



Amburg's love of city along the river shows with her work as alderwoman, resident

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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Grafton Alderwoman Bobbie Amburg has witnessed just about everything in Grafton from floods, to tension on the council to the beauty and tranquility of the community.

Amburg started as an alderwoman in 1993 and after four years ran for mayor and was elected. She was not elected for her next term as mayor and left politics for a while, but

returned as an alderwoman in 2006. She and her husband, Ed, truly love the community nestled along the river and tolerate the ups and downs, but consider most of living there something they treasure.

When the water cleared from the Great Flood of 1993, Grafton was devastated and some thought would never build itself back, but Amburg, Mayor Gerald “Windy” Nairn and others had a different idea. Piece by piece those in Grafton rebuilt the community.

“Grafton was next to being bankrupt and Windy and his team got things started again with grant writing and a lot of hands on work,” she said. “When Windy’s health took a big drop, I ran for mayor in the 1998 election. I got elected as an alderwoman just prior to the 1993 flood.”

Amburg was mayor for four years, then Richard Mosby was elected mayor of Grafton.

Tom Thompson and Amburg have worked together on many different projects since he was first elected and she said she has a lot of admiration for him.

“Tom has done a good job as mayor,” she said. “He was a superintendent of schools and worked in school administration before he retired and has the experience to do this type of job. He has worked with the Chamber of Commerce to bring businesses here and we are fortunate to have him.”

She married Ed Amburg in 1984 and he built their home on Water Street in Grafton in 1982. Bobbie’s first husband died in 1982 and was a previous mayor of Medora, so for years, she has been involved in politics one way or another. Ed Amburg was an alderman for more than 20 years in Grafton.

After the flood in 1993, Bobbie worked to save many of the historical buildings in the community, including the Reubel Hotel. The Grafton woman also leads a lot of the tourist efforts in trying to bring people to the river community each year.

Bobbie has not enjoyed the dissension that has occupied the city council in recent months, but has worked to be a positive force and keep everyone working together. The first major city council issue was about motorcycle riding and noise in Grafton, then came and then came the outdoor music, liquor licenses controversy.

“We worked too hard to get it (Grafton) where it is now,” she said. “Some of the problems we have had within the city council the past year have been the hardest things I have had to deal with since being in Grafton. Some of the aldermen and alderwomen want to go back to what Grafton used to be, but you can’t go back.

“Instead of giving the town a bad name and bad rap, we ought to be promoting it.”

More than anything, Amburg said she wants to see the Grafton City Council and people who reside there to work in unison for the greater good of the river town.

“I love Grafton,” Bobbie said. “I grew up on the river because my stepfather was a commercial fisherman and he had a fishing camp on the river, so I spent a lot of time here as a child. The river has been part of my whole life. I want us all to work together to make it a better community.”