

Lisa Piper chosen as Distinguished Graduate

By Sandra Martin

From Columbus Junction, Iowa to La Paz, Bolivia via Iowa City, Iowa; Washington, D.C.; Phitsanuloke, Thailand; Arlington, Virginia; Kabul, Afghanistan; Sichuan Province, China; Lisa Piper has followed a life journey of intellectual achievement, self-sacrifice, and service to her fellow man and the children of the world. Columbus Community Schools is proud to have chosen Lisa, a 1988 graduate, as the Distinguished Graduate of the Year to be honored at this year's graduation May 15. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wendell Piper of Washington, Iowa.

In high school Lisa excelled academically and in extracurricular activities. Graduating with a 4.00 g.p.a. Lisa devoted much of her high school life outside of the classroom to music including Marching Band, Pep Band, Concert Band, Jazz Band, Chanteurs and Chorus. She was in-

involved in the activities of Mock Trial, Yearbook, Newspaper, Quiz Bowl, Science-Math Club, FHA (Future Homemakers of America), OEA (Office Education Association), Cross Country, Plays, Speech, Future Bowl, and National Honor Society. There was never a day that Lisa was without an activity, always on the move, constantly representing Columbus Community High School to the very best of her ability. Nothing she ever did was done without a dedication and fervor to do her best.

A little-known fact about Lisa was that in high school she was an accomplished art student, whose artwork was chosen for the Student Purchase Award in 1987. The piece, a hand-made paper sculpture is still on display in the library today.

With humble beginnings in Mrs. Kisner's Spanish class, Lisa has gone on to speak fluently Spanish, Thai, and Dari in addition to her native English.

After graduation, Lisa attended the University of Iowa where she majored in Spanish with a focus on Latin American studies and graduated Phi Beta Kappa. She earned her JD degree at the American University Washington College of Law in Washington, D.C. with a focus on international law and human rights—particularly children's rights.

She went on to earn an MA degree in Studies in International Education in post-conflict countries from George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

Entering the Peace Corps in 1993, she taught English in Thailand for two years and then returned to the United States where she worked as a Senate Intern in Tom Harkin's Washington, D.C. office. From 1996 to 2001, she worked as a staff attorney and law clerk, gaining a great deal of legal expertise.

During 2001 to 2004 she was with

the Piper and Hancock Law Firm in Arlington, Virginia, where her emphasis was advocating for "the best interest of the child." In this position she represented juveniles with criminal charges or children who were truant or deemed to be children in need of supervision, carrying an active caseload of an average minimum of 50 clients.

Since 2004 she has been with Save the Children in Afghanistan, China, and currently La Paz, Bolivia. With Save the Children she has had many diverse responsibilities. Always Lisa has focused her life on helping others. Her current position in Bolivia carries the title Deputy Country Director for Programs, where she performs a myriad of duties.

Superintendent Rich Bridenstine comments, "We are very pleased to have such an outstanding individual to represent Columbus and receive our 2011 Distinguished Graduate Award."

Briefly -

Alumni Banquet set

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!

Alzheimer's Support Group to meet

The Alzheimer's Association for Henry County Support Group will meet on Thursday, April 21st from 3-4 p.m. at the lower level of the Presbyterian Church in Winfield, IA. Facilitators are Peggy Beaty and Angie Ebeling.

City-Wide clean up date set

Friday Only: Appliances will require a \$15.00 tag, which can be purchased at City Hall—No Appliance will be taken without a tag. Separate Items such as: Metal, Appliance, and Furniture. We will not pick up: Tires, Batteries, Paint, Paint Cans, Hazardous Materials, Chemicals, Spray Cans, Windows or any Glass Items. No Wood or Building Materials. Do Not Put Anything In Garbage Bags, they will not be picked up. All items must be set out by 7:00 a.m. the day of clean up. *This clean up day is for Columbus Junction residents only.* Any questions call City Hall at 728-7971.

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.

