

# PROGRESS 2008

## Fred's Muffler means quality service

Completed renovations to the front office and Wildfire Scooters brought a new look to Fred's Muffler Shop in Oskaloosa this past year. The second-generation family-owned business continues to provide quality service and products to Mahaska County residents.

Founded in 1963, Fred De Jong of Oskaloosa opened a one-stall shop in downtown Oskaloosa, Fred's Muffler Shop. In 1978, Fred's Muffler moved to its current location on A Avenue West, as son Tim De Jong began following in his father's footsteps. He continued in the shop until his father's retirement in 2000, when he took over Fred's Muffler and incorporated it, keeping it family-owned and -operated with his brother Terry. Tory Mathis joined the company this past year as a technician.

De Jong says his shop offers customers professional service, as well as the best quality work. Fred's Muffler prides itself on remaining extremely competitive in the business,

not just with parts, but prices as well. Maintaining personal relationships with the customers and providing a small-town atmosphere, even as the business expands, has been another important priority for the shop.

The De Jongs gave their office area a makeover to better market a new line of scooters from 49cc to 250 cc. Some models cost less than \$1,000. The scooters may be popular for commuters as fuel prices continue to climb.

With the storms of the past year, the company has added Wildfire generators to their mix of products. The generators come in 2500, 3500 and 6500 watt models.

Fred's business has expanded to include installation of automobile exhaust, custom duals, and performance packages, as well as shocks, struts and trailer hitches. Fred's Muffler also offers a full line of Walker exhaust products, Putnam hitch products, and Monroe shocks and struts.

The company's website

site has been used primarily for selling trailer hitches. The De Jongs have more than 500 hitches for a variety of types of vehicles and applications. However, the company continues to expand the product line on the site. Customers may access the website at [www.fredsmufflershop.com](http://www.fredsmufflershop.com).

In 2003, Fred's Muffler expanded to begin doing installation of fifth wheel and gooseneck hitches and offering many wiring packages for towing. Fred's continues to add inventory, including more performance products and accessories by Magnaflow, Dynomax, Flowpro, and Flowmaster, in addition to adding more hitch and towing inventory. Fred's also offers truck accessories such as running boards, bed mats and step bars, along with Access roll up truck bed covers, which have become quite popular.

To make an appointment for your vehicle, or to see the products Fred's offers, call (641) 673-9406, or stop by the shop at 1214 A Avenue West.

## Forest Cemetery commitment to excellence continues

More than 140 years has passed since a group of enterprising men found the need to have a place to honor citizens that have gone on before them. Their foresight has given Oskaloosa and the Mahaska community Forest cemetery.

The story began in 1860, after the enactment of the first burial law, a group of citizens met and decided to start a new cemetery in Oskaloosa. They framed the Articles of Corporation and proceeded to purchase land suitable for a cemetery.

The Forest Cemetery Association was formed and a committee was appointed to view possible sites for the new cemetery. Twenty acres were purchased from William S. Dart, lying northeast of the city for \$50 per acre. The land was surveyed, laid out in lots, fenced and called Forest Cemetery.

Rev. J.F. Childs was named as the first president of the Forest Cemetery Association. Lots were sold at auction for no less than 5 cents per square foot. Five dollars was budgeted for expenses, but that \$5 was soon raised to \$6. Today Forest Cemetery spreads

out over 65 acres and another section will open this spring or early summer. The Forest Cemetery Association continues to remain on the cutting edge of services with a baby section that opened in 2007 and also a pet section.

"A lot of people don't know that we have opened a new baby section and have a pet cemetery," said manager Greg O'Brien. We opened the new baby section in 2007."

More than 120 burials a year prompted the Association to develop more the property, which is nestled in the hills of northeast Oskaloosa. The rolling hills and majestic shade trees leave a tranquil and serene place where residents may honor their loved ones.

As soon as the snow clears we will begin preparing for Memorial Day which is our busiest weekend of the year," said O'Brien. "We hope to have the new section open and plotted by June 1."

Along with majestic presence of Forest cemetery comes the care of the sites. Just as it was in the beginning, a small amount from each grave opening and closing goes to a per-

petual maintenance fund. That fund allows the Association to care for the memorials and burial sites forever.

"It is pretty hard to maintain a cemetery of this size," said O'Brien. "We receive no government subsidy from the city, county or state. We operate with whatever amount we bring in from our services and sales."

O'Brien said a small percentage of the fees are used to care for the markers and graves. He said that allows a marker that is damaged to be replaced at no cost to the descendants. This means a marker will always remain in place.

Forest Cemetery is gem to the residents of Mahaska County. Many of the services that are available are on their web site [www.forestcemetery.org](http://www.forestcemetery.org). The same care and commitment to excellence that the first Association members had continues today nearly a century and a half later.

For more information on the services or products available, stop by the Forest Cemetery Association office at 634 North 9th in Oskaloosa or phone 641-672-2243.

## Central United Methodist Church: Serving God and the community

"Open the eyes of my heart, Lord.  
Open the eyes of my heart.

I want to see You.  
I want to see You."

Drive by Central United Methodist Church on a Sunday morning this spring and you might hear those words of song carrying through an open window. More than just song lyrics, they also are a prayer for the ministry God is doing through the Church, the Body of Christ in this place.

The people of CUMC gather on Sunday morning and throughout the week to see more of Jesus. This means having eyes open to see God's wisdom and will as expressed in Scripture, Tradition, Experience, and

Reason. Opportunities to see are provided through shared worship, Sunday School, Bible study, youth and children's programs, personal devotional life, and a variety of other activities. As the eyes of the heart are opened, the heart responds in commitment to make Jesus the Lord of one's life.

The people of CUMC believe, however, that the heart responds not just in commitment to Jesus, but also in care of brothers and sisters. If the Church is to be the Body of Christ in the world, that means having eyes to see the pain and needs of all and being called to be Jesus' heart and hands.

CUMC members are involved in a wide variety of ministries meant to

share compassion and justice with all of God's children. Members might be found working at an orphanage in Central America, rebuilding churches and housing in Louisiana, helping with an after school program for children in a poor neighborhood of Des Moines, or taking a turn preparing and serving End of the Month Meals right here in Oskaloosa. In all of these activities and many more, they open themselves to the Spirit's movement, that their hearts might become more like Jesus' heart.

The people of CUMC invite you to join them in seeking each day to have eyes and hearts open to see God more clearly and to love the world as God in Jesus taught us to love.

If you see news, call 672-2581

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