received and tax returns filed, the decision said.

Physical presence "is simply a presence in the electoral district," the board wrote.

"A person does not need to reside at one address within the district, but can switch from house to house as he feels is appropriate ...," the decision reads in part. "Moreover, a candidate does not need to spend all of his or her time in the district and may, of course, own other property and spend time there so long as the residency is maintained in the district."

Horvath-Kruger originally also challenged some of Cunningham's election petition signatures, but she withdrew that part of her complaint Monday.

# Year sees legal news outside of courtroom

By DAN CAMPANA  
Kane County Chronicle

The state's attorney served a four-month suspension.

Then, county officials appointed a temporary state's attorney.

Finally, voters elected a new state's attorney.

Kane County residents did not have to look too hard to see that local legal news in 2004 was not limited to the courtroom.

In November, Republican John Barsanti became the county's top prosecutor by handily defeating Democratic candidate Renee Robinson. He succeeded embattled former State's Attorney Meg Gorecki, who did not seek re-election.

With her law license suspended from Feb. 1 to June 1, Gorecki sat on the sidelines as the state's attorney's office moved forward under the leadership of Assistant State's Attorney Katherine Moran.

"Overall, all the transitions went well," Assistant State's Attorney Jody Gleason said. "It really did not affect our work."

See LEGAL, page 2



Gorecki



Barsanti

## Legal

Continued from page 1

During Gorecki's absence, the office garnered murder convictions against Joshua Minniti, David Reitz and John Nuckles, as well as a sex abuse conviction against former priest Mark Campobello for criminal sexual abuse.

Campobello, 39, pleaded guilty in May shortly before trial. He is serving an eight-year sentence at Illinois River Correctional Center in Canton.

He now faces two civil lawsuits filed by his two victims.

Gleason, who prosecuted Campobello, said the case was important from a legal and community standpoint.

Also in May, a judge found 41-year-old Nuckles guilty of murdering a St. Charles man during a 2003 argument at an Aurora carnival where the two men worked. Last month, Nuckles was sentenced to 28 years in prison.

Reitz, 28, pleaded guilty during the middle of his April trial for shooting to death an Aurora man outside a North Aurora restaurant nearly a year ago. As part of the plea,

Reitz received a 15-year prison term.

Minniti, who was 15 in 2001 when he beat to death Irma Braun inside her Aurora township home, was found guilty after a February bench trial. Minniti, now 19, will return to court Jan. 7 to ask a judge

to reconsider the 79-year prison sentence handed down Nov. 30, which also was Gorecki's final day in office.

The county has two ongoing death penalty cases, with Vivian Mitchell awaiting the sentencing

phase and Joseph Foreman Jr. still in the early stages of his case.

Mitchell was found guilty but legally insane last month in the 2003 killing of a West Dundee

woman. She returns to court on post-trial motions Jan. 28.

Gorecki announced in July that prosecutors would seek the death penalty against Foreman, who stands accused of kidnapping and murdering his former mother-in-law in April.

Foreman was arrested April 14 in Aurora after a six-day manhunt that covered three counties and involved more than 30 investigators from 10 police agencies.

That same day, police found Linda Duchaine's body inside an abandoned farmhouse on Dauberman Road south of Elburn near Interstate 88. He is scheduled for a Jan. 27 hearing. Foreman likely will not go to trial until next year.

Among notable non-violent crimes in 2004, prosecutors negotiated guilty pleas with two people charged with delivering ecstasy to a Geneva nail salon in March.

Within three weeks of each other, Phuong Huynh, 34, and Huang Hoaciph, 28, each pleaded guilty to delivery of a controlled substance.

Huynh received 13 years in prison, while Hoaciph is serving a 10-year term for bringing more than 4,000 ecstasy pills to Illinois from Michigan.

State police raided D.J.'s Tavern in Maple Park on May 28 after investigating alleged illegal gambling for more than 13 months at the Main Street bar.

As a result, 13 people — including Village President Mark Delaney and Police Chief Chester Morris — were charged with gambling conspiracy charges.

Delaney and Morris also are charged with official misconduct, while bar owner David Weeks and bar manager Michael Faber have been accused of running a bookmaking operation.

As year neared its close, the state's attorney was on pace to file an equal number of felony cases as in 2003. Last year, 2,556 new felony charges were filed.



Mitchell



Foreman



Campobello



Nuckles



Reitz



Minniti

# Kane clerk gets OK to run for Aurora mayor

By ERIC SCHELKOPF  
and TOM SCHLUETER  
Kane County Chronicle

**Commission says Cunningham's legal address is in the city**

The ruling clears the way for a five-way mayoral primary Feb. 22. "I have lived in Aurora my entire life," Cunningham said in a prepared statement released after the ruling. "I was raised and went to school on the east side of Aurora." Cunningham said the person who filed the objection to his candidacy



**Cunningham** County Board member John Cunningham, charged that Horvath-Kruger's objections were politically motivated.

See CLERK, page 2

## Clerk: Law does not specify time spent at residence

Continued from page 1

"She is supporting Weisner. That is her motivation," Duggan said.

The commission ruled that Cunningham is registered to vote at the LeGrande address, his driver's license and vehicle registration hold the LeGrande address, his tax return lists that address and he claims a homestead exemption at that address.

"While there is evidence that the respondent has acquired other property and may even stay at such other property for extended periods of time, the record is replete with

evidence that he considers the home at 218 LeGrande in Aurora as his residence and has in fact voted from there, received mail there, filed important documents from there and has also been there physically," the ruling stated.

Horvath-Kruger, who was present at Monday's hearing, said she signed Weisner's nominating petition for mayor, and that her husband, Brooke, works for Weisner's campaign. However, Horvath-Kruger said she does not know who she will vote for in the February primary.

Cunningham said 218 LeGrande Blvd. has been his

legal residence since 1971, but he does not sleep there every night.

He testified during Monday's hearing that various documents, including his Kane County voter registration card, list his address as 218 LeGrande Blvd. Cunningham said he has rented his house to various people over the years, including Jim Gibson, and his wife, Gibson's address is listed as 218 LeGrande Blvd. In the phone book, Cunningham said the Gibsons recently moved out because they bought a new house.

During the hearing, Cunningham said he owns a

houseboat in a marina along the Illinois River in Seneca.

According to the 2005 candidates guide by the Illinois State Board of Elections, candidates must live in the municipality they represent for one year preceding the consolidated election.

A spokeswoman with the Illinois State Board of Elections spokesperson said the general rule in what constitutes residency is "your physical presence and your intent to stay there permanently."

She said the law does not require a person to spend a specific amount of time at that residence.

# FACES of 2004

*This is the 11th in an ongoing series of stories re-visiting some of the Fox Valley's people — and issues — who made headlines through 2004.*

## Campaign, war put vets in forefront

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

12-29-04  
Beacon News

There are years to remember, and years to forget.

Nobody knows more about those vagaries of the American consciousness than the country's veterans. Sometimes remembered, but oft times forgotten, veterans enjoyed a year in the spotlight in 2004. This time, it was a year to remember.

It could be that as the war in Iraq produced more veterans — returning and not returning — Americans became more acutely aware of those who fought, came home and died in past conflicts.

It could be that Americans watched closely as the merits of war accomplishments were debated as part of the grueling presidential race, even among veterans themselves. It could be that some of the plaintive cries from veterans about

❖ Turn to FACES, A2



DONNELL COLLINS / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

John Carr, Kane County veterans assistance commissioner, at the Fox Valley Veterans Monument that was built largely because of his own research and dedication.

## FACES

From page A1

Washington short-changing hospital and other benefits funding for former members of the military — particularly in Illinois — were finally heard.

"Like anything else, when something is in the forefront, it gets more attention," said John Carr, Kane County veterans affairs administrator. "As it fades away, it gets less attention. But, yes, I think it has been in the forefront this year."

The soft-spoken, salt and pepper-bearded Carr, himself a Vietnam War veteran, was one of the reasons that 2004 was a big year for Kane County's 29,000 military veterans. His seven-year quest came to fruition with the Nov. 11 dedication of the Kane County Veterans Memorial on the front lawn of the Government Center in Geneva.

Carr conceptualized what should be in the memorial, researched the detailed historical facts included throughout, and developed, checked and re-checked the 866 names of those from Kane County who fought and died in the country's 20th-century conflicts.

By the Veterans Day dedication, Carr was happy, satisfied and relieved. And even though it appears he already will have to make room for veterans whose names were inadvertently left off the monument — a possibility Carr prepared for — he said he has been nothing but happy with the reaction to the memorial from Kane County residents.

"We got a lot of nice comments, nice letters, that were very gratifying," Carr said. "Many people were surprised and pleased at the strong educational component that the monument has."

### Politics and veterans

But that was not the only monumental recognition Kane County vets got during 2004. The year started with national recognition for Batavia's Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1197 for the work they've done putting together care packages to send to soldiers in Iraq.

The post's basement bar and banquet hall was host to the national television cameras of the ABC television network during the Jan. 20 State of the Union Address by President George W. Bush. The care packages at-

tracted ABC to Batavia's VFW, and post members welcomed the recognition as a way of raising money for more care packages.

One of the issues Batavia veterans talked about during that evening was Washington's cutbacks in funding for veterans hospitals and benefits.

Although they did not get the mention by Bush they had hoped for, by the end of the year, that issue got more attention, thanks to work by the Chicago Sun-Times. The newspaper analyzed federal records and showed that Illinois veterans on average received \$6,802 in benefits in 2003, which put them at 50th place out of 52 states and territories in the average amount of disability pay.

Not only did that get the attention of the federal Veterans Administration, it also attracted House Speaker Dennis Hastert, R-Yorkville, who said he wants a VA study that would show why disability pay varies so much from state to state and recommend a system that is more equitable.

