

Lifestyle

DIVERSIONS

Kokomo, Ind.

Thursday

Coming Friday

Get relief from
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page
designed
by Robert
Barnes

INSIDETODAY

Dear Abby

C3

Entertainment

C4

Comics

C5

C

MONDAY - FAMILY • TUESDAY - WOMEN • WEDNESDAY - FOOD • THURSDAY - DIVERSIONS • FRIDAY - HEALTH • SATURDAY - FAITH • SUNDAY - SHOWCASE

April 17, 2003

OUT & ABOUT

Out & About is a weekly compilation of events and highlights around the area.

AT THE MOVIES



"Malibu's Most Wanted"

This is the story of Brad Gluckman, a wannabe rap star from Malibu who acts and talks like he's from the "hood." Concerned that his son is going to embarrass him during his campaign to become the governor of California, Brad's wealthy father, and his campaign manager, hire two Julliard-trained actors to disguise themselves as "real life gangstaz," and kidnap his son, dropping him off in the "real 'hood" in Compton, in an effort to scare the ghettofied attitude and behavior out of him. Starring Jamie Kennedy, Anthony Anderson, Taye Diggs, Regina Hall and Ryan O'Neal. Rated PG-13 for sexual humor, language and violence. **OPENS FRIDAY.**

NEW IN STORES

Movies:

- "The Transporter" (DVD)
- "Family Guy" Seasons 1 & 2 (DVD)
- "Spirited Away" (DVD, VHS)
- "A Chorus Line" (DVD)
- "Drumline" (DVD, VHS)

Music:

- "Thankful" Kelly Clarkson
- "Day I Forgot" Pete Yorn
- "Say You Will" Fleetwood Mac
- "Have You Forgotten?" Darryl Worley
- "Ball" Widespread Panic
- "Now" Jessica Andrews

CALENDAR

Today

- **Bloomin' Daffodil Fest** sponsored by the Kokomo Visitors Bureau, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Markland Mall, (765) 457-6802
- **Basic Drawing for the Young Artist**, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m., Kids Construction Zone, class meets April 17, 24 and May 1, registration required, (765) 457-8273
- **Avril Lavigne**, 7:30 p.m., Conseco Fieldhouse, Indianapolis, www.cc.com or (317) 239-5151
- **MC Paul Barman**, 10 p.m., The Patio, www.thepatio.ws or (317) 239-5151

Friday

- **"Legacy"** presented by the Gregory Hancock Dance Theater, 8 p.m., April 18 and 19, Gregory Hancock Dance Theater, Indianapolis, (317) 923-4597
- **F&F Berns Championships Boxing**, 7:30 p.m., Indiana State Fairgrounds, Indianapolis, www.indianastatefair.com or (317) 927-7500

Saturday

- Eastern Howard Performing Arts Society presents **"Ricky Skaggs,"** 6 p.m. and 9 p.m., Eastern Howard Performing Arts Center, Greentown, www.ehpas.com or (765) 628-4025
- **Les Felding Ministries**, 6 to 9 p.m., Johanning Civic Center (317) 786-8512
- **Mofro**, 10 p.m., The Patio, www.thepatio.ws or (317) 239-5151
- **David Sedaris**, 8 p.m., Murat Theatre, Indianapolis, www.cc.com or (317) 239-5151

Sunday

- **James Whitcomb Riley house tours**, various times, James Whitcomb Riley Museum, Indianapolis, (317) 631-5885

Monday

- **Pearl Jam with special guest Sparta**, 7:30 p.m., Rupp Arena, Lexington, www.cc.com or www.pearljam.com or (502) 361-3100

Tuesday

- **"Brain: The World Inside Your Head,"** various times, Indiana State Museum, Indianapolis, www.indianamuseum.org or (317) 232-1637, Through May 4
- **Early Explorers**, 4 to 5 p.m. April 22 and 24, Kids Construction Zone, registration required, (765) 457-8273
- **Garbage Pizza**, 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. April 22 and April 24, Kids Construction Zone, registration required, (765) 457-8273

Wednesday

- **Ensemble Music Society** performance, 7:30 p.m., Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, indianahistory.org or (317) 232-1882

WHAT A GAS!

(tower, that is.)

The Kokomo Gas & Fuel Tower is an icon in our city. It stands tall as a guide for many drivers new to the area and to those native to these parts.

During the last several years, debate and rumors have swirled about the fate of the monumental marker. Will it be repainted soon? And if so, what color or design will adorn it?

RELATED ITEM

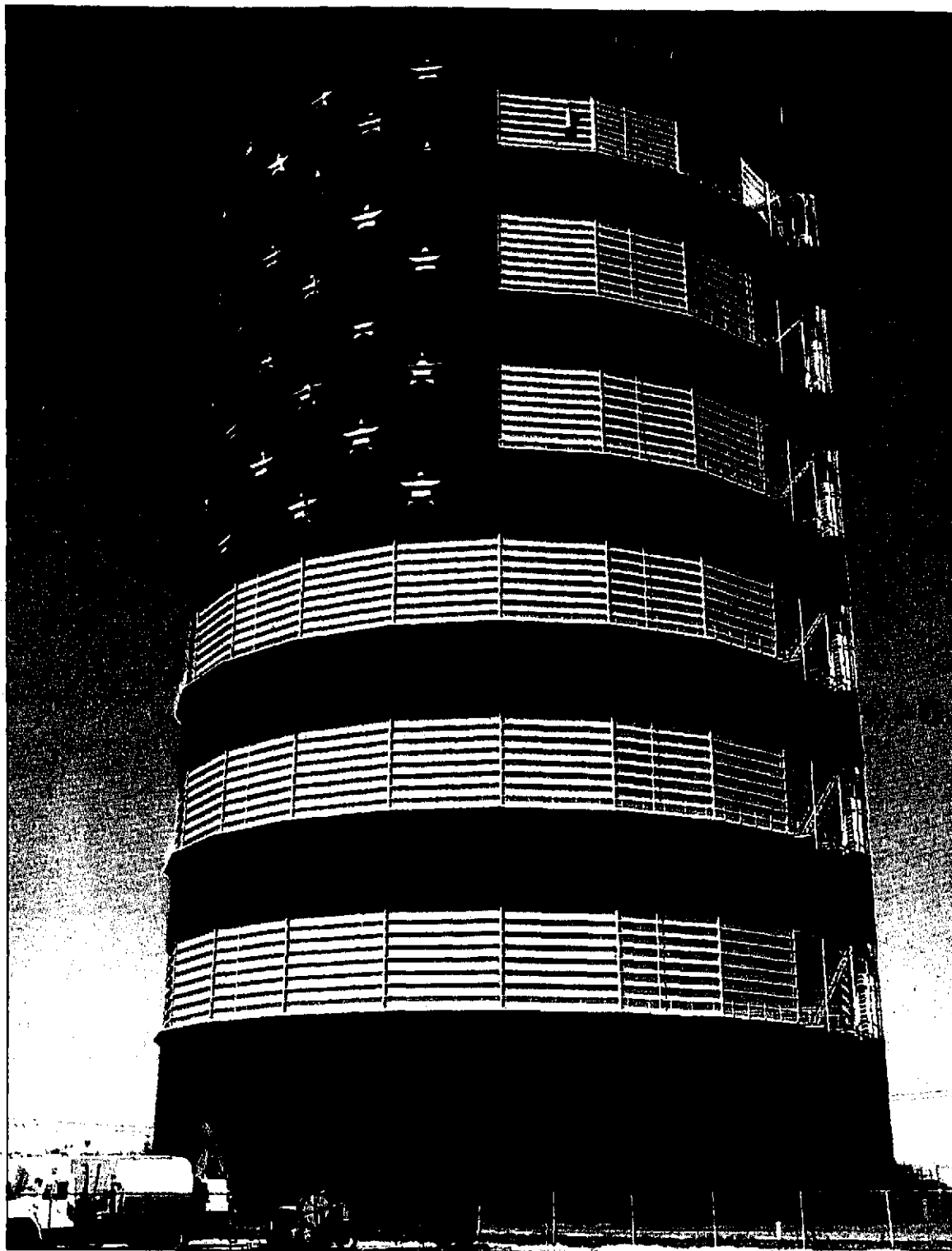
- Get your own gas tower. C2

After two similar towers were demolished in 2001, stories circulated about whether ours would suffer the same fate soon. Dave McFarridge, company vice president and general manager, said the company

is currently debating whether to paint the structure or demolish it. He said a decision could be made by June on the tower's fate.

The Tribune Lifestyle staff has compiled a list of ideas – none very serious – to stir the pot some more and to suggest some creativity for the tower's outlook.

– KOKOMO TRIBUNE



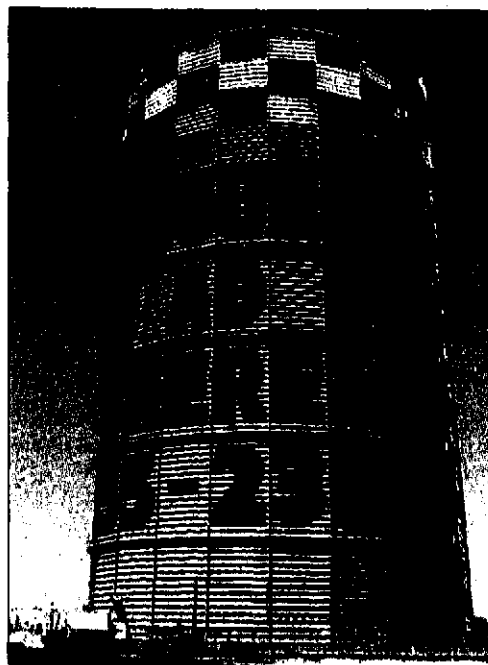
KT photo illustrations by Robert Barnes

RED, WHITE & BLUE: By far the most popular idea is a simple yet touching tribute to the country we live in and its freedoms. It seems only fitting that Old Glory be a part of our most striking landmark.

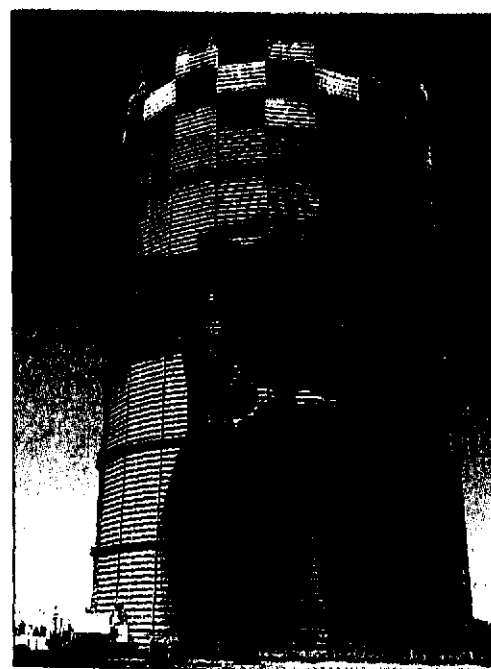
Tower trivia:

- Kokomo Gas and Fuel was formed in 1917.
- The cylinder was built in 1954.
- It is a piston-type storage container that holds 12 million cubic feet of gas in a gaseous state.
- It is 378 feet, 5 1/2 inch high at the top of the roof ventilator.
- The surface area is 36,855 square feet.
- The tower's diameter is 218 feet, 1 1/2 inches.
- The top part is checkered to increase its visibility to low-flying airplanes.
- The holder is comprised of a 22-sided shell.
- Inside the shell is a piston which floats on gas and is guided in its travel by 44 rollers, half of which are attached to the top of the piston trusses and the other half to the bottom.
- It takes about 1,500 gallons of paint per coat to paint the tower. It was last painted in 1987, and Kokomo Gas and Fuel personnel said they are currently analyzing plans involving the repainting of the holder.
- Employees serve more than 35,000 customers in Howard, Clinton, Cass, Miami and Carroll counties.

Sources: Kokomo Gas and Fuel Vice President and General Manager Dave McFarridge; Kokomo Tribune of April 24, 2000.



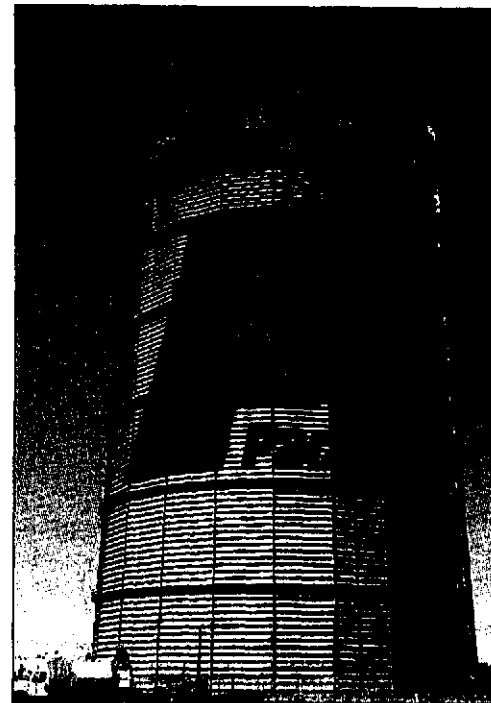
ONE BIG BILLBOARD: It's almost the perfect place for an advertisement and it seems a natural fit for a sponsor to snatch.



OH, BULL: What better mascot for a tough town than a tough bull? Maybe Old Ben could do for Kokomo what Big Ben did for London.



TOWER? WHAT TOWER? For those tired of gazing on the gas tower every day, we offer a camouflage option. As a bonus, it serves a tribute to our military overseas.



RALLY TOWER: Yes, the Pacers are still playing and they could certainly use a morale boost heading into the playoffs.



SMOKE 'EM: As cities and businesses push for more smoking bans, puffers could rally around a tower paying homage to nicotine needs.

SPRING OPEN HOUSE

April 18th & 19th

Hours: 10:00-5:00

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KOKOMO TRIBUNE

SINCE 1850

Kokomo, Ind.

Wednesday, May 14, 2003

50¢

Bush talks
tough in
Indianapolis

■ President vows to "hunt down" those responsible for Saudi attacks.

By SCOTT SMITH

Tribune staff writer

President George W. Bush vowed to teach those responsible for Monday night's suicide bombing attacks in Saudi Arabia "the meaning of American justice" during his address Tuesday in Indianapolis.

With the war on Iraq all but ended, President Bush had been expected to focus his Tuesday speech at the Pepsi Coliseum entirely on tax cuts and job growth.

RELATED
STORY

• Kokomo visitors are turned away at president's speech. A9

But the president's plan was altered by the suspected al-Qaida bombings at three housing compounds in Riyadh that killed an estimated 30 people, including eight American citizens. Nine suspected bombers also died in the blasts, and nearly 200 others were injured, CNN reported.

"These despicable acts were committed by killers whose only faith is hate," Bush said. "And the United States will find the killers, and they will learn the meaning of American justice."

▼ See BUSH | Page A9



KT photo by Erik Markov

WAY TO GO: IUK graduate Corey Swart is congratulated by Chancellor Ruth Person Tuesday after receiving his degree during the school's ceremony.

IUK stages
largest
graduation

■ Many families came to support students.

By KATIE BURNS

Tribune staff writer

After a week of wicked weather, the Swarts and hundreds of other families were glad the sun came out to shine Tuesday on the largest commencement ceremony to date at Indiana University Kokomo.

About 70 percent of the graduating class, which included Corey Swart and almost 450 other students, participated in

▼ See IUK | Page A10

A landmark loss

Kokomo Gas & Fuel tower to come down; how will residents navigate?

By ERIC SMITH

Tribune staff writer

Around Kokomo, there is one thing drivers can always look up to: A 378-foot gas tower at 900 East Boulevard, owned by Kokomo Gas & Fuel Co.

Since its construction in 1954, the tower has served as a navigational tool for longtime area residents, as well as Kokomo visitors.

But that will soon change since Kokomo Gas & Fuel has decided it will tear down the tower.

The reason, according to David McFatrige, general manager of Kokomo Gas and Fuel, is expense.

Currently out of service, it would take in excess of a million dollars to make the tower operational, he said.

"The latest bid for painting the tower was \$675,000," McFatrige said.

People who have told McFatrige they will raise money to paint the tower usually are silenced when they hear the cost involved, he said.

In July 2001, similar gas towers were demolished in Long Island, N.Y., by implosion, but McFatrige said he is not certain what means will be used to down Kokomo's tower.

The company hopes to get the job done before winter, though, and will start taking away lines running to the tower immediately, he said. Workers will begin removing remaining oils and natural gas from the tower this month, he said.

▼ See TOWER | Page A10



KT photo by Erik Markov

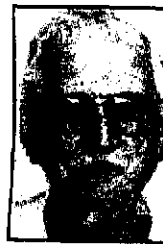
TOWERING ABOVE: Harold Fortune tees off on the eighth hole Tuesday at the American Legion golf course as Bob Lawson looks on. For many, the Kokomo gas tower represents a bit of history as well as an easy way to give directions.

RELATED COLUMN

• Shea in the City offers some off-the-wall idea for gas tower. A3



"It's a decision that has to be made because if the city doesn't do something to it, it'll be an eyesore."

— Jim Smith,
Greentown

"When things like [the Gas Tower] are old, they shouldn't be destroyed because they're not replaceable."

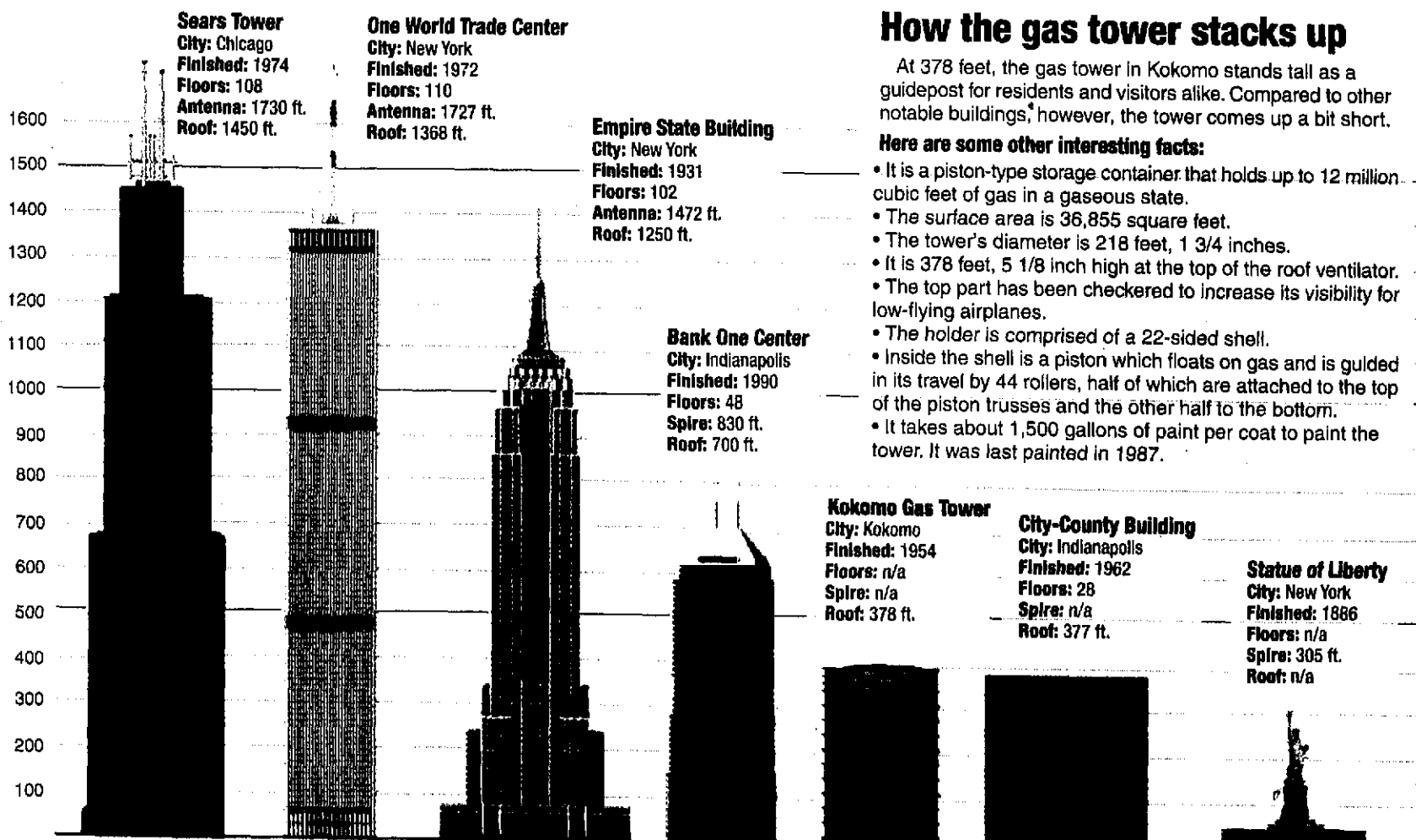
— Jim Hancock,
Kokomo

How the gas tower stacks up

At 378 feet, the gas tower in Kokomo stands tall as a guidepost for residents and visitors alike. Compared to other notable buildings, however, the tower comes up a bit short.

Here are some other interesting facts:

- It is a piston-type storage container that holds up to 12 million cubic feet of gas in a gaseous state.
- The surface area is 36,855 square feet.
- The tower's diameter is 218 feet, 1 3/4 inches.
- It is 378 feet, 5 1/8 inch high at the top of the roof ventilator.
- The top part has been checkered to increase its visibility for low-flying airplanes.
- The holder is comprised of a 22-sided shell.
- Inside the shell is a piston which floats on gas and is guided in its travel by 44 rollers, half of which are attached to the top of the piston trusses and the other half to the bottom.
- It takes about 1,500 gallons of paint per coat to paint the tower. It was last painted in 1987.



SOURCE: Imagery and technical specs from www.skyscraperpage.com; Kokomo Gas and Fuel Vice President and General Manager Dave McFatrige; Kokomo Tribune of April 24, 2000.

KT graphic by Rodney Ogle

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Vol. 152, No. 254



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WISH-TV WEATHER



Today
Showers and storms likely
High 68
Low 46

Tomorrow

Chance of showers. High 68

WEATHER | Page A10

■ Today's A1 designed by Robert Barnes



FORECASTERS

WEATHER REPORT

More rain is in store for a few days. A storm system from the Southern plains will arrive today, leaving scattered thunderstorms as a result. Chances of rain will persist through Thursday, but some sunshine will return by Friday. There is a slight chance of rain for the weekend, but that is up in the air right now.

EXTENDED FORECAST

WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
70 48	68 55	70 52	70 53	71 54

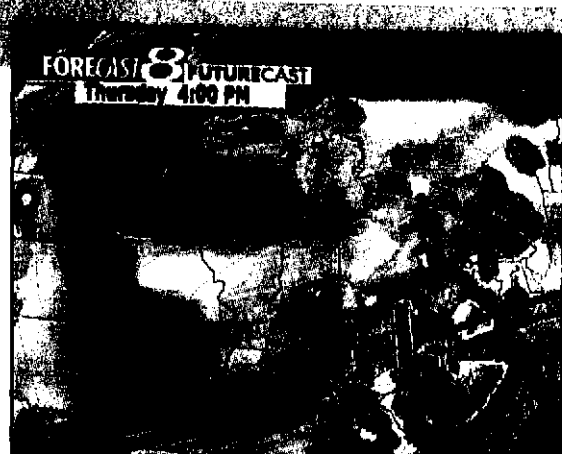
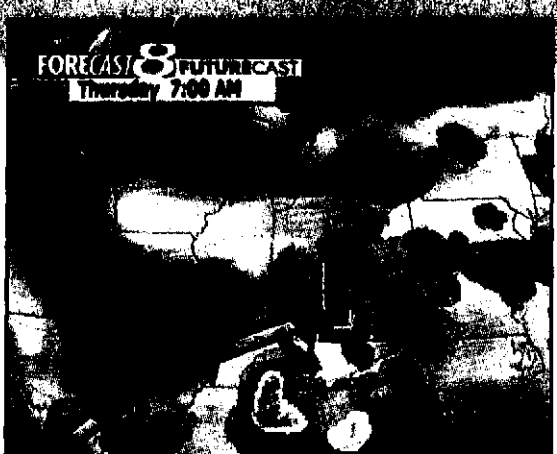
FUTURECAST

Today: Mostly cloudy with a chance of showers in the morning, then thunderstorms likely. Highs near 70. East winds 10 to 20 mph. Chance of rain 60 percent.

Tonight: Thunderstorms likely in the evening. Lows in the mid-50s. Chance of rain 60 percent.

Thursday: Mostly cloudy with a chance of showers. Highs in the upper 60s. Chance of rain 50 percent.

Thursday night: Partly cloudy with a chance of showers. Lows in the upper 40s. Chance of rain 50 percent.



REGIONAL OUTLOOK

Today's expected temperatures:

Anderson.....68/43	Dayton.....70/47	Lafayette.....68/45
Bloomington.....73/50	Evansville.....74/55	Muncie.....68/45
Chicago.....62/47	Fort Wayne.....65/43	SouthBend.....64/42
Champaign.....66/49	Indianapolis.....70/48	Louisville.....75/52
Cincinnati.....68/44	Kokomo.....68/46	TerreHaute.....70/49

LOCAL INFORMATION

Yesterday:

High: 71
Normal: 73
Record: 88 (1956)

Low: 42
Normal: 51
Record: 35 (1878)

The Sun and Moon:

Sunrise: 6:29a
Sunset: 7:51p

Moonrise: 6:19a
Moonset: 4:37a

Moon Phases:



Maps provided by: **intellicast.com** Weather for Active Lives.



