

DODGE COUNTY PIONIER

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...A Hometown Paper Read By Hometown Folks...

One Hit Wonders 2



The Lomira Community Theater performed its annual play over New Year's Eve this past weekend. Patti Cobb (left) and Julie Wild were two of 22 cast members who participated in the play. **Page 35**
(Zach Cook | Dodge County Pionier)

Irish New Year's Celebration In Horicon



The Irish New Year's celebration at Rock River Tap in Horicon had a standing room only crowd last Saturday for the 6 p.m. (midnight in Ireland) toast. From left is Bob Carpenter, owner of Rock River Tap, Horicon; Sonya Carpenter, Horicon, originally from Galway, Ireland; her husband and Bob's brother, Francis Carpenter; and Maureen Schuelke, Bob's sister, from Mayville. (Andrew Johnson | Dodge County Pionier)

Downtown Development Plan

The Horicon City Council approved unanimously a conceptual downtown development plan after a public hearing attended by about 20 people on Tuesday, Dec. 27. **Page 21**

Leaders Share 2017 Insights

Several leaders, including Horicon Mayor Steve Neitzel, Lomira Village Board President Tony Schraufnagel, and Mayville Main Street Manager Trina Justman Reichert, outline the future possibilities for community developments in 2017. **Pages 8 and 9**

Plans Start For Blue Zone Projects



Keith Hill, organization lead for the Dodge County Blue Zones team, center, leads a focus group at Mayville City Hall. **Page 12**

Korean Veteran Completes Funding For GSMT



Lyle Lidholm carefully examines planning maps of Phase 1 of Gold Star Memorial Trail. **Page 4**

by Andrew Johnson

Bob Carpenter, owner of Rock River Tap in Horicon, led an Irish New Year's champagne toast at 6 p.m. with over one hundred customers in attendance on December 31.

This was the 15th time

that Bob hosted bringing in the new year at 6 p.m. central time which is the same as midnight in Ireland. He said he changed the celebration from midnight to an earlier time because the crowd was getting smaller and people were looking for a

different alternative.

One of Bob's customers suggested that he consider celebrating the New Year with the people in New York. This idea of using a different time zone sparked the idea that he could celebrate the New Year at Ireland time since

his mom is from Ireland and the rest is history. "I just thought we should move New Years up six hoursand it would be a fun thing ... and people could get home at a reasonable hour," said Bob.

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Public Invited To January 9 Mayville School Board Meeting

Facilities Study Committee To Present Findings And Recommendations

The independent facility study committee tasked with making a recommendation to the School District of Mayville is close to making recommendations for a long range plan. The committee has met since August with the task of looking at all district facilities. The committee's existence was preceded by multiple surveys, committees, a consolidation study, as well as a referendum which did not pass in April of 2015.

At its meetings in the month of December, Matt Wolfert, president of Bray Architects presented a comprehensive solution. The solution included infrastructure fixes, extensive remodeling of existing learning spaces, and construction of additions including a state of the art Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math facility, an auditorium, and a fitness center. The

addition proposed would be between the existing middle school and high school, and features a connection of those two buildings.

Based upon instantaneous feedback and group discussion, while the committee believed the long range vision generally did address the various needs identified by the committee, the majority felt that the total price tag of in excess of \$50 million made attempting to accomplish everything at once not feasible. The committee is now focusing on prioritizing the most pressing issues. Particular focus is being placed upon a flexible solution that would provide benefits regardless of whether enrollment increases or declines.

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Bill Ehlenbeck, Parks and Trails Manager, Dodge County Land Resources and Parks Department, officially announced on Tuesday, Jan. 3, that phase one of the Gold Star Memorial Trail is completely funded. The 10-foot-wide paved trail will go from Theiler Park in Mayville to the Horicon Marsh Education Center. (Andrew Johnson | Dodge County Pionier)

GSMT Phase 1 Fundraising Goal Met

What started in 2014 as a daunting goal of raising \$650,000 to fund Phase 1 of the Gold Star Memorial Trail has been overcome by the end of 2016.

