

Keep Iowa Beautiful set to visit Community

By John Carpenter
Gazette Staff

May 6, 7 and 8 will be busy days for the city's Economic Development Committee as representatives from Keep Iowa Beautiful, Keep America Beautiful and RDG Planning and Design will visit the community and begin work on plans to help improve the town's entryways. This project began nearly a year ago when a group of Columbus Junction citizens: Tom Huston, John Carpenter, and Hal and Polly Prior attended a Keep Iowa Beautiful meeting in Newton, Iowa. One of the purposes of the visit was to bring back ideas for entrance signage to present to the city's Economic Development Committee.

But after discussing the city's situation with Keep Iowa Beautiful representatives Gerry Schnepf and Jim Gabriel, the discussion turned to a complete makeover of the town's entryways. The group reported their findings to the Economic Development Committee, and a line of communication was established between the two organizations. Later Schnepf, along with Cecile Carson of Keep America Beautiful, visited Columbus Junction and met with the Economic Development Committee. They explained that after witnessing the community's efforts in dealing with and recovering from last summer's flood, and the community's desire to improve the entrances, Keep Iowa Beautiful was interested in adopting the city's project and help by providing some funding and resources. A questionnaire for ideas was designed and published in the Gazette. Although not a large number of questionnaires were returned, many did have very good suggestions.

Now, after numerous meetings, e-mails, and discussions, the project is set to become a reality. The team will arrive on Wednesday, May 6, and stay through Friday, May 8. A full agenda has been scheduled for each day. Team members from RDG Planning and Design will be Mike Bell, Justin Platts, Thomas Wright, and Gary Lozano. Also involved in the project will be architect John Leusink, Gerry Schnepf and Jim Gabriel from Keep Iowa Beautiful, Cecile Carson from Keep America Beautiful, Al Bohling from Shive-Hattery Inc., and Roger Hunt, Field Coordinator for Trees Forever.

The City's Economic Development Committee is still interested in any suggestions or comments that local citizens may have on the project, so if you have an idea, please write it down and drop it off at City Hall. So get ready, big things will be happening in May.

Popcorn and a Movie under the stars



Location where "Popcorn and a Movie" will be held

Through the generosity of a Community Foundation grant, we are happy to announce that we are starting the "Popcorn and a Movie" program. This will run once a month, starting April 18th at dusk. We tried this Columbus Day and had a terrific turn out, so decided to make it a recurring social activity. It will be held in the parking lot of the Senior Center, weather permitting.

So come on down and have some free popcorn, watch a good movie, get to know folks in our community, and have a fun, free, and wholesome night out with your family. As summer nears, we hope to add some other fun activities to the evening.

For information, please contact Freda Sojka, 319-850-0020, or Tessa Pugh, 319-212-0422.

Area Athletes win Blue Ribbons



Two Roundy Elementary students, Rachel Harris and Sofia Valdez, participated in Special Olympics in Eldridge, Iowa, on Saturday, April 4, 2009. They participated in the 50-meter dash and the long jump. Both girls received blue ribbons. People that joined them were: Terry, Kelly, Melissa Harris, Ryan Granaman, Chuck and Peg Kirby, Twyla Peters, Jodi and Colton Heim, Rosa and Refugio Valdez, Jennifer Herr, Marianne Hunt and Ann Fletcher. Submitted photo.

For the Love of Beth

By Deb Bean
Gazette Staff

Randy Wehrman was one of more than 450 advocates that traveled to Washington, D.C. March 31, 2009 to support the Pancreatic Cancer Research and Education Act HR745. Wehrman along with patients, survivors and loved ones from across the country urged Congress to commit to doubling the budget for the National Cancer Institutes in the next five years. While increasing funding for the NCI is a critical measure, additional steps are needed to ensure that a sufficient amount is dedicated to pancreatic cancer research. HR745 will help secure those resources by establishing an initiative within the NCI to develop accountability and to encourage more investigators to focus on pancreatic cancer.

If you remember in January we brought you the story of the Wehrman family. Obama invited Randy Wehrman and his four daughters to ride the whistle train stop tour with him. His daughter, Sara is a teacher at Columbus Community School. It was a bitter sweet opportunity for their family. The family's only wish is that Beth Wehrman, their wife and mother would have been able to have survived long enough to see her dreams come true. Beth was one of Scott County's first and biggest supporters to Obama as well as a very good friend. While Beth was in the hospital she received a call from Obama and even though she was ill gave him this advice to pass along to a friend she had made on his Secret Service team. "Tell Marvin to Stop Smoking!" The train ride and

the inauguration would have been the dream of a life time for Beth. But unfortunately Beth passed away in October from pancreatic cancer.

