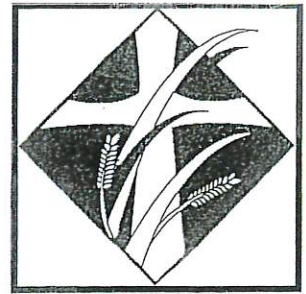




August, 2025

The Prairie Press



Volume 17, No. 12

Walkers, Riders Spread Word At Milton 4th Of July Parade

by Martha Johnson

How many Presbyterians does it take to assemble our float for the Milton 4th of July Parade?

The answer is eight this year, plus a few others who had created various pieces in advance.

These volunteers showed up with smiles on their faces, ready to let the world (or at least the area around Milton and Janesville) know about Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church.

Huge thanks go to Delight and Russ Antos, Julie and Dave Engbretson, Ann Williams, Kathy Crandall, Jean Paszkiet, and Cathy Wagner.

Lots of bells and whistles were created last year, and it was a blessing when we were actually able to FIND them.

On parade day, the riders and walkers assembled at Milton High School. As the parade began to wind its way through the town, our walkers and riders smiled and

waved flags to let everyone know that Rock Prairie is a vital piece of the area's church family.

Riders included Jan and Earl Marquis, Marge Knauer, Jean Paszkiet, Cindi Morse, Lindi and Bob Paull, Gari Sellers, and Bonnie White.

Our RPPC walkers were even more popular with the crowd. They included Elizabeth Sarauer, Pam Hatfield, Krista and Rev. Bruce Jones, and Gail Wolfe. (They were more popular because they were the ones throwing the candy to the crowd. Rumor has it, though, that they ran out of candy halfway through the parade route!)

(Continued on page 9)



Martha Johnson

Sky Carp Game Provides Fireworks On Field And Off

by Sharon Krohn

The Sky Carp Game and the weather didn't disappoint on Saturday evening, July 12, as nearly 50 Rock Prairie members and friends attended what turned out to be a double header at the beautiful ABC Supply Stadium in Beloit.

The game we had signed up for became the nightcap of a double-header because the Beloit-Dayton game scheduled for Thursday had been rained out.

The baseball was quite exciting, as Beloit won the first game by a single run and also pulled out the second game by scoring the winning run in their final at bat.

All of us joined the rest of the crowd in erupting with the signature cheer "Whooo!"

Following the game, we were treated to an excellent fireworks

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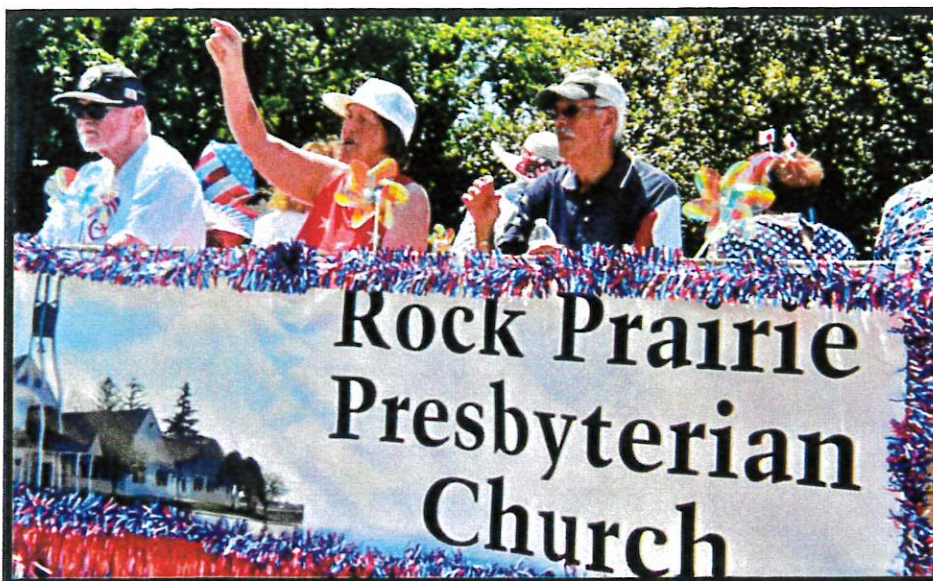
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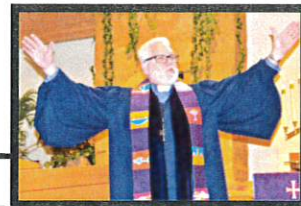
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Our float in the Milton 4th of July Parade



Instead Of 'Dog Days,' Let's Have 'God Days' In August

by Rev. Bruce

Welcome to August, the dog days of summer. It's also "National Dog Month."

