

Streetmail, Shiawassee County
March 8, 2001
Correspondent: Karel Juhl

Our resident Sandhill cranes over-wintered to protect their injured youngster, then disappeared during late February's spate of awful weather. Thankfully, a recent sighting proves they're alive and well -- and others are joining them. What a welcome sign of spring! So grab your binoculars, but focus first on Streetmail. This week we're:

Cleaning up our waterways in STREET.TALK... Learning about Laingsburg in STREET.SMART...
Trying a taste of everything in STREET.LIGHTS... and bidding farewell in STREET.FARE.

STREET.TALK

WATER WATER EVERYWHERE: "Sprawl within our county is becoming increasingly evident," leading to polluted waterways, warns the first issue of a newsletter produced for the Mid-Shiawassee River Watershed Restoration Project. Administered by the Shiawassee County Conservation District, the two-year project studies approximately 4,000 miles of land adjacent to drains, streams and the river. Ideally, all of this land should host native plants that filter contaminants from runoff before they reach the water. In reality, only one mile of cropland has been enrolled in a USDA program that pays for such "buffer" installation.

Improper septic systems, pet waste from urban lawns, runoff from livestock yards and sanitary sewer overflows have raised bacteria levels in the water to "unacceptable levels," says the district. Toss in unnecessary use of lawn fertilizer and other grievances, and the water's nutrient level rises - - increasing algae growth, decreasing oxygen and killing fish. Streams of black water, floating sewage and unbearable odors are not unthinkable if changes don't occur. This phase of the restoration project culminates in an approved Watershed Management Plan, earning funding to correct "non-point pollution" sources. The district offers a guidebook to help homeowners who live near surface water create a "water friendly" environment. You can do your part by calling 517-723-8263 ext. 3 for details, or e-mailing Project Coordinator Carlo Wysko at <cwysco@mi.usda.gov> . But first answer this:

** Native grasses with deep roots can take up about seven inches of rainfall and contaminants per hour, compared to the one inch an urban lawn can handle. Would you be willing to make some changes to your landscape if it meant improved water quality? Go to <surveylink> and let us know. Remember: we need your full name and hometown.

m a i l . b a g

VOTING WITH THEIR FEET: Last week I asked if you planned to attend the 24th annual Mid-Winter Powwow of the Chippewa, Ponca, Shawnee, Lakota and other Native American tribes. They gathered at Baker College in this ritual of song, dance and honor, sharing their combined heritage with others, and the public was invited. Although no one responded to the survey question, plenty of you voted with your feet -- by attending the event. The traditional "fry bread" samples they offered were worth walking a mile for. If you didn't make it to this Powwow, try to attend another. More than 50 Powwows are held in Michigan each year, and most are open to the public as a way for visitors to learn more about a culture that is shrouded in myth and mystery. All they ask is that you observe Powwow etiquette, which will be explained at the event.

** Remember, STREET.TALK is a two-way street, so tell us what you think. Send your comments to <mail:streettalk>. Include your full name and hometown if you'd like to be included in the newsletter.

STREET.SMART

IT TAKES A VILLAGE: Last week I asked you to name two of the six area locations that mark where principal Native American villages once stood. According to Steven Schmidt's excellent Web site, "Shiawassee County History," our region "was at various times home to the Algonquin speaking peoples, Ojibway-Chippewa, Ottawa, Sauk, Pottowatomi, Shiawassee and Fisher Indian tribes. Their principal villages were located near Chesaning, Owosso, Shiawassee town, Knaggs Bridge area, Laingsburg and on the Looking-Glass river in Antrim Township." We can't award a prize this week, but to help you prepare for the next history stumper, visit Stephen's site at <<http://www.angelfire.com/mi2/shiawassee>> . With that giant clue, let's move on to this week's question:

**** NAMING LAINGSBURG:** For about eight years in the mid-1800s Laingsburg was known by a different name. What was it? Send your answer by 8 p.m. Sunday to <[mail:streetSMART](mailto:streetSMART)> and be sure to include your full name and mailing address. (Your address will not be published; we use it only to mail your prize.)

STREET.LIGHTS

**** Need something to do? Look here. Planning a community event? List it here! Send the details to <[mail:streetlights](mailto:streetlights)> or to Streetmail, P.O. Box 17, Shaftsbury MI 48882. Please be sure to include a contact phone number.**

t h u r s d a y . m a r c h 8

LIVE AT JAMBALAYA'S: Long John Hunter appears tonight only at Jambalaya's New Orleans Cuisine. The show starts at 9 p.m.; go to <http://www.jambalayasrestaurant.com> for details, or call 517-651-9072. Find Jambalaya's at 5942 N. Round Lake Rd., west of Laingsburg.

