

# Newest member of the ISU Hall of Fame

By John Carpenter  
Gazette Staff

A few weeks ago a call was received at the Gazette asking for Tammy Rueckert. It's unusual to have someone call and refer to Tammy's last name as Rueckert, but the caller was told that Tammy was out but would return in a couple of hours. The man on the phone wouldn't give me his name or leave a message, he just said that he would call back. A few hours later he did call back, and Tammy was in the office.

The caller identified himself as Jamie Pollard, the athletic director for Iowa State University. The purpose of his call was to inform Tammy that she was being inducted into the Iowa State University Hall of Fame with the class of 2010, the first softball player to reside in the Hall.

Anyone that has followed Columbus athletics over the years know of Tammy's success as a high school pitcher. She was one of the most dominating pitchers in Columbus Community history, as well as one of the most dominating high school pitchers in the state. In 1976 Tammy was the winning pitcher when Columbus Community defeated Ottumwa High School, stopping Ottumwa's 52 game winning streak, and giving Columbus a berth in the State Softball Tournament. But Tammy's success didn't end with high school.

After graduation she enrolled at Iowa State University to study animal science, and possibly try out for the basketball team. However Tammy heard that Iowa State was attempting to build their softball team, so she decided to see if she could get a try-out. The team was working out in a gymnasium, so she



An intimidating sight to many Big Eight softball players from 1978 through 1980.

approached one of the coaches and said she was a pitcher. The coach didn't seem very interested, so he told her to go over to the side and find someone to throw to. "I was pretty mad that they didn't seem interested enough to give me a chance," said Tammy, "so I found a catcher and started to throw as hard as I could." Tammy's tremendous speed, along with the natural echo that the gym created, made her pitches sound like a rifle shot as they banged into the catcher's mitt. Everyone in the gym just came to a stop, and that's when Iowa State University realized that they were about to become a national softball power.

Tammy is still among the all-time pitching leaders in Iowa State history, earning Big Eight All-Tournament honors in 1978, 1979 and 1980. She pitched and recorded the win in the decisive game to give ISU the 1978 Big Eight Tournament Championship. She won 12 games and recorded a 0.89 ERA, the fourth best single season total in school history to help ISU notch its best ever season winning percentage (.771) in 1979. Tammy won 17 of ISU's 23 games in 1980. Her 46 career wins ranks third all-time in school history. She compiled a 1.05 career ERA, the third best mark in ISU history.

Tammy will be inducted into the

Hall of Fame at a banquet in Ames on Friday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, and will be introduced at halftime of the Iowa State University football game on October 9<sup>th</sup>.

From dominating high school hitters in southeast Iowa to a place in a Division I College Hall of Fame, Tammy (Rueckert) Virzi has not only established herself as a role model for all young athletes to aspire to, but has set the same level of excellence in her personal life as she did in her athletic career. Congratulations, Tammy, this is an honor that is well-deserved, and we are all proud to have you as a member of the Columbus Community.

# City Council clarifies Retail District definition

By Jim Rudisill

A new Columbus Junction business is free to begin converting the former Columbus Bowl building into a food processing plant, after the city council agreed to clarify the city's General Retail District definition during its September 22 regular meeting.

The council agreed to add language that specifically identifies the type of business Elias Gutierrez and his mother plan to operate out of the building. According to earlier discussions, Gutierrez established Dona Letty Foods earlier this year to manufacture specialty Hispanic foods.

The company, which Gutierrez reported earlier eventually plans to employ up to 75 people, originally began operating from a downtown building, but began investigating the bowling alley after demand for its products increased. He received council approval of a tax abatement request in August, reporting on his application that the company planned to make \$250,000 worth of improvements to the bowling alley.

However, after city attorney Tim Wink and Mayor Dan Wilson reviewed the city's General Retail District ordinance, Wink suggested the council make some changes.

According to Wilson, Wink was uncertain that the district's definition of businesses allowed to operate in a General Retail District was broad enough to allow Dona Letty Foods to operate. "It was up to interpretation. Tim thinks it's okay, I think it's okay, but he thought just to be safe, (Wink) wants to clarify things we (allow) in a General Retail District," Wilson told the council. "We just want to make sure we're inclusive enough," he added.

