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18 Fore Life & DPR Honors Gaige Willems

DECEMBER 05TH 2012 BY STAFF WRITER

18 Fore Life & DPR Honors Gaige Willems

*Article by
SMT Writer Beth Farrah*

Dexter, Missouri - The Merriam-Webster Dictionary describes the word ‘community’ as a unified body of individuals. As a unified body, it seems as if we share the same struggles, victories, heartaches, and triumphs throughout our daily routines. People come and go and the community may have its ups and downs, but in the end, we’re still ‘a unified body’.

This is a perfect way to describe Gaige Willems. Gaige is the son of Misti and Gerald Willems and is a fourth grader that attends Dexter Elementary. He is bright and athletic and loves to play basketball.

In 2009, another heartache shook Dexter and the Willems family when they discovered that their son was diagnosed with leukemia. With many prayers, Gaige recovered but we are very sorry to say that the leukemia has recently returned and Gaige must take further treatments.

Gaige has been playing basketball at the Dexter Park and Recreation and that is why when his family, friends, and teammates found out about his recent news, they knew that something needed to be done.

On Tuesday, December 4th, Gaige played his last game for the season with his team at the

new DPR building in Dexter. It was a bittersweet moment that was heartfelt and hopeful.

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Jamie Rowe of Dexter Park and Recreation organized the event in

honor of Gaige and his family. Rowe took the opportunity of handing Gaige a jersey so that he could visually see the support of his teammates and friends.

The jersey is just another way to show Gaige that we are praying,

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caring, and thinking about him while he goes through this hard time in his life.

Scott Kruse of the Ben Kruse 18 Fore Life Foundation also made an appearance at this special event. Kruse spoke about real champions in the world. They're not super heroes or NBA all-stars, but they're people like Gaige Willems, who have survived and thrived even though tough and life changing events have been thrown his way. The 18 Fore Life Foundation is able to support and help people during times of need, just like Gaige and his family. The foundation was created to help people and that is why Gaige was honored at this special basketball game.

Although a basketball jersey doesn't seem like much, we believe that Gaige will take it to heart and remember that there are so many people throughout this caring community that will reach out to help during his time of need. So, as a 'unified body', we hope that Gaige and his family come through this hardship stronger and happier than ever as hundreds of prayers are said for Gaige and his health.

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BREAKING NEWS: Jo Ann Emerson to retire Feb 2013

DECEMBER 03RD 2012 BY STAFF WRITER

BREAKING NEWS: Jo Ann Emerson to retire Feb 2013

Rep. Jo Ann Emerson announced today that she will be retiring from the House of Representatives as of February 1st of this next year. Rep. Emerson, who has been serving Missouri's 8th congressional district since 1996, stated that a new position as Chief Executive Officer of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association was the reason for her announcement.

Just when you thought that the polical ads were complete for this cycle, Rep. Emerson's resignation will create a flurry of political movement among those seeking the vacated position. A special election will be prompted for the Missouri 8th district seat.

"I am not leaving Congress because I have lost my heart for service -- to the contrary -- I see a new way to serve," Emerson announced. "I did not go seeking this opportunity, but I am excited about the new challenge it offers to find ways to promote strong rural policy."

As you may recall, Rep. Jo Ann Emerson was married to U.S. Representative Bill Emerson, a Republican from Cape Girardeau, in 1975. Bill was elected to the U.S. Congress in 1980 and reelected due to redistricting in 1982 from the 8th District. He died from cancer on June 22, 1996, a few months before the end of his eighth term. His wife, Jo Ann Emerson, subsequently ran and kept control of the seat in 1996.

With the retirement of U.S. Senator Kit Bond at the conclusion of the 111th Congress, Emerson became the dean, i.e., the longest-serving member, of Missouri's congressional

delegation.

Her strong dedication to the rural and farm communities has served her area well and she worked hard to grow the economy of her district. She commented that she would "miss" the work with her "constituents" but was very "excited" about this new opportunity.

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Urgent Needs Exist: Stoddard County Gospel Mission

NOVEMBER 28TH 2012 BY BETH FARRAH

Urgent Needs Exist: Stoddard County Gospel Mission

The Stoddard County Gospel Mission (SCGM) in Dexter has helped thousands of people during hard times and they would like to continue doing that for many years to come. The past three years have been unsteady for the Mission and with all the newer programs starting up in local places, it is hard for the Mission to receive the care and donations that they received in earlier years that helped them maintain their promise and motto “A Helping Hand in a Time of Need”.

