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KATE WATSON, former Douglas County state’s attorney, right, is sworn in as the county’s first female circuit judge by Illinois Supreme Court Justice David Overstreet, left. Watson’s husband, John Watson, also an attorney, holds the Bible for the ceremony last Tuesday at the Douglas County Courthouse in front of a packed crowd including the Watsons’ four children. Overstreet, who made the appointment, noted Judge Watson’s long history of community service over the past 27 years. *Photo by David Porter.*



ALPACAS, like the one above, are scheduled to be shorn Saturday, May 13, at the Illinois Amish Heritage Center. *Submitted photo.*

Alpaca shearing, bench dedication at Amish Center

Two noteworthy events will be taking place during the Sheep to Yarn to Quilts program Saturday, May 13, at the Illinois Amish Heritage Center. One is the shearing of alpacas, and the other is a special bench dedication honoring Fred Bumpus, who worked at the First National Bank in Arcola for 27 years, where he managed farm accounts. Ten members of his family are expected to be at the ceremony along with longtime friend, 99-year-old Evelyn Brandt, who donated the funds for the bench.

Brandt owns Brandt Industries in Springfield and was once neighbors with the Bumpus family. Since both families were in farm-related businesses, they became fast friends, she said. Bumpus worked for Marine Bank (now Chase Bank) before moving to Arcola. Brandt said she and the Bumpuses had the first two houses in the Sherwood subdivision in Springfield.

While Bumpus was a banker, his relationships with farm managers was helpful to Brandt’s business, and she has remembered his kindness with donations of four benches and a discovery garden at the Amish Center.

Wilmer Otto, representing the Amish Center said, “Bumpus was a beloved banker and community leader in Arcola



Bumpus

for many years. He was a trustee of the Arcola foundation He was a key figure in developing the Arcola Industrial Park, attracting many new businesses to Arcola. He passed away on December 26, 2012 after a courageous battle with pulmonary fibrosis.”

The alpacas are owned by Levi and Gloria Yoder, who acquired them from Levi’s niece in Goshen, Ind., Otto said. They are similar to the South American llamas and are quite sociable with humans, he said.

They will be shorn from 10 a.m. till 12 noon May 13 but will be available to greet visitors throughout the day.

The bench dedication takes place at 12 noon with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Other events happening at the IAHC campus include sheep shearing, wool spinning, loom weaving, petting zoo, and other pioneer activities.

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