



Part of the parade of diggers and dump trucks working to prepare the site for the new Visitor Center.

The Word From the Top...

Visitor Center Construction Progresses by Mac MacK & Bob Quist

The Ivory Tower at the Kelley Farm is a bit closer to the ground than it used to be, mainly because the old Visitor Center has long since been torn down and the staff is living, so to speak, in a trailer that's a mite small, a mite cramped, and a bit underwhelming. The "pinched" circumstances, however, haven't dampened the spirits of the folks running the show. In a brief interview with the Leader of the Pack, to quote an old '50s song, I learned that there is definite progress being made at the Kelley Farm as construction is moving ahead and is actually beginning to show itself to the point where one can actually see that progress is being made and being made in a BIG way.

The parade of dump trucks through the Kelley Farm has finally passed by. There were an average of 30 trucks a day and over 800 trucks in all, hauling dirt and soil (aren't they the same thing, more or less?) out of the farm to Brooklyn Park where it is being used in a construction project.

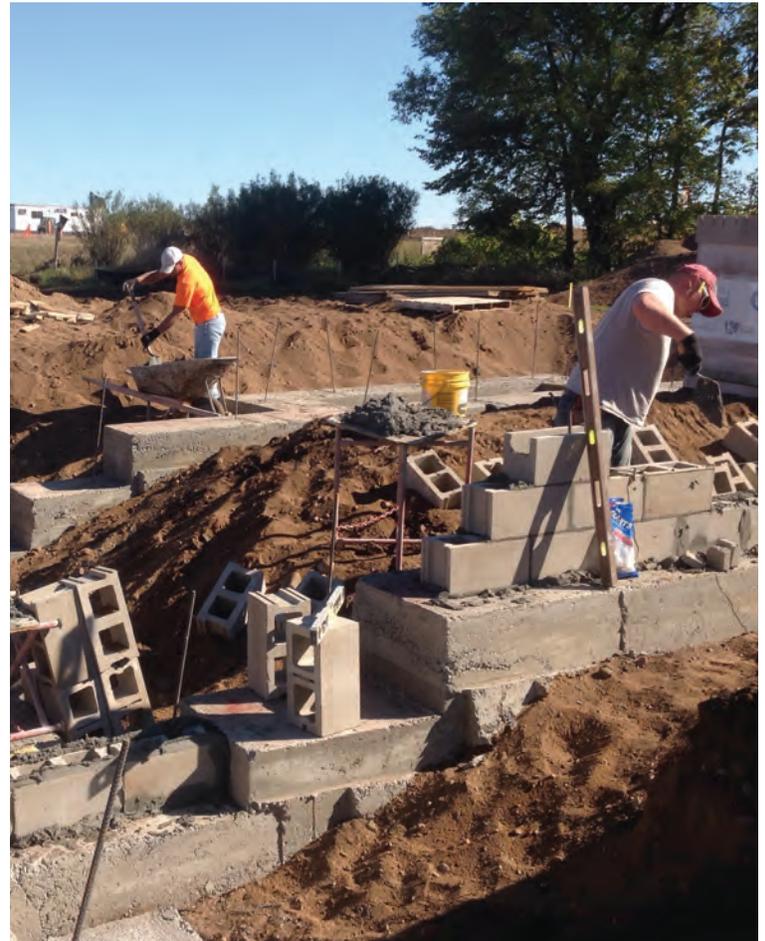
Concrete footings for two of

the five planned buildings have been poured. The multi-purpose building and the maintenance building are on their way with the multi-purpose building looking to be finished first sometime in the spring. That's a good thing because with its completion, the staff will be able to move to it and the temporary Visitors Center now in use will be a thing of the past.

As you may recall, there are plans for five buildings in all. There will be the aforementioned multi-purpose building, a maintenance building and maintenance barn, as well as a Visitors Center and a guest animal shelter (something every house could use when your neighbor brings over their dog for the weekend!).

The wells have yet to be drilled, the 96 wells for the geo-thermal system. That's coming, though a lot of this – and the construction in general, depends on the weather. Things are looking good right now.

The contractors and sub-contractors are easy to work with, said Bob Quist (Site Manager) and they're working hard and



Foundations for one of the five new Visitor Center buildings are taking shape. Weather permitting, some spaces will be ready for use by spring.

things are falling into place. Look to spring, Bob said, for a chance to see, perhaps at a Friends of the Kelley Farm

Open House, all the progress being made. We'll see you then!