### 'New' Revolutionary War vet

There even was some attention focused in 2004 on the wars of America's far past, back to the very first conflict, the American Revolution.

Researchers discovered that John Gowdy, who moved to Batavia in the early 1850s and died just a few years later, had fought in the Revolutionary War.

Gowdy was buried in the East Batavia Cemetery. He became the fourth known Revolutionary War veteran buried in Kane County.

Batavians and Kane County history buffs paid tribute to Gowdy in a cemetery ceremony over the Fourth of July.

### Monument for the future

Still, 2004 was more a year for living veterans, and perhaps for veterans in the future. The Kane County Veterans Memorial not only honors those who served in the past, but provides information to keep alive their memory in the future.

That hit home to Carr, who already has been able to lean out his window and witness four different Cub Scout packs visit the new memorial. He insisted on the education component for them.

"It's for the youth coming behind, so they will understand and remember," said Carr. "It's gratifying ... it's a little overwhelming sometimes."



12-29-04 Beacon News

# Approval process starts for I-88 stores

By David Garbe  
STAFF WRITER

NORTH AURORA — A Target, a Kohl's and a strip-mall's worth of smaller retailers could pop up in North Aurora as early as the summer of 2006.

The public got its first preview of what officials hope will be the village's largest single commercial development Tuesday night at a special meeting plan commission.

Commissioners recommended the village proceed with the zoning the 323-acre site for business use, the first official step in the development process.

The site stretches along the northern side of Interstate 88, from Randall Road in the east to the rear of the North Aurora Auto Mall in the west.

Proposed by the Hoffman Estates-based Rubloff Development Group, the property will be built out in two phases, with the first shopping center going up on the western half.

Companies committed to open in the western section project include Target, Kohl's, TJ Maxx, Michael's Arts and Crafts, Pier 1 Imports and Famous Footwear, as well as a pet supply store and an office supply store.

Rubloff is still looking for a "big-box" retailer to anchor the

eastern half of the property.

Tentative plans for that eastern site include five acres that will be set aside for purchase by the village, which has been pondering the construction of a new village hall and police station for several years.

Any discussion of that would have to wait until a meeting of the village board, said acting mayor Max Herwig.

But plan commissioners did confirm that a draft agreement between the village and the developer calls for the village to pay for the five acres with sales taxes that will be generated by the shopping mall.

Rubloff representatives estimated that the mall will generate \$3 million in sales taxes for the village annually, plus several hundred thousand dollars in property taxes.

All of the building on the site will be confined to the southern portion of the property, overlooking the tollway.

More than 100 acres along the northern edge of the site will be used as wetlands and stormwater retention areas.

That arrangement will require a major resculpting of the landscape, because a wetland of about 100 acres runs diagonally across the entire property.

# N. Aurora Rubloff plan gets first nod

12-29-04 Daily

BY CHARLOTTE  
NORGAARD

Herald

Daily Herald Correspondent

North Aurora plan commission members recommended, with suggestions, the Rubloff development at a special public hearing on Tuesday night.

The commission approved an ordinance to allow the commercial and residential development of a nearly 330-acre site on the western side of the rectangular-shaped parcel that runs along the Reagan Memorial Tollway between Orchard and Randall roads.

The development would bring major retailers Kohl's and Target to the area.

The Rubloff proposal will likely come before the village board in late January for consideration.

"Our hope is that Target, and Kohl's and additional users will be attracted to it," said Bob Brownson of Rubloff and Associates.

The development would have about 55 acres of residential development the eastern side, near Randall Road, if it cannot find a large retailer.

If approved by the village board, the mixed-use development would include commercial use, a new village hall, high-rent apartments and townhouses and a 10-acre park.

Access for the development would come through an extension of Orchard Gateway through the development to connect at the Ice Cream Drive and Randall Road.

Commission members said they would want the development bring additional tax revenue to North Aurora and enhance property values.

If the Rubloff development is approved by the village board, it is expected that Target and Kohl's will open their doors in summer 2006.

12-29-04 Daily Herald

# Longtime Campton Twp. official recalled for service

By LISA SMITH

Daily Herald Staff Writer

A public servant for more than 40 years, Alwin Rottmann was determined to pass along to his children his belief in giving back to the community.

The 77-year-old Campton Township resident was a member of the township's open space committee and plan commission until last year and remained active in the real estate appraisal company he founded many years ago.

But he also had been battling pancreatic cancer for the past year. Rottmann died in his home on Christmas Eve from cancer-related complications.

The people he worked with in Campton Township valued Rottmann's commitment to the community and his knowledge of real estate.

"Sometimes he knew that we could have paid a little bit more (for land). He had a real good sense of that," said Judy Hines, chairwoman of the township's open space committee. "He had a good sense of making people look at all sides of an issue rather than asking simply, did you like the land and was the price right. He took into account location and which



Alwin Rottmann

"Sometimes he could almost be a curmudgeon," Hines joked. "But in a good way."

Of his four children, it is Rottmann's son Alan who perhaps most closely followed in his footsteps. Alan Rottmann, Campton Township's assessor, called his father the strongest influence on his career path.

"He always felt like if you're going to live in a community you should always give back to that community," Alan Rottmann said.

Before moving to Campton Township with his wife, Patricia, in 1987, Alwin served in the 1960s and 1970s on the plan commission in the village of Lombard. As the commission's chairman, he helped shape the western suburb into the community it is today, Alan said.

There he also served as president of the Lombard Young

roads were connected."

Hines said she enjoyed working with Rottmann, who also was a Campton Township precinct committeeman.

Republicans. He also founded the Lombard Track Club and ran several marathons.

An Army veteran who served in Germany in World War II, Rottmann also was a military history buff. He especially enjoyed learning about the Civil War.

"Besides my mother, military history was the big love of his life," Alan said. "He and my mom visited probably every Civil War site in the United States. He's got a military history book collection that numbers in the thousands."

In addition to his wife of 54 years and son Alan, Rottmann is survived by two other sons, Edward of Wheaton and Thomas of Lombard; a daughter, Carol Hebda of Lombard; four grandchildren; and a brother, Richard of New Jersey.

A memorial service will be held at 10 a.m. today at St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 101 S. Sixth Ave., St. Charles. Interment will be private. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to St. Mark's Lutheran Church or to the American Cancer Society, 17 N. River St., Batavia, IL 60510.

Arrangements were provided by Yurs Funeral Home of St. Charles.

12-29-04 Daily Herald

# County delays tax-increase vote for seniors

BY LISA SMITH  
*Daily Herald Staff Writer*

Deciding the fate of senior services in Kane County will have to wait a year.

Voters won't be asked to support a 2.5-cent tax to fund health and other quality-of-life services for seniors until 2006 at the earliest, the county board's public health committee said Tuesday.

Committee members were concerned that if the measure were placed on the April 5 ballot, it might take votes away

from the Kane County Forest Preserve District's open space initiative.

"Political winds change," said Gerald Jones, an Aurora Democrat and committee chairman. "Probably the best opportunity for the forest preserve referendum is in April. ... I don't feel it's a good idea for (the senior services) initiative to be on the same ballot."

As proposed, the senior services increase of 2.5 cents per \$100 equalized assessed value

See **TAX** on **PAGE 11**

SECTION 1 **PAGE 11**

F3

## Tax: County to study how others serve seniors

*Continued from Page 1*

tion would cost the owner of a \$300,000 home an additional \$24.12 annually in taxes and would generate an estimated \$2.5 million if approved.

The money would be used to fund health care, medication, affordable housing, home repairs, job training, meals, health management counseling, protective services and transportation to activities, shopping centers and medical appointments.

Those services were among the needs seniors expressed in a survey conducted earlier this

year by the Kane County Health Department, the agency that would manage the funds collected from the tax in addition to providing basic health services. The health department would name private agencies to administer some of the other social service programs.

With the 55-and-over population expected to double by 2020, the services will become more and more important, said Bette Schoenholtz, executive director of the Senior Services Associates. She has been pushing the issue for about a year.

"I think we have a strong case," Schoenholtz said. "We

would be able to sell it to get it on the ballot."

Jones asked Schoenholtz to provide more details on how other counties, including McHenry County, have administered programs through increased taxes. He also suggested Schoenholtz lobby state and federal representatives in addition to county officials.

"It's not part of our national agenda and it should be," Jones said.

Details of the open space tax rate increase proposal are likely to be finalized at the January forest preserve commission meeting.

12-29-04 Daily Herald

# Kane County, Elgin team up to store salt

By TOM O'KONOWITZ

Daily Herald Staff Writer

*Agreement means county snowblows will have easier access to storage facilities*

Upon the next winter storm's arrival in the Fox Valley, getting around on streets in unincorporated parts of northern Kane County should be easier — and safer.

The city of Elgin and Kane County officials have reached an agreement that allows the county to store up to 600 tons of road salt near the city's salt

domes on the west side. The city cleared out a large cement bin at its Homes Road public works building for the county to store salt so its snowplow drivers don't have to drive as far from the Elgin area to get more salt.

The storage deal comes at no cost to the city or county, according to John Loete, Elgin's public works director, and it's allowed

under an intergovernmental agreement the Elgin City Council approved earlier this year.

"It's not a real big amount of salt, but it gets them by," Loete said of Kane County's new storage system. "It saves them a fair amount of time."

While Elgin and other municipalities take care of their own salting and snowplowing needs,

the county is responsible for roads in mostly unincorporated areas that don't fall within a municipality.

Previously, rural roads in northern Kane County wouldn't be salted as quickly as desired because drivers would have to go all the way south to the St. Charles area to get salt-refills in their trucks.

Under the deal with Elgin, Kane County can leave salt at the public works building and its drivers servicing the north end will head there for refills instead of farther south. This year is the first time Elgin and the county have had such an agreement.

Loete said the deal does not allow for Kane County to use Elgin's salt and it should not

affect the city's ability to take care of its salting needs.

