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Chamber Meets; Learns About Foundation

MAY 16TH 2011 BY NEWS

Chamber Meets; Learns About Foundation

*By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor*

When members of the Dexter Chamber of Commerce gathered recently for a full-membership meeting, they gathered at facility that has long been a landmark in the community – first as Cox’s Market, then Patricia’s Tea Room, and now as Cox Corner, part of the Regional Healthcare Foundation’s network of programs.

Chamber president Ed Gargas called the meeting to order, and informed those attending that the Chamber has hosted seven ribbon-cutting celebrations at new businesses/new chamber members since January 1.

“That’s good for Dexter,” Gargas commented.

Following a lunch buffet, Diane Mitchell, executive director of the Regional Healthcare Foundation, spoke concerning the programs of the Foundation.

Mitchell began by reminding Chamber members that the Foundation owns the building and grounds at the Missouri Southern Healthcare. She explained that the Foundation leases the facility to SunLink Corp., which is a for-profit.

“Let me make it clear: Our lease requires SunLink to maintain the building,” Mitchell

stressed.

The Foundation has developed several programs to help in creating a healthy environment in the region, including what Mitchell calls the “flagship” programs: Suicide Prevention, Mother-To-Mother, and Prescription Drug Assistance.

“We have had, in some shape or form, suicide prevention almost since our very beginning,” she said. She said the program now focuses on suicide prevention programs in junior high/middle schools. The program extends into several Southeast Missouri counties and Rebecca Musgrave leads that program.

Musgrave goes into schools and does a program called “Signs of Suicide.” Mitchell said Musgrave gives students a pre-test, shows them a video, talks with the young people and finally does a post-test.

“During that process she is able to identify students that she believes are at risk of suicide or have friends that are at risk of suicide,” Mitchell said. That data is reported to the school counselor. Musgrave is also available to assist in local schools if there is a situation that occurs with students.

The second flagship program is the Mother-to-Mother program, with coordinator Yvonne Hall.

“Mother-to-Mother is an incentive based mentoring program for pregnant and parenting young women. Mitchell said the program emphasizes the health of the young mother and baby, as well as parenting skills.

“In recent years it has begun to emphasize education for the mother. What we realized was that we needed to help these young mothers break the cycle of poverty,” Mitchell said. She said the program tries to help these children of young mothers grow up and not become a part of the cycle of poverty.

Mitchell said every drug manufacturer today has some sort of prescription drug assistance program. However, each program is different, and the maze of programs and requirements can be difficult to navigate. Thus, the third flagship program for the Foundation – the Prescription Drug Assistance program.

“We have advocates who work with the pharmaceutical companies, fill out the applications, keep up with the refills” and help individuals navigate the programs

successful. Mitchell said that in 2010, the Foundation’s Prescription Drug Assistance program was able to secure about \$5 million in prescription drugs for participants.

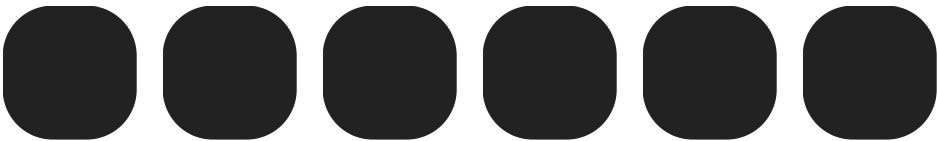
The Chamber Board of Directors will meet at noon, on May 24 at the Chamber of Commerce office Conference Room.

Photo Above: Regional Healthcare Foundation Executive Director Diane Mitchell spoke to the members of the Dexter Chamber of Commerce at a recent luncheon meeting.

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Team Completes 'Perfect Set' of Seasons

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Team Completes 'Perfect Set' of Seasons

They might be called the “most successful and best behaved gang of girls” at T.S. Hill Middle School. And the title would be right on the mark.

The Dexter 8th Grade Girls Volleyball team had more than just a successful season this year – they’ve had a highly successful, fun-filled pair of seasons on the volleyball court.

Undefeated in everyway – from regular season games to tournaments– the girls are a close-knit group of young ladies who have fun on the court, are great examples of good sportsmanship, determined and truly enjoy victory!

The team was recognized Friday afternoon during the school’s spring sports recognitions assembly.

“They are undefeated in the Stoddard County Tournament in both the 7th and 8th grades,” said Coach Melissa Hahn. “And the amazing thing about this team is that they have never lost one set.”

