



Case House receives award

Comet staff report

The old Federal-style house had stood at the corner of Front and Wabash streets in Delphi since 1844, but by the mid-1980s it was scheduled for demolition.

Now carefully restored, the 162-year-old structure known as the Reed Case House at Canal Park has received the coveted Preservation Plaque for 2006. The award was given by the Wabash Valley Trust for Historic Preservation, headquartered in Lafayette. Structures in Tippecanoe and surrounding counties are considered for the award.

"This house was literally rescued from destruction because of

the work of many volunteers and interested friends of the Canal Association," said Annadell Lamb in accepting the plaque at the presentation Nov. 8 at the Trust's Graves House Preservation Center. Lamb is chairman of the Reed Case House Committee and a board member of Wabash & Erie Canal Inc., which now owns and operates the house.

The two-story house has special importance to the Canal group because it was built by Reed Case, who was the enterprising young builder who won the contract to build the Wabash & Erie Canal through the Delphi area.

Owners of the house, Jim and

June Davis of Delphi, recognized this and offered the house to the Canal Association in 1983 instead of tearing it down. This gift assured its preservation. It was moved to its present location in Canal Park in July 1986, and renovation began soon after that.

After a long history of occupancy by families, as a boarding house and later as a vacated apartment house, there was much work to do. Lamb said damage to the siding, a poor roof, and leaky windows and doors presented grave concerns for the young Canal Association.

"With limited funds, the group relied heavily on volunteers to get the building weather-tight, repair damaged plaster and

replace inappropriate picture windows," she said.

"As volunteers began removing wallpaper, tile, pipes and fallen plaster, interesting finishes were discovered. Historic Landmarks Foundation experts were consulted for guidance, and an art conservator came to discover original finishes, working on winter days in the unheated house."

Lamb said room by room, the restoration progressed, with careful attention to preserving and restoring original woodwork.

Sponsors for the Wroten Entry Hall, the McCain Parlor, the Gruber Parlor, the Hildebrandt Kitchen, the Justice Master Bedroom, the Grantham

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Preservation Plaque

The Reed Case House at Canal Park, Delphi, was recently presented the 2006 Preservation Plaque from the Wabash Valley Trust for Historic Preservation. Pictured, l-r, are Jim and June Davis, who donated the house to the Canal Association in 1983; Annadell Lamb, Canal board member and chairman of the Reed Case House Committee; and Dan McCain, president of the Canal Association. Comet photo by Jennifer Archibald

Judicial mandates are a state-wide controversy brought home

Now a Carroll County problem

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

Tension has grown in the last two council meetings between Carroll Superior Court Judge Jeffrey Smith and the body of the county council over the county hiring policy. The issue also includes county auditor Beth Myers, who is bound by state board of accounts guidelines to follow county ordinances and resolutions.

The issue seemed at first to be whether Dee Dellenbach, hired by Smith as court bailiff, should be considered a part-time employee, a temporary employee, or a full-time employee. Smith did not advertise the position prior to interviewing and subsequently hiring Dellenbach.

However, the real issue seems to be about the council's authority, or lack thereof, to impose one of those conditions on court personnel the same as apply to all other county employees. Each category dictates a rate of pay and benefit level explained in the county personnel policy manual, contained in the budget and included in the county salary ordinance.

At the last council meeting, held Nov. 6, council members denied Smith's request to pay Dellenbach the same salary as Vick Lesh, the absent bailiff granted unpaid medical leave. Smith's additional request to pay medical benefits to Dellenbach was also denied.

According to Myers, Lesh's leave is unpaid because her vacation days, sick time and personal days have all been exhausted. Lesh continues to receive disability benefits from county-provided life and disability insurance, Myers added.

In response on Thursday, Nov. 9, Smith issued a mandate, or a court order, filed in Carroll Superior Court, which ordered the council to abide by his request for the funds.

Council members exercised their perceived authority and the judge exercised his perceived authority. And thus set the stage for a drama that is being played out across the state in at least three counties.