Dictionary, By Definition

by Mac MacK

A dictionary is, by definition (found in a dictionary), a book listing words in alphabetical order and that gives the words' meanings. For the general public, considering that we are living in a digital age, dictionaries are found on-line. Book form dictionaries can be found as well, though not now in as great a number as, say, a few years ago. One place they can be readily found these days, however, is in schools, especially elementary schools. Two places they can be found this year, in the central Minnesota area, are in Otsego Elementary School and Clear Lake Elementary School in, get this, Otsego and Clear Lake respectively.

The Friends of the Kelley Farm, in cooperation with the Sunbeam Grange at the Kelley Farm, has a program where its members visit various elementary schools over the course of a school year and present dictionaries to several classes of 3rd graders. The only markings denoting the Kelley Farm and the Sunbeam Grange are illustrations and a brief paragraph on the inside cover and on the very first page. This is to let the student know where the book came from.

The program was set up by the Friends of the Kelley Farm and the Sunbeam Grange for several reasons. First, it's a good thing. The kids benefit because they receive a dictionary at no cost to them or their family. Sometimes kids need all the help they can get.

Second, the child receives a learning tool that has the potential to help them throughout their school career, not only as a means for seeking out defini-

tions but, more important, learning how, through the use of the dictionary, HOW to seek out and retrieve information, especially doing so without the use of a computer. To be sure, computers are important and students must, especially nowadays, be knowledgeable in their use, but they should...no, they MUST, know how to seek and gain knowledge without the use of computers.

Third, and this is an important third, the brief Friends of the Kelley Farm and the Sunbeam Grange markings in the books help raise awareness of the Kelley Farm. In a way, you might say this is a subliminal message. Every time a child sees those words it registers, either consciously or subconsciously. That is a good thing because a good thing happened to the child when the dictionary was placed in their hands.

I chanced to be at both presentations and most of the children were aware of the Kelley Farm, many of them having taken a field trip to the Farm. That being said, one might wonder why we present the dictionaries. You could say, you can't get too much of a good thing, which would be true enough, but I would say, a little learning goes a long way, and the dictionaries help that effort.

Dictionaries being prepared for distribution to elementary school students courtesy of The Kelley Farm and Sunbeam Grange.

Farm Community Advisory Committee Up and Running

by John Kuester

The Kelley Farm Community Advisory Committee met for the first time on September 10th with eleven members in attendance. The purpose of the Committee according to Site Director, Bob Quist is "...to help both the Oliver Kelley Farm and its neighboring communities to better know and understand each other". In practice, Committee members and Kelley Farm staff will meet quarterly to discuss issues where community input would be helpful to Farm staff.

"In the months and years to come the community footprint of the Oliver Kelley Farm will greatly expand. Visitation will dramatically expand as will our program offerings. We will have a larger staff. In addition to a much larger economic

impact on the area, we hope to highlight the Farm's traditional role as being a gathering place for the community. Guidance from the Community Advisory Committee will be very helpful as the revitalized Kelley Farm becomes reality", Quist continued.

Kelley Farm Community Advisory Committee members will be drawn from the geographical area within the boundaries of ISD 728 as well as the communities of Ramsey and Anoka. Committee members include folks with backgrounds in education, business, non-profits, local government, and tourism.

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Look for more updates from the Community Advisory Committee in upcoming newsletters.



Spotlight: On One of the Kelley Farm Family by Mac MacK

There is a young lady working in the front office of the Kelley Farm who is a woman of mystery, intrigue, and secrets... Well, let's say she can keep stuff to herself, she knows which storage trailer the skeletons are in, and she has another life a ways up the road that we rarely have a chance to see. She is Karie O. Schwenzfeier, which is a handful in anybody's book. She used to be Karie Ouellette but recently tied a knot in her heartstrings and she and Aaron, the light of her life, walked down the aisle into the land of wedded bliss.

Born a few years ago at Mercy Hospital in Coon Rapids, she is definitely a local girl. She grew up in the area, graduating from Blaine High School in 2007 and four years later from the University of Minnesota. She had originally started at The U majoring in kinesiology but quickly learned that she and that particular brand of science were not on the same wavelength.

As a kid she wanted to be a detective. She had read some Nancy Drew books and that field held great interest for her. The interest waned in high school and at The U, with kinesiology taking a hike, she cast about for a major that would carry her into the rest of her life. What was interesting? Let's see, she said, and did some searching, always coming back to history.

