

## 'Blue Bridge' dedication



The Stearns truss bridge in Delphi was dedicated in grand style on Sunday with speakers, Carroll County Community Band playing on the bridge, and the driving of a "golden spike" on the newly added deck. Two hundred people attended.

The bridge is part of Delphi's 10-mile trail system and part of the Wabash Heritage Corridor Trail. Now located over the Wabash & Erie Canal, it is the only bridge of its kind in the U.S.

To help celebrate the history of the bridge, built

in 1905, a 1903 Winton automobile arrived on site and crossed through the bridge. It will be the last vehicle allowed on the structure. The car is owned by Dr. Peter Kesling of LaPorte and was driven by his son, Adam Kesling. This particular car traveled across the U.S. from coast to coast in 2003 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the nation's first transcontinental crossing by a 1903 Winton.

A relative of the Keslings, Ethel (Betty) Beard Simons, has written



Comet photos by Jennifer Archibald

a history of the Stearns truss in Delphi, including its move from Pulaski County to Delphi, where it was restored. The history was donated to the local canal museum. Simons is a descendant of the owners of the construction

company that built the Stearns truss bridges. The Stearns bridges were purported to be more economical than the Pratt bridges because they used less metal. They were designed to be lightweight and portable.

## Delphi receives half million dollar grant to construct replica canal boat

Comet staff report

The City of Delphi has been awarded \$550,392 to help fund the construction of a replica canal boat and related support structures to preserve and interpret the historic Wabash and Erie Canal. The boat will be located at the Interpretive Center at Canal Park.

The award is part of more than \$20 million in Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds being distributed statewide by the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT).

Transportation enhancements are transportation-related activities that strengthen the cultural, aesthetic and environmental aspects of the nation's inter-modal transportation system. The funds are used for projects such

as multi-use trails, streetscape improvements and historic bridge rehabilitation.

The City of Monticello was also a recipient of TE funds. The City was awarded \$455,200 to fund the rehabilitation of an historic two-span Whipple Truss bridge over Lake Freeman and the Tippecanoe River. The 454-foot bridge is believed to be the longest Whipple Truss bridge in existence.

Each year, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) sets aside funds that states award to municipalities for the development and construction of projects enhancing the existing transportation system. Indiana's TE Program allows funding for transportation projects to expand beyond the tra-

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## Flora Christmas parade Saturday

Comet staff report

Flora's Christmas parade will be Nov. 17 with the theme "Christmas is for Children of All Ages."

The parade will begin at 12:30 p.m., with line-up at 11:30 at Jackson-Lee-Pearson's northeast office building at the corner of Willow and Clark streets. Registration is also there.

Awards will be given for Best Float, Best Depiction of Theme, Best Motorized, Most Entertaining, and Best Walking Group.

The parade will proceed on Clark Street to Center Street, to Main, and will end at the park.

Santa will be in the parade and will visit with children in his house on Center Street after the parade until 3 p.m. He will return for visits every Saturday

through Dec. 22. Hours will be 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Flora Girl Scout troops also will be in the parade and will collect blankets and non-perishable food along the route. The items will be given to the Lafayette Women's Shelter, which serves Carroll County.

Pre-registration for the parade is encouraged. Call Danielle Hicks, 967-3292. Entries also will be accepted on the day of the parade.

Gift & Craft Show

The Flora Community Club sponsors the parade and this year is also sponsoring a Carroll County Christmas Gift & Craft Show at the 4-H Building at the park from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free trolley rides will be available between the downtown and the park during the craft show hours.

## 2006 county audit is revealed

By Debbie Lowe  
Staff writer

County leaders, including council members and commissioners, will discuss issues at a joint Wednesday evening meeting in relation to the results of the Indiana State Board of Accounts (SBOA) audit results made public Oct. 26.

The SBOA engaged county leaders and department heads in exit conferences for departments found to have problems or be out of compliance with the Indiana Code or SBOA rules.

State law dictates the auditor's and treasurer's books must be balanced monthly. In the case of Carroll County, that has not happened in the past four years. According to Tammy White, SBOA office supervisor for counties, without the balance knowledge, it would be impossible to know how much money the county has or does not have. However, those two offices were not the only offices noticed by the SBOA's 2006 audit report findings.

**Emergency Medical Services**  
Results were discussed Sept. 5 with: Beth L. Myers, auditor; Loren Hylton, president of the board of county commissioners;

Robert Baker, president of the county council; Michael Durr, EMS director; and Ann Brown and Ron Slavens, county council members.

SBOA reported EMS issues included accounts receivable balance for ambulance billings was \$709,190 on Dec. 31, 2006. A comparison of collections to billing showed a significant number of accounts not being paid or not being paid on a timely basis. The accounts receivable balance increased 37 percent from the prior year. The collections for 2006 decreased when compared to 2005 collections, from \$290,315 to \$211,502.

Financial records were incomplete, according to SBOA. It was unclear to SBOA whether all accounts were properly billed. No evidence was presented to indicate follow-up was done on the accounts billed when payment was not received.

SBOA recommended officials establish controls to ensure billings be completed in a timely manner and follow-up made on all outstanding accounts. It was recommended that a monthly accounts review be made to determine all procedures were followed.

Each governmental unit is responsible for complying with the ordinances, resolutions and policies it adopts (Accounting and Uniform Compliance Guidelines Manual for Counties, Chapter 1).

The following record keeping deficiencies were encountered while examining the records of EMS for the period ending Dec. 31, 2006:

1.) Financial records were incomplete and did not accurately reflect all of the activity of the EMS. The financial records presented did not always agree with detail records in the auditor's office. Billing appears to

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## Council/commissioners to meet in joint session

By Debbie Lowe  
Staff writer

The consensus in Carroll County is that the county government is very short of, or out of, money. Residents have asked repeatedly how the county got into this condition.

Answers were given sporadically, if at all. But the situation is one with which the county as a whole must contend.

According to end of the year reports from the auditor's office published in the *Comet*, Carroll County's general fund receipts (income) in 2003 were

\$2,673,012, but disbursements equaled \$6,176,780, making the deficit \$3,503,768. The story then begins to unfold.

A slightly different picture emerged in 2004 when receipts totaled \$7,794,008 and disbursements were \$6,568,310, Continued page 5A

## Ellers to be Flora parade marshals

By Jennifer Archibald  
Staff writer

Dr. Alvan and Arlene Eller will be grand marshals of Flora's Christmas parade on Saturday. The parade begins at 12:30 p.m.

The Ellers were chosen as grand marshals because of their involvement in the community.

Dr. Eller was a physician in Flora for 33 years, and Mrs. Eller was comptroller at the office for 20 years. They are members of the Flora Community Club and helped with the original fundraising efforts for the Carroll County YMCA.

They are members of the Flora United Methodist Church, and are active with church mission work. Earlier this year they went on two mission trips to Mississippi to help with Katrina relief work. They plan to go back in March.

Dr. Eller is chairman of the Carroll County Board of Health, is on the Wesley Manor (Frankfort) board of directors, and is a member of the Carroll County Medical Society. Mrs. Eller is a member of the Medical Society Auxiliary. She catered meals for the Society for more than 10 years.

Since his "retirement," Dr. Eller has filled in at all the area Clarian Arnett offices and at Urgent Care. He said he will soon be assisting in the Dermatology Department - seeing patients part-time at the Salem Street office in Lafayette.

Mrs. Eller owned and operated Arlene's Boutique in Flora for seven years and was co-manager of the gift shop at St. Elizabeth Hospital for 10 years. The latter was a volunteer position.

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Arlene and Dr. Alvan Eller, pictured at their home near Cutler

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