

Carpenter's Corner - It's Parade Time again!

It's that time of the year, when everyone of Irish descent, or those who know someone of Irish descent, gets their green clothes ready for possibly the second largest holiday event of the year, Columbus Junction's annual St. Patrick's Day Parade. (The only event that might be more important is Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve.)

This will be our third parade, and it has now grown to include thousands of participants and spectators, floats and bands from throughout the nation, and hundreds of political dignitaries. As always, parking will be a problem, but it will be up to everyone to fend for themselves.

The parade is planned for Thursday, March 17th. We will begin lining up in front of the State Bank at 4:00 p.m., with the annual parade to kick off at 4:15 p.m. We will then

proceed southward, following the green stripe, until the viaduct (or before if you get tired or thirsty.) At that time all participants will have the option to either continue in whatever direction you want, go home, or come to the tavern for green beer and corned beef and cabbage. (I will probably elect the latter.)

As we've said in years past, in order to be eligible for the parade you need only to be Irish, know someone who is Irish, or want to be in a parade. We will accept any entries: floats, animals, cars, machinery, bands, dancers, singers, jugglers, or whatever you feel is parade-worthy (we are not a proud people).

So folks, get ready for another great salute to the Irish. And as always, if you feel the need to give someone a St. Patrick's Day gift, I will be in the office all day the 17th.



LIFE Microlending assists Wapello FFA

LIFE Microlending has been busy in 2011!

Louisa County, IA – March 2010 – In case you haven't heard the buzz, LIFE Microlending has been busy in 2011—just ask the Wapello High School FFA. Allie Hagberg and Ben Reschke, two students on the Wapello FFA Rodeo Planning Committee, are participating in LIFE Microlending's first small business development class of the year.

Planning required for the Wapello FFA Rodeo has greatly increased since it went pro in 2009. LIFE Microlending approached Wapello Ag Instructor, Irv Meier, about helping some students write a business plan for the rodeo in January, and Meier decided to sponsor two students. For the past month, Hagberg and Reschke have been attending the LIFE Microlending Small Business Academy, along with other local entrepreneurs working on plans for their own businesses.

"The class has been helpful, and it's beneficial to me because I'm thinking about going into business," says Hagberg, a senior with plans to attend Iowa State University in the fall. Meier is attending the classes so that he can help the students with the homework they receive each week.

For each week of this 12-week course, class starts out with a local business person presenting their personal experience with the topic to be covered, ranging from the legal aspects of setting up a business to sales and marketing tactics. A few of the local businesses who have shared their business experience with the group are Kathy Buxton, CEO of Grasshorse Media in Winfield and Elias Gutierrez, managing partner and CEO of Dofia Letty Foods in Columbus Junction. Last week, Jason Hutcheson, Executive Director of Grow Greater Burlington, shared information about an online, subscription based market research tool made available to Louisa County



small businesses for free through Grow Greater Burlington.

By the end of the course, participants will have written a feasibility plan for their new business idea or a business plan for their existing business—or rodeo. The cost of the course is normally \$195 per person, but thanks to grant funding from the Iowa Foundation for Microenterprise and Community Vitality and a Horizons grant, participants were only responsible for the cost of the materials, \$40.

In addition to the Small Business Academy, 40 Wapello High School FFA students attended LIFE Microlending's First Thursday Lunch-n-Learn last week. Guest speaker John Lawrence, ISU Extension to Agricultural and Natural Resources Director, presented to the group statistics about the economic impact of agriculture in Louisa

County, information about the ISU Ag Entrepreneurship program, and the results of the 2011 Ag Innovation contest. The high school students' lunches were provided by ISU Extension thanks to a Monsanto grant dedicated to promoting beginning farmers. Also in attendance at the event were local bankers and farmers.

Next month, the LIFE Microlending First Thursday Lunch-n-Learn, scheduled for April 7, will feature guest speaker Jason Yates, Iowa MicroLoan Administrator and Developer. May Lunch-n-Learn will welcome Iowa Dept. of Economic Development Project Manager Michael Gould. Both will be held at Corner Market in Wapello, 12:00-1:00. First Thursdays are sponsored by LIFE Microlending, the Iowa Foundation for Microenterprise and Community Vitality, and the ISU Extension Council. All events are

open to the public.

