



Your Award Winning Hometown Newspaper

Vol. 127 No. 1

Long-time French-Reneker employees to retire

Jerry Long, PE, Vice-President and Mike Griffin, Engineering Technician, retired from full-time employment with French-Reneker-Associates on December 31, 2012.

Jerry joined the Firm in August 1977 as a project engineer. Prior to his joining French-Reneker, Jerry held a position with the Iowa Department of Transportation. During Jerry's 35 years with the Firm, he progressed from project engineer, to a principal and member of the Firm's Board of Directors in 1979. He assumed his current position as Vice-President and Chief Engineer in 1995. Jerry is currently responsible for all technical operation of the firm and has led the technical work from the times of pen and ink drafting to its current use of computer aided design and drafting technology.

Throughout Jerry's career he has been active in professional and civic organizations. He is a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers, the National Society of Professional

Engineers, the Iowa Engineering Society and is a past President of the Fairfield Chamber of Commerce.

Jerry's wife, Sue is also a civil engineer. Sue retired from a career with NRCS. They have two children, Aaron, an architect and Abbe an interior designer. Both children reside in Aspen, Colorado.

Mike Griffin joined French-Reneker in May of 1975 and has worked as an engineering technician for his entire career. Prior to his work at French-Reneker, Mike held positions with Fisher Governor in Marshalltown, Loudon Manufacturing of Fairfield and the City of Fairfield Public Works Department for 5 1/2 years prior to joining the Firm.

Mike's position with the Firm has grown from a survey crew helper to that of a skilled designer and to his current role as a senior technician doing construction observation on a wide variety of complex construction projects.

Mike is married to Marie and they



Mike Griffin

have one daughter, Deb Nuckolls. Deb and husband, Michael resides in Pleasant Plain, Iowa with his children, Dani and Tylor. Mike's leisure time is spent being outside, fishing, and doing nature photography.



Jerry Long

A retirement reception will be held from 2:30 to 5:00 p.m., Friday, January 4, 2013 at the Best Western Fairfield Inn for Jerry and Mike. All friends are invited to attend.

Community Club Meets

By Donna Carpenter

The Columbus Community Club met on Thursday, December 27, at noon at the Senior Center. The change of date was due to inclement weather on the 20th. President Susan Pretz brought the meeting to order, and Faye Fedlam lead the group with prayer.

There was no secretary's report. Treasurer's report was as follows: Beginning balance: \$6, 170.02

Costs included: \$75 to Economart, \$300 to United Fund, \$120 to the United Methodist Church for food, \$53.50 to Plants and Things-flowers for new business owner, \$203.30 to Plants and Things-Christmas lights, \$25 to the Gazette- expenses, and \$100- Santa Claus. \$33 was deposited from the sale of circus tickets. As of December 28, the balance stood at \$5, 326.22. There are no outstanding bills at this time.

Sue Johnson reported that Family Night was a huge success, noting

that the food collected was taken to Community Action. Sue commended those individuals, including Dan Wilson and Steve Neilson, for the hard work involved in setting up the luminaries, as well as Dorothy Orr for organizing the singers. She also thanked the Fair Board for the work in preparing the food for and working at the soup supper, which was well attended. Sue also reminded everyone for the CJPM at 5:00 on the 27th, hosted by Steve Neilson.

In regard to city business, Hal Prior spoke about a recent pre-construction meeting. They are hoping to complete the project by mid-March. The city crew is working to remove the ice from the streets at this time.

Polly Prior stated that the Senior Center was closed last Thursday due to the snowstorm. Friday's meal was cooked at the Center as the people from Wapello couldn't get to Columbus Junction. Polly stated that they have had good rental activity for the

facility during the holidays. Drivers are needed to deliver Meals on Wheels. Anyone interested in assisting for either a few days of the week or on a weekly basis, should call Judy.

Ken Purdy informed the group that the Community Foundation is planning for next year's grant cycle. He stressed that if a group is willing to accept partial funding, they need to mark that on the form. Grant checks currently awarded will be given to recipients in Oakville on January 21.

Mallory Smith discussed Community Development projects that have taken place over the course of the year. She mentioned the planter outside of City Hall, which was attended to by members of the Half Hour Club. She also spoke of the park project, summer interns, and the Community garden. She is currently filling out applications for grants that would apply to the fairgrounds.

John Carpenter spoke of the completion of the Donor Board located at the entrance of the Civic

Center. He is pleased with the finalization of this project.

Susan Pretz reported that the Habitat of Humanity house is coming along well, and it was noted by Rich Herrick that the volunteers are in the process of painting. Plans are being made for the next house to be built in Fredonia.

