

## Burlington logs to get un-jammed

### Commissioners work with INDOT to correct problem

By Debbie Lowe  
Staff writer

A logjam on Wildcat Creek has caused problems for the town of Burlington for weeks. It would be a risky proposition for any local entity to attempt to dislodge two large sycamore trees and accumulated debris in order to clear the waterway. However, the Indiana Department of Transportation has the right tools for the job. And it is willing to help when a formal request is made.

Carroll County Emergency Management Agency Director Dave McDowell said he worked with State Senator Brandt Hershman to formulate a plan to rid the area of the jam. The agreement calls for INDOT to clear the trees and brush from the water to the banks. The county highway department would be responsible to remove the debris from

the creek banks. McDowell said the jam is approximately 100 yards wide and 50 yards long and adjacent to the town's wastewater treatment plan. He said a significant flood would cause sewage problems in the area.

Commissioners voted to send a formal request for INDOT assistance to eliminate the log jam this summer.

**Veteran's administrator**  
Outgoing Carroll County Veterans Service Officer Bob Morrow was presented a plaque and a county resolution was adopted for his 59 years of service to the county and its veterans.

The resolution was read

aloud by commissioners' president Loren Hylton citing Morrow's many years of service and his provision of "utmost dignity" to his clients. Hylton said

a brick in Morrow's honor would be purchased and placed in the memorial walk located at the courthouse.

After the brief ceremony, Morrow gave the key to his office to auditor Beth Myers

Commissioners will immediately advertise the position by posting the job in the courthouse. A published advertisement will appear in the June 11 issue of the *Comet*.

**Highway department**

Highway superintendent Ron Francis reported that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) decided to reimburse the county for 75 percent of the labor costs associated with recent flood debris removal.

He said the estimated labor cost was \$40,000.

Additionally, the county was encouraged by FEMA to make two additional removal efforts. He said the debris was to be personal and not contractor rubbish and must be placed in the county right-of-way along roadsides.

Francis informed commissioners the highway department would expend the 2008 appropriation for fuel in the next two months. He said when he announced this to the county council, he was motivated by the members to utilize cost-saving measures before requesting an additional or transfer appropriation to pay for fuel for the remainder of 2008.

Francis developed a list of procedures to which highway department employees will be expected to strictly adhere. The list included not leaving truck engines idling for more than three minutes.

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Log jam on Wildcat Creek at Burlington

## Land use plan progress slow

### Steering committee steps up for zoning ordinances

By Debbie Lowe  
Staff writer

Members of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Steering Committee appeared at the Carroll County Area Plan Commission meeting last week to discuss progress, and the lack of progress, of the plan. They also made recommendations that would help the county take steps toward a final product. Steering committee spokesperson Miriam Robeson explained the committee, designated in the contract as the entity which would guide Ground Rules Inc., the firm hired to develop the plan, began meeting last November and has worked diligently with and without Ground Rules representation at meetings. She said the first draft of the plan was expected in late May or early June and the second draft would be ready by the end of June.

Describing communication with Ground Rules as, at times, a "disconnect," Robeson reported the firm is not making the progress expected. She said the contract was for 14 months with a provision that could add to the county financial obligation if delays were not due to Ground Rules. Robeson said the steering committee learned only recently Ground Rules had not reported to APC. She further stated that it was imperative for the county to adopt updated zoning ordinances to aid in economic development.

"We can't wait for the comprehensive plan to be completed," she said. "We've done a good bit of pushing to keep moving this forward."

Zoning administrator Kathy Mylet advised Ground Rules has been paid approximately 52 percent of the contracted cost, which is roughly \$57,000 but jumped to \$61,000 when an additional night meeting was held.

Steering committee member Judy Berkshire said one reason the firm was hired for the job was that it offered a money back

guarantee.

"It's certainly time to stop paying him (Brad Johnson, land use planner)," she said.

Delphi Mayor Randy Strasser said the lack of updated zoning ordinances "hampers the city in being able to make progress."

"Without the steering committee, we wouldn't have anything," APC member Pete Wagoner said.

Robeson presented three requests for approval. They were:

- Authorize the steering committee to schedule and conduct public meetings for review and comment for the plan draft under the supervision of the zoning administrator, APC attorney and APC;
- Continue land use plan development using Ground Rules, with language added to the contract to include a cap on compensation regardless of the final product delivery date, plus a late-delivery deduction if the final product is not delivered by Aug. 1; and
- Authorize the steering committee to update the zoning ordinances as a new project under the supervision of the APC attorney, for an estimated cost of \$10,000.

Wagoner moved to adopt all three recommendations with a second provided by John Hampton. The motion was approved unanimously.

**EDC**  
Carroll County Economic Development Corporation Executive Director Daryl Smith requested pre-approval to re-zone two sites, one on US421 near CR100N and one at the edge of Flora, as industrial. He said with the pre-approval, the sites could achieve the state approved "shovel ready" status and could be marketed as "industrial." He said there was "great promise" to develop both sites for industry.

