



Your Award Winning Hometown Newspaper

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Darrell Bell and Ray Johnson Named Conesville Citizens of the Year

Darrell Bell lived most of his younger life in the town of Conesville. As a youngster, he worked for Forrest Maxwell milking cows and delivering milk to residents of Conesville. Later in life, he started the Melon Shed on the north side of town. He hired locals whenever possible. As his business expanded, he chose to keep the "money/jobs" in Conesville, thus, Bell's Melons began.

Darrell gave "road rights" to the city on 2nd Street, thus enabling citizens easier access to town and everyone to drive on and across his property daily.

He is active in the Grace Church. Darrell mows, takes out the trash, cleans bathrooms, etc. He is very active in civic duty and has always got the job done.

He has three locally owned/operated businesses that are able to sustain a substantial income. He owns properties that are maintained in a manner that only aids in increasing all property values in the town. And the Conesville Post Office is still in operation, partly because of the business it receives from the Melon Shed, renters, workers and businesses of Darrell Bell's.

Ray Johnson also won the award because of his voluntary emergency service contributions to the city. Ray has served on the Conesville Volunteer Fire Department for many years.



Pictured at right is Matt Storm, Conesville Mayor, presenting Conesville Citizens of the Year Awards to Darrell Bell, left and Ray Johnson, center

He has also served as an EMS responder for as long as anyone can remember. Ray voluntarily teaches the yearly CPR class at the Fire Department and has provided skills for many life-saving opportunities.

In addition to Ray's emergency service work, he just a nice guy. He always greets you with a friendly smile and a handshake that just isn't all that common these days. Ray is known as a family man, for his love

and commitment to his wife, Chris, his children and grandchildren. Ray Johnson is a very admired man and he has touched the lives of countless individuals over the years when they have needed it the most.

Youth Center and Campgrounds Dedication set for July 11th

Thursday, July 11 will mark the dedication of the new Youth Center and campgrounds at the Louisa County Fairgrounds. The celebration will begin at 4:30 with refreshments, facility tours and games for kids. A formal program will begin at 5:30 followed by a full dinner courtesy of Tyson Foods Columbus Junction and the Louisa County Fair Board. The featured Speaker will be Bill Northey, Iowa's secretary of agriculture. Also speaking will be donor representatives, Bob Schlutz, project chair and Bryan Townsley, Fair Board president. Donors, fair supporters, camping enthusiasts and prospective facility uses are urged to attend.

The Youth Center and Campgrounds project was five years in the making and involved dozens of donors and volunteers. The over \$600,000 project counts among its supporters the City, County and State; foundations ranging from the local Community Foundation of Louisa County to the Walmart Foundation; corporations like Casey's General Stores, Tyson and Kent Feeds; area banks, local farm families, businesses, and contractors and more. One of the most impressive donations to the project was \$7,590 raised at a single evening with a soup supper and auction organized by Louisa County's combined 4-H clubs. Donations continue to arrive and a complete list of donors will be displayed at the Youth Center.

The Youth Center and campgrounds came to be as a result of the 2008 flood. At the Louisa County fairgrounds, like so many other places, the calamity created the opportunity to simply rebuild or to improve and expand. The Fair Board chose the latter. With seed money from the Community Foundation of Louisa County the group set about designing a new flood-resistant facility that would serve as the fair's office while also meeting so many more needs. The 7,680 square foot building includes a 3,000 square foot room that seats up to 250 for large functions and meetings that will be used for exhibits during the fair; a 2,800 square foot covered patio; and a kitchen with pass through serving to both the patio and main room. The building's bathrooms feature show-



ers to serve 4-H youth exhibitors and year-round campers and have exterior doors so that they might be used even when the building is unavailable. An office area and storage rooms complete the layout.

The building was constructed of split concrete blocks with a poured insulation filling. The faces of the blocks inside are burnished which gives the walls an attractive stonelike finish. Mindful of the possibility of flooding the building was located on a rise and the block construction method was chosen in part to eliminate the need for dry-wall. Geothermal was installed to provide energy efficient heating and cooling. State-of-the-art audio and video equipment was built in including speakers inside and out and a ceiling mounted projector and screen. Risers provide flexible presentation options and a custom made podium donated by Glen McCulley Jr. top off the list of amenities available to event organizers. The kitchen is fully equipped and inspected and will be the new home of the Louisa County Fair Diner. Landscaping outside the building was installed by Louisa County Master Gardeners with guidance from Nicole Hoben of Barnyard Blooms. There is paved parking on three sides of the building.

