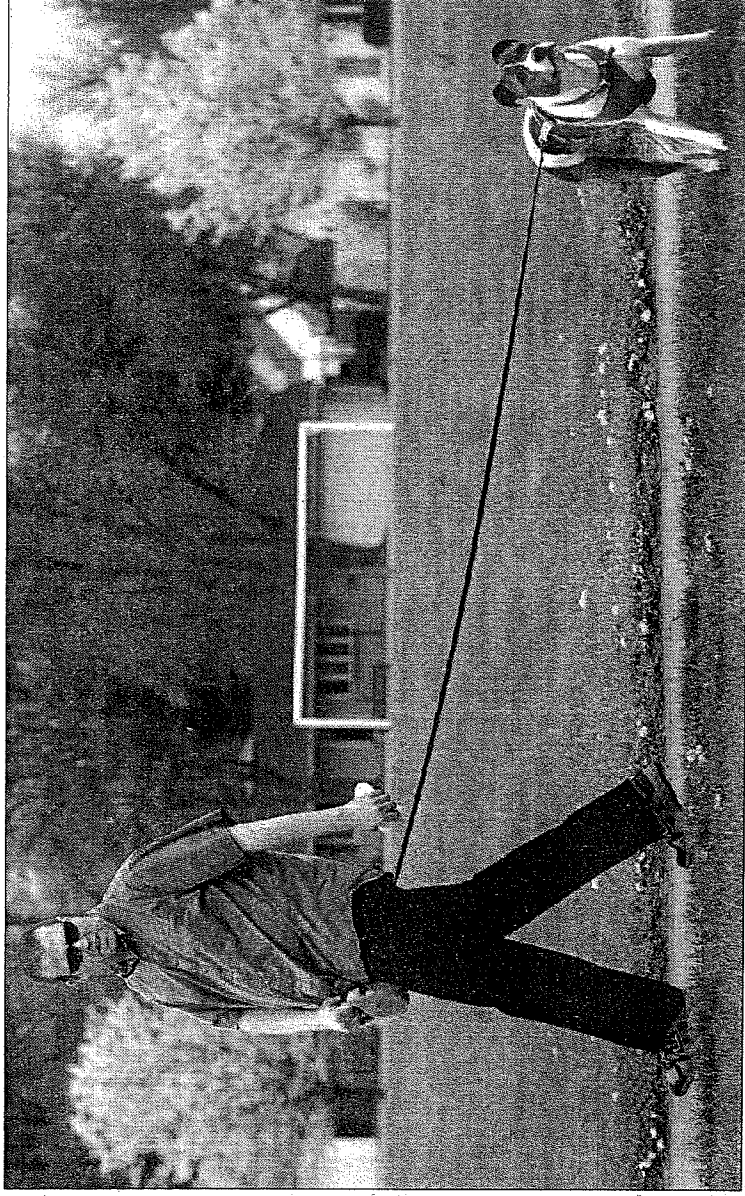


REACHING 75



At Southern View Community Park, eight-year Southern View resident Patrick Price walks his dog Cassidy along the one-mile perimeter trail on April 24. The village of Southern View will mark its 75th anniversary on July 17. DAVID SPENCER/THE STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER

'Simple' celebration planned for milestone July 17

By Tamara Browning
Staff Writer

SOUTHERN VIEW — Ernest and Thelma Stone have been residents of Southern View for nearly as long as its 75 years of existence.

The Stones, married 70 years, moved to this village on Springfield's southern border 68 years ago. They've lived at the same address since then, first in the basement until the upper part could be built.

"We just started building from the basement up," recalled Thelma, 89. "They'd holler about it now."

The oldest living married couple in Southern View, the Stones are among its 1,645 residents who have the opportunity to note the municipality's 75th anniversary on July 17.

Plans are to celebrate the milestone with a movie and some type of refreshment at Southern View Community Park (details will be in the village's June bulletin). "Just

family-type-oriented. We're small here. Just something simple and sweet. Nothing too big," said Nora Petrosky, village president.

The Stones said Southern View's growth back when they initially lived in the village was nothing like it is now. The population in 1939 of 500 grew to approximately 2,400 in 1989, according to "Welcome to Southern View's Golden Celebration (1939-1989)."

"Used to get our mail on the corner before they had house delivery," said Ernest, 90. "I made a mailbox with an oxen pulling it, made a covered wagon wheel and my son was sitting up on top of it."

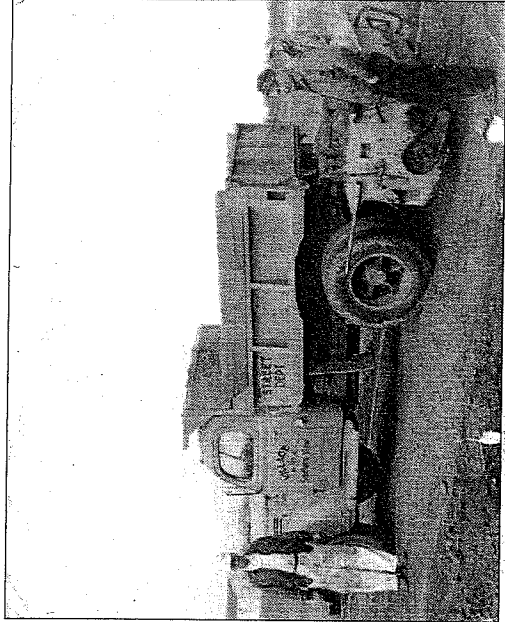
"We took a picture of it, and it showed Rita (Avenue), and there wasn't hardly anything down there."

