

# 2010 Census shows county holding its own

By John Carpenter  
Gazette Staff

Although a recent article in the Quad City Times states that the 2010 Census figures reveals Louisa County experienced a slight decline in population, -6.53%, the story shows that most Louisa County and area communities held their own over the past ten years. The 6% decline in population can be primarily attributed to the town of Oakville that lost nearly 60% of its population after the devastating flood of 2008.

The article details the loss of population throughout Iowa in many rural communities, and the increase experienced in urban areas. The good showing in Louisa County obviously can be attributed to two factors: the availability of jobs due to the Tyson Plant and our proximity to jobs in Muscatine, Washington and Iowa City; and our growth in the Latino population.

Although Louisa County has always been fortunate to have employment opportunities, either in the packing plant or manufacturing sectors, these industries can have downturns as well as upturns. But what appears to have been the biggest impact is our recent growth in minority populations. Many homes have been purchased by this new population, they have started downtown businesses, and have given our county young people and the enthusiasm that goes with youth. This is not the case in most rural areas in Iowa, their population is aging, and their school numbers are declining. Columbus Junction has a busy downtown, county schools are active, county banks are doing well,



Downtown Columbus Junction on a typical week day

real estate, although not terribly active right now, appears to be holding its values. And in addition, we are now experiencing a growth in a new population. New arrivals from Myanmar, formerly Burma, are now settling in town. And just not young men, many wives and children are now being seen on the street.

So, when many are crying the doom of rural America, we are fortunate to be a bright spot in this scenario. The 2010 census shows that Louisa County is doing well, and with our continued growth through immigration, our future looks promising.

### Population change from 2000 to 2010

Columbus City +15	Grandview -7
Columbus Junction -1	Letts -8
Conesville +8	Morning Sun - 36
Cotter No change	Oakville -266
Fredonia +7	Wapello -57

### Latino Population in area communities

City	Population	%
Conesville	432	63%
West Liberty	3,736	52%
Columbus Jct.	1,899	48%
Fredonia	244	44%
Columbus City	391	42%

## “Do You Remember?” reprint now available

As was mentioned earlier in the Gazette, a reprint of Helen Aringdale’s book, “Do You Remember?” has been in the works. The Gazette is pleased to report that the books are now available. Helen originally published the book in 2002. The book includes over seven hundred slides of the community, along with side bars that give tidbits of local history that Helen recorded. Helen had a collection of over one thousand slides, and she enjoyed giving slide shows to community groups. However, she indicated to me that she was concerned that after her death no one would know the stories behind the slides.

Helen had some health problems in 2002, and required surgery. We decided to publish the book to both defray her medical expenses, and also assure that the stories behind each slide would be recorded. Seven hundred and fifty books were published in the original printing, and they were sold out after three months.

Lately, a number of people have contacted me wishing to purchase a copy of the book. I told them that I wasn’t sure if we would do a new printing, but I would keep them informed. Early in the fall I visited with Helen about doing another printing. We had discussed using the proceeds to possibly help her spend the winter months in Colonial Manor. She was somewhat reluctant, but then decided that she would like to do another printing, although she didn’t necessarily agree with me on my idea for the proceeds.

Now, as everyone in the community knows, Helen passed away last January. Discussion was underway on the reprinting, so the Gazette decided to continue with the project. Our goal now with the proceeds is to fund an annual Helen Aringdale Memorial \$500 scholarship for a Columbus student that is interested in pursuing a degree in Journalism, Communications, or English. Three hundred books have been printed this time, and we hope that we will be able to fund the scholarship for a number of years. Even though we are a little late, we intend on offering the scholarship this year.

If you missed out in 2002, or would like an additional copy, contact us at the Gazette Office. The books remain at \$25, with a \$5 charge if you want them mailed.

Even though Helen wasn’t necessarily happy with my Colonial Manor idea, I think she would be pleased with the Scholarship idea. **John Carpenter**

## Do You Remember?

A fond look back at  
Columbus Junction, Iowa



By  
Helen L. Aringdale

Edited by  
John Carpenter

## McGruff the Crime Dog visits area schools

On Tuesday, March 29, 2011, McGruff the Crime Dog visited five, local pre-schools and daycares in Louisa County. McGruff spoke to over one hundred children about bike safety, seat belt use, stranger danger, and 911 usages.

McGruff visited Play Time Pre-school and Daycare in Wapello, Wapello Community Pre-School, Morning Sun Pre-School, Colonel’s Kids Pre-School in Columbus Junction, and Louisa-Muscatine Community Pre-School. Students were given an autographed coloring book signed by McGruff.

Wapello Community Pre-School’s visit was extra special to McGruff due to it being his 6,000 appearance.

McGruff’s visits were sponsored by the Louisa County Sheriff’s Of-



fice, Des Moines County Sheriff’s Office, Wapello Police Department and Columbus Junction Police Department.

## Iowa House to honor WWII Veterans

(DES MOINES) – The Iowa House of Representatives announced today they will be honoring World War II veterans on Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 1pm in the House Chamber.

