

Fences

By Sam Neno

Thunder rolled as the two Johnson children scampered out of the house to Fred MacIntyre's truck. While Johnny pushed open the passenger door against the wind, Jessie slipped in by him and held the door for him with her foot. Fred came out of his house and waved to them. He turned a thumbs down in the direction of the black clouds towering in the west. He and his wife, Anne, were watching the children while their parents attended a funeral.

He climbed into the truck and said, "We'll just beat the storm."

Johnny asked, "Why didn't you fix the fence this morning?"

"I hoped Danners would fix their own fence."

They drove toward the storm, corn rustling on both sides of the truck, down a gully and then up the other side, woods on either hand. A cool breeze blew through the cab.

"Storm's bringing cooler weather for sure," Fred said and wiped his forehead with a bandana that he kept on the dashboard. "Smell the rain?"

They crested the hill. Below them lay more corn fields and beyond that pasture down to Route 34. In the distance, the hills of Lansingville and the west side of Cayuga Lake lay dark green below the storm clouds.

"Look at them," Fred said and waved at the cows, standing near the fence.

He drove into the edge of the field and pulled out from behind the seat a pair of fence pliers, a roll of wire, and a box of staples. He handed the staples to Jessie and the pliers to Johnny and led them to a low place in the fence where the posts had settled and the wire sagged. "Don't touch the top one—it's electric," he said. He looked to the north at the Danner barn and shook his head.

He took the pliers from Johnny and cut a piece of wire.

Thunder rolled across the hills.

"They're getting it across the lake for sure," Johnny said.

"This won't take long," Fred said. He

looked at the sky while Jessie dug for a staple. He said, "The sky must have looked like this when God created the world." He took the staple Jessie handed him and pounded it into place.

"Wish He'd have made the fences, too," Jessie said.

A truck turned off Route 34 up toward them. Johnny recognized the Danner boys, Bob and Tom. Their father had suffered a heart attack a month ago, so Bob was running the farm. Older than Johnny by eight years, Bob was tall and lanky and wore an engineer's cap. Tom was only a year older than Johnny but bigger, huskier.

The truck stopped opposite them in the road. Bob and Tom got out and jumped the ditch.

"All done,+"Fred snapped.

Bob looked over Fred's work and said, "Looks good, too. Pa told me to get here before the storm hit or we'd be chasing cows all night. Look at them lined up there."

Fred said, "They know where to go since they got through last night."

"I'm sorry about that," Bob said, "but I've got my hands full with the hay coming on and Pa laid up. We can't afford to hire help."

Fred rubbed the back of his neck. "Years ago," he said, "my Dad was laid up for a spell, too. Guess it didn't seem like there were enough hours in a day then either." He let out a deep breath.

Thunder crashed.

"Sounds like it's reached Lansingville," Johnny said.

Bob said that sounded about right. He shook Fred's hand and headed back to the truck with Tom.



Sam Neno is a life-long resident of Lansing. He lives in North Lansing with his wife and three children.

Planning Board Profiles: Lin Davidson

Though Lin Davidson came here twenty years ago from a farming area in Pennsylvania, he first got involved in town growth issues when Lansing was considering taking on the skating rink as a town project.

"I approved of the idea and applaud the non-profit group for making the RINK happen," said Davidson, but he didn't think it was appropriate for the town to take on the liability or the cost of the project. There are some things government can do and other things that can be done more efficiently in the private sector, he believes.

Davidson, like many, saw the skating rink proposal as a manifestation of the growth Lansing is going to undergo in the future. It started him thinking hard about the phenomenon that occurred around his hometown Pennsylvania farm. As developments moved into formerly rural areas, he'd watched a conversion that ultimately resulted in newly arrived, upscale homeowners on 1/4-acre lots clamoring for the farm they'd surrounded to be transformed into a recreation area.

When an opening occurred on the Lansing Town Planning Board several years ago, Davidson attended several meetings to see if he could make a contribution. "I see growth here," said Davidson. "I wanted to see that things here are handled equitably."

Though Davidson works in Cornell's neuro-biology lab, he's also farmed all of his life. "My first job here was on Ken and Elda Patchen's dairy," he said. He raised hogs through the early '90s and now grows corn, wheat, oats and soybeans on 250 acres that he mostly rents.

Davidson sees growth in Lansing's future. It's not a process you can (or even should) stop, he believes, "but you can manage growth to have the most positive outcome possible.

"You plan your life, your business and your retirement," explained Davidson. It may not all work out, he acknowledged, "but you do the best you can." He feels that the town should do the same.

Since Davidson was appointed to the Planning Board, it worked with the 2010 Committee to gather information from everyone in town who wanted to express his or her opinion. The result was a Comprehensive Plan which was adopted by the Town Board. The Planning Board most recently completed a proposed ordinance to regulate land use that the Town Board is currently reviewing.

Davidson disagrees with those who feel that any zoning ordinance automatically translates as an erosion of freedom and the micro-management of property rights. Though zoning can restrict some freedoms, it can have have a net positive good. The proposed zoning document is "absolutely clear," said Davidson, and deals with land use, set backs and frontage requirements.

"People don't like change," smiled Davidson, "but change is part of life." The dichotomy is that the Planning Board is planning for the change that is happening but that some people may not want to happen.

"How do you deal with a town-wide issue like growth if you don't deal with it on a townwide basis?" he concluded.

ITHACA AGWAY

Your Headquarters for Bird Seed

Keep your feathered friends well fed this winter
And take advantage of our low prices.
Also see us for pet and large animal feed.

ITHACA AGWAY FARM & HOME CENTER
EXPERT ADVICE · QUALITY PRODUCTS FOR HOME, FARM, AND GARDEN
South Fulton Street · 272-1848
ITHACA AGWAY SERVING THE ITHACA AREA SINCE 1924
Mon-Fri 8:00-7:00; Sat 8:00-5:00; Sun 9:00-3:00

Space Donated

Myers Park Pavilions

If you plan to have a party for 25-200 people at the Lansing Town Park, **Reserve Now.** Pavilions have paved floors & electric outlets. Rents are \$25-50

For Information, Call **533-7388**

ARMSTRONG

SCHOOL of DANCE

Ballet Hip Hop Tap Jazz

Register Now For Summer Camp & Classes
15 Catherwood Road (In front of Pyramid Mall)
266-0209

MORAVEC CONSTRUCTION

ADDITIONS - REMODELING NEW CONSTRUCTION

LET US BID YOUR PROJECT
Member Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce

Contact: John Moravec John Manuel

FULLY INSURED **257-0061**

Member National Assoc. of Home Builders
2632 N. Triphammer Rd., Ithaca N.Y.
SERVING ALL LOCATIONS

Adelstein, Mason, Condit

Corrective / Restorative
Structural Inspections
Analysis
Diagnosis
Technical Solutions

Custom Design Services
Stone and Brick Fireplaces and Chimneys
Stone Fences, Walkways & Patios
Stone and Block Foundations

11 Bo's Hill Road - Lansing
533-4739

Advertising Attracts Attention

You read the Lansing Community News. So do thousands of other families. To reach them, call 533-7963 for our low advertising rates.