The "dog days of summer" refers to the hot, humid days that may drain energy, leading to lethargy.

This sluggishness impacts both dogs (and other animals) as well as humans. Some consider it a time to just relax and sip on lemonade.

Yet, it's also a time when we may be feeling pressure to get all the tasks we thought we'd have already gotten done during the summer months.

I remember growing up, our county fair was in August. Then I went to 4-H camp in the Adirondacks for my final time of relaxation before the mad dash to September and the start of school.

It was a "mad dash" for us because the next two weeks included all the projects that Dad intended to get done over the summer.

Often this required recruiting friends to help harvest wood from the New York State Forest before the end of our contract. It was a scramble to thin the forest and col-

lect our wood that would heat our home through the winter.

Another time, I was on the roof securing a new antenna on Labor Day weekend. The winds howled around 20 miles per hour, but it was crunch time. It had to be done before school started on Tuesday.

In the life of the church, August is a time for planning for the new program year that begins with school schedules. It is a time to prepare for Sunday School, Adult Bible Study, for Fellowship events and for 10:30 Worship..

So, instead of dog days, let's think about God Days. How are we planning for God to be in our life? How will we be ready for our own spiritual growth?

Our VISION STATEMENT:

God's Calling for our future!

Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church will follow God's call to build a path of spiritual growth and engage in ministry and mission for community impact.

Now is the time to think about God's call for you to build a path of spiritual growth. What building blocks do you need to build a path to walk with Jesus as Savior and Lord?

If you would share your ideas with an Elder or me, we can put that into our plan for the program year. God Days require us to be energetic and involved in Christ's work every day.

Spiritual growth prepares us to be engaged in ministry and mission. Ministry activities support the work of our congregation.

You can be engaged in ministry through being involved in the planning and participation in activities at RPPC.

Mission is the work of Christ we do in service to our community and also globally. We can impact our community through our service to Christ in our ministry and mission.

May these God Days of Summer prepare you for living your faith in the fall and throughout the coming year.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Bruce

Thank You For Giving To The Lord

Many projects get done in August, during the lull after the County Fair and before we ramp up for fall programming. We celebrate God's Spirit that brings a refreshing movement of grace.

We give thanks for God's grace in our lives and for our servants of Christ who

- Treated the lawn for weeds;
- Provided special music for Worship;
- Provide the wagon and decorated the float;
- Walked and rode along on our float during the parade;
- Drove the truck for the float;
- Served Communion during Worship;
- Welcomed our new neighbors;
- Assisted with providing lunch for our Elder Visioning meeting and discussion;
- Weeded the Memorial Garden and around the Manse;
- Donated cereal and other items for mission projects;
- Assisted with Worship as we presented the Vision Statement

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How To Contact Us

The **Prairie Press** is a publication of the congregation of the Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church.

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'Tres Dias' Retreat Opportunity Offered

by Rev. Bruce

"Tres dias" is Spanish for "three days."

In 1995, I attended a Tres Dias retreat, and those three days provided a spiritual experience that became foundational to my faith and ministry.

Tres Dias, an ecumenical lay-led ministry, supports local congregations by guiding Christians into a deeper relationship with Christ.

It's three days for Christians to encounter Jesus so they can be renewed, refreshed, and rekindled. Krista went on a weekend early in our relationship. We both have served on weekends.

Over the three days, we worship and hear the faith stories of lay people and clergy, and the outline of the talks focuses on grace, the challenge of living our faith, and how to put our faith into action.

The theme remains the same at each retreat, but each person relates their own life, experience, and faith journey. They share their personal walk with Jesus in a meaningful way.

They share the dynamic way Christ motivates them to impact their home, their work environment, and how they used their gifts and talents as servant leaders in their local church.

On Aug 24, our Worship will include music by Steve Weber, a member of the St. John Vianney Catholic Church. We met Steve and his wife, Terri, through the Tres Dias community.

After Worship, we will discuss Tres Dias and the opportunity for you to attend a Tres Dias retreat weekend some time in the future.

Retreats are scheduled each spring and fall.

House of Mercy Shelter Our Next Mission Focus

by Bob Fulton,
Missions Committee Chair

In the months of August and September, the Mission Committee has chosen MercyHealth House of Mercy as our service project.

