

Commissioners hear another round of dairy opposition

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

Carroll County residents have organized to express outrage that a third dairy planned for the county is slated for construction. Other objections heard were about the first two dairies and the Twin Lakes Regional Sewer District. As the other groups before them, this group approached the commissioners at the Monday night meeting requesting they halt construction of the proposed project.

'We Americans Love Our Land' is the latest entity that wants the county commissioners to take action. Organizer Daryl Johns told county leaders that group members are "motivated, dedicated and focused" against dairy concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs).

"We are not fighting hog farmers," he said.

Johns presented a petition with 65 names within one mile of the newest dairy, which would be located in Tippecanoe Township. He also presented a resolution from the Shafer and Freeman Lakes Environmental Conservation Corporation (SFLECC) requesting a moratorium be placed on approval of construction of any dairy CAFOs in Carroll County. The resolution was signed by the president of SFLECC.

Johns reported Carroll County Economic Development Corporation held a reception for the Tippecanoe Township operation. He said he found the statement made by the owner that he would be hiring workers from Mexico because "Americans won't work

for what we pay" to be offensive.

"Enough is Enough" is the opponent group's motto. Johns reported there are 79 CAFOs in the state of Indiana and 37, or nearly 50 percent of them, are located in Carroll County.

Johns requested commissioners' president Loren Hylton refrain from commenting during the discussion due to a conflict of interest.

He stated that failure of commissioners to act upon the request for a moratorium would result in lack of support at the polls in the November general elections. Commissioners took no action.

Carroll Manor

Commissioners adopted Ordinance 2008-04 to establish a method by which donations to the Carroll Manor would

only be able to be used for the facility's operational needs. It would be used at the discretion of the superintendent Martha Lewis and the commissioners, as they routinely approve claims against the account.

"I think it's a good idea," commissioner Bill Brown said.

Lewis said she did not prepare a graduated fee schedule for approval as indicated on the agenda.

County resident Galen Perry read a three-page written statement in support of taxpayer maintenance and fiscal support of the facility. Perry criticized EDC for not promoting the Manor, the commissioners for not increasing rates until recently and not ensuring the elevator project was finished in a timely manner and the *Comet* for writing about the at-

tributes of local bridges and the canal interpretive center and not promoting the facility.

"We have to get rid of this negative publicity," Perry concluded.

Brown said he agreed with "most" of what Perry presented.

"We need to give it (the facility) time now that we've invested in the elevator," he said.

During public comments, EDC Director Daryl Smith defended the role of EDC in the community as it relates to both Carroll Manor and dairy CAFOs. He explained the role of EDC is to bring jobs into the community.

Smith continued to explain that Johns and the newly formed group he represented were not opposed to dairy
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Forum to connect communities

Carroll County Focus on the Future Inc. will host a county-wide forum to learn about the many positive efforts happening in the county. Representatives from Flora, Delphi, Camden, Burlington and Yeoman, along with leaders of various community efforts, will speak April 30 at 7 p.m. at the Community Senior Center, 115 N. Division St., Flora.

Speakers will each have five minutes to tell what is going on with their group, what their future plans are, and what volunteers can do to assist. In addition to the city's and towns' representatives, other speakers will include leaders from Leadership Carroll County, Friends of Carroll County Parks, Historic Resources, the context sensitive area along the Hoosier Heartland Highway, the Wabash and Erie Canal Boat, the county's economic development plan, tourism, Eel River Tribe activities, Carroll County Ag Asso-

ciation, and the Community Foundation.

After the presentations, there will be time for questions and the sharing of ideas and resources. Refreshments will be served.

The forum is sponsored by Carroll County Focus on the Future, Inc., a not-for-profit organization that was formed as a result of the county's strategic planning effort held in 2004-2005, known then as "Carroll County at the Crossroads." The purpose of the organization is to bring individuals and organizations in the county together to address important issues, to sponsor forums that help educate people about issues and to stimulate more active engagement of citizens in the community, to build unity and spirit across the county, and ultimately, to develop a better Carroll County.

Everyone is invited to participate in the forum, learn more about what is happening in the county, and join in helping to build a better community.

