



A Couple and a Business - 50 years Old (The Business, not the couple)

By Mary Masonholder Wilson

Sometimes it is just interesting to find out the story about people from this area and their past. That happened recently for me with locals Chuck and Connie Plank. How did this interest start?

In January of this year, as I wrote the "Do You Remember?" columns and read the old newspapers looking for the information to put in the column, I noticed that it started mentioning the grand opening of a new International Harvester Store. Then later there was the ad for the grand opening of this business, Plank Implement in Columbus City, which was to be February 22 and 23, 1963. The owner, manager, and salesman was Chuck Plank. His staff was listed as Raymond Plank—A & H Manager; Bill Haines—Salesman; Connie Plank—Bookkeeper; Earl Johnson and Willie Bell—Service Men; and Mike Viner—Parts Manager. This business sold International farm equipment, tractors, trucks, and serviced them. Now, this same business is 50 years old this year.

There were many deals and prizes at the grand opening on those February days in 1963. A drawing was held for nine new model 103 PTO spreaders. Also a 24-inch Craftsman riding lawn mower could be purchased for \$89.50.

Going back into Chuck and Connie's past, I found out that Chuck Plank grew up north of Cedar Rapids in Quasqueton, Iowa. He lived on a farm there and then went to college following high school graduation. Right out of college he worked for International Harvester as a credit representative for about three years. Chuck married his wife Connie in 1961.

Connie grew up in North Boro, Iowa. As she describes it, "It is 3 miles from Missouri and 30 miles from Nebraska, or right near Shenandoah, Iowa. Following high



This collage was gifted to Chuck and Connie Plank from their son and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Shawn Plank. The collage was made by the young couple and commemorates the 50 years of the Plank Implement business.

school, Connie went to nurse's training and did a rotation at the Independence Mental Health Institute while a student nurse. It was there she first met Chuck Plank through a telephone call. ("OK, don't make any comments about meeting at a mental institute," says Connie with a laugh.) They went dancing and as they say, "The rest is history."

The Planks came to Columbus City and then opened Plank Implement in 1963. The building they purchased for the business had formerly been a skating rink, owned by first Gay Wright and then John Summy.

Connie Plank tells the story that there was a Maidrite shop next to the skating rink, which later became their business. It was run by Dorothy Tho-

mas (sister of Elmer Thomas.) Connie was pregnant at the time and not feeling too well and couldn't keep food down. She would call Dorothy who would put two Maidrites outside the window for her. Connie would come to eat them, and not get sick from the smell because the open air kept it away. Later, Connie spent many years as a Public Health Nurse and worked in Wapello.

Chuck Plank owned and operated Plank Implement for 46 years, often working more than 60 hours per week. Four years ago Plank sold the business to Bennett Farm Equipment, whose original business is located in Cedar County, East of Tipton, in the town of Bennett. Plank still works

for them; (however, Connie says he has not cut back his hours much) and is still involved in the business. Plank says, "One of the reasons I sold was because the business was changing faster than I could keep up with it." Plank goes on to say, "I really appreciate the support over the years that the community has given to me and to the business."

Columbus Junction and Columbus City were lucky to have such an implement business so close, especially when farmers needed fast repairs. Chuck Plank gives credit to the Huston family for making it all possible. Since the business has lasted 50 years, it must have been a "good deal."

Columbus Seniors earn \$183,457 in Scholarships

Last week the Columbus Seniors earned a wonderful amount of scholarships at their annual awards ceremony. Following are the awards garnered

Senior National Honor Society Members: Heaven Chandler / Caitlin Chaney / Christine Milder / Hannah Parker / Megan Pretz / Edgar Rodriguez / Mitchell Roush / Tori Sieverding / Ashley Stagner / Shelly Stewart

Senior Officers: President Heaven Chandler, Co-Vice Presidents: Caitlin Chaney and Megan Pretz, Co-Treasurer - Mitchell Roush, Secretary - Shelly Stewart

Mr. Dan Vogeler, Louisa County Soil and Water Conservation District Scholarship \$750 - Megan Pretz

Mr. Sam Bell, Mr. Shane Morgan, Mrs. Judy Shear, and Mrs. Mark Shear, Columbus Junction Sons of the American Legion Post 100 Annual Citizenship Scholarship, \$1,000 - Dylan Perez