By early 2016, about \$200,000 was still needed to reach the goal. A \$100,000 challenge grant carrot from the Bachhuber

Foundation potentially cut the need in half. The challenge grant spurred the Gold Star Memorial Trail committee of the Friends of Dodge County Parks to seek to raise the final \$100,000 by December 31, 2016.

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Hiker/Korean War Combat Veteran Completes Funding For GSMT

by Andrew Johnson, publisher and gold star dad

I received a call at my office last Wednesday (December 28, 2016) from Lyle Lidholm of Watertown. In a quiet and controlled voice he asked me what was yet needed to fund phase one of the Gold Star Memorial Trail (GSMT).

I told him the balance and he immediately told me that he would like to fund the total remaining balance. I responded by telling him that that was a lot of money and asked him if he was sure? Lyle laughed and said, "Yes, that is why I am calling."

I immediately inquired as to why he was so willing to give this large donation to a neighboring community. He told me that there was a story to tell and that he fought in Korea in 1952-1953.

I was so excited that I started to cry because he was combat military and certainly knows what "Gold Star" means. The goal of raising \$650,000 in little rural Dodge County was finally reached. The Mayville part of the trail was finally fully funded.

Many people, organizations, and businesses came forward to fund this non-motorized trail. However, it was Lyle Lidholm who finished the effort. I told Lyle that I would come to his home in Watertown to pick up the check since it was such an important event.

Last Friday, my wife Laura and Gold Star parents Greg and Barb Gassen from Beaver Dam went to Lyle Lidholm's home. Lyle told us his life's story. He held various jobs in the beginning of his career including welder, chef, and photographer, until he was hired as a member of a construction crew at Old World Wisconsin.

He restored and built buildings by using timber framing construction. He was sent to many specialized training schools while working at Old World Wisconsin. However, after 10 years of employment they let him go. So he went into the timber framing and log home construction business and built high end homes for the rest of his career.

He had a shop in Watertown where he and his crew machined timber

and then assembled homes on construction sites. After he retired, he continued to use his building skills to help build boardwalks and bridges for the 1,100 mile Ice Age Trail in Wisconsin. He also built the visitors center at the High Ground Veterans Memorial in Neillsville, Wisconsin.

He told us that he provided over 2,000 hours of labor and the High Ground people provided the materials, volunteers, food, and a place for him to sleep. He also helped the High Ground raise money by pedaling his bike for dollars.

Lyle went on to tell us about his hiking adventures. He told us he started hiking as a boy scout. At age 68 after he retired, he hiked the entire 1,100-mile Ice Age Trail, part of it in snow shoes. He would have his wife mail him food to various post offices along the way.

He attempted to hike the 2,160-mile Appalachian National Scenic Trail in the eastern part of the United States that runs from Georgia to Maine. However, he was forced to stop hiking after 850 miles because one of his feet got hurt due to wearing poor quality boots.

At age 78, he hiked the 1,000-mile Pilgrim Trail in southern France. He told us he went on many other short hikes, which means hikes of about 300 miles to Lyle. He always tried to hike 10 to 12 miles per day and on a really good day, he would get 14 miles. His interest in trails is, to say the least, very

strong and is one of the reasons he gave money to the GSMT.

The other main reason he gave to the trail was because of his military service. Lyle served in combat in Korea for one year and three days. He was a tank gunner which was a position right next to the main 76 millimeter cannon. He told us they gave him cotton for his ears but his head was right next to the cannon and he could not hear in one of his ears for several days after it was fired. He eventually lost his hearing in one of his ears because of the loud blasts and is considered in part a disabled veteran.