The new language will expand the definition of permitted accessory users and structures to include: "food sales, preparation, production and processing for human consumption, both retail and wholesale, but only where the processing uses are wholly contained within a building, and have

no exterior storage, create no offensive noise, dust, odor, vibration, or visual or electrical interference."

Council member Hal Prior said the action was needed. "It clarifies it so there isn't any problem."

In addition to passing the amendment on the first reading, the council agreed to waive the second and third reading, which will allow the new language to be effective immediately.

In other action, the council agreed to apply for a state grant that could help finance an update of the city's master plan. Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission representative Tracey Lamm told the council the Local Comprehensive Planning Grant Program would fund 50% of the update's cost. Columbus Junction developed a joint master plan with Columbus City in 2007; and city officials said they supported asking Columbus City to continue its planning association with Columbus Junction.

Lamm said she would ask Columbus City officials to join with Columbus Junction for the update effort, which will utilize Smart Planning principles. Those principles include collaboration, revitalization, occupational diversity, community character and other factors that were built into the Rebuilt Iowa Infrastructure Fund that is being used to provide revenue for the planning grants.

Wilson said Columbus Junction would develop a funding split for the local share of the update to present to Columbus City. Officials said the original master plan cost around \$15000, but agreed the update should be substantially lower.

The council also approved the city's fiscal year 2010 Road Use Tax Report. According to the report, the city spent \$263,199 on street repair projects and other related expenses during the fiscal year that ran from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010. It started the year with an \$80,251 balance and collected \$196,709 in revenue through the year, leaving an ending balance of \$13,761.

City clerk Julie Heindel, who prepared the plan, said the fund had been paying off costs associated with construction of a new subdivision street, but the city had just finished paying the final installment of that cost. She said that would free up nearly \$25,000 and provide the fund with increased future revenue.

In final action, council member Mark Huston reported on a meeting he and other officials recently held with John Meyer, project engineer on the water plant relocation project. Huston said bid letting on the project might be held in February, with construction to start shortly after that.

Huston said that according to Meyer, if that schedule holds, the plant could be operating by Christmas 2011. The council also accepted the resignation of officer Danny Zapata from the city police force and agreed to review the city's current applicant list before doing any new advertising. Zapata's final day was September 25.

Wilson also announced he would be meeting in Des Moines on October 21 with officials of the Iowa Department of Economic Development and Iowa Department of Transportation to discuss the city's proposed highway corridor improvement project.

# Congregate Meals are back in town



Twenty people were on hand at the Senior Center last Monday as the Congregate Meal Program returned to Columbus Junction. In addition to the twenty meals served, six meals were delivered in the Meals on Wheels Program. The meals were temporarily suspended because of the small participation, but the Senior Center Board has been in constant touch with the Southeast Area on Aging personnel to return the program. It is important that people come forward and participate in the meal program to keep it a viable service in town. Meals are served at Noon on Monday through Friday, with reservations required by 12:30 the day before. Reservations can be made by calling Judy Shear at 319-728-3148 between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. Anyone over the age of 60 and their spouse are eligible to participate. This is an important program in town, so please consider making a reservation for a great meal, and great conversation.

## Briefly -

### CCHS Class of 1970 plans reunion

Come to Columbus Day, October 9<sup>th</sup> to celebrate our class reunion. Meet by the water tower at 1:30 p.m. to watch the parade. Stop by Steve and Bev Nielsen's home, 830 Colonial Ave., at 5:00 p.m. for a casual gathering. Contact classmates to let them know everyone is invited.

### Columbus Day Tractor Show

The Columbus Day Tractor Show will be held on Saturday, October 9, 2010, on the North End of Main Street in Columbus Junction. Please bring your tractor, or machinery to show, so they are in place by 9:00 a.m. At 12:30 we will take them up to the school to line them up for the parade. Please do not bring candy to throw from the tractors, as we do not want anyone hurt. Please register to Lee and Carol Foster, 20446 Highway 92, Columbus Junction, Iowa 52738, or to OUR SHOP, 106 Main Street, Suite 100, Columbus Junction, Iowa 52738-1028.

### Early Childhood Board to meet

The Des Moines/Louisa Early Childhood Area Board (formerly Empowerment Board) will be meeting at the First Presbyterian Church, 801 Middle Street, Mediapolis, IA, today, Wednesday, September 29, 2010 at 10:00 a.m.

