

Commissioners face tough spending decisions

County ambulance service, Yeoman project and river clean-up scrutinized for affordability

By **Debbie Lowe**
Staff writer

Although a construction contract for the Yeoman Community Center/Emergency Medical Services Garage project is ready to sign, there was a halt to the process at the Monday morning Carroll County Commissioners meeting. Commissioners tried to ascertain, given budget reductions from the county council, if there would be an ambulance to house at the facility in 2009 and beyond. It is a requirement of the state grant for an ambulance to be located at the facility.

However, according to Emergency Medical Services Director Mike Durr, budget reductions for the department demand a reduction in services to two facilities in the county.

"I have two ambulances," Durr said. "You tell me where to put them."

Commissioner George Mears

suggested the grant administrator, Amy Miller, and Durr develop "creative financing" to be able to proceed with the project.

Commissioner Bill Brown called a lack of service in the area, "no damned good."

"We are failing the people of Carroll County by cutting the ambulance service," Brown said.

Commissioners' president Loren Hylton took a slightly different view.

"They (area residents) will have service, when the ambulance gets there," he said.

Commissioners' attorney Barry Emerson suggested Durr negotiate with hospitals in

neighboring communities to possibly provide service to county residents.

Miller was directed to set a meeting time with state funding representatives to establish parameters for grant compliance. Miller said a final decision would have to be made by Jan. 30.

In another spending matter, com-

missioners were informed a grant to gather and remove 2008 flood debris in and along the Tippecanoe River from the emergency watershed program was awarded to Carroll County. Natural Resources Conservation Services representative Joe O'Donnell said commissioners would be responsible to solicit contractor bids and choose a firm to provide clean-up services. He advised the county would be obligated to provide "in kind" financial assistance in the form of debris removal and disposal.

Emerson warned county leaders to be aware of hidden costs associated with the project, such as man-hours/labor,

administrative costs, and legal and tipping costs. He recommended they hire a grants coordinator to manage the project.

Emergency Management Agency Director Dave McDowell said because of the nature of the grant and the work to be performed, he could serve as the administrator and coordinator for the project. Commissioners consensus was for McDowell to take the lead in the matter.

Brown noted that he did not want a Department of Natural Resources river burden to shift to the county.

Highway department

A new highway department superintendent was named, but he may not sign a contract until the county receives a clarification about pay from the state.

Hylton said commissioners interviewed seven candidates for the position, two of which possess engineering degrees. It was believed

See *Decisions* page 6A

Snapshot of Carroll County's top pick for highway engineer

A short interview was conducted with the person offered the top spot for county highway following the commissioners' Monday morning meeting. A more expansive story will be published when the new hire is secured.

Name: Paul Coutts (pronounced 'Coats')

Residence: West Lafayette

Personal: Married, with seven children

Education: BA and MA in civil engineering from Purdue University

Work history: Former West Lafayette City Engineer; semi-retired with supervision experience

Reason wanted to work in Carroll County: The semi-retired Coutts said he missed going to work every day and is ready to do more engineering work.

Work philosophy: "Work does not have to be drudgery."

Monticello group to pick-up Delphi trash

By **Debbie Lowe**
Staff writer

Delphi residents may not notice a difference in trash pick-up after the first of the year, until they look at their utility bills. That will be because the company awarded the contract to provide the service to city residents will be using the same truck the city owns.

Indiana Waste Systems of Monticello will provide trash removal to Delphi beginning the first of January for just over \$91,000. The contract, approved at the Monday night Delphi City Council meeting, included the purchase of the truck the street department currently uses. The company will purchase the truck and apply the cost against the bill to the city.

A special meeting was scheduled for Dec. 15 to discuss monthly usage bills for residents.

Smiths given key to city
Gil, Janet, Austin and Alexis

Smith were awarded a gold key to the city to commemorate being recently named a "Distinguished Family of the Year for 2008" by Family Services Inc. for outstanding accomplishments and service to the community.

The local Delphi family was given the award during National Family Week after being nominated by one of Gil's co-workers from Frankfort.

"With the economy in the tank, you just don't get a lot of good news anymore," Mayor Randy Strasser said when he introduced the family. The children led the council and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of the meeting.

Other business

Police chief Justin Darling announced an officer was in a wreck earlier in the evening.

"The officer is fine," he said. "The police car, not so good."

Darling said written and physical agility tests for offi-

See *Delphi* page 5A

Local residents receive awards from Indiana Historical Society

Comet staff report

Two Carroll County residents were presented awards from the Indiana Historical Society at its annual Founders Day Dinner Monday night.

Dan McCain of Delphi received the Eli Lilly Lifetime Achievement Award, and Phyllis J. Moore of Delphi received the Willard C. Heiss Family History/Genealogy Award.

The presentations were made at the Eugene and Marilyn Glick Indiana History Center, located at 450 W. Ohio Street in downtown Indianapolis.

The Eli Lilly Lifetime Achievement Award is bestowed upon an individual who has made extraordinary contributions over an extended period of time to the field of history and/or the affairs of the Indiana Historical Society.

Dan McCain had a 34-year career with the USDA Soil Conservation Service (now the Natural Resources Conservation Service), during which time he had national and international speaking engagements, and hosted foreign diplomats as they toured the United States. Upon retirement in 1994, he set about devoting his time to two of his loves - Wabash and Erie Canal history and his small farm beside the canal.

