Looking back & ahead to 1987

By RICH SWARTZENDORRBER

The past year will undoubtedly be remembered for the "Flood of 1986," although the economic hardship is caused would rather be forgotten by many area residents. Most people, however, prefer to look for a silver lining in the cloudy year of 1986, and hope for sunny days in 1987.

Farmer Dennis Fritz of Pigeon recalled the past year "by far the worst financially he has experienced in the seven years he has been farming on his own. "It started out to be a promising year," Fritz notes about the way the crops looked in the summer.

The rain then followed the Pigeon River less than a mile from his family's farmhouse. Many of his beans were completely submerged, and he was only able to salvage a small portion of the crop.

"What looked like 40 bushels (per acre) beans, turned out to be 11 (bushels per acre)," Fritz says. He figures he lost $60,000 on the 50 acres of beans he grew this year and also had several hogs that were worth $1,500 rot in the ground.

One bright spot in the Fritz farm this year was the income from raising hogs.

"The hogs have always carried the load," recalls Fritz.

He looks ahead in 1987 with hope, saying, "I'm going to try it one more year and hope to get some help from government programs."

Shore he hasn't lost his sense of humor, Fritz adds, "If things don't work out I'll just have to go out and get a real job I guess."

Elkhart farmer Larry Krohn says he is encouraged by survival during the past year.

"We're optimistic in the sense that we made it through last year, so we should be able to make it through the year," declares Krohn. "We're just hoping we don't have a repeat (in 1987) of the weather this year."

He says about half his bean crop was lost, but the corn harvest escaped most damage. That represents the worst percentage of navy bean loss in his 59 years of family farming.

"I was thankful for what we did get off. It wasn't a good year, as far as beans, but I could have been worse," says Krohn.

Most Thumb area businesses are affected by the agricultural losses, but particularly hard hit are farm equipment dealers. Mark Gettel of Gettel Implement Company, Pigeon, says his company has taken action to keep prices to farmers as low as possible. The John Deere dealership is taking advantage of special incentives offered by the corporation and cutting expenses where possible to remain competitive.

"We're becoming a 'program type society,'" observes Gettel about the many government programs for farmers and other buyer incentive programs offered by corporate America.

He sounds a positive note about the future, saying he is encouraged by actions taken by farmers and also the dealership to weather the economic storm.

Gettel believes the only way things can change in the farming industry is for the better. "I've got to believe we've reached the bottom as far as crop prices and other such things go," he notes and adds, "We depend largely on the success of our customers, so we're doing everything we can to help them out."

The automobile industry is another business which has cut to depend on buyer incentive programs.

Dave McCormick of McCormick Motors, Pigeon says low interest rates offered by the major auto makers enabled the local dealership to move a good amount of cars, but sales of pickups were down because of the economic situation on the farm.

"All in all, it's been a good year, with the factory incentives that were offered. It was probably a better year than we expected with the farm situation the way it is," says McCormick.

He is unsure what 1987 will bring, he expects business to be slower than last year, unless buyer incentive programs are revived.

"We're kind of at the mercy of the corporation, as far as incentives go," he says.

As a member of Pigeon Village Council, McCormick hopes 1987 will be a return to business as usual, after seeing installation of a new water storage system and change in the position of Village Superintendent.

He says new Superintendant/Clerk Janet Herkeman is "doing a super job" and declares, "I would hope things would be back to normal in the coming year."

Paul Clabunchn of Thumb National Bank, Pigeon says the financial institution was affected by the farm situation, but he looks for positive signs.

"There's plenty of negative comments going around," Clabunsch says. He is not sure where he stands regarding problems facing farmers, but chooses to find hopeful signs for future improvement.

"If you give up, there's no chance," reminds Clabunsch.

Surviving tough economic times sometimes causes farmers and business to become leaner and more efficient which helps in the long run, he points out.

"Many times when you are in a storm, you often come out better and stronger in the future," he says.

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 16
Engaged couples plan weddings

Renee, Paul marry in Yule setting

Pigeon District Library

Pigeon Telephone Company

Annual Closeout Sale

Kent McKenzie
Jewelers

Joy and peace

As 1987 begins, our hopes are raised that peace may bless the earth.
1986 in pictures and stories!

in the traditional opening, Indian gave the signal.

