



Your Award Winning Hometown Newspaper

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## Large Crowd at Homage

By Mary Masonholder Wilson

The citizens of Letts certainly put their best foot forward on Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup> for the homage and presentation on Major Lawrence Herrick, deceased American pilot killed over France and originally from Letts. Homage was also paid to all veterans and the sacrifices they made in the name of FREEDOM.

The event was planned around the coming of Daniel Sellier, a man who spent a career in aviation and was from Reugny, France the small village where Major Herrick was killed. Two years ago, Sellier and an organization called FORCED LANDING found out that Richard Herrick, of Columbus Junction, Iowa was trying to find out information about his father who was killed in the war three weeks before Richard was born. Sellier and FORCED LANDING went into intense research on Major Lawrence Herrick and discovered a whole story that is almost unbelievable, especially that Herrick had long been considered a hero in this village. Eight members of the Herrick family traveled to Reugny last year for a ceremony honoring French soldiers and also paying homage to Major Herrick.

Last Saturday, approximately 150 people attended the presentation given by Frenchman Daniel Sellier. The ceremony started in the Letts cemetery where wreaths were placed at the grave of Major Lawrence Herrick and at the All War Memorial in the cemetery. Marsha Gerot, minister of the Letts United Methodist Church spoke at both the Herrick grave and the War Memorial. The American Legion gave military rites and it was a solemn occasion. Tears fell and respect was given to the fallen soldiers.

The car brigade moved from the cemetery back to the Letts Community Center where memorabilia was on display of both Herrick and other World War II information. Daniel Sellier introduced his power point presentation to the audience by saying, "This presentation is for YOU and for the Herrick family. You Americans made the supreme sacrifice for my country, and this is just a little bit of the story." The presentation was largely on Herrick but also contained footage from World War II on everything from pilot training to celebrating the end of the war in New York City.

Following the presentation, there was a moment of silence and then applause that turned into a standing ovation for Sellier and his presentation. Anyone in the audience could feel the emotion of the moment and the respect felt toward the people

who sacrificed their lives in the war. Sellier then said, "Thank you. If it were not for the American soldiers and the Allied Troops, I might still today live under German rule. No one can know the terror that our French people lived under during the German occupation of my country. The sight of the American planes and soldiers were the only hope our people had."

Following the presentation refreshments (provided by the Letts library group) and drinks were served and a toast was made to the friendships formed and the appreciation felt between the French people and the American soldiers.

Jim Thompson, one of the town council members of Letts presented Daniel Sellier with one of the flags, a World War II flag, from the Letts cemetery All-War Memorial and a quilt (made by Nancy Shuler) signed by the many people of Letts and those who attended the presentation. Sellier was also presented beef jerky from a Letts resident made in Iowa. From the Herrick family, Sellier was given a small picture and magnet of a farm scene complete with windmill, which represented our Iowa roots. Sellier presented to the City of Letts a plaque from Reugny, France showing their town and commemorating Major Lawrence Herrick.

Many people stayed around afterwards and shared stories about war, aviation, having loved ones gone to the war, and about the feelings toward our American soldiers who gave so much to so many. It was said that there were six veterans present who fought in World War II and there were many veterans present from other wars also.

Family member Richard Herrick commented, "You could really feel Daniel's passion for the American soldiers who liberated his country. The Herrick family will never be able to repay him for all his work and for all the information they have been given on Major Lawrence Herrick and his final moments in life."

April 13, 2012 will long be a day to remember in the cemetery and the Community Building of Letts, Iowa. Many were brought together to pause and think about the sacrifices made. It was a solemn occasion and a joyful occasion. Emotions were felt and bonds were made. Daniel Sellier is a man to be admired—both for his diligence in his research of Lawrence Herrick and also for his desire to bring this message of respect for the American soldier to the United States of America and to Letts, Iowa. The world would be a better place if more such meetings were held.



