ROAD

NAMES

HISTORY

~~~~~

TOWN

OF

UNION

~~~~~

VERNON

COUNTY

TOWN OF UNION
ROAD NAMES

Since I have been elected to the Town Board there have been many changes throughout the years in our roads, equipment, and a garage was built during 1964 or 1965. Previously, equipment was stored in the basement of the Town hall and outdoors for truck and larger items that would not go in. The truck was an International without four wheel drive, no comparison to the four wheel drive trucks we now have. A small Ford tractor with loading bucket and a large concrete block mounted on the back for traction was used in comparison with a larger Case backhoe and loader now used. The motor grader was a CAT 12 in comparison to the larger 1978 CAT 14G for roadwork. Roads have been improved greatly being reconstructed, culverts installed and extended to handle increased traffic we now experience.

The Town of Union road names history research and documentation has been an interesting one as I was a member of the town board naming these roads during the 1970's as requested by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. My thoughts are I am the only one remaining involved in the road naming process and feel it is my duty to create a record of road names origin for the Town of Union or it be lost forever. Copies of this record is also available at the Vernon County Historical site at Viroqua. We tried staying away from using personal names for roads although it was done in some cases.

I wish to thank Brad Steinmetz, Robert Kretche, Charles Melvin, Jack Rabata, Frank Messeburg and others assisting me in researching this project.

Prepared by current Town of Union Chairman elected to the town board as supervisor in 1963, appointed as chairman in 1973 after the death of past Chairman James Cervenka.

Elgin E. Fanta
Town of Union Chairman
September 1, 2015

John Bear Spreader Notes
by Johnson Gunfrunk, farm reporter

Township Roads

What little traveling I do anymore is generally on township roads and I am constantly amazed at how much better they are now than they were a few years back.

This spring I thought for sure that most of the roads would be impassable as they really started breaking up early and fast. However, in a few days the town patrolmen had the tubes cleaned out, gravel dumped in the soft places and you could go most anyplace without fear of bogging down.

Up until after the early forties you could expect a six week period when town roads were a real challenge to try and drive your automobile on, and some of them were hardly safe for a long-legged team of horses.

It takes money to have good roads, money to hire good patrolmen, buy good equipment and have plenty of material on hand when you need it.

Good roads could have come many years earlier than they did but some of those old town chairmen wouldn't spend a dime unless they had to.

They had enough followers that wanted to keep their taxes low that some town chairmen held their jobs for 25 or 30 years and never accomplished a thing all the time they were in office.

One real popular chairman wouldn't even buy his patrolman a new shovel. Said if he bought shovels the next thing they would want was a truck to haul them around in and if they got a truck then they would want a garage to store it in.

Said there was no limit to what patrolmen would want if you started giving in to them. We finally got tired of being stuck in the mud and snow all the time so we got rid of most of those old penny-pinchers and today about every township is pretty well equipped and maintained.

Most roads are well graveled and quite a few are blacktopped.

Back when they first started graveling town roads the supervisors always came and rode in the trucks to show the drivers where to put the gravel.

That was where the origin of the phrase "A township spread" originated.

The supervisors would have the truckers raise their box, then get the truck to rolling and when they hit 35 miles per hour they would yell 'rip it'.

A load of gravel would go a long ways at that speed but it was mighty thin on the roadway.

At one of the township meetings over west of here a discussion came up to build a bridge for twenty thousand dollars but about everyone there thought that was pretty high.

One old fellow in the back of the room got up and said, "Twenty thousand dollars to build a bridge over that little stream, heck I can pee halfway across it."

The town chairman rapped his gavel on the desk and rather sternly said, "Ole, you are out of order."

Whereupon Ole jumped up and said, "You're darn right I am out of order. If I was in order I could pee clear across it."

They finally ended up putting in a big road tube that washed out with every freshet but everyone was happy.

Today with bulk milk trucks, big yellow school buses and low slung automobiles, we need good town roads just as badly as we need good county and state highways. Sure they cost money but six weeks of mud used to get darned awful monotonous too.

This article was taken from the collection of short stories written by Johnson Gunfrunk in the 1970s, a pen-name used by the late Dale Muller.

BIRD LANE

This dead end town road intersects with County Highway V going east to private property line was named after the David Bird family that lived and built a new home at that location.

BOUDA HILL

Bouda Hill as it was and is known located on State Highway 82 in the Town of Union near intersection of County Highway A going south towards West Lima. It was named after the Bouda family that resided at the first farmstead on County Highway A, owning farming property located on both sides of State Highway 82 and County Highway A.

CANYON AVENUE

Town Chairman James Cervenka suggested this name because this location reminded him of traveling through a canyon from Morning Star Road south to State Highway 82.

CHAMPION LANE

Road name comes from Champion Valley it connects to on the east with County Road H area known as Champion Valley going through the valley towards the village of Yuba. It intersects with State Highway 82 to the west.