The girls’ statistics are staggering – never lost a sing set in two years of middle school play; outscored their opponents 1775-868 during the 7th and 8th grade years, won every tournament.

State Sen. Rob Mayer and the Missouri State Senate honored the team with a resolution. Brad Jarrell, a member of Mayer’s staff, presented the resolution to the team on behalf of the state senator.

The resolution noted that the the Lady Cats “gave their many fans good reason to cheer as they beat the Advance Lady Hornets during the hard-fought championship game” of the Stoddard County tournament 25-11 and 25-17, and praised the girls and coaches Hahn and Kara Lummukka.

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Emerson Wants Corps to Restore Area ASAP

MAY 14TH 2011 BY NEWS

Emerson Wants Corps to Restore Area ASAP

*By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor*

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson does not want the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to forget but instead to move with haste in restoring the land and the people who lived and worked in the in the Birds Point floodway in Southeast Missouri.

Emerson sent a letter Friday to Major General Michael Walsh demanding the swift restoration of the Birds Point levee in Missouri’s Eighth Congressional District. The levee was intentionally breached earlier this month by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in three places under the assumption that flooding in nearby areas would be mitigated. Emerson strongly voiced her opposition to the action.

“The people who live and work in the New Madrid Floodway cannot move forward with their recovery until some action is taken to stop water from entering the spillway. This needs to be done as soon as possible as part of a responsible process of restoring flood protection,” Emerson said. “The Corps decision has hurt these communities and counties

very badly, and they ought to be a priority as the Corps begins to clean up the mess from this disaster.”

The text of Emerson’s letter follows:

An entire Missouri community and millions of dollars in economic activity in Missouri’s Eighth Congressional District have been wasted by the decision to destroy the Mississippi River levees at Birds Point. My constituents and I will accept nothing less than your total commitment to restoring the New Madrid Floodway, repairing the resulting damage and returning flood protection to those harmed by the actions of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in this disaster.

Pinhook, Missouri, is home to 48 constituents I represent in the New Madrid Floodway, which contains 288 residential structures total. Without restoration of the levees, these Missourians cannot return to their homes. The Floodway is also home to 132,000 acres which produced fully half of the value of Mississippi County’s agricultural economy last year, totaling \$65 million. Without restoration of the levees, this county (already a persistent poverty county for four consecutive decades) will be economically devastated.

Not only do these Americans deserve protection from future Mississippi River floods, they must also be helped to their feet by the governmental entity which knocked them down. The restoration of the levees is the very least you can do for the thousands who have been injured by the Corps’ actions. It is entirely appropriate that the Corps would also repair other public and private structures in the Floodway damaged by the levee breach.

Missourians in the Eighth District deserve your prompt and complete commitment to helping them recover from the disaster the Corps caused in their communities. Please provide an immediate indication that the full resources of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be made available to help us in our time of need.

Photo Above: U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (on right) listens as Col. Vernie Reichling Jr., answers questions during a briefing on the levee held by Maj. Gen. Michael Walsh when he announced the decision to blow the levee at Birds Point. (ShowMe Times File Photo)

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Emerson Critical of Binden's Praise For Corps

MAY 12TH 2011 BY NEWS

Emerson Critical of Binden's Praise For Corps

*By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor*

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson has a few things to say these days to Vice President Joe Biden – and he might feel he was in the ‘hot seat’ when the conversation is completed.

Biden was in St. Louis on Wednesday and had praise for the Army Corps of Engineers and its decision to blow holes in the Birds Point levee in Missouri and flood more than 125,000 acres in the ShowMe State.

The blowing of the levee resulted in the intentional obliteration of 288 residential structures, ten churches, one entire predominantly African-American community, and the flooding of 128,000 acres of Missouri farmland.

According to the Associated Press, Biden told a group of reporters in St. Louis, “it is evidence that the (Army) Corps of Engineers has come up with a method along the

Mississippi to be able to mitigate some of the significant damage that otherwise would have occurred.”

U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (MO-08) responded to the Vice President’s statements by saying Biden clearly doesn’t understand the situation in the congressional district she represents.

“Not only has this decision by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers literally wiped an entire town off the map, it has also in the case of Mississippi County likely reduced the ag economy by some \$65 million,” Emerson said. “There is a swath of destruction alongside the river, and there has thus far been no public indication by the Vice President or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that the federal government will be there for these Americans to help them rebuild and keep them safe over the long term.”