Get complete updated weather information throughout the day on



NATIONAL TEMPERATURES & FORECAST

City	yesterday	today	tomorrow	City	yesterday	today	tomorrow	City	yesterday	today	tomorrow
Albuquerque	85 57	83 55 cdy	79 54 cdy	Flagstaff	72 39	68 40 cdy	68 37 cdy	Phoenix	99 73	97 73 cdy	92 67 cdy
Anchorage	52 38	54 38 cdy	55 39 cdy	Grand Rapids	68 36	70 37 cdy	65 47 cdy	Pittsburgh	81 46.02	67 42 cdy	64 45 m
Atlanta	77 53	70 58 m	77 62 m	Green Falls	66 39.04	75 40 cdy	68 43 cdy	Portland, Maine	50 43.09	56 43 m	57 42 cdy
Atlantic City	63 52	62 51 cdy	56 50 cdy	Greensboro, N.C.	75 51	77 48 cdy	88 54 m	Portland, Ore.	76 46	65 50 cdy	63 46 cdy
Austin	92 86	92 71 cdy	92 73 cdy	Honolulu	85 75	85 73 cdy	85 74 cdy	Providence	64 48	65 47 cdy	68 47 cdy
Baltimore	61 52.01	74 49 cdy	66 54 m	Houston	91 68	90 71 cdy	90 72 cdy	Raleigh-Durham	78 55	78 50 cdy	68 55 m
Birmingham	67 46.17	76 45 cdy	73 48 m	Jackson, Miss.	75 51	76 53 m	85 66 m	Reno	80 48	77 46 cdy	78 48 cdy
Bismarck	50 40.82	69 45 m	72 45 cdy	Jacksonville	86 57	86 57 cdy	87 66 cdy	Richmond	74 52	74 48 cdy	71 54 m
Boston	62 46.03	63 47 cdy	62 60 cdy	Kansas City	74 54	76 57 cdy	73 52 cdy	Sacramento	84 52	80 51 cdy	82 51 cdy
Buffalo	50 43.30	58 44 cdy	64 46 cdy	Key West	86 79	86 68 cdy	80 64 cdy	St. Louis	74 56	78 62 m	73 68 cdy
Charleston, S.C.	82 56	83 57 cdy	83 64 m	Las Vegas	91 70	85 68 cdy	83 65 cdy	Salt Lake City	71 51	78 49 cdy	75 48 cdy
Charleston, W.Va.	66 53	70 44 cdy	70 52 m	Little Rock	80 55.40	84 64 m	83 65 cdy	San Antonio	91 69	83 73 cdy	92 75 cdy
Chicago	73 49	62 47 m	62 47 cdy	Los Angeles	73 58	71 58 cdy	73 56 cdy	San Diego	70 80	67 80 cdy	68 58 cdy
Cincinnati	71 45	72 46 cdy	71 55 m	Louisville	74 51	74 52 cdy	76 59 m	San Francisco	64 52	65 53 cdy	69 54 cdy
Cleveland	63 48.11	67 43 cdy	63 47 m	Memphis	79 54	78 65 m	83 64 cdy	San Juan, P.R.	87 74.06	88 74 cdy	89 74 m
Columbus, Ohio	68 45	71 44 cdy	68 54 m	Miami Beach	80 79.05	88 75 cdy	89 76 cdy	Santa Fe	84 41	80 47 cdy	73 46 cdy
Dallas-Ft. Worth	86 63.06	87 69 cdy	89 71 cdy	Milwaukee	68 44	57 45 m	59 47 m	St. Ste Marie	69 41	66 37 cdy	62 38 cdy
Dayton	68 45	70 44 cdy	68 54 m	Mpls-St. Paul	70 42	62 51 m	72 45 cdy	Seattle	68 48	68 48 m	65 46 cdy
Denver	74 47	73 45 cdy	62 46 m	Nashville	77 49	76 58 m	78 60 cdy	Sioux Falls	68 45.32	68 50 m	67 46 cdy
Des Moines	75 52.14	69 54 m	67 48 cdy	New Orleans	82 68	87 68 cdy	88 73 cdy	Syracuse	49 44.27	58 45 cdy	65 45 cdy
Detroit	67 46	66 38 cdy	62 46 cdy	New York City	60 53	68 52 cdy	68 54 cdy	Tampa-St. Petersburg	69 74	68 68 cdy	69 75 cdy
El Paso	99 56	95 65 cdy	94 68 cdy	Norfolk, Va.	75 62	72 53 cdy	73 57 m	Topeka	76 54.11	78 57 cdy	73 52 cdy
Fairbanks	53 36	58 37 cdy	56 37 cdy	Omaha	65 59	62 52 cdy	60 62 cdy	Tucson	98 62	98 61 cdy	91 61 cdy
Fargo	70 37	67 46 cdy	72 47 cdy	Oklahoma City	79 55.03	72 52 cdy	69 48 cdy	Tulsa	72 59.94	76 65 m	79 55 cdy
				Orlando	69 72	69 63 cdy	69 69 m	Washington, D.C.	68 67	76 50 cdy	68 58 m
				Philadelphia	63 53	69 51 cdy	66 53 cdy	Wichita	68 59.18	79 59 cdy	78 53 cdy

Key: Weather: s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, an-snow, l-ice



AP file photo

THAT WAS THEN: Twin gas storage tanks in Brooklyn, N.Y., similar to the one in Kokomo, are imploded in July 2001. The 400-foot-tall steel tanks had been empty for years, also like Kokomo's. Kokomo Gas & Fuel is unsure if the tanks will be imploded or demolished. Contracts for work have yet to be formalized.

Tower ...

Continued from page A1

McPatridge also said the Department of Natural Resources will be consulted on as to how to handle Peregrine falcons living on top of the tower.

Sad to see it go

Patty Host, owner of Host Art & Framing who has fashioned miniatures of area landmarks, said the tower will definitely be missed.

"I hear so many stories about the elderly using it to find their way around," Host said.

Relatives visiting Kokomo residents often know they are in Kokomo when they see the tower, she said.

"When you see the gas tower, you know you are close," Host said. "To me, it's a sad thing. In reality, Kokomo doesn't have a lot of landmarks."

Host has made a miniature of the tower, and sales will likely be affected by the tower's destruction, she said.

"I had the model planned before I heard it could come down," Host said. "I had to work on it years in advance."

Though saddened that a city landmark is due for demolition, Host said she doesn't blame Kokomo Gas & Fuel for the decision because of the expense involved in maintaining the structure.

"Had they really gone after saving the tower, they probably would have to go back 10 years and put the costs into the gas bill," Host said. "They are a business. The tower is not owned by the city. Nobody can really step in and do anything. There are not a lot of options."

Peggy Hobson, executive director of the Kokomo Indiana Visitors Bureau, said she doesn't blame the company.

"The gas company is doing the right thing by demolishing it, rather than letting it go," she said.

Occasionally, a visitor who comes to the bureau may ask about the tower, Hobson said.

"But we've never used it to market it at all," she said. "It is kind of a byproduct."

Hobson said members of her family, when visiting, also have used the tower to navigate.

For one area business, the tower has been very useful for that purpose.

The Howard County Children's Center Site 2 day care center, also known as "Khids," is literally located in the shadow of the tower off Hoffer Street.

"It has helped with directions many times," said teacher Valerie Vaught.

Teacher Sharon Logsdon agreed, and said it is useful to guide relatives when they visit Kokomo.

"My family always called it the Purina Puppy Chow tower," Logsdon said, noting the name came from the tower's white and red painted checkerboard.

With Khids located next to the tower, the playground was literally shaded by it, Logsdon said.

"It also creates wind, and we get some good snow drifts in winter," she said.

A high profile neighbor, the tower was watched by law enforcement immediately after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.

"The police patrolled it around the clock because of its height," Logsdon said.

The teachers said they can't imagine empty space where the tower currently stands.

"We'll definitely miss it," Vaught said. "It's Kokomo."

The tower also is a familiar backdrop for area golfers, located north of the American Legion golf course.

"It will make Kokomo look a lot different," said golfer Glen Hines.



KT photos by Erik Markov

THEIR BIG DAY: Indiana University Kokomo graduates proceed to the seating area for their ceremony at the school Tuesday afternoon.

IUK ...

Continued from page A1

the outdoor event. The 447 graduates were from both IU Kokomo and Purdue Kokomo.

And because of the respite from the rain, which could have led to an indoor event with limited seating, Corey and his classmates were able to ask along all the people who helped them on their way.

"It is hard to put into words how much I appreciate what my parents did for me," said Corey, who made the student remarks for the class of 2003. "My goals would have been so much harder to accomplish if I had not had their support."

He said the students thanked staff as well as friends and family. In fact, he said, the common thread of the IUK experience is those three groups of people — though he joked that the students also shared the struggle to find parking every day at the commuter campus.

In the audience, the Swart family took snapshots. Corey's parents, Bruce and Mavis Swart; brother and sister-in-law, Brice and Erica Swart; and grandmother Dorothy Swart attended the festivities. They said they are proud of him for finishing his biology degree and applying to veterinary school.

"Am I ever!" said Dorothy, who came in from Minnesota last week and attended the graduation despite taking a trip to the hospital the night before.

Brice, who came in from Noblesville with his two children, said he is proud of his younger brother's commitment to college.

"He's been really dedicated and focused on his schoolwork," Brice said. "He works really hard."

Brice said his younger son has always liked animals, though their house has never been big enough for them to have a dog.

"He's always loved small animals — guinea pigs, hamsters," Bruce said. "We probably have one turtle that's going on 20 years old. We have a cockatiel. Right now, he's got two guinea pigs."

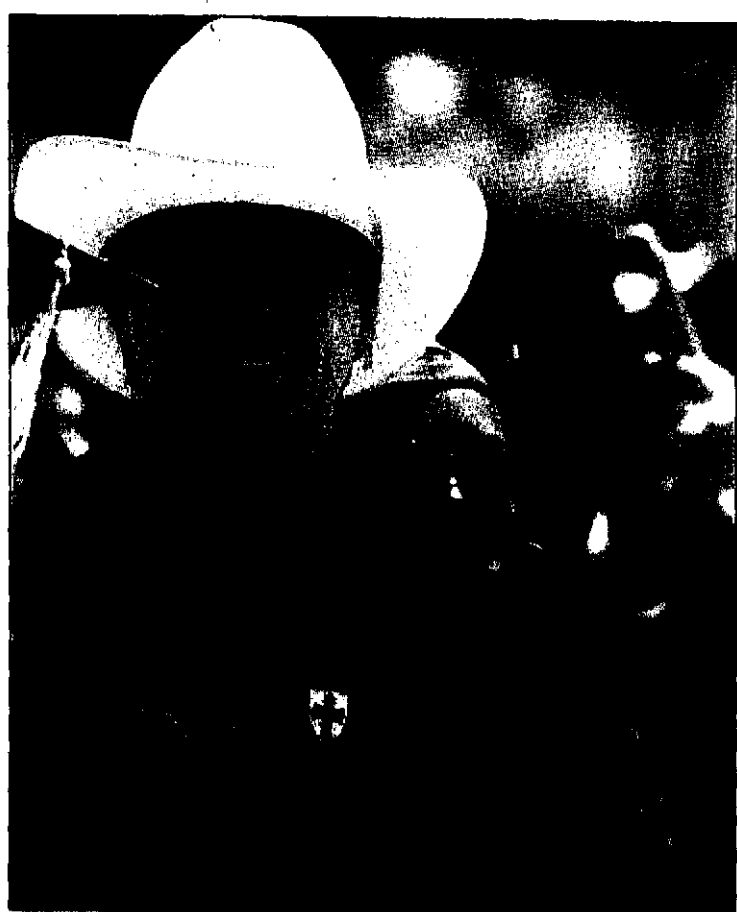
Corey also worked at the Jefferson Road Animal Hospital during the five years he studied at IUK, and he will continue working at the clinic until he is accepted to a veterinary school. He is on the alternate list at Purdue University.

"I'm just extremely proud of him, and I hope he gets his dream of being a veterinarian because that's what he always wanted to do," Mavis said.

Each of the other graduates, who ranged widely in age and field of study — and even included a husband and wife — also had supporters to hoot and holler as they crossed the stage. One girl in the audience shouted, "Go, Mom!"

Some of the students wore greetings to their friends and family on their caps. One woman's message thanked her grandfather. Other students waved and smiled at the audience.

Donna J. Walden, who received the distinguished alumni award for her three decades of work at Western School Corp. and other



BUCKING TRADITION: Professor Victor Krebs, an Indiana University Kokomo professor of Spanish, wears a cowboy hat instead of the traditional mortar board during Tuesday's commencement ceremonies.

contributions to local education, asked her family members to stand so she could thank them.

And finally, IUK thanked its founding father — Virgil Hunt, who is now 91 — by recognizing him with a doctoral degree in humane letters. He came to the

school in 1945 when it had 188 students and left in 1956 when it had more than 700 students. The school now enrolls almost 3,000 students.

Katie Burns, Tribune reporter, may be reached at (765) 454-8587 or via e-mail at katie.burns@kokomotribune.com



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INSIDE TODAY

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Thompson family has
a flood of memories

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Taylor's Wooley eyes
sectional, MLB draft

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KOKOMO TRIBUNE

SINCE 1850

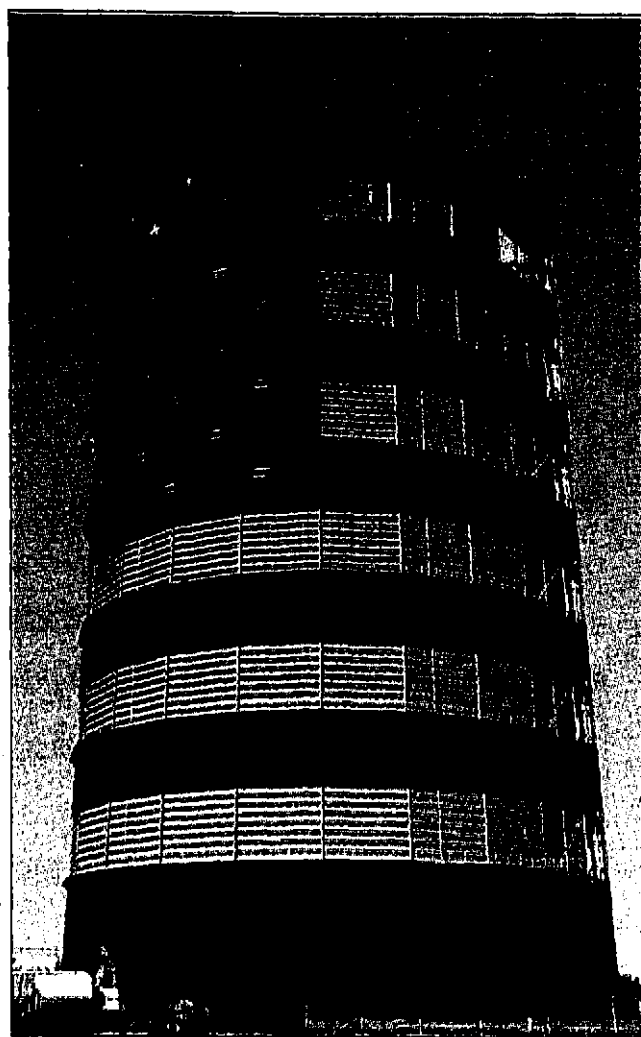
Kokomo, Ind.

Monday, June 2, 2003

50¢

ICON OR EYESORE?

Kokomoans debate the gas tower's value



KT photo illustration by Robert Barnes



AP photo

BOON OR BURDEN? Will Kokomo's 387-foot gas tower continue to dominate the city's "skyline" or will it go the way of the tower on the right, which was imploded in Brooklyn, New York back in 2001? Kokomo's tower is no longer in use, and its owner, Kokomo Gas & Fuel, faces a big maintenance bill to keep the structure painted.

By KATHERINE LEWIS
Tribune staff writer

When Steve Conwell looks up at the 378-foot gas tower at 900 E. Boulevard, he doesn't see an eyesore waiting to be torn down. He sees a symbol of the community.

"I hold it dear to my heart," he said. "I feel it's an icon for the city."

So when Conwell heard Kokomo Gas & Fuel's plans to tear down the tower last month, he decided to do something about it.

"If we can get together a coalition to absorb some of the cost of painting the tower and paint an American flag on it, we can give back to the community and the entire country," he said.

Conwell has developed a Web site with his brother-in-law Dan Vandre called savethetower.com. The Web site will allow interested citizens to learn about his plan to keep the tower from being demolished. The Web site informs interested citizens how they can contribute to save the tower. Conwell hopes to raise something close to the \$1 million necessary to

repaint the tower. He also hopes Kokomo Gas & Fuel will be willing to donate the empty field on the north end of the tower to turn it into a park. He would like to call the tower Freedom Tower and the park Freedom Park.

"The park could be a destination for tourists for viewing the tower. We could build a platform and people could take pictures with the tower in the back. If possible, we could let people ride up in the elevator and catch a view from the top," he said. "If the entire community comes together and becomes a part of this, we could keep this landmark."

Conwell is also looking to other countries for inspiration on what to do with the tower. He researched a German town's decision to use \$15 million Deutschmarks to renovate the inside of its old gas tower. That tower is now a museum where interested patrons can tour the inside and see the mechanical workings of the tower. The top of the tower has been converted to apartments and convention space.

Conwell is meeting this week with representatives from the Community Foundation to discuss possible fundraising alternatives.

"There is a limited amount of time to garner support for this," he said. "It was hard to get started, but I am working diligently because I think this is a positive for the community."

Starting a fund with the Community Foundation will allow the fundraising for the tower continue so, in another 10 years, the tower could be repainted again. A board, set up by the organization, would oversee the fundraising and decide how the money could best be spent. He is also considering applying for grants, like those offered by the Lilly Endowment Fund for community projects.

"The amount of money we are able to raise will dictate what we are able to do," he said.

Kokomo Gas & Fuel General Manager Dave McFadrigue said the company is willing to listen to Conwell's ideas. Conwell has approached the company about his plans, he confirmed.

"This is a huge undertaking for one man," he said. "If he could get it off the ground, we would be more than willing to listen to what he has to say."

▼ See **TOWER** | Page A10

Thousands march against G-8 summit

GENEVA (AP) — Tens of thousands of demonstrators poured into the streets Sunday to protest the Group of Eight summit across Lake Geneva in the French town of Evian, some battling with police and looting shops and gas stations. Anti-riot agents struck back with tear gas, water cannons and rubber pellets, as clashes continued into the evening.

German police brought in to bolster Swiss forces fought pitched battles with several hundred militants late Sunday in the center of Geneva. Swiss police simultaneously closed in on a youth cultural center that acted as a base for the protesters. The elegant streets of the lakeside city were turned into a sea of glass and acrid smoke filled the air.

A British man was hospitalized with multiple bone fractures when a police officer cut a rope that held him suspended from a highway overpass and he fell into a river, authorities said. Police were investigating, but said the officer who cut the rope did not know the man was there.

Police reported 10 other in-

juries among protesters, none life-threatening. One police officer was also hurt. Authorities searching demonstrator camps for violent youths in black masks arrested at least six people in Lausanne and detained some 400 for identification checks.

Protesters started early Sunday, timing their actions to coincide with the arrival of most of the G-8 leaders from the world's top seven industrialized countries and Russia. Most of the leaders landed at Geneva airport and traveled to Evian by helicopter.

The demonstrators — who numbered nearly 50,000 according to Swiss police officials and 120,000 according to protest organizers — blocked traffic for hours on bridges and highways in the French and Swiss regions around Geneva.

But they failed in their goal to disrupt the arrival of G-8 leaders and delegations or penetrate the security cordon around the lakeside summit site of Evian.

▼ See **PROTEST** | Page A10

Leaders seek to move beyond divisions

■ Differences over Iraq war creating tension at annual summit.

EVIAN, France (AP) — World leaders clamped a harmonious face on a summit simmering with Iraq war disputes Sunday, striking a united front with pledges of billions of dollars to fight AIDS and hunger in poor nations.

The meeting's most closely watched moment was the welcoming handshake between French President Jacques Chirac and President Bush, whose wartime differences led

to angry recriminations on both sides of the Atlantic. They greeted each other with polite smiles, a brief handshake and small talk before walking into a luncheon with other presidents and prime ministers.

Chirac, at a news conference later, praised Bush for getting Congress to pass a \$15 billion package to combat AIDS in the developing world.

"Bush took a decision in this area that I would not hesitate to call historic," Chirac said. He said France would triple its AIDS spending, to about \$179 million, and European Union

▼ See **SUMMIT** | Page A10

Graves has girl power down to a tee

■ Meet the Kokomo Country Club's first female president.

By KATIE ALDRIGHT
Tribune correspondent

Women all over the world continue to leap hurdles in the name of equal opportunity.

Golfer Annika Sorenstam made headlines last week when she played with the men at the Colonial. And right here in Kokomo, Kim Graves added yet another club to Womanhood's bag earlier this year when she was elected the first-

ever female president of the Kokomo Country Club.

It was only three years ago when Graves, branch manager of Solidarity Bank on U.S. 31, took a gigantic leap into a typically male domain in her election to the Board of Directors of the country club.

Before the year 2000, women were not allowed single membership at the country club. They also didn't have the right to vote in elections, let alone the right to hold office, but with a little push from members Dave Dyer and Jim Kebrdle, women began to find their place at the top of the ladder with all of their husbands, sons, fathers, and friends.

Graves, along with Suzie Crawford,

lifelong member of the club and another female first elected to the board, has paved the way since 2001 for women to speak their mind and to make a name for themselves within the organization.

Before being elected president in January, Graves spent innumerable hours working to improve the condition of the club for members, new and old.

"In 2001, I served on the entertainment committee, in 2002 I was Vice President or House Committee Chair, and this year I received the honor of being the head of it all," Kim said with a laugh. "This year and in years past, I have strived to make this a comfortable, delightful environment for all involved."

▼ See **GRAVES** | Page A10



KT photo by Tim Beth

A FIRST: Kim Graves is the first president of the Kokomo Country Club's Board of Directors.

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Vol. 152, No. 273

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WISH-TV WEATHER
INDIANAPOLIS



Today
Partly sunny.
Warm.
High 70
Low 52

Tomorrow
A chance of showers. High 72

WEATHER | Page A10

■ Today's A1 designed by Addie Howell



FORECAST 8 WEATHER REPORT

A bit warmer weather is expected for today with highs in the lower 70s. A storm system from the south will move closer to Indiana tonight. That means we could see some showers starting this evening and lasting through the first part of the day on Tuesday. The weather should dry out late Tuesday and last through late Thursday. The next chance of rain will start late Thursday and last through early Friday. Temperatures will be in the 70s for highs, but still a bit below normal.

EXTENDED FORECAST				
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
71	72	73	73	76
48	54	57	60	61

FUTURECAST

Today: Partly sunny. Warm. Highs in the upper 60s.
Tonight: Cloudy. A chance of showers. Lows near 50.
Tuesday: Cloudy. A chance of showers and thunderstorms. Highs in the mid 60s.
Tuesday night: Partly cloudy. Lows in the upper 40s.
Wednesday: Mostly sunny. Highs in the mid 70s.
Thursday: A chance of showers. Highs in the mid 70s.
Friday: Partly cloudy with a chance of showers. Lows in the upper 50s. Highs in the upper 70s.



REGIONAL OUTLOOK

Today's expected temperatures:

Anderson..... 70/52	Dayton..... 72/52	Lafayette..... 70/50
Bloomington..... 72/56	Evansville..... 72/56	Louisville..... 76/54
Chicago..... 70/50	Fort Wayne..... 70/51	Muncie..... 70/50
Champaign..... 72/52	Indianapolis..... 71/54	South Bend..... 70/51
Cincinnati..... 72/55	Kokomo..... 70/52	Terre Haute..... 71/54

LOCAL INFORMATION

Yesterday:

High: 68
Normal: 79
Record: 96 (1934)

Low: 48
Normal: 57
Record: 40 (1993)

The Sun and Moon:

Sunrise: 5:16a Sunset: 8:07p

Moonrise: 6:55a Moonset: 10:48p

Moon Phases:



June 7 June 14 June 21 June 29
Maps provided by: Intellicast.com



Get complete updated weather information throughout the day on



NATIONAL TEMPERATURES & FORECAST

City	yesterday	today	tomorrow	City	yesterday	today	tomorrow	City	yesterday	today	tomorrow
Albuquerque	87	64	12	Flagstaff	81	47	80	Pittsburgh	83	48	54
Anchorage	59	45	58	Grand Rapids	67	38	72	Portland, Me.	60	56	44
Atlanta	77	60	80	Great Falls	76	47	71	Portland, Ore.	72	56	75
Atlantic City	64	58	36	Greensboro, N.C.	72	57	76	Providence	81	59	113
Austin	96	65	92	Honolulu	87	76	87	Raleigh-Durham	74	50	78
Baltimore	68	57	05	Houston	96	72	92	Reno	90	56	92
Birmingham	73	54	45	Jackson, Miss.	86	68	87	Richmond	73	60	75
Blairmont	79	63	81	Jacksonville	89	74	88	Sacramento	88	58	88
Blomark	66	62	68	Kansas City	73	52	64	St. Louis	88	49	63
Boston	61	54	130	Key West	88	81	08	Salt Lake City	82	63	83
Buffalo	59	44	12	Las Vegas	103	79	104	San Antonio	95	71	93
Charleston, S.C.	82	65	05	Little Rock	80	62	80	San Diego	67	60	88
Charleston, W.Va.	64	50	72	Los Angeles	77	60	77	San Francisco	71	52	74
Charlotte, N.C.	78	54	78	Memphis	80	61	79	San Juan, P.R.	88	74	87
Chicago	63	39	70	Miami Beach	82	78	81	Seattle	83	55	87
Cincinnati	65	45	70	Milwaukee	83	37	86	St. Louis	88	57	87
Cleveland	60	46	09	Mpls-St. Paul	72	49	70	St. Louis	88	57	87
Columbus, Ohio	63	43	68	Nashville	73	64	74	Syracuse	66	47	69
Dallas-Ft. Worth	64	48	67	New Orleans	90	72	87	Tampa-St. Petersburg	88	76	88
Dayton	63	41	69	New York City	85	67	83	Topeka	75	54	78
Denver	70	58	34	Norfolk, Va.	72	62	46	Tucson	101	70	102
Des Moines	74	69	68	Oakland	83	59	80	Tulsa	83	59	78
Detroit	66	40	71	Omaha	78	68	86	Washington, D.C.	80	60	76
El Paso	99	70	88	Orlando	90	71	91	Wichita	79	58	75
Fairbanks	59	52	66	Philadelphia	65	61	76				
Fargo	74	39	71	Phoenix	107	83	108				

Key: Weather: s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, l-ice.



CROWDING THE STREETS: Anti G-8 protesters march with placards through the center of Geneva, Sunday. Demonstrators arrived in Geneva to protest against the G-8 summit which runs from through Tuesday in Evian, France.

Protest ...

▲ Continued from page A1

The centerpiece was a double march, one beginning in the French town of Annemasse and the other in Geneva. The two marches joined on the Swiss side of the border, then headed together into France.

Tension flared when the demonstrators tried to return to Geneva and were confronted by rows of riot police intent on preventing a repeat of a rampage Saturday night, when youths marauded through the city center.