The House of Mercy is a 25-bed facility which provides short-term emergency shelter and access to community resources

to homeless women and children.

Their regular needs include the following:

- ♦ Women's deodorant
- ♦ Baby wipes;
- ♦ Lysol wipes
- ♦ \$10 gas cards (for job interviews);
- ♦ Silverware;
- ♦ Paper toweling;
- ♦ Toilet paper;
- ♦ Shampoo/conditioner.

Our missions projects provide opportunities for us to treat our neighbors with Christ's love. We thank you for your continued support of our efforts.



Bob Fulton



Some much-needed mission work was accomplished recently by Joanne and Bernie Shields (pictured above) and Marti and Will Everts. The four took all the used medication bottles that had been brought to RPPC by members and friends in recent months and removed the labels (if needed) and washed them. This will allow the bottles to be reused by HealthNet as they continue their work of providing free medical care to area residents. "The work stations worked out perfectly," commented Mission Committee Chair Bob Fulton, "and the donation of time is much-appreciated by all parties!"

The requested item for the Food Pantry Cart for August is peanut butter and jelly.

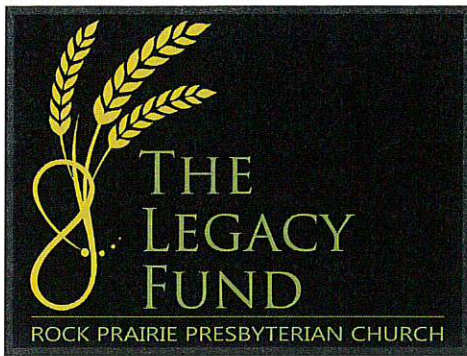
Let's fill up the cart and help our less fortunate and struggling neighbors as we thank God, by our actions, for all of our own blessings.



August 2025

August 2025							September 2025						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
3	4	5	6	7	1	2	7	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	11	12	13	14	8	9	14	8	9	10	11	12	13
17	18	19	20	21	15	16	21	15	16	17	18	19	20
24	25	26	27	28	22	23	28	22	23	24	25	26	27
31					29	30	29	29	30				

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Jul 27	28	29	30	31	Aug 1	2
					VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL! 6:45am Men's Breakfast @ Park City Restaurant	
3 9:30am Worship Summer Schedule 10:45am Fellowship Committee Meeting	4 1:00pm Outreach & Communication Committee Meeting	5 3:30am Personnel Committee Meeting 10:00am Tuesday 6:30pm Christian Ed	6	7	8 6:45am Men's Breakfast @ Park City Restaurant 10:30am Prairie Pals	9
10 9:30am Worship Summer Schedule 9:30am Communion Service	11 3:00pm Finance Committee Meeting	12 10:00am Tuesday Crafters 3:00pm Building & Grounds Committee	13	14	15 6:45am Men's Breakfast @ Park City Restaurant	16
17 9:30am Worship Summer Schedule 11:30am Worship Committee Meeting	18 6:30pm Session Meets	19 10:00am Tuesday Crafters	20	21	22 6:45am Men's Breakfast @ Park City Restaurant	23
24 9:30am Worship Summer Schedule	25	26 10:00am Tuesday Crafters	27	28	29 6:45am Men's Breakfast @ Park City Restaurant	30
31 9:30am Worship Summer Schedule	Sep 1	2	3	4	5	6



by Bo Plank

Our Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church Legacy Fund has reached a milestone during the second quarter of 2025—it has exceeded \$100,000 for the first time!

This growth was partly due to a recent Session decision to transfer \$34,760, which had been allocated for the Youth Caravan activities and held in a certificate of deposit (CD), to the Legacy Fund.

These funds are designated as a “restricted gift,” meaning that the principal will remain intact, with only the investment yields available for Caravan-related activities.

In the most recent quarter, the congregation contributed an additional \$1,100 to the Fund. So as of June 30, the Fund’s assets stood at \$110,131, comprised of

- \$39,951 in checking;
- \$37,934 in CDs; and
- \$35,246 in mutual funds.

Additionally, the Fund is named as a beneficiary of a member’s Estate Plan for \$5,000.

We extend heartfelt thanks to the following donors who contributed to the Legacy Fund recently.