Riding for St. Jude's



First Step Preschool in Flora had a Trike-A-Thon to benefit St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. The children raised \$1,462. Pictured left to right are: Front three - Charlie Balsbaugh, Morgan Viney, Hunter Anthony. Back - Mason Rudd, Megan Wagoner, Mason Click. The nursery class and preschool class each rode around the First Brethren Church parking lot for an hour. Comet photo by Jennifer Archibald

Help clean up the Tippy

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer



McDowell

Now that temperatures are rising and thoughts turn to the great outdoors, Carroll County Emergency Management Agency Director Dave McDowell wants all residents to remember there is a segment of the local population which is not able to go out to their back deck and readily fire up the grill. That's because their grills have been washed downstream and are probably located somewhere near where the Wabash and Mississippi rivers converge. However, there are many unusable household items and general debris still remaining on the banks of the Tippecanoe

River at Tecumseh and Horseshoe bends in Carroll County.

In an effort to help those residents get their lives back on track, McDowell has teamed with Delphi United Methodist Church for a May-long push to engage volunteers to work each Saturday.

"Volunteer groups are being asked to pledge a Saturday in May to work along the banks on both bends," McDowell said in a recent *Comet* interview. "We need personnel as well as volunteer dumpsters, port-a-potties and boats to do what needs to be done."

The Flood Relief Fund of Carroll County, organized by the UMC, is coordinating volunteers. Those wishing to volunteer either singly or with a group are encouraged to call church representative Kim at (765) 202-3935.

McDowell, who can be reached at (765) 564-4243, said a block party is being planned for the end of May to celebrate the completion of the project. He urged anyone who wants to volunteer in boats to cruise the river for trash pick-up to contact him. He also said any property owner with a site for the block party could contact him to arrange for the gathering of workers and homeowners and/or to launch watercraft for clean-up efforts.

District 2 commissioners' seat to be challenged in May primary

By Debbie Lowe, Staff writer

There have been many primary elections in Carroll County when the only candidates to choose from were those on the national level. However, this year is different. There are two Republicans vying for the District 2 commissioners' seat.

Incumbent George Mears is being challenged in the primary election by Delphi businessman Pat Clawson. Both candidates agreed to sit down with the *Comet* and explain why they believe they are the best candidate to lead the county out of its financial crisis.

Mears looks to the future for answers

George Mears said the county must focus on economic development for its salvation.

"We haven't created an economic engine to fill those voids in the county," he said. "We've got to make something happen."

Mears said he has been a Carroll County Economic Development Corporation board member for the past three years and said he "sat in" on the meetings for the first year he was in office, which was 2004. He described some projects as "painfully slow" to mature to be able to produce the needed results for the county. Mears said EDC demonstrates accountability with taxpayers by what has been accomplished in the county since that time.

When asked why he should

be elected for a second term given the history of his first term, Mears said it was important for him to continue the positives that have been put in motion during the last four years.

"We've got to look towards the future to make something happen," he said.

Mears explained he "had influence on making the Hoosier Heartland Highway adapt to suit the county's needs" as one of his accomplishments while in office.

Mears said he considered himself more of a visionary, which he said was the role best suited for a commissioner. He said a commissioner should be looking and planning for the future wellbeing of the county. He resisted questions about the

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Mears

Clawson vows to bring county government under control

Pat Clawson is convinced it is time for commissioners to stop ignoring the daily problems in county government. He believes commissioners must not allow the county to go unattended or unsupervised in the name of looking to the future.

Clawson said that he would make a better commissioner than the incumbent because he is in touch with the community. He cited as an example poor road conditions. He said Mears lacks action when it comes to overseeing the daily activities of department heads and the work they are or are not doing. Clawson said there should be standard job descriptions in all departments and commissioners should adhere to the rules they adopt, such as the nepotism policy.

Clawson said it is essential that the treasurer and auditor's books balance according to state statute. He added he would halt violations of the law.

"We've got to get that fixed," he said. "I would expect a complete written financial status report every month, submitted prior to the meetings. Commissioners have to follow-up with department heads to make sure they do what they are supposed to be doing."

"I don't think anyone is inept," he continued. "This isn't rocket science. If they are entrusted with public funds and they are getting paid for the job, they need to do their jobs or get someone in there who can do the job."

"I don't claim to know all the
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Clawson

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