

## IN MY OPINION

Caroline Porter

# There's just something about pigs

Folks from the area have thoroughly enjoyed the P.I.G (Partners in Galesburg) - 2000 promotion sponsored by the Galesburg Public Library and the Downtown Galesburg Business Association. Sixty decorated fiberglass pigs adorn various sidewalks, foyers, and even roofs around town. They are cute and clever. The whole project is fun to look at and was probably fun to put together, although I know Pam VanKirk, our tireless and creative head librarian, has some real stories to tell about transporting 60 fiberglass pigs to Galesburg.

A "Swine list," can be picked up at the library, with locations, artists and sponsors of the pigs. The names are hilarious. "HAMtrak," "Days of Swine and Roses," "Pigasso," "W.C. Squeals," and "Amelia Swineheart" are just some of the wonderful names created by Galesburg businesses and schools.

I've always been connected to porkers because I was born and raised in the hog capitol of the world, Kewanee, Illinois. Every year Kewanee has an enormous celebration the first week-end of September called "Hog Days," and unfortunately, I remember the very first celebration. To be able to go downtown and ride carnival rides in the middle of the street was just too exciting for words. And for several days and nights in a row!

I knew I was destined to be associated with the pig world when I landed in a German town as a summer exchange student. The name of the town? Schweinfurt. Well, of course, it means swine city - or city of swine. I received a rather frosty reception the night I told my German hosts that I was from the hog capital of the world. They said Schweinfurt was. Oops.

Closer to home, I've learned that Pittsfield in Illinois thinks they are the hog capitol of the world. They get around Kewanee's claim by saying they are the "Pig capitol of the world." Some people will stop at nothing. Lord knows how many other disillusioned cities there might be in this world.

My first week at Knox College I was in the



library and some students looking at a Life Magazine were looking at me and snickering. When they got my attention, they showed me a picture of hogs running down Main Street in Kewanee. Some dingbat had sent a photo from Kewanee's Centennial celebration that year. The caption under the photo read, "Main Street in Kewanee." My protests to these city kids that I really didn't come from a town where pigs run freely down the streets fell on deaf ears.

So, what to do with our fiberglass pigs now? There's already been a scavenger hunt. People are encouraged to vote for their favorite pig and the winner will be announced at an AUCTION of the pigs on August 20th at Standish Park from 1 to 4 pm. Flyers say there will be a "Swine" tasting by the Knox County Pork Producers, a celebrity hog calling contest and a visit by storybook character "Oliver the Pig." I would have preferred Wilbur from Charlotte's Web, myself, but he's old pork by now.

Hey — just this afternoon I was asked to be in the hog calling contest. When it comes to ham, somehow people always think of me.

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