

## Meeting & Event Dates

WPRA: WPRA - 3rd Thursday @ 6:30 p.m.\*  
 November 15 -- NO December -- January 17  
 Educational Excellence Committee - 1st Thursday @6:30 p.m.\*  
 Around the Town: City Council - 2 & 4th Tuesdays @ 7:00 p.m.\*  
 Cub Scouts - 4th Wednesday @ 7:00 p.m.\*\*  
 Boy Scouts - every Monday @ 7:00 p.m.\*\*  
 Garden Club - 3rd Monday @ 7:00 p.m.\*  
 Lions Club - 2nd & 4th Thursday @ 7:00 p.m.\*\*  
 Neighborhood Watch - 3rd Thursday @ 6:00 p.m.\*  
 Plan Commission - 3rd Tuesday @ 5:30 p.m.\*  
 Township - 2nd Monday @ 7:30 p.m.\*  
**What's Next:** WPRA Christmas Party - December 2\*\*\*  
 Christmas Holiday Decorating Contest - December 10 thru 19\*\*\*

Location: \*City Hall \*\*United Disciples Christian Church \*\*\*See Article

## Inside this issue:

WPRA	1 - 3
Around the Town	4 - 8
What's Happenin' Next	9
What's Been Happenin'	10 - 11
Remember When	12 - 13
Officers	14

## WPRA President's Comments

West Peoria's Representative to the Illinois House of Representatives, Aaron Schock, was the guest speaker at September's WPRA membership meeting. After a welcome and introduction by Mayor James Dillon, Schock shared his experiences of the latest Springfield legislative session, the longest session in Illinois history. He gave a humorous, enjoyable, and informative presentation that included considerable lively discussion.

Schock talked about the budget, the utility tax, health care, and the recent Peoria airport legislation on which he and Senator Dave Koehler worked as co-sponsors. Schock said that nearly 40% of the Peoria airport's outbound passengers have a final destination outside the USA and that the airport is an economic engine for the area.

Schock identified several huge funding proposals (a total of \$7 billion or a 20% total budget increase), on which he worked successfully to defeat. He described the final budget as acceptable because it stays within the revenue of the State and funds the pension system without a tax increase. However, Schock argued that the



capital spending budget for roads, bridges, public buildings, etc.—a separate budget--does not give adequate funds for downstate Illinois, our area to which very little in state funds has been allocated for the past eight years.

Schock promised to work hard for our area to get this funding, which might help our community in its now nearly three-year-old effort to get street improvements for Farmington Road. Hopefully, Representative Schock and Senator Dave Koehler will work together to help us succeed with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the state government agency that would actually do the work. WPRA is committed to the development of curbs and sidewalks, improved parking, the installation of safe pedestrian crosswalks—all

## WPRA Reports

efforts to attract more retail customers along Farmington Road.

Representative Schock also offered some interesting information about our legislative district, the 92nd. He said that over 20,000 people receive food stamps and that he represents the poorest district outside of Chicago. That district includes Peoria, East Peoria, Peoria Heights, West Peoria, and some rural areas. As the former President of the District 150 School Board, he spoke from experience when asked to explain how a community might form an independent school district. As a current candidate for the 2008 election for the U.S. House of Representatives, he prioritized health care spending control and the need for increased bipartisan work.

I hope all residents can join us at our November 15, 2007, meeting when we hope to have a trustee from the Peoria Park Board as our speaker. Traditionally, the WPRA does not meet in December. Please mark your calendars for the WPRA Christmas party on December 2.

By Dave Pittman

### WPRA Website

The West Peoria Residents' Association Website Team has been hard at work adding new content to the website.



Get in the habit of checking the calendar for dates of West Peoria meetings and events. Read the Home Page and the News Page for information about coming activities and instructions for submitting information about meetings, events, activities, and news to the webmaster.

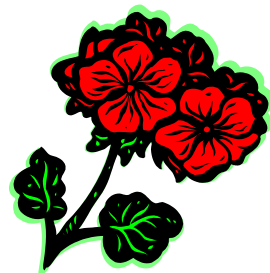
Enjoy our photo galleries with over 200 pictures taken around town and at community events by our photographer, Karen Adkins-Dutro.