Mr. Mark Huston: Columbus Junction State Bank Scholarship, \$1,500 - Caitlin Chaney

Mr. Roger Edwards: Louisa County Farm Bureau Scholarship \$500 - Megan Pretz

District 7 Iowa Farm Bureau Federation Scholarship: up to \$4,000 (\$1,000 renewable) - Megan Pretz

Mrs. Gail Stoller, Columbus Junction Lions Club Annual Scholarship \$500 - Girl - Caitlin Chaney / Boy - Mitchell Roush

Mrs. Jane Phillips and Sara Griffin, Charles E. Shellabarger Educational Trust, One-time \$1,000 - Dylan Perez / Megan Pretz / Edgar Rodriguez / Tori Sieverding / Ashley Stagner, Up to \$4,000 - Javi Diaz / Magally Solorio

Roy H. Gerling and Joan Huber Gerling Scholarship Trust: Up to \$5,000 - Girl - Elisa Zuniga / Boy - Mitchell Roush

Mrs. Dana Howell, Everette Howell Memorial Scholarship, \$200 - Trevor Conaway / Megan Pretz

Mr. Duncan Bell, Mr. Matt Storm, and Mr. Tom VanAuken, Masonic Scholarship, \$300 - Jocelyn Ramirez

Outstanding Teacher of the Year, Bev Nielsen

Mr. Brett Hafner Agriland FS Foundation Scholarship, \$1,000 - Megan Pretz

Mr. Doug Pugh: J.D. Pugh Memorial Scholarship, \$1,000 - Mitchell Roush

Mr. Danny Gipple (Standing in for Mr. Gipple is Mr. Jim Howell), United Presbyterian Church of Columbus Junction Scholarship, (Gipple Trust Scholars), \$500 - Megan Pretz

Mrs. Donna Wittmann, Lisle (Doc) and Jeanette Luthly Scholarship, \$500 - Heaven Chandler

Mr. David Duncan, Tyson Fresh Meats, Inc. Scholarship, \$1,000 - Hannah Parker / Magally Solorio

Mrs. Eileen Heck, Luke M. Heck Memorial Scholarship, \$1,000 - Heaven Chandler

P.E.O. Chapter CX Scholarship \$500, Megan Pretz

Mr. John Carpenter, Helen Aringdale Scholarship, \$500 - Ashley Stagner

Mr. Dan Wilson, Mr. Biak Thang, and Mrs. Mallory Smith, Recognition of Community Leaders, Tial Pen / Buidusang Zawthang / Tial Zi

Mr. Tim Wink

American Citizenship by Iowa Bar Association, Megan Pretz / Ashley Stagner

Mr. Nathan Carlson, Chris Street Memorial Scholarship, Heaven Chandler

Bernie Saggau Award, Heaven Chandler

Outstanding Senior Boy in Physical Education, Boy = Javi Diaz

Outstanding Senior Girl in Physical Education, Girl = Nicole Stout

Ms. Deborah Sulzberger: Outstanding Academic Achievement Award - Vocal Music, Jenna Fuller / Christine Milder / Hannah Parker / Ashley Stagner

Academic Achievement Award - Industrial Technology, Saul Salazar

Outstanding Academic Achievement Award - Agricultural Education, Trevor Conaway

FFA Stine Seed Scholarship, \$500 - Megan Pretz

Mr. Charles Mausser, Drum Major Christine Milder

Outstanding Achievement Award - Band, Tammy Hernandez / Christine Milder

Mr. David Suter, Outstanding Academic Achievement Award - Science, Mitchell Roush

Mrs. Joyce Blitsch (Standing in for Mrs. Blitsch is Mr. Steve Riley), Outstanding Senior in Drama, Ashley Stagner

Outstanding Senior in Speech, Ashley Stagner

Mrs. Wendy Watson and Mr. Steve Riley, Outstanding Academic Achievement Award - English, Heaven Chandler / Caitlin Chaney / Megan Pretz / Tori Sieverding

Mr. Eric Field, Student Council Co-President, Dylan Perez / Elisa Zuniga

Outstanding Senior in Debate/Forensics, Ashley Stagner

Mrs. Lois Mincks, Outstanding Academic Achievement Award - Family & Consumer Science, Abi Garcia