Gary Todd called everyone's attention to the fact that there are 12 board members on the Community Foundation and that Paula Buckman is the director. LaMoynes Buser complemented Steve Tomfeld for the creative snowman which is placed on Main Street. LaMoynes stated that Steve is a "tireless worker". All agreed.

Election of officers for 2013 was discussed, with new officers named as: President-Joy Lekwa, Secretary-Sarah Hand, and Treasurer-Earlene Lekwa.

The meeting concluded with a big "thank-you" to Susan Pretz for the wonderful job in carrying out her duties as president. Her dedication has not gone unnoticed.

Remember that the Gazette now has a new e-mail address for news and advertising
cjgaz@windstream.net

2012 Year in Review - Part 1

January 4, 2012 - The Columbus Junction State Bank celebrated 85 years in the banking business.

John and Diane Bloomer opened the Hogwash Truck and Trailer wash.

Great River Medical Center offers occupational therapy in Wapello.

Roundy School offers Fractions and Baking.

Totemeier celebrates birth of triplets.

City Council swears in new members and appoints committees. Obituaries include Harley Hamilton, Sally Bausch and Lowell Bowen.

January 11, 2012 - Laurie Salazar offers extreme coupon program for community. Las Palmas Restaurant opens in town. Muscatine Foods donates to Youth Center. Bonnichsen Family adds Brand to Cattleman's wall. Roundy School Bucket Fillers program continues for students. The temperature on January 11th reached 57 degrees. FFA holds pancake supper.

Community Foundation holds awards breakfast.

January 18, 2012 - A drawing and description of the new proposed 4-H Youth Center.

The Gazette announces the 125th anniversary celebration that will be held in May/

Author, Donald Rich speaks at American Legion.

Iowa Beef Council elects officers.

American Cancer Society holds Daffodil Days.

Velma Fern Stout's obituary is published.

January 25, 2012 - Jennifer and Karen Diaz completes their education and begin working at Colonial Manor. State Bank reports on good year at Shareholder meeting. CCHS sophomore students led college presentation program. 4-H holds large fundraiser for Youth Center. Joe Storm wins Specialty Blending Spirit Award. Community Foundation awards over \$88,000 in grants. School Board gives to ahead on \$6 million Development project. Columbus Schools release Honor Roll.

Tri-Rivers Conservation Auction was held.

Obituaries include Gerald Weber

and Joe Kottenstette.

February 1, 2012 - Sarah Hand receives certification from the State of Iowa as a Nursing Home administrator, and takes on role as administrator of Colonial Manor.

Ban on electronic wastes at Transfer Station is resolved for County.

The number of construction projects scheduled for the community were reported.

Columbus students discuss school calendar.

Kyndal Milder signs letter of intent to play softball at Marshalltown Community College.

February 8, 2012 - Community Bank holds annual Valentines Day Appreciation Day.

Joy and Lynn Murphy open Murphy's Grub and Pub in Letts.

Louisa County Master Gardeners' scholarship offered.

Colonial Manor purchases new bed that can handle individuals that weigh up to 750 lbs.

Riverboat Foundation grants given.

A special Valentine's Day section was published in the Gazette.

L-M School releases Honor Roll. Obituaries include Vera L. Willey, Ruby M. Teel and Karl Reece Elliott.

February 15, 2012 - Dr. Marlene Johnson was hired as the new Superintendent for Columbus Schools.

The new construction projects at the school were reviewed.

Habitat for Humanity Soup Supper was held.

Ainsworth to Marr Park Recreational Trail begins construction.

Main Street Gifts and Antiques set to open on March 1st.

Columbus Schools receive Gear-Up grant.

Roundy School "Bully Free" finalists named.

FCCLA section was published in the Gazette.

Obituaries include Gerald "Jerry" Griffin and Francis "Frank" Marion Williams.

February 22, 2012 - Activities and conversation at C.J. Park Apartments are featured.

Tyson Foods recognizes Team Members for United Fund contributions.

Evelyn Allen Hankins Foss celebrates 104th Birthday.

Mallory Smith named to Farmers' Market Board.

Representative Tom Sands hosts Mutual Telephone Company.

Trish Woepking and Jan Ball named Habitat Volunteers of the year.

Columbus FFA year in review was featured.

Valentines Day was celebrated at Colonial Manor.

RUSH Conservation Auction was held.

Patricia Jones' obituary was published.

Briefly -

American Legion Auxiliary to meet

The American Legion will meet on Tuesday, January 8th at 7 p.m. Hostesses are Joyce Williams and Dorothy Morrison. We will be collecting items for the V.A. Hospital in Iowa City.

