



Your Award Winning Hometown Newspaper

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Downton Abbey comes to Columbus Junction

By Mary Masonholder Wilson

Walking into the Columbus Junction Public Library on Saturday afternoon, January 12th was like walking into an English manor dining room. The tables were beautifully decorated with white lace tablecloths, velvet/pearled centerpieces, and "sterling" silver. A floral paper teapot was at each place setting and real teapots filled with steaming hot water soon appeared on the tables.

Gathered were a group of ladies, dressed in hats and other English finery to celebrate the current popular TV miniseries "Downton Abbey," which is set in England in one of the finest manor homes. The miniseries tells the story of both the Earl and Lady Grantham and their family who live in the house, and the servants who work for them and live in the lower parts of the mansion. There is much drama in the show and viewers enjoy watching their favorite characters. The miniseries is starting its third season on Iowa Public Broadcasting, and in case you missed the first two seasons, the Columbus Junction Library has them on DVD.

Cathy Crawford, head librarian, and her staff, along with local Rosemary Harris spearheaded this elegant event. Upon arriving at the library tea, each lady chose a tea flavor of her choice and was seated at the lovely tables. The hot water teapots and silver trays with cucumber sandwiches and walnut/cream cheese sandwiches, petite cookies, pomegranate tarts, and blueberry scones were soon served by Crawford and Sue Reid, both dressed as servants. Lemon for the tea and lemon curd as a topping were also provided. Guests were allowed to visit and admire each other's costumes while a movie screen projected scenes from the "Downton Abbey" TV show.



The invitation asked each person to bring a cup and saucer and participants introduced themselves by telling the story of their drinking china. Much effort was also put into costumes and hats for the occasion, some having made their own and others getting in closets to see what could be used.

Rosemary Harris entertained the group in a costume that was right out of the time period. Downton Abbey is still in existence; only it is actually named Highclere Castle. There was a real family on whom the current show is based, and the Earl did indeed marry a woman for her money

to keep Highclere going. This home was also turned into a hospital during World War I. Harris recommended other books that may be interesting to readers who like this story. They are: *Marry an English Lord* and *Below Stairs*. The DVD "Gothsford Park", created by Julian Fellowes, also shows the life of entitled English people.

The afternoon ended with the singing of songs from the show and World War I. The words were printed on the paper teapots and the audience of approximately 40 ladies joined in to sing.

Cathy Crawford is to be com-

mended for this afternoon of fun. She and Rosemary Harris worked well together and along with the rest of the library staff, everyone present was treated to an afternoon of English genteel living. Harris commented, "It is sad that many of these beautiful traditions and customs of the times are gone. As the butler at Highclere said, "We have to maintain standards, and if not, they are gone forever."

For an afternoon, it was fun to imagine these traditions weren't gone, and everyone was in a fine English manor. One can always pretend. It is so delightful.

Photo credit from Anita Braden

Carla Bruns begins duties as Deputy City Clerk

By Gazette Staff

With the retirement of Sue Schweitzer as the Deputy Clerk for the city of Columbus Junction, a new person was needed to fill that position. Carla Bruns was selected by the City Council from the applicants.

Carla is a familiar face around town, having grown up in Columbus City, the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Richard Houseal, and having graduated from the Columbus Community School. She also has worked as a teller at Community Bank for around 17 years.

Carla decided that after many years at the bank, she was ready for a change, and when she read about the opening at City Hall, she decided to apply. One reason for her interest in this position was she had been the City Clerk at Grandview for several years and enjoyed it. She commented, "I thought it would be fun to get back into city work."

Bruns will have many duties with her new position. The city has many projects in the works, including the

new water treatment facility and the levee improvements. With federal and state grants as the major funding source and the paperwork involved with these grants, the role of the city clerk is expanding.

The main responsibilities will be in the area of Utilities (water, sewer, and garbage), and includes billing, record keeping, payment receipts, and accounting. There are also activities with coordinating water meter replacements, which have aged over time, and many of them will be replaced in the future, and working with the Public Works department on both water and sewer utilities.