CHERITH WAY

Named after Camp Cherith, a religious camp located at the north end of this dead end road at that time and property is now owned by VCY America another religious organization. Property was previously owned by Elgin and Marguerite Herbeck who farmed and operated a private airport at this location. Both were pilots and stopped flying because of bad experiences in the air that could have possibly been fatal. They formed the MAREL Incorporated Construction Company now located at Hillsboro, Wisconsin.

DAUGHABAUGH LANE

Gaylord and Margaret Daughabaugh at that time lived at the south end of this dead end road off from state Highway 82. Margaret at one time was clerk of the Town of

Union resulting in naming this road Daughabaugh Lane.

EAST NEWBURN AVE

Chairman James Cervenka suggested naming this road after the first Town of Union chairman Josiah Newburn living in this area at one time. This section of Newburn road going east from County Highway A was then named East Newburn Avenue and the portion of the road going west was named West Newburn Avenue.

ELM AVENUE

Located in the Town of Forest, this dead end road originating at County Highway P east of Valley goes south into property located in the Town of Union. This road was named by the Town of Forest board.

HEIDENREICH DRIVE

Road located in the Town of Bloom, Richland County, named after the Frank Heidenreich family living in the Town of Union at the north end of this dead end road coming off from Pine Avenue west of the village of Yuba.

JUG CREEK ROAD

Research on how this road name originated has been interesting with variations how the name Jug Creek of this valley came into being.

Jug Creek got it's name when the lumber crews first came into the Kickapoo Valley around 1850. They established their first lumber camp at the mouth of Jug Creek in the town of Stark and built a large cabin there to stay in. The men liked their whiskey after a hard day's work in the woods. The liquor was kept in jugs, which were kept cool in the waters of the stream. There were always jugs in the creek when the lumber crews were there, thus the probable beginning of the name Jug Creek.

Another story is that a Mr. Seeley operated a lumber mill in the LaFarge area and was against drinking. His workers drank liquor, hid the jugs in the creek resulting in calling it Jug Creek.

There is a story in a book Dirt Roads by Josie Churchill handed down how Weister Creek and Jug Creek got their names. In 1846 Vernon County was being surveyed by U.S. surveyors. They carried with them a jug of whiskey. At the end of the day each would indulge in the contents from the jug. One fellow was seen letting it spill to the ground. His companion who had a hard time with the English language, shouted, "don't weister boy, don't weister!" And so Weister Creek was Christened. A little farther to the east in the Town of Stark they broke the jug, and so Jug Creek was named.

Another finding was the first three settlers coming into the area found a jug by the

creek that someone had left there. They said, "a jug by a creek, that should be Jug Creek, a name for the valley."

Some say Jug Creek got it's name because the valley looked like a jug and South Jug Creek in the Town of Stark was the handle. It has been said there were too many trees in those days to know how the valley looked.

KRAEMER ROAD

This road begins at Pine Avenue continuing into the Town of Bloom, Richland County. It was named after the Kramer family living at the end of this road near Bloom City. There was an error naming this road as it should have been Kramer Road

MAPLE LANE

Road was named after Maple Grove school located on the present Edith Marshall pasture property northwest of the Maple Lane and Twin Ash intersection. The school is still preserved and located at the original site.

MELODY LANE

As suggested by board supervisor Elgin Fanta this road was named after Wilmer and Dianna Holak that were area singers performing at various occasions. They lived and dairy farmed in Champion Valley at the intersection of Melody Lane and County Highway H.

MORNING STAR ROAD

This was known as the Morning Star Ridge area. Not much information how this name originated. Passed down from first settlers, the name came from the ridge's high elevation and the morning star was visible from there.

Another finding is there may have been a teacher or minister at the Morning Star school seeing the morning star, naming the school after it. The Morning Star school building was located near the east intersection of Morning Star and Union roads and was moved to 206 South Silver Street in LaFarge around 1950.

MUNCIE ROAD

Named after the Muncie settlement once located at the intersection of Pine Avenue and State Highway 82. Reason for this road name was to preserve the name even though the Muncie settlement was not located here. Note: See Pine Avenue for more explanation.

PINE AVENUE

It was debatable how to name this road. The town board decided to name this road after the Pine River branch because the road goes in a southerly direction along the river towards Yuba. It was named Pine Avenue because there are also other Pine River branches.

The settlement of Muncie was located at the west intersection of State Highway 82 and Pine Avenue, the hill was known as the Muncie Hill. The board wanted to preserve the Muncie name, therefore, decided to name the next road to the east going south Muncie Road even though the Muncie settlement was not located there.

Later there was an attempt to change the name of Pine Avenue to Muncie Road as it maybe should have been named but residents did not like the idea of changing their postal addresses, therefore, the name was not changed.