A new West Peoria History section will soon be added with stories and pictures about this community's past. Visit often at [www.westpeoriareidents.org](http://www.westpeoriareidents.org).

Thanks goes to Chad Udell, the developer of the website, to Lynn Dempsey, the webmaster, and to Nancy Carson for posting pictures on the website.

### West Peoria Beautiful

The West Peoria Beautiful Committee members extend their thanks to the numerous businesses that joined with them in their first Planter Project this year.



The goal of this project was to make the crossroads area of Rohmann and Sterling more beautiful as well as to instill a sense of community pride.

A sincere "thank you" from the committee goes to those who made the effort to meet the challenges of maintaining the plants during this long, hot summer. Special recognition goes to John Deal Insurance, Ace Hardware, and Flynn's School of Irish Dance—businesses whose job well done really made a difference.

Next spring West Peorians can once again look forward to further efforts of this committee to encourage residents and businesses to add beauty to this community.

Information for this article was provided by Jan Powers, chairman of the West Peoria Beautiful Committee.



New customers always welcome! Walk-in or call for an appointment!

Merry Christmas!

## WPRA Reports

### WPRA Membership

To simplify the procedure of collecting dues, the West Peoria Residents' Association board is asking residents to get in the habit of renewing their memberships in January every year. To that end, please fill out the 2008 Membership Form included in this issue of the *West Peoria News* and send the form and your dues in by January 2008.

Membership in the WPRA, a nonprofit community organization registered with the Illinois Secretary of State, is open to all West Peoria residents as well as to nonresidents who have an interest in supporting this community.

The WPRA would like to encourage all West Peoria residents—whether new residents or residents who have never joined before or those who have let their membership lapse—to join with us this year to help support our efforts in maintaining West Peoria's "small town" atmosphere of community spirit and involvement.

Membership dues provide the funding and member involvement provides the volunteers to carry out the WPRA projects, which include the quarterly publication of the *West Peoria News*, the WP Community Christmas Party, and participation in the WP Jamboree and the Fourth of July Parade. Of course, the WPRA also accepts donations from residents, whose generosity often helps with expenses.

More WPRA members would certainly mean more money and more volunteers who might well initiate and carry out new projects that would further benefit this community and its residents. Start by joining us at the WPRA meetings held the third Thursday of each month at the West Peoria City Hall at 6:30 p.m.

### State Farm Insurance Companies



**John Deal**  
Agent  
674-4085

618 N. Sterling, West Peoria

### 2008 WPRA Membership Form

Mail check payable  
"West Peoria Residents' Association" to:  
Maggie Moore, Treasurer, WPRA  
2305 W. Ayres  
West Peoria, IL 61604

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

#### Membership Options

\_\_\_\_\_ \$15 Family  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$10 Single  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$ 5 Senior

#### Donations

\_\_\_\_\_ General Funds  
\_\_\_\_\_ American Flags  
\_\_\_\_\_ Christmas Party

Your interests: \_\_\_\_\_

Clip & Save for Your Records  
2008 Member West Peoria Residents' Association  
WPRA is a tax exempt organization with 501-3-c Federal status.

Check # \_\_\_\_\_

Date Paid \_\_\_\_\_

- Tax Record -

## Around the Town

### Arthritis Exercise Program

The City of West Peoria and the Greater Illinois Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation are working together to create an exercise program for residents and their friends.

Specifically designed for those with arthritis, this program will use gentle activities to help increase joint flexibility and range of motion, to maintain muscle strength, and to reduce pain and fatigue.

The Arthritis Foundation will provide training for anyone interested in leading this exercise program. For those interested in helping to initiate this program, in leading these exercise classes, or in becoming a participant, please contact Krystiana Bronny at City Hall (309)674-1993 or Heidi Koll at the Arthritis Foundation (309)682-6600.

### Faith Ministries Church

The West Peoria Residents' Association wishes to welcome to our community Faith Ministries Church, a non-denominational Christian-based teaching ministry, located at 3020 W. Rohmann Avenue.

