

SIDNEY

Board votes to help pay library bill

By **CHRISTINE WALSH**

County Star Editor

SIDNEY — The village of Sidney is helping pay phone bills for the town's library, but at least one village board member thinks the decision is uncalled for.

The village board voted 5-1 on Monday to give the Sidney Community Library \$120 to help cover its telephone bills for the next six months. Trustee Dorella Pruitt cast the opposing vote.

A letter the library board wrote the village asking for help in paying its \$40 monthly phone bill prompted the decision. According to Mayor John Finn, the library's operating budget is about \$19,000 per year. "Things are getting tight," he said.

Treasurer Jennifer Hewitt explained that based on its appropriations most of the library's expenditures are for salaries, which are relatively low. She did note, however, that the village is paying for the library's utilities and Internet access.

In its motion approving the donation, the village board encouraged library officials to pursue available grant funds.

In other business, the board voted 4-2 to deny a subdivision request from Ron Cler for a 2-acre tract in the southwest corner of Section 17, about a mile south of UAP Richter on County Road 1000N. Trustees Cory Willard and Dorella Pruitt voted to approve the subdivision request.

Board members said that it would be inconsistent to grant the request without having an annexation agreement with Cler. The agreement would state that Cler's property would be annexed into the village if the town's limits became contiguous with his property.

St. Joseph Township-Swearingen library receives \$800 donation from local bank

St. Joseph-Township-Swearingen Memorial Library's Director Susan McKinney knew the check was coming, but she was still surprised.

The Gifford State Bank had run a promotion when their St. Joseph branch opened last summer, offering \$25 gift cards for use at local businesses, to the first 32 people who opened a new

checking account. Each time a card was used, the bank matched funds toward a donation to a community organization.

Last month, the last gift card was redeemed, and the bank told McKinney that she had a check waiting for the library's summer reading program.

Bank President Les Hoveln presented the \$800 donation Tuesday afternoon, May 2.

McKinney nearly jumped out of her chair. "I didn't know it was going to be that much!"

The bank chose to give the entire sum toward the library, which will use it primarily toward prizes for the kids in the program. Last year, the library gave away \$3 Barnes & Noble gift certificates to 150 of the nearly 300 children who signed up, as well as giving several other prizes.

This year, the reading program's theme is pirates. McKinney plans to get into the act herself. "I enjoy dressing up and visiting the kids," she said, noting that she already had most of her costume ready and is looking forward to sporting a parrot on her shoulder.

For The Gifford State Bank, the donation is part of what Hoveln is trying to make routine. "We try to regularly donate to local [organizations]," Hoveln said, continuing what McKinney said has been long-standing support from local business for the children's reading program.

"I'm just tickled you chose the library," she said.

The Leader-Ogden, IL
May 18, 2006