- Jan and Earl Marquis (in memory of Dorothy McNall and Dean Howarth);
- Margaret Henke (in memory of Dorothy McNall and Dean Howarth);
- Krista and Bruce Jones (in memory of Pete Blija);
- Marti and Will Everts (in memory of Dean Howarth);

Rev. Bruce . . . (Continued from page 5)

- Assisted with True North, our VBS.

We give thanks for the work of the Holy Spirit in these servants

of Christ. We celebrate God’s gifts, shared by members and friends with love.

We give thanks to all who serve.

Faith Exploration And Membership

In August, Rev. Bruce will lead a Faith Exploration Class. The two-part series will be on **Aug. 3 and 10** following Worship.

On the first Sunday, we will explore themes of being a Christian and our Presbyterian foundations.

On the second Sunday, we will explore more about Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church and the responsibilities of membership.

Join us if you’d like to learn more about RPPC and our Presbyterian heritage.

Those who are interested in membership will be asked to meet with Session on Sunday, Aug. 24, before Worship.

Rev. Bruce invites anyone interested in the Faith Exploration to meet one on one, over a meal or light refreshment. Contact him at (608) 205-7428 or

rev.rppc@gmail.com

to set up a time.

Adult Bible Study Coming This Fall

For the past two years, I’ve led a Bible Study on Tuesday mornings. No prior Biblical knowledge is required.

Each week, we explore the Scripture for how God is speaking to us today and how we apply God’s Word to live our faith.

We will discuss the 3 P’s (Possibilities, Ponderances, and Problems) that arise from reading a passage. We will read a few

(Continued on page 8)

- Judy Jaggard (in memory of Dean Howarth);
- Randy Leyes (in memory of Dean Howarth);
- Alison Oliver (in memory of Dean Howarth);
- Lindi and Bob Paull (in memory of Dean Howarth);
- Marge and Jerry Peterson (in memory of Dean Howarth);
- Other non-members (in memory of Dean Howarth).

You may support the Legacy Fund through the following options:

- **Cash Contributions** Gifts of any amount are welcome at any time. Please make your check payable to “RPPC Legacy Fund.”
- **Through Your Will** Designate “Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church Legacy Fund” as a beneficiary of your real estate plan.
- **Life Insurance** Designate “Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church Legacy Fund” as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy.
- **Real Estate and Securities** Transfer ownership of real estate, securities, or other appreciated assets to “Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church Legacy Fund.”

Contributing to the Legacy Fund is a meaningful way to express your faith and commitment to the church’s mission. Your donation will help ensure that the church’s work will continue to thrive.

July Music During Worship Is Again Quite Special

Again in July, talented members of our congregation and friends supplied beautiful special music

during Worship.

Playing her violin and also singing was Katie Swanson, while Jim Manus played one of his original medleys of old-time gospel favorites.

Joan Heinze and Brandon Crandall harmonized beautifully, and the trio of Sylvia O'Connor, Delight Antos and Krista Jones delighted those present in the Sanctuary with their rousing rendition of

"6 Hands."

Special music will again be featured on the Sundays in August, and then the Adult Choir will return to the newly-reconfigured choir loft in September.

The choir is looking for additional voices to be added to their ranks this fall. If you are interested, contact Choir Director Krista Jones for more information.



Katie Swanson

Progressive Dinner Plans Being Made

The Fellowship Committee is in the planning stages for offering a Progressive Dinner, tentatively set for Saturday, Oct. 4.

For this to be successful, we need hosts willing to set eight places around their dining room tables that evening.

Important note: As a host, you will not be expected to prepare all the food for your groups.

If you might be interested or would like more information, please contact Marge Smith Peterson (608) 752-1555 or Sharon Krohn (608) 290-3499.



Joan Heinze and Brandon Crandall



Jim Manus



Delight Antos, Krista Jones, and Sylvia O'Connor

Finding Hope In The Face Of Evil

by Ed Hale

(A different Ed's Note: Sometimes I struggle when asked to do a devotion, and today was no different. I just couldn't come up with the right words, and I only had a couple of days left to prepare. Then God presented me with the following, and it's now my testimony to others that He does show us the way. Sometimes it's obvious, sometimes you must ask, and sometimes He just smacks you beside the head and shows you what you didn't see right before you.)

It was Sunday, and Jean de was the Liturgist for his new church for the first time. The father of seven had been attending services for a little over a year and finally got up the nerve to say "yes" to the pastor.

