

## Focus on Caseyville

By Mary Louise Schaefer

# Library began with dream of three Girl Scout groups

You cannot write about Caseyville without writing about the people who inhabit it and develop it, past or present, for there would be no town at all without the people who lived here. A town is only as good as its citizens want it to be. If they wish it to grow and prosper, they will mold its destiny with the care of a great sculptor; and paint its tomorrows with a magnificence of a giant mural, ever looking onward and upward to bigger and better things.

If they desert it, the town will soon become a mere skeleton of itself, leaving its destiny to the whims of Mother Nature, and you know how unpredictable she is.

You should not live in a small town without becoming involved in its well being. Either through some organization, church, political party, or just as an interested villager. It is a shame that apathy sets in so easily. One becomes disinterested quickly, disillusioned or distrustful of its elected officials and sometimes even disgusted to the point of becoming dispassionate about the things happening around them. This also happens on a state level and much of the country's problems stem from the great silent majority.

It is always a blessing and a God send when people are ready to give of themselves no matter what is asked of them; or willing to volunteer their services wherever and whenever needed.

Caseyville will forever be indebted to the three groups of Girl Scouts, (one Brownie and two Intermediate Troops who were working on a special civic merit badge) and their leaders Laura King, Vi McCormick, and Esther Mayer. This project started as a tiny little spark in the dreams of a small group, but soon ignited the whole town into action.

The dream was a library. The Caseyville Library to be more specific. It was in the late '50s when a library committee was formed, and their first meeting was held in the home of Mrs. Vic McCormick.

A librarian was sent from the Illinois Regional Foundation to sit in on their meeting and give them pointers on how to go about getting a library started. She explained to this group of enthusiastic ladies that in order to get this project out of the thinking stage and into the works, they'd have to raise \$10,000.

This piece of information did not discourage them in the least. They were determined to have a library in

Caseyville and were positive that they could do it on a shoestring if everyone in town rallied to the call. The Girl Scouts got busy and sold subscriptions to the Caseyville-O'Fallon News, a weekly paper at that time, and the girls received a tidy little sum for their efforts.

The Village donated all the proceeds from a Coke machine that was located in the Village Hall, and helped in any way possible. The people of Caseyville answered the call and donated funds as well as books, books and more books, all of which had to be checked and rechecked.

The first Caseyville Library was housed in the small jailroom downstairs at the City Hall. The books increased with such speed that it became all too evident more space was needed. The Village Board agreed to let the library committee use two rooms upstairs at the City Hall; which they accepted gratefully. The donated time and effort by so many people was out of this world.

With each passing day the dream became more of a reality. In 1961, a Library Board was formed, and those women who persevered knew the Caseyville Library had arrived.

A Mrs. Winkler was sent to

Caseyville by the State of Illinois to show them how to set up a Public Library System in 1962; and it became a State Library that same year, to be known from that day forward as the "Caseyville Public Library." They had definitely arrived.

Also in that year the Library hired Marie Seipp as their first paid librarian. Marie filled this position until her retirement in 1965, whereupon her sister Clara Merckel, who had been helping Marie without pay was appointed head librarian. Clara kept this position until her retirement in December of 1978.

I do not wish to give the idea that everything fell into place. There were many stumbling blocks that almost caused the demise of this project before it got started. But as with all things in life, "You get out of it, what you put into it," and these dedicated ladies, men, and girl scouts put their whole energies, and heart and soul, into a cause they felt was most important to the town in which they lived.

There is much training that goes into the making of a Librarian and I do not wish to minimize the importance nor the continuous work involved in such a position. It has to be a labor of love coupled with a love

for one's fellow man, to be so dedicated to help and give so much. Clara attended many a workshop in many different places to perfect her function as a librarian over the years. Each and every book must be categorized keep an alphabetical file on the book titles, plus a cross file on the authors (This much I remembered when I was actively involved in setting up a small library at St. Stephen's Catholic School umpteens years ago when I was young and eager. I'm still young but not quite so eager).

So you see, dreams do come true if you have the stamina, fortitude, determination and love to see things through until it becomes a reality. When things crossed the paths of my children and they felt dejected or defeated and say "I'll never get over that." I used to reply "Well then, you'll just have to crawl under it."

It was not said in a sarcastic way. They knew that I meant "If you can't tackle it from one direction try another," because I hated a defeatist attitude and my children knew it.

Forever I preached "never say can't, it is not a word in my vocabulary, nor will it be in yours." I guess I came by this naturally, for

my father and mother both always said "You can accomplish anything if only you will try with all that is in you."

This is the philosophy that has helped me through times of discouragement.

And the other saying that has brought me through the almost insurmountable problems of life was written across the arch of the church in which I spent the most impressionable years of my life. It proclaimed "Our Faith is the Joy which Overcometh the World." Amen to that.

If you don't have faith, you have nothing. It's funny, but the wisdom of this statement did not filter through until many, many years later when the first crisis, the death of my father, hit me. We were very, very close and his death was a traumatic experience for me. Since then, it has been a part of my life and will continue to be until the day I die.

Funny isn't it, how certain things give us strength. While I was still attending that church, the saying was removed to make way for modernization. The Lord works in mysterious ways His wonders to proclaim. I'd like to leave you on that profound and re-found note.

**Pet reclamation  
now costs \$15  
for first day**

In the future it will cost at least \$15 to retrieve your pet that has been picked up by the dog catcher. Guidelines for "animal control" have been sent by St. Clair County and the City of Fairview Heights

has no jurisdiction in the program.

All animals picked up are now taken to the new county pound at 1250 South 11th St., Belleville, across from the Belleville Humane Society where

animals were previously taken. The cost of reclaiming the animal is \$15 for the first day and \$5 for each additional day the animal is left. All animals with rabies tags will be kept for

seven days. Those not bearing these tags will be kept for three days.

The Humane Society will operate basically as a society for the adoption and boarding of animals. It no longer will operate for

animal control.

The new pound will accept unwanted animals. In the past the Humane Society required a donation for accepting these animals, but in an effort to stop the dumping of un-

wanted animals, the new county pound will accept them free of charge. The pound is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and closed on Sundays and holidays.

## Building permits

Frank Spaniel Construction Co. of Fairview Heights, new home at 53 Gamlin Drive, \$85,000.	new sign for Ground Round, 10716 Lincoln Trail, \$2,000.
Reed Electrical Contractor, electric at Commerce Lane in Market Place.	Steve Jones, 9111 South Avenue, electric \$600.
Simon Sign, Wisconsin,	Floyd Bullard, Worden, electric at 117 Ashland, \$200.

## LEGAL NOTICE

### HEARING ON

"INNOVATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE WASTEWATER COLLECTION AND TREATMENT" FACILITIES PLAN SUPPLEMENT

The Tribune  
3/8/1979

**The Right Choice  
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