

Mother Nature makes amends to community

By John Carpenter
Gazette Staff

After slamming the Columbus Community during the summer of 2008, Mother Nature appeared to offer an apology to us this weekend as beautiful 80 degree sunny weather welcomed residents to one of the largest Columbus Days in recent years.

The day began with an all denominational church service at the Senior Center parking lot. A crowd of approximately 40 people attended the service, which was presented by Rev. James Braden of the Hope Bible Church. The Columbus Community School Band also participated in the service.

Throughout the day many activities, including car and tractor shows, big wheel races, a petting zoo and pony rides, as well as street vendors attracted nearly record crowds.

On the grandstand on Main Street the High School's "Beat for Peace" band performed, as did the Sweet Adelines.

At 1:30 a special presentation was held on the grandstand where Mayor Dan Wilson recognized the community for all they did during the flood of 2008. General Greg Schwab of the Iowa National Guard complimented the citizens on their fight against the flood, and Molly Clause of the Governor's Office read a statement from the Governor congratulating the community.

State Representative Tom Sands presented Mayor Dan Wilson with a plaque expressing the thanks of the community for his actions during the



The Church Service at the Senior Center Parking Lot that kicked off the Columbus Day activities

flood.

The program ended with Mayor Wilson presenting a plaque to the citizens of the Columbus Community honoring them as the 2008 Columbus Day Distinguished Citizens.

This was followed by one of the larger Columbus Day parades in recent memory. A number of local businesses participated with floats.

Following the parade free ham

sandwiches and drinks were served, while a slide show of the flood activity was presented.

Following the sandwiches a professional wrestling exhibition was held that was a hit for many of the attendees.

It was a great Columbus Day, and thanks to everyone who participated and attended. See Page 6 for more Columbus Day photos.

50/50 raffle drawing winning # 485177 Prize can be claimed at Plants and Things

United Fund Awards \$4,500 for Flood Recovery

Three non-profit organizations in Columbus Junction are now a bit closer to paying for their flood recovery efforts thanks to donations received from United Fund of Columbus Junction. On Friday, October 10, board members from United Fund awarded three checks for \$1,500 each to representatives from the Columbus Senior Center, Colonel's Kids Day Care and the Louisa County Fair. All three organizations own facilities that were under water in June. The Senior Center remains closed and offers services, such as congregate meals, out of a temporary location in Columbus City. The board is actively working to raise funds to remodel and re-open and hopes to have the project completed in less than a year. Colonel's Kids Day Care reopened in mid-August after nearly two months at a temporary location in the Methodist Church. Joy Lekwa, Director, explains that they were able to use a combination of donations, cash reserves, a loan and volunteer labor to get the doors reopened. Much pumping of water and temporary fixes made it possible for the Louisa County Fair to be held in July, less than a month after floodwater began to recede. However, before next summer, improvements need to be made to structures, electrical systems and grounds and correct the damage done by the flood.

Shortly after the flood United Fund of Columbus Junction established a Flood Relief account to collect donations for community flood recovery efforts. Nearly \$6,000 has been collected from donations from eight states. The three non-profits benefited by the recent awards collectively sustained over \$200,000 in damages. They serve hundreds of area residents and are vital to the community. "We think the people who made donations will be pleased to know their money is going to help these three organizations," commented Phil Kaalberg, United Fund President.

United Fund of Columbus Junction has worked for nearly 50 years to help fund activities and projects that make our community a wonderful place to live, work and raise a family. Each year funds are collected



through payroll deductions as well as business and person donations; the money is pooled and disbursed to area service agencies to help meet the operating costs. The mission of the organizations is "to serve Columbus Junction area residents and businesses by facilitating financial support for organizations that build a stronger community and improve lives."

Donations for flood relief are still being accepted. Those interested in contributing to United Fund can send contributions to United Fund of Columbus Junction, PO Box 263, Columbus Junction, IA 52738. Please indicate "Flood Relief" on the check. For more information about United Fund of Columbus Junction please v i s i t

www.columbusjunctioniowa.org, e m a i l cdc@columbusjunctioniowa.org or call 319-728-7971.

Pictured above are: Marilyn Thomas, Columbus Senior Center; Joy Lekwa, Colonel's Kids; Mark Huston, Louisa County Fair Board and Phil Kaalberg, United Fund of Columbus Junction.

Getting Back to Business at the Econ-O-Mart

Residents in Columbus Junction, Iowa will soon have the pleasure of a supermarket in town again, days later the medical clinic plans to reopen at its usual location and the pharmacy will do the same two weeks later. It has been a tough summer for this town of 1,900 located at the junction of the Cedar and Iowa Rivers. Floodwaters devastated the lower commercial area of town in June leaving 28 businesses and non-profits with decisions to make and work to do. Since July businesses have opened one by one: first the auto parts store and veterinary clinic, then the dollar store, chiropractic clinic, consignment store and insurance agency. The last wave of re-openings, the supermarket on October 13, the medical clinic on October 15 and the pharmacy on November 3 will be significant to



restoring a sense of community and an active economy.