"Basically in a snowstorm we're doing our thing and they come in and load their trucks," Loete said, adding that Elgin has 5,000 tons of its own salt at the dome with another 2,000 on reserve elsewhere.

He predicted that should be enough to last the year and that so far this year the city hasn't had to use an inordinate amount of salt.

12-29-04 Chicago Tribune

METRO

## Vote on senior services tax hike may be delayed

**Kane officials fear cluttered ballot**

By William Presecky  
Tribune staff reporter

Kane County officials are backing off their support of a plan to ask voters this spring for a tax increase to support social services for the elderly.

Last April, the Elgin-based Senior Services Associates Inc. and the Salvation Army decided to wait until April 2005 to put the issue before voters. The

Kane County Board supported that plan, but on Tuesday, members of the Public Health Committee suggested the tax question should wait.

Committee Chairman Gerald Jones (D-Aurora) said that the county Forest Preserve Commission wants to place a countywide open-space bond issue on the spring ballot, and that timing seems crucial for that issue.

"We don't feel it's a good idea for your initiative to be on that same ballot," Jones told Bette Schoenholtz, director of Senior Services Associates.

Senior advocates have been pressing for a tax referendum question since August 2003. Jones' committee has reviewed the proposal since then to assess the needs and wants of Kane's more than 46,000 seniors. The county's senior population is expected to increase by 86 percent by 2020.

The cash-strapped non-profit agencies want to ask Kane voters to allow the county to levy a property tax of 2.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value to supplement public and private funding for senior services.

Jan. 31 is the last day for local

governing bodies to adopt resolutions allowing binding referendum items to be placed on the April 5 ballot.

With the recent addition of seven new County Board members and a new board chairman, Jones told Schoenholtz, "There still needs to be a certain level of salesmanship... to get the leadership and individuals on County Board members on your side."

"The merit is clear," he said. What is uncertain, Jones said, are the issues of added taxes and whether the new board sees senior services fund-

ing as a county responsibility or a state and federal matter.

The proposed tax increase would be aimed at helping underwrite an array of senior services, from transportation to meals.

Voters in 11 other Illinois counties, including neighbor-

ing Kendall, DeKalb and McHenry, have authorized taxes for senior services.

As proposed, the tax impact from a countywide senior-services levy could range from \$7.46 a year for a home valued at \$100,000 to \$24.12 on a \$300,000 home, according to projections.

### HOW TO CONTACT US

Comments, questions and suggestions about articles in this section are welcome. Write:

Susan Keaton, bureau chief

2000 York Road, Suite 115 Oak Brook, IL 600523

Call: 630-368-4269 Fax: 630-368-4266 Or e-mail: west@tribune.com

12-29-04 Beacon news

# Flu shots aplenty; some restrictions relaxed

■ **Now eligible:** Health departments expand priority groups to those 50 and older, caregivers

By **Angela Fornelli**  
STAFF WRITER

**GENEVA** — After all the hype about the shortage of flu vaccine, many health departments are facing a surplus.

It turns out that many people, including those in high-risk categories, sacrificed their shot to allow others, who they thought could be at higher risk, to receive it.

Now, counties across the state, including Kane and Kendall, are trying to get rid of

their remaining doses by relaxing some of the previous restrictions. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has expanded the priority groups for those recommended to receive the shots to include those ages 50 and older and those in close contact with people in high-risk categories.

High-risk categories include those ages 65 and older, anyone with chronic conditions, pregnant women, and children younger than 2.

The expanded priority groups will be effective Jan. 3.

The Kane and Kendall health departments early this month obtained additional vaccines through a reallocation of the supply from providers throughout the state that had extra doses.

Kane County received about 2,000 doses through the reallocation, plus about 700

from other area agencies that had them left over. After offering the shots at two clinics this month to only those who fit previous requirements, about 1,000 doses remain.

Kendall County has about 100 doses remaining from the 300 obtained from the reallocation.

The lowered demand does not necessarily mean that everyone in the high-risk categories has already received the vaccination.

"Seniors that felt healthy were holding off so the vaccine could be for somebody else who needed it more than them," said Mary Tebeau, community health program manager for the Kane County Health Department.

The mild flu season thus far this year has kept people from rushing for a shot, said Cindy Gross, epidemiologist for the Kane County Health Department.

But health officials advise that anyone in

the priority categories should get a shot, and it's not too late. Although flu season typically peaks in January, it lasts through March.

Visiting Nurse Association of Fox Valley was the primary provider of flu shots in the area this year. The agency provided vaccines to about 15,000 residents of Kane, Kendall, DuPage, McHenry, Lake, DeKalb and Will counties throughout October and early November.

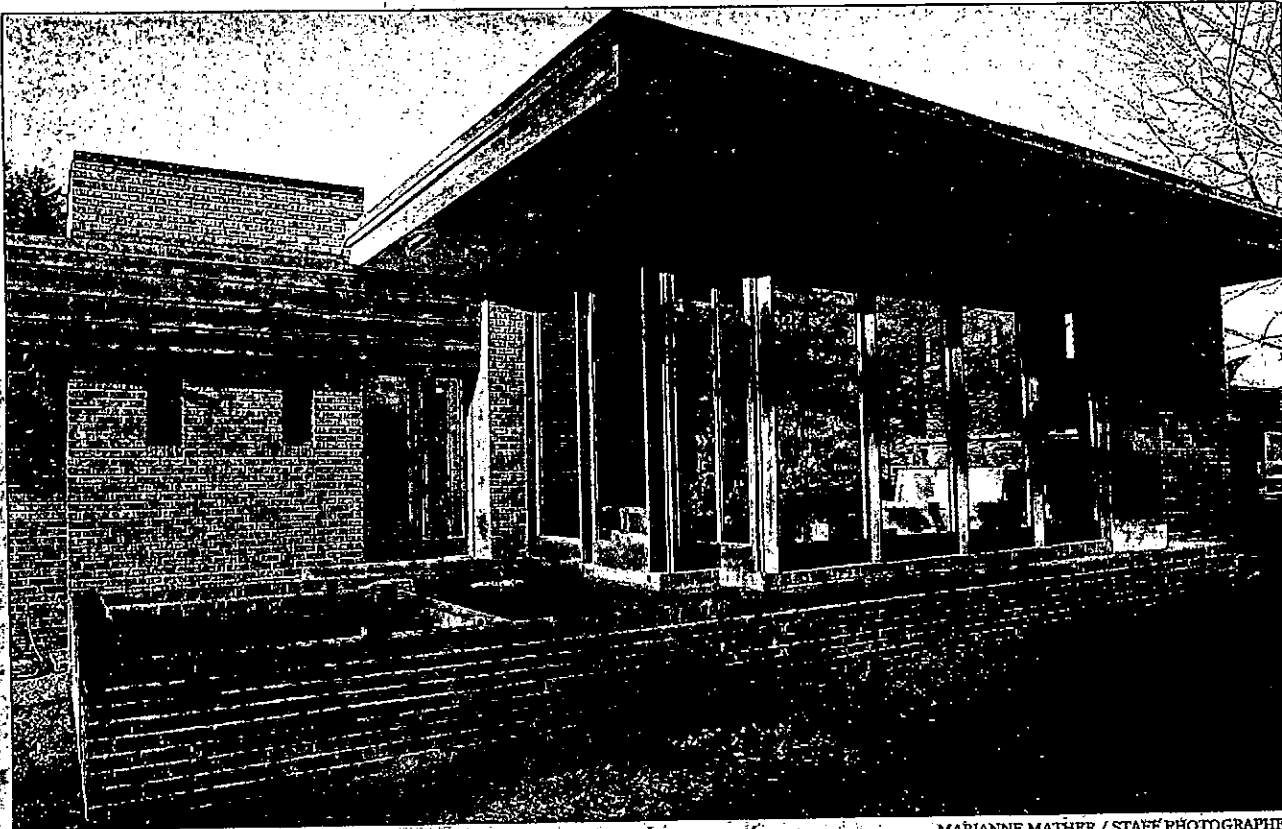
The flu shot shortage hit in early October when British regulators suspended the license of a manufacturing company that was expected to provide about half the nation's supply.

To schedule a flu shot appointment in Kane County, call (866) 233-9493 or (630) 264-7665. There will be a \$13 fee for the vaccine.

Appointments aren't necessary for a flu shot in Kendall County. Residents can walk in to the clinic at the Kendall County Health Department, 811 W. John St., Yorkville, every Monday between 2 and 4:30 p.m. Call (630) 553-9100 with questions. Vaccine will cost \$20.

## Flu shot clinics

- Elgin: Elgin Mental Health Center, 750 S. State St. (Route 31). Jan. 5, 1 to 5 p.m. Jan. 5.
- Batavia: Batavia Moose Lodge, 1535 Batavia Ave. 1 to 4 p.m. Jan. 10.
- Yorkville: Kendall County Health Department, 811 W. John St. 2 to 4:30 p.m. every Monday.



MARIANNE MATHER / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Mike Petersdorf and Sarah Muirhead are restoring this Frank Lloyd Wright-designed home, originally built in 1952, in a rural area of northern Kane County.

## Historic Wright house could be turned into inn

By Steve Lord

STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — It's been more than 50 years since Frank Lloyd Wright designed a farmhouse on Rohrsen Road in Plato Township.

At the time, the house was for Robert Muirhead and his family. The Muirhead family still owns the house, but the farm is on its way to becoming a forest preserve.

And the farmhouse is on its way from being a historic footnote to a palace, a paean to the past. Descendants of Robert Muirhead have asked for rezoning to turn the house into a bed and breakfast, and the early word is it will be a real head-turner.

This will truly be a national bed and breakfast destination, Mark VanKerhoff, building and community services director, told members of the Kane County Development Committee this month.

