

Area women help with Scarves for Troops Program

By Deb Bean
Gazette Staff

Do you knit? Do you crochet? If you do here is your chance to do something special for our soldiers serving in Iraq. As the winter season approaches we will be not only thinking about the men and women serving our country, but a group of women from our area is answering a call to help make as many scarves as possible so they can be shipped to Iraq for the winter.

During the summer from May to October, Iraq's temperature can easily reach 120 degrees Fahrenheit in the shade! But their winters last from December to March are damp and cold and an equally strong southeasterly wind, with temperatures averaging 50 degrees Fahrenheit. Northern mountainous regions along Turkish and Iranian borders experience harsh cold winters with heavy snow that cause extensive flooding when they melt.

When Pat Solomon and Carol Foster from Columbus Junction read a newsletter regarding a request from a Mary Sue asking for help, they decided to pitch in and help.

In Mary Sue's newsletter she said, "I need your help in making several hundred scarves. One year we sent homemade crocheted snow balls; they were a real big hit and provided some silly fun for the troops."

The requirements for the scarves are that they be 4 to 6 feet long (no longer). Make the scarves from cotton or wool as these do not melt on the body if there is a fire. Any type



Carol Foster watches Pat Solomon knit a scarf for our troops.

of yarn will be accepted. Wool or cotton would be the best but people can just use what they have on hand. Earth tone colors are preferred, no fringe.

Also the troops have requested a little note and a picture (optional) included with the scarf or scarves. The website will pay all shipping fees. A

scarf along with some small items in a goodie box will be sent directly to the soldier; the group is receiving names and addresses directly from the military.

The deadline to get these shipped is December 1 and the drop off in Columbus Junction will be at Our

Shop, owned by Carol Foster. If you have any question you can call Carol at 319-728- 5648 or Pat Solomon at 728-2099.

So get your knitting needles and crochet hooks out and help to keep a soldier warm this winter with a homemade scarf from the United States.

Manuel doesn't let his disability stand in his way

By Deb Bean
Gazette Staff

Imagine growing up unable to hear what people are saying to you or being able to hear the noises of the world around you. Imagine living in a country with little to no resources to help a child born with a disability. Imagine when you are only a few months old your mother suffers a heart attack and passes away. Imagine being a seven year old and losing your father to cancer. Imagine being a child unable to hear people call your name and your only way to communicate was to point at what you wanted.

This is a story about such a young man, 21 year old Manuel Cano, known as "Manny" to his family and friends. Manuel was born 100% deaf. But through love and devotion of his family he learned that when he needed something he would point to what it was.

When Manuel was just a few months old tragedy struck his family when they lost their mother to a sudden heart attack. His family moved forward the best they could. There would be no money for doctors or clinics that might have been able to help Manuel with his disability. Tragedy struck the Cano family once again when Manuel was 7 years old, this time losing their father to cancer. Manuel's big brother, Juan

stepped in and did the one thing that a big brother should do, he adopted his little brother and, along with his family and Manuel, moved to Iowa. Juan and his wife, Adelada, and Manny's brothers and sisters, Martin, Elena, Estela and Victoria, have resided at X-37 SE of Columbus City for 14 years.

When Manuel moved here he was 7 years old. He attended Muscatine School because Columbus did not have a hearing impaired program. Manuel and his sisters learned a whole new way to communicate through sign language, and in 2006 he graduated from Muscatine High School.

Manuel started working as summer help before being hired as a full time night custodian for the Columbus School District. "He is a great employee who is loved by all. He is a great worker and a great addition to our staff and community," stated Mike Jay, Facilities/Transportation/Co-Athletic Director and Head Boys and Girls XC Coach at Columbus Schools.

Manuel, along with some of his family members and a very good friend, Ramon Gomez, left November 6th for his hometown of Juventino, Mexico. What makes this trip very special is that Manuel has worked and saved his money to purchase several items, an air compressor, soccer balls,

basketballs, skateboards, stuffed animals, Columbus t-shirts, and candy, just to name a few. He will be taking these items to Juventino and giving them to friends and family. "These kids are very poor and cannot afford this stuff," he signs. Once in Juventino he will have to revert back to his old way of communicating as no one there can sign, and he does not know how to write in Spanish.

