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# Old Neat Feat roller rink razed, only memories remain

By Felicia A. Petro/Senior Reporter  
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The former Neat Feat roller rink in Pine Township was recently demolished. The one-time area fun spot was closed in 1989 and had partially collapsed. The block building portion pictured was the home of the former owners Thomas and Cherie Rosak.

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After two years of legal hassles, Neat Feat roller rink in Pine Township has been razed.

"I'm thrilled its done. I don't have to sit in front yard and look at a pile of rubble," said Rose Albertson, whose home on 888 N. Broad St. Ext. is behind the former roller rink. Neat Feat collapsed over two years ago after it had been up for sale as a commercial building.

"I had insulation up in my trees. My kids could hear a big rumble. That winter we were getting mice more in the house than normal," Albertson said.

Neighbor Don Burkett at 874 N. Broad St. Ext., said the building wasn't kept heated so the metal roof caved after too much heavy snow collected on it.

Owner Thomas Rosak is in a nursing home in Pittsburgh and had no money to handle the problem. He and his wife, Cherie, ran Neat Feat after buying it from the former Bil-a-Lou skating rink owners in 1989. The Rosaks reportedly moved to Pittsburgh to be close to family when the aging Mrs. Rosak became ill, and later died.

The bank in charge of the property did not foreclose on the business, leaving the cost of tearing it down on the township, George Elliott, Pine supervisor, said.

"I was disappointed the bank didn't take any responsibility on it," he said. "I thought they'd foreclose but after the (collapse), they wouldn't. I think we did the right thing for the community. It took two years to get everything on the table."

The township's solicitor worked with the owner's lawyer to get permission to go on site to bring down the building.

Pine put aside \$15,000 of its 2011 state Community Development Block Grant money " normally used for housing rehab " to pay for the project, said Chris Conti, senior planner with he Mercer County Regional Planning Commission, which administrates the CDBG funds.

"We had come under budget," he said, with Sere day Trucking, Brookfield, Ohio, which gave the low bid for over \$12,000 to raze the building after removing asbestos.

An environmental study was done for over \$500 to determine the location of the asbestos, which was found in the floor tiles and exhausts, Conti added. Sere day tore down the building last week.

"It was a danger to the public. In general, they stopped using (Neat Feat) and it fell apart," he noted.

Burkett helped trim the grass after Neat Feat closed. He plowed the driveway when the Rosaks still lived there in the block building portion that didn't collapse, but was "leaning" on one side after the skating rink portion had come down, he added.

He went inside the block building part "out of curiosity," he said. The skates and sound system had been left behind by the Rosaks, Burkett said. The building was vandalized and stripped of its copper piping and kids would also party in the building after it became unstable, which scared Burkett, he said.

The township has a lien on the property if it's sold, but "the trouble is there's more owed on property than what its worth," Elliott said. The bank in charge has the primary lien, he noted.

The township secretary stated that the property is a non-buildable lot under the township's zoning. "The sewer has been disconnected for years," she added.

Albertson has been living behind the former roller rink for five years. Without the debris in the yard, "I do laps in the front," she added. "I kind of like it."

When it operated, "My daughter was 12 and would go across the yard and absolutely loved it," Albertson said. "Then a little bit after that, they closed it down."

Elliott fondly remembers going to the roller rink every Saturday from when he was 8 years old to his mid teens. When Elliott hit sixth grade, "I could go on Friday nights," he added. "I had many memories of it, and they were all fond ones. It was a great place for kids on a Saturday afternoon."

The decline of Neat Feat is sad, Elliot said. "It was a regional landmark. I don't know how many thousands of kids enjoyed many days out there."

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