



Ten minutes with ...

... Delphin 'Spike' Berglund, 92, with his 10-year-old companion, 'Teddy.'

Did you come from a large family?

There were three boys and a girl besides me. My mom is from Sweden, and my dad is from America. I was born in 1912 on a farm in Rush Point, Minnesota. It was really just a little jerkwater store that sold groceries, hardware and clothes. We raised mostly milk cows on a dairy farm. Back in 1925, my dad rented 80 acres for \$250 a year; not a month -- that's when a buck was worth a buck.

Were there phones on the farm?

Yes. They had two lines that ran to farmers all over. And when your telephone rang, it rang on all the phones. When we had snowstorms and blizzards, sometimes the lines would go down. If you wanted to call your neighbor to see if they were OK or needed something, the line would be down. Many times, I would saddle my horse and go find the break in the line and pull it together so we could have the telephone again.

Did you go to high school?

No. It seemed like the farm boys weren't supposed to go to high school; just the people in the city.

Where else did you live as a youth?

My dad rented a boxcar for \$25 and migrated from Minnesota to North Dakota. There was more open country there. Land was only a dollar an acre; you could even homestead. When we got there, we bought 320 acres in two different fields. The road ran right through the middle. There were even buffalo bones on the farm. I remember I took the horses and the wagon out on the prairie and picked up the bones. We got 12 bucks a ton. Them bones were like a feather, so it took a lot of work to get a ton. At 14 years old, I hauled grain like the older men; I even handled my own team and wagon. I got about five bucks a day; that was big wages back then.

When we bought our land, for 10 years we never used our seed. The drought came in, and we had to sell the cattle we raised. We couldn't feed them, so the government bought all of them. We got \$15 apiece. And if they were really good, we got \$20.

Were you involved in World War II?

I volunteered for the Army in 1942. I was a staff sergeant; although I was a PFC (Private First Class) most of the time. I made staff after the war was over. I was in for 7 1/2 years.

I saved three soldiers from drowning when we were in Germany. There were six of us in a boat we had captured. One of the guys suggested that we all throw our weight to one side and see what happens when the guy driving makes a turn. After we capsized, I threw a cushion to one guy, then went and helped the other two. I grabbed Prostinick, who couldn't swim, just as he was going under.

I was also shot in the hand while I was in. I met my brother in Germany, and he had taken a P-38 off a dead German officer. He asked me to hang onto it for him and take it home. I brought it back to base and got a permit to carry it. Guys were always asking me to see the gun.

One day, after the war, my sergeant asked me to see it. I had already been showing the gun to some guys who were loading a truck. I was in a hurry and quickly put the magazine back in. I accidentally released the hammer and the gun went off. It went through my hand, and passed between two guys. When they were stitching me up, they ran water over the hole to clean it out, and it poured right through my hand.

What do you like about Illinois Valley?

Nothing. I moved here in 1969. I cut firewood for many years. Everybody knows it; Berglund Firewood. I sold a lot of wood, and cedar fence posts. I'd go find the logs and cut 'em and split 'em. I was still cutting wood at 80 years old.

What is your favorite ice cream?

Maple nut. I like maple really well. All we had as a kid was vanilla. I remember when we had an ice cream social, my dad would give me 10- or 15-cents for homemade ice cream.

~Interview and Photo by Shane Welsh



Corinna Fierro

Pregnancy Center aide offers hope

Corinna Fierro, a volunteer with The Pregnancy Center of Illinois Valley for seven years, first learned about the services when she was a teenager in need.

Due in part to all the support and encouragement that she received when the center was known as Living Alternatives, she now has a beautiful daughter.

Fierro particularly enjoys being able to help clients when he or she feels as though all is lost.

"We show them that there is hope," she said. Another area where she strives to help others is in sharing with them about all of their options -- helping them to see that they have real opportunities to explore.

One goal she hopes to accomplish at the center is showing people "what God has done for me, and that He can do it for them too."

"Our main need in the Illinois Valley is truthful education about all options in a crisis pregnancy," she said.

The center provides accurate information about parenting, adoption, legal guardianship and abortion in a non-judgmental way.

"The valley also needs truthful abstinence education," said Fierro, "and there are many counterfeit 'truths' out there."

Abstinence is encouraged for unmarried clients, along with information about the risks of STDs and possible long-term effects.

Said Fierro, "We need more client advocates. God calls us to use our talents, not to hide them. Being a volunteer helps one to use their talents wisely."

She challenges folks to "seek God's will. It is wonderful volunteering here. God can use you to make a difference in someone's life."

Hey, it's free!

Scholarships are available for "Supervision & Customer Service Training" Tuesday and Thursday, April 19 and 21 in the RCC Kerby Belt Bldg.

The class is sponsored by Illinois Valley Community Development Organization (IVCDO). The class will run from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. both days.

For more information, or to register, go to the IVCDO office next door to Caves Pharmacy.



EQUIFAIR 2005 was held at the Josephine County Fairgrounds Saturday, April 9. The free, day-long event was sponsored by the Josephine County Equestrian Coalition. Many horse breeds were shown and there were many demonstrations of equestrian training and skill. There were also many free clinics for horse owners, and vendors offered a wide variety of products and services. It was the first such event in the county, according to the coalition.

(Photos by Dale Sandberg)

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