Small, convenient

Among Petrosky's goals is to grow commercially the village



Ernest and Thelma Stone are Southern View residents who have been married 70 years. SUBMITTED PHOTO



A village of Southern View street department truck was on the job in January 1949. SUBMITTED PHOTO

"I told myself the only place I'd move in Springfield would be Southern View because I'm from a small town. This is a small town. It's just a small little village next to all the conveniences of a big city."

Nora Petrosky, village president

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that she said many people don't realize: is a separate municipality.

"I've been places, and I'll say, 'Southern View.' You get this, 'Oh,'" Petrosky said.

"Also, when I go talk to people, I'll say, 'I'm the president of Southern View.' They'll think of you as president of an association. Sometimes, I'll use the word 'mayor.' The word 'mayor' they understand better only to get my point across.

"The people who have been here a long time, I think they know we're here."

Southern View sought incorporation in the 1930s as a means to develop a water system that would be fed by the city of Springfield, according to village history.

After a Southern View election in which about one-fourth of residents voted (117 people for, 30 opposed), Southern View became an official incorporated municipality July 17, 1939.

Born and raised in Auburn, Petrosky married her husband, Gary Petrosky, in 1987. He had a house in Southern View.

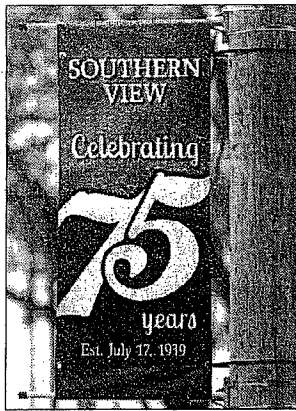
"I told myself the only place I'd move in Springfield would be Southern View because I'm from a small town. This is a small town," Nora Petrosky said.

"It's just a small little village next to all the conveniences of a big city."

A decrease in family sizes may account for the village's drop in population over the years, Petrosky said. Jim Foster, the village's trustee of law enforcement, said the closing in 1985 of the nearby Allis-Chalmers (Fiat-Allis, Fiatallis) may have affected population decline.

"There were a lot of people who worked at Allis-Chalmers who lived here in the village," Foster said.

"Probably a lot of those



Banners like this one advertising the 75th anniversary of Southern View can be seen throughout the village on telephone poles. DAVID SPENCER/THE STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER

residents left."

Treated well

Landlocked with some 800 houses, Southern View has its own police department, public works department, elementary school and two parks.

The property that's considered in the village is "all chopped up," Petrosky said.

For example, the village includes Southern View Community Park to the south and railroad tracks to the west. The Curve Inn, 3219 S. Sixth St., is in Southern View, but property around it isn't.

From Thorntons, 3005 S. Sixth St., to County Market, 2777 S. Sixth St., is Southern View's. Marine Bank, 3001 S. Sixth St., isn't.

"(People) don't know. It doesn't matter to them. As long as we know and we just take care of them," said Petrosky, who noted that residents whose homes are close to Southern View but are technically in Springfield are offered village benefits such as limb and leaf pickups.

"It's just taking care of the area. It's such a small, great community I'm just so proud to be part of," she said.

Recruiting business

Elected in 2005 as trustee and in 2007 as village

president, Petrosky's term has included cleaning up the overgrown tennis courts area at the village's original park named after former longtime Village President Jack McDonald.

"No one knew there were tennis courts here. They were all hidden by these humongous bushes," Petrosky said.

Other accomplishments under Petrosky's leadership include constructing and paying off the new Southern View Municipal Building completed in 2009, securing a \$100,000 federal grant for the police department that was used for news cars, computers and security cameras for the community park, and implementing a vehicle-impoundment lot that in a recent fiscal year generated almost \$25,000.

Petrosky hopes to come up with new ideas to generate revenue because the plan is to not raise the village's 6.25 percent sales tax. With that, she said she hopes to put out feelers for new businesses in the commercial district in the next year.

"We're doing great. It's a business we run here. It's a small business," Petrosky said.

"I feel honored to be here to serve. Life's too simple. There's no secret in government. It can be simple. It can be run like a good business."

Foster called Petrosky "tidy."

"Because if you want something, you better need it bad. She takes care of the money," Foster said.

Petrosky said she learned to be careful with money as a stay-at-home mother in a one-income household.

"You have to pinch pennies. You get what you need. You don't get what you want," Petrosky said. "I pass that along here. We get what we need and save up so if we want something or we really need something,

the money's there to do it. That's just common sense."

Petrosky said she's proud to be part of Southern View's 75th anniversary.

"We've got a lot of work to do. We've got a lot of work done," Petrosky said.

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