This church, formerly known as the Faith Missionary Baptist Church, was founded on May 21, 1978, by its present pastor, Jackie Adams and his wife Victoria. The church was first located at 1716 Lincoln Street in Peoria and then moved to 433 S. Warren Street--its location for the past 28 years.

Dedication services for their new building--built in West Peoria on land purchased in 2004--were held on April 29, 2007.

Pastor Jackie and Victoria Adams, who have been married for 38 years and have four children, join with their congregation of 40 other active families to invite any who are interested to come and fellowship with them at any of the church's services.

Sunday: 9:30 a.m. Sunday School  
 11:00 a.m. Morning Worship Service  
 Tuesday: 6:30 p.m. Bible Study  
 Wednesday: 6:30 p.m. Prayer Meeting

### Boy & Cub Scouts

Boy Scout Troop 11 will again be selling holiday wreaths starting Oct. 15. Delivery will be Nov. 17.

Cub Scout Pack 11 will be selling popcorn again this year. Sales start Sept. 29 and delivery will be Nov. 17.

If interested in buying a wreath or popcorn, contact Bob De Sutter at 674-6668 or any Boy Scout or Cub Scout.



### City Hall

The following items are available for residents to pick up at the West Peoria City Hall:

- "Plant Pride...Not Litter" yard signs
- Welcome packets for new residents—please use these to get acquainted with your new neighbors and to welcome them to West Peoria.
- Free address numbers to be visible at the rear of properties that have alleyways. The city requests that residents display these numbers so that they are easily visible from the alley (on garages, fences, sheds, or telephone poles, etc.) to provide address identification to emergency personnel, Waste Management, code enforcement officers, and public officials.

831 N. Western  
Peoria, IL 61604  
(309) 676-7626

Reliable  
Automotive  
Inc.

## Around the Town

### Garden Club

The West Peoria Garden Club offered a "Dig-It-Yourself" weekend in September at the Western and Main Streets garden. Plenty of purple coneflowers, spring daisies, lamb's ear, and other perennials are still available. Anyone interested in acquiring these plants should contact Donna Schwab at 676-6912.

The City of West Peoria and the Beautification Committee of the WPRA are planning a remake of the space in 2008. To help with the make-over, please contact Jim McCarter at 673-6207 or Mical McFarland at [econ-dev@cityofwestpeoria.com](mailto:econ-dev@cityofwestpeoria.com).

In November, the Garden Club will take advantage of professional workshops offered by ICC and the Park District.

On Monday, Dec. 17, at the home of Hazel Thomas, the Garden Club will hold a holiday party, featuring refreshments and an optional gift exchange.

The Garden Club will continue to meet at 7 p.m. on the third Monday of each month at the West Peoria City Hall unless special events require a schedule and/or location change. Notification of such changes will be publicized.

Plans for 2008 include building containers, learning about raised bed gardening, and touring local gardens. Plan ahead for the third annual seed and plant exchange to be held on September 15, 2008. At this event local gardeners bring their extra seeds and plants to exchange with other club members.

Dues are \$10 per calendar year for single members and \$18 for families. Please mail checks to Pat Sharp at 609 N. Swords Ave., West Peoria, 61604.



**ROBERT STECHER**  
**ROB STECHER**

**STECHER'S AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE, INC.**  
*Engine & Transmission Repaired & Rebuilt*  
*Tune-Up & Brake Service*  
*Air Conditioning*

1006 WEST MAIN STREET  
PEORIA, IL 61606

PHONE 673-5337

### Jamboree Run Returns



After a two-year hiatus, the Jamboree Run will return in June 2008. Volunteers--needed now to help coordinate and organize this event—should call Krystiana Bronny at City Hall, 674-1993.

The tenth Annual Jamboree Run was held in 2005. This traditionally 4-mile race was added in 1994 as a morning activity to be held on the day of the West Peoria Boy Scout Jamboree—an event begun in the 1980s.

This advanced notice should give runners enough time to get in shape to participate in this event.



