

City of Remsen

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Tom Haverkamp
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Dale Schroeder
Dick Sievers

Paige List – Clerk/Treasurer
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Dave Sanow – Street Superintendent

Municipally Owned
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Swimming Pool – Parks

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Steven J. Pick – Operations Director
Ron Mayer – Superintendent
Dr. Steve Meis – Physician
Barry Thompson – Attorney

March 3, 2009

Rebecca Ohrtman, SWP Coordinator
IDNR
Wallace State Office Bldg.
502 E. 9th St.
Des Moines, Ia. 50312

Becky,

I have enclosed the article from the Remsen Bell-Enterprise on our SWP project and Pheasants Forever. I don't believe our paper is "on-line" but I will check and let you know. I will also send any articles about our award of the WIRB grant.

I, again, want to express my thanks to you and Dan and your staff with our Source Water Protection Plan as well as all your assistance with compiling information for the WIRB grant. Without you and your staff as well as assistance of the Sioux River RC&D, and the USDA, this grant achievement could not have happened. It shows complete cooperation and professionalism by all branches of the government to assist small cities/municipalities of Iowa in providing safe drinking water for its citizens. It also shows communities that the IDNR SWP department is here to help communities resolve potential problems before drastic measures need to take place.

Your department needs to be commended.

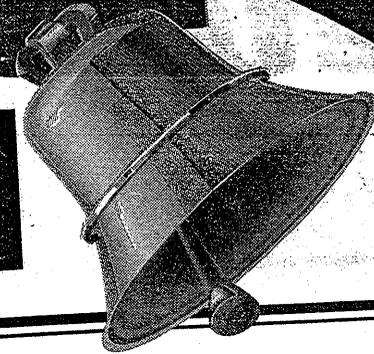
With sincere thanks,



Steven J. Pick
Operations Director
Remsen Municipal Utilities

Remsen

Bell



Enterprise

75 Cents

REMSEN, IOWA

February 26, 2009

Briefly

Chamber of Commerce coffee schedule

The Remsen Golf Course will be hosting a Chamber Coffee on Wed., March 11, 2009, from 8:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Mid-Sioux's Comedy Night celebrates Mardi Gras

Mid-Sioux Opportunity, Inc. will be holding their 7th Annual Comedy Night Fundraiser Mardi Gras style on Sat., March 14, 2009, at the Avalon Ballroom, 114 Fulton, Remsen. Comedian Fred Bevill will share his passion for laughter.

Social hour begins at 6 p.m. A meal of parmesan chicken breast, roast beef, cheese potatoes, Riviera-

Habitat and clean water — they go together

By Magdalene Landegent
Editor

The city of Remsen and the Remsen municipal utilities are working with the local chapter of Pheasants Forever to turn 70 or more acres of land north of Remsen into habitat.

The city is taking this unusual approach to helping keep Remsen's water supply pure.

The land in question includes Remsen's well field north of town plus about 35 acres the city recently purchased. That land includes some of the underground watershed surrounding the well field.

Planting native grasses on the land and taking it out of crop production will help limit the amount of nitrates seeping into the water supply

er, explained Steve Pick, the Remsen utilities operations director.

"We're working closely with the Iowa DNR, Sioux Rivers RCND, Plymouth County and the USDA on this project to head off our high nitrate problem before it gets to a point where something drastically needs to be done," Pick said.

The water that Remsen residents receive has about 5-6 parts per million of nitrates, he said. The maximum level is ten.

If a community reaches that maximum, a nitrate removal system might have to be installed, Pick said.

Changing land near the well field to habitat, Pick added, is the "cheapest route we see in this to reduce our nitrate level."

The total size of the land to be turned over to habitat is yet to be decided.

The planners are still waiting to hear back whether they will receive a grant to buy 21 acres to the east of the well field.

Changing that land to habitat could decrease the flow of nitrate's to Remsen's well No. 8, which currently has Remsen's highest level of nitrates, Pick said.

"If we would take Well 8 out of commission, it would just filter into our other well fields," he explained.

Mike Slota, a member of Plymouth County's chapter of the Pheasants Forever, said this project fits the club's mission "to a T."

"Part of Pheasants Forever's mission statement is to enhance pheasant and wild-

life population plus habitat restoration through improvement to the land and water conservation," Slota said. "We'll enhance the habitat, of course, but we'll also clean up the groundwater."

The habitat will be open to the public, but not for hunting.

Slota said it could also be used for students.

"It'll be a 70 acre classroom," he said. "One of the programs I'd like to see it used for is to have the high school biology teachers take it over and do water samples every month. That way they can track and see how this is actually cleaning up the water."

Pick agreed.

"There could be endless possibilities of what we can do with is as far as a nature

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R-U school board to hold work session

The Remsen-Union Community School District will be holding a work session on Mon., March 9, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. in the Administrative Building Conference Room.