LEARN TO COOK authentic Mexican food. Each Thursday for four weeks, Lynda Cobb will show you how. It's from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. in room 301 of Owosso High School, and costs \$45 (including food!). For more info on this Owosso adult enrichment class, call 517-723-5598.

THREE PART HARMONY: The Chenille Sisters perform at 7:30 p.m. at the annual family entertainment evening at the Lebowsky Center in downtown Owosso. This Emmy Award-winning trio "specializes" in everything from jazz and folk to pop and Motown. Their appearance is sponsored by the Owosso Rotary Club and tickets are \$15, \$10 for seniors and students K-12. For tickets and more info, contact the box office, 517-723-4003.

f r i d a y . m a r c h 9

MORRICE LIONS FISH FRY: All you can eat from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Lions clubhouse, 525 N. Morrice St. Cost is \$6 for adults, \$5.50 for seniors, and \$3.50 for kids. Show your current Lions membership card and you'll get 50 cents off for everyone in your party. Call 517-625-3554 for details.

s a t u r d a y . m a r c h 1 0

BALLROOM DANCING: This USABDA event takes place at the Corunna Community Building, off Corunna Avenue the second Saturday of each month. A one hour lesson opens the evening at 7 p.m., followed by ballroom dancing from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. Cost is \$6 if you're a member, \$8 if you're not. Call Bob for more info at 517-723-5364.

TOTO COMES TO OWOSSO: Here's your chance to see "The Wizard of Oz" on the big screen. The Owosso Community Players opens its classic movie series with Dorothy, Toto, the Cowardly Lion and the rest of the gang at 7:30 p.m. at the Lebowsky Center in downtown Owosso. Cost is just \$5 for adults, and \$3 for kids 12 and under, with proceeds used for the ongoing restoration project at the Center. For tickets and more info, contact the box office, 517-723-4003.

FAUX PAINTING? Learn to combine faux finishes and stencils to create a fool-the-eye finish. These Trompe L'Oeil Painting classes are from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. today in the Shiawassee Street Building, Corunna, and repeats on Monday. Cost is \$25, plus \$10 for supplies. Call Corunna Public Schools Community Education office to register, 517-743-4151. Check out their Web site at <http://scnc.corunna.k12.mi.us> .

s u n d a y . m a r c h 1 1

TOTO TWO: Today's showing of "The Wizard of Oz" is 3 p.m. See Saturday's listing for details.

MEET THE ARTISTS: Meet the artists behind the photography, paintings and ceramics now on display at the Shiawassee Arts Center. Michael Smith and Debra Oliva will attend a free, public reception from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., 206 Curwood Castle Dr. in Owosso. See this week's "Ongoing" listing, below, for details.

m o n d a y . m a r c h 1 2

MORE FAUX: Trompe L'Oeil Painting class today is from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. See Saturday's listing for details.

PLEASE DON'T EAT THE DAISIES: The Durand Area Garden Club meets at 7 p.m. at Durand Middle School, Room 205 -- just as they do the second Monday of each month, so mark your calendar. Tonight's program introduces safe gardening practices, good soil management, groundwater awareness and a display of composting, all presented by guest speaker Darren Bagley of Genessee County Extension MSU. All are welcome, and Pat Roussin tells us you'll not only make new friends who share your love of gardening, but the group takes field trips and participates in various projects around the area. For more info, contact Pat at 517-288-3310 or <roussin@shianet.org> .

o n g o i n g

SHIAWASSEE ARTS CENTER: Original paintings and photography by Michael Smith, plus ceramics by Debra Oliva, are on display at the Shiawassee Arts Center through April 1. Michael is a 1968 graduate of Owosso High School, and his photos have appeared in several magazines including Family Circle and Flower and Garden. See their art Tuesdays through Sundays from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free. The Center is at 206 Curwood Castle Dr., Owosso, For info, call 517-723-8354.

** Remember to confirm times, dates and admission prices prior to the event, as they're often subject to change.

STREET.FARE

"All farewells should be sudden." -- LORD BYRON

And so, this is mine. Next week my husband and I are moving to Virginia and Streetmail's Shiawassee County edition will be in another's capable hands. I've certainly enjoyed my stint as your correspondent, and hope you've had a bit of fun as well. You'll continue to receive Streetmail each week, so please give your new correspondent a warm welcome. For my part, I won't miss my weekly dose of this interactive newsletter. Why? Because I'll pick up the local edition in my new neighborhood! Ah, there's no place like home.

** Have something to say? Looking for help with a thorny problem? Find a cool Web site you'd like to tell others about? Drop a line to <[mail:streetfare](mailto:streetfare)> and we'll help you spread the word.