Legislators will consider a resolution honoring Iowa’s WWII veterans in this, the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year of the beginning of the conflict. Republican and Democratic legislators are inviting any Iowa World War II veteran to be present. Following the resolution, the Representatives have arranged for a meeting and ceremony for the veterans to take place on the First Floor Rotunda.

“Iowa veterans are a testament to our state’s rich history of service. I look forward to recognizing them and their service in the House,” said Rep. Tom Sands (R-Wapello).

## Briefly -

### Alumni Banquet scheduled

The annual Columbus Schools Alumni Banquet will once again be held the second Saturday in June. The location is Roundy Elementary School for the meal and program. The United Presbyterian Women will provide the banquet meal. Make sure this event gets on your summer calendar!

### Chapter T Open House

Chapter T will be holding its 75th year birthday open house on Sunday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at 2-4 pm, at the Letts Community Building. All are welcome to help us celebrate.

### City Council meets tonight

The City of Columbus Junction will hold a regular meeting today, Wednesday, April 13, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. in the New Civic Center/ City Hall.

### CC United Methodist dinner

The Columbus City United Methodist Church Adult Fellowship is sponsoring a creamed chicken dinner on Saturday, April 16, 2011, from 5-7 p.m., at the Masonic Lodge in Columbus City. On the menu is: Creamed chicken and biscuits, great salads and several yummy desserts. The public is invited and welcome. A free will offering will be accepted.

### Easter Egg Hunt scheduled

The annual Easter Egg Hunt will be held at Chautauqua Park on April 23, 2011 at 1:00 p.m. Children ages 0 – 10 are welcome to attend. Anyone wishing to donate please contact Lisa at 319-728-8115, and leave a message.

### Fair dates set

The Louisa County Fair will take place July 24-30, 2011. Kick-off will be Sunday, July 24<sup>th</sup>. Fair will start on Monday, July 25 ending on Saturday, July 30. Hope to see you at the fair!

### Conservation Board to meet

The Louisa County Conservation Board will hold a meeting today, Wednesday, April 13, 2011, at 5:30 p.m. at the Louisa County Conservation Board Office.

### Retired School Personnel to meet

The Louisa County Retired School Personnel will meet Tuesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at the new Letts Community Center. Please plan to be there by 11:30 a.m. we will have lunch, a tour of the new Community Center, and a visit from Tom and Opal Handlen, our new District Six Co-coordinators. This promises to be an interesting day; we hope you will plan to attend.

### School Board to meet

The Board of Education for the Columbus Community School District will hold a public meeting on Monday, April 18, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. at the Roundy Elementary School Library.

### Blood checks at Senior Center

On Tuesday, April 26, 2011 the Senior Center will be offering FREE blood screenings for Glucose, Cholesterol and Blood Pressure Checks. This will be from 9 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. This is offered free by the Senior Center and Colonial Manor Nursing Home. Stay healthy and have your blood checked.

### Senior Center happenings

On Monday, April 18, 2011 Mark Moore will be serenading on the piano for those eating lunch at the Columbus Senior Center. He will be playing your favorites. This should be a fun time. Call Judy Shear at 319-728-3148 no later than Friday, April 15<sup>th</sup> to make your reservation. See you at the Senior Center.

### Shellbark Club to meet

The Shellbark Club will meet on Thursday, April 21, at 11:30 a.m. at the Hills Bakery. Meet at Ainsworth 4-Corners at 11 a.m. to carpool on to Hills.

### Stairway to the Stars performance

The students and staff of Stairway to the Stars cordially invite you to attend their 17<sup>th</sup> annual dance and tumbling concert entitled “Seasons”. It is being held on Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 P.M. and Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 P.M. at the Washington Community Center in Washington. Both evenings are the same performance. The show is open to the public and no ticket is necessary. Many area children from Washington, Keota, Riverside, Wayland, Ainsworth and Crawfordsville will be featured in the show. For more information on attending the recital or registering for dance and tumbling lessons please call Melissa at (319) 653-5648 or (888) DANCE36.

### WCCB to meet

The Washington County Conservation Board will hold its monthly meeting on April 13, 2011, at 4:30 p.m., at the Conservation Education Center.

### Easter Bunny in Morning Sun

Morning Sun Care Center, an ABCM Corporation home, is sponsoring its annual Easter Egg Hunt on Friday, April 22 at 2:00. Children up to age 12 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.

### Visual Support Group to meet

The next meeting of the Louisa County Visual Support Group will be on Thursday, April 14<sup>th</sup> at Corner Market. For more information contact Lois Richers at 319-527-2630.

### This Saturday’s Prom schedule

The Columbus Juniors and Seniors will celebrate Prom 2011 this Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup>. They invite the public to GRAND MARCH starting at 7:15 p.m. in the High School Gym and Auditorium. Doors will open at 6:45 p.m. with general admission to the High School Gym. Only ticket holders will be allowed in the auditorium. Admission of \$1.00 will be charged to all at the door.