

City tree falls on house

Thirteen-year prediction comes true

By Debbie Lowe
Staff writer

Barbara Christiansen purchased the house at 123 W. Madison St., on the corner of Madison and Market streets, in Delphi after her husband passed away 13 years ago. There was a large tree located beyond her property line on the street side of the sidewalk. Christiansen believed the tree should be removed for safety reasons when she moved into the house and believed it belonged to the City of Delphi.

According to Christiansen, Sam Deiwert was mayor at the time so she called him about the tree. She said she was told that if she had it removed she would be assessed a \$500 fine because, it belonged to the city.

Christiansen said she asked the next mayor, Lee Hoard, to remove the tree for safety reasons approximately six years ago. She said Hoard told her that, although it belonged to the city, it was structurally sound and no action would be taken.

The tree fell onto Christiansen's home last Wednesday night in the storm that ripped through Delphi. It landed on her roof and caused significant damage. She said she called current mayor Randy Strasser. She said she was told the city was not re-

sponsible for the damage because it was a result of an act of God.

"I didn't see any point in arguing with him," Christiansen said. "He told me to contact my insurance company and get an estimate of the damage. I work at McDonald's and I don't have house insurance."

Although the house was damaged, Christiansen said she has been staying in it.

"The damage isn't as bad as we first thought," she said. "Only one part of the roof is damaged and two bags of ceiling tiles were water damaged."

Christiansen said she has family members who are supportive and who are able to work on her house. She paid someone to cut the tree off of her house on Sunday so the house could be assessed for safety reasons. Electrical power was restored Monday.

Christiansen said she learned that the city adopted a tree ordinance within the past two years. She said she hoped the ordinance would help her prove her point with the board of works, which next meets Sept. 8 at 6 p.m.

Delphi Street Commissioner Aaron Lyons said Tuesday the city has a tree manual, inventory and ordinance, which established a tree commission. He said the program was developed when



Storm damage

Barbara Christiansen's home at the corner of Madison and Market streets in Delphi was damaged when a tree fell on it during a storm last Wednesday. Comet photo by Debbie Lowe

Hoard was mayor and Delphi became a "Tree City." Lyons said, however, the commission has not met since Hoard left office.

According to the tree inventory, funded by a grant which paid an arborist for a professional document, the tree in question was declared in "fair" condition and given a 65 percent (out of a possible 100) rating overall. Lyons said the city strives to address those trees listed on the in-

ventory as needing to be removed and has limited manpower to perform other routine tasks. The tree at the corner of Madison and Market streets was to be only "monitored" by city officials.

Delphi's Tree Manual and Tree Ordinance can be found on city's Web site, www.cityofdelphi.org. The tree inventory can be viewed by visiting Lyon's office. Lyons can be reached by calling the city building at (765) 564-2097.

Council

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service provided by the same department.

Erdmann said he thought the review process was advisable to provide more input into budgeting and planning for the future.

"The more people who look at the budget, the more checks and balances we have," he said.

"I don't think the county council understands what all the numbers are on our budgets," he continued. "I would like for them to host township hearings for us to answer questions at the time of review."

However, one council member does not believe the review is necessary but agrees that meeting with township officials would be helpful.

"I don't think the council has any business looking at township budgets," Ron Slavens said. "Trustees are quite capable of making their own budgets work."

"However, we did more this year than last year with them," Slavens continued. "We didn't spend enough time with them this year though. If we met with the taxing entities we could get them to answer our questions on the spot and it would be more meaningful to everyone."

"I thought it turned out well," council president Ann Brown said. "Everyone took a stack of budgets and made comments about them. The group decided what to focus on and we functioned as a team."

"I thought it was quite interesting and it was very easy to see what is going on," she continued. "We found mistakes."

The fourth budget to receive a comment was Carrollton Township. According to county auditor Beth Myers, after the concern was conveyed to the township trustee, it was discovered a number-recording error was made. It was immediately corrected.

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State could use more and different urban trees

Comet staff report

Indiana could benefit by having more and different trees lining its city streets, according to a study on the trees in 23 cities done for the state's Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry.

"Bringing about such change is important" DNR's Community and Urban Forestry (CUF) coordinator Pam Louks said, "because the study also showed that Indiana's urban forests reward Hoosiers with nearly \$79 million in annual benefits. The rewards include energy savings and reducing carbon in the atmosphere."

The study, which was done for the CUF program, found that street trees throughout the state also return benefits by reducing ozone levels, volatile organic compounds such as sulfur dioxide and small particulate matter and improve storm water interception and reduction.

Economically, trees also make city streets look better, increase community economic vitality, increase real estate values and give residents a sense of place according to the study which was done by the Davey Resource Group.