## Columbus Business Professionals sponsor Blood Drive

By Sandra Martin

Thursday, April 25, will mark the last blood drive for the Columbus Community School year 2012-2013. The Business Professionals of America are sponsoring the drive in the high school gym from 7:30 to noon. This is an excellent opportunity for all eligible blood donors to show their community spirit by donating a pint of blood. This donation not only affects the many individuals who will need transfusions, but also aids the student organization. Many people do not realize that not only are the students performing a community service project in hosting the drive, but they also realize a stipend for the pints donated that goes into their treasury to help fund their activities. By donating at this drive, community members will not only perform a helpful service for their fellow man, but also contribute to a fund raising effort for the BPA. For most people this is a far more satisfying way to contribute to an organization than being asked to buy a candle or cookie dough.

Over the last four years while this opportunity has been in effect Columbus students have hosted 13 blood drives (National Honor Society 4, FFA 4, FCCLA 4, BPA 1) These drives have netted the organizations \$3,396—a gratifying method of fund raising. In those 13 drives, they have collected 692 units of blood, which have impacted the lives of 2,768 patients—an admirable feat.

However, as with any project there is always a desire to do better. These students need the help of all who can donate. The group with the highest total of donations has been the National Honor Society, who in 2009 received donations totaling 83 units. Maybe it's time for members of the community to help the BPA top that record. Thirty-eight percent of the American population is eligible to give blood, but less than ten percent actually do. Those eligible to donate must be in good health, weigh more than 110 pounds, and be at least 17 years old. Students who are 16 and have parental approval are also allowed to donate. Many of the participants over the last few years have been students, who are developing lifelong habits of service. The Blood Center presents an award to high school students who during their

high school career donate the equivalent of one gallon of blood. This takes extreme dedication on the part of the student to be able to work donations in around their schedules. This year Columbus is proud that Christine Milder will receive the One Gallon Grad Award.

The sponsoring group is the Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center, which is based in Davenport. The Center handles more than 250,000 units of blood components yearly. Blood donations are vital to every community. More than 4.5 million people will need a blood transfusion every year; this is approximately one in seven patients. The MVRBC estimates that 17% of blood donations are utilized for cancer patients, 11% for general surgery, 8% for heart disease, and 8% for trauma. Many people don't give blood because they decide on their own that they aren't eligible to donate. Potential donors are encouraged to check with MVRBC to see if their medications, health history, or travel are really reasons for deferral. Many people with high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma and other conditions once thought to preclude them from donation are now eligible to donate. Even cancer free patients are sometimes eligible. All

donations are tested for various viruses and diseases before being transfused. For ease of parking, the BPA will free up parking spaces in the first row of the lot for those who are driving in to donate. The group will work hard to make donation a quick and easy process for all who come to give.

### Letts

#### Kindergarten Round Up

The L-M School District is in the process of identifying next year's kindergarteners. 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 18<sup>th</sup> and Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup>. 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.

## Briefly -

### Community Club to meet

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

### Prom Grand March scheduled

The Columbus Juniors and Seniors invite the public to the "Grand March" during the 2013 Prom Festivities this Saturday, April 20, 2013 at the Columbus Community High School. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m.

### City to hold Public Meeting

The City of Columbus Junction will hold a Public Meeting today, Wednesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2013, at 4:30 p.m. at the Civic Center/City Hall. The Proposed Rental Code Ordinance will be discussed. Anyone with questions or comments on this matter is encouraged to attend.

### Simply Soothing to hold CJPM

Simply Soothing on 301 E. Access Rd. next to Caseys General Store will be hosting a CJPM from 5 to 7pm on Thursday, April 25, everyone is welcome. A CJPM is a networking event hosted by a local business and promoted by Columbus Community Club. These fun gatherings are designed to help businesspeople and other community leaders meet and get to know one another, to develop new customers and to showcase products and services available in our community.

### Etude Club to meet

The Etude Club will have a dress rehearsal on Monday, April 29<sup>th</sup>. It will be in the Columbus Junction Methodist Church at 6:30 p.m.

