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ICWHA Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Indian Creek Water and Homeowners Association will be held on **Monday, March 11 at 7 p.m. at the Towanda Community Center.**

Please note that this year we will be meeting in the Board Room which is on the south side of the building.

Please enter from the parking lot through the south door, so that we don't disturb another group meeting in the larger room.

Thanks and look forward to seeing you then!

Towanda HCE News

The Towanda HCE will meet on Monday, February 11, 7 p.m. at the Towanda Community Building. The program "Care Giver Self Care" will be given by Pat Pulokas. Hostesses are Jeanie Wager and Connie Carstens. Guests are always welcome to attend. Contact Cindy, 824-4797 for more information.

A McLean County HCE program of interest is a Membership/Friendship Tea, Saturday, Feb 9, 1-3 p.m., held at Christ Lutheran Church, 311 N Hershey, Normal. Father Dominic Garramone, OSB, the "Bread Monk" will present a program "The Scone Zone." Father Dominic is a monk of St. Bede Abbey in Peru, IL. Tickets/seats are limited and are \$10 for HCE members and guests. Contact Cindy Kelley, 309-824-4797 by January 31 for tickets.



Gardening Tips

Climate change, global warming, whatever you want to call it, it is already making a difference, and we need to protect ourselves. It has already hurt our water supply and the quality of our drinking water. Some states are concerned about them having enough clean, safe drinking water in the near future.

The mosquitoes, fleas, and ticks are moving in and biting more people and pets. The number of people and pets that have been bitten has tripled since 2004. More tick bites mean more Lyme disease. The fleas are spreading heartworm and the mosquitoes bring disease like Zika. It is important to use insect repellent and to check for ticks when leaving a forest area. Also, be sure to empty any item that holds water to curb mosquito breeding.

As the weather warms up, the bacteria reproduce more quickly. Meanwhile, antibiotic-resistant bacteria are becoming more common. Using less antibiotic use in humans and farm animals will help to curb that problem. Waterborne infections are expected to rise as the floods overuse the water treatment systems.

Asthma and allergies have gone up over 10 percent in the last 10 years, partly due to longer growing seasons that put more pollen in the air earlier and at a higher count. The higher humidity brings more mold. Close your windows and change clothes when you come inside.

Hotter days prompt people to wear fewer clothes. It has been predicted that the warmer days will bring more skin cancer. Be sure to apply sunscreen when you go out and wear a hat to protect the tips of your ears and the back of your neck.

The holidays have past and now is a good time to check our houseplants. The plants collect dust just like our furniture. It is time to dust them and check for any insects that have appeared. It won't hurt to wipe the leaves of the artificial plants also. It will freshen them up.

To clean them, use a moist cloth or paper towel. Hold one hand under the plant and gently wipe the top with the moist cloth. If you see some sticky stuff on the leaves or table, you probably have insects on the plants. The plants absorb air and light thru their leaves, so it best to get rid of the insects.

Mealy bugs look like a tiny ball of cotton. They suck the moisture out of the plants. You can dab them with a ball of cotton dipped into alcohol or spray them with insecticidal soap. You will need to spray them every 5-6 days for 3-4 weeks, so you can kill the newly hatched eggs before they are old enough to start laying eggs.

Aphids are small insects, usually green, they live on the end of the branches. They also suck the moisture out. If you are outside, a strong blasts water will knock them off. You can also spray them with insecticidal soap.

Scale is round brownish without legs and looks like a scab. They are usually found on the stem. Again, spray with insecticidal soap, for 5-6 weeks.

Spider mite is tiny specks underside of the leaves. They will leave a fine webbing in the leaf axils and between the leaves. Use the insecticidal soap.

Whiteflies can be seen when you brush against the plant. Use the insecticidal soap and let the tops of the soil dry out before watering again.

If you wait too long between spraying, the newly hatched insects will be old enough to start laying eggs and you will soon have a new batch of insects.