McCain was instrumental in coordinating the development of Delphi Historic Trails, Canal Park, and the Wabash and Erie Canal Conference and Interpretive Center - leading a \$3 million fundraising campaign to make the latter a reality. His role as president of the Carroll County Wabash and Erie Canal Association currently has him spearheading an effort to add a replica canal boat, warehouse, and dock to the reconstructed portion of the canal in Delphi.

He heads an association that makes canal history come alive through various



Indiana Historical Society awards

Dan McCain received the Eli Lilly Lifetime Achievement Award, and Phyllis Moore received the Willard C. Heiss Family History/Genealogy Award at the Indiana Historical Society Founders Day Dinner Monday night in Indianapolis. Photo provided

indoor and outdoor exhibits and through special events such as Canal Days in July and the Old Fashioned Christmas at the Canal.

McCain is a graduate of Delphi High School and Purdue University. He was born and now lives in a home built on land purchased in 1857 by his ancestors. It sits just six blocks from Canal Park.

The Willard C. Heiss Family History/Genealogy Award is given to a family historian for his or her distinguished service and career in Indiana family history and genealogical research.

Phyllis Moore has been curator of the Carroll County Historical Museum since 1967. During her

tenure, the museum has made many extraordinary contributions to the community, including: the creation of a genealogy library; a relocation/expansion that grew the museum to 10 times its original size; the implementation of automation to the museum's record keeping and identification; and the digitization of 16,500 images (almost half of the museum's photographic collection), all of which are available through the museum's Web site.

Moore is an active member of many organizations, including the Indiana Historical Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, Colonial Dames, Daughters of Colonial Wars, Indiana

Canal Society, New England Women, Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, Continental Society of Indian Wars, Delphi American Legion Auxiliary, VFW Auxiliary, Gamma Gamma Nu, National Society of Dames of Court of Honor, Delphi Business Women, Wabash and Erie Canal Inc., New England Historical and Genealogy Society, and Piscataqua Pioneers.

Since 1830, the Indiana Historical Society has been Indiana's Storyteller™, connecting people to the past by collecting, preserving, interpreting, and disseminating the state's history.

More information on the IHS is available at www.indianahistory.org.

County receives United Way funds for disaster relief

Comet staff report

Indiana Association of United Ways (IAUW) announced Carroll County recently became the recipient of \$700,000 in grant money for individual assistance to help with recovery efforts from the 2008 February and June storm and flood damage. Disaster Assistance Northwest Indiana (DANI) will administer funds to Carroll and surrounding counties.

Grants totaling \$14.8 million came from the 2008 Indiana Natural Disaster Fund established with a \$45 million grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc.

"We have supported worthy



Mailing label goes here

projects from funds provided by Lilly Endowment to address the worst Indiana disasters in 100 years." Larry Welker, IND Fund chairman and IAUW board member said.

Factors determining grant awards include local needs, available resources, the scale and type of damage, local demographics and other funding commitments.

Round one grants which included funding for immediate assistance needs and the creation of an infrastructure of support groups to organize and carry out the recovery work were awarded during the summer.

Round two grants included proposals for projects ranging from assisting individuals rebuild homes to reconstructing or repairing public facilities in the hardest-hit counties.

Pete winner is quiet volunteer

By **Susan Scholl**
Editor

Tuesday night Flora Lions Club honored Helen Ennis as the 2008 Pete Award winner. She and her family were honored guests at the club's annual Christmas dinner.

Helen is the 25th recipient of the award that honors a member of the Flora area who demonstrates outstanding service to the community. She joins her husband, Gail Ennis, who was presented the award in 1985. They are the first husband and wife to individually receive the award.

Helen is known for her long-time involvement with 4-H and her dedication to Flora Community Park.

"Whatever needs to be done, I just volunteer when needed," said Helen.

She served as a 4-H cat project leader for 20 years and last year was presented an award from the state 4-H organization her for long-time commitment to the cat project.

Besides being a 4-H leader, Helen has traveled the state for 25 years as a judge for 4-H flower and garden projects.

She currently serves on Carroll County's Exhibit Board, a position she has held for many years.

Helen is also very active with Extension Homemakers.



Ennis

She has held numerous offices within the organization including president. Several years ago she initiated a county-wide Extension Homemakers project to gather supplies for the Ronald McDonald House. The project continues today.

She has sewn hundreds of baby blankets, baby bibs, school bags and preemie gowns for Riley Children's Hospital.

Another one of Helen's volunteer activities is scheduling everything that goes on at Flora Community Park, something she has done for many years. That includes re-

unions, birthday parties, garage sales, etc. She and her husband Gail, who is park board president, work together to schedule the five ball diamonds.

They have also purchased supplies and operated the Little League and Girls Softball stands for a number of years.

Helen was on the original Pork Festival committee, the forerunner of the current Hog Jog Day in Flora.

Helen worked with Martha Hoffman, Sue Holmes and the late Connie Collins to plan and organize the three-day event that included running races, a long-distance bicycle race, giant flea market, special music, and the Little Miss

and Mister Contest.

"We appreciate that Helen gives of her own personal time to help the community in so many ways," said town clerk-treasurer Joretta Tinsman. "Volunteerism is important and people don't always notice all that volunteers do to place the community a better place to live."

Helen and Gail have been married for 53 years. They have four children, eight grandchildren, and a great-grandchild on the way. She is a member of the Flora United Methodist Church and babysits three of her grandchildren.

Helen plans to continue keeping busy, helping her family and her community.