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Historic video of Milan is preserved

Summary:

(September 23, 2005)-With years and years of video on VHS collecting dust and gradually deteriorating over time, something needed to be done before the historical information Billy Thompson captured on his camcorder, depicting the town of Milan, Minnesota, would be lost. Videos of various town events and wildlife, spanning several years, as well as, some film dating back to the 1950s are just some examples of the variety of historical content held on the VHS tapes. Thus, The Video Presentation Project was formed to help Milan preserve these historical videos by converting them to DVD.

One of the videos that was converted, features Milan from 1950-1965. The process to convert the video, which was already once transferred from film reels to VHS, and preserve it further by converting it to DVD, was amazing. It was exciting to watch a film, which is more than a half a century old, and see how much times have changed. Some of Milan's very own local music was used to fill the void of silence on the video, which was so old that the approximately 60 minutes of original video contained no sound. Thus the compilation of Carol Ford and Jerry Ostensoe's CD, *Prairie Dogs*, and the old film allows for both a visual and audible stimulation of Milan's culture.

Michele Olson, a senior majoring in chemistry at the University of Minnesota, Morris, is working with the citizens of Milan to help preserve some of their town's history through the transfer of VHS to DVD. The digital conversion is carried out through the use of the program WinDVD Creator. This will allow people for years to come to sit down and watch a visual representation of what their town use to be like, and it is hoped that it will become a way to visually stimulate youth to become interested in their town's history.

Milan has received funds from the Community Assistantship Program (CAP) of the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs. CAP supports student research assistants to carry out community-initiated and community-guided projects that will impact their community. The students provide information or answers to questions that a group may need to better accomplish their goals or plans. The CAP's goals are to enhance the capacity of community organizations by providing access to research and technical resources available at the University of Minnesota, and to provide faculty and students with increased opportunities to complete useful community-driven applied research projects.

The Center for Small Towns is a community outreach program housed at the University of Minnesota, Morris and serves as a point-of-entry to the resources of the University of Minnesota. Small towns, local units of government, K-12 schools, non-profit organizations, and other University units are able to utilize the Center's resources as they work on rural issues or make contributions to rural society. Their mission is to focus the University's attention and marshal its resources toward assisting Minnesota's small towns with locally identified issues by creating applied learning opportunities for faculty and students.

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow

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