For more information about any of the information listed above, please contact lifelending@gmail.com. Website coming soon! In the meantime, check out the Wapello Rodeo at www.wapellorodeo.com.

The mission of the Iowa Foundation for Microenterprise and Community Vitality (IFMCV) is to serve as a catalyst for innovative projects and initiatives designed to improve the vitality of Iowa communities. The LIFE Microlending mission is to advance economic development efforts in Louisa County through the support of entrepreneurship and small business development by providing training, mentoring, funding and networking opportunities for Louisa County entrepreneurs, small business owners, and community leaders.

CJ Police to participate in (STep) Program

Beginning March 17th and continuing through March 20th, Iowa law enforcement will be out in force looking for traffic violators as part of the Special Traffic Enforcement Program (sTEP). This enforcement event is one component in a state-wide project to help change driver behavior and encourage motorists to obey traffic laws with an emphasis on buckling up, slowing down and driving sober. During the same effort in 2010, law enforcement reported three traffic fatalities.

Far too many lives are lost each day on Iowa roadways because drivers and passengers don't obey traffic laws. In January 2011, according to the Iowa Department of Transportation, of the 16-recorded traffic fatalities, 10, or nearly 77%, were not wearing their safety belts. Something

as simple as taking 3 seconds to Reach, Pull and Buckle could save 50% of those fatal and serious injuries resulting from crashes where occupants were not buckled.

Randy Hunefeld, sTEP Coordinator with the Department of Public Safety, continues to stress how important it is for people to buckle up, slow down, drive sober and obey all traffic laws. Hunefeld admits the safety message has remained the same over the years, but as long as tragic motor vehicle crashes continue, so will the efforts of law enforcement and the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau.

During the November 23-29, 2010 sTEP wave, 1,765 officers from 234 law enforcement agencies across the state reported 19,306 traffic violations. Included in that total were

1,173 safety belt, 7,485 speed, 2,913 equipment and 2,290 proof of insurance violations. Law enforcement investigated 823 crashes with 12 fatalities.

The next sTEP enforcement project will occur on May 25-June 5, 2011. For additional information you may go to www.iowagtsb.org or www.nhtsa.dot.gov.

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, 2006, and is not currently enrolled in the Columbus Preschool Program, KFC Preschool, or the Great Beginnings Preschool Program, please call the school at 319-728-6218.

Usted cree que su hijo/a tendrá la edad necesaria para empezar el Kindergarten en el Otoño del 2011? 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 el Kindergarten. Si su niño/a nació antes del 15 de Septiembre del 2006 y no está inscrito actualmente en el Programa del Preescolar de Columbus, el Programa Preescolar de KFC, o en el Programa Preescolar Great Beginnings, por favor llame a la escuela al 728-6218.

Briefly -

Conesville Firemen Fish Fry

The Conesville Firemen will be holding a Fish and Wing Fry at the Conesville Fire Station on Saturday, March 19th from 5:00 to ?? Adults are \$8 and 12 and under is \$4. Everyone is invited to come and enjoy a great time with great food. All proceeds are used to help finance equipment and activities for the Conesville Fire Department. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Legion Fish Fry

The American Legion will be holding a fish and chicken fry on Saturday, March 12, 2011 at the Legion Building. Serving will be from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. The price is \$8.00.

After Prom Committee to meet

The After Prom Committee will meet today, Wednesday, March 9th at 6:00 p.m. at the High School student center. All junior parents are encouraged to come. For more information please contact Cindy Johnston 728-5032 or 212-0330.

Blood checks at Senior Center

Glucose, Cholesterol and Blood Pressure checks will be done at the Columbus Community Senior Center on Wednesday, March 22, 2011 from 9 a.m. till 11 a.m. The tests are free. Come and be tested to help stay healthy.

City Council to meet

City of Columbus Junction will hold its regular meeting tonight, Wednesday, March 9, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. location New Civic Center / City Hall.