The house sits on the north side of Rohrsen Road, about three-quarters of a mile east of Route 47, in Plato Township. It is next to the more than 500-acre Muirhead Woods Forest Preserve, purchased by the Forest Preserve District in 2003.

The land is not developed yet, but it is loaded with natural features that have been allowed to grow free of farmland considerations. So it also does not completely look like the farm the Muirhead family worked for

many years.

In 1950, Robert Muirhead had the house built of rock and cypress plywood, designed by Wright.

And yes, it was designed by Wright himself.

Many buildings that claim direct lineage to Wright, one of the most influential architects in American history, were actually done by students. They are confused as such because they contain many of the features Wright used, such as windows that open outward.

But the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation Web site confirms that the Muirhead House definitely is a Wright-designed building.

Owners need the zoning change to

make the house a residence again. Because it was an owner-occupied building on a farm, it sat on regular farm zoning. But now it will be classified as rural residential, and needs the zoning change for that classification. It also will get a special use for a bed and breakfast.

The Development Committee gave the rezoning its blessing, and passed it on to the County Board for final approval, most likely in January. Kane officials were more than happy to approve the rezoning.

"It's really going to be something," said Phil Bus, Development Department executive director. "They're putting a lot into it."

The Thursday fire caused able to rescue the gifts.

well."

12-29-04 Chronicle

# N. Aurora shopping center proposal would provide land for police station

By ERIC SCHELKOPF

Kane County Chronicle

**NORTH AURORA** — A 600,000-square-foot shopping center being proposed for the village's west side will bring more than just stores — it also will provide land for a new police station.

Hoffman Estates-based Rubloff Development Group wants to build the North Aurora Towne Centre on 323 acres between the North Aurora Auto Mall and Randall Road.

As part of the project, the village will get five acres that it will use for a new police station and possibly a new village hall. The current police station is maxed out for space in the building it shares with village hall at 25 E. State St.

"Whether we put village hall there still has to be determined. We need a new police station, and that's where it should go," Acting Village President Max Herwig said.

A 10-acre park also would be built as part of the development, which could fulfill

## What's next?

- Plan commissioners on Tuesday recommended zoning the land for business use. Village trustees will consider an annexation agreement for the development at a Committee of the Whole meeting at 7 p.m. Tuesday at village hall, 25 E. State St.

the North Aurora Baseball Association's desire for more baseball fields.

Target and Kohl's would anchor the shopping center. Other stores committed to the project include TJ Maxx, Michael's Arts and Crafts, Pier 1 Imports, Famous Footwear and Petco Superstore.

Wetlands make up 110 acres of the property. The developer plans to build a four-lane road that would connect Orchard Gateway to Randall Road.

Plan commissioners on Tuesday recommended zoning the land for business use. Village trustees will consider

an annexation agreement for the development at a Committee of the Whole meeting at 7 p.m. Tuesday at village hall, 25 E. State St.

Rubloff seeks village approval by January 2005 so the project can get under way by March or April.

Target and Kohl's would open in the summer or fall 2006, said Rubloff Vice President Bob Brownson.

Rubloff has not been able to find commercial tenants for about 40 acres of the property, part of the development's second phase.

However, Rubloff plans to continue to market the land commercially for about three more years.

If it still does not get bites, it wants to build an undetermined number of upscale apartments and townhouses.

Brownson said the company would prefer to develop the land commercially.

"We make a lot more money as shopping center developers than townhouse or apartment owners," Brownson said.

AT GORDON



12-29-04 Chronicle

# Commissioners honored for windmill work

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

The commissioners of the Kane County Forest Preserve District were honored for the recent restoration of the Fabyan Windmill.

Preservation Partners' annual award dinner saluted the commissioners for "outstanding commitment" to the project, which began in 1997 and cost \$916,020. The windmill dates to the 1850s and has been in the Fabyan Forest Preserve on Route 25 since 1914, when it was purchased by Colonel George Fabyan. After extensive renovation, the sails were turning again this summer, something that had not happened in 60 years. A grand opening is scheduled for the spring.

Forest Preserve President John Hoscheit acknowledged

the work of past preserve president Jack E. Cook in restoring the windmill.

"This project really started under Jack," Hoscheit said. "He enabled the rest of the commission to focus on this important landmark."

Preservation Partners, which gave the award, has been involved in the restoration since the beginning. In 1997, Preservation Partners contacted Dutch windmill expert Lucas Verbij, who oversaw the restoration, Verbij said.

"The inside equipments and the interior of the structure makes this windmill very unique and actually a treasure of its kind," he said.

Verbij said the work included restoring the cant-posts, two sill plates atop the cant-posts, all the doors and windows and their frames. The

basement had to be restored and waterproofed, the entire windmill had to be painted, the balcony needed new timbers and new floors, the tower and cap had to be reshingled, and the shingles needed copper flashing.

Also, a new windshaft, a new tail pole, new wooden sailstocks and new shore beams to connect the new tail pole to the cap were installed. Verbij said the majority of work took a year on site and six months for the restoration plan.

The award dinner was held at the courthouse on Third Street in downtown Geneva. Past honorees include former Forest Preserve President Phil Elfstrom and former Kane County Board Chairman Mike McCoy. Preservation Partners Executive Director Liz Safanda emceed the event.

12-29-04 Chronicle

# County board jail tour rescheduled for Thursday

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

Kane County Board jail tour  
— Take Two.

The Kane County Board will tour the county jail Thursday. A tour was scheduled Dec. 8 to give the seven new board members perspective on overcrowding and poor conditions at the 400-bed jail at 777 E. Fabyan Parkway in Geneva. The board plans to construct a new 600-bed facility.

But none of the new members showed up for the tour.

"This is to give a second opportunity for board members to participate," said Chairman Karen McConnaughay.

McConnaughay said three members, Linda Holmes, D-Aurora; Tom Van Cleave, R-Batavia; and Bonnie Lee Kunkel, D-Aurora, told her of pre-existing conflicts before the Dec. 8 tour.

Van Cleave said he already

had seen the jail. He arranged a tour in January 2003 during his candidacy.

"It was a real eye-opening experience of an overcrowded jail, a dilapidated jail," he said.



McConnaughay

not imperative.

"From everything I've heard, the conditions there are supposed to be abysmal," she said. "It's almost a matter of do I need to go and look at it myself?"

Michael Kenyon, R-South Elgin, said he could not go to the Dec. 8 tour because of a Farm Bureau Board meeting in

Chicago.

"I've never been in the jail," he said. "I guess all you see is what you see on TV."

McConnaughay said the tour will give the jail issue more relevance to the new members.

"When you have hands-on experience of an issue, it heightens your awareness, it gives you a better sense of the issue," McConnaughay said.

McConnaughay said she has been informed of one new member who cannot attend Thursday's tour, Mark Davoust, R-St. Charles.

Davoust is out of the country.

"In a situation like this, you may never get perfect attendance," she said.

McConnaughay said having a majority of the seven new members attend will make the event a success.

"I certainly hope we won't have to reschedule this for a third time," she said.



Chronicle, photo by John Kavours

Attorney Julio Valdez prepares for a trial in the law library at the Kane County Judicial Center in St. Charles. The library is open to the public.

# Law library offers knowledge with a smile

*12-29-04 Chronicle*  
Library now in Kane County Judicial Center

By DAN CAMPANA  
Kane County Chronicle

ST. CHARLES — Walk in the Kane County Law Library's door for the first time and a smiling face will greet you from behind the counter.

Walk in that same door for the 10th or 100th time and you will be met with the same welcoming smile.

For the last five years, library director Halle Mikyska and librarian NancyLee Browne have been the sources of those smiles.

Their main goal: Provide information in a comfortable atmosphere to the diverse community they serve — a community that ranges from high-priced attorneys to the poor.

"Certain personalities are drawn to certain professions," said Mikyska, who has been with the library for 11 years. "We enjoy helping people."

Knowing the courthouse scares

many people entering its doors, Browne offers a "friendly" interrogation to better understand how to help someone.

She describes the technique as "giving comfort by giving knowledge."

Residing only a few steps away from arguably the busiest courtroom, traffic court, inside the Kane County Judicial Center, the law library serves as an oasis to its variety of visitors.

Thousands of pages fill the library's shelves — everything from historic U.S. Supreme Court cases to a children's book of Abraham Lincoln jokes.

Answers to legal questions come in many shapes and sizes, from skinny pamphlets explaining the basic rights a person has in court to seemingly ancient books detailing historical rulings by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Though they cannot offer legal advice, Mikyska and Browne do provide direction to patrons for

finding the information they need. Nearly 60 percent of all questions answered in 2004 came from people who are not attorneys.

Questions primarily focus on family law, ordinance violations and landlord-tenant issues, Browne said.

Attorneys have more specific requests, such as finding case law or recent legislative decisions that affect the legal world. Despite the sometimes demanding nature of lawyers, Mikyska said the library has a "wonderful group of attorneys" who regularly visit.

The library's theme doesn't limit itself to just big, old, dusty books written in the seemingly foreign language of the law. You can find a handful of fictional court and crime novels and even a copy of the movie "My Cousin Vinny."

The library, which joins more than 300 other libraries in the DuPage Library System, appeals to children as well, with the annual storytelling event that features a Kane County judge reading to kids.

Mikyska even has talked about bringing in board games as a fun alternative for those passing time in the library.

"Nancy and I are constantly making mental notes," she said of the inspiration for improvements.

"Much of it is unique to itself," Court Administrator Douglas Naughton said of library's features. He credits the work of Browne and Mikyska, as well as their personalities, for the library's atmosphere.

"They like coming to work," Naughton said.

Melissa Williams, who works as a domestic violence legal advocate at the Judicial Center, complimented the staff and the variety of resources offered by the library.

"They're very nice and very helpful," Williams said, as she worked on a report for an Aurora University class.