R-U to hold Athletic Breakfast

There will be a R-U Athletic Breakfast held on March 8, 2009 from 8:00 - 12:00 noon at the R-U cafeteria. Proceeds from the breakfast will go toward the R-U Athletic Department.

Senior meals

Monday, March 2 - Tater tot casserole, coleslaw, fruit cocktail, frosted brownie.

Tuesday, March 3 - Cook's choice.

Wednesday, March 4 - Roast beef, mashed potatoes with gravy, wax beans, lettuce salad

Habitat: Slota calls preserve a '70-acre classroom'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
preserve," he said.

Slota even threw out the possibility of planting wildflowers along the road where it runs by the habitat.

"It benefits everyone," Slota said of creating the habitat. "Remsen will have cleaner water. We'll be able to use it for classroom. Plus if there's any activity we want to use it for down the road, it will be available."

The city takes possession of the recently purchased land March 1. They won't hear back about the 21 additional acres until March as to whether their grant application to the Water

Improvement Review Board was approved.

Pheasants Forever will begin planting the native grasses for habitat this spring.

"Whenever Pheasants Forever can work it out, it will be available to them," Pick said of the land.

"It'll be winter cover, nesting cover, and some other tall grasses," Slota said. "We'll probably put some food plots in there, too."

In Remsen's current well field, some alfalfa will be taken down and reseeded with native grasses.

Slota also hopes to put in some dogwood along the Deer

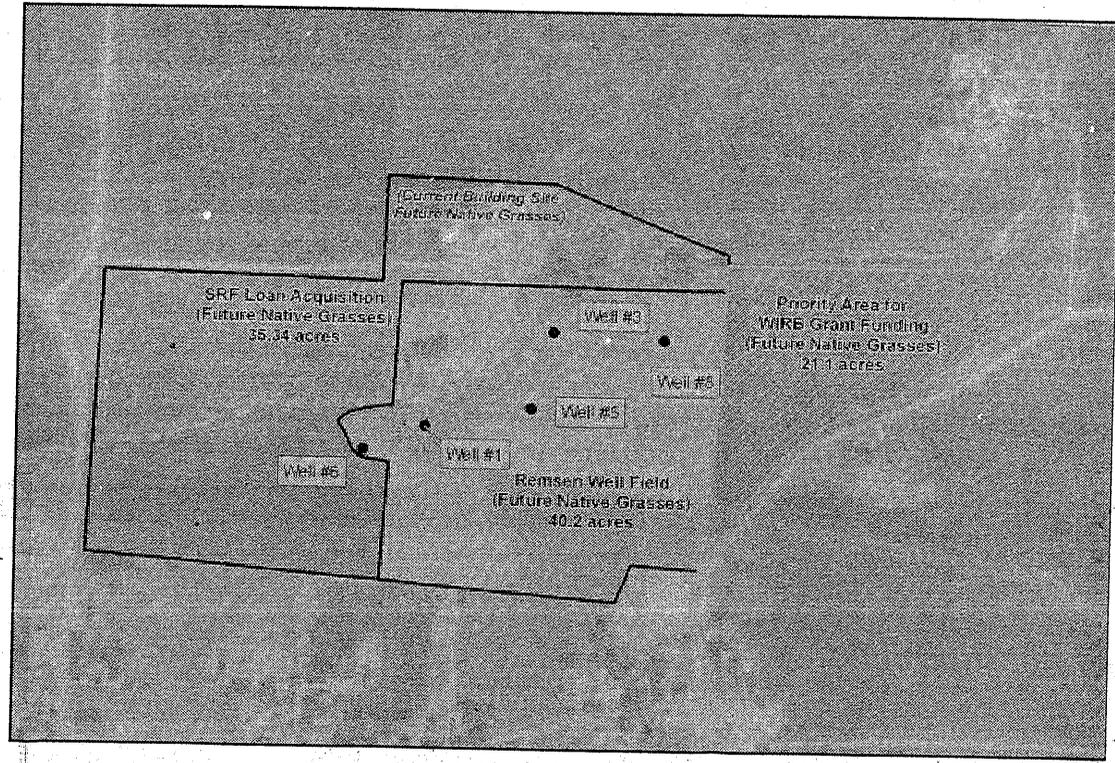
Creek that runs through the land to catch the snow.

The Pheasants Forever local youth council will also help with the project to gain experience, he said.

The impact on Remsen's water supply wouldn't be immediate, Pick said.

"We're looking at probably a year or so before we would really see some results," he said.

"I have no doubt you're going to notice the difference in five years," Pick said. "As a hunter, when you see buffer strips upstream, you see how clean that water is. Buffer strips clean up water."



(MAP CONTRIBUTED)

At least 70 acres around the Remsen well field will be transformed in to native habitat starting this spring. The center block on the map is the well field, and to the left is the city's recently purchased acres to turn to habitat. To the right is another 21 acres that...