



Your Award Winning Hometown Newspaper

Vol. 126 No. 43

Former Winfield resident honored by Highway Patrol

By Donna Carpenter
Gazette Staff

A former area resident, the late Stan Gerling, of Winfield was honored in a ceremony at the Iowa State Patrol Communications Center near Atlantic, Iowa, on Thursday, October 18, 2012. Gerling, a member of the Iowa State Patrol was one of two troopers killed in the line of duty on June 30, 1989. Trooper Gerling, along with Trooper Pilot Lance Dietsch worked in the area between Atlantic and Council Bluffs. They were out searching for an individual in a cornfield and their plane unexpectedly crashed.

Trooper Gerling, 34, left his wife, Peggy, and sons Eric and Alan. Both men were honored by the placement of signs on two bridges on Highway 6 between Atlantic and Lewis. Several Iowa Highway Patrol officers were in attendance for the event, and many spoke fondly of both Stan and Office Dietsch.

Gerling's sister-in-law, Donna Carpenter, and husband John of Columbus Junction were in attendance, along with other family members. Gerling was a graduate of Winfield-Mt. Union High School.



Bridge near Atlantic, Iowa honoring the late Stan Gerling

School Board deals with student enrollment decline

By Jim Rudisill

The loss of over 72 students in this year's Columbus School District enrollment may mean a loss of more than \$430,000 in state aid in 2013-14, school board members have learned. Superintendent Dr. Marlene Johnson reported the sobering news to the school during its October 15 meeting; and added this year's budget is also looking dismal. "If we continue on budget, we'll be about \$170,000 short this year," Johnson warned the board about the district's 2012-13 spending.

Although Johnson acknowledged the situation was serious, she said it would be possible to reduce the district's spending and still meet students' educational needs. "It's doable. We can still provide our students an education, (but) we have our work ahead of us this year," she said.

Under Iowa school financing, this year's enrollment count will be used in calculating next year's state aid. Johnson said that state aid is currently projected to be around \$6000 per student. With the loss of 72 students this year, the financial impact is significant. "This is more than paper clips and shutting the lights out and only using one paper towel to dry your hands," Johnson said about pos-

sible budget reduction targets.

The student loss this year continues a three-year trend that has seen the district lose over 120 students. Johnson however said the district will survive. "These are significant losses, but we are still a viable district," she said, pointing out there are numerous districts around the state that have similar enrollments and are operating.

Johnson said the district will need to begin ways to tighten its belt. "Our budget will need to have some serious alterations. I will be creating a budget committee to provide input on budget reductions," she said.

The committee will include board members, students, administrators, local residents, teachers, support staff and others. Johnson also said she will invite a financial specialist to attend a special budget workshop to discuss school budgeting for the next five years. The board did not set any specific date for the work session, but Johnson said it will need to be scheduled within the next few weeks.

In other action, the board agreed to open the school's fitness/weight room facility to the general public, if volunteers who are willing to be trained in CPR step forward. Johnson told the board the school cannot af-

ford to pay anyone to staff the facility; and insurance rules will not allow the center to be left unstaffed. The board agreed to allow the public use, but will restrict access to any free weights.

A 4-H club that will focus on robotics received the green light from the board. Tessa Pugh, a Louisa County Extension Service representative, told the board the club will design and build robotic machines that will compete with other student-designed equipment around Iowa.

In final action, the board received lists of possible future building, superintendent and board goals. District goals included increasing the reading, math and science proficiency of all students; have all teachers fully implementing their professional development plans by May 2013; and decrease the percentage of elementary students who are non-proficient in reading and math by 10% in each grade level.

Several school board goals were also tentatively identified. They included implementing anti-bullying policies; insisting on regular attendance by students; continue to look at funding resources; and increase academic success through regular

monitoring of the Iowa Core and other programs.

Johnson also outlined goals she hoped to attain this year. Her list included promoting the success of all students by working with collaboration teams, developing annual goals for principals and improving communication, among other indicators. She also proposed completing her entry plan, attending school finance workshops and linking work to the Iowa Core.

The board also learned about a proposed music trip to New York City next year. Columbus Music Boosters representative Kim Carson said the trip would offer students a unique new experience away from Columbus Junction. She indicated a similar trip could be offered every four years.

The board is expected to continue discussing the proposal next month. The board did approve a debate team trip to Illinois. Teacher Eric Field said the high school's debate and forensics team would be gone from November 16 to November 18.