Naughton said the current library is a major improvement over its cramped predecessor in the old Kane County Courthouse that had little room for anyone or anything.

"It was not public-friendly," Naughton said of the big rolling shelves and a space that could not hold more than seven people at a time.

See LIBRARY, page 2

## Library

Continued from page 1

During the designing stages for the judicial center, which opened in 1993, officials brought in a professional librarian who specified the types of lighting and amount of space to help make the library aesthetically and functionally pleasing.

Funding for the library, which is overseen by the

Chief Judge's Office, comes from \$13 filing fees in civil cases, donations, money raised from selling books and service fees for things such as copies or faxes.

On filing fees alone, the library received nearly \$144,000 in 2003. They were raised by \$3 this year after a four-year fight in the legislature. It marked the first fee increase since 1992.

As for the future, Mikyska said she hopes to improve technology by enhancing software and adding computers.

12-29-04  
Beacon News

# Seniors tax issue won't be on ballot

■ **April vote on open space:**  
Board says decision to fund  
services can wait until 2006

By Steve Lord  
STAFF WRITER

GENEVA — A referendum to create a tax to provide services for senior citizens in Kane County will be delayed until 2006.

Kane County Board officials Tuesday confirmed they do not want to put the seniors tax proposal, asking for 2.5 cents for each \$100 of assessed value, on the April ballot because they already plan to put on a Forest Preserve District referendum to pay for more open space.

"This is probably the best opportunity for the Forest Preserve to go for expansion of open lands," board member Gerry Jones, D-Aurora, told organizers of the senior referendum. "The political climate is such that we don't feel it is a good idea for your initiative to be on the ballot."

Jones made his comments as chairman of the board's Public Health Committee. The senior services ballot question has been at the Public Health Committee level for more than a year.

Backers of the seniors referendum appeared before the committee Tuesday in hopes of getting the measure off the table and before the full County Board by January, in time to put the question on the April ballot.

While county officials have been discussing another open space referendum on and off, it had not been mentioned in any official way until Tuesday. In 1998, voters supported a \$70 million open space referendum which allowed the Forest Preserve district to aggressively buy land that might have been swallowed up by development. Officials are hoping to pass another

❖ Turn to **SENIORS, A2**

## SENIORS

From page A1

referendum to continue that kind of acquisition program.

### 'Needs' survey

Bette Schoenholtz, director of Senior Services Associates, asked committee members to consider backing the senior citizen referendum for April, even though she already knew the answer.

While she said she understood the county's situation with the open space referendum, she said the county's own senior services needs assessment, which the Health Department administered, "showed there was a need" for the increased funding.

She said that need will only become greater, as the population of more than 46,000 residents in Kane who are over age 60 is expected to increase 39 percent by 2010 and 86 percent by 2020, according to the 2000 census.

"The whole reason we came to you is because of this exploding

senior population," Schoenholtz said.

### Selling seniors' issue

Senior services officials have said the 2.5-cent tax would raise about \$2.5 million to help fund services that once were funded by state and federal sources. Many of those services have been cut in the past few years.

But Jones said County Board members right now believe as much effort should be spent lobbying state and federal officials to restore that funding.

"This should be a state and national issue," Jones said. "They've dropped the ball on this."

Jones also said County Board members need more concrete details of how the \$2.5 million would be dispersed. Because the earliest the senior referendum could be put on the ballot would be in 2006, Jones said that gives organizers plenty of time to plead their case.

"This not only gives you a chance to sell your case to the board members, but to the public as well," Jones said.

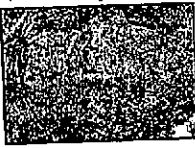
12-29-04 Chronicle

# Senior referendum unlikely in 2005

By PAUL DAILING  
Kane County Chronicle

Open space or the elderly? The Kane County Board's Public Health Committee on Tuesday advised proponents to delay a proposed referendum that seeks additional funding for senior services. Chairman Gerald Jones, D-Aurora, said the referendum would endanger voter support for a pro-

posed forest preserve referendum that seeks tax funds to acquire open space for preservation. Senior Services Associates, a local senior advocacy group, had been pushing for the senior referendum since 2003. The group wanted the county to provide funds to allow agencies to improve their services to seniors. In the proposal, the Kane County Health Department



Wojnicki

ment and coordination, caregiver services, elder abuse reporting, home health care, mental health services, counseling, nutrition and transportation. The committee will not recommend that the county board support the referendum because of the likely open space referendum. Barbara Wojnicki, R-St. Charles, said voter support falls when voters are faced with

many referendums. "It's unlikely that someone will vote in all of them," Wojnicki said. "They'll probably choose what's nearest and dearest to their own hearts." If the board had adopted a resolution in support of a referendum, the deadline to put it on the ballot would be Jan. 31, said Joan Renne, chief deputy to Kane County Clerk Jack Cunningham. If a referendum is placed on

the ballot by petition, the filing deadline is Jan. 18. As no election in fall 2005 is scheduled, the next chance for a senior services referendum would be spring 2006, an unattractive proposition to supporters. "We certainly don't want to wait another year," said Bette Schoenholtz, executive director of Senior Services Associates. See SENIOR, page 2

## Senior: Next chance for referendum likely spring 2006

Continued from page 1

The proposed referendum reads: "Shall the Kane County Board annually impose a tax of not to exceed .025 (percent) of the value, as equalized or assessed, by the Department of Revenue, of all property in Kane County for the purpose of providing

social services for senior citizens. Under the proposed referendum, property with a \$100,000 market value would pay \$7.46 annually and property valued at \$500,000 would pay \$39.91. The funds would be used "as a last resort; after all other possible funding sources have been exhausted."

Jones said proponents of the senior referendum need more board support. "I think there's a certain level of salesmanship that needs to be done," he said. Jones said Schoenholtz needs to "have a sit-down" with board members to discuss the nature of any possible referendum, including if such services are the county's responsibility. In several cases, the funds from the referendum would be replacing lost state or federal funds. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of Kane County residents age 60 or older increased 15 percent between 1990 and 2000, to 46,132 from 40,128. The county's population in 2002 was at more than 443,000.

12-30-04  
Chronicle



**Bill  
Page**

## The bottom of the mailbag

These don't look like letters to Santa...

**MAIL:** Why are you so down on Tom Van Cleave? Just because he's been elected to the county board doesn't mean he should give up his position on the Batavia school board. Instead of criticizing him, you should praise his public spirit. I think as long as Tom has the desire to serve (and the voter support), he should be allowed to hold any office he wants.

**BILL PAGE:** OK, but I'm drawing the line at Miss Congeniality.

\*\*\*

**MAIL:** Mr. Page, before you slammed the seven new members of the Kane County Board for not taking a tour of the jail, you should have asked each of them why they were absent. You would have found that these are busy people who can't rearrange their schedules at the drop of a hat. Besides, I don't believe the tour will serve much of a useful purpose. What can anyone learn by strolling through the jail?

**BP:** "Strolling through the jail?" Now there's a phrase I never thought I'd see. The reason for a personal tour is that the board members need to see, hear and smell the jail. You can't make a decision on a new jail if you don't know what the old one is all about. By the way, a second tour is scheduled for today. Want to bet attendance is better than last time?

\*\*\*

**MAIL:** If Jack Cunningham wanted to run for mayor of Aurora, then why did he go to all the effort to become Kane County Clerk? When he ran for clerk, he promised he'd modernize the office, but how can he decide after two years that he's ready to move on?

**BP:** After the debacle of November's elections, trust me, Jack is ready to move on. As to why he wants to become Aurora's mayor, I'm not sure, but my guess is because it doesn't involve counting.

\*\*\*

**MAIL:** I read your column about the lawsuit involving former police chief Don Shaw and St. Charles. I don't agree that he should give up his fight. There's more here than meets the eye, and the truth needs to be brought out.

**BP:** Sorry, but there's less here than meets the eye. Shaw's suit didn't have much basis in fact and relied heavily on a far-out conspiracy theory. As much as people love to believe in conspiracies, the truth is they rarely exist in any form. The one presented by Shaw makes sense only to people who believe in black helicopters and wear tin-foil hats.

\*\*\*

**MAIL:** How can you support issuing a liquor license to the Sportsplex? This is a facility that hosts youth soccer leagues, and I don't think it's a good idea for there to be a bar in the same place. Putting liquor in front of impressionable kids can lead to underage drinking. All I can see is trouble. Teenage girls and grown men drinking beer is not a good combination.

**BP:** Ummm ... I think you meant to phrase that differently. However, I didn't say the place should or shouldn't get a license. What I said was the rhetoric had gotten out of hand. Sort of like your letter.

\*\*\*

**MAIL:** I saw you at Blue Goose last week when you were ringing a bell for the Salvation Army. How did it all turn out? By the way, you don't look anything like your picture — you look much better in person.

**BP:** How come I think you saw the wrong guy? This picture is as good as it gets. We (Vern Oie and I) had a great time, but the really good news is that the Sally is going to make — or even break — its Christmas fund-raising goal. And that's thanks to all of you who responded so generously.

\*\*\*

**MAIL:** Bill, I've got a New Year's resolution for you. Instead of always writing about the mistakes our elected officials make, why not write about all the positive things they accomplish?

**BP:** I would, but I don't write fiction.

• Bill Page lives in St. Charles and owns a marketing company. He also writes about local issues on Tuesday and Thursday. Calls and e-mails answered at (630) 584-0809 or [wpage@mediawerks.org](mailto:wpage@mediawerks.org).

12-30-04 Beacon News

# Community responds to Marie's request

## FACES of 2004

This is the 12th in an ongoing series of stories revisiting some of the Fox Valley's people — and issues — who made headlines through 2004.

**B**ack in July, friends of Marie Wilkinson made a plea to the city she loves so dearly.

Help us find a way to keep Aurora's undisputed matriarch in her home.