Flood Buyout deadline set

If anyone is interested in applying for a buyout due to the Flood of 2008 this is your last opportunity. Your dwelling must have been located in a Zone A "100 Year" Flood Plain or have been declared "Substantially Damaged" by the Louisa County Flood Plain Coordinator. Please contact the Louisa County Board of Supervisors at 319-523-3371 or SE IA Regional Planning Commission at 319-753-4307. The deadline to apply is Friday, April 29, 2011.

Half Hour Club to meet

Half Hour Club members, please note a **change in meetings** for May and June: May 10th we will go to Connie Lewis' cabin and in June, we will be going to the Riverside Casino.

Library Story Time

Library story time on Thursday, April 21 from 4-4:45 p.m. We will be reading about Peter Rabbit and his adventures in Mr. McGregor's garden. We will make a sock rabbit and have carrot treats! Story time is open to children pre-school to 3rd grade.

Masons to honor 50 year members

The Columbus City Masonic Lodge will be honoring all 50-year members on April 21st with a meal beginning at 6:30 p.m. New 50-year members are Ralph "Bo" Morrison, Frank Jamison and Wayne Barnes. All Masons and their families are invited.

PEO Salad Luncheon

The PEO Salad Luncheon will be held on Monday, May 2nd from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. at the American Legion building in Columbus Junction. Tickets are \$7.00 and may be purchased at Columbus Junction State Bank, The Feed Wagon, Pride of Iowa Market Place, Special Effects, Plants and Things, or any Chapter CX PEO member. Many wonderful salads, ham balls, chicken salad croissants, and German potato salad will be served.

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.

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

The students and staff of Stairway to the Stars cordially invite you to attend their 17th annual dance and tumbling concert entitled "Seasons". It is being held on Friday, May 6th at 6:00 P.M. and Saturday, May 7th 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.

Community Club to meet

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

Winfield-Mt. Union Alumni Banquet

The Winfield-Mt. Union Alumni Association is hosting the 102nd annual banquet to be held Saturday, May 28, 2011, at 6:30 p.m. The banquet will be held in the Winfield gymnasium. Alumni and guests will be served a buffet, which will be catered by Pork's Restaurant. Reservations may be made to Gwyn McCreight, 109 North Huntsberry, Winfield, IA 52659, phone 319-257-6724, or by email to pjfricke@hotmail.com. Please note "WMU Alumni" in the subject line. Deadline for receiving reservations is Saturday, May 7, 2011. The Alumni Association would appreciate an update of any name or address changes. Also, a casual coffee will be hosted by the Winfield Chamber of Commerce in the school lunchroom from 3-6 p.m. on the afternoon of May 28th. This is a time for visiting and catching up with old friends.

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.

John Mickelson named ESGR Volunteer of Year

Des Moines, Iowa – John Mickelson of Columbus Junction, a volunteer with the Iowa Committee of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), was honored recently as Volunteer of the Year in recognition of his work on behalf of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve mission.

According to Rob Kelly, vice chair of Iowa ESGR, "The Volunteer of the Year recognizes the most outstanding ESGR committee volunteer. John services as a Military Outreach volunteer. John is extremely dedicated to the military unites he supports both Army National Guard and Army Reserves. He also loves to be involved in the employer side also. He is always willing to participate in the lunch and learns and encourages new volunteers. He can speak firsthand about military service and his sincerity and honesty only enhance his vast knowledge when speaking to civilians and service members." said Kelly.

John Mikelson is employed by University of Iowa Veterans, where he is a veteran's advisor. Mikelson received the Volunteer of the Year Award during the Iowa ESGR annual meeting this month.

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is a Department of Defense agency established in 1972. Its mission is to gain and maintain em-



ployer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law, and resolving conflicts. The Iowa Committee of ESGR involves 160 volunteers across the state. .

More information about ESGR Employer Outreach Programs and volunteer opportunities is available at www.iowaesgr.org or by calling Becky Coody, at 800-294-6607 X2757.

Pictured from left to right are ESGR State Chair Dick Rue, Becky Coody, ESGR director, John Mikelson ESGR Volunteer of the Year and ESGR Vice Chair Rob Kelly. Submitted photo.