The board also agreed to follow the same procedures as last year for developing its 2013-14 school calendar.

Due to the Columbus Day parade cancellation, a special ceremony will be held on Thursday, October 25, at 5:00 p.m. at the Senior Center honoring Sam and Emily Bell, Marv and Verlinda Prior, and Al and Dianne Bohling as 2012 Distinguished Citizens. A presentation will held at 5:30 with refreshments served.

Briefly -

Blood Checks at Senior Center

Tami Nichols, R.N. from Colonial Manor will be at the Columbus Senior Center today, Wednesday, October 24th from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. to do blood glucose, blood sugar and blood pressure checks. We hope to see you there!

Model A's to visit Col. Jct.

On Thursday, October 25, at 10:00 am twenty-one vintage Model A Ford cars will be rolling into downtown Columbus Junction. The Hawk A Model A Ford Car Club from Cedar Rapids will be visiting Main St. Gifts and Antiques, Plants and Things, the Swinging Bridge, and George Bell's Gasoline Museum while on a two-day road trip from Cedar Rapids to Burlington to Muscatine and back to Cedar Rapids. Parking spaces will be blocked off that morning to accommodate the visitors so please find alternate parking until 11:30 am in the downtown area. See the Gazette for photos next week!

City to Council to meet

The City of Columbus Junction will hold a regular Council meeting today, Wednesday, October 24, 2012, at 5:30 p.m. at the New Civic Center/City Hall.

Trick or Treat at Colonial Manor

Don't forget to stop by for treats on Wednesday, October 31st from 5:30-7:00. The residents look forward to seeing your costumes and handing out candy!

Area Trick or Treat times

The City of Columbus Junction set Trick or Treat time for Wednesday, October 31st, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The City of Conesville's Trick or Treat time is 5-7 p.m.

Etude Club to meet

On Tuesday, November 6th, Etude Club will be meeting at 7 p.m. in the Assisted Living Center of Colonial Estates in Columbus Junction. Hannah Parker, Sara Ramirez and Ericka Ramirez, the 2012 recipients of Etude Scholarships, will be present to share their experiences from music camp. An open invitation to all ladies in the community interested in finding out more about Etude Club, with the thought of becoming club members, are asked to attend. All members, please wear your ETUDE shirts, bring your club music, CAP donations and food for the dessert bar. Marilyn Rees is the hostess.

FCCLA to hold food drive

The Columbus FCCLA will be holding a canned food drive today, Wednesday, October 24 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in Columbus Junction. If you would like to donate and will not be home, call Lois Mincks at the high school (728-2231) ext. 3332. The cans collected will go towards the Community Action Program (CAP) of Columbus Junction.

Guys and Gals food drive

The Guys and Gals 4-H Club will hold its 3rd annual Food Drive on Saturday, November 3rd from 9 am to 11 am. The kids will be going door-to-door in Grandview, Letts and Fruitland asking for food donations. Donations may also be dropped at the Letts Library or Fruitland City Hall before Saturday or at the Grandview Shelter that day. Any non-perishable items are accepted please make sure they are not expired. For more information, call Terri at 563-506-0665 or Angie at 563-571-5560.

High School Play scheduled

The Fall High School Play will be on October 26 and 27, at 7 p.m. (both nights) at the Columbus High School Auditorium. Students are hard at work putting together this annual production. Admission will be \$5 for adults and \$3 for students. Please come see the play and support the arts at CCHS.

Public Health planning meeting

The Louisa County Public Health Emergency Planning multidisciplinary planning meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 7, 2012, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Wapello Ambulance Barn on Highway 61 in Wapello. The focus of the meeting will be implementing a countywide coalition to coordinate emergency response activities related to public health and safety. Kathy Vance will once again moderate the meeting.

L-M High School Blood Drive

L-M High School will host a Community Blood Drive on Wednesday, November 7th, from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the high school gymnasium. To donate, please contact Debbie Steahr at 319-726-3421 or dsteahr@louisa-muscatine.k12.ia.us. Walk-ins welcome! Donor Eligibility Criteria: Potential donors must be at least 17 years of age (16 with parental permission form available through www.bloodcenter.org) and weigh more than 110 pounds. A photo I.D. or MVRBC Donor Card is required to donate. To schedule an appointment for donation, please call the Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center at (800) 747-5401. Donors who last gave blood on or before 9/12/2012 are eligible to give blood at this drive.

