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A Sneak Peek inside the new School's Sports Complex

By Mary Masonholder Wilson

"Wow!" is the first word that comes out of my mouth after viewing the new Columbus Community School additions to the existing school complex. There are two parts to this addition. One is the building, which will house the Columbus School administration and the Muscatine Community College classrooms. The other is the "add on" to the existing high school and will have an all-sports gym, a wrestling practice room, and other sport's related rooms.

My tour, led by school personnel, Todd Heck and Seth Schlee, began in the sport's complex. The first misconception that I had that was soon disproved was that this was totally a wrestling building. Not so.

The "big" room on the lower level is a gym. This gym is regulation size, but not huge; it will have bleachers on one side to hold about 100 spectators. The design is this way, as this room is mainly a practice gym and a classroom—a classroom for high school Physical Education classes.

Next year, the junior high will use the current high school gym for their Physical Education classes. They also will use the girls' and boys' locker rooms off that gym. The old gym and locker rooms in the old building will no longer be used for any physical education classes or practices.

Todd Heck pointed out several advantages to the new practice gym. "It will reduce the need for early morning practices. Right now, due to the gym shortage, some coaches are going with 6:00 AM practices. If school is canceled due to bad weather, often students don't find out until 6:30 AM, and many of them have already tried to make it to their early practice." Also the new gym will make it easier for coaches to schedule practices. Right now if the current gym is in use for another sport's game, coaches have to schedule practices around that event. Now they can practice in the new gym.

Or coaches can have practices in both gyms at the same time thus avoiding early and late practices."

The architects of the complex thought of everything. In this new gym, there are windows at the top. Only on the east side are the windows clear glass. On the other three sides, the windows are a special oblique glass that will filter out sun, not put any outside glare to the baseball diamond to the west, and will also be capable of withstanding lots of stress should a baseball hit them. Now that's planning!

Of course, locker rooms are in the new complex for both girls and boys. The girls even have a mirror wall complete with plug-ins for doing their hair. Coaches have separate locker rooms and offices. These same locker rooms will also be used for football games, etc. and have exits out the back for the sports areas to the west.

Restrooms for the public are right inside the entry hall. These hallways are beautiful, mostly due to the glass windows to the east that open up the view. Todd Heck could not stress enough how energy efficient these windows were. It was 20 degrees when I was there. He had me touch the windows in many parts of the complex. They were all warm; none of them were cold despite the outside temp. These windows are just that efficient, and they will keep the heat out in the summer.

On the upper level (yes, there are two levels to this complex), there are many other rooms. There is a training room for tape-ups and dealing with sport's injuries, etc. Money is currently being raised for a whirlpool tub for those that need heat and an icemaker for those that need cold on their injuries to be in this room. Next to this, game referees and/or officials will have their own room, to be used for all sports, complete with shower and toilets.

Then on this level is the wrestling practice room. It is large enough to hold 2 full mats. There will be mats around the walls for further protection. This room also has a locker



room and coaches' room.

Seth Schlee pointed out, "The big advantage to this room is that it is clean and sterile and well ventilated. This will reduce the chances of staff infection for the wrestlers. There was no ventilation in the old gym and this created an environment for germs. Now, this should not be a problem in this new complex."

Outside the wrestling practice room is a cardio room. This space is also well lit with windows and will be used for workout bicycles and other equipment.

Once again, Todd Heck stressed

the efficiency of the heating and cooling of the building. "It will take minimal heating and cooling units for this building. The building has the latest geo-thermal technology, which is pulling energy out of the ground."

The Columbus blue color has been used on both the exterior and the interior. This building is a source of pride for Columbus Wildcats and Wildcat fans. The design reflects a "classy feel" and will be well used in the years to come. Next week, the Muscatine Community College/Administrative Building will be covered in this newspaper.

A Need for Help from the Community

Once again it is time for our community to rally around a family that is in need of help. Last Friday afternoon the home of Jeremy and Letty Marin's was badly damaged by fire. The cause of the fire has not yet been determined, but the family has lost everything in their home. A fund has been designated to help the Marins, and contributions can be made at the Columbus Junction State Bank and Community Bank. Also, individuals are organizing fund raising efforts for the Marins. They are in need of anything that would be needed to help maintain a household, as the family escaped with only the clothes on their back. Currently the Marins are living with relatives. The Marins are a long time family in our community, and anything that you can give would be deeply appreciated. Fortunately no one was injured in the fire, but the effects of a fire of this magnitude have been devastating. So if you can help, please do what you can.

The Columbus Junction Fire Department, the Columbus Junction Ambulance Service, the Conesville Fire Department and the Wapello Fire Department assisted in the fire fighting efforts.