### Etude Club to meet

ETUDE will be held at the Columbus Community Senior Center Tuesday October 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. Stephanie Duncan will be hostess.

### FFA Alumni to meet

The Columbus FFA Alumni will have a meeting today, Wednesday, September 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Ag Room at CCHS. ALL parents are invited to attend. Call Brenda Wilson with questions: 319-212-0529.

### Fredonia seeks Council Member

Needing a City Council member for the Fredonia Council please contact Al 563-571-0226 if interested.

### Letts Fire Department Fish Fry

Letts Fire Department will hold a fish and chicken fry on Saturday Oct 2, 2010 starting at 5:00 p.m. Adults \$9.00 Children \$4.00.

### Library to host Puppet Show

Please mark your calendar - Sunday October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 2 p.m. at the Columbus Community School Auditorium. The Library is hosting the Eulenspiegel Puppet Theatre's production of *The Flea*. This is a melding of 2 Spanish-American folktales. The production will feature our very own students and live music provided by Ron Hillis. Admission: free! Please call the Library for details 319-728-7972 or email [cathy.crawford@columbusjct.lib.ia.us](mailto:cathy.crawford@columbusjct.lib.ia.us).

### Retirement Party for Marcy Gerst-Meeker relocated

The Community Action Program retirement reception for Marcy Gerst-Meeker will be held at the American Legion on Thursday, September 30<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

### Military Women Brunch

A Heart to Heart Brunch will be sponsored by Stonecroft Ministries honoring military wives and active duty women. The event will take place on Wednesday, October 6, 2010 from 9:30 - 11:30 A.M. at the Family Life Center, 4601 Utica Ridge Road, Davenport, Iowa. The dress code will be *casual attire*. There will be Giveaways and Special Gifts! Reservations are required for the brunch and free childcare. The deadline for both is: Friday, October 1, 2010. For more information, call Pam at 563-263-8443 or email: [heid@machlink.com](mailto:heid@machlink.com).

### Physical Therapy Wellness seminar

Want to lose weight, feel great and achieve optimal health? Then join us on Thursday, September 30, 2010 a 6:00 p.m. for a one-hour motivational seminar at Rendezvous Banquet Hall, 3127 Lucas St. Muscatine, IA to learn simple steps to lose weight and get fit inside a 28-Day Health Challenge! The event is hosted by Muscatine and Columbus Junction Physical Therapy. Call 563-288-6787 for more details. Register at [www.ehealth930.eventbrite.com](http://www.ehealth930.eventbrite.com). There is no charge for admission. The special guest speaker is David Bush, Peak Performance Health Coach and former Iowa Barnstormer.

### Flu shots at the Senior Center

Get a head start on the flu season by getting your flu shots Thursday, Sept. 30, 2010, starting at 9 a.m. at the Columbus Community Senior Center. Getting your flu shot early is the smart thing to do. See you Sept. 30, 2010.

### Come help "Fill the Jeep"

On Columbus Day, October 9<sup>th</sup>, the American Legion Auxiliary #100 will sponsor "Jeep for Veterans" in the Econ-O-Mart parking lot from 8 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (noon) Please help us fill the Jeep with items such as batteries, playing cards, puzzle books, microwave popcorn, powdered drinks, packaged cheese and crackers, packaged cookies, personal items for women, plus many other items. These items will be sent to our veterans overseas. Let's show them we care and express our Thanks for preserving our freedoms.

### Washington Conservation winter hours

Starting October 1, 2010 the Washington County Conservation Education Center at Marr Park will be changing to its winter hours. We hope you will continue to come out and enjoy the center throughout the winter months. Winter Hours (October 1<sup>st</sup> - March 31<sup>st</sup>): Monday 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.; Tuesday Closed; Wednesday Closed; Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.; Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.; Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.; Sunday 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

### Washington Model Railroad Club

The Washington Model Railroad Club will hold its annual Train Show and Swap Meet on Sunday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 606 W 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Washington, IA 52353. All scales will be represented. Admission is \$4 for adults, \$1 for children ages 6-12, early arrivals \$5. Swap tables to rent are \$18 each. There will be a food stand in the building. For more information, contact Mike Worley at 319-653-3782.