"While we are still studying the analysis, we can immediately conclude that we need to diversify our urban forest species with native trees and where space permits, plant large maturing trees for optimum environmental benefits," Louks said. "We also recommend to engineers, planners and developers to plan spaces in urban areas for large maturing species of trees as opposed to leaving small sites for so many ornamental trees that do not offer the

multitude of benefits of large ones."

The study found that more than 850,000 vacant street tree planting sites in the state, the top six species are maple, ash, elm, oak, crabapple and pear (with maple and ash being the predominate species), 58 percent are in good condition, 26 percent are in fair condition, 14 percent poor and two percent are dead or dying.

Having such limited diversity opens many issues, which the top species listed highlight. Silver maple can cause infrastructure problems. All ash trees in Indiana are threatened with death by the emerald ash borer insect that is and will be a financial burden for affected cities and towns. Crabapple and pear look nice but have neither the size nor canopy to produce the amount of environmental benefits many other trees offer.

The sample urban statewide inventory (SUSI) demonstrates that the urban forestry program is on track toward a solution, using the silver maple species as an example.

"The current study shows that the planting of problematic species such as silver maple is being reduced throughout the state," Louks said.

"SUSI also shows that this species is our main service provider in the way of environmental benefits. We need to maintain the silver maple we currently have but start planting other species that have the same capability for carbon sequestration, storm water uptake, energy conservation and air cleaning. While the study shows we are making progress, it also showed that, in the 23 SUSI communities inventoried there is ap-

proximately only one tree for every six people," Louks said.

According to recent research done by Dr. Dave Nowak of the USDA Forest Service, it takes one acre of healthy trees to support the oxygen, clean air, for eight people.

"We have our work cut out for us to help make Hoosier cities and towns green and healthy," Louks said.

The study also found that Indiana's urban forest is evenly balanced in age. However, the urban forest needs to be unevenly balanced in order to ensure that the benefits derived from large, maturing trees continue without disruption.

To do the study, the consultants first inventoried the trees, then assessed and quantified the benefits of the street tree resource to estimate a net value to those benefits, after deducting the cost of purchase, planting and maintenance over the life of each tree.

The consultants were hired by the DNR Division of Forestry using funds from three U.S. Forest Service urban forestry grants from 2007-2008. The project included the same 23 cities and towns inventoried in 1992 by a Purdue University study.

"The 1992 study was a baseline to guide us in the future about where we need to focus our dollars and efforts," Louks said.

The 23 SUSI communities are being visited by the urban forest office, Indiana Urban Forest Council members, consultants and city foresters to explain the study.

Contact (317) 591-1170 or go to plouks@dnr.IN.gov for a list of the communities involved in the study.

Professional Briefs

Canal Association president DAN MCCAIN will attend the annual conference of the American Association of State & Local History Aug. 27-29 in downtown Indianapolis. On Saturday he will speak to an audience of primarily museum directors and staff about the Canal Associ-

ation's most recent accomplishments. McCain also attended the conference in 2006, in Phoenix, Ariz., when the local Canal Association received the Albert Corey Award for "the best new vol-

unteer-driven museum in the United States." This year McCain will present what the association has been doing since the creation of the indoor museum, highlighting the outdoor interpretive exhibits.



Wilma B. Houser
8/27/47-5/29/05

When someone we love is taken away isn't it wonderful to know they met God that day. For who is more blessed than those who move on into God's arms where we all belong. To imagine such love, as they must now feel makes our tears of sorrow seem almost unreal. They can soar with the eagles up in the sky and we can feel their gentle kisses as they quietly pass by. So, stand up, raise your hands and sing. Because someone you love just got their wings.

From the Houser and Brooks Families

Obituaries

David R. Eis

Pastor David Raymond Eis, 70, died Aug. 20, 2009, at his home.

Born in Pittsburg, he was the son of Earl E. and Mildred Fross Eis. His marriage was on June 17, 1995, in Lafayette, to Karen Shockey, who survives.

Pastor Eis was a member of the Creekside Church of the Brethren.

He served as the pastor of the Syracuse Church of the Brethren until illness forced him to retire in June 2007.

Also surviving are two sons, Mike Eis (wife: Connie) of North Manchester and Ben Dyson (wife: Amber) of Indianapolis; a stepson, David Dyson (wife: Julie) of Macy; two sisters, Shirley Cree (husband: Lee) of Evansville and Ruth Harris (husband: Bob) of North Manchester; eight grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Memorials may be made to the Northern Indiana District Office of the Church of the Brethren in Nappanee, The Salvation Army or the Center for Hospice and Palliative Care of Elkhart.

Michael K. Zink

Michael K. Zink, 69, Flora, died Aug. 18, 2009, at St. Elizabeth Central, Lafayette.

Born April 13, 1940, in Lafayette, he was the son of the late George and Daisy Spears Zink. His marriage was in 1960 in Lafayette to Nancy L. Webb, who survives.

