

County gets in step with FEMA

Risk assessment plan could mean prevention funding

By Debbie Lowe
 Staff writer

What would happen in Carroll County if a tornado ripped through the courthouse as it did in White County in April 1974? Or if it rained so much the ground became totally saturated and all septic systems became useless in the little communities of Burrows or Yeoman?

Some county representatives have these types of thoughts, and fears, as they perform their daily jobs. For those who are not expected to manage disasters when they happen, emergency response solutions may not come easily.

After the 100-year flood of 2008 and the aftermath of the devastation, it became apparent to Carroll County's newly appointed Emergency Management Agency Director Dave McDowell that the county was not receiving funding that other counties received to minimize disaster damages and costs to repair those damages. Although McDowell was personally affected by the flood, he started to research how to tap into additional FEMA funds for damage prevention meas-



McDowell

ures. McDowell discovered that all Indiana counties were to have developed a disaster mitigation plan per a state statute enacted in 2000.

Former EMA director Justin Darling said that he was aware of the need for a plan but received a lack of support from a former county department head who would have been critical to the planning process.

"In 2004, when the flood hit Delphi, counties were on their own to develop the plan," he said. "The facts have changed since then. The resistance to the plan that I faced is no longer present."

McDowell said that during his effort to create the plan, he happened

to contact the Polis Center, which is affiliated with the Indiana University School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI, for information about how to use a new computer program that projects disaster damage. He quickly realized that this contact was critical.

"By pure accident, I found out that the state department of homeland security hired the Polis Center to organize the county and write the plan for us!" he said. "I was expecting that it was up to me alone to do the plan, and I was certainly willing to do that, but this was even better."

McDowell learned that the Polis Center was ready to begin working

with Carroll County to develop the plan, which will act as a funding conduit for FEMA dollars for disaster prevention, or mitigation, activities in the county.

"This community can potentially receive funding for ways to minimize damage from floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, dam failure, major water events and ecological disasters," McDowell explained. "FEMA money can be used to reduce the impact of the disaster either by prevention, such as shelters, home elevation and education, or to accumulate resources, such as the tools necessary to make repairs after the damage has been done."

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DCES building project completed

By Debbie Lowe
 Staff writer

Just one short year ago, the Delphi Community School Board's plans for a \$13 million school buildings renovation were defeated in a public referendum. It did not take long for board members to regroup and determine just how to accomplish the much needed repairs to the buildings without utilizing the comprehensive renovation plan at one time.

To that end, the board heard a wrap-up of the elementary building project, which was the first phase in making as many of the needed repairs and improvements, project-by-project, to all of the buildings as funding allows.

"We are pretty much finished with the elementary project," superintendent Ralph Walker said at the Monday night meeting.

Walker reported that security measures were installed and the HVAC systems were upgraded.

Jason Jeffries of the engineering consulting firm Envoy and Associates reported specifically about work accomplished. He noted that staff was yet to be trained to use the security systems.

Jeffries did give some welcome news to the corporation leaders.

"I am happy to report there is about \$277,000 unspent from the project," he said.

Jeffries specifically ad-

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Woman arrested for stealing from Delphi Cub Scout troop

Comet staff report

Jane Alison Popejoy, 38, of Ambia, has been charged in Carroll County with theft from Cub Scout Troop 3165 in Delphi after the new treasurer reported missing funds from the troop's account.

First Sergeant Tom McKee



Popejoy

of the Indiana State Police Criminal Investigations Division was asked to investigate the theft of approximately \$3,000 that was taken while Popejoy was Cubmaster/treasurer of Pack 3165.

She turned herself in to the Carroll County Sheriff's Department on Monday and was released after posting bond.

Popejoy was charged with theft, a class D felony. McKee stated the charges were filed last week as a result of a seven month investigation.

Picking corn - 1950s style



The Delaplans - Bob and son Jeff - are picking corn with a 1954 John Deere 300 three-row corn picker. Bob bought it at an auction, and he and Jeff rebuilt it. Jeff is pictured in the tractor last Saturday, and Bob is shown with some of the harvested corn. They needed the corn picker for a new side business - selling squirrel corn. They're renovating a family barn on CR 700N for storing and bagging this year's crop - 2,500 bushels. The ear corn can be used to feed any kind of backyard wildlife. The Delaplans are calling their business "Critic Treats." Comet photos by Jennifer Archibald

Freedom Bridge to be built above HHH in Delphi

By Jennifer Archibald
 Staff writer

The City of Delphi learned last week that it has been awarded a sizable grant through the federally funded Transportation Enhancement Program. Grants are awarded through the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT).

The City has worked with the Carroll County Wabash & Erie Canal Association and Delphi Historic Trails to secure this grant, which will fund a historic foot bridge project connected with the Hoosier Heartland Highway.

"The grant overall exceeds \$2 million, with 80 percent (\$1,605,000) in federal funds and a 20 percent match by the state through Major Moves money," said Dan McCain, president of the Canal Association.

McCain said the grant money will reconstruct a 300-foot 1895 bridge over the Hoosier Heartland Highway beside the intersection with Main Street in east Delphi.

The bridge is called Freedom Bridge because it originally was built in Freedom, Ind., in Owen County. It spanned the White River. McCain said when a new bridge was built at the site several years ago, the old bridge was dismantled and stored at Conner Prairie.

He said Conner Prairie had plans for the bridge but can no longer use it.

The effort to bring the bridge to Carroll County was prompted by the Hoosier Heartland Highway dissect-

ing the Monon High Bridge Trail, which is part of the Delphi Historic Trails System. The Freedom Bridge will be a pedestrian bridge, reconnecting the trail.

It will be located on a bluff south of Tri-State Cob, on a severed portion of the former Monon Railroad.

"The Canal Association has owned the railroad right-of-way since the Mears brothers gave us the land six years ago," McCain said. "The Canal and Delphi Historic Trails volunteers built the present Monon High Bridge Trail and opened it in 2004."

McCain and Delphi Mayor

Randy Strasser say the Freedom Bridge will be a "signature" bridge for Delphi and Carroll County. It will run perpendicular to and above the Hoosier Heartland Highway.

"From a historical standpoint, it will be an eye catcher," Strasser said. "It

will connect the trail that leads to the Monon High Bridge, and it will be only a mile from Wilson Bridge."

"Thousands of motorists daily will pass under this historic 1895 iron relic," McCain said. "It will serve as a trail crossing and an 'advertisement' for all the historical things in and around Carroll County for travelers to visit. It could be likened to a wake-up call as people become aware of our historical treasures nearby."

The feasibility of putting a long bridge above the highway was made possible through a redesign of the proposed HHH through Delphi.

"A lot of planning and discussion went into this," Strasser said.

"Mayor Strasser has worked very diligently and effectively with the Canal and Trails to make this come our way," McCain added.

He explained that the grant was awarded to the City of Delphi as a Local Public Agency. He said this is protocol for grants administered by

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This 1895 iron structure, now dismantled, will find a new home in Delphi



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