Through his thoughtful and kind heart he was inspired to help the kids from Juventino. He signs, "I love all kids and want to give back." Even though Manuel will not be able to hear the squeals and laughter of the kids receiving his gifts he will know how happy he has made them by the "smiles and hugs" because, after all, those are two universal languages.

When Manuel was asked if it has been difficult growing up in a world with no sound, he humbly smiles at the interpreter and signs, "I have been deaf since birth so I don't know any different. When I moved to the United States I was seven years old and communicated by pointing. I was blessed to get the resources I needed to be able to learn to speak through signing and that my sisters were able to learn to sign as well. I have been blessed with a good family, great friends, a job and people all around me that like me for me despite my differences. This is what inspired me



to give back something to kids that are less fortunate and can't afford it otherwise."

***Writer's note-November is National Adoption Awareness Month. This story was an inspiration for me to write. Because of the love of his family, Manuel was not separated from them and placed in Foster Care. They were able to stay together and remain a family. All children need the love of a family and a warm and safe environment to grow up in. So make Adoption an option and open your hearts and your homes to a child in need.**

Volunteers needed for First Impression Project

It is said that first impressions are lasting impressions. What reaction do visitors and new residents have when they first come to Columbus Junction? What changes could be made to make that initiation more favorable? The Community Development Center is organizing an effort to answer these two questions. By participating in Alliant Energy's First Impressions Columbus Junction will get a report from a team of "secret shopper" visitors and we will provide the same for another community in Iowa.

The First Impressions pairs similarly-sized communities and trains volunteers and coordinates

their efforts so that each city comes away with a useful evaluation of their welcoming amenities: signs, parks, store fronts, and more. Each community provides a team of volunteers that visits and critiques the other city. Volunteers are currently being sought for the Columbus Junction First Impressions team. An orientation meeting will be held Wednesday, November 19 from 3:00 to 4:30 pm at the Civic Center, 232 Second St. Those not able to attend the meeting who are interested in participating in the project should contact the Community Development Center at 319-728-7971 or cdc@columbusjunctioniowa.org.

Veterans' Day at Roundy



Pictured above is a view of the program honoring all Veterans held yesterday at Roundy Elementary School.

An open house is scheduled for Thursday evening from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. for anyone who would like to view the facility. Also, you could pay your dues that evening if you would like. The dues are set at \$30 per month, payable on the 1st of each month. For November, the dues will

be \$15 for the balance of the month. We have some start-up expenses such as insurance and organizational costs that we would like to pay as soon as possible, so if anyone wishes to pay their dues a few months in advance, it would certainly be helpful. If you would like to pay early and cannot

Briefly -

2009 County Fair Dates set

Dates for the 2009 Louisa County Fair will be Monday, July 20 through Saturday, July 25, 2009.

Story Hour at the Library

At the Library - Story Hour for K-3rd grade: Tuesday, November 18, after school to 5 p.m. Stories, turkey craft and Bingo is back!

C.J. Clover Kids to meet

Columbus Junction Clover Kids to meet November 16th at the Columbus Junction Fire Station at 6 p.m. This will be a short informational meeting for the Columbus Junction area club, and the parents. Clover Kids is an exciting 4-H program for youth in kindergarten through 3rd grade. Clover Kids was specifically developed to bring the life skill building and experiential learning benefits of traditional 4-H to children in grades K-3. Its goal is to promote children's positive development through cooperative learning and developmentally appropriate activities. If you have any question or need more information, please contact Deb Humiston at 319-728-5102 or Traci Orr at 319-728-2302.

City Council to meet

The City of Columbus Junction will hold its regular Council meeting today, Wednesday, November 12, 2008, at 5:30 p.m. in the New Civic Center/City Hall.