**Geier Florist**  
2002 W. HEADING AVE.  
WEST PEORIA, IL 61604  
(309) 674-0047  
1-800-845-8682

E-Mail: [geierflorist@insightbb.com](mailto:geierflorist@insightbb.com)  
Web Page: [www.geierflorist.com](http://www.geierflorist.com)  
Hours: M-F 8am-5pm / Sat 8am-3pm

*Dennis Beaufrre, Proprietor*


### Lions Club

The West Peoria Lions Club is currently conducting two fundraisers to finance their humanitarian service projects.

Peoria-area dining tour books offering buy one/get one free meals at many area restaurants are being sold for \$30. Please call Emil Henrich at 693-1191 to purchase a book.

The club's other fundraiser includes the sale of wreaths (sizes 18, 25, or 36 inches), roping, centerpieces, and crosses. To buy any of these items, please call Linda Capps at 673-6409.

These fundraisers are held to provide funds to carry out the Lions Club's humanitarian service projects, which include providing eyeglasses, hearing aids, and holiday food baskets to those in need. Please call Carolyn McCarter at 673-6207 with the names of needy families who might benefit from one of the Christmas food baskets to be distributed by the Lions Club.

## Around the Town

### Neighborhood Watch

Thanks to the concerned citizens of West Peoria the "block watch" program continues to add new blocks to this important crime prevention program.

Callender and Kenwood blocks are now a part of the growing number of streets to become a part of West Peoria's community policing program.

The further expansion of this program through Neighborhood Watch will make this community an even better and safer place to live. Any residents interested in starting a "watch" on their block are invited to call Maggie Moore at 673-0535.

All West Peoria residents are invited to attend Neighborhood Watch meetings on the third Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. at City Hall.

### New Ordinances - Burning & Curfew

The City of West Peoria has recently enacted two new ordinances:

(1) Effective Oct. 1, 2007, the open burning of rubbish, garbage, yard waste, and other combustible materials is illegal in West Peoria. The ordinance allows for fines up to \$750 per offense.

Permits must be obtained for construction site burning, bonfires (allowable only for organizations, not the general public), and prescribed burns. Permits may require fees. Also, the new ordinance does allow certain recreational burning if the fire is contained in an approved container such as an outdoor fireplace, barbecue pit, or campfire ring. Burn barrels are not allowed for any of these purposes.

Commercially manufactured grills, smokers, and outside fireplaces do not require permits; but there are restrictions as to their use.

Permissible burning is subject to a variety of specific restrictions related to factors such as the size, duration, location, and supervision of the fire; the material used to kindle the fire; and the containers used.

This ordinance was passed to promote a healthier and safer environment for West Peoria residents.

(2) The City of West Peoria's new curfew ordinance makes it illegal for minors (less than 17

years of age) to be present at or on any public assembly, building, business, street, highway, or other public place or way at the following times:

- Between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday
- Between 11:01 p.m. and 6 a.m. on Friday and Saturday

This ordinance allows for the defense of such a violation if the minor is accompanied by the child's parent, legal guardian, or custodian; or by a sibling, stepbrother, or stepsister at least 18 years of age; or by an adult (approved by the child's parent, guardian, or custodian) at least 21 years of age.

Another allowable defense includes participating in, going to, or returning from:

- Employment which the laws of this state authorize for a person less than 17 years of age to perform
- A school recreational activity
- A religious event

For further details and clarification concerning the terms of both the burning and curfew ordinances, contact City Hall at 674-1993 or visit the city's website at [www.cityofwestpeoria.com](http://www.cityofwestpeoria.com).

### DAVE'S GOODTIME BILLIARDS

\*\*\*\*\*

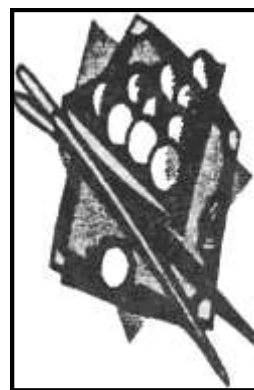
Pool & Games  
Leagues

\*\*\*

Pizza  
Sandwiches

Drinks

\*\*\*\*\*



2800 FARMINGTON ROAD

## Around the Town

### Plan Commission

During 2007 the Plan Commission has been in the process of updating the City of West Peoria's Comprehensive Plan. At the last Plan Commission meeting on Sept. 19, the commission approved the updated plan.

