

Ankeny through the decades...

recalling Ankeny news from the 1950s, 1970s, 1980s*

December 2018



1950s



Ankeny Seniors Hold Crystal Ball

One of the pre-Christmas parties held each year is the “Crystal Ball”, given by the Ankeny Senior Class. The Ball of 1958 was held in the High School gym on Dec. 13 from 8:30 to 12 p.m. Admission was fifty cents. The class motto is: Knowledge is a treasure, but practice is the key to it. The class flower is a carnation and the class colors are red and white. Lynn Hall was the Master of Ceremonies for the Ball.

The girl’s quartet entertained for part of the program. Members are Grace DeMoss, Judy Ferguson, Marilyn Hefte, Maxine Fuqua. Jerry Dutcher played a piano solo. Music for dancing was by the “Aristocrats.” Refreshments consisted of hors d’oeuvres, ham sandwiches and potato chips. The cost for this was 25 cents.

The officers for the Class of 1958-59 are: President, Lynn Hall, Vice-President, Elvin Reynolds, Secretary, Betty Kaup and Treasurer, Marilyn Hefte. *Ankeny Times, December 18, 1958*

Ankeny 1920. If anyone should ask you about Ankeny, what would you be able to tell them? Chances are that you would say that it was one of the fastest growing, young progressive cities in the state, but could you give them the facts?

Ankeny is one-mile square. It has 172 houses with a population of 648. There are within its limits 22 farms, 25 head of horses, 10 cows and 13 hogs. Only five persons above 10 years of age cannot read or write some language. There are two miles of electric light wire, poles and twenty-three street lamps. One and three-quarters miles of sewer and a water system that cannot be beat by a town three times as large. One hundred four families own their own homes and sixty-eight rent them. *Ankeny Times, December 4, 1958*

**Wording has been reduced to fit the space in some cases. Additional decades will be covered in future issues. Please become a member of the AAHS or send comments via email at: history@ankenyhistorical.org.*



Ankeny Area Historical Society

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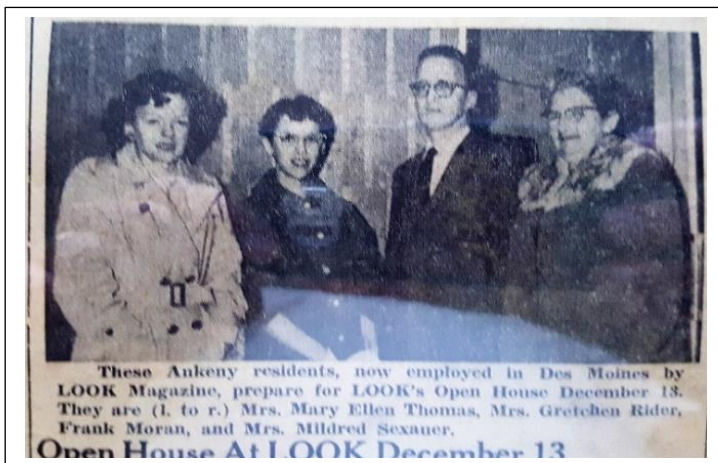
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Stringing Christmas Lights in Ankeny. Getting all “prettied up” for the holiday season. Workmen were seen earlier this week spreading holiday cheer around town by stringing colored Christmas lights along Main Street in Ankeny. Pictured on the ladder is Robert Adams, assisted by Herb Zunkel of Iowa Powder and Light Company. Earl Hildreth can be seen directing traffic along with two interested bystanders. *Ankeny Times, December 4 1958*



Ankeny Folks in Hospital

Al Kent, well-known depot agent in Ankeny has been in the Lutheran Hospital the past two weeks, recovering from a heart attack. He may have to remain another six weeks depending upon his progress. Mrs. Kent is staying with her daughter in Des Moines, while her husband is recovering.

Paul Allen, another well-known business man is at Lutheran. He became ill early last week and entered the hospital on Thursday afternoon for tests and observation.

Mrs. Loren Woods, a surgical patient, is at Des Moines General. She will be there for a few days.

