

# City feels effect of difficult winter

By John Carpenter  
Gazette Staff

Plodding through another stormy weekend in the winter of 2007-2008, city crews and supplies have been pushed to extremes. The community again experienced a dangerous winter storm this past weekend with a combination of rain, ice, snow and then extreme cold.

Hardly an evening has went by this winter when one couldn't see a city truck out plowing area streets. Along with the snow removal, the city's salt supply is now nearly depleted. "We have had salt on order for some time now," said Mayor Dan Wilson, "but every city in our area is also needing salt. We really don't know if there will be any more available this winter, but the city crews will do the best they can with what is remaining."

Although we have had brief respites from the cold, the warmer temperatures have only hastened the build-up of ice. Most streets have patches of ice on them, and the only answer to eliminate the ice is warmer weather.

The Gazette would like to join the rest of the community in complimenting our city employees



The remaining salt supply at the City shed.

on the work they have performed this year under very difficult conditions. Despite nearly weekly hammerings

by Mother Nature, business and life has operated pretty much at a normal pace. This is due to the dedication that

all of our city employees have exhibited all winter. Thanks to everyone involved.

# School Board to institute "Distinguished Graduate Program"

By John Carpenter  
Gazette Staff

At their monthly meeting last week the Columbus Community School Board formulated a new program designed to both recognize distinguished graduates of Columbus Community Schools, and also show the value one can receive from an education at Columbus Community.

"Columbus Community School believes that a Columbus education and diploma enables students to do great things. We believe that there are Columbus graduates who have done great things and they deserve recognition by Columbus for their achievements as adults," explained Superintendent Rich Bridenstine.

The idea of the program is for the public to nominate worthy graduates for consideration. All nominations will then be considered by a committee, and a distinguished graduate will be selected each year to be honored at graduation ceremonies. Those distinguished graduates will then be added to a "Wall of Fame" in the school. The committee and parameters for qualification to serve are yet to be determined.

In order to be considered as a nominee, one must have graduated from either Columbus High School, Cotter High School or Conesville High School. They must have accomplished some item of significant achievement or contribution. Examples are achievements in career, country, community or service to

mankind.

Any individual or group may make the nomination of a person. The nominations must be in writing and must include the individual's name, graduation year and profile of accomplishments. The nomination deadline is April 15, 2008, and inductions will occur during the High School graduation ceremony. The selection will be made by unanimous vote of the selection committee. An individual or group may nominate more than one candidate, and those individuals not chosen the first year will be automatically included with the group of nominees for the next year. Nomination forms will be available at both banks, the Columbus Gazette, City Hall and the

Superintendent's Office. All nominations must be returned to the Superintendent's Office by April 15, 2008 to be considered for this year. "The Board's desire is to show new graduates what these individuals have accomplished in life, and to emphasize that they began their careers with the same item that the new graduates have, a Columbus Community diploma," said Bridenstine.

Time is running short. If you have someone in mind who deserves this recognition, please submit their name as soon as possible. It is a wonderful way to encourage our new graduates to attain the highest they can in their new life, and recognize those past graduates who have accomplished so much.

# City Council reviews request for additional sewage usage

By Jim Rudisill

A construction project by a Conesville family farming enterprise might lead to an increase in sewage treatment by Columbus Junction. Brad Bell told the city council at its February 13 meeting that his family was building a new facility in Conesville that would house up to 300 migrant farm workers, but the project would likely cause Conesville to exceed its sanitary sewer system's capacity because the family already houses around 450 workers in any building.

Bell asked the council if Columbus Junction would be willing to treat waste water that would be pumped from Conesville's lagoon once it reached its maximum capacity. Bell said the waste would likely be generated some during the late summer or early fall.

"Muscatine has agreed to take it, but Columbus Junction is closer," he told the council.

Environmental officials with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources told him the decision would be up to Columbus Junction, Bell explained, stressing the request to the city was from his family's enterprise and not the City of Conesville.

Columbus Junction officials said they estimated up to 30,000 gallons of additional waste water could be produced daily by the new workers, based on an average usage of 100 gallons per person. The city currently treats around 200,000 gallons of waste water each day. The officials said they would need to have an engineering study completed before committing to any action.

you don't have to open yourself up to issues unnecessarily," Mayor Dan Wilson said.

Officials said that could happen if the additional waste products caused an increase in the city's biological monitors. The officials said the city must maintain certain monitoring levels and if the additional waste caused those levels to raise, Columbus Junction would have to face the consequences from state environmental officials and not the Bell family.

Bell said his family would be willing to fund an engineering study if necessary. Wilson told Bell to contact him if the family decided to pursue the matter.

In other action, the council briefly reviewed its proposed 2008-09 budget. The proposal includes \$1,275,861 in spending and \$1,281,003 in revenue. This year's figures included \$1,259,355 in expenditures. A public hearing on the proposal is scheduled for February 27.

According to budget worksheets, the police department's budget is projected to be \$285,048, compared to this year's spending of \$258,577. Other 2008-09 department spending (with current spending in parenthesis) included the library, \$70,100 (\$65,091); parks and recreation, \$11,550 (\$13,450); mayor and council, \$8,612 (\$8,612); city hall, \$29,753 (\$25,200); water fund, \$247,150 (\$247,150); Road Use Tax, \$161,880 (\$160,360); solid waste, \$122,500 (\$120,500); sewer fund, \$178,600 (\$178,600) and miscellaneous, \$117,827 (\$156,685). The miscellaneous fund included

TIF spending for Colonial Heights, debt service, community development and the city's share of revenue collected through the voter-approved 1% sales tax that will go for construction of a new Louisa County jail.