Carla will also be working with Mallory Smith and the Community Development Center of City Hall in helping administer the new rental inspection program. This was a goal of the city's to make sure people in rental properties have a clean, safe environment in which to live.

Julie Heindel, City Clerk, will be continuing her same responsibilities. However, she will assume more du-



ties in budgeting and administering the grants the city has received. Heindel will also be working with Bruns on some of the new duties.

Mayor Dan Wilson commented, "We are trying to become more efficient in the operation and adminis-

tration of utility accounts and other city projects as they arise. Much is happening in Columbus Junction."

Indeed, much is happening in our small town. The City Clerk and Deputy Clerk are in charge of making sure it gets done.

Habitat House progresses



Pictured left to right: Rich Herrick, Jeff Everett, Jerry Musgrove and Larry Prior

The Habitat for Humanity House being built in Columbus City for Sophie Torres and her family is starting to near completion. It is hoped that by the end of the first week in

February, move-in will be possible. The home is a four-bedroom, two-bath residence. It is 32 feet wide and 48 feet long.

There are many "hands" in this project. The volunteerism has been wonderful. Jeff Everett and Mark Shear are leaders, and it is difficult to name all the workers. Some of the

regulars have been Danny Gipple, Warren and Trish Woepking, Jim Gabriel, Jerry Musgrove, Larry Prior, and Rich Herrick.

Everett explained that the house is an effort to give back to society. He went on to say that great effort has been made to ensure that this is a well-built house. Building materials, such as exterior wall-foam insulation, blown-in-attic insulation, solid oak doors, and ¾ inch wood flooring provide quality construction and energy efficiency.

The house has a south exposure with lots of windows to bring in winter sunlight. Appliances purchased were energy efficient. The house now qualifies for a "Super, Insulated, High Efficiency Home", which will bring back a sizeable refund.

Everett also told of the generosity of many firms and people. Whirlpool donated the appliances. The Sperry Drywall Plant in Mediapolis donated the drywall. Menards and Winfield Builder's Supply have also been very willing to help with the project, giving reduced rates on building materials.

Mark Shear, worker and the Columbus City Mayor, has donated his time to do the electrical work and much of the wood finishing, especially the fine, finishing work. Shear

personally formed wooden "rosettes" to top the woodwork on doors and windows. Dr. Brian Masonholder donated some of this wood. Rich Herrick developed the overall design of the house.

Everett said the prison inmates at the Ft. Madison Penitentiary built the kitchen cabinetry for the house. The quality of materials and workmanship is high. The exterior cabinet wood is maple and the shelves inside are a Baltic cabinet-ply from Russia.

The painting of the interior is finished, and the Torres family chose the paint colors. They went with many bright colors that make the home very cheerful and warm.

Private donations from the community are used to construct Habitat Homes. It is also the volunteer workers who make a huge difference in the community and make homes and projects such as this a reality.

The volunteer workers at the house want to thank all the people who provided lunches for them. There were many compliments about the food, and lunches together at the house were a lot of fun!

The Habitat House is definitely the work of many and a house to be proud of. The Torres family will soon be able to enjoy the efforts of all these people.

Briefly -

4-H Soup Supper and Fundraiser

On Sunday, January 27th at the American Legion in Columbus Junction, a soup supper will be served from 4-6 pm. Supper is \$6 and includes all you can eat chili, vegetable, potato or cheese soup and a drink. The main dessert auction begins at 6 pm. This year, there will be 2 mini-auctions of desserts beginning at 4:30 and 5:15 for those who wish to come and go. Proceeds will go towards 4-H enrollment fees for Louisa County youth.

Cristal Arthur holds book signing

Christal Arthur, a resident and author of Washington, IA, will be available to sign copies of her book, *Overdrawn*, on Saturday, January 19, 2013, from 9-11 a.m. at the Coffee Corner, 125 West Washington Street, Washington, IA 52353.