We hope all these well-known friends will recover soon and be home to enjoy Christmas with their families. *Ankeny Times, December 25, 1958*

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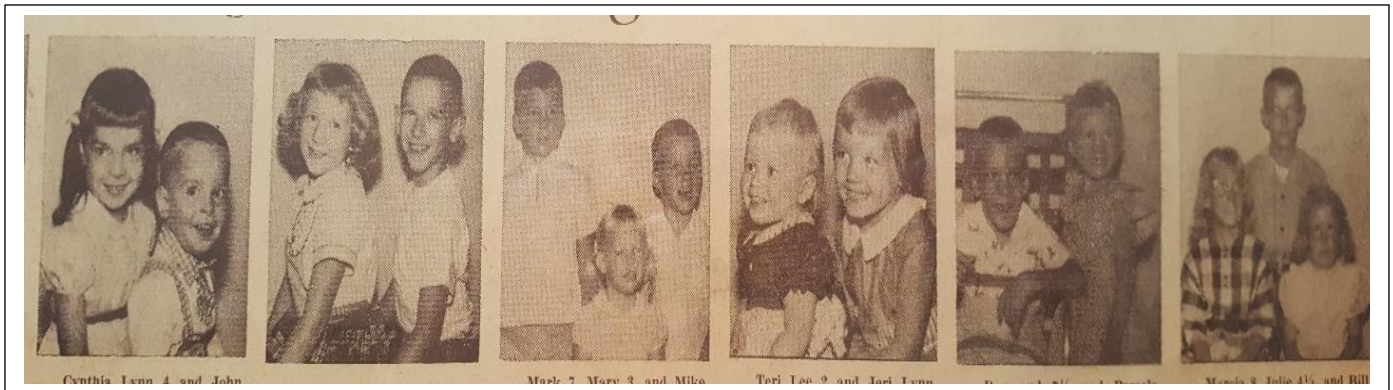
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Just Watching and Waiting for Santa....



Pictured left to right:

- Cynthia Lynn, 4, and John Michael, 19 mos, the children of Mr. and Mrs. Cato Geoffredi, 534 Des Moines St., Ankeny.
- Christine, 7, and Steven, 8, the children of Mr. and Mrs. Hollis E. Scott, of Elkhart.
- Mark, 7, Mary, 3, and Mike, 5, the children of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Schill of Alleman.
- Teri Lee, 2, and Jeri Lynn, 4, the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. R. Decker Davis, Berwick.
- Raymond, 7 ½, and Pamela, 3 ½, the children of Mr. and Mrs. Warren Thorton, 214 Kline, Ankeny.
- Marcia, 8, Julie, 4 ½, and Bill, 9, the children of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Ersland of 105 Kline, Ankeny. *Ankeny Times, December 25, 1958*

Willet Weis Home Burns to Ground

By 8 a.m. Saturday, all that was left of the Willet Weis home was a smothering mass of debris. They lost everything in the home fire caused by an explosion of their oil heater. It happened Saturday night in bitter cold. Fire trucks from Ankeny and John Deere helped fight the blaze. The humble home was only a short distance from the Charlie Weis home, parents of the burned-out family, and they are staying there for the time being. Saylorville Baptist Church has contributed food, clothing and miscellaneous articles. They also brought each of the six boys a new pair of shoes. Clothing, furniture and food are being accepted for the family at the fire station or at Fontanini's garage. The papers are full of tragedies of this kind lately. Everyone should be extremely careful to avoid any chance of this happening in their home. *Ankeny Times, December 18, 1958*

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Vesper Services Held Sunday

Bluebird and Camp Fire Girls taking part in Sunday's Vesper Service were Suzanne Dutcher, Diane Crawl, Linda Lowe, Connie Sellers, Lela Houchin, Mrs. Joe Houchin, Kathleen Kochheiser, Diana Durham, Mrs. Hershel Durham, Janet Evans and Barbara Nagel.

Nearly 100 Bluebirds and Campfire girls and leaders attended the annual Christmas Vesper Service held at 4 p.m. Sunday at Ankeny Methodist Church. The candlelighting affair, held the first Sunday in December, opens the Christmas season for this group. Each year it is held at a different church. A number of parents and friends attended the service.

Photo by James Chan.