Sunday's clashes in Geneva lasted at least seven hours and were some of the worst the city had ever seen. At least one pharmacy was ransacked and bullet proof windows of banks were smashed as police and militants played a cat and mouse game.



POLICE BARRIER: Riot police face anti-G-8 demonstrators in the center of Geneva, Sunday. The demonstrators blocked traffic for hours on bridges and highways in the French and Swiss regions around Geneva.

Summit ...

▲ Continued from page A1

officials said the 15 member nations are expected to commit about \$1.2 billion in new funds at a summit in Greece later this month.

In an annual summit ritual, tens of thousands of protesters staged demonstrations in French and Swiss regions beyond the heavily guarded security perimeter of the lakeside summit. They spoke out on everything from anti-globalization and environmentalism to forgiveness of Third World debt and fears over genetically modified foods.

Demonstrators blocked traffic for hours on bridges and highways around Geneva, across the lake from the meeting. Swiss police officials estimated the crowd at 50,000; protest organizers said it numbered 120,000.

Inside the summit, there was a concerted effort to get beyond Iraq. "Everybody talked positively. Nobody talked about the past," said Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien, attending his 10th and final summit. "Everybody was concentrating on creating a mood of solidarity."

Swiss President Pascal Couchepin said that even just one hour into the summit, "the atmosphere was much better. At the end of the day, the atmosphere was quite good."

White House officials suggested Bush was taking a wait-and-see approach about his relationship with Chirac and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, another ardent war foe.

It was a different matter, though, with Russian President Vladimir Putin, who also opposed the U.S.-led drive to depose Saddam Hussein but, in Washington's view, was not confrontational about it.

Putin and Bush held a reconciliation meeting earlier Sunday in St. Petersburg, Russia, where they cele-



SUMMIT SUPPER: Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, center, sits at the table for a working dinner with leaders concerned about the New Partnership for Africa's Development as part of the G8 summit in Evian, France Sunday. At left is U.S. President George W. Bush and at second left is British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

brated ratification of a major nuclear arms agreement and proclaimed their close friendship. "Strange as it may sound," Putin said, the United States and Russia have even strengthened ties - a point that Bush was happy to echo. "We will show the world that friends can disagree, move beyond disagreement and work in a very constructive and important way to maintain the peace," Bush said.

The annual summit of industrialized nations brought together the leaders of the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Canada and Russia at a spa on the banks of Lake Geneva. They were joined on the opening day by leaders from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Africa and developing countries such as China, India and Mexico - a move intended in part to answer the criticism of anti-globalization protesters that the G-8 was a rich country's club insensitive to the needs of poorer countries.

Chirac's spokeswoman, Catherine Colonna, said the leaders were not avoiding talking about Iraq but were focusing on the challenge of

rebuilding Iraq rather than the fractious debates of the past. "We have not changed our point of view. Neither has the United States," she said.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair said the summit leaders should find areas of agreement.

"The most important thing, particularly after all the differences there have been over Iraq, is that the international community comes together and gives a very strong statement," said Blair, Bush's leading supporter in the war effort. "It will be the quality of intent that is as important as anything else," Blair said. He expressed hope the summit would take a clear position on the need to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

For all the talk of reconciliation, though, the leaders still held to long-held views.

Chirac, for one, was asked if his "multipolar vision" of the world, in which a strong European Union would act as a counterweight to U.S. foreign policy, was a goal shared by other summiteers.

Tower ...

▲ Continued from page A1

The tower, which was constructed in 1954, is currently out of service and would take in excess of \$1 million to make it operational. McFrittridge said the cost of painting the tower will come not only in paint, but also in the cost to "rough up" and remove the green paint currently on the tower. He said the estimate to paint the tower green and paint a checkerboard at the top would cost the company about \$675,000.

"We did not get an estimate on what it would cost to paint the American flag up there," he said. "But I think it would be considerably more."

Working at the Village Pantry in the

shadow of the tower, Patty Darlin said she would offer to paint the tower herself if that's what it took to keep the tower standing.

"I think it's great," she said of Conwell's idea. "It's a landmark. If you tear it down, you are taking a piece of Kokomo away. I'd put in for it. I'd even help paint it."

Darlin said she still uses the landmark to find her way home.

"The other day, my granddaughter pointed at the tower and said, 'We're almost home! When a 5-year-old says something like that, there's something about the dumb thing that makes you want to keep it,' she said.

Still, not everyone is for saving the tower.

"Times change, things change and you can't save every building," said

Dick Beck, the golf professional at the American Legion Golf Course. "I would rather take the million dollars it is going to take to repaint the tower and apply it to ill children or a charity that helps children or a hospital."

Michelle Legan, who works at the Pro Shop with Beck, agreed.

"I think it's great he wants to paint an American flag on the tower, but I think that kind of money could be spent on other things," she said. "It doesn't bother me the tower is coming down. It's not something I feel we have to have."

But Conwell is undeterred.

"The sky's the limit for what we can do," he said. "Who knows? Anything is possible."

Katherine Lewis, Tribune reporter, may be reached at (765) 854-6740 or via e-mail at kate.lewis@kokomotribune.com

Graves ...

▲ Continued from page A1

I want people to walk away with a good feeling about [the Kokomo Country Club].

The finer details are Kim's major forte. Her employment at a bank provides the expertise needed to fine tune spending, and her common sense, professionalism and likeability give Kim the edge needed to make the club a true success.

"I worked really hard to get to where I am today, putting in long hours and attending all kinds of meetings," stated Graves. "Now, I just really want to do an excellent job-not just for the women, but for everyone involved."

Kim's biggest supporter is her husband. "He was so excited when I received the call

from Brian [Harris, former president,] about putting me on the ballot," said Graves. "I had a lot of doubts and was really shocked by the request, but my husband really encouraged me to show my true potential."

She added jokingly, "He gets teased a lot because of my current status - 'Have your wife fix this... Mention this to Kim...' - but it's all in fun."

Kim feels no differently about being "First Woman President."

"I would have done my job the same way even if I wasn't the first woman ever in my position," said Graves. "I just think that I opened the door for other women who want to become involved; from this point forward, it will be much easier for them. I'm just an average person doing what needs to be done."



KOKOMO TRIBUNE

Kokomo, Ind.

Thursday, August 21, 2003

50¢

Targeting meth labs is paying off

■ Miami sheriff credits teamwork for increased enforcement.

By DANIELLE RUSH
Tribune region editor

PERU — Before January 2003, Miami County law enforcement officials had closed down three methamphetamine labs.

Since January, though, sheriff deputies and police have closed down more than 20 methamphetamine labs in Miami County, and arrested those who run them.

Sheriff Ken Roland attributes the increase not to more labs, but to a partnership between sheriff departments in Miami, Howard, Cass and White counties, Indiana State Police, Peru Police Department and other local agencies.

"A lot of the names [of possible manufacturers] we have been hearing were some of the same names Howard County [and the other counties] were hearing," Roland said. "Before, everyone just tried to do their own thing."

In addition, he said, the Miami County Drug Task Force, including officers from the county and city, has worked to make more meth-related arrests.

"We work closely together, feed a lot of information," Roland said.

Roland said that effort has paid off, with 21 meth labs closed since January.

"They were out there. We just weren't making a concentrated effort," he said.

▼ See **METH** | Page **A6**

Howard County battling surge of meth labs

■ This year police have dismantled 21 drug labs in Howard County.

By MIKE FLETCHER
Tribune staff writer

A day after Thanksgiving 2000, Kokomo police came across something out of the ordinary for Kokomo — a methamphetamine lab.

Since that day, labs have been popping up in Howard County at a rapid rate.

"We've gone from our first discovery a day after Thanksgiving two years ago to 21 in a matter of a few years," said Kokomo Police Capt. Michael Holsapple, head of the Howard County Drug Task Force. "I think that speaks for itself."

From mobile labs in vehicles to labs in homes, apartments, garages, hidden in woods and fields, police have discovered the labs just about everywhere.

"I've been an officer for about 25 years, most of which has been working around drugs, and this is one of worst drug problems that I have witnessed," Holsapple said of the meth craze.

▼ See **SURGE** | Page **A6**

Get Involved:

Any Miami County resident with information about possible meth labs is encouraged to call the Miami County Sheriff Department at (765) 472-1322 or the Miami County Drug Task Force at (765) 472-5193.



CAPTURING THE MOMENT: Charlie Sparks, the Region 4 Department of Commerce director, takes photos from the top of the gas tower while standing on the northeast edge Wednesday. The tower is set for implosion in just a few weeks.

VIEW FROM THE TOP

Tribune reporter takes rare look at Kokomo from top of the gas tower

When I was told I had the opportunity to climb to the top of the Kokomo Gas & Fuel gas tower, I couldn't believe my luck.

The tower has been an important landmark for me ever since I started to work at the Kokomo Tribune.

In the beginning, it was how I first knew I was close to work when I saw it on U.S. 31. I drive by the massive structure on my way to lunch or to go home in the evening. To be able to see a side very few have seen was an opportunity I knew I couldn't pass up. I was practically jumping for joy.

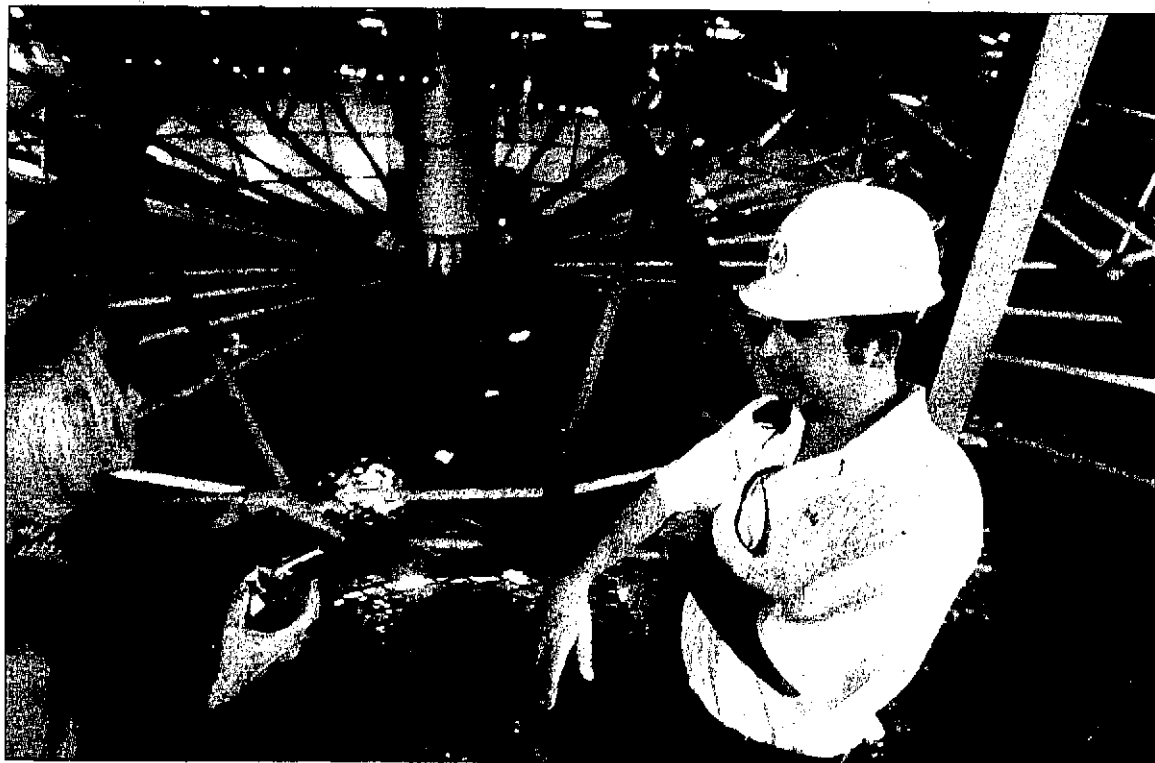
Just a few weeks before one of Kokomo's best-known landmarks is to be imploded, media representatives were invited to climb the tower Wednesday to share the experience with area residents.

At 8:15 a.m., I was in the office of Kokomo Gas & Fuel, excited and eager to climb, but we had to put on and adjust our safety equipment.



Story by
**KATHERINE
LEWIS**
Photos by
TIM BATH

Kokomo Tribune



INSIDE SCOOP: Patti Host and demolition project manager Jeremy Wortman talk about how the gas tower used to work as they stand in a crow's nest just beneath its ceiling Wednesday morning. The webbing of steel behind them is the framework that holds the roof up.

▼ See **TOWER** | Page **A10**

No charges filed in Kokomo's first Amber Alert case

■ Lack of criminal intent prompted police to drop the case.

By MIKE FLETCHER
Tribune staff writer

Criminal charges will not be sought against a man who took two Kokomo girls from their residence July 27, which prompted the first Amber Alert case in Kokomo, police said Wednesday.

The Amber Alert, which aggressively publicizes child abductions through

broadcast bulletins and other means, was launched that day after Paula Housley reported her husband and two children missing from their residence at Mansard Apartments, 1809 W. Carter St.

An investigation led police to believe that the girls, Brooke and Kaitlyn Reese, might be in danger. The man who took the girls, Kenneth Housley, 36, is the father to Kaitlyn, 11, and stepfather to Brooke, 13.



Kenneth Housley
Police say he meant
no harm to daughters

After reviewing the case, Howard County Prosecutor James Fleming elected not to charge Housley with any local crime, Fleming said Wednesday.

"There's not enough evidence to show he had any criminal intent to do any harm to these girls," Fleming said.

The girls' mother, Paula Housley, was asleep at the time the girls were taken, according to police reports.

Kokomo adopted the Amber Alert policies in 2002, but this is the first time the department has issued the Amber Alert.

Police in Campbell County, Tenn., located Housley and the two girls, who were unharmed, several hours after the Amber Alert was broadcast state and regionwide.

Housley was arrested by Tennessee police on charges of resisting law enforcement and disorderly conduct. The children were returned to their mother.

On Aug. 7, Kenneth Housley was released from the Tennessee jail and returned to Kokomo, where he was interviewed about the case by Kokomo Police Lt. Donald Whitehead.

"I think the intent was the main thing," Whitehead said of the probe. "We didn't feel like he had any intent to harm those girls. It wasn't like he was a stranger."

Attempts to contact the family for comment were unsuccessful.

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WISHTV WEATHER



Today
Partly sunny;
chance of storms
High 89
Low 67

Tomorrow
Chance of storms. **High 84**

WEATHER | Page A10

■ Today's A1 designed by Robert Barnes



FORECAST 8

WEATHER REPORT

Heat and humidity are in store today. Highs should reach the upper 80s with some places reaching 90 degrees. Expect scattered thunderstorms today and the first part of the day Friday. The cold front that will cause the thunderstorms will pass through by Friday afternoon, clearing the way for cooler and drier air in time for the weekend.

EXTENDED FORECAST

THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON
pm	am	beautiful!		
89 70	84 69	82 61	84 59	87 62



FINAL PREPARATION:
A worker rewires the lights at the top of the tower in preparation for the demolition. The lights have to stay lit at night until the tower comes down.



LONG CLIMB: Members of the media and invited guests begin climbing the Kokomo Gas & Fuel tower Wednesday morning.

Tower ...

▲ Continued from page A1

Ready to go, we were told to walk into the parking lot and stand by the tower. It was then I first had some doubts.

I realized as I stood on the verge of climbing up that I might have made a mistake. While I thought I could climb all of the stairs, I had to tilt my head all the way back to see the top of the tower. My palms started to sweat and I began to think about the waiver I had just signed, saying I wouldn't sue anyone if something happened to me on the climb. Maybe this wasn't such a good idea after all.

At 8:40 a.m., we began our ascent. There are 551 steps to the top of the gas tower, putting those of us who made the climb 378 feet in the air.

The gas tower is not a place for those who are out of shape, afraid of heights or those who have not had a tetanus shot recently. The stairs are small and only allow for one person going up or down at a time. Rust and flakes of paint covered the steps and railing. The tower has weathered rain and sleet and heat and snow since 1954.

I initially thought I was special because I got to climb the gas tower, but plenty of Kokomoans have done it. At least, that was the impression I got from all of the graffiti near on the elevator, which is located next to the stairs going up the tower. A.I.J. must be pretty special because not only were those initials on the elevator shaft, they were also spray painted into the roof.

Halfway up the stairs, I realized I was on the ultimate Stairmaster. It just kept going up and my legs and chest were already burning. At least it got me away from staring out over the railing or through the holes in the steps.

I thought about turning back at almost every set of stairs, especially as the houses got smaller and smaller, but I knew I had to get to the top.

It was a big, albeit brief, relief once we reached the checkered part of the tower. While we had all been grumbling minutes ago, the fact that the end was so near made the rest of the climb seem easy.

On top

The roof of the gas tower is painted with the same checkerboard that is painted on the upper sides of the tower. But as the gas tower is coming down, the paint hasn't been attended to and is flaking off, revealing rusted metal. A giant cut runs around the roof in a circle, literally cutting the top of the roof off from the rest of the gas tower. However, I walked on both pieces of the roof because beams were still intact underneath to support the metal sheets.

But I wasn't up here to focus on the tower, I wanted to see the view.

As I looked out over the American Legion Golf Course, over to Indiana University Kokomo, I never realized how green and beautiful Kokomo is.

We were assured the tower was safe and we were free to walk around the top. As I took my first few steps, I could feel the metal buckle and pop under my feet.

"That can't be good," I thought. But then I figured we had been told it was safe for a reason, so I decided to walk to the edge, much to the chagrin of Charlie Sparks, the Region 4 Department of Commerce director, who had also been invited to climb to the top.

"I can't believe you walked right to the edge!" he said.

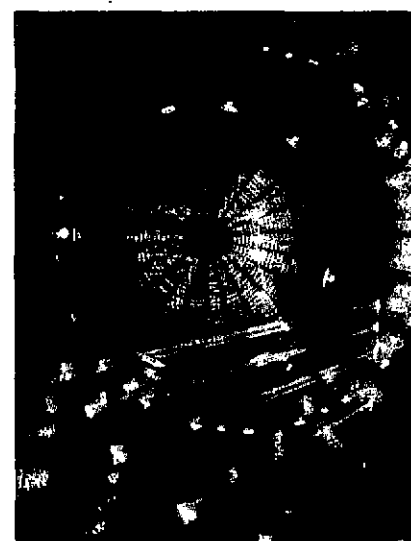
Just to prove I was brave, I held onto my hat and grabbed the peeling railing and looked over the edge, straight down.

I quickly stood upright because the sight was making me a little woozy.

After a deep breath, Sparks and I carefully continued our way around half the tower to get a good look at downtown. Even the morning haze that hung over Kokomo couldn't obstruct the sight of the city center. It was amazing.



LOOKING UP: Light streams in from holes cut in the top of the tower in preparation for the demolition.



LOOKING DOWN: Standing in a crow's nest on the inside at the top provides an excellent view of the plunger that would rise with added gas pressure.

The view also allowed us to see the new DaimlerChrysler building several miles away. But right as we stepped closer to the railing to get a better look, we heard what sounded like small explosion from inside the tower. There was a rumbling in our feet. But our tour guide from Controlled Demolition Inc. didn't seem to mind, so Sparks and I decided not to worry about it.

After touring the top, visitors were given the opportunity to climb down a small staircase into the tower. I took it.

Descending into the dark, I had to take off my sunglasses to see properly. The air was heavy, thick with heat and the smell of gas. The only light streaming in came from the windows and a long line across the gas tower, almost as if it had been cut in half.

I was later told by CDI representatives that cutting the gas tower in half will help it implode on itself. Still, standing almost 378 feet above ground, the fact that there was virtually nothing holding the tower together made me a little nervous. I decided I had enough of being inside – and I was getting a little light-headed from the gas – so I went back up.

"Aaah, fresh air!" was the phrase commonly used by people coming back onto the roof of the gas tower.

After we all had another chance to catch one last glimpse, we began our descent. While the climb up forced me to focus on my strength, the climb down forced me to focus on my balance. Traveling down the steep staircase made me feel as if I would go sliding down the stairs and pitch myself over the side.

As I pulled the sweaty hard hat from my head, I looked back up at the tower with a sense of accomplishment. I was on top of the world in Kokomo. And even after the gas tower is fallen and the last of the debris is carted away, the seven people who climbed to the top of the tower Wednesday morning will have a memory we won't ever forget.

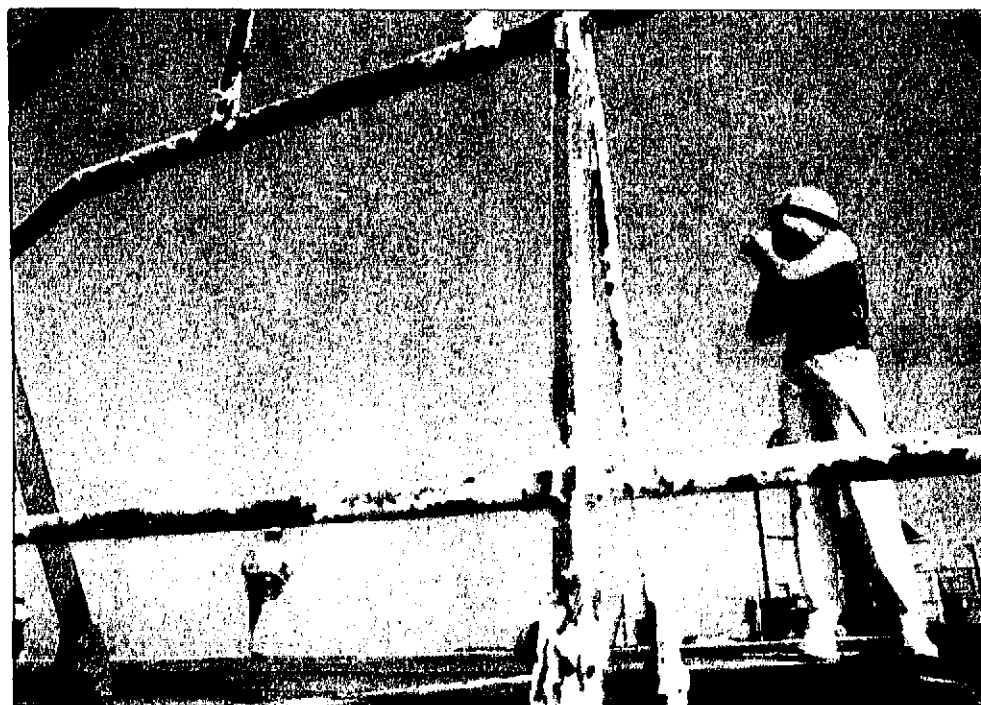
Katherine Lewis, Tribune reporter, may be reached at (765) 854-6740 or via e-mail at kate.lewis@kokomotribune.com

Photos by
TIM BATH

Kokomo Tribune

SIGHT TO REMEMBER:

Patti Host takes photos from the roof of the gas tower just after arriving at the top.





Coming Friday

You can help those suffering from diabetes.

This page designed by Robert Barnes

TODAY

Dear Abby

C2

Entertainment

C3

Comics

C4

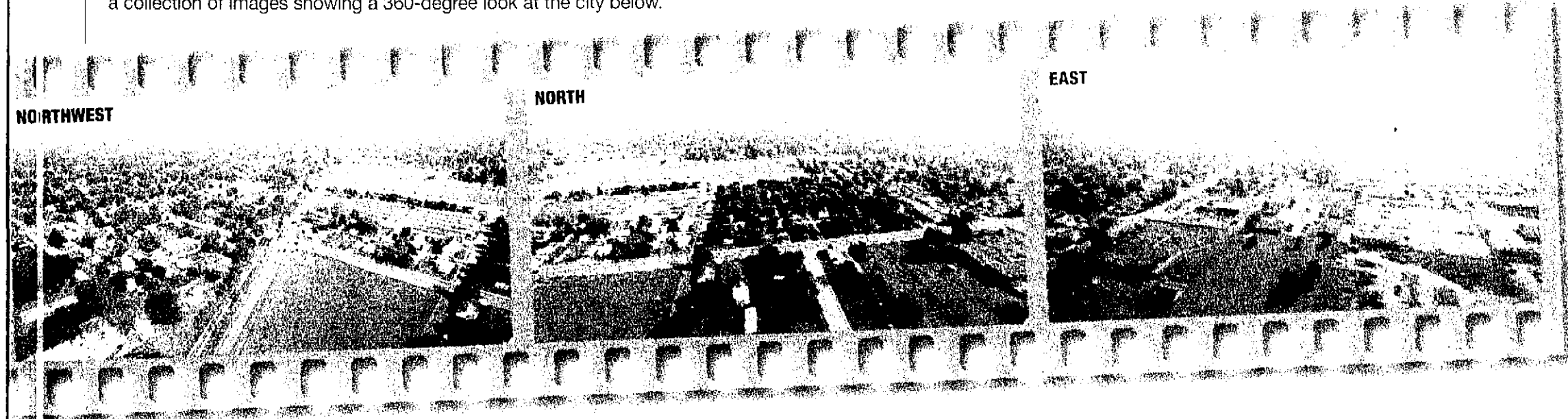
Kokomo, Ind.

Thursday

September 4, 2003

ONE LAST LOOK AROUND:

The Kokomo Tribune recently visited the top of the 376-foot-tall Kokomo Gas & Fuel tower. While there, photographer Tim Bath compiled a collection of images showing a 360-degree look at the city below.



TIME'S UP FOR THE

Photos by
TIM BATH

Kokomo Tribune

At 7:30 a.m. Sunday, the Kokomo Gas & Fuel Tower will be imploded, forever altering Kokomo's skyline. To honor the tower, the Kokomo Tribune

has compiled a collection of photos along with some items Kokomo residents have submitted to remember the red-and-white checkered icon.

Local band pens musical tribute to tower

The band Brewer Downham Sidran has the last word when it comes to remembering the Kokomo Gas & Fuel Tower.

The group produced a song called "Tearing the Tower Down," and included it on its debut album released Monday. The inspiration for "Tearing the Tower Down," came from a co-worker of band member Jerry Brewer of Sharpsville who told him it'd be a good idea to write a song commemorating Kokomo's tallest structure. Brewer, who used to tour the country as a drummer but now owns Angel Music in Kokomo, said he thought it was a good idea.

"I went to everybody in Kokomo and every line reads that way," Brewer said. "It's more a biography than a ballad. It wouldn't get a Dick Clark dance thing. I tried to tell the story of it. It's what it means to families as a navigational tool, and I even wrote about how families have driven by it and they've never given it a thought and how they should give it another look. In any of my songs, I'm trying to make it relatable to other people."