Community Club meets

By Donna Carpenter

The Columbus Community Club met on Thursday, March 21, with President Joy Lekwa opening the meeting. The Treasurer's report was as follows: \$400 from dues paid, \$200 to the Post Prom Committee, with a balance of \$7,356.22.

City Report: Mayor Dan Wilson passed around a plaque the city has received from Keep America Beautiful in Washington D.C. Columbus Junction applied for and was the recipient of this "Innovation Award" for the project in which the summer interns painted the crosswalks. Dan also discussed the levee project and street repairs, noting that the repairs will take place when the weather warms up. He also informed the group in regard to the development of the rental housing code and rental inspection program, the main focuses of the program being safety issues and general quality of life. Copies of the code are at City Hall if anyone is interested in reading it.

County Report: Paula Buckman indicated that there will be a budget hearing early in April and that budget rates will remain the same. The County is working on adding rock to gravel roads. The Louisa Development Group will hold their annual meeting in June.

The Community Foundation will hold an estate planning meeting, for seniors, on the afternoon of May 2 at the Senior Center. There will be

Bingo for Charity at that time. Charity Giving Vouchers will be given as prizes.

School: Jenny Laughlin told the group that spring activities and sports practices have begun and they have good participation. The Iowa Assessments have been administered and completed. The construction projects are over 80% complete. The wood floor for the gym is slated to be installed in June and everything appears to be on schedule at this time.

Extension: Kathy Vance passed out posters with information about Extension Week in Iowa, celebrated March 24-30th. The Intro to I Pad introductory class has been completed and an intermediate class will take place, with registration through SCC. She reported that the Wholesale Producers Webinar was informative and that a Citizens Academy at the Methodist Church for Burmese citizens is currently taking place.

Senior Center: Polly Prior said that the center has scheduled rentals for most weekends through June. The center is always in need of volunteers for Meals on Wheels. Please contact Judy, if interested. She invited Community Club members, on behalf of Paul Corbiere, Beat for Peace sponsor, on April 9 at 5:30 at Roundy Elementary, for a light dinner and concert performance in thanks for the financial support for the St. Louis trip in November. He stated that it was a wonderful trip and that students will speak about their experiences there. Beat for Peace will perform at the Cedar Valley Kite Festival in Marion, Iowa on April 20, where there will be kite flying exhibits.

In other business, it was moved and seconded to renew the membership of the Louisa Development Group. The group also moved and seconded the donation of \$200 to the Post-Prom Party Committee. The Community thanked the Columbus Junction State Bank for paying for the cost of the recent meal for the junior class. Joy noted that our newest member, Kip Trader, who owns the car wash, was in attendance. Earlene stated that the Girl Scouts have several cases of cookies left from their cookie drive. Two cases will be purchased by the Community Club and donated. Richard Herrick passed out fliers in regard to the presentation by Daniel Sellier of Reugny, France, on April 13, at 1:00 P.M. at the Letts Community Building. Connie Lewis

offered an invitation to a 65th Anniversary celebration for she and her husband, Warren, on April 20, at the Senior Center.

Trish Woepking reported that there will be a ground breaking held at the Habitat for Humanity House in Columbus City on March 22, at 6:00.

Melanie DeVore spoke about upcoming events regarding an Antique Tractors Group, asking the Community Club for financial assistance to obtain refreshments and supplies. She also spoke about collaborating with Mallory Smith in the development of a retail tab on the Columbus Junction website.

Finally, a plaque was presented to Susan Pretz in honor of her two years of service as Community Club president.



Snowman leaves for the Winter: City workers, Fred Lukavsky, Steve Tomfeld, and Jeff Carey, work to load the snowman displayed on the corner of Walnut and Main Streets. Tomfeld designed and made the snowman, which has added interest to our downtown during the winter. It is hoped that by removing the snowman, they are taking winter with it.

Briefly -

Shooting Stars 4-H Club Soup Supper

The Shooting Stars 4-H Club will be hosting a FREE soup supper for the congregation of the Pleasant Grove Community Church on Sunday, April 14, 2013 at 6 p.m. The group will serve chili and potato soups, relish, crackers and desserts with drinks as part of their service project. Congregation members and family members of the Shooting Stars are invited to attend.

Chapter CX P.E.O. to meet

Chapter CX P.E.O. will meet on Monday, April 1 at 7 p.m. at the home of Jenny Humphreys's. On April 15th the meeting will be held at the "Main Street Gifts and Antiques" store in downtown Columbus Junction. Hostess there will be owner Melanie Devore and Sherry Humphreys will be co-hostess.