Twenty-three campsites along the western edge of the fairgrounds are also part of the project. Adding the sites shows the fair board's commitment to being much more than a one week a year event. Stock car races are held on Friday evenings from spring to fall and the group is working closely with the Louisa County Trails Council to develop a trail that will link the fairgrounds to Chinkapin Park. The Columbus Junction Farmers market will relocate to the Youth Center starting on Friday, August 2. The campgrounds are currently partial hook up-water and electricity, and will be full service sites by this fall. The campground project as well as an improved levee are two

projects that are collaborations of the City of Columbus Junction and the fairgrounds. Mark Huston is on both the city council and the fair board which gives him good perspective on the advantage making improvements to the area. He commented "The fairgrounds is key to attracting visitors and providing activities for residents." Close a million dollars will be invested in the fairgrounds area as a result of the youth center, campsites, levee and trail development.

A subcommittee of the fair

board oversaw the Youth Center develop including design, fund raising, and construction. Bob and Marillyn Schlutz headed up the committee with great enthusiasm, expertise and attention to detail. Through their involvement with the Iowa State Fair Association, cattle shows and tourism interests they have visited numerous facilities and had great ideas to share. Their vision along with their financial support and volunteer labor made the project possible.

Another Great 4th of July



Briefly -

City to hold public meetings and Regular Council Meeting

The City of Columbus Junction will be holding public hearings and a regular meeting today, Wednesday, July 10th, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. in the New Civic Center/City Hall.

Class of 1988 to hold class reunion

Attention CCHS Class of 1988: The 25-year reunion for the Class of 1988 is set for the weekend of October 11-12. Friday Night Family Fun at Chinkapin Park. Ride the float in Saturday's parade and supper at the Thirsty Camel. For more information and to R.S.V.P., contact either Nikki McFarland at 314-680-8899 or Theresa Hall at 319-461-9122 by July 31st.

Cooks Night Out

Everyone is invited to our next Cooks' Night Out Supper to be held today, Wednesday, July 10, 2013, at the Letts Methodist Church from 5 to 7 p.m. Everyone is welcome and there is no charge for the supper. Crafts and games are available for the youth and visiting for adults. The planned menu includes Cowboy Casserole, Salads and Desserts and Beverages.

Farmers' Market coupons

Farmer's Market coupons are now available at the Senior Center on Thursdays from 10:15-11:00 A.M. until all supplies are exhausted.

Farmers' Market held on Fridays

A Farmer's Market is held every Friday afternoon through October 11 at the American Legion parking lot. Produce, plants, baked good and crafts for sale. WIC coupon, SNAP and senior nutrition coupons accepted. New vendors are always welcome.

Letts United Methodist Church to hold Fun Days

Fun Days are being planned for students K-6 at the Letts United Methodist Church. The day will begin at 9 a.m. and end at 2. Lunch will be served. Activities, crafts, games, snacks, and music. Registration forms at the church office or call office in the a.m. M-F at 726-3641. Fun Days are scheduled for August 1 and August 8. No fees. For questions, call Pastor Marsha Gerot at 319-725-6722.

School Board to meet

The Board of Education for the Columbus Community School District will hold a public meeting on Monday, July 15, 2013 at 6:30 PM at the Roundy Elementary School Library, 1212 Colton Street, Columbus Junction, IA 52738.

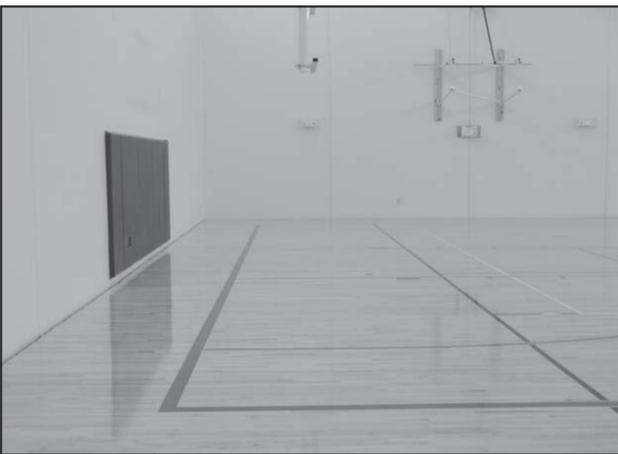
Shellbark Club to meet

Shellbark Club will meet Thursday, July 11th at 11:30 a.m. at Dodici's Café in Washington.

Summer Food Safety Training

ISU Extension and Outreach in partnership with the Community Development Center in Columbus Junction and their Wellness Intern, Jane Ohde, a medical student at Des Moines University, will offer this free program at the new Louisa County Fair Youth Building at both 1:30 pm and 6:30 pm on Tuesday, July 16th. Participants will learn the importance of and be able to practice safe food handling practices at the end of the program. RSVPs for the free class are encouraged but not required. Call 319-523-2371 x202 or email Kathy Vance at vancek@iastate.edu.

School Construction progress



Once again the *Columbus Gazette* got a peak at the building of the new sports complex at the Columbus Community School. Work is moving along on schedule. Top photo: The gym located on the lower floor. The floor is sealed and playing lines are in place. Bottom photo: The upstairs wrestling room. The wall side mats say it all: Wildcat Wrestling.