The song, along with "September 11, 2001," was recorded at Brewer's studio in Kokomo. All other songs on the CD were recorded at the band Bad Finger's studio in Minneapolis. Brewer said he knows the band from when he was touring the country as a drummer.

Now the group hopes local radio will play its tower song and the public will buy copies of its CD, available in stores around Kokomo. Downham said the CDs are \$10 and may be purchased at Karma, The Grocery Sack No. 1 and No. 2, Down on Main Street in Greentown, and The Tom Thumb Tavern.

"Tearing the Tower Down"

Words and music by Jerry Brewer
Angel Wind Music, Kokomo

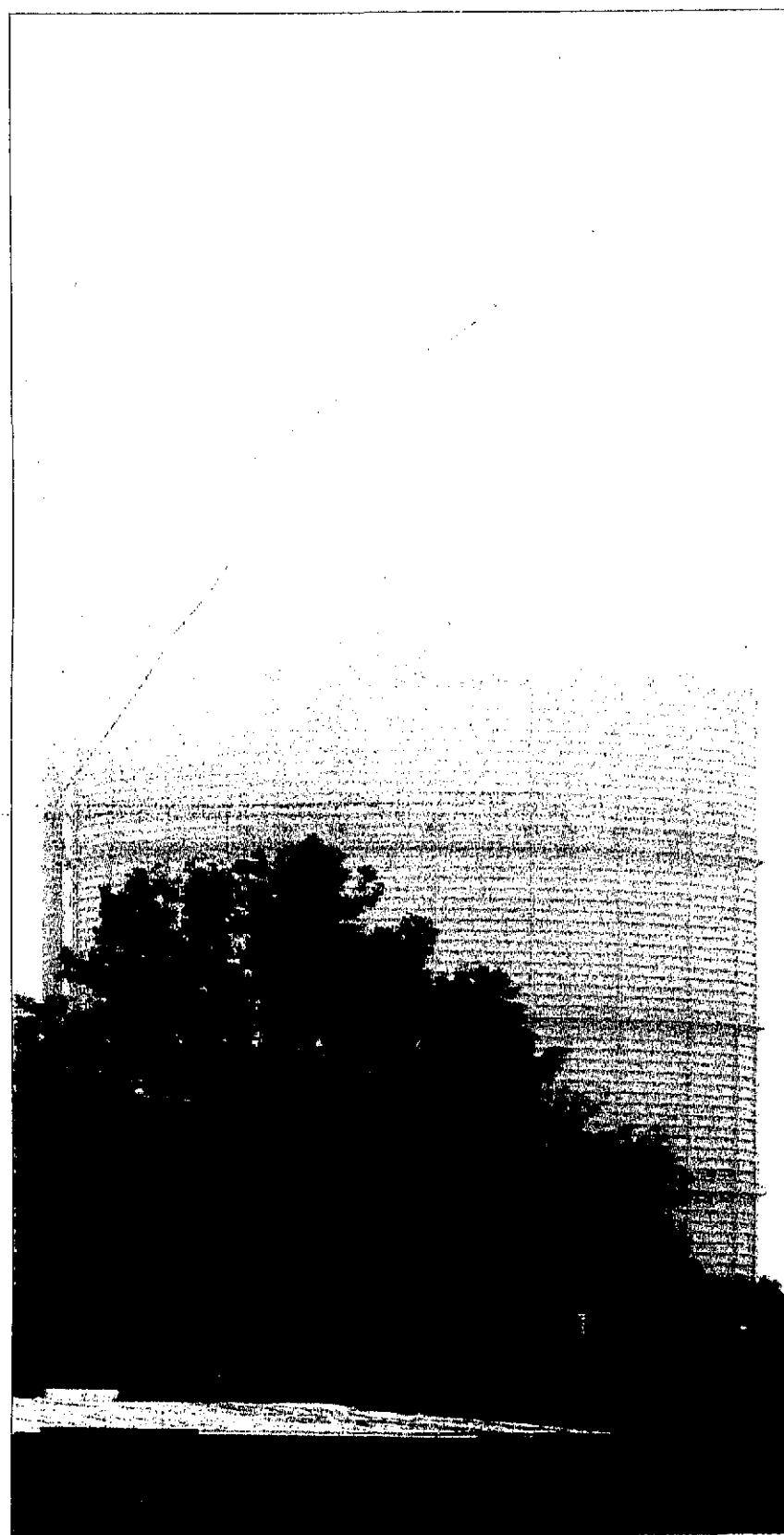
In 1954 a project was born
It called for iron workers, painters and more
This was no building, no little highrise
Instead a gas tower, going clear to the sky

Back then Kokomo had growing pains
Delco and Chrysler brought big money veins
It's been standing there, all this time
You drive right by, it never crossed your mind

But now they're tearing the tower down x 2
Progress comes and goes to another small town x 2
They're tearing the tower down

Party-ers and lovers, navigational tool
When out in the country, breaking all the rules
From all directions it can be seen
A welcome home sight for many families

So now as you ride around in your Cadillac
Better look to the tower, one more flashback
Just like an old friend you've got memories
With time comes change, that's where life leads



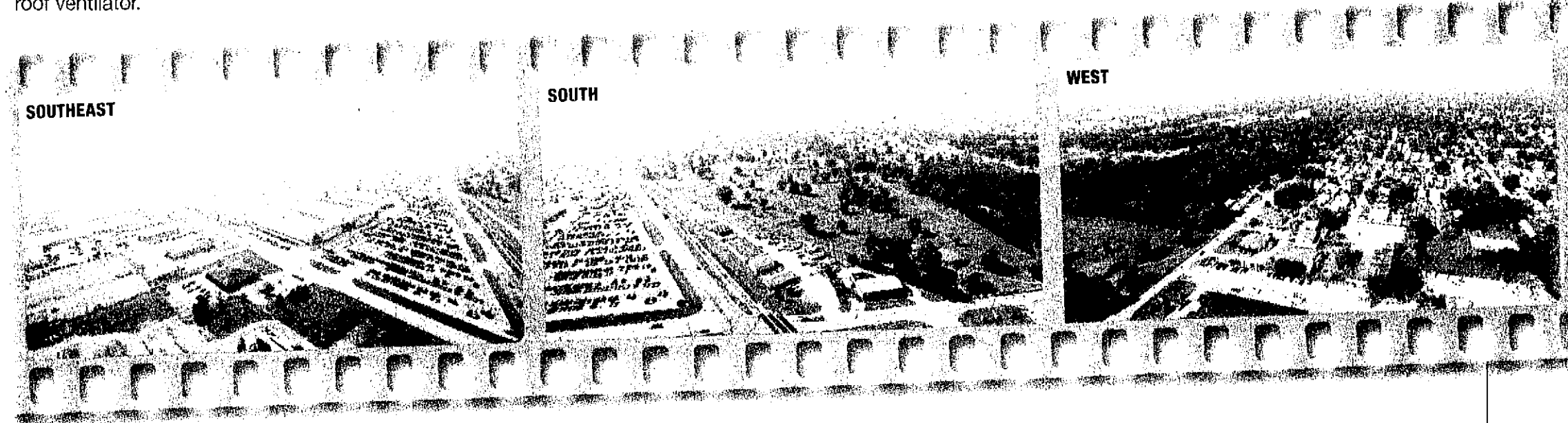
NOW YOU SEE IT ... Even as fog covers the city, the gas tower still makes a large impact on the skyline.



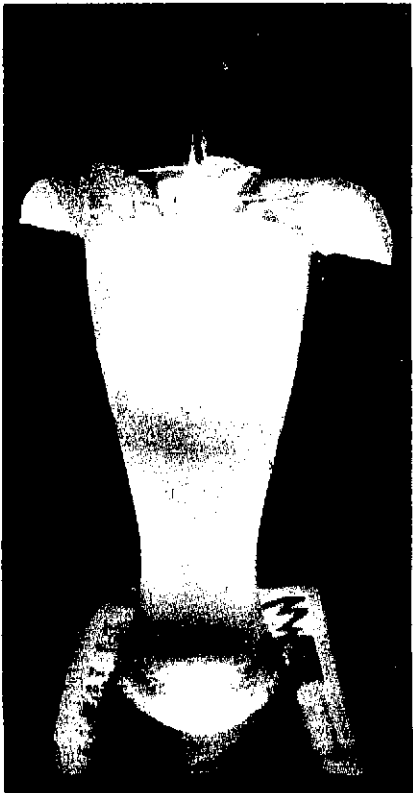
TOWER TRIVIA:

- Natural gas was first discovered in Kokomo in 1886. By 1918, gas companies were looking for alternative sources of fuel.
- Kokomo Gas & Fuel was formed in 1917.
- The cylinder was built in 1954.
- It is a piston-type storage container that holds 12 million cubic feet of gas in a gaseous state.
- It is 378 feet, 5 1/8 inch high at the top of the roof ventilator.
- The surface area is 36,855 square feet.
- The tower's diameter is 218 feet, 1 3/4 inches.
- The top part is checkered to increase its visibility for low-flying airplanes.
- Inside the shell is a piston which floats on gas and is guided in its travel by 44 rollers, half of which are attached to the top of the piston trusses and the other half to the bottom.
- The holder is comprised of a 22-sided shell.
- It takes about 1,500 gallons of paint per coat to paint the tower. It was last painted in 1987.
- Employees serve more than 35,000 customers in Howard, Clinton, Cass, Miami and Carroll counties.

Source: Kokomo Gas & Fuel

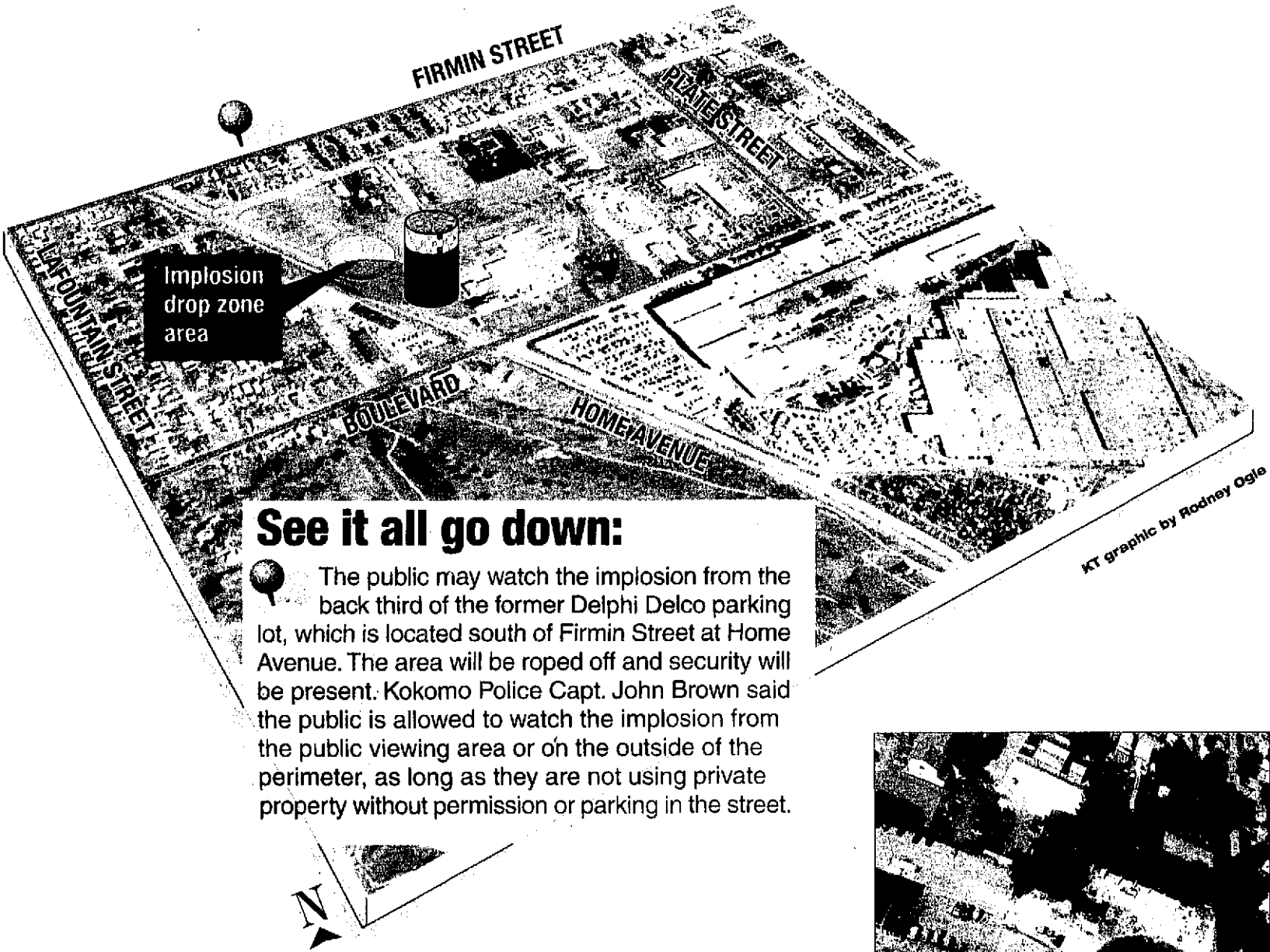


IT'S A BLAST



KT photo by Erik Markov

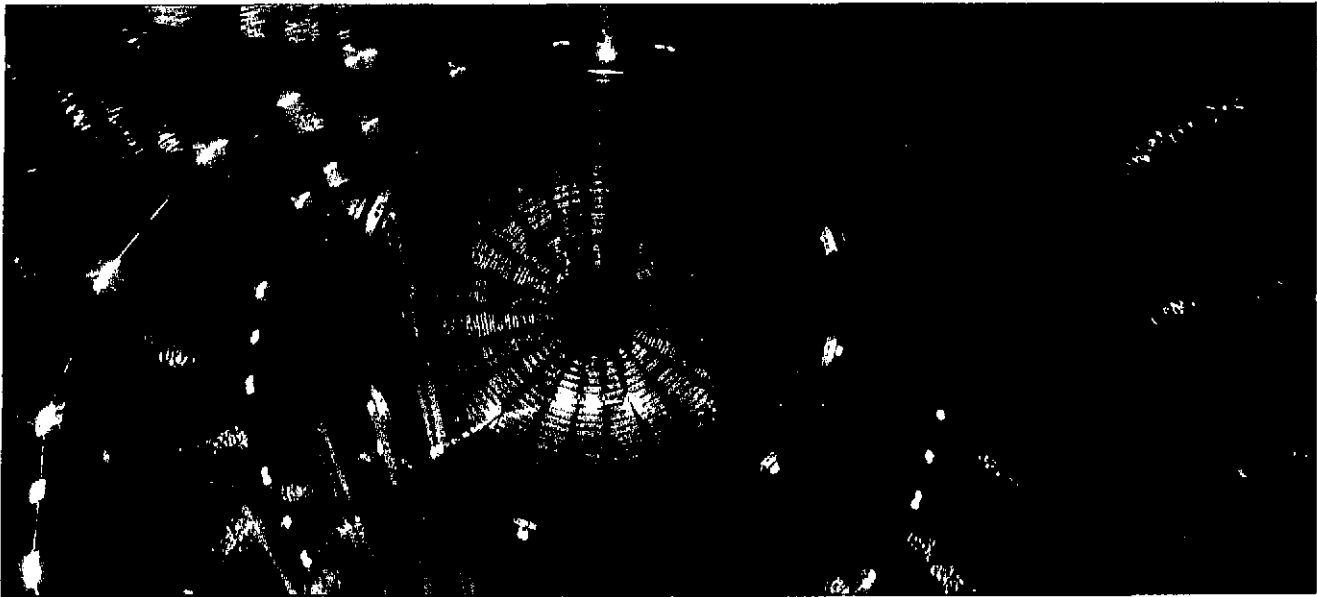
STILL STANDING: Heather Faris, a bartender at Buffalo Wild Wings Grill & Pub, 1805 E. Markland Ave., created the Gas Tower mixed drink to commemorate Sunday's gas tower implosion. The \$7 drink contains sweet and sour mix, Stolli vanilla, buttershot, Midori and other alcohol.



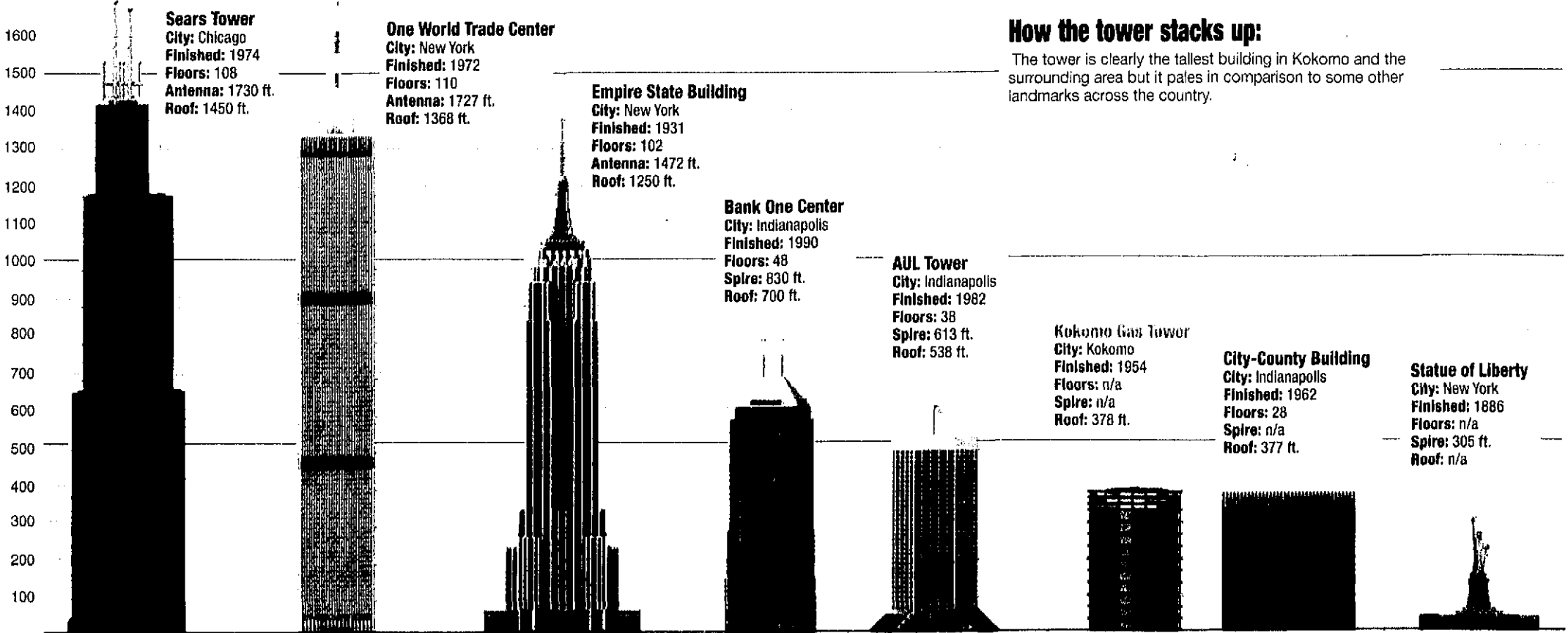
See it all go down:

The public may watch the implosion from the back third of the former Delphi Delco parking lot, which is located south of Firmin Street at Home Avenue. The area will be roped off and security will be present. Kokomo Police Capt. John Brown said the public is allowed to watch the implosion from the public viewing area or on the outside of the perimeter, as long as they are not using private property without permission or parking in the street.

INSIDE OUT:
Light fills into the tower from holes recently cut into the metal shell.



LOOMING LARGE: The tower has cast a shadow on the Kokomo landscape for 51 years.



SOURCE: Imagery and technical specs from www.skyscraperpage.com; Kokomo Gas & Fuel

KT graphic by Rodney Ogile



KOKOMO TRIBUNE

Kokomo, Ind.

Saturday, September 6, 2003

50¢

Third party may decide city pay

■ A binding arbitration ordinance draft is set to reach City Hall.

By ERIC SMITH

Tribune staff writer

A proposed ordinance may let an outside party settle disputes between Kokomo Common Council and city employees.

Friday, the council's Public Safety and Welfare Committee told leaders of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, the Fraternal Order of Police and the firefighter's union that it would draft such an ordinance and take it to the council.

The ordinance the parties discussed in city hall Friday would bring back binding arbitration, a process in which a professional arbitrator would decide employees' salaries when contract negotiations between city government and its workers break down.

Proponents of binding arbitration say it ensures fairness because the person settling contract disputes would be a neutral third party. But opponents say it lets the municipality's purse strings be pulled by someone with no stake in the decision.

The four councilmen on the committee — Greg Goodnight, Andy Castner, Mike Wyant and Tom Harrison — all said that they are in favor of binding arbitration, though each expressed concerns about the specific details.

Corbin King, council attorney, was asked to research binding arbitration.

King said Anderson, Muncie and New Castle all have binding arbitration, but several communities have rejected it.

"It's not widespread throughout Indiana," King said. "The Gary city attorney asked me if it is even legal. Fort Wayne is looking into it and is not big on it. Bloomington and Indianapolis don't like it. If you are going to do it, then you need to get all the information on it."

▼ See **ARBITRATION** | Page **A10**

Bush addresses discouraging jobless figures

■ The president claims his plans will promote increased job creation.

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — President Bush said Friday that discouraging new jobless figures made clear that "we've got to do something" about an economy that shows signs of recovery but is still shedding jobs.

RELATED STORY

• U.S. companies slash payrolls for the seventh straight month in August. **A7**

He spoke a few hours after a new government report showed that while the civilian unemployment rate dropped from 6.2 percent to 6.1 percent, companies cut payrolls by 93,000, particularly in the manufacturing sector.

Bush said he saw hopeful signs, such as rising business orders.

Job creation is often a lagging indicator, he said, "the last thing to arrive on the scene" in a recovery. And productivity is growing faster than job growth, meaning the economy is not expanding rapidly enough to create sufficient hiring, he said.

"Today's report shows we've got more to do, and I'm not going to be satisfied 'til every American who's looking for a job can find a job," Bush said.

▼ See **BUSH** | Page **A10**

||| GAS TOWER IMPLOSION |||

10 seconds to tumble

More than 2,200 tons of steel will be felled by 100 pounds of explosives



KT photos by Tim Bath

READY TO GO: Kevin Klass with Controlled Demolition Inc. talks Friday about how the Kokomo Gas & Fuel Tower will fall when it is imploded Sunday. About 100 pounds of explosives will do the job.

By SCOTT SMITH

Tribune staff writer

Shaped explosive charges will cut through the steel support beams of the Kokomo Gas & Fuel tower "like a hot knife through butter" at 7:30 a.m. sharp Sunday, and gravity will do the rest.

Kokomo residents expecting one big bang or huge pieces of shrapnel flying through the air might be disappointed by the demolition of the tower. The 387-foot structure is simply going to tumble forward like a tall tree, coming to rest on the ground like a deflated steel sock.

Officials from Controlled Demolition Inc., the company creating the implosion, explained the planned sequence of events to the media Friday, aided by a few highly explosive props. Doing the job will be dozens of charges, 18-inch long V-shaped bars of RDX explosive, covered by sheets of copper.

Traffic on the streets immediately around the tower will be restricted to authorized personnel around 5:30 a.m., and shut off completely at 7 a.m. At that point CDI employees will make a final check of the tower to make sure no one is in harm's way. Once the all-clear is given, a siren will sound for two minutes, then a one-minute notice will be given. A final notice will be given at 15 seconds, and then the countdown will start at 10 seconds.

Viewers will hear a quick series of sharp cracks as the charges explode in sequence. Firing in sequence reduces the amount of air pressure coming

COMING SOON:

■ **SUNDAY:** Kokomo residents share their memories of the landmark and some photos of its construction. See how it will all be done with a step-by-step guide.

■ **MONDAY:** Special coverage of the gas tower's implosion with extra pages of photos and a look at the effects.



from the implosion, thereby ensuring no nearby windows are broken, said CDI President Douglas Loiseaux.

The charges are designed to cut, rather than blast the steel support beams of the tower, Loiseaux said. The charges' shape ensures their blasts will focus on very small areas. Instead of radiating outward like dynamite, the explosives will cut thin lines.

When a charge goes off, the V-shape of the copper sheath will be hit by 3 million pounds per square inch of force, explained CDI employee Kevin Klass. The copper will invert, turning into a blade slicing through metal at 28,000 feet per second.

"It can cut through a 1½-inch thick steel plate," Klass said. "It's a real pretty cut. It looks like a razor blade went through it."

Using cutting torches, CDI workers have already cut notches in the middle section of each H-shaped support beam. The beams border each section of the 22-sided structure. The charges have been strapped to the still-intact inner and outer facing plates of the beams, and covered by 1/2-inch thick conveyor belting, then 50-pound sandbags, then a plywood covering, and geofabric material for good measure. The copper might cut through the steel beams, but that's as far as it will get.

The first charges will explode on the "sight lines" of the tower — the support beams facing the direction the tower is supposed to fall. Then, in sequence, the charges will explode in both directions around to the south of the tower, firing nine milliseconds apart, Klass said. Once the charges at the base of the tower have exploded, charges circling the second, third and fourth tiers of the tower will explode in sequence, each tier separated by a 100-millisecond delay.

Finally, all but two of the support trusses holding up the tower's roof will be cut by explosives, Klass said. Like the valve of a carburetor, the roof will fall inward, swiveling on the two beams which remain intact. The weight of the roof falling forward will help to ensure the tower falls along the sight lines, Loiseaux said.

▼ See **TOWER** | Page **A10**

Don't be alarmed, it's just training

Area firefighters and police aren't about to miss a once-in-a-lifetime training opportunity, so don't be surprised to see eerie figures in protective suits combing the wreckage of the Kokomo Gas & Fuel tower Sunday.

They'll be carrying equipment to test for radiation and biohazards, while others will arrive with heavy equipment to search for possible "survivors." A bomb squad will race to defuse a "secondary" device attached to a high pressure natural gas pipeline. If any victims are found, they'll be treated to a thorough decontamination.

The Kokomo Fire Department's hazardous materials (hazmat) team will conduct the joint training session with the Kokomo Police Department bomb squad and the Grissom Air Reserve Base hazmat team, beginning about 20 minutes after the tower comes down, Kokomo firefighter Doug Thomas said Friday.

The teams will all be enacting emergency plans for dealing with a "dirty bomb" terrorist attack, Thomas said. Three dummies will be placed in the tower before it comes down, representing an ill-fated advance team in need of rescue, he said.

