

Clawson gets Republican nod for commissioner



Clawson Delphi resident Patrick F. Clawson won the Republican nomination for county commissioner, district 2, in Carroll County, ousting incumbent George Mears. "I am thoroughly impressed by the number of voters who turned out for this important election," Clawson said upon winning the nod. "My next step

is to prepare for the fall election. I appreciate everyone who supported me and I hope to continue to have their support."

"It's time to start studying the job now," he continued. "I will attend commissioner meetings when I can." "I am looking forward to the fall election and whatever comes after that," he concluded.

Clawson had 1,153 votes (62.29%); Mears 698 votes (37.71%). Incumbent William R. "Bill" Brown was uncontested in district 3.

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Scott W. Ayres of Flora and Jay B. Bordner of Bringham, along with incumbent Carl R. Abbott of Delphi, received the Republican nominations for county council at large. Abbott received 1,209 votes (34.34%); Ayres 1,096 votes (31.13%); and Bordner 1,216 votes (34.54%).

Other Republicans who were uncontested were: Judge of the Superior Court, 74th Judicial – Jeffrey R. Smith of Delphi, 1,525 votes; Clerk of the Circuit Court – Nancy S. Mattox of Delphi, 1,559 votes; Recorder – Barbara Ann Chapman of Flora, 1,445 votes; Coroner – Jay Dee Cree of Camden, 1,643 votes; and Surveyor – Wayne E. Chapman of Delphi, 1,633 votes.

For Republican precinct committeeman, Burlington Township, Robert

Continued page 5A

Budget reductions are explained

The Comet has been asked by readers to explain how the county budget appropriations have changed over the past 12 months and what those changes mean for each department.

A chart and information can be found on page 5B of this issue. The chart details from information provided what the amended 2007 appropriation budget was, what departments initially requested for 2008, what budget was submitted to the Department of Local Government Finance for approval in September, and finally how the council revised it and adopted it in mid-April.

A brief overview is included of each department's losses, funding shifts and in one case, an increased appropriation. This is not meant to be the final word, but was designed to help the reader grasp the scope of what happened to the county budget and how it got to where it is today.

Wildcat oxbow creates natural opportunity

By Kevin Schnepf
Staff writer

A parcel of farmland along Wildcat Creek in Carroll County will grow its last crop this season. Next year the low-lying field will be returned to its native state, filled with trees and Indiana prairie grasses, and will remain that way forever.

David McCain, a member of the Wildcat Creek Foundation (WCF), told the Comet Thursday the foundation will soon own a 50-acre field nestled between Adams Mill and Adams Mill Covered Bridge near Cutler. WCF is a non-profit land trust organization formed to protect areas along the scenic waterway for which it was named.

"The foundation views this area as the gem of the Wildcat," McCain said. "This field is the central part of the gem."

McCain said the foundation will work with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to reconcile the tilled ground back to its natural state as a wetland. The effort will create Oxbow Natural Area, a protected park between the bridge and mill which will allow visitors to stroll between the points of interest.

'Oxbow' is a term used to define a waterway which circles back close to a point from which it came, much like the shape of a yoke used with oxen. The narrow opening of land between the opposite-running waters of the Wildcat at this site made it feasible for the mill to be situated there. Water coming in from upstream could be directed through the mill run then back into the creek on the other side of the building.

Another benefit of an oxbow according to McCain is that the banks form a natural barrier for the land inside the circle. The result is a perfect place for animals and plants to flourish and humans to enjoy. He said the



The wetter the better
Wildcat Creek Foundation (WCF) member David McCain points at a dark area where water typically stands in a field situated between Adams Mill Covered Bridge (visible in the background) and the mill near Cutler. McCain said WCF, a non-profit organization which helps protect areas along scenic Wildcat Creek, will soon purchase the 50-acre plot to create a recreational wetland park called Oxbow Natural Area. A portion of a levee which separates the field from the creek will be removed to allow water to fill the wetlands naturally. More trees will be planted to extend the wooded riparian buffer along the waterway and the remainder of the field will be sown in native Indiana prairie grasses. McCain said a planned boardwalk and trail through the site will help protect the creek valley while adding to the area's potential to draw visitors. Comet photo by Kevin Schnepf

layout was what enticed the foundation to focus on the site.

Last year WCF purchased the wooded buffer between the creek and field. The purchase was made possible with some help from private donations and the Indiana Heritage Trust, which is mainly funded by environmental license plates.

McCain said the project was moving along steadily. Work has already begun on a trail through there which will meander along the creek from the mill to the covered bridge. More trees will be planted around the field's perimeter to

extend the buffer. A few invasive and exotic trees will be removed beforehand. The remainder of the field will be sown in native Indiana prairie grasses. Additionally, a small portion of a levee between the future wetland and creek will be removed so water from creek flooding will keep the wetland damp.

McCain affirmed the trail should be completed this year and will include a stairway to provide access to the bridge from the lower-lying field. Visitors will be able to park across the road from the mill and

walk around the oxbow to the bridge.

As the wetland develops, plans call for a boardwalk to be installed through there so walkers can enjoy the natural area up close.

The idea for the nature area's name came from a study of the Wildcat Creek valley performed by landscape architecture students from Purdue University. They focused on the same area WCF had eyed, calling it the "Oxbow Opportunity." Plans they drew up included the wetland and

Continued page 5A

Commissioners grapple with gravel roads

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

Carroll County Commissioners became concerned about which hard-surface roads were planned to be ground to gravel per the proposed 2008 road plan at their Monday morning meeting. When it was learned CR500S between Prince William Rd. and SR39 was scheduled to become gravel, and noting that there were 14 houses on the road, it was determined a special meeting was needed to discuss county road issues and solutions in-depth.

Commissioner Bill Brown said roads in housing growth areas should be preserved as much as the county could afford in order to encourage additional new home growth.

Commissioner George Mears suggested commissioners develop "creative financing" for residents which would help the county with the cost of maintaining more hard-surfaced roads.

Highway superintendent Ron Francis said the county receives enough from gas tax to maintain approximately 20 percent of the roads in the county.

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Delphi council promotes Safe Routes to School Program

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

Delphi City Council unanimously approved a resolution to pursue Indiana Department of Transportation grants to construct sidewalks and bicycle paths on Armory Rd. at its Monday night meeting. The venture, in collaboration with the Delphi Community School Corporation, would provide safe paths for students to use to get to

school. Completion of the construction would allow students to travel to school by walking or biking thereby reducing vehicle emissions and increasing physical fitness.

Funds could also be available to make improvements to pedestrian interchanges on Armory Rd. According to Delphi Mayor Randy Strasser, a bicycle rodeo would be a component of the kick-off celebration when construction is finished, which he

predicted would be later this year.

Council members agreed by consensus to hear a presentation by Star Development about a low-to-moderate housing rehabilitation funding program the city could offer. According to Strasser, the grant, for owner-occupied residences, could be submitted next January.

"I think it's a really good idea," Brian Garrison said.

Continued page 5A

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