Wilkinson had taken a bad fall weeks earlier, and doctors had told her she could not stay in her little white house on Aurora's West Side because she needed round-the-clock care.

To Marie, who has lived in that home since she moved here 70 years ago, the news was devastating.



Denise  
Crosby  
Columnist

So those who love this woman most decided to find a way to keep her there. They set up the Friends of Marie Wilkinson Fund at Old Second Bank and the plea went out through the pages of this newspaper and beyond:

Marie, who has spent the majority of her 95 years helping the underprivileged, the oppressed and the innocents, needed help herself.

And the community responded.

"Unbelievable," is how Scheketa Hart-Burns, a city alderman and close friend of Wilkinson, described the outpouring that followed.

The funds that were raised, she told me, were enough to keep Marie in her home throughout 2004, and will also allow her to stay there most of next year.

Money came in from all over — from private individuals to corporations. One day in November, Ed Schmitt's seven local McDonald's restaurants even earmarked 10 percent of their earnings to go to the fund.

As appreciative as they were of those large dollar amounts, Hart-Burns says the ones most touching were those small contributions from the people who could afford to give the least.

"One woman gave \$10, and to her, that was a big part of her income," says Hart-Burns. "But she told us Marie had been there for her, and she wanted to be there for Marie."

Wilkinson has indeed been there for so many people.

In the more than 60 years she has lived in this city, she has become an icon. She's helped start a science museum, human rights commission



STEVE ROSENBERG /  
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**Marie Wilkinson, who has helped thousands of people in need, is getting the help she needs to stay in the home where she has lived for seven decades.**

and an urban league. Her name appears on a day care center, on a park, on foundations, scholarships and a food pantry.

Her name is even on an honorary street sign on North View, where the door to her modest two-story home has always been open to the poor, the hungry, the homeless, the unemployed, the sick and the mistreated.

"I've tried to be an advocate for the persecuted; those who just weren't getting a fair deal," she said in a St. Anthony Messenger magazine article in 2002, not long after receiving the Lumen Christi Award, the Catholic Church's highest honor for missionary work in America.

"God points me in the right direction," she went on to say. "I know it is God because the things I feel passionate about were always 30 years ahead of their time."

There is nobody, says Hart-Burns, who has "touched more people in this community than Marie."

The money from the fund, she says, was used to pay for a person who stays with the elderly woman day and night. In addition, Wilkinson has a volunteer driver who takes her where she wants to go.

And as she gradually gains some strength, one of the places she still wants to go every Friday is the Marie Wilkinson Foundation and Community Food Pantry on North Highland Avenue, which opened in April of this year. There, she still helps bag groceries that are distributed to the most needy.

After decades of giving to the community she loves, Marie Wilkinson is receiving the payback she deserves.

And those who love her most say thank you.

# County committee assignments handed out

Board chooses Elgin  
Republican Wolfe as  
vice chairman

By Eric Walter  
Staff writer

The assignment of Kane County Board members to the panel's committees went smoothly until the race for mayor of Aurora reared its head.

District 5 Kane County Board member Bill Wyatt, an Aurora Republican, questioned Dec. 20 why new board chairman Karen McConaughay of St. Charles selected him to chair the Public Services Committee, since it oversees the Kane County Clerk's Office.

Wyatt and County Clerk Jack Cunningham both are running for the Republican nomination for Aurora mayor in the primary election Tuesday, Feb. 22, 2005.

McConaughay said Wyatt, previously chairman of the board's Transportation Committee, was well-suited for the position.

Wyatt's concern was settled after many of his fellow board members agreed to

of Hurlbut, Mitchell and Aurora Democrat Ken Griffin.

Newly sworn-in District 14 board member Mark Davoust, a Republican from St. Charles, will join Greviskes and Hampshire Republican Bob Kudlicki on the County Liquor Commission. Davoust also will serve on the Judiciary and Transportation committees.

New District 10 County Board member Tom Van Cleave, a Republican from Batavia, was named to the Human Services and Public Services committees.

The County Board also elected Elgin Republican Don Wolfe as its vice chairman, who will assist Karen McConaughay and fill in for her when she is unable to attend county meetings.

Wolfe has served on the Transportation, Finance, Solid Waste and Forest Preserve District panels during his eight years on the County Board. He also chaired the County Impact Fee Committee earlier this year.

"We're here to do the people's business," he said after his selection. "The people expect us to deal with the issues."

Karen McConaughay said the Forest Preserve District Board, which is composed of the entire County Board, will organize its committee structure at its next meeting Tuesday, Jan. 11.

12-30-04 Republican

*"We're here to do the people's business. The people expect us to deal with the issues."*

Don Wolfe

New vice chairman of the Kane County Board



appoint an interim chairman until the primary election in Aurora is decided.

District 13 County Board member Cary VanOvermeire, a Republican from St. Charles, said she expected to receive that appointment.

The chairman of the committees, approved unanimously, were appointed as follows: Aurora Democrat Paul Greviskes, Administration Committee; Elgin Republican Catherine Hurlbut, Development Committee; Carpentersville Republican John Noverini, Finance Committee; Republican Rob McConaughay of Geneva, Human Services Committee; North Aurora Republican Jim Mitchell Jr., Judiciary Committee; Aurora Democrat Gerald Jones,

Public Health Committee; and Elgin Republican Jan Carlson, Transportation Committee.

Karen McConaughay also selected the board's ad-hoc committee members. She will serve on the Labor Management Committee with her brother-in-law, Rob McConaughay, as well as Carlson, Jones and Noverini.

Barb Wojnicki, a Republican from Campton Township, will head up the Public Aid Committee, which will include township supervisors Doug Johnson of Elgin Township, Sue Harney of Dundee Township, Jerry Swanson of St. Charles Township and Jim Murphy of Aurora Township.

The Solid Waste Committee will consist



# Batavia wells should be tested

State says more Areas of health concern expand to homes on west side of Fox River

BY GALA M. PIERCE  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

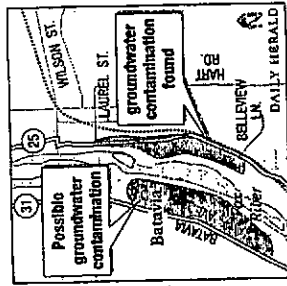
Ever since a well in far south Batavia coughed up a cancer-causing agent during a random test in 1986, state officials have constantly monitored the sol-

vent. Those property owners using private wells along that stretch of Route 25 have long been warned not to drink the water. Now officials urge residents on private wells across the river living near the Westside Cemetery to get their water tested for vinyl chloride.

The Illinois Department of Public Health made the announcement Wednesday after tests found more contamination in well water along the east bank of the Fox River.

Although there's no direct evidence the substance has migrated to the west side, officials said they're leaving nothing to chance, especially since the original source of the vinyl chloride has never been determined.

"No one is drinking the water where the contamination is, but the purpose of this (announcement) is simply to



say this contamination continues to exist and we can't predict with any certainty if this will affect wells on the west side," said Ken Runkle, environmental toxicologist with the Illinois Department of Public Health.

With long-term exposure, elevated levels of vinyl chloride

can affect the liver and may increase the risk of liver cancer. Roughly 50 to 75 wells near Route 25 are in the area of contamination. It is bordered by the river to the west, Bond Drive to the south and Laurel Street to the north.

Residents, who live on South Batavia Avenue from the Westside Cemetery to Merlo Drive as well as Woodland Avenue should call to get their water tested, too.

In January 1996, the state department of health found traces of vinyl chloride in the Montessori School's well during a routine check. Later, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency found higher levels of contamination in Batavia Concrete's production wells.

That company, along with Eagle Concrete and Funway Entertainment Center, began using the city's water supply, and the school began distributing bottled water.

Other organic chemicals with chlorine, such as trichloroethene, were discovered as well, Runkle said, but vinyl chloride is the only one of real concern.

IEPA officials have since built wells for the sole purpose of testing the water, he added, and that is where the recent traces were found.

The most recent samples, conducted in March, contained anywhere from 2 to 66 parts per billion in the monitoring wells, Runkle said. Water must have 2 parts per billion or less to meet the drinking standard.

In a 2003 health consultation, the state department of public health concluded that no public health hazard existed at that time for residents west of the river.

"This is more of a reminder to people that may have moved in the area," Kane County Health Department Environmental Health Director Fred Carlson said. "We encourage people to test their water (in private wells) every one or two years."

A list of private laboratories approved for testing can be obtained by calling the Kane County Health Department at (630) 208-3801.

It could cost residents anywhere from \$100 to \$300 to test for chlorinated solvents, Runkle said.

133 S. River Lane. The theft occurred during a party between 9 and 11:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 16. The coat check room was unattended, police said.

• Someone stole a cell phone and black leather coat valued at \$400 from Old Towne Pub, 201 W. State St. The coat was left unattended and discovered missing at 12:01 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 18.

• Someone stole a purse and contents valued at \$95 from a car parked at Gander Mountain, 2100 S. Randall Road, between 7 and 11 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 17. The car's passenger window was broken.

by the Illinois Ford F150 pickup heading \$7,500, Vanover said.

1230-04 Chicago

## Gilberts' president will not seek second term

### SHAW NEWS SERVICE

GILBERTS — Village President Everett Clark said he will not run for re-election in April.

Clark said he spends 30 to 40 hours a week on village work in addition to time he spends running his own business.

"It's my hometown, and for me to put any less time and effort into it just wouldn't be right," he said. "I really

just can't commit to four more years."

Clark was elected in 2003 to a two-year term as village president. His successor will run for a four-year term.

Gilberts Trustee Bill Lindoerfer said he is sorry Clark is stepping down.

"Everett put a lot of his time and heart and soul into the village," he said. "People forget the amount of time it takes."