Mr. Jeff Martin, Outstanding Academic Achievement Award - Social Studies, Tori Sieverding

Mrs. Robin McClanahan, Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center "Gallon Grad Award", Christine Milder

Outstanding Academic Achievement Award - Business Education and Technology, Edgar Rodriguez

Mr. Jorge Malagon, Outstanding Academic Achievement Award - Foreign Language, Heaven Chandler / Caitlin Chaney / Tori Sieverding / Ashley Stagner / Elisa Zuniga, Mr. Jeff Maeder and Mrs. Chris Wolf

Outstanding Academic Achievement Award - Art, Tammy Hernandez

Governor's Scholar Recognition Program, Megan Pretz

Beryl and Wilma Sime Roundy Charitable Foundation., \$1,780 - Caitlin Chaney / Trevor Conaway / Jenna Fuller / Christine Milder / Hannah Parker / Megan Pretz / Edgar Rodriguez / Mitchell Roush / Tori Sieverding / Ashley Stagner

Beryl O. and Wilma S. Roundy Scholarship Foundation, \$1,730.00 - Michelle Cibrian / Tammy Hernandez / Irvin Rodriguez / Shelly Stewart / Elisa Zuniga

Lelia Lintner Memorial Scholarship., \$1,250 - Caitlin Chaney / Edgar Rodriguez

Vanessa Espinoza Scholarship, \$100 - Heaven Chandler / Jenna Fuller / Mitchell Roush

Ralph and Adeline Crawford Scholarship, \$1,000 - Christine Milder

Miscellaneous College Scholarships

Iowa State University Academic Recognition Award, \$6,000 (\$1,500 per year) - Megan Pretz

Iowa State University Future of Agriculture and Life Sciences Scholarship, \$500 - Megan Pretz

Simpson College Academic Achievements and Performance Scholarships, \$76,400 (\$1,910 per year) - Jenna Fuller

University of Iowa Advantage Iowa Full Tuition Scholarship, \$32,244 (\$8,061 per year) - Chandler, Heaven

Silver Cord Awards, Caitlin Chaney / Trevor Conaway / Jenna Fuller / Christine Milder / Hannah Parker / Mitchell Roush / Tori Sieverding / Tial Zi

Senior with 3.00 Grade Point Average and above, Caitlin Chaney / Michelle Cibrian / Trevor Conaway / Javi Diaz / Jenna Fuller / Tammy Hernandez / Christine Milder / Hannah Parker / Dylan Perez / Edgar Rodriguez / Irvin Rodriguez / Mitchell Roush / Tori Sieverding / Magally Solorio / Ashley Stagner / Shelly Stewart / Tial Zi / Elisa Zuniga

Senior with 4.00 Grade Point Average and above, Heaven Chandler / Megan Pretz

Total amount of ALL Scholarships listed: \$183,457.00

Briefly -

Legion asks for return of equipment

American Legion Post #100 is asking anyone who has borrowed our medical equipment (wheelchairs, walkers, canes, etc) and is finished using the equipment, that they please return these items to our Legion Post. We have continued requests for equipment, and we need to have unused items returned. Contact Marvin Prior, Kenny Martin, Sam Bell, Warren McConahay or any other Legion member for arrangements to return these items.

C.A.P. celebration planned

The Community Action Program, located at 205 E. Access Rd. in Columbus Junction, will be hosting a Cinco de Mayo day in their offices. They will celebrate the Hispanic community on this day in their office during regular office hours, 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. on Thursday, May 9. Served will be chips, salsa, and tre de leche cake. The community is invited to attend this day and celebrate at the CAP office.

Community Foundation get-together

The Community Foundation of Louisa County and Community Foundation of the Great River Bend are hosting a fun and informative get-together, "Planning Your Legacy", May 2 at two locations. The morning session will be held at the Columbus Senior Center at 10:00 a.m. and at the Briggs Center in Wapello at 2:00 p.m. Enjoy morning or afternoon teatime with your friends and play Charity Bingo to win a \$50 certificate for your favorite nonprofit. For more information or R.S.V.P., please call 319-868-4240 or cflc@louisacommm.net.

