

Family fun awaits at Wildcat Creek celebration



Celebrate serenity

Canoeists enjoyed a quiet float during last year's Celebrate Wildcat Creek at Adams Mill east of Cutler. Visitors to this year's event on Saturday can also enjoy free supervised canoe rides courtesy of the Wildcat Creek Foundation. Other activities of the day include kids programs, nature hikes, tours and food. Photo provided

Comet staff report

Carroll County's Adams Mill will host the annual Celebrate Wildcat Creek June 7. The event, which offers a variety of activities ranging from free canoe rides to nature hikes and special kids programs, has become a springtime tradition for many in and out-of-county residents.

Although the emphasis is a laid-back day of relaxing in the beauty of the area, a solid environmental message will be evident. Visitors and families will have the opportunity to learn about the significance of the North Fork of Wildcat Creek, one of only four streams in Indiana to have earned designation as a

state scenic stream. Local conservation groups will be present to share what they are doing to keep the Wildcat and its corridor pristine. New this year will be the dedication of Oxbow Nature Preserve, a 68-acre site adjacent to Adams Mill. The preserve will be restored from its present agricultural use to forest, wetlands and prairie. After a short dedication ceremony at 2 p.m., cake and lemonade will be served.

Other activities include: live music throughout the day by the Dulcimer Gathering, The Dogs and Dave Inskeep and Cindy Fisher; an opportunity to observe and visit with local crafts people and artists; a tour of the historic mill; and a great

family fun day with mother nature. Celebration goes will also have the chance to sample the culinary skills of Burlington Kiwanis Club and the ladies organization of the Cutler Presbyterian Church. Food and beverages will be available for purchase on-site, or visitors can bring a picnic lunch and relax under a beautiful old

shade tree. Adams Mill is located one-half mile east of Cutler off SR75. The Wildcat celebration is a project of the Wildcat Creek Foundation, the Wildcat Guardians and the Wildcat Creek Watershed Alliance. For a map and further information visit www.wildcatcreek-foundation.org.

Council From page 1A

In a related matter, Myers took exception to comments made by Brown at the May 22 night meeting about providing information to the council concerning the expected property tax and home-credit loan re-payment from the state. She said it was not standard procedure for the auditor to notify the council of all income received into the general fund upon receipt.

"If I thought you needed to know about it, I would have told you," she said. "I'd like some respect. I thought we were supposed to work together."

Myers said it is her job to distribute money when it is received by using a formula dictated by the tax rates for all taxing entities.

Brown said it was the auditor's job to fully inform the council of income payments to the county. She said it would make it easier to understand how county money flows in and out of the general fund to aid in making spending decisions.

She said the council could not control the income, only spending. Income had to be considered to make the most informed appropriation decisions.

"We can't control the revenue," she said. "We can only control expenses. But we must know about income."

Slavens explained to Myers the council needed an explanation of receipts on a routine basis for them to consider when making spending decisions.

"We've been asking for this for a long time," he said. "We need to know the amount going into settlement."

Myers said she did not have revenue reports prepared for the meeting but would put them into council members' mailboxes upon completion.

"We need to get it straight," Ashby said. "If we don't get it right, we'll be real short."

Veterans' Office
Several veterans attended the meeting to express concern about a rumor circulating that the Veterans' Office was going to be closed by the council.

"We need a veterans' service office in Carroll County," Dick Grantham said.

He suggested a tax increase to maintain the office and staff.

All council members present stated individually that closing the office was not under consideration. Ashby said he was concerned that there seemed to be a rumor that not only was the veterans' office going to be closed, but administrator Bob Morrow was asked to step down.

"Morrow's expertise is not replaceable," he explained. "But it

was Bob's choice to retire."

Consensus of the council, as explained to the audience and directly after the meeting in a follow-up interview with Abbott and Ashby, was that there was never an intention to close the office. Council members clarified there was no intention to request Morrow to leave his post.