Trustee Tom Wajda said

he will run to replace Clark. The village needs more employees, better equipment and buildings, and an updated comprehensive plan, he said.

"There's a number of things that need to get done," he said.

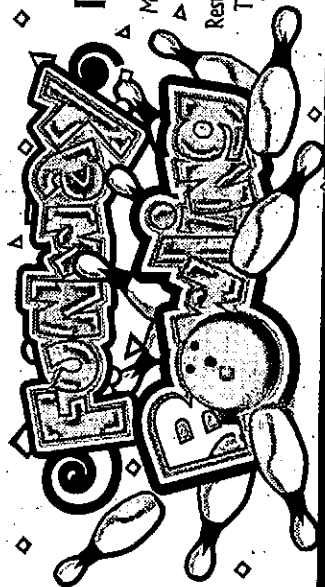
Eighteen residents have taken petitions to get on the April ballot, Village Clerk Shirley Sorenson said. Petitions must be returned between Jan. 17 and Jan. 25.

**AL CAPONE'S  
HIDEAWAY &  
STEAKHOUSE**

Authentic 1930's Chicago Style  
On the Old River Between St. Charles & Erie

**NEW YEARS EVE  
CAPONE STYLE**

HUGE STEAKS • FULL SIZE COCKTAILS  
ROARING 20'S CIGARS  
AND FEATURING...



**New leagues are starting.  
It's not too late, join today!**

Most leagues begin in the first week of January! Call Now!  
Parent & Child • Youth • Sunday Morning Mens  
Restaurant • Friday Evening Mixed • Thursday Morning Ladies  
Thursday Morning Seniors • Every Other Thursday Mixed

**Call 630.879.8717**

funwaybatavia.com

1335 S. River St. (Rt. 25), Batavia, IL 60510

~~12-30-04 Chronicle~~  
**Some Batavia residents  
urged to test private wells**

By ERIC SCHELKOPF  
Kane County Chronicle

BATAVIA — Some residents with private wells should have them tested for groundwater contamination.

The Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency said residents with private wells along the Fox River south of the West Batavia Cemetery between South Batavia Avenue and Route 25, might have contaminated water.

The agencies have been monitoring groundwater contamination in industrial and noncommunity public wells along Route 25.

The results showed elevated levels of vinyl chloride in wells between Route 25 and the eastern shore of the Fox River.

Long-term exposure to elevated levels of vinyl chloride can affect the liver and might in-

crease the risk of liver cancer.

"We aren't aware of anyone who has gotten sick," said Ken Runke, environmental toxicologist for the Illinois Department of Public Health. "It is better for residents to know, and then they can get their wells tested."

Runke said the source of the contamination is not clear. Residents can obtain a list of private laboratories approved for testing by calling the Kane County Health Department at (630) 208-3801. They can call the health department again after the samples have been analyzed for an explanation of the test results.

The Illinois Department of Public Health from 1996 to 2002 sampled several private wells west of the Fox River in southern Batavia to find out if there was any contamination on that side of the river. Vinyl chloride was detected in one well. The user was told of the results and advised how to reduce exposure.

# N. Aurora police cite need for new station

12-30-04 Chronicle

Officers say department has run out of space

By ERIC SCHELKOPF  
Kane County Chronicle

**NORTH AURORA** — The North Aurora police station is so cramped that a shower is used for storage.

Even though relief still is several years away, village officials are moving ahead to acquire five acres on the village's west side for a new police station and possibly a new village hall.

The land is being set aside as part of a 600,000-square-foot shopping center that Hoffman Estates-based Rubloff Development Group wants to build on 323 acres between the North Aurora Auto Mall and Randall Road.

Police Chief Tom Fetzer said the department has run out of space in its 4,600-square-foot building at 25 E. State St. The station opened in 1990 as an addition to the village hall.

"There is no room for lockers. Our evidence room is completely full, and there is no room for parking vehicles any more," Fetzer said.

Village hall has a similar space crunch. Filing cabinets are in the village board room because there is not enough space.

Fetzer said a new police station on the village's west side makes sense.

"The growth is going west. The land is centrally located," Fetzer said.

Any new police station or new village hall would not be built until 2006 or 2007 at the earliest, Village Administrator Sue McLaughlin said. The land is part of the shopping center's second phase, near Randall Road.

The developer plans to build a four-lane road — Orchard Gateway Boulevard — that would connect Orchard Road to Randall Road. The po-

lice station would be located north of Orchard Gateway, just west of Randall Road.

Village trustees will have to decide whether they should build a combined village hall/police station.

McLaughlin said she would prefer a combined facility.

"Right now, village hall and the police station work very well together," McLaughlin said. "We share the same computer system and the same phones. All would have to be duplicated if we had separate facilities. It would increase the cost."

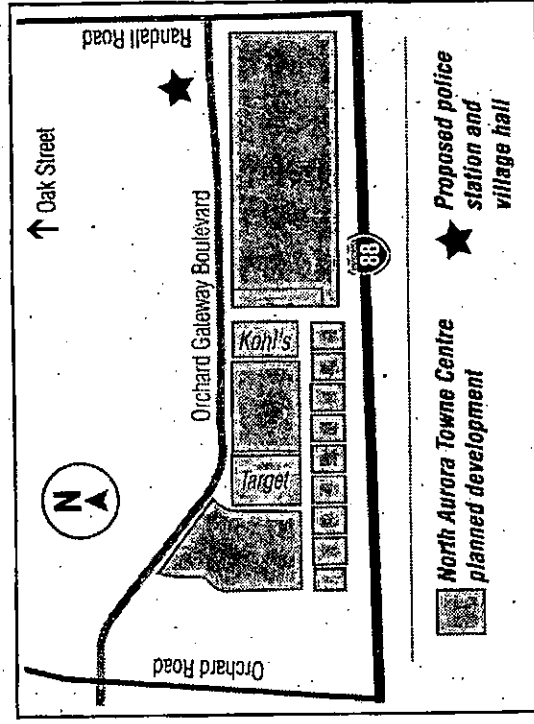
An architect in April 2003 estimated a 35,000-square-foot village hall/police station would cost \$11 million.

Another idea would be to have village hall expand into the space the police station previously occupied.

"Both the police station and village hall will get more room, no matter how it occurs," McLaughlin said.

Although village officials would have to figure out how to pay for the new facility, they will not have to buy the land for the facility.

"Rubloff is giving us 5 acres,



and we are reimbursing them through a sales tax rebate. It is not like we are taxing residents. We will still be ahead," McLaughlin said.

Target and Kohl's would anchor the proposed North Aurora Towne Centre. Other stores committed to the project include TJ Maxx, Michael's Arts and Crafts, Pier 1 Imports, Famous Footwear and Petco Superstore.

Wetlands make up 110 acres of the property.

Plan commissioners this

week recommended zoning the land for business use. Village trustees will consider an annexation agreement for the development at a Committee of the Whole meeting at 7 p.m. Tuesday at village hall, 25 E. State St.

Rubloff seeks village approval by January 2005 so the project can get under way by March or April.

Target and Kohl's would open in the summer or fall 2006, said Rubloff Vice President Bob Brownson.

12-30-04 Daily Herald

# Batavia mayor wins citizen of the year

BY GALA M. PIERCE

*Daily Herald Staff Writer*

Batavia's longest-serving mayor has done more than just lead his community for almost 25 years.

Jeff Schielke has contributed to the town as a journalist, historian, preservationist, volunteer firefighter, auxiliary police officer and leader in regional issues.

He has seen Batavia double its size and has helped establish Randall Road as a commercial hub during his tenure as mayor.

The 56-year-old also knows how to let others shine and take the reins in efforts such as the Batavia Riverwalk, Batavia Renaissance Project and the Fireworks Access Committee, Chamber of Commerce Director Roger Breisch said.

The chamber announced Wednesday that Schielke will be



**Jeff Schielke**

honored as the 2004 Citizen of the Year at its Jan. 22 annual awards dinner.

"Can you think of a person who has dedicated their life more to this community than Jeff Schielke?" Breisch asked.

The chamber received 30 letters nominating a dozen residents. A six-person committee, composed mostly of past recipients, unanimously chose Schielke, Breisch said.

Suzy Petkus of Batavia, who has worked as Schielke's secretary for 15 years, continually is amazed by his wealth of knowledge.

"He's not looking out for what's best for Batavia in just

See **BATAVIA** on **PAGE 9**

# Batavia: Mayor is co-author of book

*Continued from Page 1*

2004, but 2030," she said.

Mike Evans, chamber president, agreed.

"No one in this community has dedicated themselves to its past, present and future more than Jeff," he said in a statement. "We are fortunate to have such a dedicated servant to lead the community. The chamber is pleased to be able to recognize his many years of service in this way."

Among all his community involvement, Schielke has served or continues to head the Kane County Council of Mayors; Tri-City Ambulance board; Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert's bridge siting committee and Kane County's original storm water management committee. Furthermore, he co-authored 1987's "Historic Batavia" and its update in 1997, and won the Preservation Partners of the Fox Valley's Preserva-

"All the people who have been previous recipients have been strong contributors to the fabric of our community."

**Jeff Schielke, Batavia mayor**

tionist of the Year award in 1995.

Schielke, a graduate of Aurora University who was honorably discharged from the Army, said he was humbled upon hearing he was named this year's Citizen of the Year.

"All the people who have been previous recipients have been strong contributors to the fabric of our community," he said. "They have played major roles in many of the successful chapters to the city's history."

The chamber created the Citizen of the Year Award in 1958 to recognize those who made

## Jeff Schielke

**Personal:** 56 years old; married to Linda

**Before becoming mayor:** Graduated from Waubesa Community College and Aurora University; honorably discharged from the Army; reporter-editor with the Kane County Herald newspaper; reporter and commentator for radio station WGSB; and served as an auxiliary police officer.