Salute to Heroes at L-M School

The Louisa-Muscatine Sixth Grade Classes will present a "Salute to Our Heroes" concert on Friday, November 9 at 2:30 PM in the Elementary School gymnasium. They would like to cordially invite all area veterans and any family members who would like to attend the concert. The school is completely accessible, and parking close to the door will be reserved for attendees. Anyone with questions may call Lori Carroll, L-M Elementary Music Teacher at 319-726-3634.

Is the Gazette Haunted?

By Mary Masonholder Wilson

We, at the GAZETTE are beginning to worry. All sorts of things are going wrong here, and we don't know why. The only conclusion we can draw is that this newspaper is HAUNTED! "By whom?" you might ask. Oh, there are all sorts of possibilities. We don't wait to leave anyone out, but here are a few past members of this paper who might be coming back to "hover" over us as ghosts: B.H. Shearer, Musa Todd, or Helen Aringdale. Not that any of these people would ever do anything to hurt us or the paper, but the paper meant so much to them, maybe they just couldn't leave. Or maybe they decided to pull a few early Halloween pranks.

Here are a few of the unexplainable happenings at the GAZETTE office: First off are the health issues of the staff: John, on top of everything else, had kidney stones, got infection in them, had surgery and got a partial case of pneumonia. (Of course, he wouldn't stay home and was right back at work, but some days his mind was out of this universe and his language was kind of foul!). Carmen had eye issues, they

were dripping all the time; Mary had back and neck problems; Donna was coughing and sneezing, and Tammy sometimes didn't feel well. Now you tell me—don't you think some spirit was hanging around in here?

Then we had telephone problems. Sometimes they wouldn't work. Sometimes everyone's phone, but Mary's worked. Sometimes the phone would ring, we would answer it, and no one would be there. Sometimes people would call and while we were talking, the dial tone would never quit. Sometimes we would be talking to someone and the phone would go dead. Sometimes we just wanted to pull all the phones out of the wall and get two cans and a string. This probably would have worked better.

Then we had electrical problems and computer problems, because as you know, the two often come "hand in hand." Tammy's computer froze; she couldn't get it unfrozen and she thought she was going to have to turn it off and lose the Sport's page a couple of hours before it was to be sent to Washington to be printed. Lonnie Harless came to the rescue on that one, and the page was saved. Then later, two hours after the paper should have been sent to Washington, John was still getting the paper finished due to all the extra Columbus Day stuff, and the whole paper disappeared off his computer. How could this happen? Finally that was

fixed; and for a few minutes, things seemed normal, but during the day the electricity was off and on. Then later in the day when the papers came back to be mailed, we discovered such errors as the headline had been left off the front page and there were other errors. At our end here, the headline, "Columbus Day Distinguished Citizens" WAS ON the paper. How could it not have gone through the email to Washington? I tell you, folks, we are haunted! There is no explanation for this. However, we wonder if it was due to the power outages, but we don't know.

Now for the haunting of all hauntings: On my computer, ever since I came here, there has been a background picture a vicious-looking dog. I hate this picture! So does everyone else in this office. We can't get rid of it. No one in here can, and we've had Lonnie Harless try and it might be gone for a minute and then it comes back. We're told that this picture is permanently embedded in this computer. It must be some spook!

All in all, we think the newspaper is haunted. We can't come up with any other solution. Goodness knows, it couldn't be OUR fault, not us!! Nope, I think there are a few spirits that just can't leave here. You know, I don't blame them. I think, when I'm gone, I'll come back here and "hang out" too!

G-L Lions Club conducted free vision screenings

The Grandview-Letts Lions Club conducted free vision screenings for 42 preschoolers at the Louisa-Muscatine Elementary School on October 9 and 10, 2012. The screening process helps detect a condition called amblyopia, more commonly referred to as "lazy eye." Trained Iowa Lions Club members use a special camera to take photographs of the children's eyes. Specialists in the Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences at UI Hospital and Clinics then interpret the results. Parents will receive a report in about two to four weeks. Lions Club members across Iowa conduct vision screenings for young children through the Iowa KidSight program.

U of Iowa Mobile Clinic to be in Col. Jct.

The University of Iowa's Mobile Clinic program will be holding an upcoming clinic in Columbus Junction to provide physicals, health screenings, health education and other services. The clinic will be on Saturday, November 17th from 10 AM to 2 PM at the Wilma Sime Roundy Elementary School.



0 4 8 7 9 4 2 0 8 0 4