

PROGRESS 2007

Meadowbrook Apartments: Affordable housing for families, the handicapped or disabled, and the elderly

Meadowbrook apartments offer affordable housing for low-income families, the handicapped or the disabled, and for elderly residents.

The apartments, housed in two attractive brick buildings, offer many amenities, including air conditioning, coin-operated laundry facilities in both buildings, off-street parking, full-sized stoves and refrigerators, and each apartment has its own water heater. The complex also offers a bike rack and a gazebo with a picnic table that the residents can use.

According to manager Patricia Harland, Meadowbrook also offers the additional benefit

of providing maintenance for their tenants.

"Basically, we do the repairs on the apartments. We do it by service request, because we have to have permission to go into the apartments. If anything happens, the tenant will fill out a service request, saying what needs to be fixed, and then the maintenance person does those daily," said Harland.

In addition to apartment maintenance, Meadowbrook takes care of yard work and snow removal, as well as pest control.

"We contract out the snow removal and lawn mowing, so tenants don't have to take care of any of that. We also do pest control once a

month, too, which we have found if we do it monthly, we don't have problems," Harland added.

There are 16 units, with eight one-bedroom apartments and eight two-bedroom apartments, in the complex. Meadowbrook apartments are eligible for Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 8 rent subsidies. Assistance is available to prospective tenants, so they don't already have to have a HUD or a Section 8 voucher. Since these are low-income units, income limits do apply.

Potential residents need to fill out an application and then Meadowbrook's

management will perform criminal, credit and landlord reference checks on the applicants.

Once the applicants pass the background check, Meadowbrook will begin the application process. They verify income and assets. Based on these factors, rent is calculated, based on 30 percent of the applicant's income.

Tenants are required to pay utilities; Meadowbrook takes care of water, sewer and trash pick-up.

Meadowbrook is located at 508 South M St., Oskaloosa. For more information, call (641) 673-8526, or applications are available at Santa Clara Apartments, 1305 Santa Clara St., in Oskaloosa.

Fins 'N Things enters 31st year

It was thirty-one years ago, in the fall of 1976, when an Oskaloosa business, Fins 'N Things, was born. Starting out as a small store in the basement of Marvin and Karolyn Andersen's house, it has since grown into a full-line pet store. Fins 'N Things carries everything you would expect from a pet store, from All Glass tanks to Zoo Med reptile products.

"Our customers have every kind of you can imagine," says owner Blaine Andersen. "People come in for items for their dogs, cats, and fish, but we also have customers with hedgehogs, sugar gliders, ferrets, chinchillas, and all manner of snakes, lizards, and frogs. Crickets are a big seller for the lizard and frog people."

At Fins 'N Things, located at 101 K Ave. East, crickets are always on the menu, along with feeder goldfish, rose reds, white clouds, ghost shrimp, mealworms, etc. A wide variety of frozen and freeze-dried fish foods is also available, as well as food and treats for lizards, small animals, birds, and of course, dogs and cats.

"We have some exciting new products," says Blaine, "including the Omega One line of fish food, made with seafood fresh from Alaska. The fish do great on this stuff. We also just got in a large variety of natural dog treats, from tasty smoked rawhide bones to delicious gourmet chicken fillet strips. Dog go crazy for these."

After a move to the short-lived mini mall, Market Village, Fins 'N Things finally ended up at their current location on the corner of North Market and K

Avenue East, where they have been since 1985. With 50 freshwater tanks and three saltwater tanks, Fins 'N Things has a large selection of fish from which to choose. A knowledgeable and helpful staff provides answers and advice for new and experienced fish hobbyists and they strive to make your experience with fish fun and easy.

Fins 'N Things also carries all your fish supply needs, including aquarium sets, fish bowls, ornamental plants, rocks and sculptures, colored gravel, filter systems, heaters, water conditioners, medications, and testing supplies. Fins 'N Things has several discounted tank set ups that come with everything you need to get started. They also have a nice selection of small animals, birds, and reptiles, along with cages, bedding, treats and toys. For those with dogs and cats, Fins 'N Things carries the premium lines of pet foods, Eukanuba, Science Diet and Nutro. These foods are high in nutrition and low on waste, providing healthier skin and coat and a better life for your pet.