Mr. Zink had been employed in the heat treat department at Fairfield Manufacturing Co., Lafayette, for 39 years, retiring in 2001.

He attended St. Lawrence Catholic Church.

Also surviving are two sons, Michael K. Zink of Lafayette and Richard D. Zink (wife: Lisa) of Attica; two daughters, Janet M. Brennan (husband: Greg) of Tucson, Ariz., and Monica L. Bever (husband: David) of Rossville; three sisters; and 10 grandchildren.

Services and burial were held Friday in Lafayette.

Births

Dane and April (Cook) Fife of Flora are parents of a 7-pound, 8-ounce daughter, Molly Elisabeth, born July 17 at Home Hospital, Lafayette. Grandparents are Tony and Teresa Fife of Flora, Gary Cook of Lakeland, Fla., and Kathy Cook of Columbus, Ohio. Maternal grandmother is Ione Cook of Lakeland, Fla. Paternal great-grandparents are Dale and Mary Ellen Zinn and Chuck and Mary Knight, both of Flora.



Helen L. Pullen



Helen L. Pullen, 83, of Cutler, died Sunday morning, Aug. 23, 2009, at Waterford Place Healthcare in Kokomo. She

had resided there for three years and had been in ill health for the past week.

Born Feb. 19, 1926, in Hemlock, Indiana, she was the daughter of Menno and Faye Craft Ebersol. She graduated from Greentown High School in 1944. On June 22, 1946, she married Morton Pullen Jr., who preceded her in death on Feb. 10, 1986.

Mrs. Pullen had been employed as an office worker at Continental Steel in Kokomo. She later worked at Delco Electronics in Kokomo, retiring from Department 872 in March 1993. She later worked at Meijer in Lafayette.

She was a member of United Auto Workers Local 292, Moose Lodge, Classic Lassies E.H. Club, Clay Township Luncheon Group, and the Geetingsville Over 60s Group. She was a lifetime member of the Greentown Glass Association and an associate member of the 379th, 8th Army Bomb Group.

Surviving are a daughter-in-law, Pat Pullen of Cutler; three grandsons, Duane Pullen (wife: Kristie) of Indianapolis, Darren Pullen (wife: Janelle) of Bringhurst, and Mark Pullen (wife: Lynndsey) of Kokomo; a step-granddaughter, Laura Purvis of Kokomo; two great-grandsons, Janzen Purvis and Lincoln Pullen; and four great-granddaughters, Taylor Purvis, Ashlyn Pullen, Paige Pullen, and Reagan Pullen.

Mrs. Pullen was also preceded in death by two sons, Ronald Pullen and Thomas Pullen, a brother and two sisters.

Private funeral services will be held at Maple Lawn Cemetery, Flora. Pastor Dan Butcher will officiate.

Memorials may be made to the American Heart Association or American Cancer Association.

Baker Funeral Home, Flora, (www.bakerfh.com) is handling arrangements.

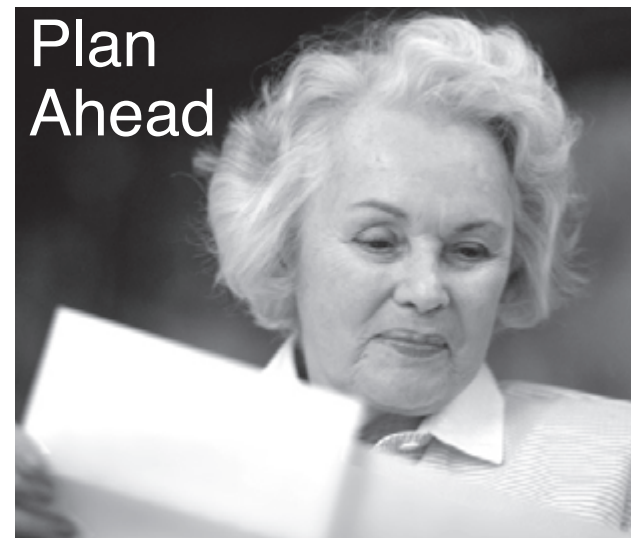
Other Death Notices

Harry Leo Maxfield, 73, Monticello, died Aug. 18, 2009, at the Monticello Assisted Living and Healthcare Center. Among the survivors is a daughter Trisha Downey (husband: Jamie) of Delphi. Services were Aug. 21 in Monticello.

Chris Large, 37, Rossville, died Aug. 23, 2009, at his residence. Among the survivors is a daughter, Althea George (husband: Tim) of Delphi. Services are today, Wednesday, in Frankfort.

Dallas Adam Buck, 19, Attica, died Aug. 22, 2009, in a single-care accident east of Attica. Among the survivors is a brother, Michael Kelley (fiancée: Angela Zediker) of Delphi. Services will be Thursday in Attica.

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