Pictured above is a view of cus

tomers on Monday morning returning to familiar, but new surroundings at the Econ-O-Mart.

Briefly -

Meet the Candidates tonight

Meet the Candidates tonight from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the Civic Center in Columbus Junction. This event is sponsored by the Columbus National Honor Society and the Columbus Community Development Center.

Cedarcrest stockholders meeting

The annual Cedarcrest Stockholders meeting has been set for October 19th, at 6 p.m., at Cedarcrest Country Club. This year, we are having a potluck dinner after the meeting. The Club will provide soup and maid-rite sandwiches. The Cedarcrest Board would like to invite and thank all new members from the past two years at this meeting.

FCCLA Food Drive scheduled

The Family, Career and Community Leaders of America will be going door-to-door to collect non-perishable food items and toiletries for the local food pantry on Tuesday, October 21 from 5:30-7:00 p.m. Please be generous.

Fundraiser set for Senior Center

Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 25, 2008, to attend a great Fund Raiser for the Columbus Community Senior Center. Steve Tomfield and the members of the Circle of Pride Motorcycle Club are sponsoring a fun afternoon and evening for the family at the Circle of Pride Rodeo grounds. There will be fun activities for the children in the afternoon with a DJ and a Country-Western band in the evening. Tyson has donated food for the evening. There will be a silent auction during the evening with lots of great things to bid on. This is a great cause to help in the replacement of an asset to our community that was destroyed by the flood. Come out and make a contribution for the rebuilding. See you on October 25, 2008.

Habitat in need of volunteers

Volunteers are needed at the Habitat house at 1303 6th Street in Fredonia. Work is scheduled for each Saturday from 8:30 to 3:30, except holidays, until the house is finished. They will be working on insulation and drywall. Volunteers should call Jeff Everett at 319-728-2346 or Warren Woepping 319 728-2775 for more information.

Health Fair in Morning Sun

It's Fair time! The Morning Sun Care Center's 7th annual Community health, safety and educational fair is set for Monday, October 27th, from 1-5 p.m., at the Morning Sun Community School gym. Items made available that day include: flu and pneumonia shots, free hearing tests, free blood pressure checks, free blood sugar and total cholesterol checks, free SpO2, free bone density test, free blood typing, free body fat checks, free spinal health checks. 40 different agencies and organizations have come together to provide information and education on health, safety, and a variety of topics. Come join in the fun, great food, music and door prizes.

Retired School Personnel to meet

The Retired School Personnel will meet on Tuesday, October 21, 2008, at noon. Lunch will be in Crawfordsville at Almost Home Bed and Breakfast. Reservations required by October 17th. Call Marilyn Thomas at 319-728-2644 for reservations and directions.

Shellbark Club to meet

Shellbark Club will meet at Turn 2 in Mediapolis on Thursday, October 16th at 11:30 a.m. Please meet at Columbus City Masonic Hall at 10:45 a.m. to car pool.

St. Joseph's Church Fall Fiesta set

St. Joseph's Catholic Church will hold its Fall Fiesta on Sunday, November 2 from 11-1 p.m. at the Columbus Community Student Center. They will be serving Pork loin, potatoes and gravy, green beans, rolls, tortillas, rice, assorted salads and desserts, lemonade, tea and coffee. The cost is \$7 for adults and \$3 for children ages 3-12. There will be a country store, 50/50 drawing and basket raffle.

Trivial Pursuit Night in Wapello

On Saturday, October 25, 2008, there will be a Trivial Pursuit night at 6 p.m., at the Briggs Civic Center. Pre-registration only - must register by October 17th. There will be a limit of 16 tables. The cost will be \$10 per person to play/teams will be made up of 8 people. Teams of all ages make the best competitors. To register call 523-3001, 523-3170 or 523-3327. Money will awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. Concessions will be available. The Trivial Night is sponsored by the Wapello Cemetery Association.

Community Club to meet

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

Dog tags available at Fredonia City Hall

The Fredonia City Hall will be open on Saturday, October 18th from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. so residents can obtain dog tags.

School Board to meet

The Columbus Community School Board of Education will meet on Monday, October 20, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. at Roundy School Library.

County officials seize nearly \$50,000 in marijuana plants

On 10/13/08 the Louisa County Sheriff's Office received information that a marijuana growing operation had been located at Chinkapin Bluffs, a county recreation area near Columbus Jct. Some hikers had been walking in the area, located the patch and contacted law enforcement. The Sheriff's Office and the Columbus Junction Police Department responded to the area and after searching the area, the patch was found and 203 marijuana plants were seized. The plants had been started in peat pots and transplanted to the park after considerable work had been done in the timber to open the area for sunlight and camouflage the grow. The plants ranged in size from a foot tall to approximately six feet tall and the estimated street value set at \$50,000.00.

This is another example of a working partnership between citizens and law enforcement.