Fins 'N Things is run by Blaine Andersen, along with Marvin and Karolyn Andersen, and employee Sam Groenenboom. The entire staff is experienced, and can help you pick the right pet for you, and ensure that your pet has all the necessary supplies. Stop by Fins 'N Things today for all of your pet needs! The store is open Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. In the winter and fall, they are also open from 1:30 to 4 p.m. on Sundays.

Brian Booy Construction: Experience, integrity and excellence

Brian Booy Construction, LLC, is the place to go for home building, remodeling or light commercial construction.

Although Booy Construction concentrates on new home construction, Brian said they do other kinds of construction as well.

"Primarily, my business is doing new homes, but once in a while we do light commercial work and we do remodeling, but mostly it's new home construction," Booy explained.

Booy and his crew, which has over 100 years of construction experience, can take a customer's building project from conception to completion, because they have experience in all phases of the home building and remodeling process.

Booy Construction can design a project, work with the customer's design, or work with an architect's design for a project.

Before becoming a contractor, Brian Booy

studied to become an architect, so he feels very comfortable on the design side of a project.

"Probably 80 percent of our blueprints, I draw myself, so we usually lay-out our own blueprints for our customers," said Booy.

Booy Construction is willing to build homes in just about any price range.

"In Oskaloosa, we try to fit everybody's need — the middle of the road home, as well as the high-end home. In Oskaloosa, I think there's a need for both. A lot of builders don't want to do the smaller homes, because they feel there's not enough money margin in that, but for us, it's not all about the money," said Booy.

Booy said his company likes to put an emphasis on quality.

"When I started in the new construction business, I started in cabinetry and I tried to figure out a way to do it just a little bit better, so we

strive for detail and quality. I try to give each house a little different type of look, so each home owner feels that they get a 110 percent effort from us. So basically, it's the quality that sells the houses," Booy said.

Because of a recent bout with illness, Booy had to take some time away from his business, but he said he was lucky to have a great crew to keep things going, while he was out.

"It pretty much took me out for the whole year. I was still there behind the scenes, but I couldn't physically work. I'm just blessed to have the men that I have that were able to keep the business going for me."

In addition to his crew, Brian said that the support of his wife, Glenda, has been tremendously important to him over the years, not only during his illness, but also in helping him learn about the business-side of running a company.

Booy also said that his father's faith in him has been very important to him, especially since his building career started out shakily.

"Somebody asked me not too long ago, 'When did you first know that you could build?' and I told them, when I was about 8 years old, my parents put brand new vinyl on their floor and I took a hammer and screwdriver and destroyed it," laughed Booy.

Brian Booy Construction, LLC, is licensed, insured and bonded. They're located in Oskaloosa and you can reach them at (641) 660-2158.

Sound off on the community forum at oskaloosa.com

Answer the Question of the Week

Oskaloosa Discount offers big savings

Pat Flaherty started Oskaloosa Discount a year and a half ago.

He now owns Oskaloosa Discount and the building at 205 N. A St., across from Hardees.

Flaherty purchases new and scratch-and-dent merchandise and floor samples from "some of the largest retailers in the world." He held truckload sales every weekend, though they are now open all week long, except Sunday.

He carries a large selection of merchandise, including, but certainly not limited to, small

appliances, electronics, sporting goods, domestics, furniture and computers, at a fraction of the price, that the big name, big box stores charge.

"We enjoy meeting the public and giving them good buys," said Flaherty.

Kyle Parker is the manager, you know him from his days at Radio Shack as he is still recognized. They are open 10-5 Monday through Saturday.

"We invite people to come in and browse and see what we have to offer," Flaherty said.

Making a difference in Mahaska County for 22 Years



OSKALOOSA VISION. (Front Row, L-R): Auda Childs, Jennifer Baker, Nancy Struit, Linda Hemp (Back Row, L-R): Dr. Craig Coen, Michelle Engel, Linda Oetjen, Sue Andeway, Kellie Vroegh.

(Not Pictured): Alicia Bricker, Kayli Broadway, Linda Coen

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