

Wind Farm Pays More Than 1 Million Dollars to Support Local Roads

(Tuscola, IL) – April 12, 2019 – EDP Renewables made the last installment of the permitting fees required to build the Harvest Ridge Wind Farm. In total, the wind farm has paid \$1,440,000 to the Douglas County, Newman Township and Murdock Township Motor Fuel Tax Funds in order to use the roads during project construction.

Wind farm construction requires significant use of county roads to transport wind turbine components, concrete, aggregate, and other

materials. In order to use the roads, the wind farm signed a Road Use Agreement with the County and Townships which required EDP Renewables to pay \$15,000 per turbine in permitting fees to the County and the Township where each turbine will be located, resulting in the following payments:

- \$720,000 to the Douglas County Motor Fuel Tax Fund
- \$615,000 to the Newman Township Motor Fuel Tax Fund
- \$105,000 to the Murdock

Township Motor Fuel Tax Fund

These payments are to ensure that taxpayers do not bear any financial burden as a result of the construction of the Project. The payment provides Harvest Ridge Wind Farm permission for oversized and overweight vehicles to travel on township and county roads and will cover the cost of other permits needed to use the roadways for the project.

Since the funds are deposited into the County and

Township Motor Fuel Tax Funds, these road authorities can also use the funds for other road and bridge work unrelated to the wind farm.

"I recently visited one of EDP Renewables wind farms and saw the excellent conditions of the roads in that area," stated Yedaw, a long-time farmer and resident of the Arthur area. "Good quality roads are so important to farmers. It's great to see that these funds from the wind farm will benefit the roads

throughout all of Douglas County."

In addition to these payments, the Harvest Ridge Wind Farm will also pay for all the road upgrades prior to construction and road repairs after construction. The Road Use Agreement also requires the wind farm to pay an annual maintenance fee of \$1,500 per mile of local road used during the construction of the project. The Harvest Ridge Wind Farm will continue to pay the road

fee every year that the wind farm is in operation.

"We are pleased to make these payments to the Motor Fuel Tax funds, which will have a lasting impact on roads and bridges throughout the area," stated Ryan Brown, Executive Vice President at EDP Renewables. "We are committed to the communities where we operate, and we look forward to being a good community partner here for years to come."

Westray: A Special Person Looks Back on cont'd from pg. 1

home, and I told myself "I will not drive this every year." I moved to Villa Grove in the fall of 1988.

You're married to Donn Westray, correct? How many children do you have?

Yes, we have three children. Amy, Ervin and John, and we have one grandchild, Olivia.

Do you want to talk about how you and Donn met?

<laughing> The day I told his mother, (Judie) that we were going to get married, she was thrilled, but she said, "Let's get one thing straight. I loved you first!" because I've actually worked here (JR's) close to twenty-six or twenty-seven years of the thirty-five years they've been here. When I first came to town, I had a part-time job in the deli, working for Elmer at the IGA. I made donuts with Sheila, frying chicken.

<Smiles> Donn and I have been married for twenty-two years, this January. After I retire, we'll still have a lot going on, with this place, his folks have worked so hard for so many years here, but they're just unable to do it any longer. We've got some ideas that we'll just have to put in place, moving forward. We're looking to doing some new things here at the business, and we're also looking forward to seeing our granddaughter.

Where does she live?

She lives in Bement. There's always something to do here at JR's, whether it's order day or shopping day, or whatever, so we're hoping that one day a week we can see her, at least. He retired back in October. My folks live about two hours south of here, in West Salem, so I'm hoping that we'll either get to meet up with them somewhere or go down and spend time with them.

Has the paperwork and documentation involved with being a teacher changed over the years?

Oh yes! Absolutely. You

have to keep records of everything. A lot of people wonder why we have so many days off, without the kids. They're called Data Days. When you have a kid who is struggling, you have to test them so many times and look at the data. You have to say, "ok, we tested them here, and then we did this intervention, then we tested them again, and did they improve?, and if not, what's the next step. That might be special ed." That's where so much of this is driven from. A lot of that is on top of the fact that they have standards that they have to meet for the rest of the class. Special ed has so many timelines and deadlines that they have to meet. You have specific dates. Everything has to be in a particular order.