"We don't often get to train in a real debris field, with a bunch of dust everywhere and our ears ringing from the explosions," Thomas said. "This will be a lot more realistic."

United Way, unions kick off 2003 fund-raising campaign

■ This year's campaign is critical, leaders say.

By JOY DANISON

Tribune staff writer

The mood was solemn Friday as the Howard County United Way and local labor unions paired up to launch the agency's 2003 fall fund-raising campaign.

Though last year they were in a festive mood, this year United Way leaders plainly stated their need: At least \$2.35 million to keep 72 local social service programs and

17 United Way member agencies afloat for the next year.

"I don't want to beat around the bush. The bottom line is, we need help this year, more help than ever before," United Way employee Sonie Widland told the group of supporters gathered at United Auto Workers Local 292 Union Hall.

"These are hard times," Widland said. "But we have programs ... They'll close their doors if we don't help them get funded."

Indeed, this year's campaign could be one of the most critical in recent years, United Way leaders acknowledged.

▼ See **UNITED WAY** | Page **A10**

Raffle to raise money for United Way:

The United Way of Howard County is sponsoring a communitywide raffle as part of this year's 2003 fund-raising campaign. Participants can purchase a chance to win one of 20 different prizes, including cash, shopping sprees or gift certificates to local businesses. Tickets are \$5 apiece or \$10 for three, and will be available during today's Day of Caring. Or, to purchase tickets contact the United Way at (765) 457-6691. Proceeds will benefit the United Way. A drawing will be held noon Dec. 15 at United Way offices, 210 W. Walnut St. Winners need not be present to win. Prizes include:

- **FIRST PRIZE:** \$5,000 cash.
- **SECOND:** \$3,000 shopping spree.
- **THIRD:** \$1,000 shopping spree.
- **FOURTH:** \$750 gift certificate.
- **FIFTH-SIXTH:** \$500 gift certificate.
- **SEVENTH-TENTH:** \$300 gift certificate.
- **11TH-20TH:** \$200 gift certificate.

* Shopping sprees and gift certificates can be used at any Howard County business.

business **A8**
classified **C8-C10**
comics **C5**
entertainment **C4**
lifestyle **C1-C3**

local news **A3-A5**
obituaries **A2**
opinion **A8**
sports **B section**
Vol. 153, No. 4



SOON

Sign of the times

The gas tower represents changing lives.

Page **A10**

■ Today's A1 designed by Robert Barnes



Today
Sunny

High 76 Low 54



FORECAST 8

WEATHER REPORT

The weekend is here and the forecast is perfect! After a cool start, lots of sunshine will warm temperatures into the upper 70s this afternoon. Sunny skies are in the forecast for Sunday, too. A warm-up will begin as temperatures hit 80 degrees Sunday and the lower 80s Monday and Tuesday. This will be a great weekend to check out a local festival, hit the park or just take a walk in the neighborhood.

EXTENDED FORECAST

SAT	SUN	MON	TUES	WED
beautiful	a nice warm up!			
78 52	80 57	82 60	83 62	84 63

FUTURECAST

Today: Sunny. Highs in the upper 70s.
Tonight: Clear. Lows in the upper 40s.
Sunday: Sunny. Highs near 80.
Sunday night: Clear. Lows in the mid-50s.
Monday: Partly sunny. Highs in the lower 80s.
Monday night: Clear. Lows near 60.
Tuesday: Partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 80s.
Wednesday: Partly cloudy. Lows near 60 and highs in the lower 80s.
Thursday: Becoming cloudy. Lows near 60 and highs near 80.



REGIONAL OUTLOOK

Today's expected temperatures:

Anderson.....77/56	Dayton.....75/53	Lafayette.....77/57
Bloomington.....79/57	Evansville.....83/56	Louisville.....83/59
Chicago.....81/58	Fort Wayne.....76/55	Muncie.....76/55
Champaign.....82/60	Indianapolis.....78/55	South Bend.....76/53
Cincinnati.....78/55	Kokomo.....76/54	Terre Haute.....78/57

LOCAL INFORMATION

Yesterday:

High: **73**
Normal: 80
Record: 100 (1954)

The Sun and Moon:

Sunrise: **6:16a** Sunset: **7:08p**
Moonrise: **5:21p** Moonset: **1:28a**

Moon Phases:



Maps provided by:

Intellcast.com



Get complete updated weather information throughout the day on



NATIONAL TEMPERATURES & FORECAST

City	yesterday	today	tomorrow	City	yesterday	today	tomorrow	City	yesterday	today	tomorrow
Albuquerque	81 64	83 62 cdy	79 61 cdy	Flagstaff	74 51 04	75 49 cdy	78 45 cdy	Phoenix	100 80 14	104 84 cdy	105 82 cdy
Anchorage	60 51 01	62 43 cdy	60 43 cdy	Grand Rapids	73 43	77 45 cdy	82 54 cdy	Pittsburgh	68 56	74 50 cdy	78 51 cdy
Atlanta	84 69	76 67 cdy	78 64 cdy	Great Falls	92 57	89 56 cdy	90 55 cdy	Portland, Maine	78 60	76 51 cdy	77 53 cdy
Atlantic City	81 64 01	78 60 cdy	82 63 cdy	Greensboro, N.C.	78 63	78 61 cdy	78 59 cdy	Portland, Ore.	92 54	83 61 cdy	87 59 m
Austin	91 71	92 64 cdy	92 63 cdy	Honolulu	88 78	90 77 cdy	90 77 cdy	Providence	79 86 02	78 65 cdy	82 55 cdy
Baltimore	76 61	78 58 cdy	81 58 cdy	Houston	89 73 04	92 65 cdy	91 63 cdy	Raleigh-Durham	81 65	81 61 cdy	79 61 cdy
Billings	91 59	89 59 cdy	89 59 cdy	Jackson, Miss.	82 66	m m mm	m m mm	Reno	91 59	88 55 cdy	86 51 cdy
Birmingham	86 63	84 66 cdy	85 64 cdy	Jacksonville	86 72	85 75 m	87 73 cdy	Richmond	78 63	80 57 cdy	81 58 cdy
Bismarck	96 53	91 57 cdy	82 57 cdy	Kansas City	82 54	85 57 cdy	86 58 cdy	Sacramento	87 61	90 57 cdy	86 57 cdy
Boston	74 63 01	75 59 cdy	81 60 cdy	Key West	90 83 05	88 79 m	89 79 cdy	St. Louis	78 58	81 58 cdy	84 57 cdy
Buffalo	70 56	72 52 cdy	77 57 cdy	Las Vegas	97 77	99 77 cdy	98 77 cdy	Salt Lake City	85 70	85 62 cdy	87 57 m
Charleston, S.C.	82 73 08	78 73 m	79 70 m	Little Rock	82 61	85 58 cdy	87 61 cdy	San Antonio	89 72 10	92 65 cdy	91 66 cdy
Charleston, W. Va.	71 54	78 61 cdy	81 54 cdy	Los Angeles	93 66	90 66 cdy	96 64 cdy	San Diego	85 70	78 70 cdy	77 69 cdy
Charlotte, N.C.	82 64	81 65 cdy	76 64 cdy	Louisville	76 57	81 54 cdy	83 59 cdy	San Francisco	72 59	71 58 cdy	73 55 cdy
Chicago	75 46	81 51 cdy	82 58 cdy	Memphis	80 62	85 62 cdy	87 64 cdy	San Juan, P.R.	94 76	87 77 cdy	87 76 cdy
Cincinnati	73 56	77 53 cdy	80 55 cdy	Miami Beach	85 75 49	92 76 m	93 75 cdy	Santa Fe	81 51	78 52 cdy	75 53 cdy
Cleveland	69 62	72 53 cdy	80 56 cdy	Milwaukee	73 51	81 56 cdy	83 61 cdy	St. Ste Maria	70 43	79 44 cdy	77 56 cdy
Columbus, Ohio	72 54	76 52 cdy	80 55 cdy	Mobile-St. Paul	86 53	90 62 cdy	86 64 cdy	Seattle	85 58	76 56 cdy	87 57 m
Dallas-Ft. Worth	90 67	90 65 cdy	91 63 cdy	Nashville	79 61	82 59 cdy	84 61 cdy	Sioux Falls	93 61	91 61 cdy	90 61 cdy
Dayton	71 50	76 51 cdy	80 54 cdy	New Orleans	88 77 24	88 74 cdy	88 74 cdy	Syracuse	66 59 10	73 49 cdy	79 51 cdy
Denver	87 58	79 57 cdy	76 54 cdy	New York City	78 67	78 61 cdy	82 62 cdy	Tampa-St. Petersburg	77 76 47	86 75 m	88 76 cdy
Des Moines	85 54	87 60 cdy	87 61 cdy	Norfolk, Va.	79 72 05	78 65 cdy	79 65 cdy	Topeka	83 62	86 57 cdy	88 59 cdy
Detroit	72 55	77 51 cdy	81 58 cdy	Oklahoma City	85 83	88 59 cdy	87 60 cdy	Tucson	96 77	97 73 cdy	98 72 cdy
El Paso	87 67	88 56 cdy	89 66 cdy	Omaha	89 54	89 61 cdy	87 61 cdy	Tulsa	84 57	86 57 cdy	87 58 cdy
Fairbanks	55 43 05	60 35 cdy	68 37 cdy	Orlando	85 74	86 75 m	89 75 cdy	Washington, D.C.	76 64	79 62 cdy	82 61 cdy
Fargo	89 58	90 55 cdy	90 57 cdy	Philadelphia	78 66	81 60 cdy	83 62 cdy	Wichita	81 59	88 60 cdy	88 62 cdy

Key: Weather: s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, l-ice

Tower ...

Continued from page A1

"One thing we want to make sure doesn't happen is for the charges on the bottom to go off, so the tower would fall 15 feet or so and just sit," Loiseaux said. "If that happened, would [the tower] deform and go someplace we don't want it to go? We want to make sure that doesn't happen."

As the tower falls toward the north, 12 million cubic feet of air will be forced out of the top and bottom of the structure with a massive whoosh, Loiseaux said.

"It's not going to fall as a 22-ton monolith would - it's coming down very slowly, piece by piece," he said.

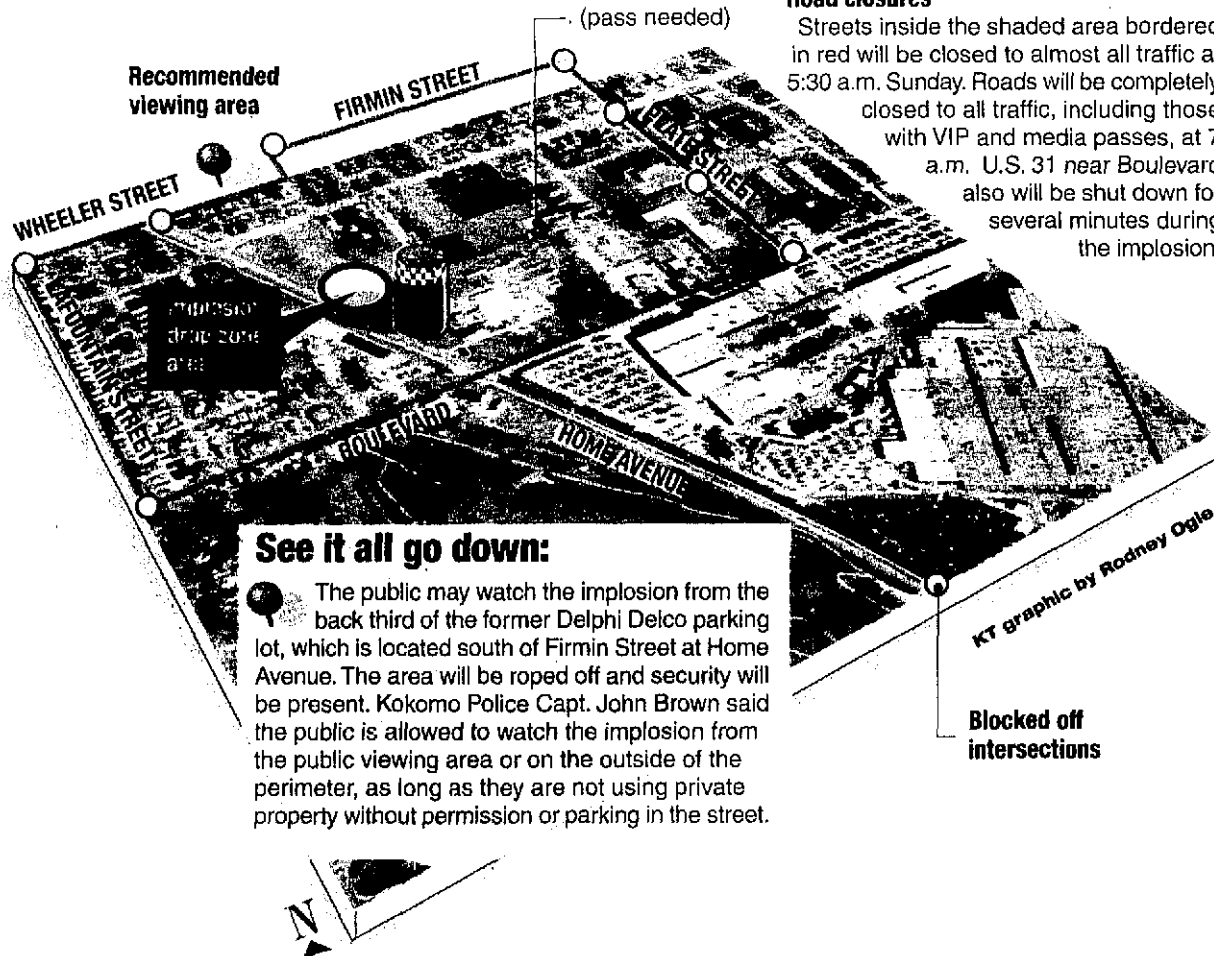
It should take about 10 seconds for the entire tower to be felled.

And when the dust settles, environmental stations will be monitoring the air for toxins, such as lead, and sweeper, "flusher" and vacuum trucks will be on hand to clean up the powdery residue, he said. Kokomo Gas & Fuel officials plan to accept bids on the steel.

"We look our final inventory today, and we think it's going to take a little less than 100 pounds of explosive to bring down a 2,200-ton structure," Loiseaux said. "At that ratio, each pound of explosive is going to bring down 44,000 pounds of steel. That just shows how much effect gravity has on it."

Scott Smith, Tribune reporter, may be reached at (765) 454-8569 or via e-mail at scott.smith@kokomotribune.com

Watching the tower fall:



See it all go down:

The public may watch the implosion from the back third of the former Delphi Delco parking lot, which is located south of Firmin Street at Home Avenue. The area will be roped off and security will be present. Kokomo Police Capt. John Brown said the public is allowed to watch the implosion from the perimeter, as long as they are not using private property without permission or parking in the street.

Bush ...

Continued from page A1

The president said his plans would spur more hiring. Those include health care measures, streamlined regulations and restrictions on medical lawsuits and a comprehensive energy plan, expanded trade and tax breaks.

"While the signs are pretty good about our economy, there's still people looking for work, and we've got to do something about that," Bush said.

Democratic rivals cited the new figures as evidence Bush's tax cuts have not boosted the economy.

"Unfortunately, we did not need further evidence that the economic policies of George W. Bush have failed working Americans," said presidential candidate Howard Dean. "These 93,000 Americans are only the latest victims of the administration's failed trickle-down ideology."

Added Rep. Richard Gephardt of Missouri, another Democratic

presidential contender: "The economy continues its downward spiral today with news of 93,000 jobs lost in August, the deepest job loss in the last five months and the seventh straight month that employers have cut jobs."

Bush's trip here completed a trio of Midwest speeches on the economy and opened a fresh round of fund raising to bolster his re-election bank account. Friday night's fundraiser was injecting another \$1.5 million into a war chest already worth at least \$56 million for next year's primary, though he faces no GOP opponent.

The president had not headlined a fundraiser for his campaign since Aug. 22. But Friday marked the start of a new round that shows he has no intention of slowing down before the end of the current fund-raising period on Sept. 30. Bush has six more fund-raisers in five states this month.

White House press secretary Scott McClellan said Friday that the president will attend campaign events in Nashville, Tenn., on Sept. 8; Jacksonville and Fort Lauderdale, Fla., on Sept. 9; Philadelphia on Sept. 15, and Cincinnati and Chicago on Sept. 30.

The president is trying to keep the public focused on his efforts to revive the economy, and to spread the optimism he says he feels about an upturn.

Bush won Indiana decisively in 2000, and he is eager to keep its electoral votes in his column. The state most recently elected a Democratic governor, Frank O'Bannon.

Bush's former budget chief, Mitch Daniels, is running for governor this year.

Bush spoke on the warehouse floor at Langham, a family owned freight management company.

The company serves as a travel agent for cargo, and has a global network of 800 agents who make sure that freight from various companies gets to its destination. It has 55 employees.

Arbitration ...

Continued from page A1

King, originally from Anderson, said he has only had time to consult the city attorney there, and he still wanted to further look into how Muncie and New Castle handle binding arbitration.

But the committee was ready to move forward, and King was asked to draft the ordinance. The committee agreed that if there were problems with the draft, it could be amended as it was being reviewed by the council.

The committee and union leaders agreed on some elements to be included in the draft. They are:

- **Equal representation.** Whether there is one ordinance or three ordinances, one for each union the city deals with, AFSCME, FOP and the firefighters should be given equal consideration.

- **One arbitrator.** Whereas the binding arbitration ordinance passed and repealed by the city in the 1970's called for the appointment of three arbitrators, only one would be needed. The previous ordinance allowed for the union to select one arbitrator, the city to select another and for the hiring of an independent arbitrator. Committee members agreed the city's arbitrator would likely agree with the city and the union's arbitrator would likely agree with the union. Only

one independent arbitrator would be needed to ensure fairness.

- **Shared costs.** Arbitration fees should be split evenly by the city and the negotiating union. One possibility that would cost neither side a dime is turning to the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. That service provides government with free arbitration.

- **Efficient timeline.** The committee was concerned that arbitration could drag out negotiations and consume too much time. A deadline would be considered in the forthcoming draft.

Also during the meeting, committee member Castner, who is running for Kokomo mayor, said he felt details of a Kokomo Tribune column on binding arbitration were incorrect.

The column reported that in 1975, former Kokomo Mayor John Peacock agreed to give city employees pay raises of \$500 and to give longevity pay plans to both police and firefighters. The column reported that city council rejected the mayor's plan, and an arbitration case soon followed.

Castner, who was the assistant Kokomo police chief at the time, said he had no recollection of the Tribune's information on Peacock's role.

A Dec. 20, 1976 article supports the column and attributes the information to former Fraternal Order of Police president Robert Trobaugh.

United Way ...

Continued from A1

Member agencies already face a 9 percent cut in their funding for next year. If the community fails to meet the United Way's \$2.35 million goal, those cuts could deepen, they said.

"We need to have the community really step up," said Jim Laird, vice president of sales and marketing for Haynes International and chairman-elect of the United Way Board of Directors. "What we're looking for, as everyone has said so eloquently, is help."

And this year, that help will have to come entirely from the local community.

The United Way has struggled to meet its campaign goals over the last several years, in part because of a sluggish economy that is just now beginning to show signs of recovery, said Bill Calhoun, the agency's campaign director.

Last year, donations fell about \$200,000 short of the agency's \$2.55 million goal. But a Lilly Endowment grant helped the United Way make up some of the difference.

That money is gone now.

At Friday's luncheon, United Way leaders focused on how little it would take to meet this year's \$2.35 million goal. Simply put, if every worker in Howard County pledged \$1 a week for the next year, the money collected would more than meet the need, they said.

"That's all it is. It's not a sacrifice," said United Way President Carl Graber. "It's a Coke."

But currently only 35 to 40 percent of Howard County workers donate to the United Way, Graber said.

During this year's campaign, the agency plans to focus on the remaining 60 to 65 percent. The agency has spent much of the past year identifying new businesses in the local community and businesses that have never been asked to participate in the campaign in the past, Calhoun said.

Over the next several weeks, 21 "loaned associates" - more than ever before - will fan out over the community, visiting places they have never gone before to make the United Way's case. The loaned associates are a group of local

workers donated by their employers to serve as a temporary sales force for the United Way.

"All we ask for is to give us an opportunity to share the story," Calhoun said. "We're asking those that have never given to give. We're asking those that have given to consider giving a little more."

The fate of 72 programs and 17 local nonprofit agencies could depend on it, United Way leaders said.

"I am optimistic," Graber told the group of supporters gathered at Friday's luncheon, which was sponsored by the Howard-Tipton Counties Central Labor Council, UAW Community Action Program, UAW Locals 292 and 685, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 873, Paper Allied-Industrial Chemical and Energy Workers Local #6-154, and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3733.

"We have a challenge. But I am optimistic because you are here," Graber said.

Joy Danison, Tribune reporter, may be reached at (765) 454-8571 or via e-mail at joy.danison@kokomotribune.com



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Sunday, September 7, 2003

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Lending a helping hand

■ United Way's Day of Caring attracts more than 500 volunteers.

By MIKE FLETCHER
Tribune staff writer

Greg Hoppes moved to Kokomo in 1972 and made a living in construction and working in hardware stores. It's in his blood.

He worked at the Kokomo Home Center in the 1970s, at Furrows for 13 years and most recently at Lowe's Home Improvement.

"I've been around construction all my life," Hoppes said Saturday morning after finishing the kitchen and countertops on a home on East Monroe Street. "I can't get away from it. You can say I was born and raised in a hardware store."

Hoppes put his skills to work Saturday, along with hundreds of other volunteers, as part of the United Way's Day of Caring.

More than 500 volunteers labored on 40 projects at local nonprofit agencies and projects at the homes of elderly and low-income residents most of the morning. Volunteers painted walls, cleaned windows, raked leaves, stuffed envelopes, washed and waxed the library's bookmobiles, and performed dozens of other tasks throughout the community.

Hoppes and more than a dozen other volunteers helped remodel the future home of Stacey Griggs on Monroe Street. The project is part of the Habitat

▼ See **CARING** | Page **A12**

ANALYSIS Palestinians may struggle to replace Abbas

■ The vacuum could encourage violence and calls for Arafat's exile

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — The resignation of Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas — if it stands — leaves the Palestinians in a fix: how to find a successor who will be seen as neither a toady of Yasser Arafat nor a tool of the Israelis and Americans?

RELATED STORY

• Israel bombs Gaza City home in failed attack on Hamas leadership.
A7

The list of candidates who might strike such a balance is short — one possibility is parliament speaker Ahmed Qureia — and the need to resolve the crisis is urgent. In a vacuum, Palestinian militants might step up attacks, and Israel could take dramatic measures such as the expulsion of Arafat.

The developments bode ill for the "road map" peace plan championed by President Bush and accepted, at least in principle, by both Abbas and his Israeli counterpart, Ariel Sharon. The plan calls for an end to three years of bloodshed and establishing a Palestinian state by 2005.

▼ See **ABBAS** | Page **A12**

Break with the past

A relic of the 50s, the tower finally succumbs

Be prepared:

Only about 10 seconds should pass between the first explosions and the tower reaching the ground.

Blast order:

1. Explosives will detonate here first, milliseconds before blasting around the entire first ring of girders in paired order. These first blasts, along with the removal of metal skin from some of the tower, are intended to weaken the front sections, causing the tower — with gravity's help — to gently fall to the planned drop zone.
2. Explosives have been planted on the front, but not the back, of the tower's second and fourth sections. Engineers hope this arrangement will steer the collapsing structure toward the northeast.
3. The roof has been cut so that, as the bottom gives way, explosives will cause the roof to tip open on uncut areas — creating a hinge of sorts — and allow trapped air to escape in a controlled way.

Up to this point:

Preparing the gas tower has been completed by Kokomo Gas & Fuel and Controlled Demolition Inc.

- **MAY 2003:** Kokomo Gas & Fuel announces plans to tear down its gas tower.
- **JUNE 2003:** Kokomo Gas & Fuel hires Maryland-based Controlled Demolition Inc. to implode the gas tower. CDI has handled five other gas tower projects.
- The Kokomo Fire Department inspects the tower for potential hazards.
- The fill line and the discharge line out of the holder are disconnected.
- All of the natural gas in the tower is purged from the tower so it can be opened up.
- Workers remove nearly 15,000 concrete blocks from inside the tower. The blocks, which weigh about 43 pounds each, once weighed the giant piston down to keep gas compressed in the tower.
- The oil that coated the inner walls of the tower is cleaned out with water jets and steam cleaners.

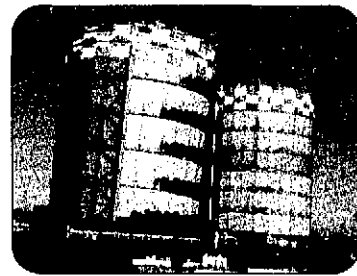
POWERFUL:

A CDI worker holds the V-shaped RDX explosive to be used in the implosion.



We're not the first:

When the tower comes down, it should look similar to this pair of towers — the Keyspan Gas Holders — that Controlled Demolitions Inc., imploded near Brooklyn, New York, in 2001.



Going ...



Going ...



Going ...



Gone

The Kokomo Gas & Fuel tower is, or rather was, a 387-foot, 22-sided cylinder capable of holding 12 million cubic feet of natural gas. That's all it was — a gas holder. No one ever gave it a name, or painted it more than once every 20 years or so.

Story by
SCOTT SMITH

Kokomo Tribune

It was built in 1954-55, a time when the gas company's biggest customer was Continental Steel Corp. Open hearth furnaces consumed the gas and smokestacks belched acid soot that would tarnish a car's paint. The steel plant melted scrap and turned it into rebar, fencing and nails. The men who worked at the plant toiled and the gas tower's reserves kept them in constant work.

As unglamorous as the tower was, it represented the City of Firsts. It was functional. It worked every day. It wasn't fancy, and it didn't put on airs.

▼ See **TOWER** | Page **A5**

KHDC selling tower plaques

The Kokomo/Howard County Development Corp. is selling an attractive plaque commemorating the Kokomo Gas Tower. Proceeds will benefit the Kokomo Technology Center, a high-tech business incubator.

The plaque is 9 inches by 12 inches of aluminum. A colored picture of the gas tower, a description of the tower, an optional serial number, and a two-inch by 3/4-inch piece of the tower are on the plaque. The serial number indicates the piece's location on the tower. People have the option of buying a plaque with a red or white tower piece and a serial number for \$29.95, a plaque with a green tower piece and serial number for \$24.95, or a plaque with a green tower piece and no serial number for \$21.95.