School Board tables hiring of new Curriculum Director

By Jim Rudisill

A study will be needed before the Columbus School Board decides whether or not to replace curriculum director Tara Paul, who submitted her resignation to the board during its April 18 meeting. Paul, who has accepted the superintendent's position at Estherville-Lincoln Central School District in northwest Iowa, has been at Columbus for four years.

After the board accepted Paul's resignation with regret, board president Marsha Gerot said the position should not be filled and the duties distributed between administrators and teachers. "I feel we don't need to replace (her)," Gerot told the rest of the board.

She said administrators and teachers could assume most of Paul's duties, especially since several of them have been trained in SIOP, a sheltered instruction protocol that Paul introduced and helped to implement in the district.

Other board members either disagreed with Gerot or wanted more investigation. "I think we need a curriculum director," Dan Peters said.

Polly Prior agreed, explaining Paul's work with SIOP needed to continue. "After all the money we've spent, I'd hate to have it go down the tubes," she said.

Board member Sandy Martin, a retired teacher of the school district, said teachers needed to be asked their

opinion. "I'd like to know what they are really thinking," she said.

Martin also wanted to know Paul's opinion about keeping the position and whether she thought the district could find someone with her expertise in SIOP. Paul said there likely was not anyone in the area who had her experience with the program, but she said the current staff would be able to keep the program moving ahead, but at a cost. "No one is irreplaceable, the job will get done," she said. However, that will mean the building principals and the teachers would need to do more of the paperwork and other details to keep grant money flowing. "Everything is tied to funding and there are days I spend on a report," she said.

If the principals are forced to do that work they won't be in the classroom observing teachers or conducting other instructional duties, she continued. Gerot however was not convinced. "They should be able to do reports," she said.

Superintendent Rich Bridenstine cautioned the board not to take long to make a decision on the position. He said if the final decision is to fill the position, the district would need to start moving to find good candidates. He also encouraged board members to make their decision on educational and not financial values. The board agreed to table more discussion and directed Bridenstine to

poll the teaching staff for opinions. The board will hold a May 5 meeting and the issue will be added to the agenda.

The board also tabled a decision on hiring an assistant cross country coach. Bridenstine reported coach Mike Jay currently has over 30 runners participating. Several board members agreed Jay should have more help, but Martin balked over approving a position over an indeterminate period. She said the board should approve a position for a set period in case the number of participants later drops. Bridenstine will talk to Jay about the situation and present a report to the board at its next meeting.

In other action, the board approved a \$257,354 amendment to its 2010-11 budget. The amendment, which will not affect property taxes, will cover unexpected expenditures for building repairs and architectural and engineering fees. There were no written or verbal objections to the amendment.

The board also agreed to consider a proposal to implement a summer school this year. Last year's school, which focused on reading and math, attracted around 40 participants. Bridenstine said federal stimulus money would be available to fund the program. He will present a report later to the board.

In final action, the board re-

viewed information on the latest achievement testing accepted the resignations of teacher Mary Wilson and Deb Lowe. Wilson, a high school English teacher, has taught in the district for 34 years; while Lowe, a junior high Special Education teacher, has 19 years of service.

In other personnel action, the board also accepted the resignation of Larry Abrams as the National Honor Society sponsor, effective at the end of the 2011-12 school year. The board also hired Vicki Flores, preschool special education associate, four days a week at \$9.89 per hour; and Scott Dennier as the pool manager, with a salary of \$8000.

The board also agreed to consider a proposal to add a maintenance employee to its staff. Local resident Bob Reid suggested the move during an earlier meeting, suggesting the school district could save money by having its own maintenance employee. Bridenstine will conduct a study to present to the board.

The third readings of board policies establishing a school treasurer position and adopting a poor weather policy for holding extra-curricular practices were also approved. Board secretary Tanya Purdy was later appointed to the treasurer's position, although there was no additional compensation for the position. A second reading of a technology appropriate use policy was also reviewed.