

★ **Roll Call Number**

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Agenda Item Number

_____ **59** _____

Date _____ December 18, 2006 _____

Communication from Grant Bridgford, 4010 Welker Avenue, regarding the naming of a creek after the Griffin family.

Moved by _____ to receive and file comments.

COUNCIL ACTION	YEAS	NAYS	PASS	ABSENT
COWNIE				
COLEMAN				
KIERNAN				
HENSLEY				
MAHAFFEY				
VLASSIS				
TOTAL				

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVED

_____ Mayor

CERTIFICATE

I, DIANE RAUH, City Clerk of said City hereby certify that at a meeting of the City Council of said City of Des Moines, held on the above date, among other proceedings the above was adopted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal the day and year first above written.

_____ City Clerk

REGISTRATION FORM TO SPEAK AT CITY COUNCIL MEETING

59

FILED

To: The Honorable Mayor
and
Members of the City Council
City of Des Moines, Iowa
c/o City Clerk

2006 DEC 11 PM 3:49

CITY CLERK
DES MOINES, IOWA

I/We Grant Bridgford
(Please Print)

hereby request permission to speak at the Des Moines City Council
meeting of Dec 18th, regarding

A petition stating that the creek
flowing into Gray's Lake should be
named after the Griffin family. Edna
and Stanley Griffin were members
of the First Unitarian Church. And both
played big roles in the State of Iowa

Name: Grant Bridgford
(Signature)

Address: 4010 Welker Av.

Daytime Phone: 515-255-2987 : HOME

PROCEDURAL RULES OF DES MOINES CITY COUNCIL:

Part III. Agenda

Rule 16. Citizen Agenda Requests. Any citizen may request
the right to have an item placed on the Agenda (including a
request to speak) by filing such request in writing with the City
Clerk prior to noon on the Wednesday preceding the Council
meeting.

Part V. Citizen Participation

Rule 27. Citizen's Right to Address Council. Persons other
than Council Members shall be permitted to address the Council
only upon specific Agenda Items.

TROOP 50 EAGLE PROJECT

Grant Bridgford

TITLE:

**WATER TESTING, NAMING, AND
CREEK CLEAN UP**

Griffin Who?

Most people think of Des Moines as just the capital of Iowa, but there is more to this state than that. Included among the people who have lived here, is an important -- yet unsung -- civil rights leader named Edna Griffin. She protested against Katz Drug store that was located in downtown Des Moines and also filed a personal lawsuit against Mr. Katz himself, accusing him of violating the civil rights laws of Des Moines. This made her a hero to everyone who lived in Iowa. Throughout the late 40's until the mid 70's she lead marches and protests, advocating for the civil rights of African Americans in our state.

For Edna Griffin nothing came easy. Being a young African American in the early 20th century never was. "Edna found her way through college and married a doctor, Stanley Griffin, and she became a school teacher." (*Des Moines Register* 2 December 1999). One of the reasons why I believe Edna Griffin is a hero is that she had to go through her whole life putting up with discrimination throughout the United States. But it wasn't until when she moved to Iowa that she felt compelled to do something about it.