There are two ways people can buy a plaque. They can order online by going to the Development Corporation's Web site, www.khdc.org, and clicking the tower icon.

Coupons also are available at all Salin Bank & Trust Co. locations, including all Kroger stores; Bona Vista's Box Store, 1221 S. Plate St.; and at Kokomo Gas & Fuel Co., 900 E. Boulevard.

Buyers can anticipate delivery six weeks after the implosion of the tower.

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Vol. 153, No. 5

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WEATHER	Page A12

■ Today's A1 designed by Robert Barnes

Tower ...

▲ Continued from page A1

The muscular, plain tower was just as fitting a monument for a small auto manufacturing town as the Empire State Building is for New York City.

"A lot of the reason companies came to Kokomo was because of the availability of gas," Kokomo Gas & Fuel project engineer Mike Host said. "The holder kind of symbolized the ability of the company to provide for its customers without having any curtailments in the supply. It was another tool we had to reassure everyone that the gas would be there."

Built on a German design which was considered state of the art at the time, the tower won respect for its usefulness. On the other hand,

the drab functionality of the tower also led more than a few people to call it an eyesore.

CBS correspondent Steve Kroft, a regular on 60 Minutes, grew up in Kokomo and worked as a draftsman at the gas company on a summer break from college. Working in the shadow of the gas tower at the operations center on Home Avenue was a bit unnerving, Kroft said.

"I always used to think it was going to blow up," Kroft said. "I always wondered, if it did, would it blow the entire state off the map?"

"I used to think it was incredibly cool. But then I got to a certain age where I actually thought it was pretty ugly. I'm going to miss the fact that it's not going to be there," Kroft joked.

Mechanical age, digital age

While the tower gradually slid toward obsolescence, Kokomo indus-

tries were changing with the times.

In 1955, the steel mill, Delco Radio and the Stellite division of Union Carbide were the largest employers in Kokomo. More than 3,000 workers, mostly women, manufactured car radios, while thousands of men provided the heavy labor needed for steel and alloy manufacturing. The U.S. 31 bypass was only half completed – the southbound lanes weren't dedicated until 1959, according to "Howard County, A Pictorial History," by the late local historian Ned Booher. The Chrysler Corp. was still making transmissions in the old Haynes Automobile buildings off Home Avenue.

Milton Beach, media relations manager with Delphi Electronics Systems, said the tower preceded the "evolution" of automotive electronics which has kept Delphi prospering here.

"You look back at the 50s, and you look at the gas tower, and you realize that was the era of horsepower and handling, radial tires and V8 engines," Beach said. "Back then all we made was car radios." It wasn't until the 1960s that

large numbers of consumers began demanding refinements such as power brakes, power steering, power windows and air conditioning, Beach said. In the 1970s, Delco expanded its product lines further when corporate fuel economy standards came into being, and manufacturers began looking for ways to increase fuel efficiency. The company did pioneering work in creating electronic engine control modules, which in turn "changed the whole reliability of the vehicle."

From there the automotive electronics revolution took off, but the tower stayed the same.

The 70s also saw the introduction of the technology which would directly contribute to the tower's demise – liquefied natural gas storage. The company's Liquefied Natural Gas plant, located on the border of Howard and Tipton counties, can store 400 million cubic feet of natural gas compared to the tower's storage of 12 million cubic feet.

The tower survived the introduction of the liquefied gas plant because it still served a "load balancing" function, Host explained. Whenever the company scheduled

a delivery of natural gas through the pipeline, it was difficult to predict precisely how much of that delivery would be used when it arrived. Any excess could be easily stored in gaseous form in the tower, and if the delivery came up short of meeting demand, gas could be withdrawn from the tower. The process of loading or unloading the tower was much easier than liquefying or deliquesfying gas into or out of the liquid plant.

But in December, the company made arrangements to make last-minute adjustments to their deliveries, and the tower wasn't needed anymore, Host said.

Kokomo economic development officials are trying to get one last use from the tower before it heads to the scrap yard, however.

Greg Aaron, president of the Kokomo-Howard County Development Corp., has been taking advance orders for commemorative plaques, which will be made from pieces of the demolished tower. The funds will go toward the establishment of the Kokomo Technology Center, a business "incubator," where budding entre-

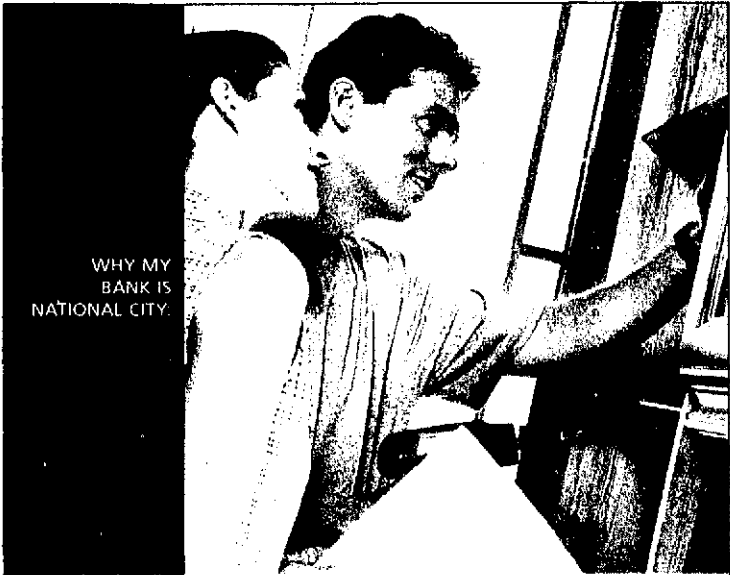
preneurs can take a business idea and run with it.

"It's all about celebrating the old technology and supporting new technology," Aaron said.

Kokomo is still a manufacturing town, and will be for the foreseeable future. In 1969, the first year the Indiana Business Research Center took reliable statistics, manufacturing employment in Kokomo accounted for 64 percent of all wage earnings. Thirty years later, that ratio hasn't changed. But open hearth furnaces have been replaced by microchip manufacturing; hand turned lathes have been replaced by robotics.

Is it too much of a stretch to say the tower's toppling symbolizes the end of an era? All that's certain is Kokomo residents will feel nostalgia for the old gas tower for many years to come. Maybe some day Old Ben and the Sycamore Stump might even have some company in Highland Park – if anyone knows how to build a replica of the Kokomo Gas & Fuel tower.

Scott Smith, Tribune reporter, may be reached at (765) 454-8569 or via e-mail at scott.smith@kokomotribune.com



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Coming Thursday

A look at the fall TV schedule

■ This page designed by Robert Barnes

TODAY

Crossword puzzle **D2**Photo page **D3**Couples **D6**

Kokomo, Ind.

Sunday

September 7, 2008

Tales from the tower

Kokomo residents recall life and work near a landmark

By TOM CAREY
Tribune lifestyle editor

"Grandpa's birthday cake" will soon be gone.

That's how Ilene Host's grandchildren refer to the Kokomo Gas & Fuel Tower. The Kokomo woman's late husband, James, helped build the local landmark, set to be imploded this morning.

The popular icon has been a major part of Kokomo's skyline and memories for decades. Some scaled it, others painted or worked on it, and others simply admired its grandeur.

A host of memories

Ilene, a GI war bride and resident of the British village of Frampton-on-Severn, married James Host in England in August 1945. He returned to the states about a month later and she came over the following March. He got a job inspecting on the tower.

"Construction started on the project in 1954," Ilene said.

Climbing up and down a rope ladder, part of James' job, bothered him.

"He had nightmares sometimes," she said. "I was worried about him, (but) he was assigned a job and he just stuck with it."

She laughed, recalling James telling her that some workers nipped wine before scaling the rope ladders. If he'd done this, Ilene said, James told her, he would not have made it past the first rung.

James put in a lot of overtime, Ilene said. The extra income allowed him, Ilene, their children and James' mother to visit Ilene's mother in England in 1958.

Ilene and James' grandchildren referred to the tower as "Grandpa's birthday cake," the Kokomo woman said. James passed away in 1983. His and Ilene's son, Michael, works for Kokomo Gas & Fuel and he is helping to dismantle the tower.

"Soon 'the birthday cake' will be just a memory," Ilene said. "And I, among others, especially our son, Michael, will be sad to see the lights go out."

Painting memories

Kokomo's William Sexton, with proverbial paint in his blood, splashed a lot of the real stuff on the Kokomo Gas & Fuel Tower, too.

The announcement that the tower would be imploded saddened Flora's Gee-Knee Rioux and Kokomo's Roger Sexton, who said their late father was one of three men slapping the premiere layers of paint on the famed southside landmark. When the icon is imploded, the siblings said, gone will be a symbol of Kokomo's history and their family.

A bit about Bill

Bill, who passed away in 1967, was a professional painter who worked for

contractor R.D. Robbins and others, Rioux said. He labored with a roller and brush from the early '40s to the '60s, his daughter said. In the early '60s, Rioux said, he satisfied a "hankering" and became a Pinkerton guard.

Ohio's Miller Contractors were contracted to do the tower painting, Rioux said, which began in the summer of 1955 and was finished up the next year. They in turn, she said, hired Sexton, Lloyd Amos and a third painter. She said she can't remember the third party's name and Roger said Amos passed away years ago.

Ironically, Sexton — who at times was hundreds of feet above the ground — had a fear of heights, his children said.

"I almost died every time I went up," Sexton later told his children, Rioux said. "He kept saying, 'I'm going to conquer it (the fear), I'm going to conquer it.' He and the other painters were secured with a strap in 'boatsman's chairs' as they were hoisted up to paint," Rioux said.

Sexton, his daughter said, had an extra rope holding him in. He later admitted he never did overcome the fear.

A northside resident at the time, Rioux said, she would trek to the tower a couple of times a week, either driven in a friend's car or pedaling there on her bike. However she arrived, she said, she recalls being proud of her father both because of his work and because he was struggling to conquer his fear. And after she got married and moved away, she said, on return visits her spouse would proudly point and say, "there's the tower Dad painted."

Roger, who later worked at Chrysler and did painting on the side, said he worked with his father starting at age 12. The son recalls laboring alongside his father, painting interiors and exteriors of homes around Lafayette Park School. Roger said his dad was very knowledgeable and pleasant to work around. Like his dad, Roger — who did some painting on the tops of Chrysler structures — also has a fear of heights.

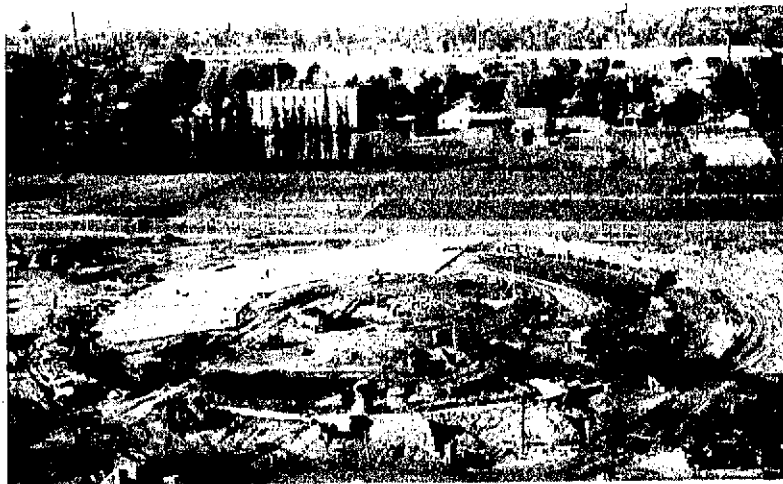
Roger also engaged in familial bragging, recalling how "I used to tell the guys over at Chrysler my dad painted the tower."

Disturbing news

"I don't like it," Roger said of the gas company's plans to implode the structure. "But I know it's progress — things change."

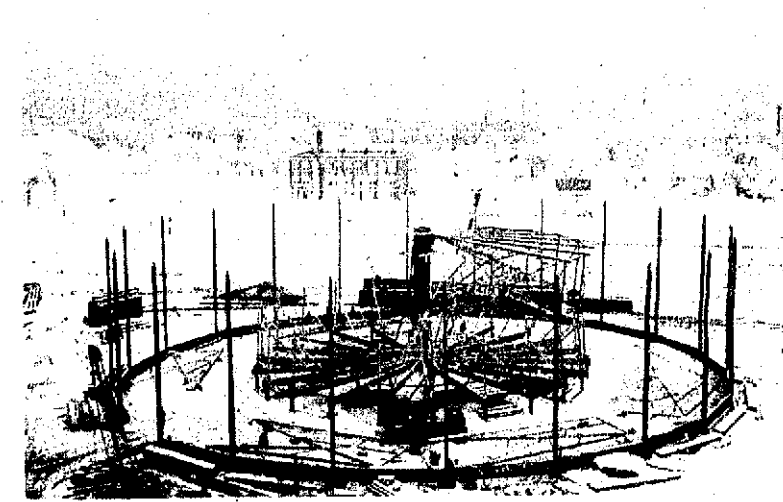
Rioux said news of the implosion is devastating to her and her siblings, as she's sure it is to many Kokomoans. She talked about the company's "raffle" — where entrants could earn the chance to set off the charge bringing down the tower.

"There's no way I could do anything like that," she said.

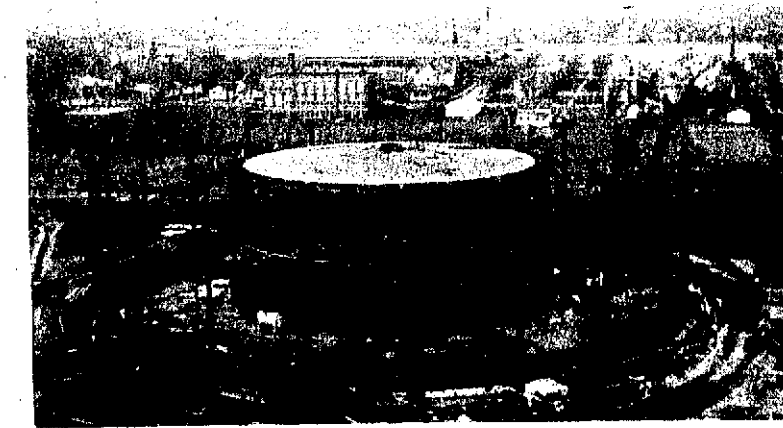


Photos courtesy of Mike Host

OCT. 22, 1954: Work on the concrete pad that will eventually support the gas tower is underway. The clearing of the site was done in August 1954. The tower was completed and put into service almost one year later in September 1955. As many as 85 welders were employed at one time to complete the work.



DEC. 20, 1954: Beams which will construct the massive piston inside the tower are being put into place.



JANUARY 13, 1955: The roof of the tower nears completion. The piston and the roof were tied together and utilized as a floating work platform. Two electric blowers were used to slowly raise it to the top. Blowing started on March 15, 1954, and was completed 64 days later on May 18.

MEMORIES

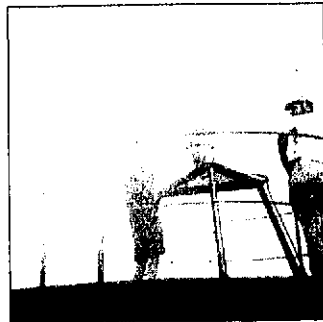
When I look at the tower it always brings back memories of Mr. & Mrs. Mercer. He was a superintendent on the project. They ate with us when we operated the Steak Diner on the corner of Main and Monroe. We became very good friends.

Mr. Mercer wanted me to be the first lady to reach the top of the tower. A female reporter had climbed to the third or fourth floor but never to the top at that time.

We met and went to the top of the tower on a Sunday. Needless to say, the superintendent was in big trouble for letting us go on top when someone reported him.

Bob Dockerty, Dwight Fitz and I, with Mr. Mercer, walked the steps. I have snapshots to verify our being on top of the tower. What memories so long ago.

Ann Fitz, Kokomo



Several years ago my husband took me for a plane ride in our J-3 Cub to New Castle. It was a beautiful clear day and when we took off from New Castle coming home my husband told me to look on the horizon to see the gas tower of Kokomo. I looked and all I could see was a little line about one inch long on the horizon which I couldn't equate with the gas tower. I just couldn't imagine we could see it that far away. Pilots use landmarks to know where

they are and they will surely miss the gas tower as a landmark. Our daughter also is a pilot and says she knows she is getting close to home when she sees the tower.

Althea Etherington, Kokomo

My daughter gave me your address in case I wanted to write to you, concerning the gas tower. Shame, shame, shame ... I was very shocked when my daughter, who lives in Kokomo, informed me recently that the gas tower is going to be

dust soon. I live in Florida now, but grew up in the Kokomo area, knowing that was a landmark — it could be seen for miles. Back then I lived a few miles away from Kokomo and I could see that tower in the distance. How sad that a landmark must be destroyed for the march of progress and money when it could be preserved and kept for all to remember it. Isn't anything worth keeping just for the sake of history? And how cowardly that you are raffling off to the winner — a click of a button to destroy years

and years of history that could have been saved. It does no good to protest, or sign petitions or object ... We all hate to see a part of history be destroyed.

Pat Rhea, former Kokomo resident

In 1972 when I was transferred from Milwaukee to Kokomo by Delco Electronics, I lived one month alone at the HoJo [Howard Johnson] Motel. After work each day a co-worker, the late great Wally Russell, would take me to the local night spots. When we left

each establishment, he would turn me around to face the gas tank to orient myself. When the family arrived to live in Kokomo and we left town, on the return trip we had a contest to see who would see the tank first. When my wife and I were alone on one of these trips, the one who did not see the tank first had to buy ice cream cones. To this day we still look for the tank when approaching home.

Joe and Amy Marchese, Kokomo

▼ See **MEMORIES** | Page **D5**

Tom Lloyd, Peru

Tower ...

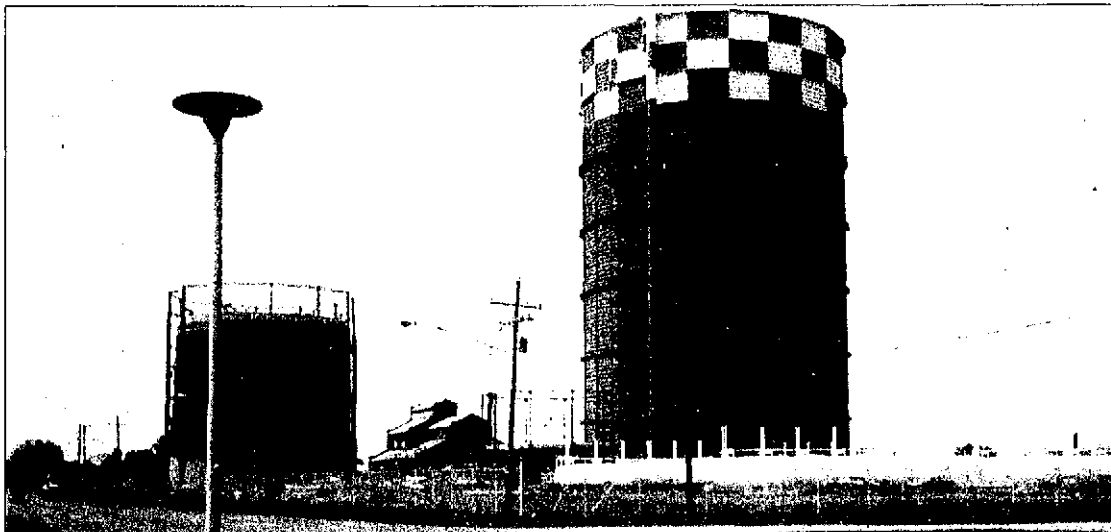
▲ Continued from page D1



Ray Keller and Jerry Meiring.

Climbing cops

Two adventurous boys and the pair of policemen who pursued them to the top of the gas tower are part of the icon's history, says one of the officers' kin.



TWO TOWERS? It's no mistake, the gas tower residents are used to seeing once had a little "brother." This photo was taken from Boulevard in 1974.



LONG WAY DOWN: The staircase wasn't always available for use by workers. In this photo, a worker gets to his job site by climbing a ladder.

Memories ...

▲ Continued from page D1

Our dad got his pilot's license in 1956. We would take trips on Sundays to Sullivan, where my parents (Wesley and Ruth Cox) were from to visit family. We would fly out of Ruzicka Airport, which was located on what is now South Lafountain Street in Kokomo. Back then we didn't have modern technologies for flying, so Dad (Wesley Cox) relied more on landmarks to navigate the plane. He would often say for us girls to start looking on the horizon for the Kokomo gas tower so we could find our way home. On a clear day you could see the Kokomo gas tower as far away as Indianapolis. Our dad has been gone for almost 10 years now. Seeing the old tower reminds us of very special memories of our childhood. Our hero dad piloting a plane and the kids' favorite words on a trip, "Are we almost home?"

Loralce Cox Love and Diann Cox Eads, Kokomo

I was working in the coffee shop at the Courtland Hotel when the gas tower was constructed. Some of the construction crew were staying there and eating in the coffee shop. The supervisor was at the tower site when one of the workers on the top dropped a rivet and it fell on the supervisor's forearm and broke it. It could have been a more serious accident if it had struck him anywhere else.

Margie Mosier, Kokomo

It pulls at my heart strings to hear that the gas tower is coming down. I watched it being built every day. I attended Jefferson School in the 1950s. It was located on the vacant lot north of the tower. I was fortunate to have classes on the south side of the school. We watched them build and paint the tank from start to finish. There wasn't a day go by that someone in the class didn't get scolded for watching out the window. It was an interesting and exciting experience for young children.

The tower became a landmark for all to see as they neared Kokomo. As a child, it was a great sight to see after a long vacation trip. Many memories were torn down with the school, and many more will also go down with the tower. Sadly, things change.

Sandy (Krise) Warner, Kokomo

My memories of the Kokomo Gas Tower begin in the 1950s. My dad had recently become a pipefitter and was working on the tower as it was being constructed. He would come home and tell us about the high catwalks and the interesting work he was doing. Dad is gone now but I cannot drive by the tower without thinking about him. He also worked on the Delco Park skating rink and that's gone too. Even as I write this, I still understand why the gas tower must go. Daddy was a believer that the world moves forward and things do change. Perhaps I inherited this philosophy from him. I refuse to be melancholy, but I also respectfully decline the opportunity to purchase a ticket to be the one to push the button that ends an era.

June Barton, Kokomo

I have always found a lot of pride when looking to the skies and spotting the gas tower on the skyline of Kokomo.

My father was a local pipefitter who was hired by the out-of-state contractors who erected the tower. My father-in-law was part of the first crew who painted it. My husband was on another crew who painted it years later. I had a picture from that event, a Kokomo Tribune picture — I'm sure it's in the archives. I just can't seem to find it. When it was painted the last time, I tried to get my son or one of my nephews, all union painters (at the time), to join the crew. None wanted anything to do with something that high. My husband was afraid of heights, but stated that between each section while working you didn't notice the enormity of it. The third generation just replied, "High is high — no matter how many levels separated it."

Both fathers and my husband are gone now, but it just follows through with "nothing lasts forever." Only memories remain now, but good ones just the same. I will remember it with pride the day my husband finished his work and it looked all shiny and new with its new coat of paint.

Mrs. Lewis Dowden, Galveston

The Kokomo Gas Tower means joyful anticipation, hope and happiness to me, and also to my son.

Two years ago I was a divorced mother raising my 8-year-old son in a small town just south of Fort

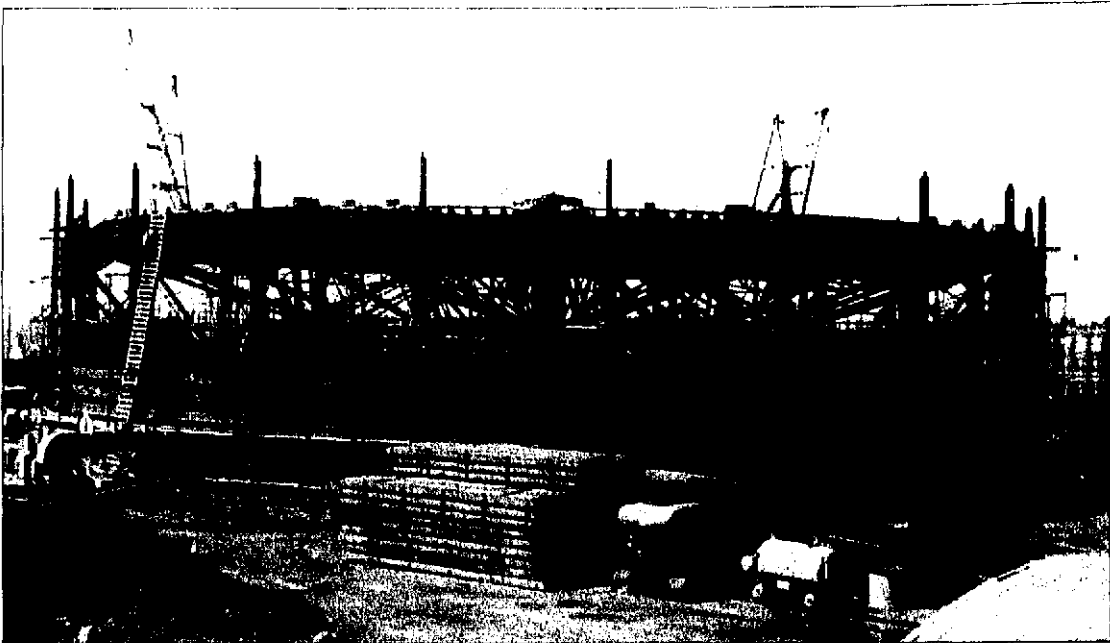
Job a precious memory

A Kokomo man's lay-off led to his connection with a Kokomo icon, his widow said.

Kokomo's Barbara Hansen said her late husband, Robert, was laid off from Moon Welding after Christmas in 1954. But the couple were "thrilled to death" when he was hired as part of the crew to inspect the construction of the tower, she said.