It seems like it was well intentioned, but is it effective?

I'm a person who tries to find something good in everything, and so as far as testing the kids and seeing if that's working for them rather than just sending them to special ed, I don't think that's a bad thing. I feel for districts, number one, trying to fill those roles. Sometimes they have to bring in extra people to do the testing while the teachers go ahead and teach. The extra aides in the classrooms, the documentation that's associated with the Response to Intervention (RTI) has changed things a lot. If you were given unlimited power and resources, what would you change for the school?

Like I said, a life skills program for the older special ed kids would be my first thing. I think they're doing a really good job of trying to do the upgrades to the building and looking at the needs of the district. I think that's a good thing. It's funny, because just the other day I was walking into the school, and it struck me that I soon wouldn't be doing that, and yet the building on the outside really

hasn't changed since I started. I'm in my fifth classroom in thirty-two years. They have a fantastic staff out there, and I have no regrets. I hope that through our business, we can continue to support the school and its programs. I have no interest in subbing, even though I have a few who are trying to change my mind., but I hope to stay involved through other means.

What's been your least favorite part of being a teacher?

As I told you, I'm working under my eighth principal. Some things are always the same, but each one of them have had their own goals and outlook as to what they want you to do. That near constant change has been tough. Every day can be rewarding, but on other days, I've just gotten through it. Tell me what job isn't like that, though!

<laughs>

What's been your favorite part of being a teacher?

I guess probably the small successes. When I first started here, I had a group of kids that didn't want to do their work, and Mrs. Krejci the history teacher worked really well with us. When it would come time for their tests, a group of four or five of them would come to our house and I would make them sloppy joes and give them chips and soda, and we would make note cards and study through the evening so they would get a good grade on their test. Today, I wouldn't dream of doing that, because things have changed so much. To this day, I know there are a couple of those kids who would know exactly what I'm talking about. I think the reward is not so much while they're in school, but after they get out. They look back and either say "Yep, probably should have listened to you on that one," or they've thanked me for doing something like that. That's probably one of the biggest rewards.

Wise or Otherwise cont'd from pg. 4

equipment; too obvious, I thought. The real booty would lie back in the trees. So I ran forward, my eagle eyes trained to spot the slightest pastel shade in the green of the grass.

LO AND BEHOLD! There it was; very near a tree, a pink ovate shape on the lawn. You are mine and only mine I smugly smiled at the thought. All I could see was pink on green and I ran as fast as my little powder blue clad legs would carry me. It was near...very near; all that was left to do was lean down, snatch, and keep moving. I had practiced at home; this was too easy. However, at home, I had been the only hunter. Now I was to know the agony of defeat.

CRASH! Two tiny little heads banging together. THUMP! Two tiny little behinds hitting the freshly mowed grass. There we were. Startled, I sat looking into the eyes of a huntress that I would later come to know as Michelle. That day, she, as was the style at the time for girls, wore a yellow dress with pink flowers on it. She had a pink windbreaker, which actually matched the knot on her forehead not to mention my own. We stared at one another for what might have been several of Shirley MacLaine's lifetimes but, in reality, was only a few seconds. The pink egg was there. Pink coat, blue cords, pink egg, green windbreaker, pink knots...NO PINK EGG!

We saw another youngster run off, an opportunist who cruelly took advantage of our distress. We would have names for a person like this as we grew older which I shall refrain from mentioning here. I looked back at the little girl and I saw my own pain reflected in her eyes, which began to swim with tears.

Somewhere on the planet there was a happy hunting ground but not at this spot. We fell, as if in slow motion, backwards in opposite directions on the luxurious green, spring battlefield. Two



Kent and Michelle

brightly shod prone bodies, wailing in anger, pain, fear and dejection. Would anyone hear? NOOOOOOOOO!