If you have a bad case of mealy bugs, they can also get down into the soil. Then it is best to just get rid of the plant.

The holidays have past and the seed catalogs are arriving in the mail. It won't be long until the seed racks will show up in the stores. It is time to get out that list you made earlier of plants that you wanted to replace. The seed and plant catalogs have a lot of good information under the picture. Most of them tell how big the plant will be when it matures and if it needs sun or shade. It also might list the cold zone that you can safely plant it. McLean County is zone 5 or 5B. Some plants from zone 6 or above, you can put outside and then bring them inside for the winter.

Make another list of plants you would like to use. Listing the name of the plant and the price, also the catalog name and page number for further reference. Don't forget to add shipping and handling charge.

After the garden centers put their plants out, check out the local places so you can see the healthy plant and prices. It might cost a little more, but it might be worth it. Plus, if you need more, you know where to go and you will be helping the local economy.

In the summer, the birds use the bird feeders and also eat insects and larvae for fat and protein. During the winter they would like to have suet to get their fat and protein to help keep warm. You can purchase suet cakes or you can make your own. Just melt equal amounts of lard and peanut butter, add some bird seed, raisins, chopped dried fruit, maybe sunflower seeds. Mix well and pour into a pan to harden. Cut it into pieces and place in a suet holder or hang in trees and shrubs.

As I was driving on a sunny day in Bloomington-Normal, I noticed some nice young trees planted along the street. Then I noticed the wood chip mulch was pressed against the trunk, up for several inches. We have always said to keep the mulch back a couple of inches from the trunk. The root flare needs to be able to breathe. By having the mulch touching the trunk, it will keep the bark wet and invite disease. It can also shorten the life of the trees.

Last fall, you probably put your tools away without cleaning them. Now is a good time to get a bucket of soapy water and a brush. Remove all of the caked-on soil and grass clippings. Sharpen the tools and let them dry well. After they have dried, wipe them with an oily cloth, so they don't rust. It is also a good time to see if any need to be replaced.

The ground is covered with snow and it is really cold. Hopefully, you have been keeping the bird feeder full. The wild bird seed that most people use in the feeder contains a good variety of seed. With the severe cold, the birds need more fat and protein to keep warm.

The suet cakes also contain a lot of fat to help keep the birds warm. Sometimes it is interesting watching the birds hold on to them and eat.

Another good feed that some people are afraid to use is the sock feed. It contains, what some people call, is thistle seed. They are talking about Nyjer seed. Nyjer seeds come from the African yellow daisy, a plant not usually grown in the United States. The seeds are collected and sold in northern Africa. The seeds are sterilized before they are sold. That is so the seeds won't germinate and become invasive anywhere. The seeds contain a good combination of fat, protein, and fiber that the birds need.

Nyjer seed can be served all year round because the finches and other use it in the fall. Place the sock in the open so the birds can watch for predators.

Some companies call it "niger" seed.

Helen J. Leake

TFD News

We are off to a good start in 2019! Weather in December was pretty mild but winter is in full force now. When large amounts of snow fall it is important to clear away the pile up around fire hydrants, three feet all the way around is standard. This helps to ensure a fast response in case of a working fire. Stay warm and dry as you work to clear your driveway, wet and heavy snow is still a very dangerous concern. Stay home if possible and if needed take extra precautions when driving through town. We ran 6 medical and 10 fire calls in December putting our total at 16 calls.