The Wehrman's family goal now is to support funding for critical research necessary to find treatment and better diagnostic tools for pancreatic cancer. In 30 years, pancreatic cancer's survival rate has remained at 5%, making it one of the worst cancers with little to no medical advancement. The Whipple surgery, one of the only effective treatment options, is only available to about 20% of patients diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Even with the surgery, recurrence is very high.

The same number of deaths occur from pancreatic cancer each year as from breast cancer, yet breast cancer receives \$600 million in research funds while pancreatic cancer receives less than \$100 million. "While we certainly do not wish for cut backs among other cancer research, we feel it's critical to increase the funding for pancreatic. It's reasonable to think if we find a cure and treatment options for the worst of cancers, all other cancer patients will also benefit. Breast cancer is no longer a death sentence, and you can see the fruits of the research. We hope someday pancreatic cancer patients will have the same hope," states Leah White, sister to Sara.

The week before Christmas 2007, they attempted the Whipple surgery on Beth. "Three hours in, they closed her up and gathered my sisters, father and I into a room. Due to the proximity of her tumor to a major artery, my mom was not a candidate

for the surgery, and we were told the mean survival rate was usually about 6 months. At the time, I was 4 months pregnant with my first child," states White. The family asked about other treatment options and were basically told they could try a few, but the prognosis was grim. It was death sentence for Beth.

"As children of a parent who died from pancreatic cancer, my sisters and I are 20% more likely to develop this disease. We are hopeful we can find better treatment plans so if, God forbid, my sisters or I were to have pancreatic cancer, we may have a better chance at beating it," agrees Leah and Sara.

Once the Pancreatic Cancer Research and Education Act is enacted and fully funded it will provide a greater focus on this disease and will provide the National Cancer Institute with the tools it needs to develop the diagnostic methods and treatments that are currently lacking for pancreatic cancer patients.

This year over 38,000 Americans will be diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and nearly 34,000 will die. The five year survival rate is less than 5 percent and has remained largely unchanged in the last thirty years, largely because early detection tools and effective treatments have not been developed. Less than 2 percent of the National Cancer Institute's federal research funding is currently allocated to pancreatic cancer.

The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network will enlist volunteer advocates like the Wehrman family to help ensure their U.S. Representatives know about the Pancreatic Cancer Research and Education Act HR745.

To learn more about the organization efforts visit www.pancreatic.org.

Upcoming Reunions

Winfield-Mt. Union Alumni Banquet

The Winfield-Mt. Union Alumni Association is hosting the 100th Annual banquet to be held Saturday, May 23, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. The banquet will be held in the Winfield gymnasium. This is a special year so we are asking if you have any special memorabilia to share, such as school sports uniforms, pictures, annuals or such items from the past, please bring them early so they can be put on display. There will also be souvenir coffee mugs available for sale in a limited quantity. Tickets are \$10.00 per plate for all alumni and guests for the buffet, which will be catered by Pork's Restaurant. Reservations may be made to Frances Lowe, P.O. Box 5, Winfield, IA 52659, phone 319-257-6784 or to Wanda Linder, 606 W Central Ave, Apt. 9, Winfield, IA 52659, phone 319-257-6724. If you wish to reserve a coffee mug, please let them know. Reservations can be made by email at pking@iowatelecom.net, also but please designate your class year. Deadline for receiving reservations is Wednesday, May 13, 2009. The Alumni Association would appreciate an update of any name or address changes. A casual coffee will be hosted by the Winfield Chamber of Commerce in the school lunchroom from 3:00-6:00 p.m. on the afternoon of May 23rd. This is a time for visiting and catching up with old friends.

Wapello Alumni Banquet

Last Call. Are you interested in having an all school alumni banquet in 2010? Come to the meeting in the Ambulance Barn in Wapello on Tuesday, April 14th, 2009 at 6:30 P.M. If there are not enough in attendance at the meeting there will not be an All School Alumni Banquet in 2010.

Conesville School Reunion

May 23, 2009 is the scheduled date for the Conesville School Reunion. Invitations are being sent but anyone interested in Conesville and/or the old school is invited to attend. You don't need to be a alumni, just show some interest and you're in. Registration will begin at 12:00 noon with a full meal immediately following @ 12:30 p.m. catered by Kalona Kountry Katering. You do need a reservation. Any questions can be answered and/or reservation made by calling Fran @ 319-728-2319 or Rose @ 319-728-2027. See you there.

Briefly -

Easter Egg Hunt this Saturday

The Columbus Junction Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Saturday, April 11th at 1:00 p.m., at the Chautauqua Park. Ages 0-10 are welcome to attend. Anybody interested in donating candy or money, please contact Lisa at 319-750-0801.

Legion Auxiliary to meet

The American Legion Auxiliary will meet Tuesday evening, April 14th, at 7 p.m. Corrinne Moyer will be hostess.