A public hearing, held on October 16 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall, gave residents the opportunity to comment.

To review the Comprehensive Plan, go to the City of West Peoria website at [www.cityofwestpeoria.com/planning](http://www.cityofwestpeoria.com/planning).

### Volunteer Program

A program to assist West Peoria's elderly, disabled, or those otherwise incapacitated has been started by Krystiana Bronny, our Americorps VISTA volunteer.

This program, which is reliant on volunteer efforts, will help the elderly and disabled with outdoor tasks that they find difficult or impossible to perform. This is an opportunity for residents of all ages to help our neighbors with simple tasks such as raking leaves or shoveling driveways. Even a minimal commitment of time and energy can have a huge impact on the lives of both the receivers and the givers of this assistance.



To volunteer for this program, contact Krystiana Bronny at City Hall 674-1993. Those who require help should also call. Be a good neighbor and report the needs of residents who could benefit from such help.



(309) 256-4251  
[www.peoriapilepatrol.com](http://www.peoriapilepatrol.com)

**GOT POOP?**  
**WE SCOOP!**

Dog Waste Removal  
Prices start at \$7/week  
Available year round

# free checking

- NO Minimum Balance
- Unlimited Check Writing
- NO Service Charge

## South Side Bank

Member FDIC / Equal Housing Lender Since 1922

### [www.southsidebank.com](http://www.southsidebank.com)

**WEST PEORIA**  
2427 W. Rohmann Ave • 671-4833

Personal accounts only. Only \$100 to open. Your checks will not be returned. You may request one copy of a check per month at no charge. All overdraft, NSF and stop payment fees apply.

### Target Area Initiative

In keeping with West Peoria's goals to provide its residents with a beautiful, clean, and safe community, the city has begun an initiative to improve the quality of life for residents by focusing on one target area at a time. A team consisting of the city's code enforcement officer, community police officer, and city leaders will be visiting individual neighborhoods to provide resources, to encourage civic involvement, and to answer questions about these efforts. This team looks forward to working with residents who share these goals for our city.

Please contact West Peoria City Hall at 309-674-1993 if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

## Around the Town

### West Peoria Veterans

The WPRA's *West Peoria News* and its website would like to honor those from West Peoria who have served or are serving in our country's military.

To begin this on-going effort to commemorate Veterans Day celebrated on Nov. 11, we need the help of our readers. Please relay information by phone or e-mail to any WPRA members listed on the last page of the *West Peoria News*.

The *West Peoria News* and the WPRA's website will publish the names of all those West Peorians or their family members who are currently serving in the military. Please provide the following information:

- Name of the service person and his/her relationship to a West Peoria family
- Branch of the military in which he/she serves
- Place where he/she is presently stationed


The WPRA's website will also publish information about those who have served in any of this country's military endeavors in the past. We would like also to remember those West Peorians who may now be deceased.

Please provide the following information:

- Name of the service person and his/her relationship to a West Peoria family
- Branch of the military in which he/she served
- The time period in which he/she served (a particular war, dates, etc.)
- The place where he/she served
- Any interesting anecdotes related to his/her service

The United States' military history includes:

- World War I (1917-1918)
- World War II (1941-1945)
- Korean War (1950-1953)
- Vietnam War 1964-1975)
- Gulf War (1990-1991)
- War on Terror (2001-present)



No Appointment Necessary  
**Cindy and Diane**

**JOE'S BARBER SHOP**

---

(309) 676-4219  
2324 W. Rohmann  
Park Across Street

Tues.-Fri. 8:00-5:00  
Sat. 8:00-12:00

## Motor Mites Open Gym!

At Franciscan Rec. Complex **Ages 1-5**  
Every Mon, Wed, & Fri  
9:15am-11:15am  
\$2 per visit or \$20 for a 12 visit pass

---

## FRC Community Gymnasium "Garage" Sale

### Sat., December 1

**It's indoors so come rain, shine, or snow!**

**8 am - 2 pm**  
**Franciscan Rec. Complex**  
**908 Sterling Ave.**




**To have your own table or for  
more information Call 677-6705.**

Please Patronize our advertisers.