**Term as mayor:** Elected in 1981; has been re-elected five consecutive times and holds the record as longest-serving mayor in Batavia.

**During his tenure as mayor:** He has seen the city grow from 12,500 people in 1981 to 25,000 in 2004; overseen industrial growth to more than 5.5 million constructed square feet and retail growth, which has resulted in \$4.46 million in sales tax revenue in 2003 compared to \$450,000 in 1985; worked in a community effort to complete a public riverwalk; supported the passage of six public school referendums, two park district facility expansion referendums and two library referendums.

**Present:** Chairman of the Tri-City Ambulance board of directors for the past 21 years, the Kane County Council of Mayors since 1985 and the Chicago Area Transportation Study Council of Mayors since 1996; continues to volunteer with the fire department; serves as member of the Pace suburban bus board.

**Other achievements:** Co-chairman of the successful \$70 million county forest preserve open space referendum in 1999; co-authored two updates of "Historic Batavia," named Preservationist of the Year by the Preservation Partners of Fox Valley in 1995; and was chairman of Congressman Dennis Hastert's Fox River Bridge Siting Committee in 1990.

strides in maintaining and improving the character of Batavia. Last year, the chamber honored long-time volunteer Peggy Haines, who was the first posthumous Citizen of the Year.

## Unfinished projects have Schielke seeking re-election

**BY GALA M. PIERCE**

*Daily Herald Staff Writer*

There are many community projects dangling that Batavia Mayor Jeff Schielke wants to see come to fruition.

The William J. Donovan bridge reconstruction, the Route 25 realignment project, the fire station expansions, the citizens transportation task force and the Mooseheart deal all come to

mind.

That's why he will run for office again in April. No one else has announced that they're running yet.

Schielke, 56, said receiving the 2004 Citizen of the Year Award had no bearing on his decision to run again. The decision to make an announcement after the holidays came a few weeks ago. "It is a nice send-off to go for term No. 7, though," he said.

He began to circulate a petition a couple of days ago.

First elected in 1981 after Mayor Archie Bentz, Schielke was re-elected for five consecutive terms.

Schielke wants to ensure no issues surface during the bridge reconstruction in 2006.

He already has announced he wants to put a half-cent non-home-rule sales tax increase on the ballot next spring.

The money would be earmarked for capital improvement projects, and the fire stations would be first on the list, he said.

The citizens transportation task force, which should commence next month, may make decisions on other improvement projects.

Schielke also wants to see downtown redevelopment ideas take shape and new commercial retailers on the southeast side.

# Testing of wells in Batavia urged

## Precautionary measure targets sites along Fox

By William Presecky  
Tribune staff reporter

The detection several years ago of high levels of vinyl chloride in private wells on the east side of the Fox River in Batavia has prompted state and county health officials to advise private well users on both sides of the river to have their water tested.

According to Fred Carlson, director of environmental health for the Kane County Health Department, the precautionary advisory issued Wednesday by the state Department of Public Health is aimed at people with private wells between Illinois Highways 31 and 25, south of West Batavia Cemetery.

All private wells warrant testing every year or two, Carlson said.

He estimated that as many as 75 residential wells, mostly along the west side of the Fox River in Batavia, are used actively.

State health and environmental investigators began several years ago to monitor groundwater contamination in the riverfront in southern Batavia. Re-

sults revealed high levels of vinyl chloride, a human carcinogen, in wells between Illinois 25 and the eastern shore of the Fox River, according to Ken Runkle, a state environmental toxicologist.

"All of the contamination that has been tracked is on the east side of the river," Runkle said.

The state concluded in 2003 that there was no health risk for residents on the west side.

"But ... it's not predictable whether it could potentially affect wells on the west side of the river, so that's why we wanted to include that area" in the advisory, he said.

"The risk of adverse health effects depends on the level to which one is exposed and the length of that exposure. To date we don't know of anyone who has been exposed in this area," Runkle said.

Long-term exposure to the chemical can affect the liver and may increase the risk of liver cancer, Carlson said.

Carlson said it was "never proved positive where [the contamination] was coming from."

"What they think is that historically there might have been some dumping along south Route 25 in that area," he said.

The county Health Department can answer questions or provide a list of testing laboratories. The phone number is 630-208-3801.

12-30-04 Chicago Tribune

# Kane County gives computers to kids

## Police group will redistribute 110 surplus machines

By William Presecky  
Tribune staff reporter

More than 100 personal computers that Kane County has declared to be surplus are to be donated to a police group this month for redistribution to underprivileged and at-risk children.

Roger Fahnestock, director of the county's Information Technologies Department, was granted approval this week to release the computers to the charitable arm of the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 14.

Of the 360 computers the county has removed from service over the last year as part of technology upgrades, 110 can be reused, according to Fahnestock.

Using the roughly 600-name database for its "Shop With a Cop" program, which distributes Christmas gifts to underprivileged children, the FOP plans to load the computers with updated software and distribute them "to those who need them in the community," ac-

cording to Dennis Carroll, the group's project chairman.

"Our intentions are to coordinate with community [non-profit] groups in Kane County . . . to establish a community computer program," said Carroll.

"The program would essentially provide computers to underprivileged or at-risk kids [who] want to volunteer in their neighborhoods in exchange for the computer," he said. Families in need would be eligible as well.

"The program has a lot of potential to develop into a computer-training program," he said.

Fahnestock recommended releasing the computers to the FOP because it was the only non-profit group that was willing to take all of them.

Fahnestock said it was impractical for his office to attempt to dole out the surplus equipment on a piecemeal basis. "A lot of organizations want one or two," he said.

Under the agreement approved by the County Board's Administration Committee, the police group will "act as the agent to distribute them," said Fahnestock.

He said some department employees have agreed to volunteer their personal time to help upgrade the software.



# S. Elgin pushes senior housing

BY ADAM KOVAC  
Daily Herald Staff Writer

Faced with a shortage of housing for senior citizens, South Elgin is urging developers to consider building new residences tailored to the elderly, officials said.

Attracting and keeping seniors has several long-term benefits, village planners say, and as a result, they want more housing designed for seniors who still live on their own.

Community Development Director Steve Super said more senior-housing projects, such as the River Crossing condominiums under construction downtown, could pay off for South Elgin.

"We're trying to be as balanced as possible so when people get older, they can stay in South Elgin," Super said. Increasingly, many are not.

According to U.S. Census Bureau data, the number of people 65 and older is not keeping pace with the total population of South Elgin.

In 1990, the village had a population of 7,474, of which 704 were 65 and older, 9.4 percent of the total.

In 2000, the village had a population of 16,100, of which 922 were 65 and older, or just 5.7 percent of the total. The village hopes to reverse that trend.

"When you can keep people in your town for their whole life cycle, it's a win-win."

While elderly advocates applaud South Elgin's efforts, they also are concerned many seniors won't be able to afford the upscale development rents.

Besides two live-in nursing homes, the Alderwood Health Care and Carlington Care centers, South Elgin does not have town house or apartment com-

plexes for independent seniors, Super said.

The seniors-only River Crossing project would add 45 units for older residents and talk of a senior-targeted subdivision would fill an elderly housing void on the village's west side.

Jennifer Almanza, with Senior Services Associates in Elgin, said with nearly 254 elderly residents who require special services, South Elgin has a need for additional senior housing.

Although it's a good sign the village recognizes a shortcoming, officials and developers need to ensure new developments are affordable and reflect the needs of elderly tenants, Almanza said.

"There's a huge base of seniors that want a safe, comfortable place to live—heat in the winter and air conditioning in the summer," Almanza said. "They don't need microwaves and swimming pools."

12-30-04 Beacon News  
Batavians on private wells advised to test water

BEACON NEWS STAFF

BATAVIA — The Illinois Department of Public Health advises Batavia residents who obtain drinking water from private wells in certain areas along the Fox River to have their water tested for possible groundwater contamination.

The department routinely reminds

those who use private wells to have their water tested as a precaution. Public wells are monitored on a regular basis by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

In the mid-1990s, the Illinois EPA found elevated levels of vinyl chloride, which can cause damage to the liver, in public wells between Route 25 and the eastern shore of the Fox

River, on Batavia's south side. The state Public Health Department then found vinyl chloride in a private well west of the Fox River in southern Batavia.

The source of contamination was not determined, and residents who use private wells and live south of the West Batavia Cemetery between South Batavia Avenue (Route 31) and

South River Street (Route 25) are advised to continue having their water tested.

People can contact the Kane County Health Department at (630) 208-3801 for a list of private laboratories approved for testing. After the samples have been analyzed, residents can call the Health Department for an explanation of the results.

Churches should be exempt from this fee

I am a longtime member of Lord of Life Church and am writing to express opposition to the Kane County Board's and Transportation Department's traffic impact fee as it applies to churches. According to the county, churches are now considered developers because they cause traffic, or do they?

The greatest amount of traffic caused by churches is on Sunday mornings and some weekday evenings after 6 o'clock. These are considered off-peak hours and do not cause any traffic congestion.

At Lord of Life we are finally able to add onto our current building that was constructed in 1992. We have been overcrowded shortly after we began holding services there.

We have been planning for this addition for quite awhile to meet the needs of our congregation, not in anticipation of a high influx of new members.

The Transportation Department says they have modeled this impact ordinance after DuPage County's.

Well, according to DuPage County's traffic impact fee ordinance, if the construction will not generate additional traffic, the development will be exempt from the impact fee.

Let's face it, the traffic congestion in Kane County is not caused by churches. Out in the La Fox area, the additional traffic will be generated from the new Metra station, and the new housing developments that have been approved for La Fox, along with Elburn's continued expansion.

Please call, write or e-mail the Kane County Transportation Department and let them know you are in favor of exempting churches from the traffic impact fee.

Patricia Plass  
St. Charles

12-30-04  
Republican