Smith's order reads:

Mailing label goes here

"IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

1.The salary of Dee Dellenbach as bailiff of the Carroll Superior Court shall be \$21,622 annually, as previously approved by the Carroll County Council in the Carroll County Salary Ordinance for 2006 and 2007 from the date of employment.

2.Dee Dellenbach shall be paid for the period from October 9, 2006 to October 22, 2006 and all subsequent pay periods the difference between the claim for wages filed and the salary paid immediately.

3.Dee Dellenbach shall receive all benefits of a full-time employee of Carroll County, including but not limited to health benefits, retirement, sick days, vacation days, holidays, or personal leave days from the date of her employment.

4.The Carroll County Council and the Auditor shall take all necessary steps to implement this order.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED THAT the Carroll County Council and the Carroll County Auditor appear before the Carroll Superior Court on a date and at a time to be fixed by further order of the Court and show cause why the salary and benefits ordered above should not be paid."

According to President of the Association of Indiana Counties and Montgomery County Auditor Jeff Dossett, council has the option to accept the order or not. If it is not accepted, the matter will go to litigation before a special judge for a ruling. And if the council does not agree with that ruling, the matter will go to the Indiana Supreme Court, which is where Montgomery County Council members find themselves at present.

Dossett said in a Nov. 9 Comet interview, AIC would like for the matter to receive national attention for a permanent resolution. He said for a judge to order unplanned spending is a dangerous situation.

"A judge's mandate is a form of judicial tyranny," Dossett said. "I would love to see the issue go to the federal level (for resolution)."

AIC is working to support legislation that would remove the ability of a judge to demand the county pay for what the court believes to be necessary, not what council members determine to be necessary.

"If the council is no longer in control of the county finances, taxes will go up," Dossett

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First the ceremony...then the real work!



Area IV Development Corporation held a ceremonial ground breaking for senior housing project, Water Tower Place, last Wednesday. The project is similar to Area IV projects in Benton, White and Clinton counties. The project was conceptualized approximately six years ago, according to Area IV Executive Director Sharon Wood. "There has been an enormous amount of time, money and energy expended over the years to bring affordable housing for seniors to Delphi," Wood said. Pictured at the ceremonial ground breaking left to right, are Mike Recker of the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, Brad Marley of First Financial Bank, Wood, developer David Uttermohlen, George Brown of Great Lakes Capital Fund and Delphi Mayor Lee Hoard. Comet photo by Debbie Lowe

A night of policy-making for DCSC board

By Kevin Schnepf
Staff writer

Policies were the hot topic at the Monday night Delphi Community School Corporation Board of Trustees meeting.

A revised attendance policy for the middle school was adopted as well as changes and additions to the corporation-wide bylaws and policies manual.

The new policy manual replaces the existing version.

According to Shelly Wills, secretary to superintendent Ralph Walker, a majority of the manual did not change.

Board member Mike Shoemaker made the motion to approve the document, with a second by Melinda Rossetter. The new corporation policy manual was unanimously approved.

The board worked with Ohio-based Neola during the updating process. Neola helped make policy changes adhere to state and federal laws.

Superintendent Walker said the policy manual is a "living document" that can be revised or updated at any board meeting. Pending changes, the mission and vision statements were excluded from the approval process.

The corporation's drug and alcohol policy has not changed. The three strikes rule is still in effect.

However, one section added

was a drug test policy for students. Random drug testing will soon be a tool available to the corporation.

As stated in the new drug testing policy section, "the board

requires that each student participating in one of the corporation's interscholastic athletic programs, extra-curricular programs, or driving to school, sign an enrollment application agreeing that

the student will participate in a random drug-testing program, conducted and paid for by the corporation, during the term in which the student will be participating."

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Best Thanksgiving Float

Salin Bank won the award for Best Thanksgiving Float in Flora's Holiday Parade on Saturday. Others winning awards were: Living Faith Church of the Brethren, Best Christmas Float; Girl Scouts, Best Walking Group; Mann Chevrolet-Buick, Best Motorized; and Carroll High School Band, Most Entertaining. This year's theme was "Making Holiday Memories." Comet photo by Jennifer Archibald

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