Furthermore, Emerson says, there is no evidence to suggest that any reduction in Mississippi River flood stages at Birds Point last week will lead to a reduction in damage as the crest moves downstream.

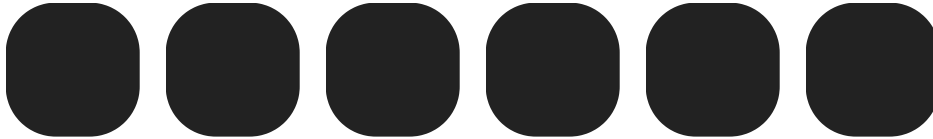
“I do not know what damage the Vice President imagines was prevented by causing hundreds of millions of dollars of destruction in Southern Missouri, but I can tell you the crisis in our communities is real, it is immediate, and a comprehensive response is urgently needed,” Emerson said.

Emerson said four Southern Missouri counties have been declared major federal disaster areas, but that an expansion of that designation to Scott, Stoddard, Cape Girardeau and other counties is necessary, as well as restoration of the levee sections the Corps of Engineers detonated.

“I think it is foolhardy to call any action that purposefully ruins Americans lives and livelihoods is a sound method of dealing with any disaster,” Emerson said. “The folks I represent are no less important than any other Americans suffering from the flooding along the river.”

U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson at a briefing by the Army Corps of Engineers near Birds Point on the Mississippi River levee.

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'All Clear' Issued For Rolla Campus

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'All Clear' Issued For Rolla Campus

*By Annabeth Miller,
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ROLLA, Mo. - Life and work on the campus of Missouri University of Science and Technology have started to return to normal after a frightening situation Thursday morning.

Police issued an "all clear" bulletin at 1 p.m. after apprehending a suspect in a into custody who is believed to have entered nearby Fort Leonard Wood military base with an assault rifle, fled to Rolla in a stolen car while shooting at pursuing officers, wrecked the car at the university campus, walked through a university campus building in Rolla with the rifle, and then broke into a home and stole a car from the person living there.

The suspect has been identified as Cody Willcoxson of Southwest City, in McDonald County.

Missouri S&T went on a lockdown just before 9 a.m. Thursday after a report of a man with a gun was on campus in McNutt Hall, a building in the mining department. A text alert was sent out and a message was posted on S&T's website.

Law enforcement officers later said no shots were fired on campus but some shots were fired near campus. One shot hit a sheriff's deputy's car.

According to the Rolla police, at approximately 8:36 a.m. a male identified as Cody Nathaniel Willcoxson was seen at the entrance gate at Fort Leonard Wood with an AK-47. After being questioned, he fled the scene and was pursued by members of the Pulaski County Sheriff's Department and St. Robert Police Department in a silver passenger car.

The suspect then began to shoot at the pursuing officers, and he headed east on I-44. Spike strips were set up on I-44 which resulted in the suspect exiting at the Rolla 184 Exit.

The suspect then began shooting at Rolla Police officers and members of the Phelps County Sheriff's Department as they pursued him.

The suspect then drove through several areas in Rolla where he continued shooting at officers.

The suspect vehicle stopped near McNutt Hall at Missouri S&T near University Drive and Highway 63. The suspect fled from his vehicle on foot with a long rifle. Law enforcement officers established a perimeter around McNutt Hall and cleared the building.

Several minutes later the suspect broke into an occupied residence in the 1000 block of Crinoidal Court and demanded the keys to the resident's car and stole it. He later fled the scene in the stolen car.

At approximately 1 p.m., law enforcement officials apprehended the suspect. He is now in custody.

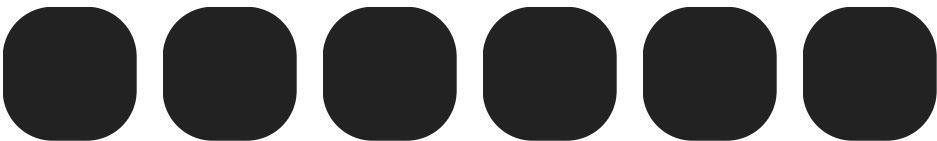
Most students on the Rolla campus had already left for summer break when the incident occurred.

Photo Above: The Millennium Arch on the campus of the Missouri University of Science & Technology in Rolla, where earlier today the campus was on lock-down due a suspect with an AK-47 assault rifle. The Millennium Arch started out as several large slabs of red granite rock and precisely cut with a high tech water jet. The original design came from internationally acclaimed artist Edwina Sandy, the granddaughter of Sir Winston Churchill.

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