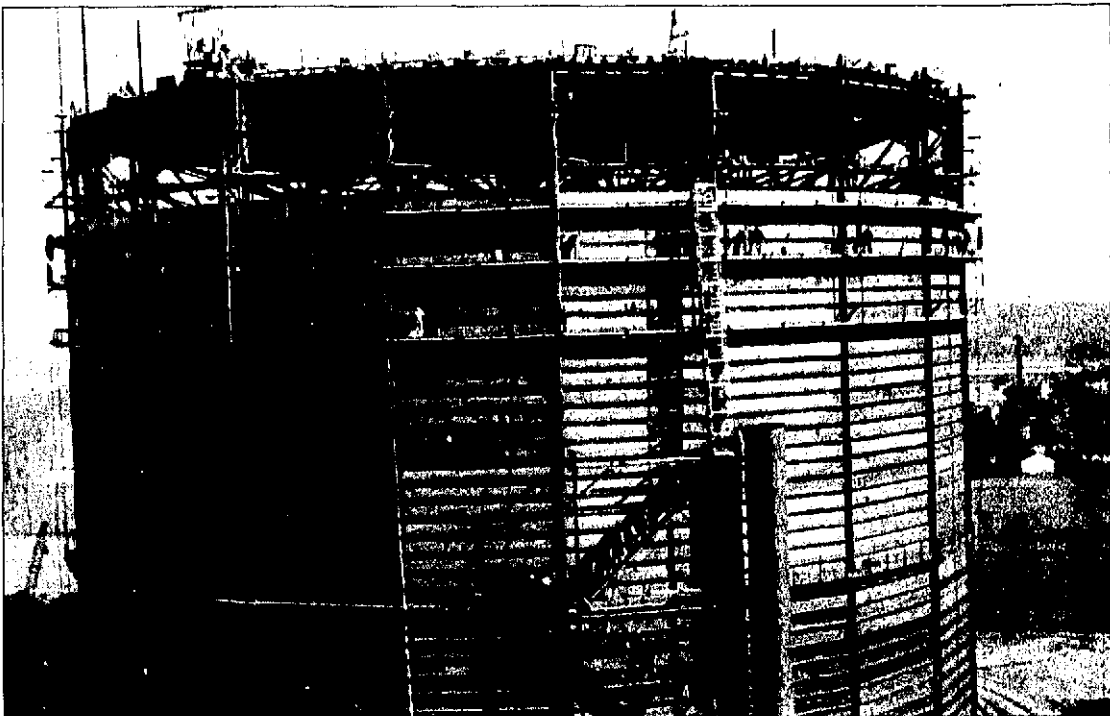
They lived on East Boulevard, along with daughter, Christi, a short distance from the construction site. Because of that, mother and daughter could stand in their yard and watch the workers, "who looked like little specks," Barbara said. The workers and Robert would often wave down at the pair.

She said the entire family was proud of Robert, who passed on in 2002, and his work on the tower.



Photos provided by Mike Host

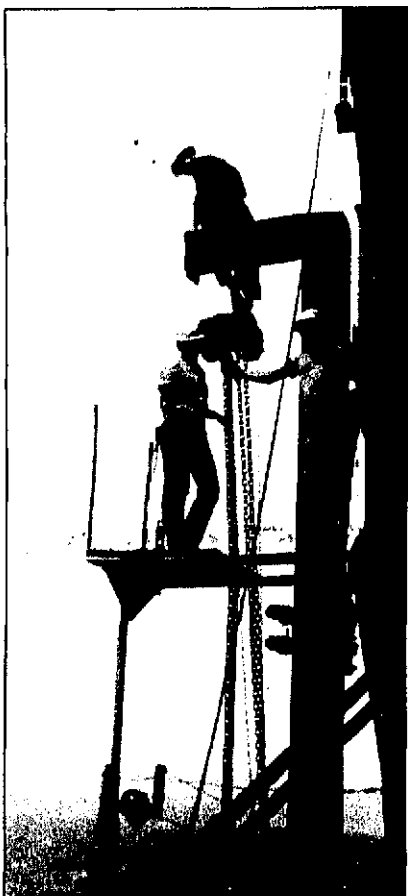
GOING UP: The first course of panels is attached to the tower. From here, The tower will begin growing at a rapid pace.



HEIGH-HO, HEIGH-HO: The side sheets are complete above the piston and the elevator tube is started, next to the partially constructed staircase. In this photo you can see the men heading to work on the staircase.



ALMOST THERE: In this photo, the work is being done on the fifth gallery of five total. Completion of the elevator shaft and stairway takes place during this phase.



SAY CHEESE: Workers near the top of the tower pose for the camera in this photo from 1955.

Wayne. At the urging of friends, I placed a personal ad with an online dating service. After many disappointments, I met a wonderful man from Kokomo. After meeting a few times, I brought my son to visit my new friend in Kokomo — our very first time in this city. As we neared this City of Firsts, the Kokomo Gas Tower was our first inkling that this just might be our home some day. As my relationship grew, the sight of the tower on each trip began to mean so much more. As we would come out of Greentown on Ind. 22, my son would sit up straighter in the seat and start to get excited as he would get his first view of the tower. Each time I glimpsed the tower, I felt such hope and such joy — in this wonderful man, in this vibrant city, in all that awaited us ... and in that wonderful old gas tower. It became the symbol of this wonderful life we've made here in Kokomo. Even today, after a year of marriage, the Kokomo Gas Tower means so much to us.

I can't tell you how saddened we were to hear the news that we would lose "our" symbol. The trip from Greentown just won't be the same. Each time we'll look up to see "our" gas tower, and it won't be there.

Thank you for letting me share our story with you (and your readers). I know the tower means a lot to many others, and only in the past two years has it meant something to us. But the emotions that it conjures up are very deep and very strong.

Cindy Morr, Kokomo

My memories are many of the ole "Tank" as we affectionately called it. I was a kid growing up in the shadow of the "Tank" in Gateway Gardens. We played many softball/football games underneath the tank in the Jefferson School yard back in the '60s and '70s. The guys used to challenge each other with "to be a real man you've got to climb to the top of the tower." Needless to say, I never became a real man. At the age of 12, I remember standing in my yard and actually watching the 1965 Palm Sunday tornado bounce off the tank (true story). I attended Anderson College and whenever I came home, I'd look for the tank, it would always let me know I was close to home. I'm gonna miss that ole tank. It's been faithfully there for me for the last 50 years. I hate to see it go.

Chuck McCoskey, Kokomo

Three years ago, my father and I were driving from the Marion area to our homes west of Kokomo. My father had Alzheimer's and would get confused as the evening neared. He was very worried that I did not know where I was going, so to calm his fears, I pointed out the gas tower.

I told him that it was close to home and he was like a little boy watching the tower the whole way home. I lost my dad not long after that, so when I look at the tower I think of it meaning that we were almost home for my dad.

Mary Dillman, Kokomo

I just spent (a recent) weekend in Kokomo and was very sad and disappointed to learn that the Kokomo Gas & Fuel Tower would soon be disappearing. For the last 10 years we have been staying in Kokomo at least three weekends a year, just to get away from home. It was always a game we would play to see who could spot the tower first. It will now be nothing more than a memory from the past.

The saddest part is another piece of Americana will be lost. That tower was a landmark of your wonderful city. It is part of your history. It should be treasured and preserved. I do not know the details of why it is being imploded; however my thought is every step should have been taken to assure its preservation. I only know that the sky will be empty on my next visit to Kokomo.

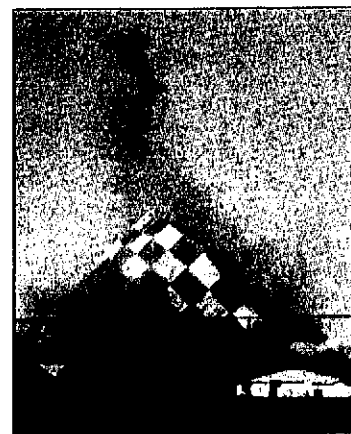
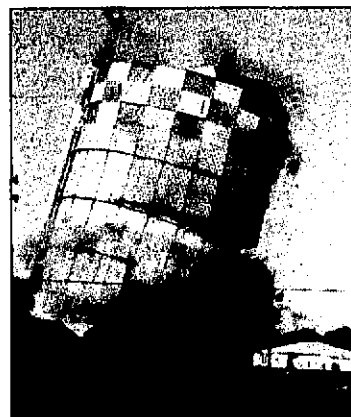
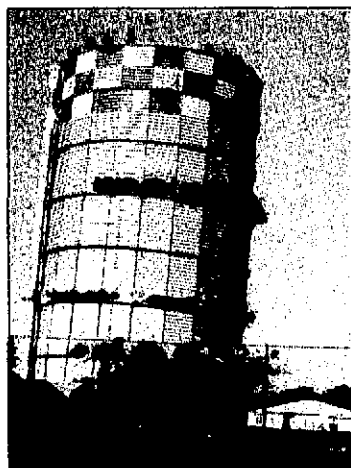
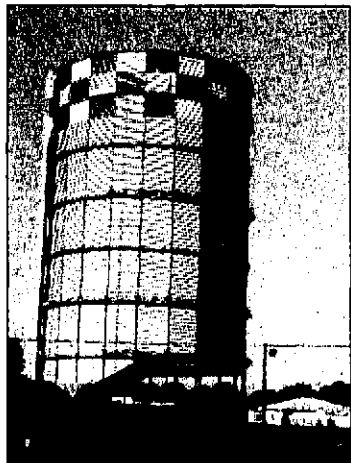
Rodney Reid, Lawton, Mich.

When I was younger, my family relocated to Michigan. We still had family here in Kokomo, so every few weeks, we would make the trip back "home" to Kokomo. The trip back was five (long) hours, and after we exited I-69 onto westbound Ind. 22, there would always be that sense of anticipation upon seeing "the Tower" off in the distance. The bigger it got, we knew we were closer to seeing all our old friends and relatives. Now, as a Kokomo resident with three kids myself, the Tower is a very reassuring sight to see as we're driving around town, and we can even see it from our front porch in the winter time. We'll all miss its presence, for it is, indeed, a symbol of home.

Traci Holland, Kokomo

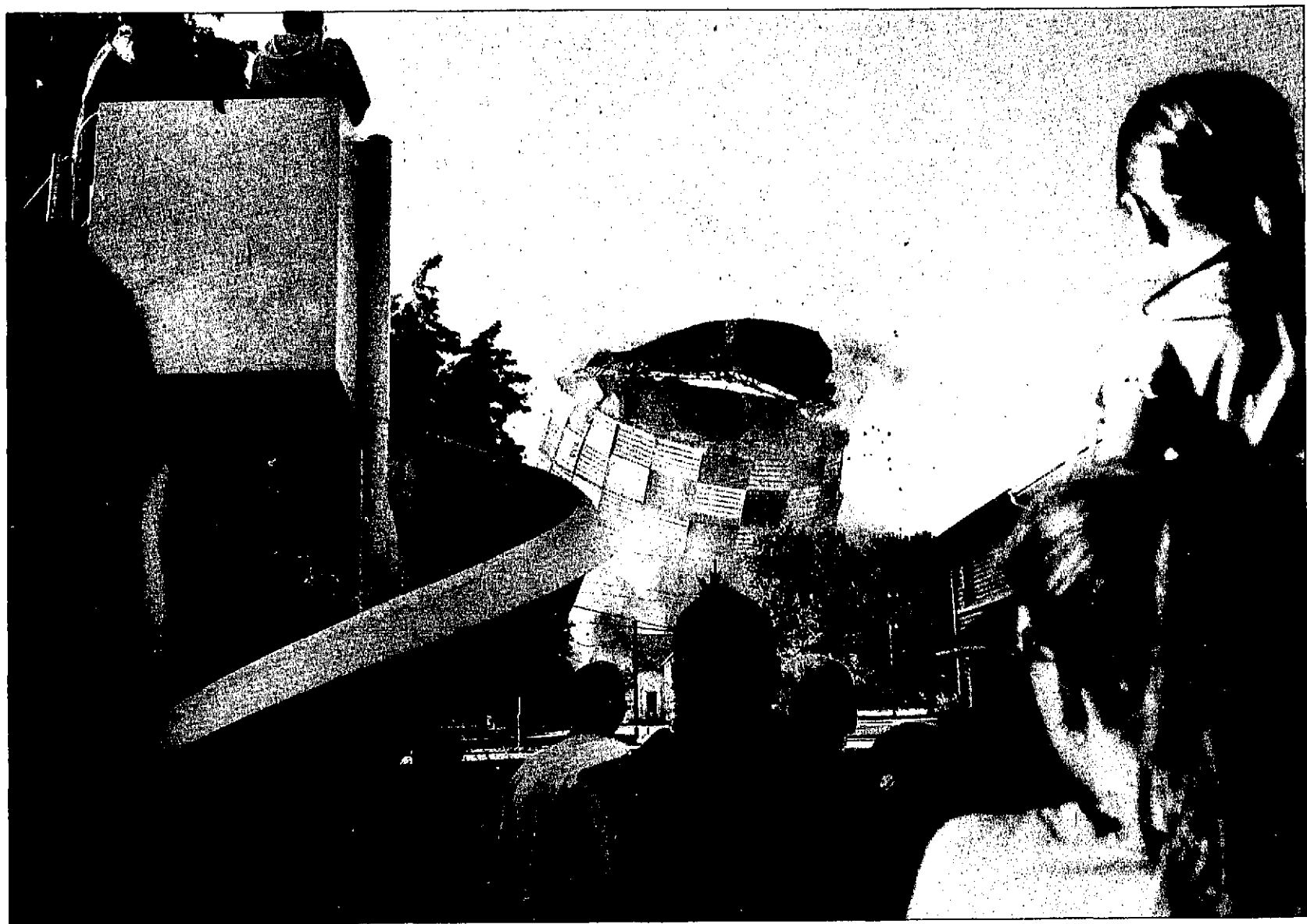
7:34 A.M.

Sunday morning, Controlled Demolition Inc. imploded the Kokomo Gas & Fuel Tower. The photos below by Kokomo Tribune photographer Erik Markov show how it fell step by step.



KT photos by Erik Markov

REST IN PIECES



KT photo by Tim Bath

MOMENT IN TIME: Residents of Garden Place Apartments watch as the Kokomo Gas & Fuel tower falls to the ground after a series of explosives weakened key points of the 48-year-old structure. The tower took nearly a year to complete in 1954-55 but took about 10 seconds to fall. The site should be completely cleared in about 6 weeks.

Tower implosion draws nostalgic crowd

Growing up in Kokomo more than 30 years ago, Miriam Thomas played with the Kokomo Gas & Fuel tower in the background. Although she has since moved to Berkley, Mich., Thomas drove nearly 300 miles to see the 48-year-old gas tower come down Sunday.

"It's always been here, my whole life," she said. "I went to Greentown [Saturday] to take photos of the tower from a different vantage point. It's sad, but it was worth the drive down here, definitely."

And come down it did. At about 7:30 a.m., a voice could be heard from near the tower counting down from 10 to the implosion. When the counter got to five, the crowd near Appletree Lane and Dogwood Drive joined in. After the crowd cried one, there was a huge boom that elicited a few screams and jolted many people.

Bright flashes sparked across the middle of the gas tower, and it began to fall. Black debris winged through the air and sent birds scattering across the sky. Only 10 seconds later, the once mighty tower was a heap of distorted metal in a cloud of dust. Claps and cheers were the only sounds in the air and the Kokomo skyline was changed forever.

"It was cool!" said Pam Wiggins, a former Kokomo resident who now lives in Sterling Heights, Mich. "I jumped 4 feet and then I grabbed my camera and tried to take as many pictures as I could. I've never seen an implosion before. You see explosions in the movies, but this is real. It's not fake."

Mark Loizeaux, president of Controlled Demolition Inc., the

Story by
KATHERINE LEWIS
Kokomo Tribune



KT photo by Tim Bath

SOUVENIR SALES: Bob Galloway, right, checks out T-shirts being sold by volunteers, including Justin Thatcher in the old Delco parking lot Sunday morning. The shirts were selling for \$10 with proceeds going to Bona Vista.

company that imploded the gas tower, said Sunday afternoon that he was pleased with the result.

"I was totally surprised," he said. "It went so much better than expected." Loizeaux said CDI tried to keep the tower from going more than 264 feet in front of the base, which would have put it in the yard behind Arnold Chiropractic, 801 E. Hoffer St. After the implosion, CDI measured the fall to be 101 feet from the front of the tower's base.

▼ See **IMPLOSION** | Page **A4**

BONUS COVERAGE

• After 2 p.m. today, visit our Web site at www.kokomotribune.com to see video footage of the tower tumbling.



INSIDE: A view from the air. **A4**



INSIDE: Implosion draws a crowd. **A5**

INSIDE: Awestruck visitors see all they can see. **A10**

6 weeks
... until all traces of the gas tower will be removed.

100 pounds
... of explosives were used to implode the tower made of 4.4 million pounds of steel.

Source: Controlled Demolition Inc.

INSIDETODAY

classified	C5-C8
comics	C5
entertainment	C4
lifestyle	C1-C2
local news	A3-A6
obituaries	A2
opinion	A9
sports	B1-B6

Vol. 153, No. 6



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WISH-TV WEATHER



Today
Partly sunny.
High 81
Low 62

Tomorrow
Partly sunny. **High 80**

WEATHER | Page A10

■ A1 designed by Steve Kozarovich

FIRST PERSON



Scott
SMITH
TRIBUNE
COLUMNIST

Greatest show on earth

As it turns out, the guy who won the raffle to implode the Kokomo Gas & Fuel tower really didn't "press the button" after all. They had a ceremonial button for him to press, but Controlled Demolition Inc. officials confided before the blast that they'd be the ones controlling the explosions.

And the ignition, when it came, was deafening. Standing in the media/VIP area on the west side of KeyBank, near the intersection of Plate and LaFountain streets, the view was completely unimpeded.

As the time neared 7:30 a.m., a woman standing in front of the VIP area with the raffle winner announced that "They're holding at 1 minute. There's some sort of security issue."

But that announcement was apparently off the mark, as around one minute later she began the 10-second countdown. I hurriedly pressed "record" on the Kokomo Tribune's digital camera about two seconds before the first charges went off.

It was several steps beyond loud, a sound that could probably have been heard out in Greentown. One war veteran standing nearby said afterward the sound of the charges exploding was like incoming artillery fire. If so, it's amazing more soldiers didn't come back with shell shock.

After being shown the multiple layers of material surrounding each charge Friday, I'd been under the impression that the blasts would have been somewhat muffled. And considering that each shaped charge was covered by inch-thick rubber conveyor belting, a 50-pound sandbag, a plywood box and finally geotextile fabric, it seemed like a reasonable assumption.

But not only did I see the flames of the explosions bursting through the coverings, but I also experienced an involuntary terror reaction. I don't think I breathed until the tower was on the ground. After the explosion, I looked down to where my 6-year-old son Henry had been standing, and then looked back another 10 feet to where he ended up.

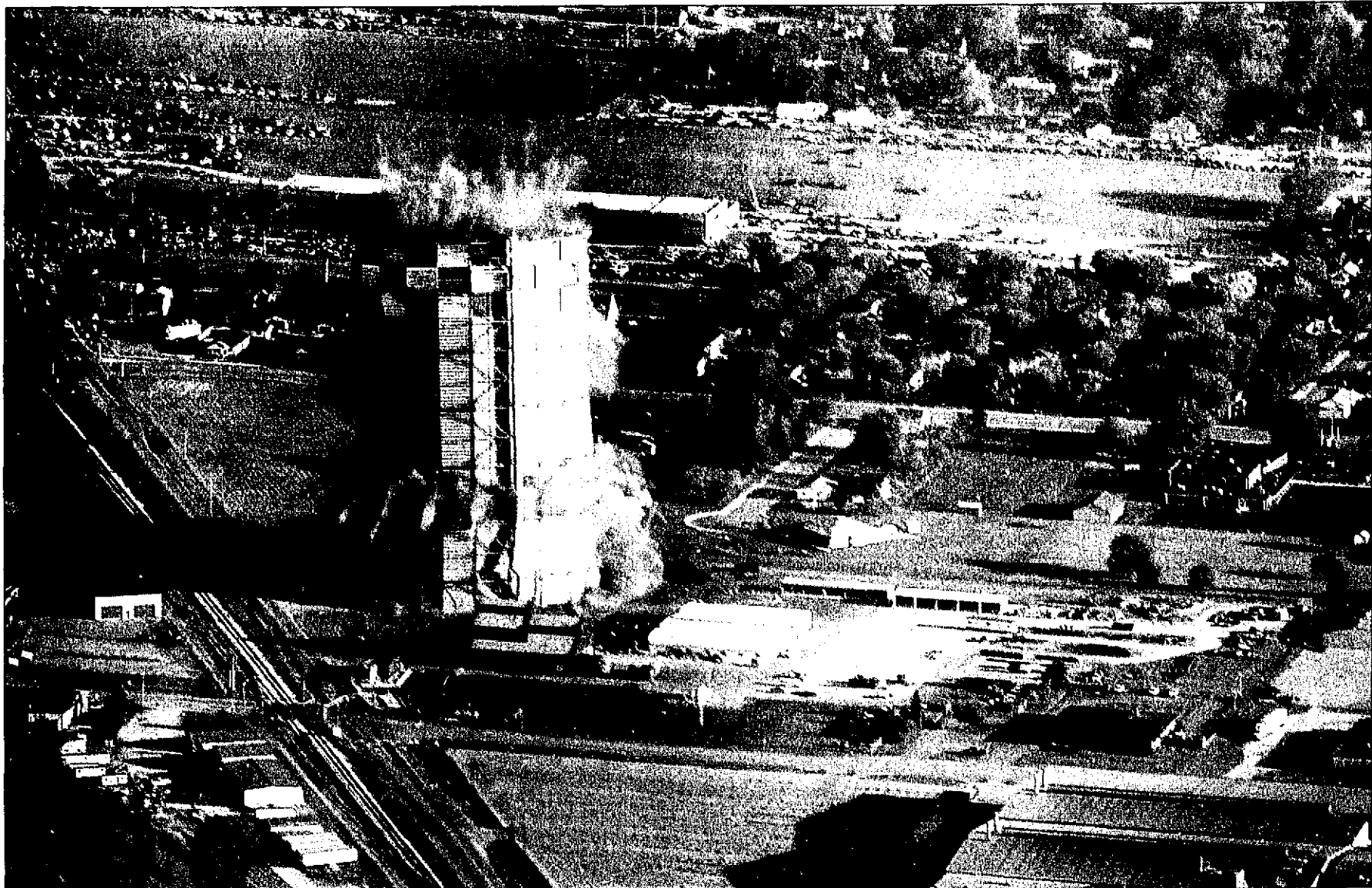
I guarantee he wasn't the only person in the crowd to jump back. Everyone standing within a quarter-mile of the implosion can thank CDI that they still have their hearing. Without the coverings, the blasts probably would have broken windows and eardrums. Even with the coverings, we felt a concussion more than 400 yards away.

The explosions happened in at least three distinct waves, with the ground level charges first; then the charges circling halfway around the tower about 50 feet up went off roughly at the same time a similar set about two-thirds of the way up fired. The last to go were the charges set all the way around the tower just below the halfway point and on the roof. By the time these fired, only a second or so behind the first charges, the tower was already in motion.

It felt as if it was supposed to fall, inside the fence bordering Home Avenue, and well away from the day care center adjacent to Kokomo Gas & Fuel's field. It fell quickly enough to make a "whoomp" as it touched down, but slowly enough for the air to push back the cut-away circle of the roof like a soup can lid or a badly glued toupee.

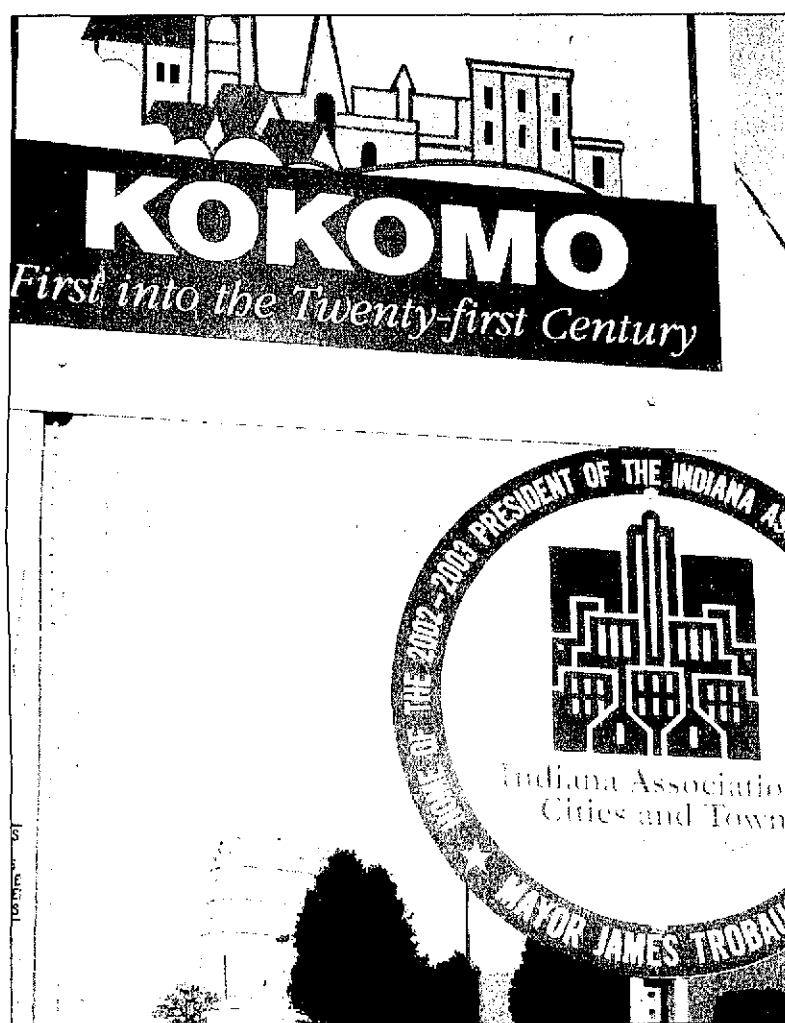
Whether it was the sound of the charges reverberating inside the steel of the hollow tower or simply the grind of steel on steel, the roar of the falling tower continued unabated until the crumpled structure had come to rest on the ground. Some people clapped; I started laughing at the sheer adrenaline rush of the experience. It was the sort of feeling I had after riding the "Son of Beast" rollercoaster at Kings Island — awe-struck giddiness that something so terrifying could be such a good time. They've got me on the digital camera exclaiming "Holy crap!"

A cloud of fine brown dust rose 100 feet or so into the clear, cool and still early morning air, but abated within a few minutes. From our vantage point, we didn't smell any odors. Cinergy PSI came out to inspect some power lines close to where the tower fell, but otherwise the spectacle seemed to have gone off without a hitch. As we were walking away, Henry suggested they rebuild the tower and implode it again next year. Not a bad idea, if you ask me.