Their businesses support the West Peoria economy and bring you the

## West Peoria News

## What's Happenin' Next

### Christmas House Deco Contest

This year's West Peoria Holiday Lighting Contest will once again be sponsored by Haddad's West Peoria Market and the Medicine Shoppe of West Peoria.

Judging will begin on Dec. 10 and end on Dec. 19—be sure that displays are lighted after dark. The names of winners will be posted at Haddad's Market on Dec. 20. There will be one winner for each of the following five categories:

Vegas Style – "Over the Top"

Simplicity - "Short and Sweet"

Religious – "Overall Religious Theme"

Holiday – "Who's Got the Spirit?"

Judges' Overall Favorite – "The Can't Miss House of the Year"

Nomination forms--which can be obtained at Haddad's Market starting the first week of December—serve to notify the judges as to which residents want their displays to be considered for the contest. Residents can nominate either their own displays or those of their neighbors. Only houses within West Peoria's city limits are eligible. Winners will receive a \$5 gift certificate from Haddad's Market and a large plate of Christmas cookies.

### Woodridge Professional Building

2619 Heading Avenue

Home to these fine businesses:

The Bailey Group, Inc.

Lontai Design, LLC - Architecture

Cottonwood Financial

Memories By Michael Photography - Weddings and portraiture

Connie Abraham & Mary Willi - Physical massage therapy

*Elegant office space in a beautiful setting.*

Office space available.  
Contact Barb Kerns at 696-3618

[www.woodridgeprofessionalbuilding.com](http://www.woodridgeprofessionalbuilding.com)  
Visit our webpage for history, renovation photos and more!

Serving West Peoria for 40 years

# Haddad's Market



Bakery  
Produce  
Fresh Meat  
Catering Menu

Deli Trays  
Sandwiches  
Fruit Baskets

\* Great for Luncheons  
\* Weddings  
\* Graduation parties  
\* Special Occasions

**Phone: 674-0040**

2407 W. Rohmann West Peoria IL 61604

\*\*\*\*\*  
We now offer  
Home Delivery  
\*\*\*\*\*

Please call and ask for details.

\*\*\*\*\*

### WPRA Christmas Party

The West Peoria Residents' Association will host its annual Christmas Party on Sunday, Dec. 2, 2007, from 6-8 p.m. at the Franciscan Recreation Center at 908 N. Sterling.



Residents are invited to join us for an evening of Christmas music, hot chocolate, cookies, and Santa, who will arrive promptly at 6 p.m. to light the tree. Special activities for children include a coloring

contest and a hayrack ride (for which a nominal fee will be charged) along West Peoria streets that will be lined with luminaries (candles covered with paper sacks).

## What's Been Happenin'

### Night Out Against Crime

The hot and humid weather didn't stop the crowd from enjoying the hot dogs, sno-cones and music at the 7th annual Night Out Against Crime sponsored by the West Peoria Neighborhood Watch, the City of West Peoria and the Peoria County Sheriff's Department. A demonstration by the canine division of the Sheriff's Department was, as always, a crowd pleaser, and the highlight of the evening was the bicycle give-away by the West Peoria Township.

Our thanks to the generosity of our local businesses and organizations who helped make National Night Out a special event.




**Goosey Gander  
Gifts Galore**  
Antiques, Primitives, Sweets & More  
2319-B Rohmann Ave.  
671-1203

Goosey Gander (The Previous Greetings & Goodies), 2319 Rohmann Ave., is located next to Haddad's Grocery in the little plaza.

This tastefully decorated little shop, owned by Kay Segler, offers beautiful home décor, gorgeous pictures, scented bath bars, quilted garment bags, holiday decorations, and a lot of unique gift items.