ASA Softball Fundraiser

Junction Express ASA softball team has teamed up with Uncle Bill Conaway for a Mexican Supper Fundraiser on Saturday, January 12, 2013, at the Conesville Fire Department from 4-7 p.m. Free will donation. They will serve burritos, sanchos, soft-shell tacos and chips and salsa. Money raised will go towards buying new equipment and cost of tournaments. Teams are 10U, 12U and 14U, with girls from Columbus Junction and Winfield.

Heritage Center tour of homes photos needed

The Columbus Community Heritage Center Museum on Maple Street in Columbus Junction, would like to know if anyone has any photos or articles of past Columbus Junction holiday Tour of Homes. If so, they would like to create an exhibit with those materials. For more information, contact either Lisa Hills or Gloria Newell.

CCHS Variety Show set

The 2nd Semiannual Showcase will be presented on Thursday, January 10 at 7:30 pm in the Columbus High School Auditorium This student-run variety show will feature an evening of music, acting, readings, and comedy improvisation. The show is produced by high school English teacher Eric Field and stars current members of the Advanced Performance Speech class: Edwin Amigon, Luis Cabrera, Wyatt Carson, Alicia Inarrito, and Rebeca Neri, with several student guest artists. Admission is free, but freewill donations can be made at the door to benefit the High School Debate/Forensics Team or the Junior High Speech/Debate Team. Donations will be used to help both programs continue competing successfully all over Iowa and the Midwest. For more information, call 319-728-2231 ext. 3323 or eric.field@columbuscsd.org.

Cook's Night Out

Cooks' Night Out will be held on Wednesday, January 9, 2013, from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Letts United Methodist Church, Letts, Iowa. The public is invited—there is no charge for the supper. Come and visit with your neighbors. The cooks on the Committee are planning a great meal to start off the year.

"Downtown Abbey" at the Library

"Downton Abbey" Tea Party at the Columbus Junction Public Library on Saturday, January 12 at 3:30 pm. Bring your teacup and saucer and enjoy a review of the past 2 seasons of "Downton Abbey." We will have refreshments, a trivia quiz, and music. Wear your hat and gloves! If you do not have a hat and gloves, come anyway and enjoy a delightful afternoon.

Half Hour Club to meet

The Half Hour Club will meet Tuesday, January 8th, 2013, at 1:30 p.m. at the Columbus Civic Center in Columbus Junction. The program will be Washington County Hospice. We invite the public to join us for the meeting. Hostesses are Roberta Boulton, Janet Vincent and Arlene Buckman.

School to hold Advisory Committee meeting

Columbus Community School District will hold its first School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC) meeting on Monday, January 7, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. in the Roundy Elementary Library.

St. Joseph's Altar and Rosary Society to meet

St. Joseph's Altar and Rosary will meet today, Wednesday, January 2, at 7 P.M. at Egert Hall. Hostesses are Juanita Hunter and Anita Milder.

February 29, 2012 - The Corner Market in Wapello was featured. CCHS students participate in ISU Honor Band.

Ivan Gonzalez returns to C.J. as an Americorps volunteer. Sara Torres awarded Child Care Credential.

CRP signup begins. Betty Jane Cassabaum's obituary is published.

March 7, 2012 - The Wapello Market Place is featured.

Plans begin for the annual St. Patrick's Day parade.

Colonial Manor residents celebrate Dr. Suess' birthday.

County Warning system is updated.

National Red Cross month is celebrated.

Obituaries include Charles "Chuck" Andrews and Nela Jean Bennett.

March 14, 2012 - Cookies and Kids hold Food Drive.

Extension donates \$10,000 50 Youth Center.

"Keep Iowa Beautiful" month is celebrated.

Columbus Junction Museum begins search of Shellabarger Drug class pictures.

Farm Safety is featured in the Gazette.

CCHS to perform "Seusical". Obituaries include John Richie Orr, Jackie Allen Crull, Twyla A. Adams and Marjorie Allen Davis.

March 21, 2012 - Colonial Manor celebrates 37 years of operation. Nathan Carlson is named new Athletic Director at CCHS. Gazette's annual St. Patrick's Day parade is held.

Governor Branstad to keynote local growers' banquet. An historic stained glass window was on display at Main Street Gifts and Antiques. Roundy Students involved in soil experiments. Obituaries include Orville Walter Meeker, Laurie Sue Rudisill and Edward Jasper Wilson.

March 28, 2012 - Columbus Medical Facility turns 35 years old. Community Bank donates \$25,000 to Youth Center. C.J. Road Clean Up is scheduled. Port Louisa National Wildlife Refuge to begin new construction. Chautauqua Park Bridge constructed. Past Columbus Junction Dormitory is featured. Obituaries include Madge Dorothy Orr, Harold C. Kurtz and John Henry Cutkomp.

