

The Megaphone

Elwood, Indiana

Elwood High School(s)

Volume 1, No.1

November 15, 2000

Welcome . . .



. . . to the *First Edition* of our electronic *Megaphone!*

As the months unfold, this newest version of the Megaphone will become a monthly feature of our Panther Den Online. We welcome contributions from anyone interested in providing submissions for publication online. Feel free to forward your work to mcrim1361@att.net.

Regards,

Marvin Crim, WLWHS Class of '57

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The Original Panther Den

by Loretta (Jarvis) Dodd

Hi, Denmates,

I came across the following article on microfilm from the Elwood Call-Leader, dated Feb. 4, 1947, about how the Panther Den came into being:

"At approximately 7 o'clock Saturday night, Feb. 3, 1945, the doors of the Panther Den were opened to the students of the Wendell L. Willkie High School for the first time.

Today, two years later, this thing that had been the dream of many of the students, teachers and citizens of Elwood has really become a reality. Two years ago, the question was raised, 'Will it be permanent?' And through the hard work of the students and their teachers, it has become a permanent part of the school.

The whole idea of a youth recreation center is one several years old here in Elwood. Many years ago, during the depression, a Recreation Committee, composed of teachers and townspeople, established a recreation room in the City Building. This was really the start of a growing movement which has helped to make the Panther Den possible.

At the beginning of the school year in 1944, the idea of having a recreation center was brought up at the Student Council. All of the students in high school favored the idea.

The Student Council and the senior class of 1945 took the responsibility of organizing this recreation center - which was later to be called the Panther Den. They collected money from different businessmen in town and sold membership cards to the students.

They decided on the old gym as the place to have the Den. The greatest change was observed by those who saw it last as a drab gymnasium. For today it is one of the brightest, modern places in Elwood. Most of the work was done by the students and the teachers. What used to be the boys' shower room was made into a lounge room. It has nice furniture and up-to-date magazines to be read. Along the sides of the Panther Den are booths. There is a music room and a concession stand. The students have also obtained a 'juke box.' There are two pool tables, four ping-pong tables, cards and games of all kinds. The Den is open to the students every Tuesday and Saturday nights from 7 until 11 o'clock.

The present officers of the Panther Den are George Acres, president and Marjorie Waymire, financial secretary. Miss Mary Allen is the sponsor. The students and the officers have arranged to have a band once a month so that the students can have 'live music' for dancing.

It would be impossible to name any one person responsible for the Panther Den. It only shows what can be done by a group of determined and cooperative people in a democratic society."

So . . . look what the Panther Den is today, 55 years later . . . electronic communication for fun and reminiscences for Panthers across the entire United States. Amazing!

Love to all,

Loretta (Jarvis) Dodd, '56
in Elwood

Your Hometown Today
by Sharon (Benedict) Hurst

Hello, Denites,

A quick update on your hometown, Elwood, Indiana . . .

Anderson Street should be open from Main to the RR track this week. The globes for the lights are here. The posts are not, but should be fairly soon. There are benches, flower pots and trash containers here. The "brick" along the sidewalks and in the cross walks looks great. All will be very surprised when they see this.

Our Main Street Committee has put a display in one of the empty windows on Main Street and it looks good. There are two businesses that are interested in doing windows uptown too. There are also two (2) persons who are wanting to open new businesses uptown. The restaurant on the corner of So. A St. and Anderson St. (where Tam's Drug Store used to be) is coming along well and will be well appreciated by all.

Economic Development is a priority subject right now. There are many things coming together and it looks very promising for our old hometown. Of course, the sesquicentennial in 2002 is another big workshop for our townspeople. We are planning to have a celebration similar to the one in 1952 and have called out the troops (figuratively speaking).

We have the paper work for a new program called the Breast and Cervical Cancer Program (BCCP) signed and ready to go. This will assist women who are not eligible for Medicaid and who do not have insurance or are under insured to obtain diagnostic testing. We also are developing a Resource Center through St Vincent Mercy Hospital which is located at 1525 So. A Street next to the License Bureau.

There will be all types of information available in Spanish and English. Online computers, TV/VCR's and reading materials will be there for community access. This has all come together in the past year and the Community Relations Department at the hospital is working with the Robin's Rest to bring awareness, education and assistance to the people in our community through these and other programs which will be available.

This is a very exciting time to be here in Elwood and to see the progress that is happening. This is just a sampling of what has been accomplished the last 6 or 7 months with only a small percentage of our community actively involved. If all of our community were to become involved, it would be difficult to think about what this town could become. We would be limited only by what we had not yet dreamed about.

Until next time, your roving community reporter,
Sharon (Benedict) Hurst, '53
Now in Elwood, IN