Smith said another two sites were being readied for the same purpose.

APC gave preliminary approval to the plan but was concerned about whether the Town of Flora, which has its own planning commission, would do the same.

A letter of intent to EDC to re-zone the parcels of land will be sent.

**Construction fees**  
Carroll County Commissioners twice rejected a revised fee structure for building permits due to a perceived ambiguity of one classification of building and how the cost for a permit would be determined. APC adopted a slight change in the wording of the amended fee structure to address commis-

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## Call-out for local autism chapter

### Parents of autistic child tired, desperate for help

By Kevin Schnepf  
Staff writer

Robert and April Zopp of Yeoman do not get very much sleep. They are busy tending to the needs of their 15-year-old daughter, Lyndze. Parents of healthy teens might feel like they accomplish little besides chasing their kids around at times, but Lyndze provides extra challenges compared to a typical teenager. Within the last two years she was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome, a form of autism, along with other disorders.

Lyndze requires around-the-clock attention because of her condition. April said her daughter could go from sweet and smiling to thrashing and angry in a heartbeat. Exhausted and sore from what April termed daily "rages," the couple has tried to find help from a host of sources. However, agencies who send volunteers typically do not return to help again.

"Every organization that sent a volunteer said they would not return," April said. "It was more than they were prepared to handle."

She explained Lyndze has a high-functioning form of autism. Her first word, uttered at the age of four months, was rhinoceros. She was able to carry on conversations two months later.

April explained the couple went years not knowing what affected Lyndze or how to deal with it. Doctors did not have the knowledge or technology



Baking up a campaign

Yeoman couple Robert and April Zopp are pulling out all the stops to raise support for local families of autistic individuals. They want to start a local chapter of the Autism Society of America in Carroll County and are biking and baking their way toward the goal. They hope their efforts will spur others in the county who are strained by autism's demands to help bring ASA to the rescue. Comet photo by Kevin Schnepf

to determine her condition and medications they prescribed based on mis-diagnoses only made matters worse. One drug made Lyndze gain almost twice her body weight in just a few months.

"There were no real adequate tests up to 2002," April explained. "A diagnosis then was if they can speak and run then they're not autistic. In the last six years, some great tests have been developed."

During those more recent years the couple began to find answers to some of their questions. A correct diagnosis was made by occupational therapist Leonard Miller in Brookston.

April said Miller looked for the root cause to Lyndze's condition instead of tackling symptoms as had been the approach of previous physicians. When he reported his findings to physicians a connection to autism was established, Lyndze

was admitted to a special hospital to ease her off unhelpful prescriptions and introduce proper treatments.

Lyndze just finished eighth grade at Twin Lakes schools. She was enrolled in special education. This year, thanks in large part to close monitoring of select prescriptions, she was well enough to be part of the "mainstream" school chorus and Spanish classes. April said

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## Council split on bill-paying vote

### Funds stability vs. no loan interest

By Debbie Lowe  
Staff writer

Carroll County Council members were again faced with putting enough money in the general fund to pay upcoming bills at their Thursday morning meeting. However, from where to draw the money provided significant discussion. In the end, no consensus was reached.

Auditor Beth Myers said she needed approximately \$240,000 until June 17 to pay claims and payroll. Her suggestions were to make another inter-fund loan or draw money from the approved tax anticipation warrant loan.

Council member Ron Slavens said the fund balances should not be touched. He said the balances needed to show stability to maintain consistency. Council mem-

ber Jerry Hendress expressed concern about the concept of borrowing money which would incur interest.

"I'd rather us use the inter-fund loan rather than borrowing," Council member Carl Abbott said.

However council member Steve Ashby advocated the council borrow the money from the bank.

"We have to have (fund balances) right," he explained.

Slavens said it was important to track income correctly.

"The cost of the loan is minimal," he said.

"We have to have faith in the system," Abbott said. "We have to have faith in the people. We've come through the hard times with the cuts we've made."

Although he previously advo-

cated borrowing the needed funds from the secured tax anticipation warrant, Slavens made a motion to approve an inter-fund loan from the cumulative capital improvement fund not to exceed \$240,000. Hendress provided the second. The motion passed three-to-one. Slavens, Abbott and Ann Brown voted to approve the motion. Ashby voted against the measure. Council president Nancy S. Cripe and Rob Baker were absent.

Ashby said Friday the council did not have a comprehensive list of what money had been borrowed and from what funds. He said correct totals were imperative for council members to study and understand before deciding how to proceed.

"We were provided with hand-

outs just prior to the meeting and this doesn't allow time to review the information," he said. "It just isn't enough time to make an informed decision."

Brown said Friday, although she voted to approve the inter-fund loan, she was not in favor of the measure in the long run.

"I wanted to get us moving," she said. "I figured one more inner-fund loan was okay - we had to get the bills paid."

Brown said she did not have all of the information she needed to make the best decision, but considered the tax anticipation warrant a safety net. She said the council did not know how much inter-fund loan money had been borrowed because some was repaid.

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