

Fair Horse Arena becomes a reality

By Mary Masonholder Wilson

At this year's Louisa County Fair, the new horse arena was used for the first time. This arena had been "in the works" for years (starting in 2002), and according to its 4-H Horse and Pony project leader, Linda Pierce, "It seemed like the project that would never end."

The project actually started with the desire to build a horse barn at the fairgrounds, not a new arena. Several horse exhibitors were showing Weanlings, baby horses, and needed a place to house them as they did not tie well to a trailer, plus they needed to be inside. It was also the desire to have a horse barn for fair goers to be able to come around and view the horses, just as other livestock was seen at the fair. Horses are beautiful animals, and young children especially love to admire them.

The original committee in this project was: Lisa Garrison, Brenda Keller, Joanne Ryan, Linda Pierce, Tammy Virzi, Mary Colthurst, and Chris Estabrook. In 2002, Pierce and Virzi went to the Fair Board Members with their request for a barn. At that time, the request was to locate the barn near the existing horse show arena, and the Fair Board gave approval for the group to start fundraising for this project, and the idea was off and running.

Lisa Garrison and Linda Pierce started to organize ways to get money. They got a list of 4-H youth from the county extension office that had horse projects for the fair. They contacted these kids, had a meeting, and started the wheels in motion. Their first project was to sell Butterbraids. They did this several times. Then Pierce Furniture donated a Lazy-Boy recliner for a raffle. Tickets were sold, a drawing held, and Wayne Finke was the winner. Finke donated the recliner back to Pierce Furniture who then sold the chair and donated those proceeds to

the 'barn cause'. The group also sold candles and over the years had several Columbus Day bake sales.

However, their big fundraiser was a "Kiss the Pig" contest. Coffee cans were placed around the county in various businesses. These cans had pictures on them of Craig Helmick, Tom Sands, Chris Mosman, Rob Heindel, John Lawrence (principal at Columbus schools), Bob Schlutz, Nick Pugh, Kurt Braby, Deb Massner, and Larry Mincer. People would vote for the person they wanted to kiss the pig by placing money in the can. Chris Mosman, plant manager of IBP at the time, was the big winner—his can had over \$1,000 in it; supposedly the employees of IBP were very anxious to see him kiss the pig. Mosman did indeed kiss the piglet, and the owner no longer wanted it back and donated the pig for an auction, which was held immediately. It was fun for all and a real moneymaker.

In the meantime, around 2006, Linda Pierce had become a member of the fair board, and she was really working hard on the goal of getting a horse barn. She started writing grants. However, a shift in focus occurred. It was decided that there was not room for a barn near the existing arena, and the barn had to be near the arena. Thus the arena had to be moved. A new location had to be selected. It was decided to use the area where the old softball fields used to be, which the fairgrounds owned. The Fair board donated the land, and now a new project was being started, that of a new arena. The barn would have to wait until later.

In 2007 Pierce wrote the Louisa County Engineer asking for dirt from ditches to be hauled to the new site as the ground needed to be raised. They complied, and next she called on Tom Scott, President of River Products outside Fredonia asking for gravel. He donated 500 ton of gravel

and the project was looking like a real go. However, Mother Nature had other ideas. Several times Pierce had workers and haulers lined up and weather prevented it from happening. One November there was an ice storm, and then there was the flood.

Finally Pierce got five trucks and drivers donated by Don Bean, Charles Shellabarger, Mark Kemper, Schlutz Ent, and John Bloomer. The gravel was moved. That, along with the county ditch soil, raised the arena site approximately four feet. Many people donated time and equipment, such as skid loaders, graders, tractors, etc, to get this going, and Kemp and Sons did the grading of the gravel and ditch soil in 2010. Again, the project was delayed by weather. Finally this past spring, Bob Schlutz and the Fair board, with Pierce giving a push got together to make this a reality. Pierce went to see Tom Scott of River Products again, got more soil and sand. He was so generous he gave her a key and said, "Get what you need." She got nine trucks hauling: Holmes Concrete, City of CJ, Bloomer Construction, Carpenter Productions, Schlutz Ent., and Tom and Aaron Bonnichsen. On-site equipment and workers were provided by O'Toole's Inc., Schlutz Ent., and Odessa Mechanical Contracting. Some of the drivers were Larry Boysen and Ben Reshke. In four hours, this part of the project was completed, and it was a race as rain was starting.

On the hottest day of the summer, Pierce and Andy Carpenter worked on leveling the ground. Roger Edwards and others also helped with finishing touches. Trail's End Fencing put up all the white vinyl to enclose the arena.