City Council to meet

The City of Columbus Junction will hold a regular meeting of the Council today, Wednesday, March 27, 2013, at 5:30 p.m. at the New Civic Center/City Hall.

Conesville Fire Trustee needed

The Louisa County Board of Supervisors is accepting applications for a Trustee on the Conesville Benefited Fire District. This is a 3-year appointment. Applicants must be a resident of Louisa County living in the Conesville Fire District. Applications may be picked up in the Louisa County Auditor's office or online at louisacountyiowa.org. They will be accepting applications through April 5, 2013.

C.J. Easter Egg hunt scheduled

The Columbus Junction Easter Egg Hunt will be held on March 30, 2013, at 1 p.m. at Chautauqua Park. Children ages 0-10 are welcome to attend. To donate or if you have any questions, please contact Lisa Exline at 319-750-0801.

Energy Assistance available

Do you need help with your energy bill? If so, first you must meet the Federal Household Income Guide qualifications to be a candidate for this assistance. Help is available at the local Community Action Program at the Louisa County Center, 205 E. Access Rd., Columbus Junction, Iowa.

Grandview-Letts Lions blood drive

The Grandview-Letts Lions Club is sponsoring a Blood Drive on Thursday, March 28, from 1:30-6:30 in the Letts Library Community Room.

Lawrence Herrick presentation

On April 13, 2013 at the Letts Community Center in Letts, Iowa, the Frenchman Daniel Sellier, will give a presentation on Major Lawrence Herrick, an American pilot in World War II killed over France. Sellier's presentation will include slides, details of Herrick's final moments, information on military aviation and World War II. He also will tell of the bravery of the French people as they cared for and buried Herrick's body defying the Germans. At 1:00 PM on that Saturday, a procession will go from the Letts Library to the Letts Cemetery where a ceremony will take place paying homage to Herrick and all dead military persons. Following this ceremony, the procession will return to the Letts Library for the presentation by Sellier, which will probably take place around 2:00 PM. Coffee and cookies will be served following the presentation and there will be time for questions and visiting with Sellier. Major Herrick was born and raised in Letts and married Jeannette Helmick from Columbus Junction, Iowa.

Letts Fire Dept. Fish Fry

The Letts Fire Department will be holding a fish and chicken fry on Saturday, April 6, 2013, at 5 p.m. The cost is \$9.00 for adults, \$4.00 for children.

Easter Bunny at Morning Sun Care

Morning Sun Care Center, an ABCM Corporation home, is sponsoring its annual Easter Egg Hunt on Friday, March 29 at 2:00. Children of all ages will be divided into categories for the hunt and all will have the opportunity for pictures with the Easter Bunny. Refreshments will be served and the community is encouraged to attend. For more information, contact Angie Smith at 868-7751.

Museum to restore graduate photos

The Columbus Community Heritage Museum has recently been gifted with the large pages of composite photos of former graduates going back to the 1930's and up to the 1960's. To preserve these would require professional framing, and be somewhat expensive. We are asking for donations from interested people to fund this project. Any help would be appreciated, and contributions can be mailed to: Columbus Community Heritage Museum, 122 Maple Street, Columbus Junction, IA 52738. Any questions, call Lisa at 728-2175 or Gloria at 728-2124.

Blood Checks at Senior Center

Tami Nichols, R.N. from Colonial Manor will be doing blood checks at the Columbus Senior Center today, Wednesday, March 27th, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

United Methodist Women to meet

The United Methodist Women will meet in the church on April 3, 2013, at 1:30 p.m. A baby shower for Bryson Matthew Murphy will be held at 2:30 p.m. Lesson: Janice Buser; Hostesses: Sharee Owens and Judy Prior.

L-M Kindergarten Round Up

The L-M School District is in the process of identifying next year's kindergartners. If you have a child who will be 5 years old by September 15, 2013, or know of one, please contact the elementary office at 319-726-3634. Kindergarten "Round Up" will be Thursday, April 18th and Friday, April 19th. This will be a 2-hour session. Teachers meet with students and the Principal will meet with the parents. You must be pre-registered, please call the elementary office to set up a time at 319-726-3634. **Busy Hands Pre-School/Day Care** We are also accepting students for our preschool/childcare program located in the elementary building. Please call Busy Hands pre-school/childcare at 319-726-3634 ext. 200. The preschool and childcare have limited space to sign up soon.

Columbus Alumni Banquet

The Columbus area Alumni Banquet will take place at Roundy Elementary School on June 8, 2013. Social Hour will begin at 5:30 p.m., and Dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m. Special recognition will be given to the 50-year (1963) class and the 25-year (1988) class. Put the date on your calendar now! Tickets are \$10 and are available at both Columbus Junction Banks.