Ankeny Times, December 18, 1958

1970s

Ankeny Enrollment Continues to Rise. Ankeny school enrollment continues to buck the trend in student decreases in the central Iowa counties served by the Heartland Area Education Agency. In November, the Des Moines Register reported a decrease in public school enrollment in the Heartland area. The number of students was down 686 from the 1974-75 figure of 119,462. According to the Agency's report, only Dallas and Warren counties showed a county-wide increase. Ankeny was listed as being the tenth largest high school following (in order): Lincoln (DM), East (DM), Valley (WDM), Tech (DM), Roosevelt, DM, Ames, Dowling (WDM), Hoover (DM), and Newton. Figures released to the Press-Citizen show an increase over last year of 213 students in the Ankeny system. Since the 65-66 school year, the average increase has been 174 students per year. *Ankeny Press-Citizen, December 11, 1975*

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Nichols Receives Kiwanis Award. An award for outstanding achievement in Agricultural and Community Activities was presented to Marvin Nichols at the recent Kiwanis farm-city dinner and program. Marvin was recognized for his contribution to improve crop and livestock production. He and Marion Coppock grew seed corn many years under the “Coppock” brand. More recently, Marvin has produced seed stock of Angus Cattle, and is now maintaining a herd of Charolais cattle. He is also in partnership, at present, with Hawkeye Breeders in a bull-stud enterprise comprised of ten highly rated beef bulls which are housed and cared for under contract with various owners. Mr. and Mrs. Nichols have five children and reside on the farm on which Mrs. Nichols was born. *Ankeny Press-Citizen, December 11, 1975*



Mr. and Mrs. Russel Mowry were surprised at the Senior Citizen's Christmas Party with a celebration of their 50th Wedding Anniversary. The Mowrys were married on December 30th, 1925, at Bussey, Iowa and have lived in Ankeny since 1939. The Mowrys have two children. Their daughter, Mrs. Glen Moore, her husband, and two sons live in Heidelberg, Germany. Their son, David Mowry, his wife and three sons live in Riverside California. About 50 Senior Citizens were on hand for the celebration, which also included a Christmas gift exchange. *Ankeny Press-Citizen, December 18*



If you'd like to donate to the Ankeny Area Historical Society or send memorials in honor of a loved one, please contact us at history@ankenyhistorical.org. And, thank you!

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Hawkettes Still On Top In Poll. The top twenty: 1. Ankeny (8-0), 2. West Burlington (6-0), 3. Mediapolis (6-0), 4. Terril (4-0), 5. Adel DeSoto (6-0), 6. North Polk (5-0), 7. Belmond (5-0), 8. Waukon (7-0), 9. Parkersburg (8-0), 10. Rockwell city (6-0), 11. Cherokee (5-0), 12. Dysart-Genesco (6-0), 13. English Valley (6-0), 14. West Monona (5-0), 15. West Lyon (5-0), 16. Diagonal (8-0), 17. South Winneshiek (7-0), 18. Southeast Polk (4-1), 19. Lake View-Auburn (6-1), 20. Glenwood (5-1). *Ankeny Press-Citizen, December 16, 1976*

Hawkettes Breeze to Ninth Win. Number one rated Ankeny Hawkettes whipped conference foe Indianola 85 to 57 Friday Night, winning their fifth straight conference game and ninth straight season game without defeat. The Ankeny girls will travel to Boone Friday night and will host Saydel Saturday night. Ankeny scored 44 first half points while limiting Indianola to 28. Cathy Conway was the high point girl of the evening, scoring her season high of 33 points. Conway made three interceptions and had three assists. Mary Yori had another good night for the Hawkettes scoring 26 points. Yori has scored over 20 points in five of this season's nine ball games. Yori also had three assists and two rebounds. *Ankeny Press-Citizen, December 16, 1976*