During the budget discussion, council member Mark Huston said the city council should begin to review its water rates.

"I think it's been about 10 years since we adjusted rates," he said.

In final action, the council also examined a bid for street repair work from Kluesner Construction, Inc., Farley, Iowa. The company submit-

ted a \$3,623 bid to seal approximately 5,372 feet of cracks and joints on Colonial Avenue from Springer Street to the cul-de-sac. The company also submitted a \$5,980 bid for around 6600 feet of sealing and mill work on Main Street from the viaduct to Springer Street. Officials said the bid was considerably lower than earlier estimates.

Council members told city staff to obtain references for the company and additional formal bids from other providers and a final decision would be made after those were received.

# Civic Society receives \$1,500 Community Foundation Grant



The Community Foundation of Louisa County (CFLC) awarded the Civic Society of Columbus \$1500 for multicultural outreach and the Hispanic Cultural Festival \$1800 for their event. Pictured from l-r, Ken Purdy (CFLC), Hal Prior on behalf of both groups, Nancy McGill (CFLC) and Rondalyn Weyrick (CFLC). Photo by Vivan Jennings.

## Briefly -

### After Prom meeting scheduled

The Columbus Junior Class parents will hold an After-Prom Planning Meeting on Wednesday, February 27, 2008 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the Columbus Junction Fire Station. All parents interested in helping with the After-Prom festivities are invited and encouraged to attend. For more information, call Mindy Conaway during the evening at 725-6706.

### Alumni Banquet scheduled

Continuing the custom of holding the Columbus - Cotter - Conesville Alumni Banquet on the second Saturday in June, the 2008 Banquet will be held at Roundy Elementary School on June 14, 2008. Make your plans to attend the banquet and to schedule your class events to coincide with the date.

### Community Club to meet

The Columbus Community Club will meet this Thursday at Noon at the Civic Center.

### Girl Scouts to sell cookies at Econ-O-Mart

Girl Scout Troop 9010 will be selling Girl Scout cookies at the Econ-O-Mart on Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup> from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and Troop 9061 will be selling cookies at the Econ-O-Mart on Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

### Kindergarten Round-Up set

Will your child be old enough to attend school at Roundy Elementary, Columbus Junction, IA this Fall? Roundy Elementary is preparing for Kindergarten—If your child was born before September 15, 2003 and is not currently enrolled in the Columbus Preschool Program, Colonel's Kids Daycare, or the Great Beginnings Preschool Program, please call the school at 728-6218.

### ¿Usted cree que su hijo/a tendrá la edad necesaria para empezar el Kindergarten en el Otoño del 2008?

¿Tendrá su hijo/a la edad necesaria para asistir a la Escuela Primaria Roundy en Columbus Junction, IA este otoño? La Escuela Primaria Roundy se está preparando para Kindergarten—Si su niño/a nació antes del 15 de Septiembre del 2003 y no está inscrito actualmente en el Programa de Preescolar de Columbus, el Programa Preescolar de Colonel's Kids, o en el Programa Preescolar Great Beginnings, por favor llame a la escuela al 728-6218.

### Historical Society Spring Membership Meeting set

The Louisa County Historical Society Spring Membership Meeting will be held on Saturday, March 1, 2008, at 6 p.m. at the Louisa County Historical Society, 609 Highway 61 N, Wapello, Iowa. There will be a soup supper (cost \$6.00), plus a talk by Bev Karagin on Morning Sun artist, Laura Rock. Please plan to attend.

### County Cattlemen Banquet

The Louisa County Cattlemen's Association announces its annual Banquet for Wednesday, February 27th at the American Legion in Columbus Junction. The evening will begin with 5:30 pm Social and 6:00 pm supper. Following supper will have a comedian for entertainment with Awards for the Hall of Fame Cattlemen and Kirk Keltner Memorial Scholarship. The fun filled evening concludes with a fundraising Auction. All are welcome. Tickets maybe purchased at the door for \$10. For more information or tickets ahead of time contact Wade Edwards 319-631-1708, Bryan Townsley 319-868-5718, Tom Bonnichsen 319-729-2020 or any Louisa County Cattlemen's Board member.

### Shellbark Club to meet

Shellbark Club will meet February 21<sup>st</sup>, at 11:30 at La Casa Grande Restaurant in Washington (Old Captain's Table Restaurant). Roll Call: Something about Valentine's Day.

### Taco Supper to benefit School Track Program

A taco supper will be held Saturday, March 1, 2008 at the Columbus High School Student Center. Serving will begin at 3:30 p.m. and continue until 7:00 p.m. The food will be prepared by the Villagrana Family and all proceeds from the supper will benefit the Columbus Track Program.

### Tri-Rivers Conservation Foundation to hold auction

Tri-Rivers Conservation Foundation Board of Directors cordially invites you to our **2nd Annual Fundraising Auction** Saturday, February 23, 7:00 - 9:00 pm (doors open at 6:30 pm) Louisa County Conservation Office, 12635 County Rd G56, Wapello, IA . \$15/person or \$20/couple. Make reservations at 319-527-4530 or [Tri-Rivers@lccb.org](mailto:Tri-Rivers@lccb.org) More information and a complete auction list at [www.Tri-Rivers.org](http://www.Tri-Rivers.org)

### Financial Seminar at Victory Christian Center

Victory Christian Center, 122 Ninth St., Columbus Junction, will be sponsoring Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University starting Thursday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 p.m. The series will run for 13 weeks. Financial Peace University provides practical ways in which to handle your money. Topics to include but not limited to: Debt reduction; Savings; Long-term investing; Insurance; and Negotiating. More information will be forthcoming, but seating is limited. If you would like to reserve your space, please call Jolene McAfee at 319-728-5720.