Lyle told us that he began thinking about contributing to the GSMT as soon as he saw an article in Watertown Daily Times last week about the need to finish up the funding. He gladly gave us a check and posed for pictures. I brought the check over to the county Parks Department on Tuesday morning and later that day the county officially released a statement confirming phase one of the trail was indeed funded.

Lyle is still in amazing shape for an 84-year-old. His wife of 36 years passed away two years ago. He has four children. Lyle said he doesn't hike as much now but continues his trips around the world. On his last trip overseas in September, he used the train instead of hiking. He said he is glad to be part of the GSMT and wants to help with it in the future.



Lyle Lidholm, second from left, poses with local gold star parents in his home in Watertown last Friday when he completed the funding for phase one of the Gold Star Memorial Trail: Laura Johnson, left, and Andrew Johnson, on right of Lyle, and Greg Gassen on far right. (photo by Barb Gassen)



Lyle Lidholm explains the exact location of the Ice Age Trail to gold star parents Laura Johnson, left, and Greg and Barb Gassen, at his home last Friday. Lidholm helped build walkways and board walks on the trail. He also has hiked the entire 1,100-mile trail. His interest in hiking is one of the reasons he decided to give funds to the GSMT. (Andrew Johnson | Dodge County Pionier)



Barb Gassen, gold star mom and also board member on the Friends of Dodge County Parks, the organization raising the funds to build the GSMT, shows Lyle Lidholm maps of the GSMT. Phase one of the GSMT is a 10 foot wide pave trail that starts in Tyler Park in Mayville and goes 2.1 miles to the Horicon Marsh Education Center. (Andrew Johnson | Dodge County Pionier)

GSMT Phase 1 Fundraising Goal Met

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By early 2016, about \$200,000 was still needed to reach the goal. A \$100,000 challenge grant carrot from the Bachhuber Foundation potentially cut the need in half. The challenge grant spurred the Gold Star Memorial Trail committee of the Friends of Dodge County Parks to seek to raise the final \$100,000 by December 31, 2016.

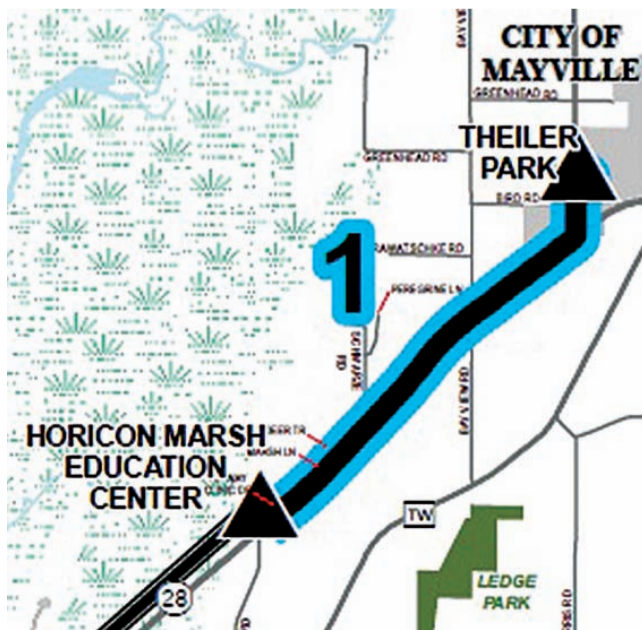
Dozens of individuals mixed with several corporations, foundations, businesses and organizations stepped up to the plate with donations over the past several months to bring the goal within reach. Then thanks to a significant donation from Lyle Lidholm of Watertown on December 30, the \$100,000 mark was reached to maximize the Bachhuber grant and surpass the \$650,000 goal for Phase 1.

Design work on the Phase 1 project is on-

going with final draft designs expected to be released at a public meeting likely to be held in February. Upon finalizing the designs, project construction will be bid out with completion and open-

ing of the trail anticipated by summer.

Fundraising for future phases extending to Beaver Dam is expected to begin in earnest once Phase 1 is constructed.



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