Just recently opened, Kay's husband, "The Famous Chef Lee," makes a wonderful variety of home made fudge and he loves to give free samples. They also carry a nice selection of candies including sugar free.

Store hours: 9:30 am - 5:00 pm Tuesday thru Saturday

### WESTERN AVE. CLEANERS

**309-673-1920**

326 N. Western Ave. Peoria, IL 61604  
wcleaners@gmail.com

#### Dry Cleaning and Shirt Laundry

Repairs & Alterations, Leathers & Suede, Gowns  
Heavy Starch available for Shirts and Denim  
Environmentally Safe Solvents  
Formerly "Lee's Cleaners"



**HEATING • COOLING • REFRIGERATION**  
RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL



Office: (309) 633-1313  
(866) 463-1313  
Fax: (309) 637-4263

**24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE**

329 N. WESTERN  
PEORIA, IL 61604  
e-mail: dmidavei@mtco.com

"FREE ESTIMATES ON NEW EQUIPMENT INSTALLATION"

**The One and Only**      **The Original**



**428 N. Waverly**      **676-1533**

*Come In and Look \*Amazing\*  
for All Your Holiday Gatherings!  
Schedule Your Appointment Today!*

*Bring in this card & enjoy 10% off  
any hair service or gift purchase!*

**THE HAIR GALLERY**  
Campustown Plaza, Peoria  
671-HAIR (4247)  
Open Tues-Sat



# What's Been Happenin'

## WPFDF Family Day and Hog Roast



**CCL ONE SOURCE  
FIREPLACE**

**Corey Lambin, Installer**

**Maintenance, Installation and remodeling  
Fireplaces, stoves, inserts and corn burners**

**Chimney Sweep**

**FREE ESTIMATES**

**(309) 678-8418 or 678-9555**

**FAIRLANE** (309) 303-9859  
**AUTO** DC 188\*106\*36127  
**SERVICE &**  
**TIRE** DAN JENKINS  
2424 W. ROHMANN WEST PEORIA



**GILES ACCOUNTING AND TAX SOLUTIONS, LLC**

Lawson S. Giles, CPA, CMA, EA  
Accountant and Tax Preparer

Providing Effective Solutions for your complex accounting and tax problems

1927 W. Kellogg Ave., West Peoria, IL 61604  
Business 309.637.1465 or Fax 309.637.7740  
Email: Gilestx@AOL.com  
Hours by Appointment Only

Authorized E-File Provider

Licensed to Practice before IRS

**MARK'S MARKET**

LOTTO DELI ICE  
COLD BEER SODA  
2705 W. Farmington Road  
West Peoria 673-2590

**WASH - O - RAMA**  
CLEAN

SAFE

FUN

Farmington Road & Sterling Avenue

## Remember When

### From West Peoria's



Fifty years ago, an explosion at the corner of Rohmann and Sterling Avenues killed four people and destroyed two buildings: a two-story brick building at 2425-2427 W. Rohmann that housed three businesses as well as two upstairs apartments and a residence at 708 N. Sterling.

The businesses located on the first floor of the building were Traub's Market, owned by Perry Traub; the Aaron Hardware and Paint Store, owned by Ralph Aaron; and the West Peoria Beauty Salon, operated by Mrs. Leona Aaron. A CILCO gas distribution center was located behind the commercial building.

Both the building and the house were owned by John J. Heitzman, who lived with his wife Opal in the house on Sterling. Heitzman's daughter, Margaret Einfeldt, and her husband Robert lived with their two boys, Robert and Kenneth, in one of the apartments above the brick building.

The second apartment was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond C. Wright, the owners of the then well-known Peoria eatery, Wright's Café at 106 S. Monroe Street.

The evening of January 16, 1957, started off as did most Wednesday evenings for the Einfeldt family. Margaret Einfeldt, the organist at West Bluff Christian Church (today's United Disciples Christian Church) was at choir practice. As usual, her two sons had possibly attended a Boy Scout meeting at the same church. Robert Einfeldt, also active in Cub Scout work, had picked up his sons and taken them to Mrs. William G. Wahl's variety store at 2508 W. Rohmann, where they bought ice cream and comic books.