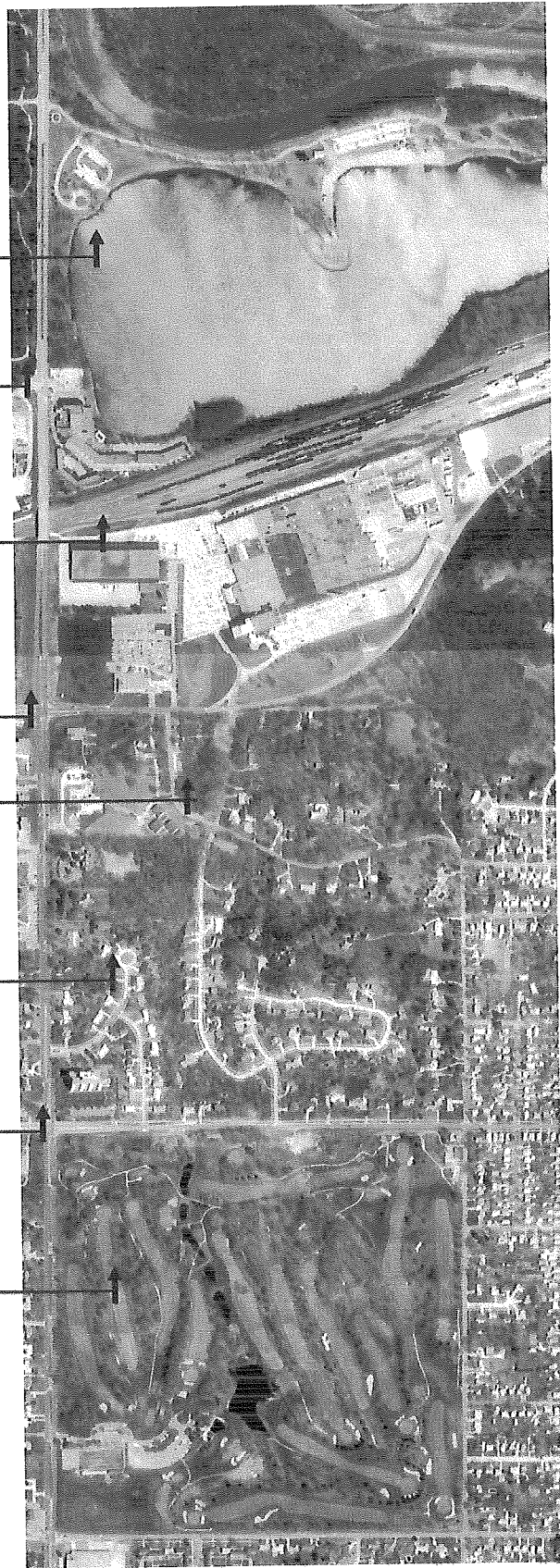
Downtown Des Moines was the location of Katz Drug Store, named for its owner Maurice Katz. "On a hot day in July, Edna Griffin and a few of her friends walked into Katz Drug Store. She sat down at the lunch counter wanting to order a ice cream soda, when she was refused service because she was black." (*Des Moines Register* 2 December 1999). Mr. Katz himself told Griffin the facility was "not equipped to serve colored people." (*Des Moines Register* 2 December 1999). At the time she was with her 1-year-old daughter and two of her friends. This scene made Edna and her friends furious. Over the next few weeks Griffin led sit-ins, picketed the drug store, and sued the owner.

The case went to trial and the jury was made up of 6 women, who supported her claim of violation of her civil rights and awarded her \$50. In December of 1949, Mr. Katz appealed the lawsuit to the Iowa Supreme Court. "The Supreme Court found Mr. Katz in violation of an 1884 Iowa statute making it a crime to discriminate in public accommodations." (Conlin, 1998). Griffin had won the fourth and final of her lawsuits against the store, it was a hollow victory. "An all-white jury again was on the civil case. And they awarded Griffin with \$1." (Silag and others, 2001, 77). This is perhaps, what Edna Griffin is best known for; it also ended open discrimination in public areas all over the state of Iowa. "Griffin's lawsuit against the store helped settle another case that was to go to court, the case settled when the defense attorneys were told of the Iowa Supreme Court's decision." (Conlin, 1998). In the end, this Supreme Court judgment became a benchmark of civil rights law in Iowa.

Many people say that Edna Griffin was the "Rosa Parks of Iowa" (Conlin, 1998), but she is so much more. Edna Griffin is a hero. If it weren't for her, we might still be legally discriminating against people of other races and nationalities. Edna improved the lives of Iowans of all races. We now are all considered equals because of Edna Griffin and her heroic movement for civil rights in Iowa. Even today people are still being discriminated against because of their race. When people consider what some early Iowans accomplished, they would see that Edna Griffin is a true hero of Iowa.

SITE MAP
From Gray's Lake
to Wakonda Golf Course

- Gray's Lake
- Fleur Drive
- Industrial Site
- Bell Ave.
- Church Property (First Unitarian)
- Residential Area
- Park Avenue & Fleur Drive
- Wakonda Golf Course





Creek Photo from First Unitarian Church (facing south)



Creek Photo from First Unitarian Church (facing north)



Close Up Photo of the Algae in Creek (before Creek enters calvert)



**Creek running into the entrance to calvert to Gray's Lake
under Bell Ave**



Water running into the creek from the Wakonda Golf Course, 300 yards south of the church property, showing high algae concentrations indicating high nitrate levels from properties south and east of this location.