

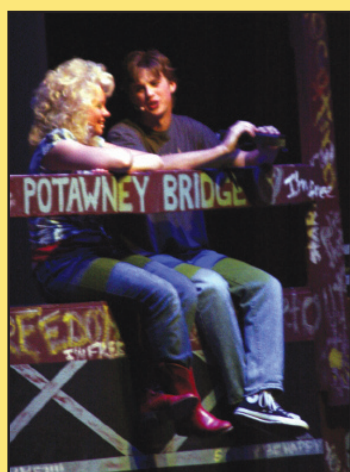


MAQUOKETA

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IN THIS ISSUE



Photos of Peace Pipe Players production of Footloose, The Musical
Page 9

| | |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| Local | Pages 2-3 |
| Editorial | Pages 4-5 |
| Family | Pages 6-7 |
| Sports | Page 8 |
| Obituaries | Page 13 |
| Classifieds | Eastern Iowa Bizzzy Bee |

SUPPLEMENTS

- **Eastern Iowa Bizzzy Bee**
- **Menard's**

Due to a varying numbers of supplements purchased by our advertising customers for insertion in *The Maquoketa Sentinel-Press*, subscribers in some areas may not receive all the supplements listed.

PUBLIC NOTICES

- Original Notice - PHH Mortgage Comp. vs. A. Scholbrook et al
- Neta Pool probate
- Maxine Countryman probate
- Mary Lancaster probate
- EIRUSS - Aug. 12, 2009 meeting
- Delmar City Council - Aug. 6, 2009 meeting



Our public notices are also published on the web at:

<http://www.publicnoticeads.com/IA/search/searchnotice.asp>

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

- Jackson County
- City of Maquoketa
- City of Andrew
- City of Baldwin
- City of Monmouth
- City of Delmar
- Delwood School District
- Maquoketa School District

Playground is fun place to learn

By KELLY GERLACH

Slides, climbing walls, amphitheater, grass. All that's really missing are the children.

The new Natural Playground & Learning Center at Sunshine Preschool and Daycare in Maquoketa remains under construction – in all actuality will always be growing and changing like the children it serves – but most of the site work, seeding and equipment are in place.

Sunshine kids are bursting with the energy to try it all out.

“Every kid (age) 3 and over has been on the playground and they love it,” said Sally Davies, Sunshine executive director. “They know what their expectations will be when the playground’s finally ready. They know they need to have two teachers watching when they use certain equipment. And they know we need to get the grass established before they can play there.”

The kids won’t be able to fully utilize the entire playground until a little later this fall, but progress continues.

Construction of the new Natural Playground began in June. Sunshine discarded the old, worn plastic equipment and rubber chipping in exchange for a more natural area that Sunshine and its young charges could grow with. The Natural Playground combines landscape elements, trails, and plants and uses natural materials such as rocks, trees, logs, dirt and limestone – all things that are indigenous to the area.

The overall goal is to provide children with a fun place to play as well as an outdoor classroom where they can learn.

“There are a lot of kids who don’t go to the state parks, don’t have gardens to plant. Many who live in town and are surrounded by concrete,” Davies said. “We want to give our kids the opportunity to plant something and watch it grow. There are flower gardens and we have a vegetable garden planned. There will be raised flower beds for those with physical challenges.”

An amphitheater is already in place in the 3 and younger play



MSP photos by Kelly Gerlach

This new natural slide at Sunshine Preschool & Daycare challenges children to climb up via the rock scramble on the right. It provides added safety for children because there is no ladder to climb, no chance of falling off that ladder and being injured. To the left is a climbing wall.

space, as well as a slide built into the hillside. There are rock scrambles and log climbs, wooden bridges, 5-foot and 8-foot slides.

“It’s going to physically challenge (the kids) to a degree,” Davies said.

Some of the lumber from the former playground will be reused, transformed into sand tables and benches for the children.

Sunshine Preschool & Daycare received a crucial \$42,000 grant from Jackson/Clinton County Empowerment that is making the playground a reality. Davies said that specific components of the project had to be and were completed prior to the end of June.

“We’ve had a ton of help with donations, material, time. There’ve even been a lot of people just driving by and watching and waving as we’re working out there,” the executive director said.

“It’s hard to drive by and see a pile of dirt and envision what (the playground) will be in the end,” she continued.

Groups and individuals donated much labor and materials to the project.

■ **PLAYGROUND**
Please turn to page 2



Grass still needed to grow at the children’s amphitheater on the Sunshine playground, but the rock seats and covered pavilion were already in place at the beginning of July. The amphitheater will give Sunshine instructors a chance to treat their kids to outdoor instruction in a more organized yet natural setting.

Ground-floor apartments debated by council

By DOUGLAS MELVOLD

Owners of commercial buildings in a six-block area of downtown Maquoketa would be prohibited from developing ground-floor apartments in those buildings, under a proposal that will go to the Maquoketa City Council next week.

The council’s Municipal Enterprise Committee on Tuesday, Aug. 11, unanimously recommended that the council pass an ordinance prohibiting apartments from being constructed, rented or occupied in a commercial building in the designated area.

Apartments on the second and third floors in the designated area would be permitted.

City Manager Brian Wagner said the proposed ordinance change was prompted by a request from a downtown property owner to construct an apartment on the first floor of his building.

Neither the property owner nor anyone representing him attended the committee meeting.

Currently, residences are permitted in areas zoned B-2, general business.

Committee member Margo Shouse said she feared that if many downtown storefronts were remodeled for ground floor apartments, it may discourage merchants from locating businesses downtown.

The committee studied a Bellevue ordinance that prohibits dwellings on the ground floor of commercial buildings in that community’s busi-

ness district.

Mayor Tom Messerli said he favored adopting the Bellevue ordinance for Maquoketa.

The committee also proposed that the designated area include the three blocks of Main Street between Maple and Quarry streets and the three blocks of Platt Street between Niagara and Olive streets.

Wagner noted that any first-floor apartments that are in the designated area at the time the ordinance would be passed would be allowed to remain.

In a memorandum to Wagner, City Attorney Mark Lawson said he felt the city has the power under home rule to restrict apartments in the downtown area from being on the ground level.

He noted that any such dwellings that existed before the ordinance was passed would be “grandfathered in,” or allowed to remain, and could continue to be used as apartments.

While Bellevue’s ordinance has not been challenged in court, Lawson said it has been controversial.

He noted that the biggest supporter of the ordinance is the Bellevue Area Chamber of Commerce, which doesn’t want to see the downtown area be converted from commercial to residential use.

The biggest opponents are property owners who feel that their right to use their building as

they see fit is being infringed.

Lawson noted in his memo that the Bellevue City Council has been asked to repeal the ordinance several times since its passage in 2004, but has not done so.

Shouse and committee members Jason Hute and Ed Turney agreed to recommend that the council pass the ordinance.

The committee’s recommendation is expected to be considered by the council at its next meeting at 7 p.m. Monday, Aug. 17.

The council would have to have the ordinance drafted and approve three readings before it would take effect.

On a related topic, Shouse asked if there was anything the council could do to require that that a commercial building have a tidy appearance and to prohibit clutter and debris inside.

Wagner noted that the city’s property maintenance ordinance prohibits buildings from being in a state of disrepair, such as having broken windows and holes in walls or the roof.

The city’s Property Maintenance Committee considers whether to take action on buildings that may meet that criteria.

Wagner and other committee members said, however, that there is no ordinance that controls clutter or debris inside a building, unless it presents a health or safety hazard.