PINE LANE

This road begins at Pine Avenue going west over the hill to the west intersecting with East Newburn Avenue. It was named in reference to Pine Avenue it connects with to the east.

PINE HILL ROAD

Divided road named by Town of Bloom board in reference to Pine Avenue it intersects with in Town of Union going south into the Town of Bloom, Richland County.

SHORT LANE

The shortest of Town of Union Roads, .08 miles going north from State Highway 82.

SOUTH CANYON

Dead end road extension of Canyon Avenue going south from State Highway 82.

SPRING LANE

LaVern Byers living at that time at the west end of this dead end road connected to Pine Avenue, suggested this name because of the cold water springs located on his property.

ST FRANCIS LANE

Penelope Persein and her family living at the end of this dead end road intersecting

with Muncie Road, was a religious person suggesting this name.

ST JOHNS AVENUE

Named after the nearby St Johns Dilly church and cemetery, located at the State Highway 82 intersection going east into the Town of Greenwood.

ST JOHNS LANE

In reference to nearby St Johns Avenue, this dead end road goes to the west from State Highway 82.

STARK LANE

Coming off from Valley Avenue in Town of Union, this road going west continues into Compton Road in the Town of Stark.

SUNRISE LANE

This name was chosen because board member Elgin Fanta suggested the sun comes up from that easterly direction and this would be a good name for this dead end road coming off from County Road H.

SUNSET LANE

After naming nearby Sunrise Lane, it was decided to name this dead end road going west from County Road H Sunset Lane because of the sun setting in that direction.

THOMPSON ROAD

The Thompson family once lived at the end of this dead end road going east off from County Highway A. It was later learned this road may have been locally called Rocky Road or Rocky Hollow at one time.

TIMBER LANE

Named so because of the trees growing beside of this narrow town road. Another connected reason for naming was the Vodak family owned an abandoned second farm located at the west end of this dead end road. They dairy farmed and dealt in timber sales.

TWIN ASH AVENUE

Information received from Jack Rabata living at Beaver Dam was the son of John and Agnes Rabata once living at the intersection of Twin Ash and Morning Star Roads. He remembered there were one or two Ash trees with two forks near the east side of Morning Star Road by their fence line near State Highway 82. This area was known as the Twin Ash area resulting in naming this road Twin Ash to preserve the name.

TWIN VALLEY ROAD

George Dolezal Junior living at the north end of this dead end road with his parents George and Dorothy Dolezal suggested this road name. The name comes from two valleys coming together from the north on their farm.

UNION AVENUE

Town board could not decide what to name this road and board member Elgin Fanta suggested naming it Union after our Town of Union.

VALLEY AVENUE

Named so because it goes north from Morning Star Road to the settlement of Valley located in the Town of Forest.
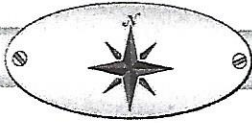
WARNER AVENUE

It was named this because it goes west from State Highway 82, through the valley along Warner Creek to County Highway P. The Warner name came from a Warner family once living at the lower end of the valley. The Warner Creek Cheese Factory operated by the Glick family was once located at the intersection of Warner Avenue and County Road P and later moved to Hillsboro.

WEST NEWBURN

Chairman James Cervenka suggested the Newburn name in honor of the first Town of Union chairman, Josiah Newburn, living in this area at one time. East and West Newburn are divided by County Road A.

WILDERNESS LANE

This road intersecting with County Highway H was named by Edward Kolowrat owning a farm at the west end of this dead end road in reference to the forest, hills and wild life on his property.

* * *

SEE PAGE 57

S2500

VALLEY RD

P

V

82

6   5   4   3   2   1

STARK RD

S2900

WARNER

WARNER   RD

CHERITH LN

TIMBER LN

WARNER   RD   RD

7   8   Cy   9   10   11   12

UNION

ST JOHNS LN   ST JOHNS

ST JOHNS LN

S3300

JUG   CREEK   RD

MAPLE   RD

H   V

18   17   16   15   14   13

MORNING

STAR

TWIN VALLEY LN

ASH   RD

TWIN   RD

WILDERNESS LN

BIRD LN

SEE PAGE 39

SHORT LN   CHAMPION   LN

82

CANYON

19   20   A   21   22   23   24   MUNCIE

82

SEE PAGE 45

Bear   Cr   S CANYON AV

S4100

SUNRISE LN

Neptune Lake

MELODY LN

30   29   28   27   26   25

W   NEWBURN   PINE   RD   SUNSET LN

SPRING LN   ST FRANCIS WAY   H

S4500

PINE   LN

RD   E NEWBURN AV   PINE AV

Pine

31   32   33   34   35   36

D   ROCKY LN   Pine   River

A   KRAEMER RD   KRAEMER RD   PINE AV

S4900

E14100   E14500   E14900   RICHLAND COUNTY   E15700   E16100   E16500