DEATHS: Eleanor F. Patterson and Alber Orchard, residents of Bay Port; Margaret St. Pierre of Bay Port; Wanda John of Bay Port; and Mark C. Lake of St. Louis, Missouri.

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Pigeon news notes

Mrs. Glen Wood, daughter of Mrs. John Decker and Mrs. John Decker, were married May 21. Mr. and Mrs. John Decker were married in church at Wallace Monday, with Pastor and Mrs. Herbert Motz, family in attendance. The couple are residents of the Pigeon area.

Mr. and Mrs. John Decker, from the Pigeon area, are planning a surprise birthday party for their mother, Mrs. John Decker, on June 22. The party will be held at her home and will be attended by family and friends.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Motz, new family in Pigeon, are planning a surprise birthday party for their mother, Mrs. Herbert Motz, on July 1. The party will be held at her home and will be attended by family and friends.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Hen, residents of the Pigeon area, are planning a surprise birthday party for their mother, Mrs. Roy Hen, on August 10. The party will be held at her home and will be attended by family and friends.

The best of luck for the coming year to all of our friends.
SPECIALS GOOD THROUGH MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 1987

GAME HENS $0.89

COUNTRY STYLE SAUSAGE $1.39 L.B.
BULK SAUSAGE $1.19 L.B.
CO. JACK CHEESE $1.89 L.B.
BAEYFORD TURKEY ROLL $1.79 L.B.
HOMEADE CHEESE BALLS $3.49 L.B.
MOZZARELLA CHEESE $1.79 CHUNK, ONLY

PICNIC HAMS 79¢ L.B.
GROUND CHUCK $1.33 L.B.
PORK STEAK $1.29 L.B.

RED EMPEROR GRAPES $59¢
FRESH BROCCOLI $69¢ BUNCH
SIZE 24 PASCAL CELERY $59¢ BUNCH
6 OZ. PACKAGE RADISHES, $4/1 MATCH
LARGE GREEN KALE, 1 LB. PKG. CELLO CARROTS,
1 BUNCH GREEN ONIONS

SUNSHINE REGULAR OR MINI
NO SALT CHEEZ ITS OR HI-HO
CRACKERS... $1.39

BEAGIO 32 OZ. DOUBLE CHEESE OR 27 OZ.
SUPER DELUXE PIZZA $2.69 PKG.
TROPICANA FROZEN 100% PURE REGULAR OR HOMESTYLE
ORANGE JUICE 12 OZ. 69¢ CAN
PREMIUM ALL FLAVORS MCDONALDS
ICE CREAM $1.99 GAL
MCDONALD’S HOMOGENIZED MILK $1.79 GAL
DEAN’S FRENCH ONION DIP 16 OZ. 69¢ OR 1 LB.
KRAFT CHEEZ WHIZ 16 OZ. JAR 99¢
KRAFT • MIDGET LONGHORN CHEESE 16 OZ. 99¢
KRAFT THREE KINDS SHREDDED CHEESE 8 OZ. PKG. 1.39¢

ASSORTED FAYGO POP & MIXERS 3/89¢

REGULAR OR DIET PEPSI • PEPSI FREE
MT. DEW • SLICE
A&W ROOT BEER 99¢

ITALIAN BREAD 16 OZ. LOAF 69¢
MADE RITE REGULAR OR RIFFLE
POTATO CHIPS 18 OZ. PKG. $1.69
HAUSBECK BABY KOSHER DILLS 32 OZ. $1.39
LA CHOU BEEF OR CHICKEN
CHOW MEIN 42 OZ. PACK $2.19
TRUEWORTH CANNED
TOMATO JUICE 46 OZ. CAN $69¢
TRUEWORTH APPLE JUICE 46 OZ. CAN $1.29
Lipton Onion Soup Mix 3 CT. PKG. 79¢

WHITE RAIN SHAMPOO OR CONDITIONER 115¢

PENINSULAR-BEET SUGAR 4.2 LB. BAG 99¢
Add'l. Quantities 1.29
Limit 1 With This Coupon
Good thru Mon., Jan. 5, 1987
Good At: Don Eila Foods, Pigeon