### Master Gardeners to meet

The Louisa County Master Gardeners will meet on Tuesday, April 23, 2013 at 4:30 P.M. at the Louisa County Historical Society to carpool to Burlington for our greenhouse tour of Zaiser's nursery and greenhouses. All members and spouses are welcome to join us for this event. We will be going out to supper afterward at the Chophouse in Mediapolis. See you there!

### Visual Support Group to meet

The Louisa County Visual Support Group will meet on the third Thursday of the month, which is April 18<sup>th</sup>. We will meet at Corner Market at noon with a Dutch-treat lunch. Susan Howard from the Department for the Blind will be our guest speaker. For more information, contact Lois Richers at 319-527-2630.

### Legislative Forum set

A Legislative Forum will be held on Saturday, April 20, 2013, with Senator Tom Courtney and Representatives Dennis Cohoon and Tom Sands at the Burlington Library from 9:15-10:30 am.

### Letts Fest Scheduled

The City of Letts will be holding its second annual Letts Fest on June 29<sup>th</sup>. The community is looking for vendors, and participants in the parade and car show. If interested, please contact Jake Shoppa at 563-571-4561; Monica Bieri at 319-212-1613; or Joy Murphy at 319-330-6063 and 319-726-3052.

### Muscatine County Civil War Roundtable

The Muscatine County Civil War Roundtable will be hosting a power point presentation by Ed Bayne and Tom Woodruff with the Louisa County Historical Society at 7 pm, on Tuesday, April 23, 2013, in Room 27, Strahan Hall, Muscatine Community College. This presentation features the lives of the "SIX Littleton Brothers" who fought and died during the American Civil War. The public is invited at no cost. Mark your calendar to attend and learn the fascinating story about these SIX brothers."

### KCB Roadside Clean-up

KCB week will kick off with a Make a Good First Impression Clean-up on Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers are to meet at the north parking lot of Columbus High School at 8 am; activities will be finished before noon. People interested in volunteering or being team leaders for specific locations should contact Brian Cummings at 728-2750 or Mallory Smith at 728-7971. The rain date for the Clean-up is Saturday, April 27.

### Area Agencing on Aging KAB Lunch

Local senior meal sites sponsored by the Area Agency on Aging will be hosting a "Keep America Beautiful" lunch Thursday, April 18. The meal is available to anyone over age 60 (and his or her spouse of any age) regardless of income or residency. Contributions to cover the cost of the meal are requested. Reservations are required by noon today, Wednesday, April 17. The menu features golden baked chicken, potato salad, Boston baked beans, sliced strawberries and white cake. Call your local senior meal location: Columbus Junction at 728-3148; Wapello at 523-8455; and Winfield at 257-6921.

### Blood Checks at Senior Center

Tami Nichols, R.N. from Colonial Manor will be at the Columbus Senior Center on Wednesday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. to perform blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol checks. This is a free community service. We hope to see you there!

### Stairway to the Stars concert

The students and staff of Stairway to the Stars, cordially invite you to attend their 19<sup>th</sup> annual dance and tumbling concert entitled, "Morning, Noon and Night." It is being held on Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. at the Riverside Casino and Gold Resort. No ticket is necessary. Many area children from Washington, Keota, Riverside, Wayland, Ainsworth and Crawfordville 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.

### Trees offered for Community

The Trees Forever Organization of Columbus Community and Alliant Energy are encouraging tree planting within the Columbus community (including Columbus City, Toddtown and Fredonia). Trees Forever will pay half the cost of a tree, or up to \$75.00. Interested parties may pick up application forms and read about tree varieties offered now at these area locations: Columbus Junction banks, City Hall, Columbus Gazette and Robertson Real Estate. After the forms are filled in and signed, they need to be returned to the place they were picked up by May 8<sup>th</sup>. It is hoped people will be interested in taking part in doing this to make our community beautiful. Any questions, call Roger Hunt 563-260-1074 or Judy Prior 728-2036.