Mother-Daughter Tea in Conesville

The United Methodist Women at Conesville will be having a Mother-Daughter Tea at the church on May 8th at 7 p.m. The Cunningham's from Grandview, Iowa, will entertain us with their music. Refreshments will be served after the program. Everyone is welcome.

Cooks Night Out

On Wednesday, May 8, 2013, a Cooks' Night Out Community Supper will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Letts United Methodist Church, Letts, Iowa. The menu includes Lasagna, Lettuce Salad, Garlic Bread and all of those wonderful desserts. Please join us that evening for some delicious food, lots of conversation and crafts for the kids - all at no charge to the public. For additional information contact the Church Office at 319-726-3541.

Etude Club to meet

Etude Club will meet on May 7th at 6:30 p.m. at the Colonial Manor in Columbus Junction. Please wear your Etude shirt and bring along your chorus music and other music from the Spring Show, which you would like to share with the residents in the manor. Following this program, the regular monthly meeting of the club will be held in the Colonial Estates Assisted Living Center. The May 7th lesson will be on "The Proper Way to Display the American Flag," and will be presented by a local veteran. The Rev. Faye Fedlam will serve as hostess for this meeting.

FFA Banquet

The FFA will be holding their annual banquet this Friday, May 3rd at 6 pm in the high school commons area. This is a time to reflect on the past years events and accomplishments, recognize individual students, and install the upcoming years officer team. All members, alumni, and community supporters are welcome to attend! FFA members and their families are asked to bring a side to share, meat and table service will be provided.

Grandview Bible Church Salad Supper

Grandview Community Bible Church will hold a salad supper on May 11, at 6 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. All ladies and girls are invited to attend. The speaker will be Jan Tombow of Clearwater, FL. She will share details of being kidnapped at age 5 and always looking for the missing parts of her life. She eventually found them and much more. Helen Crump, a missionary supported by the church and now living in Florida at 91-years-of-age, will be bringing music. Please bring a salad to share.

Grandview Women's Club to meet

The Grandview Women's Club will meet at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 9th. Marillyn Schlutz will be the hostess for a tea party.

Cattlemen's Group Tour

The Louisa County Cattlemen will be taking their first group tour June 17. The bus will depart at 6:30 a.m. from the L-M high school parking lot, and return at approximately 8:30 p.m. Activities for the day will include: touring the Caterpillar plant and visitors center in Peoria, Illinois and the Black and Gold Ranch and Feedlot in Astoria, Illinois. The Black and Gold Ranch and Feedlot is run by Steve Foglesong, past president of the Illinois Beef Association. The ranch currently feeds out over 4,000 head of cattle in a new mono-slope building and runs a cow-calf and replacement heifer operation. Check out their website for more information at www.blackgoldranchandfeedlot.com. Cost is \$125.00 per person and seats are available on a first-come, first-pay basis. Included in the cost is all tours, transportation, continental breakfast, boxed lunch and an evening meal. For more information regarding the trip, or to reserve your seat, contact Dale Howell at 563-299-5163 or Tom Bonnicksen at 563-506-1712. Checks may be made payable to the Louisa Cattlemen's Association and mailed to Dale Howell, 18996 140th Street, Columbus Junction, IA 52738.

Historical Society Program

"Country Schools" will be presented by the Louisa County Historical Society, Hwy 61, Wapello, on Sunday, May 5th, at 2:00 p.m. The speaker for this program will be Bill Sherman. He speaks nationally and internationally on topics related to country schools. Audiences are encouraged to share experiences they have had with country schools. This will be a program of interest for all ages.

L&M PTO to hold retirement tea

Louisa-Muscatine PTO will be sponsoring a retirement tea for 4 long-time employees of the Louisa-Muscatine CSD, on Wednesday, May 15 beginning at 4:00 pm in the Elementary Cafeteria. Those leaving us include Kindergarten teacher, Cindy Stineman-Miller, with 35 years; Kathy Clevenger, First grade with 22 years; a former sixth grade teacher turned Curriculum Director Peggy Colton with 37 years; and Willie Weston, Industrial Education Teacher with 31 years. This totals 125 years of valuing, challenging, and preparing students of Louisa-Muscatine. We are sorry to see them leave, but we do wish them the best in the coming years.

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