Mary Yori



Cathy Conway

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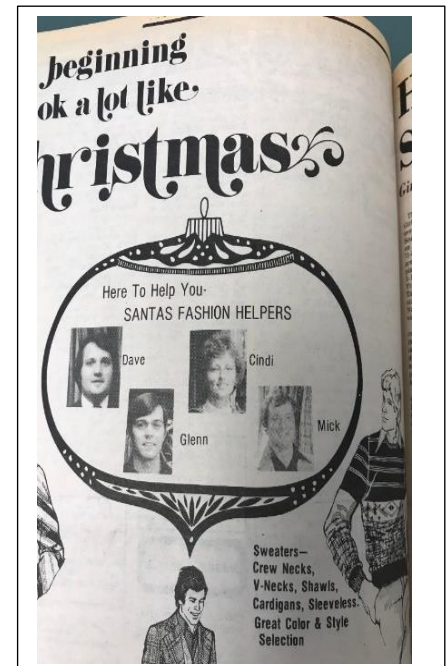
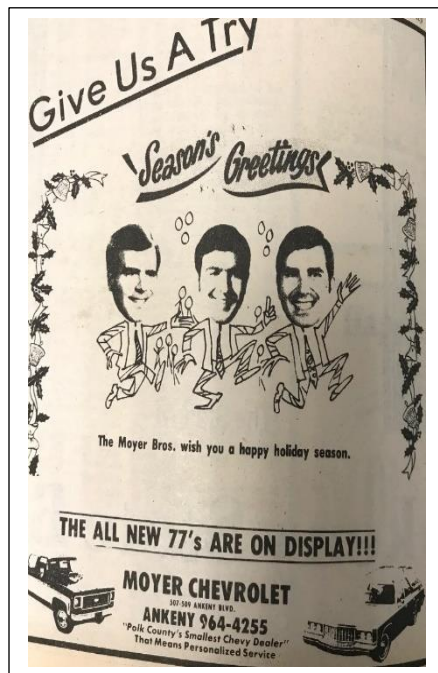
1970s



Division II Hockey Opens Jan. 2. The Ankeny Hawk hockey team opens Division II play on Sunday, January 2nd against Lincoln of Des Moines at 6:50 p.m. The game will count in the standings of both the Metro League and Division II. The winner of the Division II league advances to the state tournament March 4th, 5th and 6th. The young Hawks are 0 and 5 in Metro play, having lost 8-3 last week to Dowling. Denny Wiles, Ted Wiles, and Doran Doty scored the Ankeny goals. The Hawks were tied 2-2 in the first period but were unable to keep up the pace. "We're doing a lot of things well," Coach Annable stated, "but every mistake we make seems to cost us a goal. We have to do a better job on defense as a team." *Ankeny Press-Citizen, December 30, 1976*



Ankeny Press-Citizen, December 11, 1975



Ankeny Press-Citizen, December 23, 1976

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Uptown Ankeny Sparkles - The young trees of Uptown Ankeny are now dressed in their holiday foliage of crystal lights. Uptown businessman Gerry Fehn and a member of the Ankeny Streets Department are shown putting up the lights last week. The annual lighting of the trees at Wagner Park is set for Thursday, December 3rd, complete with singing, apples from Santa Claus and, new this year, a post-ceremony open house at Kirkendall Public Library, also in the Park. *Ankeny Press-Citizen, December 3, 1987*



Vice President Bush Stumps In Ankeny – The first United States Vice Presidential visit in recent history took place last Friday as George Bush brought his bid for the top spot to Ankeny. Hosted by Elwell's Restaurant, approximately 200 Bush faithful gathered for a meal and a handshaking session with the Vice President. Yvonne Krambeck, a Republican organizer at all levels for many years, was in charge of Bush's visit and welcomed the candidates, introducing him to the appreciative crowd. Bush touched on the upcoming summit with U.S.S.R., his foreign policy experience and his strong family ties. After his stop in Ankeny, Bush was going to Cedar Rapids before returning to Washington D.C. *Ankeny Press-Citizen, December 8, 1987*

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Ye Olde Madrigal Dinners-1987 –The Madrigal dinners are presented annually by the Music and Dramatics students of Ankeny High School, a medieval English dinner with music and ceremony, complete with raided banquet table and setting designed by AHS Dramatics Instructor John Cocking, who portrayed the Lord of the Manor. The faculty production directors are: Cocking, high school Choral Music Director Steve Carstenson and Freshman Ensemble Director Nancy McConeghey. Along with the regular performance dinners, the Madrigal group has performed for the Ankeny elementary school students, at Mercy Hospital Medical Center and will be presenting Madrigal excerpts for senior citizens. Tracy Moore is shown at the grand banquet table with left and right, Ed Ostroot and Matt Smythe. *Ankeny Press- Citizen, December 8, 1987*



