



Mostly sunny
High of 88°
Weather, 17A

FRIDAY

July 10, 2009

Vol 2 No 235

GAZETTE NEWS-CURRENT

Big Picture, Local Focus.

Little Art Theatre in Yellow Springs to host encore video presentation on Saturday.



XENIA ■ BEAVERCREEK ■ JAMESTOWN ■ CEDARVILLE ■ YELLOW SPRINGS ■ SPRING VALLEY ■ BELLBROOK ■ WILBERFORCE

USA WEEKEND

Where were you when we landed on the moon?

SUPPLEMENT INSIDE ➤



BEAVERCREEK, BELLBROOK

Check out events from these two cities in Greene County.

LOCAL NEWS, Page 7A ➤

NEW DAY AND LOOK



To help buyers and sellers our Real Estate section will run Fridays.

REAL ESTATE, Page 1B-2B, 7B-8B ➤

NOTEWORTHY

Anthony M. Iacovone

Army Spec. Anthony M. Iacovone has graduated from One Station Unit Training (OSUT) at Fort Leonard Wood, Waynesville, Mo. The course of instruction included basic combat training and advanced individual training (AIT).

The basic trainee received instruction in drill and ceremonies, weapons, map reading, tactics, military courtesy, military justice, physical fitness, first aid, and Army history and traditions.

During AIT, the soldier completed the Combat Engineer Course to perform basic combat construction and rigging operations; operate light and heavy engineer wheeled and armor tracked vehicles while participating in combat mobility, counter-mobility, and survivability operations; assist in assembly and maintenance of military standard float and fixed bridges; prepare, install, and prime firing systems for demolition and explosives; arm, disarm, and install anti-personnel and anti-tank mines, locate mines by visual means or with mine detector; and recognize and neutralize land mines, firing devices and booby traps. Iacovone is the son of Karen Zehme of Green Oak Drive, Troy, Ohio, and Michael Iacovone of N. Sheffield Drive, Bellbrook, Ohio.

The specialist graduated in 2002 from Bellbrook High School, and received a bachelor's degree in 2008 from Urbana University, Ohio.

After almost 40 years, Beavercreek land, water still appears poisonous

Community in the dark about backyard Superfund site

First in a three-part series.

By BRANDON SMITH

For the Gazette News-Current Don Kessler is a little perturbed.

Kessler lives in the Beavercreek subdivision of Woodhaven, a 150-home chunk of suburbia built too fast for the city limits to catch up. So even though Beavercreek has subsumed the whole area, the vast majority of homes in Woodhaven rely on wells for all their water needs.

It's a nice place to live, Kessler says. But he and his neighbors are in the middle of an unfolding

story about pollution and the process the U.S. government uses to clean it up. The pollution will eventually get scrubbed from the land, but its aftermath may never be known.

A few hundred yards northeast of Kessler's house lies the most polluted land and groundwater in the county, the location of the former Lammers and Kohnen Chemical Company, which burned in a magnificent blaze Sept. 30, 1969.

The company fire

According to EPA documents,

See Water, Page 2A ➤



No studies of illness have been or will be conducted in the residential area near the former Lammers Barrel Factory, the most polluted place in Greene County.

Brandon Smith for Greene County Dailies

Water

Continued from Page 1A

the company reclaimed industrial solvents. According to local sources, the company also received used 50-gallon barrels from companies and “reconditioned” them — washing out chemicals, repairing nicks and dings and possibly painting them. The site is known both to locals and now officially, to the EPA, as the “Lammers Barrel Factory.”

Paul Lammers and Anthony Kohnen’s company came to a screeching halt when a delivery truck’s static electricity made a spark and lit a small fire, according to Kip Smith, Battalion Chief with the Beavercreek Fire Department. Smith witnessed the 1969 fire in person.

All trucks carrying flammable materials are required to drag a chain along the ground to maintain continuous static discharge safely (that is to say, without spark) into the pavement, Smith said. That fateful day in 1969, one truck was missing its chain, according to Smith and EPA officials familiar with the findings of the state fire marshal’s investigation. The loading dock and many other areas of the company stored massive amounts of flammable chemicals; fire soon engulfed the campus.

Little Beaver Creek flows through the center of the two-acre property, just northeast of the intersection of Grange Hall and Patterson roads. Because the area was not equipped with fire hydrants in 1969, to battle the blaze firefighters were forced either to truck in water or pump it from the creek. The creek pumping didn’t go so well.

“They ended up pumping flammable solvent back onto the fire,” said Smith. A friend

and colleague of his helped to battle the blaze as Smith several hundred other people watched; Smith later joined the local fire department. “We were thankful no one was killed. ... (But) a man was hit with a barrel, a flying barrel.”

The following was taken from the October 1, 1969 edition of the *Xenia Daily Gazette*:

“Most seriously hurt was Richard Majusick of the Mad River Twp. department in near-by Montgomery County.

He was treated at Kettering Memorial Hospital for a hair-line fracture of the right leg and face cuts that required 25 stitches to close.

He was knocked down by a solvent barrel thrown into the air by one of several hundred explosions that accentuated the raging flames, Chief Crawford said.”

Two other firefighters sustained minor injuries, but the most serious health hazards from this fire were not likely caused by heat or explosion.

The health risk

Laboratory work has associated various cancers and liver problems with the chemicals released in the Lammers fire. EPA’s Web site lists the chemicals that are known to have contaminated soil at the site:

“...trichloroethylene, methyl-ethyl ketone, tetrachloroethene, 1,1,1-trichloroethane, aromatic hydrocarbons, aliphatic hydrocarbons, ketones, esters, and alcohols.” The chemicals were contained in “eighteen vertical tanks, ranging in size from 2,500 to 25,000 gallons and approximately 6,000 55-gallon drums,” all of which ruptured during the fire.

To do some research of your

own on these chemicals, see the pollution Web site Scorecard.org. Among other valuable pollution-related tools, you can click on “Chemical Profiles” and enter any of the chemical names above for more information on that chemical.

No studies of illnesses in the area have been done by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) or the Greene County Combined Health District, according to representatives of those organizations. In Oct. 2008, ODH released an assessment of health risk in the area, but the findings did not measure the actual occurrence of illness. In the report, ODH recommended more testing — to which Ohio EPA replied, in a written public comment, that adequate testing was currently being done.

Neither the local nor the state health agencies plans to attempt a study of illness in the area. Mark McDonnell, the highest officeholder at the county health district, had this to say in an e-mail:

“We have not done epidemiologic studies, because Greene County and Beavercreek in general have much lower incidences of cancer and other marker diseases than State averages. I think that you will find some data in the Oct. 08 ODH report. We also do not have any other adverse effects being reported.”

“I don’t believe that for one minute,” said Kessler, who is Chairman of the EPA-established community involvement panel for the site.

“I’d like to see testing done” regarding illness in the area, he said.

NEXT WEEK: EPA says studies wouldn’t likely get settlement.