Commissioners' president Loren Hylton was granted permission to fill the position "as-is." It was decided the position would be three days per week with no benefits and would be reviewed when the 2009 budget was developed.

Budget
Myers reported the proposed amended budget fell short of balancing with projected 2008 revenue by approximately \$40,000. She said the amount was roughly the amount of insurance costs for one month.

Slavens said the county has received the amount of revenue projected by the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance only one time in the past six years. He said he did not trust the 2008 projected figure.

Brown advocated reducing the budget permanently rather than searching for a one-time expense

that would perhaps work for 2008 but not beyond.

"I think we should do it through attrition," Ashby said. "I'm real worried about next year."

Slavens recommended council members be prepared to reduce the county payroll by at least two positions at the next meeting, which is scheduled for June 17 at 8 a.m.

Highway department
Superintendent Ron Francis explained three requested additional appropriations. A comment he made at the end of his presentation initiated a discussion about future planning and a word of caution.

Francis said he predicted the highway department would expend the 2008 fuel appropriation balance in the next two months. He said he planned to request an additional appropriation to supplement the budget line item. He estimated approximately \$31,000 per month was currently being spent.

Ashby said Francis was expected to institute cost-saving measures to protect fuel consumption. As an example, he said he verified that two highway department trucks were left idling

recently in a restaurant parking lot while the truck drivers ate lunch.

Francis said that was not the standard procedure for truck drivers.

"This fuel thing is going to be more critical than anyone ever imagined," Ashby warned.

Hendress said fuel prices alone would run the department 40 percent short of their total requested appropriation for 2008.

Slavens cautioned Francis more than once he would expect to see documentation of cost-saving measures before being asked for additional appropriations for fuel.

Additional appropriations:
• \$11,963 from cum. cap. to underground storage tanks;
• \$5,000 from Riverboat to Umbaugh and Associates;
• \$30,462 from cumulative bridge fund to Carrollton Bridge;
• \$20,000 from cum. bridge to Bridge #81; and
• \$27,171 from highway to dust control.

Transfers approved:
• Surveyor - \$37.93 from computer and software to office supplies.

The next meeting will be June 17 at 8 a.m.

Dedication June 14



Work is nearing completion on the stationary playground boat at Canal Park, Delphi. Dedication of the boat will be June 14 at 1:30 p.m. The event will include a skit portraying life on the canal in the 1850s. The skit will be repeated at 3 p.m. Projected for the summer of 2009 will be the completion of an operational replica canal boat. In the meantime, visitors can ride the canal pontoon boat, which will offer rides on June 14 at 2 and 3:30 p.m. More volunteer captains are needed to operate the boat throughout the season. If interested, contact Dan McCain at 765-412-4308. Prospective captains can also attend the volunteer lunch and recognition ceremony this Saturday at noon at Canal Park. Comet photo by Jennifer Archibald

DLGF provides online tax estimator

Comet staff report

The Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) and Indiana Business Research Center (IBRC) at Indiana University released an online property tax calculator for Carroll County taxpayers last week.

The tool can be accessed from the department's Web site, www.in.gov/dlgef. It allows taxpayers to enter a property's assessed value, taxing district and possible deductions to see tax bill estimates for bills due in 2008.

The release was in conjunction with the approval of Car-

roll County's 2008 budget and certification of tax rates, which occurred May 16.

The estimates provided by this tool are projections only and should not be taken as a statement of true tax liability,

which is determined by the county.

A copy of the Carroll County budget and the DLGF analysis are available at <http://www.in.gov/dlgef/2615.htm>.

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30th Annual Flora Hog Jog

Sat., June 14

Flora Community Park

Registration is currently underway for 10K Run, 2-Mile Run/Walk & Runt Jog at www.hogjog.com

\$15 per entry postmarked or received by June 7.

\$20 entry fee day of race

Same day registration and packet pickup will start at 6:15 a.m. at the park

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Sat. June 14, 2008

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