Ankeny Press-Citizen, December 16, 1986



Ankeny Press-Citizen, December 8, 1987

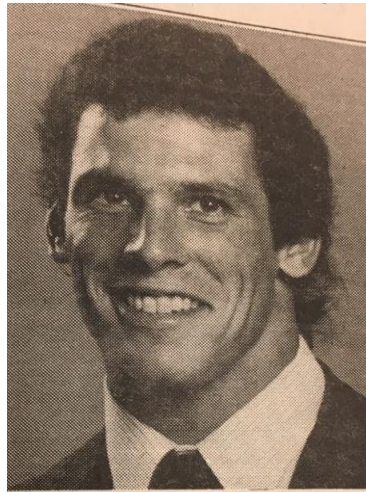
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Dennis Gibson

Detroit Lions Line Stopper - The Detroit Lions eighth-round draft pick, Dennis Gibson of Ankeny, has proved to be one of the professional football teams best picks as the Iowa State University grad turned out to be the Lions leading tackler. Gibson was an outstanding linebacker at AHS, where he started two years, and went on to be redshirted at Iowa State, then became the Cyclones three-year starter.

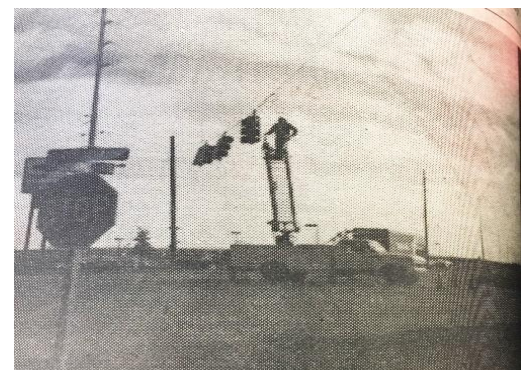
"We liked the way he played in the Senior Bowl game, but we were not sure he could take the pounding inside," said Detroit's linebacker coach Mike Murphy. "Dennis is a good pass defender and has been doing a good job of taking on the guards." Dennis has beaten the NFL odds and leads the Lions in tackles. Detroit head coach Darryl Rogers says eighth-round draft picks are usually on special team or make the waiver wire.

Gibson is an exception. He made the special teams and nailed down a starter's spot before Detroit's first exhibition game. The teams that have fielded on the grid against Gibson in the NFL have found coach Murphy's pre-season words on Gibson to be true, "Dennis plays very hard, very well and makes few mistakes." . *Ankeny Press-Citizen*, December 16, 1987.

Delaware-Oralabor Lights on Wednesday The City of Ankeny is in the process of erecting new traffic light on Delaware Avenue and Oralabor Road. The timetable for placing the traffic signals into operation is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, December 16th at 1:00 p.m.

The traffic signals at Oralabor Road and Delaware Avenue are in much the same manner as the traffic signals at Magazine and Highway 69.

Ankeny Press-Citizen, December 15, 1987



Polk County Joins in Quest of Ankeny Airport - The Polk County Board of Supervisors joined in the quest of a small-plane airport to be developed in and next to Ankeny as they voted Tuesday to form an airport authority. The Ankeny, Bondurant and Altoona city councils and the Polk County Board of Supervisors now must each hold a public hearing and vote separately on the proposal of developing an airport for northeast Polk County. The airport would be run by the airport authority, formed by the Polk County Board of Supervisors, of representatives from the county, Ankeny, Bondurant, and Altoona. The city councils have already declared an interest being part of an airport authority for the proposed Ankeny airport. The proposed site for the airstrip is south of Ankeny's Oralabor Road, just east of Interstate Highway 35 (Strawberry Farm), which has already been annexed into Ankeny, and the area adjacent to the east of the Strawberry Farm.

Ankeny Press-Citizen, December 29, 1987