Towanda Library

Library Announcements and Program updates:

We are enjoying a very busy and joyous season at the library. Several of you have stopped in to see the new improvements. Our new shelving is here and we are excited to spread out. We will be painting, constructing new furniture, and shifting books around the library to utilize our new space. Our goal is to make the library as inclusive, inviting, comfortable, educational, informational, and cutting edge as possible. We are a work in progress, so please pardon our mess. We will be ready to hit the ground running this spring. We have big things in store to celebrate the 30th Anniversary for the library at the 301 S. Taylor Street location. Please contact the library or email me directly; director@towandalibrary.org if there is a particular book, movie, music cd, or audio book that you would like us to acquire. In between projects we are hoping to plan a few special events. We will keep you posted through the Indian Creek Newsletter, our website, and Facebook page. We will be launching a new website in spring of 2019. While we anticipate it to be visually pleasing, it will also be highly functional and much more user friendly for our patrons. We will hold programs to navigate the new site once it goes live. We will offer programs in 2019 that will explore our new digital services and offerings.

Bulldog Builder's LEGO Club: Monday afternoons from 2:30-3:30. For registered 3rd-5th grade students. February Dates: 4th, 11th, 25th

Bulldog Book Club: Late Start Wednesday afternoons from 2:30-3:30 for registered 4th and 5th grade students. February Dates: 13th

Preschool Story Time Returns February 6th. It will be held every Wednesday morning at 10:30 am through May for toddlers and their caregivers. Advanced registration is not required.

Knitters and Crochet Group: We are happy to welcome Knitters and Crochet group every Tuesday at 5pm. Come join us!

Towanda Reads Book Discussion Group: We are reading Factfulness by Hans Rosling. Copies are available at the library. All are welcome to join us to discuss this title at 5pm on February 14th.

Towanda 4-H

The Towanda 4-H club will meet February 5, 2019 at 6:30 at the Towanda community building. Caleb Vogel will give our program on Passport to the World project. Claire Malinowski will also discuss our next community service project. Various members will also give talks and demonstrations about their projects. For more information about joining our club contact Scott Clement at 275-5910 or Jeanie Wager at 728-2852.

Towanda Historical Society

January 18, 2019

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Directors of the Towanda Area Historical Society (TAHS), President Gail Ann Briggs, Secretary/Treasurer Patricia Pulokas and Mary Merritt, are soliciting options about the future of the organization; former Directors Dale Messer and Dale Sutter are deceased. Established in the spring of 2005, TAHS is a State of IL Not For Profit Corporation.

The initial goal of the group was to update and expand the first history book "Towanda, McLean County Illinois 1826-1976". In the fall of 2006 TAHS and the Towanda District Library (TDL) partnered to apply for an LSTA Digital Imaging Grant from the Illinois State Library (ILS) in Springfield. The successful \$19,141 grant allowed TAHS-TDL, with the help of a hundred volunteers, to develop a website with images uploaded to the ISL Digital Archive

(<http://www.idaillinois.org/cdm/search/collection/tdl/searchterm/Towanda%20Area%20Historical%20Society/order/title>).

Some of the money that was raised was meant to help carry out the goal of developing a book; however, interest and energy has dwindled, and the directors need to know your thoughts about the direction that should be taken regarding the organization, the book project, and the remaining funds.

Please provide input to Briggs (rgbriggs@frontiernet.net – or – mail to 112 Hunt St) and/or to Pulokas (palp@mchsi.com – or – mail to 111 Miriam Way), Towanda, IL 61776.

We appreciate your help!!! Thank you

Scouting Organization Pancake and Sausage Breakfast at School – Sat.Feb.9 – serving 8-2
Unit 5 1-hr late start ~ Wed.Feb.13
President's Day / Federal holiday & no school ~ Mon.Feb.18
Teacher Institute / no school for students ~ Tue.Feb.19

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Pampered Chef features Cooking Shows, Catalog Parties, Freezer Meal Workshops, Bridal Showers & Fundraisers!

Contact your local Indian Creek consultant for these events.

Annette Hancock

Call Home - 728-2990

Text or call- 309-242-1802

Email - oldcars@frontiernet.net

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Call Mary Leins at 728-2904

For Hire:

Need help taking care of your pet while your away, call Bailee Harmon at (309) 530-5360. "I love animals and have been volunteering at the Humane Society for almost six months. I would love to help take care of your animals".