St. Patricks Day at the Library

The Columbus Library will hold a St. Patrick's Day Story hour after school on Thursday, March 17th. We will have music, stories, crafts and cookies. This will be a great time for kids K-3rd grade. Call 319-728-7972 if you have any questions and to register.

FFA Blood Drive

The Columbus FFA will be sponsoring their annual blood drive on Monday, April 4th from 1:30-6:30 p.m. at the American Legion. If you are 16, you must have a parent permission form filled out, which can be picked up in the high school office. Last day of donation must be on or before February 7, 2011. If you are interested in signing up for a time to donate, please call Katie McWhirter at 319-728-2231 x 3621 or email katie.mcwhirter@columbuscsd.org.

FFA Consignment Auction

The Columbus FFA will be having their 2nd Annual Consignment Auction on Saturday, April 2nd at 10:00 a.m. at the old Sajak's building on Highway 92. Unloading/Check-in times for consignments will be available soon. For more information, visit www.mcwhirterauctionco.com.

Spotlight at Victory Christian Church

Need an evening out with your family? How does a FREE evening out with the family sound for good, clean entertainment with area talent? Bring yourself and the family to Victory Christian Center, 122 Ninth St. Columbus Junction, on Saturday, March 12, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. as they host "SpotLight", a local talent show. This year's line up includes drama, vocal, instrumental and comedic talent. Its family entertainment at its best and it is FREE. If you would like more information, you may contact Jolene McAfee at 319-728-5720 or www.vccjunction.org.

Grandview-Letts Lions Blood Drive

The Grandview-Letts Lions Club will be sponsoring a blood drive on Thursday, March 10th, from 1:30-6:30 p.m. at the Letts Library/Community Building. To donate, contact Marvin or Margaret Thomas at 319-726-3286. Please eat before donating and bring photo I.D. You are eligible to donate if you last donated on or before January 13, 2011.

Soup Supper at Kingstom UMC

The United Methodist Church in Kingston (Pastor Earlene Lekwa) is having a soup supper on Sunday, March 20th, from 4-6:30 p.m. The menu includes Chili or Cheesy Chicken Vegetable, salads, and dessert. \$7 adults. 8 miles north of Burlington on Hwy 99.

Learn to knit mastectomy prosthetics

Our Shop, 106 Main Street, Suite 100, will be hosting a workshop on Monday, March 21st from 1-4 p.m. for anyone interested in learning how to knit mastectomy prosthetics from instructor Diana Weigert. Be sure to register by calling 319-728-5648, because space is limited and also to get your supply list. There will be a \$10.00 instructor fee.

Conservation Board to meet

The Louisa County Conservation Board will meet on Wednesday, March 9, 2011, at 5:30 p.m., in the Louisa County Conservation Board Office.

Ham and Bean Supper at Masonic Lodge

The Columbus City Masonic Lodge #107 will be having a community Ham 'n' Bean Supper on Friday, March 18, 2011, from 5 – 7 P.M. Free will donations will be accepted. Special guest speaker at 7 following the meal: Von Ketelsen from AM. 540 KMWT.

School Board to meet

Notice of Special Meeting / Budget workshop II, the Board of Education will meet on Monday, March 14, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. at the Roundy Library, 1212 Colton Street, Columbus Junction.

Shellbark Club to meet

The Shellbark Club will meet Thursday, March 17th, at 11:30 a.m. at the Pizza Hut in Washington.

Wine, Food and entertainment

Come and join in the fun! Enjoy fine wine and good food along with other entertainment. Saturday, March 12, 2011, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Two River's Lodge, (formerly the "Main Bar" at the Circle of Pride Rodeo Grounds), Hwy 70 south Conesville, Iowa. Cost is \$20.00 per person at the door; ALL Wine Samples and Food are FREE. R.S.V.P. by March 10, 2011 by calling 319-726-5322 or 319-725-6180 you must be 21 years old to attend.

Daylight savings time begins this weekend. Be sure to spring your clocks forward on Saturday Night.