Community Christmas Cantata rehearsals held on Sundays

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO JOIN - Rehearsals for the community Christmas cantata continue Sunday, November 16, 2:00-4:00 at the Columbus Junction United Methodist Church. A Christmas cantata entitled, "The Promise Fulfilled" by Lani Smith, will be presented Sunday, November 30 at the Columbus Junction United Methodist Church at 7:30 p.m. A time of fellowship and refreshments will follow the cantata performance. Rehearsals for the cantata presentation will be held weekly on Sunday afternoons from 2:00-4:00 at the CJ United Methodist Church. A Saturday, November 29th evening rehearsal will be held, time to be determined by the group. All area singers are invited to join this ecumenical choir under the direction of Jay Hauenstein, accompanied by Jill Bowen. This seasonal community event is sponsored by Junction Entertainers, LTD. Questions? Contact Jay or Lorie Hauenstein, 728-2793.

Community Club to host Blood Drive

THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY REGIONAL BLOOD CENTER ANNOUNCES THAT A BLOOD DRIVE SPONSORED BY THE COLUMBUS JUNCTION COMMUNITY CLUB WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH, FROM 1:30 PM TO 6:30 PM, AT THE AMERICAN LEGION HALL (99 2ND STREET). To donate, call Kirsten Shellabarger at 319-728-2414 to sign up. Walk-ins welcome. Donors who last gave blood on or before September 24, 2008 are eligible. Blood donation is a safe, simple procedure that only takes about an hour. Donors must be at least 16 years old, in good health, and weigh at least 110 pounds. A Blood Donor card or other photo I.D. is required to donate; 16-year-old donors must present a signed parental consent form, available from the Blood Center or for download from www.bloodcenter.org. Controlled high blood pressure and diabetics are acceptable.

FFA selling fruit, meat and cheese

The Columbus FFA is currently doing their annual fruit, meat, cheese, and snack fundraiser. The money is used to offset traveling costs and registration costs for leadership conferences. If you wish to purchase and have not been asked, please call Katie Lewis at 728-2231 x 3621.

Soil and Water District Commissioners to meet

The Louisa County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners will meet Nov.17, 2008, at 4:30 p.m. at the NRCS Office in Wapello. Topics on the agenda will be an update on cost share projects and District Commissioner election results. For more information please contact the office at 260 Mulberry St. STE 2, Wapello, or phone 523-6411.

Chapter CX PEO to meet

The next meeting of PEO Chapter CX will be held at the home of Chris McFarland on Monday, November 17 at 7:00 pm. The meeting will be co-hosted by Linda Pierce and the program will be "Dolls" by Polly Prior. All members are encouraged to attend.

Pleasant Grove Church to hold chicken and biscuit supper

Pleasant Grove Community Church is having their annual Chicken n' a Biscuit supper today, Wednesday, November 12th, from 4:30 to 7:00. Please mark your calendar for good food and fellowship, as this is a fundraiser to help the church with winter expenses. See you there! Free Will Donation accepted.

Shellbark Club to meet

The Shellbark Club will meet on Wednesday, November 19th, at 11:30 a.m., at Hayes Tea House (403 W Main St., Washington). Please note the change of day. Bring your baby picture for show and tell.

School Board to meet

The Columbus Community Board of Education will meet next Monday, November 17th at 6:30 p.m. at the Roundy Elementary School.

Chapter R, T.T.T. to meet

Chapter R, T.T.T., will meet on Thursday, November 13 at 7 p.m. at the home of Linda Pierce. Mary Beth Carey will serve as co-hostess. Cristina Rotari, a foreign exchange student from Moldova, will give a presentation about her country. The business meeting will follow.

Fitness Center Update

Final work on the Fitness Center is now being completed. It is anticipated that the key pad lock will be installed this week, and a timer is scheduled to be placed on the lights.

If everything goes as planned, a potential opening date of this Saturday, November 15th is planned.

All individuals who have expressed an interest will be contacted.

attend the open house, applications are available from Polly Prior at Northwestern Mutual Insurance, Carla Shellabarger at H&R Block, or John Carpenter at the Gazette office. A lot of work has been accomplished, and all of the board members are excited to get the facility off and running as soon as possible. So if you haven't seen the Center yet, or have any questions, feel free to stop by on Thursday evening, or call the Gazette Office for further information.