The arena finally was ready just a few days before the fair. This Louisa County Horse Facility has been a great addition to the fairgrounds. It is a beautiful sight as drivers enter the fair, and it is also visible

from Highway 92 bringing attention to the area. However, it is still a work in progress. Next year, it is planned to get lighting from Musco. An announcer's box will be added, and shade trees will be planted.

The building of the barn will have to wait, but is still on the future agenda. Fundraising will continue, and Pierce plans to pursue more grants.

Pierce credits the 4-H horse project youth with getting a lot of the money for this project. Many of these youngsters started this fundraising so long ago; they have graduated and moved on, never getting to use this new facility. Today, some of the youth working to get the barn may never get to use it; however, they still continue to work for this project.

Pierce also thanks the many people who donated equipment and work hours. Many have not been named in this article. Then there are the many businesses that donated their product or provided it at a much-reduced cost. Pierce added, "Without them, the project could not have happened."

The fair board members have also been a huge supporter and workforce for the arena. Pierce says, "Because of the Louisa County Fair board and the best 4-H parents, that is how this project got completed."

There are many who say this project would not have happened without Linda Pierce. Many would have given up after this many years and so many adversities. Pierce persevered. She says, "There is nothing more beautiful than seeing a horse run across a pasture. Someone once said, 'Horses are God's gift to man,' and that is how I feel."

Because of Linda Pierce and many others, the Louisa County Horse Arena was dedicated during the fair this summer. It was a dream come true, and it will fulfill the dreams of many horse lovers for years to come.

Briefly -

Community Club to meet

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

Blood Checks at the Senior Center

Colonial Manor Staff will be at the Columbus Senior Center on Tuesday, September 20th from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. to do blood glucose, blood pressures and cholesterol checks. We'll see you there!!

CCHS Class of 1971 plans reunion

CCHS Class of 1971 will be holding their 40th class reunion on October 8, 2011 starting at 5:00 p.m. at the Cedarcrest Country Club in Columbus Junction. Please RSVP to Randy and Nancy Orr by September 24th by calling 319-728-3189 or email Randy_nancy71@yahoo.com also see us on facebook.

CCHS Class of 1976 plans reunion

Members of the CCHS Class of 1976: Reserve the dates of Friday and Saturday, September 16th and 17th. We will be having our 35th class reunion! Letters will be sent to you and you can get updates at <https://sites.google.com/site/cchswildcat1976>.

City Council meets tonight

City of Columbus Junction will meet tonight Wednesday, September 14, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. for its regular meeting, location the New Civic Center / City Hall.

Fredonia city elections

The City of Fredonia will have the following seats up for election this year: Mayor and 2 Council Members. You may pick up nomination papers at City Hall on Monday 5 - 7 or call Lisa Exline at 319-750-0801. Nomination papers must be turned in by 5 p.m. on September 22, 2011.

Emma Beckman - Masons supper

Emma Beckman Chapter 445, Order of the Eastern Star, will be serving a spaghetti supper to the Masons and their families prior to the Mason's regular meeting on September 15, at the Masonic Center. Serving starts at 5:30 p.m.

FCCLA selling corn stocks

The Columbus FCCLA are holding their annual decorative corn stock sales. The cost is \$10, we will be taking orders until Thursday, September 15. You can order calling the school at 738-2231 ext 3332. They will be delivered on Saturday, September 17. The proceeds go to help support FCCLA members leadership conference and activity expenses.

FCCLA Pink Out volleyball night

Thursday, September 29th, join the Columbus Volleyball Team for a "Pink Out" against Pekin. The FCCLA will be selling Columbus Wildcat Pink Power t-shirts for the game for \$10. Pre-order by Friday, September 16th to make sure you have your shirt for the game. All proceeds will go to the Gary Hamilton family. Order forms can be found in the Gazette or you may pick them up at the Columbus Junction State Bank, Columbus Community Bank, or at the Columbus School Offices. Questions call Lois Mincks at CCHS 319-728-2231 ext. 3332.

Emma Beckman Open House

On Sunday October 9, 2011 Emma Beckman Chapter #445, Order of the Eastern Star will have an Open House from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Masonic Center in Columbus City for the observance of their 100th anniversary. The Grand Chapter of Iowa granted the Charter on October 26, 1911. Friends and members are welcome for this occasion as the one hundred five members of today look forward to the future of the Chapter.

Shellbark Club to meet

The Shellbark Club will meet Thursday, September 15th at 11:30 a.m. at Unc & Neph's in Washington.