Story Hour at the Library

Story Hour: Tuesday, April 14th after school until 5 p.m., for K-3rd grade. Featuring Beatrix Potter stories, movie and craft. Come celebrate April!

City Council meets tonight

The Columbus Junction City Council will meet today, Wednesday, April 8th, 2009, at 5:30 p.m., at the New Civic Center/City Hall.

Mealsite in need of volunteers

The Congregate Mealsite is looking for volunteers to help with the delivery of our Home Delivered Meals. Please call Barbara at 319-728-2412, Monday-Friday between the hours of 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Etude Club Spring Show

The public is invited to attend Etude Club's annual Spring Show, which will be presented on Tuesday, April 14, 2009, at 7 p.m., in the United Methodist Church of Columbus Junction. You can experience an evening of entertainment as you "Put On A Happy Face" and listen to happy songs you cannot stop singing! Refreshments will be served following the show.

Free Coffee at Mealsite

Please join us for the 2nd Thursday Free Coffee at the Meal Site in the City Hall in Columbus City this Thursday, April 9th beginning at 8:00. Our 4th Thursday Coffee will be in the basement of the Hope Bible Church on April 23rd, beginning at 8:30. Then, we are looking forward to being in our newly renovated Senior Center for our coffees beginning in May.

Grandview Community Club meeting

The G.C.C. meets the first Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. in the new shelter house. If you'd like to get involved or have questions come and join us. Contact Ryan Stewart (563)-299-0893 or Jeremy Goddard (563)-506-2053.

Half Hour Club to meet

The Half Hour Club will meet on Tuesday, April 14th at 1:30 p.m., at the Columbus City United Methodist Church. Hostesses are Rita Sands and Judy Chapman. The program will be Kay Perkins - Heifer Project.

Visual Support Group to meet

The Louisa County visual support group will meet on the third Thursday of April. This falls on April 16th. We will meet at the sub station on Highway 61 in Wapello at 1:30. Dr. Kevin Jennings, an eye Dr. from Burlington, will talk with us.

Conservation District to meet

The Louisa County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners will meet today, Wednesday, April 8, 2009, at 4:30 p.m. at the NRC's Office in Wapello. Topics on the agenda will be an update on cost share projects. For more information please contact the office at 260 Mulberry St. STE 2, Wapello, or phone 523-6411.

Shellbark Club to meet

The Shellbark Club will meet on Thursday, April 16th at 11:30 a.m. at Jerry's in Mt. Pleasant.

FFA Banquet set for tonight

The Columbus FFA Annual Parent/Member Banquet will be today, Wednesday, April 8th, starting at 6:00 p.m. in the high school student center. All members, their parents, and supporters are welcome to attend. Please bring a dish to pass, as the meat, table service, and drink will be provided. Following the meal, a program will take place in the auditorium recognizing members' achievements from the past year, awarding degrees, and installing the new officer team. Afterwards, the newly formed Columbus FFA Alumni will hold a brief meeting and anyone interested in what the alumni will do, is welcome to attend. In addition, they will have a jar to collect money to help offset the cost of the 14 Columbus FFA members attending the Iowa FFA Leadership Conference in Des Moines. Questions? Please call Miss Lewis at 728-2231 x 3621.

Columbus Alumni Banquet

Mark your calendar now for the Columbus-Cotter-Conesville Alumni Banquet, June 13th. Due to cancellation of last year's banquet because of the flood, we will be honoring two 50-year (1958 and 1959) and two 25-year (1983 and 1984) classes. If you'd like to be involved in planning the banquet, contact Jerry Bell or Jim Howell.

Class of 1969 to hold reunion

Columbus Class of '69 - how about a get together June 27, 2009, at 6:00 pm at the Thirsty Camel for dinner to celebrate 40 years from graduation. This also includes anyone that attended Cotter University, Conesville or Columbus Junction that may have attended, moved away, and/or didn't even graduate with us - it doesn't matter. If you are interested in attending, please send an e-mail message to Connee Holliday at hollidayjr@farmtel.net or Diana Wellington at wllngt236@aol.com. Please title the message with "Class Reunion" or such so we won't delete it as junk mail or spam. Parents of '69ers: Please pass this information on to our classmates who live out of town. Or, if you can't make it to dinner, send an e-mail with any information about you and your family that you might like us to share with the others. So that we can give the Thirsty Camel an approximate number of attendees, please respond to us no later than June 20, 2009.

Class of 1989 to hold reunion

Attention 1989 Grads from Columbus Community High School. We are asking for your help. We are in the beginning stages of planning our 20-year class reunion. Time has flown by! The first step is to gather classmate addresses, along with email addresses. Please forward any classmate information to Debbie (Buser) Bunting at debunting@hotmail.com. If there are any questions or concerns, please contact Debbie (Buser) Bunting and/or Jennifer Hills-Dunker at 319-212-0490. Your help would be greatly appreciated!