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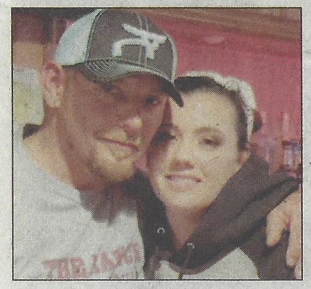
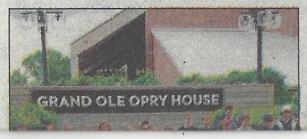
Aquatic Center
PAGE 3



The Ranch
PAGE 4



Students take a look at what is in the Drinking Water

By Sara Tischauser
Editor

A group of Seymour students have been researching to find out just what is in the drinking water in the Seymour area.

Dennis Rohr, Seymour high school science teacher, has been working with the Groundwater Research Team (GRT), who are a group of students who chose to be in this group because they are interested in groundwater, to look at the groundwater in the Seymour area.

Earlier this school year Rohr said they received a $1,000 2018 Pella Grant from the Wisconsin Society of Science Teachers (WSST). Rohr said they partnered with Clean Water Testing out of Appleton naturally occurring in the groundwater including arsenic," Rohr said about the water samples they had tested.

Now, with these results Rohr said they are compiling the information to take a look at what is in the water in the area and sharing their results with the public at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, May 22 in the Seymour High School Auditorium.

"Our goal of this is to provide residents where we are right now and what we've learned so far," Rohr said. "We are going to provide what we understand so far and share the maps we have created on our GIS [geographic information system], the correlation graphs we have

"I was surprised by the very high concentration of arsenic in relation to the rest of the United States," Warner said. "In this specific area of northeast Wisconsin we are among the highest [levels of arsenic] in the nation."

Kersten Thibodeau, a sophomore GRT student, said the data can help people see how this area compares to other areas.

"It would be nice to see in our area of Wisconsin how high our levels are and see how we can fix that in the future," Thibodeau said.

One of the main questions Justin Bowers, a sophomore GRT member, said he had prior to their research was how laws have affected arsenic levout of the water from those wells? That was my main question."

Rohr said they have not answered this last question yet and will have to look up well logs before they can begin researching this.

Thomas said some of the group had previous experience which helped with this project.

"Something that helped us was that last year a couple of us team members had worked on a project," Thomas said. "It was a competition put on by the US Army Corp of Engineers and we worked on this same question and that is how we got to know mapping software. That kind of helped us dip our feet in the water a little bit. Now this year we got know what's in the water you are drinking," Thomas said. "You don't realize a lot of what's in your water."

Bowers said that the results tell people what is going on.

"We are not trying to shut people's wells down," Bowers said. "We are trying to tell them if they need to take precautions and think rationally."

Rohr said everyone is invited to their presentation at 7 p.m. on May 22 at the Seymour High School Auditorium. The group will present their findings and also have time to answer questions from the public. Rohr said they are very grateful for those who have helped with the project so far.

The Grand Ole Opry
PAGE 5

Shiocton Track
PAGE 14

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and used the grant money to provide water testing kits to people in the towns of Osborn, Cicero, Seymour, Black Creek and Lessor at a discounted rate.

Tyler Thomas, a sophomore in GRT, said they had 222 data points from water samples collected. Rohr said they have been researching groundwater since 2003. In 2007, Rohr said they received a $10,000 Toyota TAPESTRY grant which allowed them to build a large data base. Now, with the data the group just collected they will be able to compare the differences in the groundwater over the last 10 years.

Those individuals who had their water tested received their individual results and Rohr said the school also received all the results.

"We studied for 23 metals that are all potentially made."

Rohr said they have looked at the data to see if there is a correlation between if one metal goes up does another metal go up or down. These findings are some of what the GRT students will share at the presentation.

Thomas said one of the highlights for him was to look at the arsenic in the area.

"Not much research has been done on arsenic in Outagamie County," Thomas said.

Rohr agreed that lately arsenic has not been studied a lot.

"DNR [Department of Natural Resources] hasn't been doing much research on arsenic lately," Rohr said. "They did early on when arsenic was a problem in early 2000."

William Warner, a sophomore student in GRT, said some of the findings surprised him.

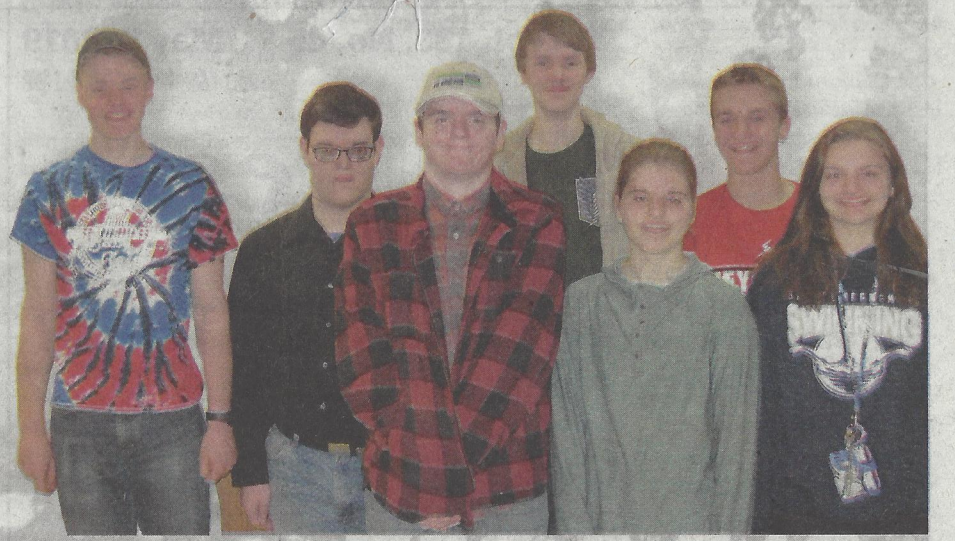
els.

"I remember my main question was, did the laws passed in 2004 concerning well casing minimum requirements, did that help?"' Bowers said. "Did that make the arsenic stay a grant so we could collect 222 data points and we hit the ground running."

Sharing the results with the community is something the group believes can be very beneficial.

"It's always good to

"We really appreciate the townships who partnered with us, the residents who got their water tested and shared data with us and for Clean Water Testing who partnered with us as well," Rohr said.



Members of the Groundwater Research Team in Seymour are compiling the data they collected from water samples and will be presenting the information to the public at 7 p.m. on May 22 in the Seymour High School Auditorium. Everyone is welcome to attend. Pictured (left to right): William Warner, Edward Hackl, Justin Bowers, Ty Witthuhn, Elizabeth Zahn, Tyler Thomas and Kertsen Thibodeau. - Submitted photo