CWO Prince and Princess of Hearts

The Columbus Women's Organization is looking for candidates for their annual Prince and Princess of Hearts Contest. Children 0-5 years of age are eligible for the contest, which will run from Monday, January 21st through Wednesday, February 6th, 2013. Deadline for entry and photos is Friday, January 18th at noon with all entry material delivered to Twyla Peters at the Columbus Medical Clinic. Prince and Princess of Hearts will be determined by the largest amount of money donations in that child's name at these locations: Columbus Junction State Bank, The Community Bank and the Econ-O-Mart, between Monday January 21st thru February 6th, 2013. The Prince and Princess will be crowned on Saturday, February 9th, 2013 beginning at 10:00 a.m. at the American Legion in Columbus Junction. The winners will each receive a \$50 Savings Bond donated by Community Bank and the Columbus Junction State Bank, and get to ride in the Columbus Day parade. **MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN!** All proceeds from the contest benefit the Senior Girls Dinner, annually sponsored by the C.W.O.

Early Childhood Area Board to meet

The Early Childhood Iowa Area Board Des Moines/Louisa Counties will be meeting today, Wednesday, January 16, 2013, at 10:00 a.m. at the First United Presbyterian Church, 801 Middle St., Mediapolis, IA.

Grandview-Letts Lions soup supper

The Grandview-Letts Lions Club will hold their annual soup supper on Saturday, January 19, 2013, from 5-7 p.m. at the Community Center and Library in Letts. The all-you-can-eat menu includes: Chili and Wisconsin Cheese soups, homemade pies, celery, carrots, pickles, crackers and drinks. The cost for tickets is \$6.00; (Ages 6-12) \$4.00; (Ages 5 and under) Free.

L-M FFA Alumni steak sandwich dinner

The Annual L-M FFA Alumni Steak Sandwich dinner will take place on Tuesday, January 22nd in the high school cafeteria from 5:30-8:00, or until half-time of the Varsity Boys' game against Columbus Community High School.

School Board holds special meeting

The Board of Education for the Columbus Community School District will hold a special meeting/budget workshop II on Thursday, January 17, 2013, at 5:30 PM at the Roundy Library.

School Board to meet

The Board of Education for Columbus Community School District will be holding a public meeting on Monday, January 21, 2013, at 6:30 PM at the Roundy Elementary School Library.

Blood Checks at Senior Center

Tami Nichols from Colonial Manor will be at the Columbus Senior Center from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 23rd to do blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol testing. This is a free public service. We hope to see you there!

Shellbark Club to meet

The Shellbark Club will meet on Thursday, January 17, 2013, at 11:30 a.m. at the 92 Roadhouse in Columbus Junction.

St. Joseph's Church to hold discussion on "End of Life" issues

Join us Tuesday, January 22 at 7 P.M. in Egert Hall at St. Joseph's Church for a presentation on the Church's teaching on death and dying. There will also be soup served. You may bring something to share as well.

Veterans' Day at State Capitol

Veterans Day at the State Capitol will take place on Wednesday, January 23, 2013 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Iowa State Capitol Rotunda, East 13th St. and East Walnut St., Des Moines IA. This event will be coordinated by the Veterans Coalition, which includes representatives from the Iowa Veterans Council IVC, the Iowa Association of County Commissioners of Veterans Affairs IACCVA, the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs ICVA, the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs IDVA, the Iowa Veterans Home IVH, and ALL Veterans Service Organizations. For more information, contact Dan Gannon, Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs, (515) 991-5257, gannonobx@aol.com or Darlene McMartin, ICVA Legislative Chairperson, (712) 328-5797, darlene.mcmartin@pottcounty.com.

Legislative Forum scheduled

A Legislative Forum will be held on Saturday, January 19, 2013 with Senator Tom Courtney and Representatives Dennis Cohoon and Tom Sands at the Burlington Public Library from 9:15-11:15 am.

Remember the new Gazette
e-mail address:
cjgaz@windstream.net