Perry Traub, who was still working at his market after its 6 p.m. closing time, detected the smell of gas sometime between 7:30 and 8:00 p.m. After receiving a call from Traub, Heitzman joined him to help investigate the problem. Central Illinois Light Co. logs showed a trouble call was received from Heitzman at 8:06 p.m.

When Einfeldt returned home, he joined the other two men after taking his two sons to the Heitzman home to stay with their grandmother.

Within minutes before a CILCO gas service truck arrived, the explosion occurred around 8:25 p.m.

Ralph Aaron, whom Traub had called about the gas odor, was just leaving his home at 505 N. Western Ave. to go to his hardware store when he heard the explosion and saw the flames. Probably with extremely mixed emotions, the Aarons went to the site to witness this devastating event.



The three men--Traub (41), Heitzman (61), and Einfeldt (35)--all perished. Robert John Einfeldt (11) also was killed. In the confusion and terror of the moment, he had evidently become separated from his grandmother and his brother Kenneth (8), both of whom escaped the enflamed Heitzman house on Sterling. Opal Robb Heitzman suffered severe burns and leg cuts; Kenneth had only slight cuts.

The explosions were heard as far away as Creve Coeur and in various areas of Peoria, at least three miles away. Flames shot so high that they were visible for miles. West Peoria houses in the vicinity shook, windows were shattered, doors were blown off, lamps and dishes were broken, furniture was overturned, and electric power was cut off. Cracks in walls and ceilings of some West Peoria homes remain as reminders of this tragic event.

West Peoria firefighters, including Ron Robinson (still living in West Peoria) and Emil Henrich (former owner of Geier Florist), were joined at this scene by firefighters from Peoria, Richwoods, and Limestone.

CILCO reported the six-inch distribution main contracted, creating a crack in the cast iron pipe about one-eighth of an inch in width—quite possibly weather-related. The explosion reportedly occurred because gas escaped, followed a path of least resistance, and entered the building on Rohmann Ave.

Of course, those who lost their lives left behind family members forced to deal with such unexpected sorrow. But this was also a West Peoria tragedy that deprived this community of people who had already contributed to its growth and would undoubtedly have continued to do so.



# West Peoria Residents' Association

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PEORIA, IL  
PERMIT NO. 618

W  
P  
R  
A

West Peoria Residents' Association  
c/o 2305 West Ayres  
West Peoria, IL 61604

Dated Publication Please Do Not Delay



[www.westpeoriareidents.org](http://www.westpeoriareidents.org)

Membership is open to all residents of West Peoria as well as those nonresidents who have an interest in supporting this community. The West Peoria Residents' Association is a private, nonprofit community organization registered with the Illinois Secretary of State.

President	David Pittman	dvdptmn@aol.com	676-5237
Vice President/Webmaster	Lynn Dempsey	ledempsey@sbcglobal.net	
Secretary/WP News Coordinator	Loretta Fehl	lofehl@insightbb.com	637-0326
Treasurer/WP News Advertisements	Maggie Moore	maggiemo@mtco.com	673-0535
At Large	OPEN	If interested in the position, contact David Pittman	
WP News Copy Editor	Sharon Crews	sharoncrews@hotmail.com	676-8109
WP News Layout Editor	Nancy Carson	carsonnm@insightbb.com	676-5140
WPRA Photographer	Karen Adkins-Dutro		
TO JOIN WPRA, CONTACT MAGGIE MOORE			

## Articles for WP News

The primary function of the WPRA's West Peoria News is to inform residents of the activities of the city's governmental agencies and officials, its committees, its organizations, and its businesses. Besides giving up-to-date reports of activities, the WP News also serves as a record of the people and events that have shaped our community's history.

The WP News staff appreciates all the help received from individuals (committee members, etc.) who actually serve as our reporters.

To make this task easier, our "reporters" can choose to give the WP News staff the essential information (the "who, what, when, where, how, or why" facts). The staff will then write the articles. Those who prefer to write their own articles are, of course, free to do so.

Although space is limited, any suggestions for future articles are welcome.