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FOCUS: The Great Flood of 1993 forever changed the Monroe County community of Valmeyer. While most people moved to a new community on top of the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River, others stayed behind in the old village.

VALMEYER: 10 YEARS LATER



DOUG BADER/Special to the News-Democrat

The Great Flood of 1993 prompted Valmeyer officials and residents to move their community out of the Mississippi River flood plain.

BY GEORGE PAWLACZYK
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Ten years after the Great Flood of 1993, the new Valmeyer has everything it takes to be a perfect town.

Since the new village opened in 1995, Police Chief Paul James, who commands a force of one officer besides himself, said there has been no serious crime. The newly paved streets are devoid of litter and potholes.

Property taxes are low, and residents say new houses cost significantly less than in nearby cities.

There are three churches, a car wash, a bank, a convenience store with gas pumps, a tavern constructed tastefully to look like a residence and three

gleaming fire trucks to serve about 800 residents.

There are no rundown buildings because nothing has had a chance to get old and decay.

So, what's wrong with the new Valmeyer?

Plenty, say the people who stayed below in the old Valmeyer after refusing financial help from the federal government to live "up on top," as many call the new town.

They deride the so-called perfect town as nothing more than a sterile, modern subdivision with little of the charm and character of the quaint, 175-year-old river town below that was all but wiped out by the flood.

Even former Mayor Dennis Knobloch, who lives in the new

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GEORGE PAWLACZYK/News-Democrat

Jacob Geringer, 6, and his 4-year-old sister, Emma, played on the driveway of their family's home in the new Valmeyer.

Daughter and father die in crash

She worked at Mascoutah High

BY GEORGE PAWLACZYK
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A Mascoutah father and daughter on their way to visit relatives in rural Oklahoma were killed Friday in a collision between their car and a tractor-trailer.

Killed were Everett M. Eubanks, 80, and Donna F. Greene, 55, both of Mascoutah.

A report from the Oklahoma Highway Patrol, which handled the accident, was not available. According to a story in The Daily Oklahoman, the accident occurred 18 miles south of Seminole, Okla., on U.S. 377.

The newspaper reported that Greene, driving on an intersecting county road, failed to stop at a stop sign and was struck by a truck driven by Michael Earnest of Okemah, Okla. Earnest, who was briefly hospitalized, was not charged, according to the news story.

Both victims were reportedly pronounced dead at the scene.

Eubanks, who was born in Stillwell, Okla., was a World War II Navy veteran and worked as a salesman.

Greene, a native of Wichita, Kan., worked

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Single mother still fights for child support

Battle has lasted 13 years

BY JENNIFER A. BOWEN
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For 13 long years, a single mother has been fighting in St. Clair County courtrooms to get child support from the father of her son.

And even though her son now is 21, she intends to keep fighting until the man pays her the \$28,590 he owes.

Victoria Mitalovich has been battling with the father, Vernon Bell, and her frustration has reached an obsession to get the child support.

"I will continue to furiously fight to have Vernon Bell held accountable for his actions; he will either pay me, or the lawyers," Mitalovich said. "One way or another, I'm going to spend his money."

According to court records, Bell, who is the father of John Mitalovich, has been ordered by one St. Clair County judge after another to be placed on probation or jailed until he makes child support payments.

Court records show he regularly ignores the orders.

Child support payments have been few. In

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MidAmerica Airport increases fuel sales, hopes trend continues

Recent moves have airport looking up

BY PATRICK J. POWERS
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MASCOUTAH — For an airport with no major customers, MidAmerica St. Louis Airport apparently sells a lot of jet fuel.

"We're better than last year, but we still have to sell a lot more gas," Airport Director Tim Cantwell said. "The goal is to sell 1 million gallons

of gas a month. That's what we need to sell to be up there with the big boys."

Cantwell made increased fuel sales a priority when he became airport director nearly one year ago. He waived the ban on ejection seat aircraft landing at MidAmerica, struck a deal to sell fuel to U.S. military planes and lured in Allegiant Air to provide limited charter ser-

vice.

As a result, Cantwell has been before his bosses on the St. Clair County Public Building Commission at least three times requesting an increase in either the amount of gas he can buy in a month or the amount of money he can spend on gas in a year.

The commission on June 19 approved Cantwell to spend up to \$2.1 million to buy aviation fuel for the year. That's nearly double the \$1.3

million originally budgeted to spend this year on fuel for resale.

"You're going to see it grow every year," Cantwell said. "Continual improvements, we'll take them every day."

In the first six months of last year, the airport averaged \$24,500 a month in jet fuel sales. When the airport waived its ban on ejection-seat aircraft in July, fuel sales for the last six months of the year jumped to \$100,000 a month.

Then, in November, the airport struck a deal to become a licensed gas dealer for military aircraft. That resulted in another spike in fuel sales, raising this year's monthly average to \$169,000.

MidAmerica Airport sold \$1 million in gas from Jan. 1 through June 26. The increased sales puts the airport in line to sell about 2 million

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"Continual improvements, we'll take them every day."

Tim Cantwell, MidAmerica Airport chief

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FOR MISSOURI

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E REAL ESTATE
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POWERBALL: **07-09-14-41-44** Powerball: **25** Jackpot: **\$134 million** Power Play: **04**