There are many new programs in the area that offer food to families and those are great and helpful programs but the problem is that these programs are both regional and national but not local. There are many needs throughout our world and country but we must not overlook the needs in our own community.

There have been many ups and downs at the SCGM just like there has been in many other places throughout the years but the last three years in particular have been slowly sliding down hill. Food donations have slowed down, so SCGM have been facing many different challenges when it comes to low supply and high demand.

A couple of years ago, the SCGM received countless donations along with the ability of being able to purchase or receive donations of can goods and other foods from the Food Bank in Cape Girardeau so they could keep their stock and supply fresh and ready for whoever needed it. Recently, larger organizations that have a broader range of areas that they donate to have been collecting the food that the Gospel Mission used to receive.

The local Wal-Mart in Dexter was also one of SCGM’s main resources for supply. Wal-Mart used to donate day-old bread and other foods that went out of date. The Mission would pick up the food and stock their own shelves so that they could give to the needy. Now, SCGM lost another source that they used to receive from. Wal-Mart is now giving all that leftover food to the Food Bank in Cape just like the other organizations. Wal-Mart would love to keep donating because they know of all the good that SCGM brings to the community but it is simply a corporate ordeal.

The flow of food has slowed tremendously and it has caused SCGM to slow down with it. The food that is being donated to organizations like Feed America and other large food pantries that we often hear about are not reaching our local needs. Our community’s food drives and other types of donations are helping out regional or national places while our local people are not benefitting much at all from our efforts. There is something truly special about donating to other causes like Feed America but we must not forget to help

the ones in our community that are also in need.

Donations of food and other goods are crucial to our community. The Stoddard County Gospel Mission has three different branches that are located in Dexter, Puxico, and Advance. In Stoddard County alone, the SCGM feeds approximately 1,200 families monthly. In Puxico there are about 250 to 300 families in Advance, there are about 200 families that benefit from the Mission.

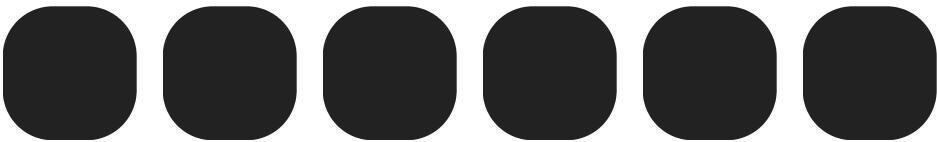
People do not realize that there has been such a need for supplies at our local Gospel Mission and that is why County Wide Insurance hosted a Stuff-A-Truck event with the old Civil Defense Truck. We become a drop off point for a wide variety of foods so that we can offer help to our local Gospel Mission. Our slogan is: “To insure that people have plenty, help the Stoddard County Gospel Mission” and we hope that it is a successful event! You can help bring not only canned goods but frozen and refrigerated foods as well. We hope that this is a great way to jumpstart the Mission and get things flowing again so that our community can stay healthy, strong, and united.

For more information you can contact the Stoddard County Gospel Mission at 573-624-8979.

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Jo Ann Emerson Tours Mingo Job Corp

NOVEMBER 28TH 2012 BY STAFF WRITER

Jo Ann Emerson Tours Mingo Job Corp

*Article Provided to
SMT by Reader*

Puxico, Missouri - US Representative Jo Ann Emerson recently toured Mingo Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center near Puxico. Representative Emerson is often found visiting with her constituents as well as remaining well informed of the successful programs in our region.

Job Corps is based upon offering education and training program that help young people learn a career, earn a high school diploma or GED, and find and keep a good job. Eligible young people that are at least 16 years of age must qualify in order to be accepted into the program.

Job Corps works to provide the all-around skills needed to succeed in a career and in life. Those accepted into the Mingo Job Corp program display a high level of respect and determination to achieve their personal goals.

During the course of her visit, Representative

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Emerson spoke with Health Occupations students Kayla Woolsey and Kristen Medlock, who plan to become Certified Nursing Assistants after completing their Career Technical Training at Mingo Job Corps.