St. Mary's in Lone Tree fundraiser

St. Mary's Church in Lone Tree will be having their annual Fall Auction fundraiser on Sunday, September 25 at the American Legion. Lunch will be served starting at 11 a.m. The silent auction is from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The regular auction begins at 1 p.m. Come and eat with us and join the fun bidding on your favorite pie, cake or craft.

Retired School Personnel to meet

The Louisa County Retired School Personnel will meet on Wednesday, September 21, at 11:30 a.m. location will be the Scone House in Grandview.

This week at the Farmers' Market

Fridays from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the American Legion parking lot, now until October 14th. The market offers fresh produce, baked goods, homemade noodles, jams and jellies, and plants. Some vendors accept Iowa Farmers Market Nutrition, WIC and Senior Program coupons. Buy fresh and local and taste the difference. For more information, including how to participate as a vendor, contact Nitza or Mallory at 319-728-7971.

Model Railroad club to meet

The Washington Model Railroad Club will hold its annual train show and swap meet on Sunday, October 2nd from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 606 West 3rd Street, in Washington, Iowa. All scales represented. Admission for adults is \$4, children 6-12 \$1. Swap tables to rent: \$18 each. The food stand will be in the building. For more information, contact Mike Worley at 319-653-3782.

Seasonal Flu Clinics schedule

Flu clinics will be held at the following locations: Sept. 20th - Letts Methodist Church 9:30-11:00 am; Sept. 21st - Columbus Senior Center 9:00-11:00 am. Every Thursday from 1-4 p.m. at the Public Health Office in Wapello. Medicare Part B covers the cost of the flu and pneumonia shots. If this is your primary insurance bring your card for verification. Medicare Part B is the only insurance we accept for flu shots. We do not bill Medicare Advantage Plans at this time. Without Medicare Part B the cost is \$25.00 for flu shots and \$60.00 for pneumonia shots. If you have a question call the Public Health Office at 319-523-3981.

Benefit for Sammi Smith

Friends and neighbors will be hosting a benefit for Sammi Smith on Saturday, September 17, 2011 at the Louisa County Fairgrounds. The day's activities will begin at 3:00 p.m. and include games, food, music and fun.

Representative Tom Sands announces re-election plans

(Wapello)—Rep. Tom Sands (R-Wapello) announced last week that he will seek re-election to the Iowa House in new House District 88. This district includes all of Louisa County and portions of Muscatine and Des Moines Counties.

"The first three words of the Preamble to the United States Constitution are, 'We the People.' This illustrates that the strength and power of this country lies within its people, not its government," said Sands. "Iowans expect government to be fiscally responsible with the people's hard-earned tax dollars. I will continue my efforts to defend the taxpayer and find ways to streamline the work of government."

Sands is a banker, real estate appraiser, and farm owner. Tom has three grown children and five grandchildren. He and his wife, Catherine,

are members of the First United Methodist Church of Mediapolis.

Sands is active in the community and is a member of Louisa County Farm Bureau, Iowa Corn Growers Association, American Soybean Association, Iowa Cattlemen's Association, National Rifle Association, Louisa Development Group, and a Charter member of Sons of the American Legion Post 100 in Columbus Junction, in which he served as the group's First Commander. He is also a former Columbus Junction City Councilman.

"Rep. Sands brings a thoughtful approach to state government. He has no doubt been a vigilant watchdog of the taxpayers' money," said House Speaker Kraig Paulsen. "Sands is consistently listening and working to give Iowa taxpayers a seat at the table."



In the House, Sands serves as the Chair of the Ways and Means committee. He also serves on the Public Safety, Environmental Protection, Legislative Council, Capital Projects and Fiscal committees.

2011 Homecoming Week kicks off at Columbus Community Schools

Homecoming Week Schedule of Events

Support Your School and Attend this Week's Activities

Wednesday, Sept. 14:
Powderpuff Football Game—7:00 PM at the football field.
Bonfire following game.

Thursday, Sept. 15: Volleyball at L-M

Friday, Sept. 16: Pep Rally at High School Gym—12:15 PM
Parade: Leaves school at 1:30 PM proceeds to downtown CJ
Football Game against Camanche
Fresh/Soph—5:15 PM
Varsity—7:00 PM
Coronation of King and Queen—
Halftime of the Varsity Football Game



2011 Homecoming candidates, front row, left to right: Eppy Murillo, Kindal Milder, Torie Hathaway, Kenzie Griffin, Laura Wittmann. Back row, left to right: Juan Solis, Ray Quiroz, Rafael Cardenas, Tanner Travis, Cody Castillo.

Saturday, Sept. 17: Homecoming Dance at the High School 8:00 PM