Laughter and shouting still ruled the day as others collected their prizes. Then, out of the frenzied midst, our mother-protectors where there to sweep us up in their arms with words of solace and comfort. As I remember now there was also the slightest hint of bemusement in their demeanor. In any case, our crying subdued, our limp, little defeated bodies with empty baskets at our side were carried back to sit on our Mom's laps while the other kids returned, baskets brimming with the treasures we so feverishly pursued moments earlier.

Several children came offering to share only after being threatened by the adults who accompanied them. We accepted their offering in silence, only to be threatened by our own parents, who forced a weak "thank you" from our lips. It was time to go. The Hunt, was over.

I sat with the basket in my lap full of "pity" eggs I had not earned and imagined how bitter they must taste. I would refuse to eat them! I eventually did decide that I had better sample them just to verify how bitter they would be only to find out that these

prizes so hotly sought really did taste, well....awful. I was not sure and I am still not sure as of today that they were actually meant to be digested as "candy".

Sensing my pain, Mom suggested we go to Dairy Queen for chocolate sundaes and suddenly, there was a light at the end of the tunnel. After all, who needs those stinky old, hard, stale things in the basket when you can have ice cream and a Mom with which to share it.

The bump was gone by the time we got home. Dad was so upset when Mom regaled him with the story of the day's events that he was crying although, on retrospect, it might have been hysterical laughter.

The dog ended up eating the contents of the basket including the plastic grass. It turns out the grass was not toxic but could cause diarrhea resulting in an unusual, colorful, and festive holiday display upon the lawn. All who passed by surely would have agreed.

Mom would end up canceling the appearance of the duck at my birthday party the next month. And, I would go on to be friends with the little girl, Michelle, for the rest of my life. But, we would never, ever go on The Hunt again.

Welcome High School Sports Fans to the Lincoln Prairie Conference cont'd from pg. 1

athletes will be competitive for a long time to come."

The Little Okaw Valley

Conference was formed in 1970 for the 1971-72 academic year. Seven of the

smallest schools in the "big" Okaw Conference made the move to split away to form the original LOVC. Those schools were Arthur, Atwood-Hammond, Bement, Cerro Gordo, Newman, Oakland and Villa Grove.

The fifteen member schools of the newly minted LPC are Arcola, Arthur Lovington Atwood Hammond, Cerro Gordo, Bement, Argenta-Oreana, Sangamon Valley (Niantic and Illiopolis), Okaw Valley (Bethany and Findlay, Decatur LSA, Cumberland, Kansas, Oakland, Hume, Shiloh, Villa Grove, Heritage and Farmer City Blue Ridge.

The Little Okaw Valley Conference went through many changes over the last fifty years and this will be the biggest alteration of the entity in its history.

The new Lincoln Prairie Conference will move forward as a ten team football conference until 2021 when the Illinois High School Association's divisional play takes effect. In all other sports and activities the new conference will move on as set up as the IHSA divisional plan only applies to the sport of football.

Holding It All Together cont'd from pg. 4

the same thing.

And once the crying starts, the reasoning-middle layer of the brain is deactivated. The limbic system and reasoning center cannot be on at the same time. I think your brain would explode, or something. When someone has retreated to the core layer of emotions, they don't care what you think or anything else. Once emotions take over, conversations are over. You would be better off giving them emotional support (hug), food, and dispelling any fears they might be having.

One of my biggest pet peeves is when adults move back into their emotional core layer of their brain, and stay there. We all know people like that. Everything triggers an emotion. You can't have a reasonable conversation with them. And they act like they do not have any common sense whatsoever. Once I've figured out who they are in my circle, I avoid them like a pothole.

So here's a thought; instead of flooding social media with what we think about politics, sports, or problems, and other non-essential topics - how about we figure out which part of our brain is activated before we open our mouths. My dad used to tell me, "Opinions are like noses, everybody already has one." Knowing where to keep your

nose is a valuable skill that we should all strive to acquire.

And lastly, if only we would understand that not everyone is operating in the same brain

layer at the same time, we would sure get along better as a society. At least it would be a start.

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