Mingo Job Corps Civilian Conservation Center is a residential vocational and educational training program serving students ages 16 to 24, located near Puxico, Missouri. In addition to seven vocational trades, Mingo Job Corps offers GED or High School attainment, driver's education, and basic health care all at no cost to the student.

The U.S. Forest Service administrates the program in Southeast Missouri and at 27 other

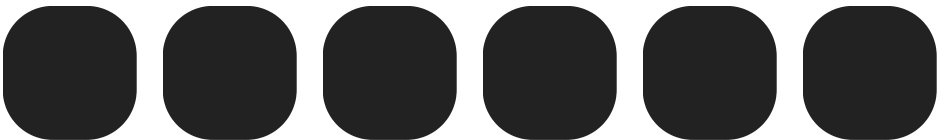
centers across the nation. For more information, call 573-222-3537 or visit www.jobcorps.gov.

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A Special Gather; "The Christmas Reading"

NOVEMBER 22ND 2012 BY STAFF WRITER

[A Special Gather;](#)

Article By
SMT Writer Beth Farrah

Dexter, Missouri - As Christmas gets closer and closer, it's easier for us to get caught up in the hustle of the holidays and forget about the real reason why we celebrate Christmas. Greg and Lisa Mathis knew that there had to be a way to slow people down for a minute or two so they could share the story of Jesus with them.

While many families have the tradition of sitting together near the fireplace and reading the Christmas story on Christmas Eve, Greg and Lisa wanted to read it at the beginning of the December so that the meaning and the words are fresh in your mind as you go and battle the stressful Christmas shopping at the mall and the hustle and bustle of running around to each relatives' house during the holidays. The tradition first started when Greg remembered his mother-in-law reading the Christmas Story to his two sons when they were younger and he knew he wanted to share that feeling of warmth and peacefulness with other people.

The Mathis's have held The Christmas Reading since 2009 and they are grateful that it is still a wonderful and popular event, even with the community's busy holiday schedules. This is the official fourth annual Christmas Story Reading and the hosts are proud to see the numbers increasing each year. Last year, they had 300 people gathered together and they hope to see more and more people from the community come out and celebrate with them in the years to come. It's important that someone decided to reach out to the community in this way to share the light and teach others about the birth of Jesus and Christmas itself.

Although the special reader  is a secret for now, you can

come to the event to find out who it is. The previous speakers over the past few years were Jim Hall, Lydia Lovins, and Corey Mouser. You will also get to take pleasure in great holiday music and Christmas carols and enjoy many treats and warm drinks while you listen to the second chapter of the Gospel of Luke.

 We hope to fill the streets of Downtown Dexter with

holiday cheer. It's easy to get whisked away in the negative and stressful things of the season but we would like to take this night to "Get Our Spirits Right" and find warmth in not only the fire, but in our families and friends. If the Christmas music doesn't get you into the Christmas-mood, then hopefully the lights and decorations will. With a beautiful scene and great music, we hope that you find this event heartwarming and memorable.

On December 1st, the Christmas Reading will be held across from the Rainy-Mathis Funeral Home on an open lot at 130 West Stoddard Street in Downtown Dexter at 6pm. You can stay as long as you wish or leave as early as you'd like but the reading of the story will not last very long. You can dress casually but keep in mind that even though there is a bonfire, you still need to bundle up to keep warm.

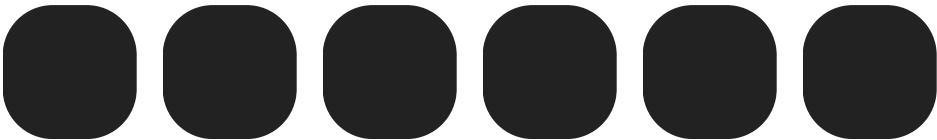
The Christmas Reading is becoming more and more of a Dexter Tradition and we're proud to call it our own. After all, what's a better way to start the Christmas season by hearing the wonderful Christmas story read by a special guest right out of the Bible, drinking cider and hot chocolate with your friends, and listening to Christmas music? We hope that you can come out and join us for this fantastic and uplifting event with a night full of fellowship, prayer, and the true reason for the season.

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