The congregation listened intently (and with a certain sense of pride) as he read the Gospel and introduced hymns. They all understood what a big step this was for him, and most felt that they had had a small part in this "First" for the tall, slender man.

The Congregation knows that God sent Jean de Mutabazi and his family here. On the first day that the whole family showed up in church, they were welcomed as any other new family would be—pleasant smiles and handshakes for all—but no real conversation.

But then, the Mutabazi family's story began to make its way into conversations at the coffee klatches and committee meetings.

Over the next few weeks and months, the family's journey to this congregation unfolded . . . "None of them speak English," "They found us on the internet," "They were brought to town by Jewish Social Services," "They have nine people living in a two

bedroom house," "They are from Congo in Africa," "They lived in tents in refugee camps for ten years," "None of them has a job, had seen running water, used a phone or computer, or even understand what a screen door or window curtain is."

The word got out fast, and help came from our congregants just as fast, including clothing, food, carpools, school supplies from the Sunday School, a tablet for translating, job searches, after-Worship English Classes, financial assistance, driving lessons, computer lessons, and a 1,000-fold sharing of Christian love.

More recently, stories of why the family fled the home they had known for many generations have come to be known.

The Republic of Congo has been, for dozens of years, one of the most dangerous places for Christians in the world. Brutal attacks by the minority Muslim population on the majority are

extremely bloody and vicious.

Just this past February, 70 Christians were rounded up in the night, taken to a church that had been boarded up by the rebels, and were brutally tortured and beheaded.

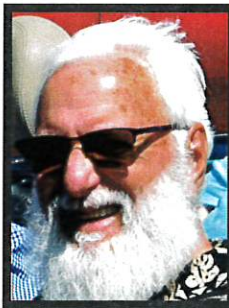
The Mutabazi family left their village when a group of rebels were looting houses and stores and killing Christians. While running from their home, Jean de turned to see his grandfather beaten, and he hasn't seen him since.

"He helped me become a Christian," said Jean de with tears in his eyes when he told a few Rock Prairie members about that day, but added in the next breath, "God sent my family to my new Christian friends, and for this I am grateful."

Please pray with me:

God, I lift my prayer to you, the Prince of Peace. I pray against violence of all kinds. I pray for peace in people's hearts. I pray against the anger, distrust, and hatred that breeds violence against individuals, groups, and countries. I pray this in the great name of Jesus, the Messiah.

Amen.



Ed Hale



The Mutabazi Family

Our Nursery Program Could Use Your Help

by Pam Hatfield
and Nicole Barlss

A message for all Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church Prospective nursery helpers:

Jessica Wellnitz has been our Nursery Coordinator for the past two years and has done an extraordinary job ensuring that our children have fun and are well-cared-for during Worship.

As you know, Aug. 31 will be her last official Sunday as Coordi-

Rev. Bruce . . . (Continued from page 5)

verses, discuss them, and then move on to the next passage.

If you are interested in participating, let me know. If Tuesdays or mornings do not work with your schedule, please let me know. There may be others, and we can

start a new study at a different time.

Preaching Schedule For August

(Worship at 9:30)

**Aug. 3, 8th Sunday
After Pentecost**

Hosea 11:1-11; Psalm 107:1-9, 43;
**Colossians 3:1-11; *Luke 12:13-21; Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23; Psalm 49:1-11.

“Christian Mind Set”

**Aug. 10, 9th Sunday
After Pentecost,
Communion**

Isaiah 1:1, 10-20; Psalm 50:1-8, 23-24; *Hebrews 11:1-7; **Hebrews 11:8-16; Luke 12:32-40; Genesis 15:1-6; Psalm 33:12-22.

“Assurance, Belief, Conviction”

**Aug. 17, 10th Sunday
After Pentecost**

Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 80:1-2, 8-18;
*Hebrews 11:29-38; **Hebrews 11:39-12:2; Luke 12:49-59; Jeremiah 23:23-29; Psalm 82.

“Something Better”

**Aug. 24, 11th Sunday
After Pentecost,
Reception
of New Members**

*Jeremiah 1:4-8; *Jeremiah 1:9-12; Psalm 71:1-6; Hebrews 12:18-29; Luke 13:10-17; Isaiah 58:9b-14; Psalm 103:1-8.

“What Do You See?”

**Aug. 31, 12th Sunday
After Pentecost,
Guest Preacher**

Jeremiah 2:4-13; Psalm 81:1, 10-16; Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16; Luke 14:1, 7-14; Proverbs 25:6-7; Psalm 112.