History occupations are, as a logistician would say, in short supply and so, on leaving the environs of The U, she held a variety of jobs. She worked at the National Sports Center during the USA Cup, at an office job at the University of Minnesota (just couldn't

get away from that place), as a bookseller at Barnes & Noble, and even sold flooring at Home Depot. By the time she got to the Kelley Farm she could run an office or two, thumb through a book, and even, in a pinch, tell you everything you needed to know about laying floors.



With her love of history and her history of searching for history-field jobs at the Minnesota Historical Society, she came across an announcement for an opening at the Kelley Farm. It was a perfect fit. She was hired, starting in February 2013. Since that time she has been the "front" person for the Kelley Farm, sometimes the first person visitors see when they come into the Visitors Center and often the last person they see as they head to the parking lot.

There's a lot to like about working at the Kelley Farm, Karie says. There are lots of kids at the farm and it is fun to see the learning process going on. As a 4th grader she came to the Farm for the first time and did some plowing. She learned enough about plowing and the Farm to know she liked the place and wanted to come back, and now she has.

She doesn't get down on the farm part very much these days but makes a special effort to get down several times a season, particularly during the pickling weekend and prairie sugar weekend. To some folks those are the best weekends of the year though a lot of other special events aren't far behind. I asked what she would like to see at the Kelley Farm. How could it be improved? "In an ideal world," she replied, "there would be no staffing shortages," letting it go at that. Her answer showed that she could be diplomatic, tactful, and thoughtful, all at the same time, always good talents to have – and she has them all.

They say 'beauty is in the eye of the beholder' but in her case it's also in the ear of the beholder. She plays piano AND the violin, having done so since age 11. She plays with the Northern Symphony Orchestra but hasn't limited her extracurricular activities to the musical world. She loves baking and, by her admission, makes "delicious sweet treats." (Had I known this, I would have insisted she bring some for this interview.)

Karie is a hard worker and gets a lot done at the Farm, but she gets a lot done off-work as well. She loves to read, watch some old sitcoms on TV, and that's just indoors. Her brand new husband loves the outdoors and she does, too. She tries to balance indoor and outdoor activities as well as she can. Camping? She does it. Hiking? That, too. Fishing? She knows her way around a rod and reel. Simply put, this young woman is quite the package. She loves her family, she loves her work, and she loves life. What a combination!

THANK YOU!

Give To The Max Day (November 12, 2015) was extra special this year. While friends of the Kelley Farm were generously contributing to support the Farm on the GiveMN.org site, the Friends of the Kelley Farm group was randomly awarded a "Golden Ticket" and an additional \$1,000.00!

Many thanks to all of our gracious supporters and to GiveMN for making this Give To The Max Day one we won't soon forget!

CONTRIBUTE ONLINE

<https://givemn.org/organization/Friends-Of-The-Kelley-Farm>

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Become a Friend of the Kelley Farm!

Inquire at the check-in desk when you
come out to visit!

How Do You Pronounce “Brat?”

There are two ways to pronounce the four-letter word, b-r-a-t. We have all had, at one time or another, experience with the “a as in cat” word, but not all of us have dealt with the “a as in walk” word. I had an up-close-and-personal experience with the latter sounding brat a few weeks ago, and what a time it was. The Kelley Farm is an historical site, to be sure, but the Farm’s support group goes way beyond being merely a supporting pillar of the historical site. The Friends of the Kelley Farm conducts several activities throughout the course of the year to help raise awareness about the Kelley Farm and also raise some money to help fund various goings on at the Farm.

One of these activities is running Brat sales around the area.

Just recently two such sales events were held in Elk River, in September at the Coborn’s Grocery Store and in October at the Cub Grocery Store. Both are located in north Elk River and both did quite well. At times there were actually lines at the order windows, waiting to order their delicious Brats, hot dogs, and at Cub, ham-burgers.

It was a gray September day at Coborn’s but that didn’t cloud the spirits of those helping. It was still a bit warm that weekend, which helped. At Cub in early October, it was a different story. It was a bright sunny day. The wind was out of the south and it must have been COLD south of Elk River because the strong wind blew cold air throughout a good part of our stay. It was tolerable though,



Good foods for good causes! A hearty thanks to our volunteers who staff our brat stands – and to those who belly up to enjoy brat stand eats wherever they may be!

and a good time was had by all who worked, helped, and contributed.

The next time you’re at the grocery store, whatever grocery store it might be, and see a brat

stand open, stop by for a brat (or hot dog and/or ham-burger). Generally you will be helping a good cause.