



October 28, 2011

CAMP JEFFERSON TO UPGRADE

Remember the camp song, “(Name), (name), strong and able get your elbows off the table, this is not a horses stall, but a first class dining hall, round the table you must go, you must go?” I think this song is a rite of passage for all summer 4-H campers and other youth, but the song has a new meaning for kids in Saline County and the surrounding area that have attended activities at Camp Jefferson south of Fairbury. Camp Jefferson is building a new, first class dining hall.

Camp Jefferson's goal of constructing a new dining hall is one step closer after a large donation from the Pfaff family, along with the First National Bank of Fairbury. The volunteer Camp Jefferson Board has raised approximately \$290,000 of the estimated \$385,000 required for a new mess hall/meeting room/ storm shelter building. The Board decided to go ahead and announce to build the new mess hall. They will need to borrow some money, but if they wait another year, the construction costs may go up too. They hope to have the new facility done by April of 2012.

Camp Jefferson has been a popular 4-H camp for 8 to 11 year olds and their teenage counselors in 4-H with nature walks to the river, canoeing at the pond, shooting sports with BB guns and bow and arrows, swimming in the round pool against the tree background, craft and project making, and fun and games. The old YMCA camp has a storied history. In 1921, a forty-acre campground was established by the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). Now overseen by a volunteer board and being a functional 501c3 organization, it has been a good facility for the Gage, Jefferson and Saline County Earth Festivals for 500 fifth graders each year. The camp serves as a location for a Crete Middle School science field trip. The camp is used for family reunions, church gatherings, scouts, and many other activities.

Slowly there have been improvements over time. The much needed restroom and shower facility, constructed from Endicott blocks, a new water well and two cabin restorations have been the more recent improvements. Back in the 80's, a group of volunteer 4-H'ers in Saline County that I recruited, myself and Bob Stritzke, former extension educator in Jefferson County, spent some Saturdays building a brick wall shoring up an aging circular swimming pool with Endicott brick. Each spring the circular pool is filled with cold well water, you just don't want to be the first one in!

Camp Jefferson is located three miles south of Fairbury on Highway 8 and one mile west on Camp Jefferson Road. With a new fully-functioning mess hall planned for 2012, the multi-purpose arts/crafts area, and multiple cabins for lodging, it is the perfect place to bring a group. Camp Jefferson offers many recreational activities including swimming in the outdoor pool, sand volleyball, archery and canoeing. Camp Jefferson has housed both Girl Scout and Boy Scout camps, as well as corporate functions, graduation parties and family reunions.

For more information on what Camp Jefferson has to offer, contact the Jefferson County Extension office and they can get you in touch with the right people. E-mail office manager Joann Kerwood at jwurm2@unl.edu or call 402-729-3487.



LANDLORD/TENANT WORKSHOP PRE-REGISTRATIONS

The Landlord/Tenant Workshop being conducted by University of Nebraska Extension is planned for Sokol Hall in Wilber on Tuesday, November 15th from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. It is important for all parties involved to keep updated on issues in the management of the farm asset. This workshop is an excellent way for you to stay in touch and maintain positive leasing relationships. I will seek to get permission for more than 50 participants. Call today to reserve your space to the University of Nebraska Extension Office in Saline County at 402-821-2151 or e-mail office manager Lou Hajek at lhajek2@unl.edu.

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