RPPC August Birthdays

August 5 Mary Zordel

August 15 Nancy Nesbitt

August 17 Vicki

Soloman-McLain

August 21 Kathy Gibbs

August 22 Betty Kuranz

August 30 Georgia

Waterman

Did you hear the one about the dyslexic, agnostic, insomniac man who stayed up all night pondering the question, “Is there really a dog?”

nator. However, she will still be taking her turn in caring for our nursery kids, she assures us!

I have been looking at Indeed.com for our new Nursery Coordinator position, but of the few I received, none fit our needs.

We are one of the few churches that has been able to staff their nursery with paid staff. The hiring process over the years has been time-consuming and difficult, and it has still required getting volunteers to help, as needed. Emily Kleinheinz will continue as our Nursery assistant.

Now is the time to go beyond our Time and Talent nursery volunteers that have been so amazing filling in on many Sundays and ask others to also be generous in the giving of their time to help care for our nursery children.

Our Personnel and Christian Education committees will be working together to ensure that our Rock Prairie kids continue to be happy and safe in the nursery.

Initially, this effort will involve always having three months of sign-up sheets available so that people can sign up enough ahead of time to get it on their busy calendars.

The committees will coordinate the scheduling of the needed volunteers for our nursery.

Both of our committees will meet on Aug. 5 to further discuss this initial process. When you see the nursery sign-up sheets in the Narthex, please consider actively supporting our kids in this way.

4th of July Parade . . . (Continued from page 1)

We also are grateful to Dominic Vitone who drove the truck pulling our float and to his assistant Harry Larson.

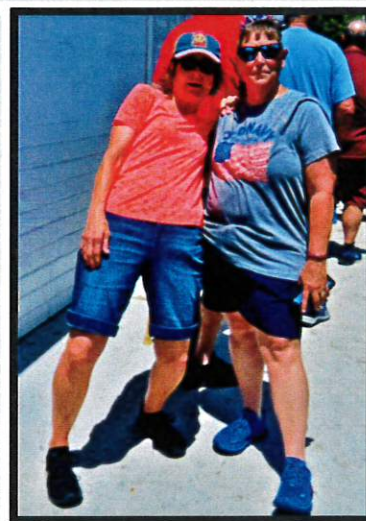
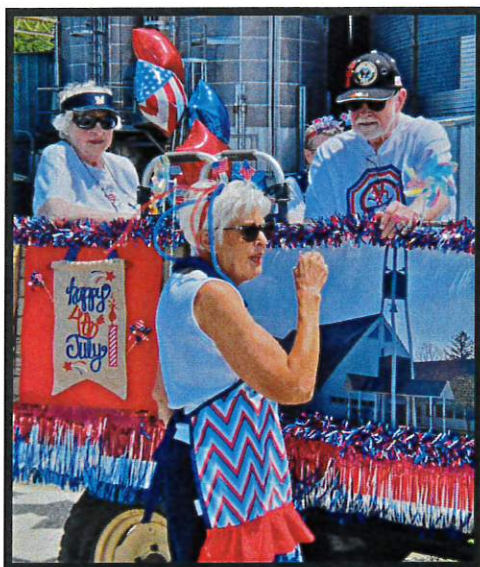
None of this could have happened without the amazing leadership of Cathy Wagner; this is just

another example of her heading up so many RPPC projects!

Thank you to every person in

this wonderful celebration of this country's birth.

God bless America!



Photos by Pam Hatfield

Sky Carp Outing . . . (Continued from page 1)

show.

Although those who arrived early had to try to stay away from a hot sun, after the roof of the stadium provided shade at the start of the second game, it was a beautiful night to watch a game.