KT photo by Michael Hickey

BOOM! Explosives in the Kokomo Gas & Fuel tower, as seen from a helicopter, are set off early Sunday morning.

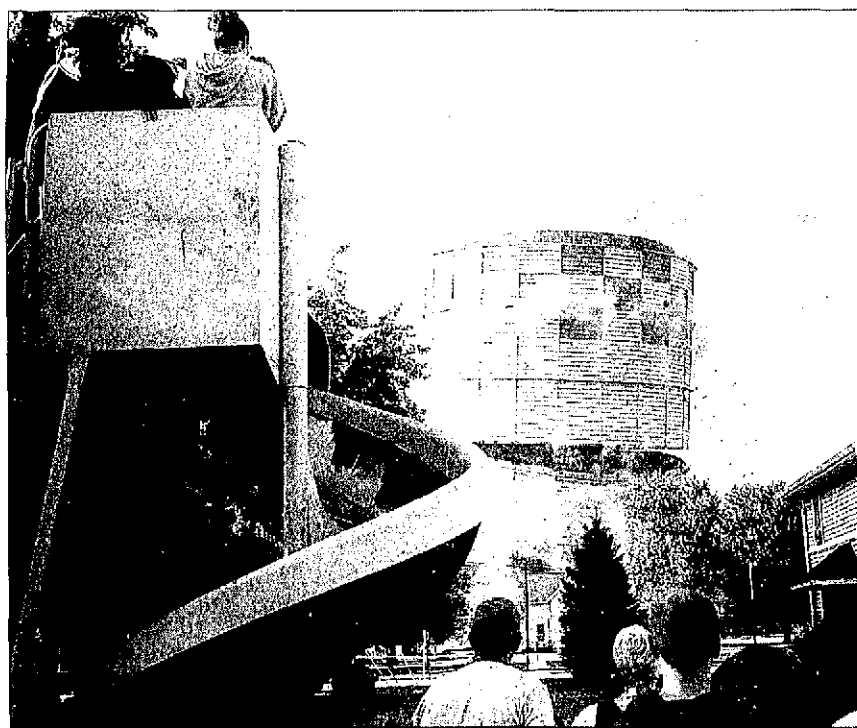


KT photo by Steve Kozarovich

WELCOME TO KOKOMO: The tower is shown during its fall Sunday from the intersection of U.S. 31 and Boulevard. Police closed off U.S. 31 for several minutes to keep drivers from being distracted by the loud booms.

"I couldn't help but scream. It was closer [to the day care] than I anticipated."

— Marissa McGowen, Khids Day Care director



KT photo by Tim Bath

CAPTIVATED: Garden Place Apartments residents watch as the top section of the tower "floats" down slower than the bottom half.

"It's strange to see it there [in a heap]. In the blink of an eye, it was gone."

— Ron Powell, Kokomo Gas & Fuel employee

Implosion ...

▲ Continued from page A1

"I was impressed it came down as vertically as it did," he said.

There were a few casualties, however, discovered after the dust cleared.

The tower's elevator landed on the corner of the Kokomo Gas & Fuel building causing minimal damage. Debris also brought down power lines along Home Avenue, resulting in a loss of electricity for some residents and traffic headaches for those traveling home.

Dave McFatridge, general manager of Kokomo Gas & Fuel, said the implosion went as planned.

"The only real incident came with the elevator on the side of the tower. It was cabled to the tower to fall, but the cable broke and it hit the side of our building," he said. "There is no real damage inside, but CDI said they would have the damage cleaned up [Monday], if there is any. To us, there is no real damage."

McFatridge said about 50 year-old windows were also broken out as a result of the fall, but those will be replaced as well.

Cinergy spokeswoman Angeline Protogere said about 850 customers were affected by the power outage. As of 11:30 a.m. Sunday, about 60 people were still without power.

"We were able to reroute power and restore service to all but 60 of them. The 60 customers are due to be restored around midday," she said.

Kokomo Police Sgt. Doug Mason said the implosion went off without major problems.

"We have some down power lines on Home Avenue and that knocked out a few traffic lights," he said. "The people have been very compliant. They wanted a good vantage point and we've had people who tried to go

where they should not be. But, they moved when we asked them to move."

Mason said KPD would keep Home Avenue closed until at least early today. He said motorists should be mindful of cars in front of them, as other motorists might stop suddenly to look at the tower.

"Drive safely and be mindful of traffic," he said. "And do not stop in the middle of the street to look at the tower."

Mason also warned would-be looters that off-duty police officers would be patrolling Kokomo Gas & Fuel to keep people out.

"People are trying to jump the fence for a piece of metal," he said. "It's like Elvis left his guitar or something."

Out of the shadows

The implosion was unnerving to Marissa McGowen, director of Khids Day Care, which stands in the former shadow of the tower.

"I couldn't help but scream," she said. "It was closer [to the day care] than I anticipated. I was shaking and crying. I am glad [the day care] is still standing."

McGowen did not know if the day care had been damaged right after the implosion.

McGowen has taken the names and numbers of all the children from the day care to call parents in case the day care has to be closed today.

McFatridge said the citizens of Kokomo should be commended.

"We want to thank the citizens for their understanding this was a business decision that was as tough for all of the Kokomo Gas & Fuel employees as it was for those in the community," he said.

McFatridge, who also thanked the city officials for all of their hard work, said today it would be business as usual.

"I am relieved," he said. "A lot could have gone wrong, but it didn't. It was quite

an interesting show."

Although it was an amazing show, it left many with a sense of loss.

Kokomo Mayor Jim Trobaugh said he had mixed emotions about the tower being destroyed. But, he said it was important for the city to look toward the future.

"I thought it went well. It was very safe," he said. "I think it's time we get on with it and look for other landmarks in Kokomo because we have several. We are going to continue to progress."

Trobaugh added that the decision was smart for Kokomo Gas & Fuel.

"It was a good business decision on their part to demolish it because it wasn't being used and they were paying to keep it up," he said.

Ron Powell, who has worked as a credit manager at Kokomo Gas & Fuel for nine years, said it would be strange to come to work and not be in the shadow of the massive tower.

"It's strange to see it there [in a heap]. In the blink of an eye, it was gone," he said. "Now we are going to see the sun through the windows. I like the shade better."

Loizeaux said crews would begin removing the wreckage one week from today. He anticipated the work would take six weeks to complete, weather permitting.

"After it is all removed, we will grade it out and seed it and then we will say goodbye to Kokomo," he said.

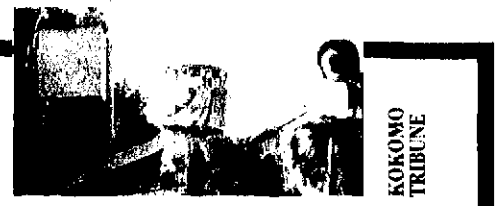
... from the front of the gas tower to the fence behind Arnold Chiropractic.

... from the ground to the top of the gas tower.

... from the front of the gas tower when standing to the front of the debris after the gas tower was imploded.

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TOWER IMPLOSION

FASHION FOURSOME:

Kandycie Hinkle, Lauren Host, Ashley Billiard, all 19, and Audri Host, 16, with their gas tower inspired shirts pose before the tower comes down as scheduled Sunday. The idea for the shirts came from Lauren Host, a Ball State University fashion design major, who asked her roommates Hinkle and Billiard along with Host's younger sister Audri if they would be interested in wearing them.



KT photo by Erik Markov

SHEA IN THE CITY

What Kokomo is abuzz about today



Shea
VAN HOY
TRIBUNE
COLUMNIST

Tower take-down turns into spectacle

■ Crowds flooded the intersection of Firmin and Home Avenue.

It's not often Kokomoans find reason to sit on their rooftops. That's more the speed of Chicago Cubs fans trying to get a sneak peek of the game in Wrigleyville.

But on the rooftops they sat early Sunday morning in the area surrounding the intersection of Firmin Street and Home Avenue for the Kokomo Gas & Fuel tower implosion.

The event — as big as could be imagined in Kokomo — took on a tailgating atmosphere, with people sipping coffee and eating breakfast in the beds of Dodge Rams parked at Kokomo Spring and the old Delphi Delco Electronics Systems' lot.

Todd Scoggins, 34, was born and raised in Kokomo, but drove up from Indianapolis for the implosion, which received heavy media coverage from his current home city. Scoggins was set to scale a step ladder in the back of his pickup for a better view.

"I brought my video camera and I wanted to get up and over the crowd," Scoggins said at 7 a.m., 30 minutes before the tower fell as scheduled. "Things come and go and I guess if it's not needed anymore, I'm OK with them taking it down. It's an interesting story and something that doesn't happen often. I went down to the [Market Square Arena] implosion and it was impressive."

Chuck McCoskey, 50, said the gas tower held significant sentimental value for him.

"I grew up right over there," he said while gesturing toward Garden Place Apartments, previously Gateway Gardens. "And I worked here at the Delphi plant for 18 years. Growing up, we played baseball underneath it. We called it the tank back then."

He said even though he now works at Delphi Delco's main plant, his route to work still takes him past the tower.

"It will be weird driving through and not seeing it tomorrow," McCoskey said.

As the tower's demise ticked closer, the city's paved arteries clogged and people selling commemorative T-shirts made their rounds.

I spoke with Kokomo native Kenosha Pigg, 51, as she got a last glimpse of the nearly 400-foot-tall cylinder.

"It's the last time we'll all get to see it. That's why everyone got up early to come out," said Pigg, who worked for Kokomo Gas & Fuel in 1970, before attending college.

Pigg and I were speaking at 7:30 when, without warning, a series of loud cracks startled the crowd. As a number of people jumped at the sound, Pigg turned her attention to the tumbling metal. As the dust settled, she seemed amazed by it all.

"It's kind of a shock," she said. "There's nothing there and it's hard to believe."

Ashley Dunlap, 16, said her 19-year-old cousin, Jessica Dunlap, was one of the people who jumped when the explosives detonated.

"It's weird not having it there," Jessica said.

Jim Scheffler, 56, brought his camera mounted on a tripod, which stood about 8 feet tall. Scheffler, who told me he had lived in Kokomo for nine years, described the wreckage as people filtered back to their homes and cars.

"It looks like a big ship has suddenly fallen from the sky to the earth," he said. "I didn't quite get the first ring of explosions on video. I think I got about 8 seconds of it recorded."

Even though the tower was no longer used to store natural gas, it still provided a viable service to the community.

"You always knew where you were at in town," Pigg said. "When I was little, it was so big, it always looked like it was following you."

Scoggins said that when he attended Ball State University in Muncie, he knew he was just minutes from home when the gas tower came into view. He joked that he might have a tough time finding his parents home now that the tower has been toppled.

"I told them I might get lost," he said. "I guess I'll know I missed my turn if I end up in Peru."

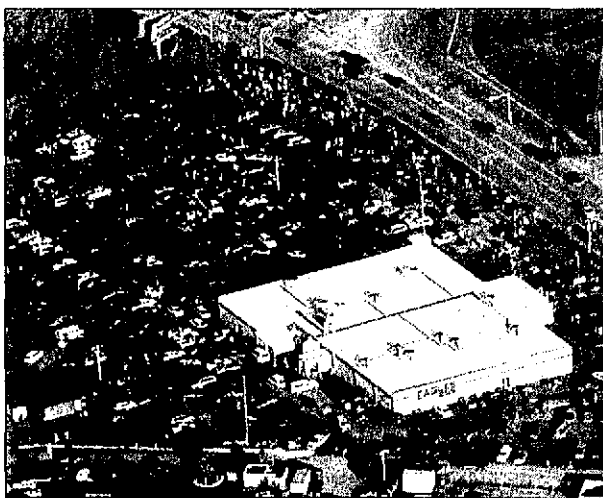


KT photo by Erik Markov

ACTION! Ed Hellmann readies his video camera as his niece, Anna Marie Miller, stands next to him before the scheduled destruction of the Kokomo gas tower Sunday morning. Hellmann is a meter reader for the Kokomo Gas & Fuel Company who showed up with hundreds of other people to the area around Plate Street to watch the tower come down.

STUFFED:

The lot of the Eagles' Home on Lincoln Road near Home Avenue was filled to capacity by interested visitors eager to see the implosion.

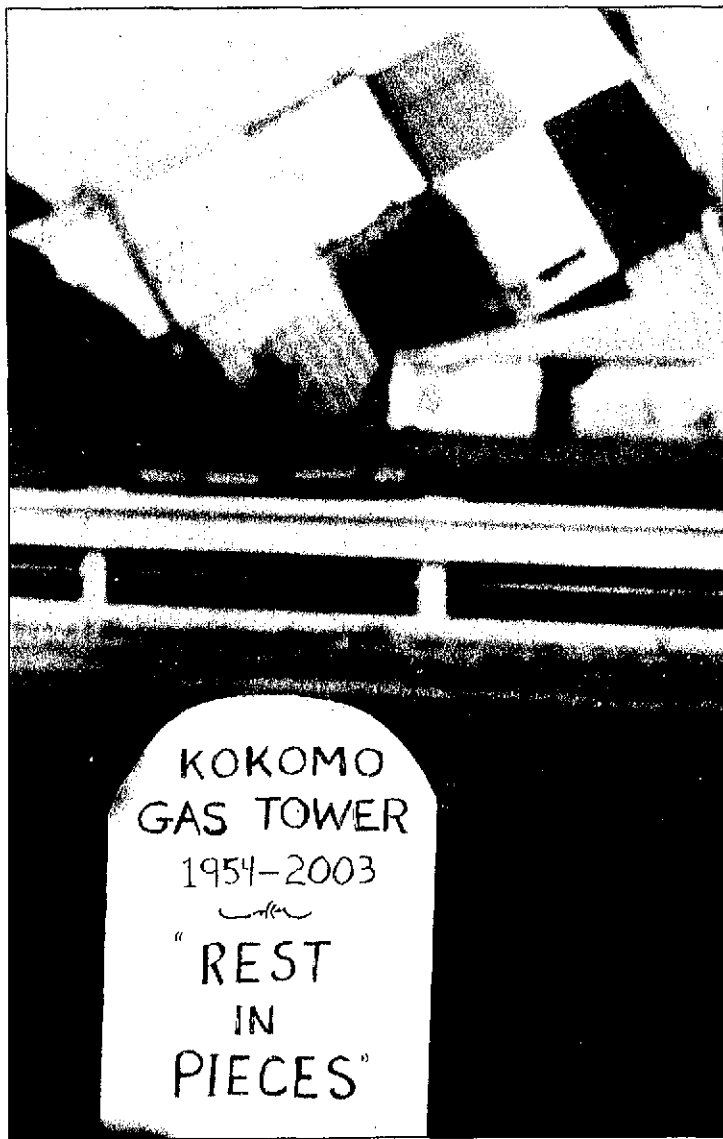


KT photo by Michael Hickey



KT photo by Tim Bath

EARLY EXCITEMENT: Adam Duchatau, Matt Duchatau and John Bass view and videotape the tower coming down while standing between buildings in Garden Place Apartments.



KT photo by Erik Markov

IN MEMORIAM: A mock headstone shows the dates of the tower's birth and death after the tower was destroyed.

It was a mainstay but like everything it will pass

Driving back toward Kokomo late Saturday night, I saw the lights burning on the horizon and it took a moment before I realized that what I saw over the low-lying fog were the lights of the Kokomo Gas & Fuel tower.

And I guess that's when it hit me: After Sunday morning, they'd never be there again.

The realization that this landmark — there from before I was born at Howard Community Hospital nearly 40 years ago — would be gone by early morning suddenly struck home.

I've known the tower was coming down for some time.

I've read the remembrances people have submitted to the Kokomo Tribune. And, in the

background of my mind, I wished that one of the options for its continued existence were actually viable, yet I knowing they aren't. I knew that a piece of Kokomo history was in its final days — just like the Continental mill and the old Delco plant before it.

I'd felt sad that it was coming down, but in a distant way.

As I drew closer, the tower gleamed in the moonlight — almost as if it were on stage under spotlights — standing proudly one last night, its final night.

I remember as a child the tower looming above the Kokomo Mall's J.C. Penney store, where my grandmother Hilda Dempsey worked for years, and my great-grandmother Virginia Burnsworth's tiny house on East Firmin Street near the bypass.

The tower always held a fascination for me. I wondered how far you could see from its top and what the world looked like from the summit. I remember the childhood wonderment recently at the thought that "PEOPLE ACTUALLY CLIMBED ALL THE

WAY UP TO THE TOP!"

I even worried at times what would happen if something would ever cause it to explode.

Nostalgia gripped me and I found myself driving towards the tower one last time. It looked its usual formidable self, a little scruffier perhaps with the peeling paint, but the only dissonant note seemed to be that two or three of the temporary white lights on the tower's northern exposure were out.

Growing up just above Highland Park, the green monster towered on the horizon of my youth, completely visible from my backyard where I played with friends. It was also where I watched trains hauling steel into Continental to be turned into nails and waved at their engineers and crews.

For years, the trains rolled in and out of the mill's property and past my house, with the soot from the furnaces coating the nearby houses. That structure came down in 2000, by then an eyesore which needed to be re-

moved, and Mother Nature has started reclaiming that site.

I went by the tower a second and then a third time in Sunday's early morning hours. I drove through my old neighborhood, and though the trees have grown higher, the tower was still visible.

To get to Washington School, every morning and afternoon, I walked east along Defenbaugh Street where the original Delco Radio plant, with its Quonset huts and glass-enclosed heat plant, stood off in the distance.

Sunday morning, I crossed the ground that once held those buildings and the parking lots that once seemed to have thousands of cars parked in them every day so I could watch the tower come down.

The changes in Kokomo in my lifetime have been enormous — and nearly all for the better. A community that doesn't grow and change instead stagnates and dies a slow death.

Yet, the changes leave me feeling nostalgic today.

Gone are the days you could come downtown to eat at Fenn's

Drugstore, go to the city's original McDonald's on Sycamore after the Halloween Parade or head to Scotty's. No more eating Sunday lunch after church at Craig's Restaurant on West Sycamore.

No longer will people go to the outdoor movies on summer evenings at Delco Park or play on the metal curly-Q slides and the train engine in the playground at Highland Park or cross the old steel-structural bridge over the Kokomo Creek dam.

This morning, the green monster lies in a discordant pile — the checkerboard top is still its most visible remainder — waiting to be hauled off.

They say that if you grow up with something, you become complacent to its existence and often don't appreciate it as fully as a newcomer.

After this weekend, I truly understand what they mean.

A lifelong resident of Kokomo, John Dempsey is a Tribune sportswriter and may be contacted by e-mail at john.dempsey@kokomotribune.com or at (765) 454-8562.



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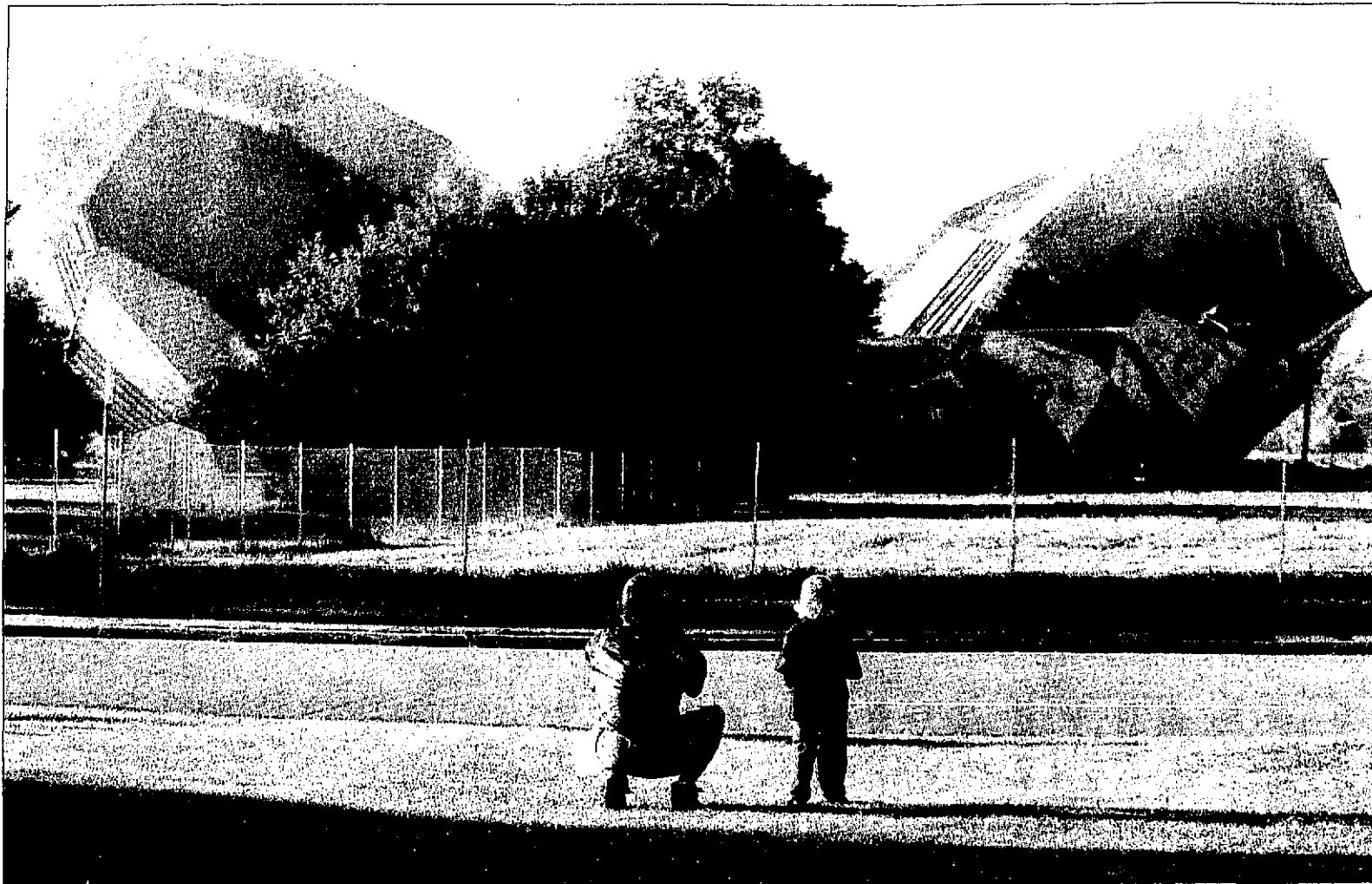
FORECAST 3

WEATHER REPORT

Expect the nice weather to continue for most of the state. Temperatures will be a few degrees warmer than yesterday with highs in the low 80s. Humidity will start to increase over the next several days. Highs will get into the mid 80s by Wednesday. Dry weather looks like it will last until late Thursday, when some scattered showers and thunderstorms will enter the forecast. Rain chances may last through Friday, but right now, it appears that another round of cool air will arrive next weekend.

EXTENDED FORECAST

MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI
more	humidity		scattered	
82	83	84	84	80
60	65	65	66	66



KT photo by Tim Bath

TOWER IMPLOSION

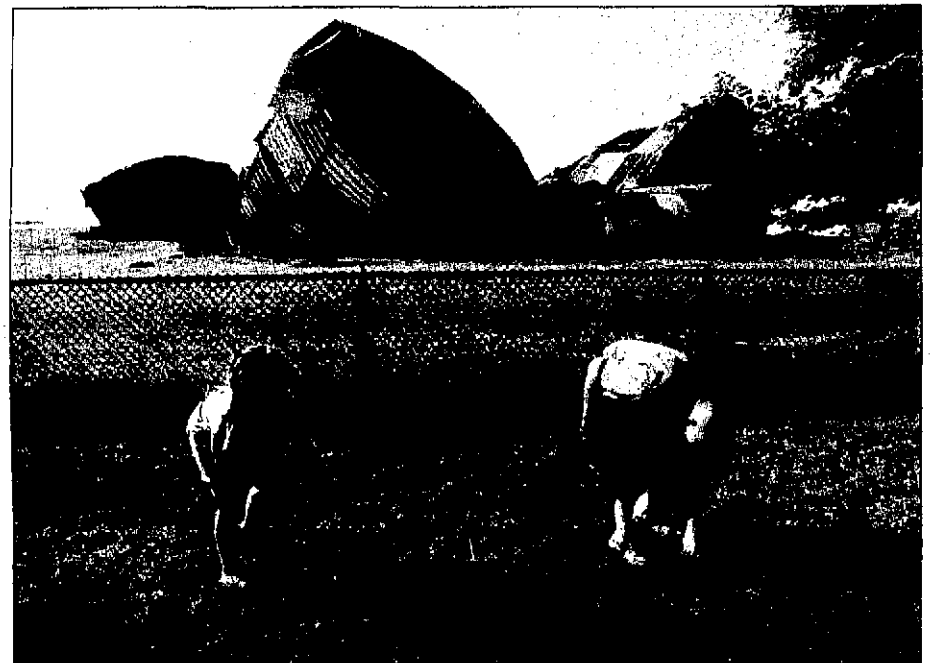
It was an awesome site for many after Sunday's destruction of the Kokomo Gas & Fuel tower.

CLOSER LOOK: William Hulet and his son Chantz, 3, stop to take some photos and examine the crumbled remains of steel Sunday morning.



KT photo by Tim Bath

TOWERING MASS: A Controlled Demolition Inc. employee checks out what's left of the tower Sunday morning. This is the top of the tower. The orange part in the middle is the central beacon.



KT photo by Tim Bath

SOUVENIR SEARCH: Nakia Bearrett, 8, and Travis Vandergriff pick up pieces of paint outside the fence to the north of the tower behind one of the homes along Hoffer Street Sunday.



KT photo by Michael Hickey

DOWN BUT NOT OUT: The remnants of the Kokomo Gas & Fuel tower can be seen from a helicopter after the successful implosion. Controlled Demolition Inc. said it will take about six weeks to clear the site. The Khids Day Care center can be seen in the lower right corner.

CLEANUP



KT photo by Tim Bath

SUCKING IT UP: Controlled Demolition Inc. employees remove debris that fell around the tower, including vacuuming this area around Khids Day Care Center on Waugh Court Sunday morning.



KT photo by Tim Bath

WHAT GOES UP: Employees of Controlled Demolition Inc. and Kokomo Gas & Fuel examine damage to a building, just south of the tower, that was hit by the elevator shaft.



KT photo by Tim Bath

DIRTY JOB: Street sweepers clean Hoffer Avenue on Sunday morning after the implosion of the gas tower.