



Rock County STAR HERALD

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Library to receive \$175,000 in upgrades

Tax abatement public hearing set for May 5 to pay for work on library and county share of fiber optic

By Mavis Fodness

Improvements to the Rock County Community Library were unanimously supported by the Rock County Board of Commissioners and were added into the county's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for completion this year.

Prior to Tuesday's meeting, the board toured the current library facility with library director Clint Wolthuizen who laid out the proposed \$175,000 in facility improvements.

Wolthuizen assured commissioners the plan provides "practical and functional changes" to the local facility, and he said the changes are common improvements supported by the library board.

"Right now, we get by," he said.

At the previous County Board meeting, Wolthuizen turned in his resignation effective next week. He will begin a new library job in Worthington. The new director will oversee the facility improvements along with the library board.

"They are common sense changes that should make their job easier," Wolthuizen said. He added that the proposed improvements might make hiring a new director easier.

The library board hired an industry consultant to guide the local improvement process. The last facility improvement occurred in the late 1990s, Wolthuizen said.

Central to the plan is moving the current children's library from the southwest corner of the building closer to the entrance for better supervision and safety of the children. The plan will also enlarge the chil-

Library improvements/see 3A



Chantel Connell photo/0423 Bugz Program

"Be a Lady" is one of the songs in the "Bugz" program Friday afternoon sung by first-grade Lady Bugs (front row, left) Kianna Woods, Ashlie Gonzalez, Greta McClure, Ava Sieve, Julia Beyer; (back) fourth-graders Savannah Perez, Cedar Viessman, Elizabeth Wagner and Jocelyn Hart.

Students perform 'BUGZ'



Chantel Connell photo/0423 Bugz Program

The Bumble Bees perform "It Don't Mean a Thing" Friday afternoon in the elementary gymnasium during the musical "Bugz." Pictured (front row, left) are first-graders Nicholas Mann, Fox Forrest, Logan Mann; (second row) fourth-graders Camden Janiszkeski, Harley Wendland and Ryan Vos.

By Mavis Fodness

Luverne Elementary School's first- and fourth-grade students performed the perennial favorite musical play "Bugz" Friday afternoon, April 17, in the elementary gymnasium.

Directed by Beth Capistran and Shirlee Gilmore, the "Bugz" are going to a picnic, and the Lady Bugs, Army Ants, Fireflies and Bumble Bees are preparing for the event.

In a country-style hoedown, the Lady Bugs are in charge of proper etiquette, the Army Ants handle security, Fireflies are in charge of lighting, and entertainment is provided by the Bumble Bees. All efforts are to help the critters rescue the party. The Stink Bug wants to come too, but will he be invited?

The answer is revealed through the performance of five songs' rhyming dialogue.

Discipline hearing shows importance of parent, school communication

By Mavis Fodness

Luverne School Board members met in special session Thursday, April 16, for a disciplinary hearing involving a middle school student.

The weapons violation coupled with verbal threats came in front of

the board for additional action.

After reviewing the information, no additional disciplinary action beyond the district's mandatory minimum five-day suspension from school was recommended.

However, several interven-

tions were agreed upon as the student returned to school, according to Superintendent Gary Fisher.

School personnel, with the support of the student's parents (who attended the meeting), developed the interventions.

"No kid should come (to school)

feeling afraid," Fisher said.

He said the incident highlighted the need for parents to also be involved with the district's efforts to curb bullying.

"We need as a society and a school to deal with it together," Fisher said.

City works with local contractor on East Barck residential development

By Lori Sorenson

The city of Luverne and Cleveringa Construction have entered into a development agreement for the construction of two triplexes and one twin home on East Barck Avenue.

Luverne City Council members authorized the agreement at their April 15 meeting.

A tax increment financing district has been established to remove existing substandard buildings on three properties now owned by the city.

"We'll have an open canvas there for new development," City Administrator John Call said about the demolition process.

Water and sewer utilities will be stubbed in to the property line, and the three lots will be conveyed to contractor Merlin Cleveringa as he obtains building permits.

According to discussion at the April 2015 meeting, Cleveringa plans to start construction around mid to late May.

"I have three parties interested in purchasing them," Cleveringa reported to the council.

"We'll try to keep costs lower than the Blue Ridge Estates. According to surveys, there is a fairly decent demand for that price range."

— Merlin Cleveringa, contractor

"We'll try to keep costs lower than the Blue Ridge Estates (in the new Manfred Heights Addition). According to surveys, there is a fairly decent demand for that price range."

Over the past year the city has acquired three blighted properties — 509, 409, 501 E. Barck — "to achieve the goals of eliminating blighted property and to allow for potential

Barck development/see page 2A



Cleveringa Construction, Luverne, has a development agreement with the city of Luverne for residential construction on the East Barck Avenue property now owned by the city. Construction will start mid- to late May on two triplexes, like the one pictured above, and one duplex, like the drawing pictured below.