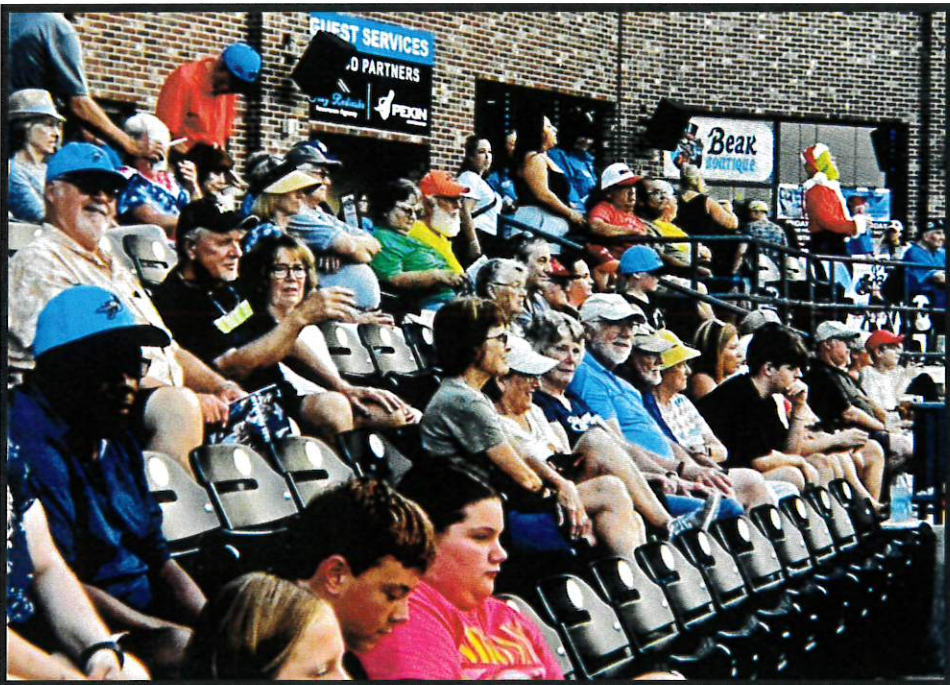
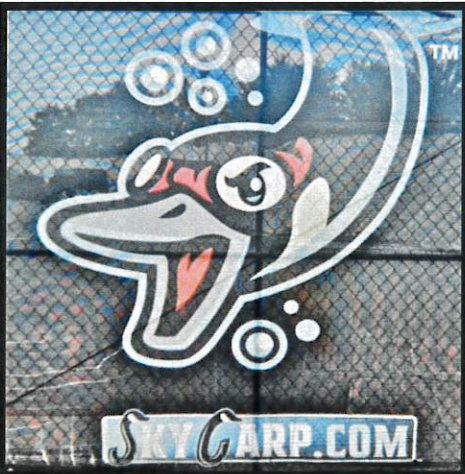
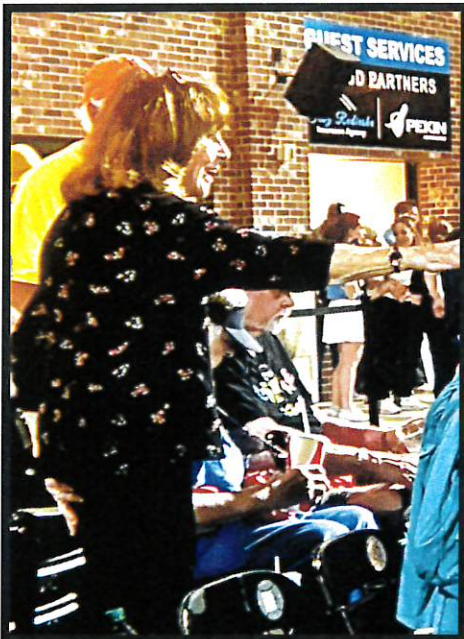
The refreshment stand located just behind our seats saw many of us enjoying brats, burgers, dogs, as well as many of the other tasty treats offered there.

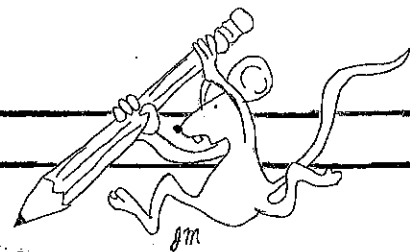
Our own Dawn Hale generously

provided everyone with some of her delicious home-baked cookies, which were much appreciated!

From all of us on the Fellowship Committee, we hope you all had as much fun as we did!







The Church Mouse

Dear Friends,

Pennies From Heaven

I found a penny today,
Just laying on the ground.
But it's not just a penny,
This little coin I found.
Found pennies come from heaven.
That's what my grandpa told me.
He said "Angels throw them down."
Oh, how I loved that story!
He said when an angel misses you,

They toss a penny down,
Sometimes just to cheer you up,
To make a smile out of your frown.
So don't pass by that penny
When you're feeling blue;
It may be a Penny from Heaven
That an angel tossed to you.

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—The Church Mouse

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