

# Senior Center recovery forges ahead

By John Carpenter  
Gazette Staff

"We will rebuild" is a statement repeated by every member on the board of the Columbus Senior Center. The Center was badly damaged in this past summer's flood, and since the organization has no income source, recovery efforts have relied solely on donations.

"We have the money now to replace the wiring, and Mark Shear has been contacted to do this work, and we have money to install a new furnace and air conditioner, and Bob Reid is doing this," said board member Tom Huston, "but we still have only studwork inside, and plywood on the outside, so a lot more help is needed."

Recovering the Senior Center has been a major undertaking by the board as it does not qualify for many of the federal emergency programs that are available for homeowners and businesses. The center is owned by the citizens of Columbus Junction, so most of the burden has fallen to our local citizens to help. "We are definitely going to rebuild," said Huston, "but for now we will go at a speed that we can pay for. I'm confident that people will come through as we need help for each step in our recovery."

The Senior Center is one more facility in town that has had a long



View of the interior of the Senior Center as it stands today

history of dedicated citizens who have volunteered to serve others. And because of this long history, we cannot let the Columbus Senior Center become a casualty of the flood of 2008. If you would like to help, or

have any ideas or suggestions, please contact any of the following board members: Tom Huston, Marilyn Thomas, Dorothy Orr, Polly Prior, Ron Baird, Donna Eden or Dick Peterson. (Dick Peterson replaced Norma

Schweitzer who was a long-time and valued board member.)

We are a community that can do things, and we came together to build the Senior Center, so we can come together again to restore it.

# Mother Nature hangs her Christmas decorations

By John Carpenter  
Gazette Staff

The weekend after Thanksgiving has traditionally been a time when people put up their Christmas decorations. The same apparently holds true for Mother Nature as she spent her time this weekend decorating the community for Christmas.

A two inch snow fell on the community over the weekend beginning on Saturday night and extending through Monday noon. Fortunately roads were warm enough on Sunday so snow didn't particularly create a problem for travelers returning home from the Thanksgiving weekend.

However, colder winds came in late Sunday and early Monday cre-

ating some slick areas for those traveling to work early Monday morning. No major accidents were reported in the area, but drivers were traveling slower than usual.

Another chance for light snow is forecasted for midweek, however at press time no major storms are projected. An interesting side to the story is that a check of last year's Gazette showed that a major ice storm hit the community on the weekend after Thanksgiving which made travel considerably more difficult than this year's storm.

It wouldn't be Christmas without snow, but the general concensus in town is that this is enough for this Holiday Season.



Mother Nature's handiwork at Chautauqua Park

# Used Clothing will be available for any family to take through Christmas

Beginning next week, the basement of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Columbus Junction will be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week from Noon to 8:00 p.m. until and including Christmas for anyone to come in and take whatever clothing their family may need. We encourage any family to come and see if there is something you can use. Please don't feel embarrassed, you are doing as much good for the donors in finding a use for the clothing as the donors are doing for you. And also, you are teaching a number of our young residents the benefits of helping others. The Columbus Gazette, the area Girl Scout Troop and St. Joseph's Confirmation Class have been collecting used clothing for area families over the past several weeks.

All sorts of clothing has been collected, and they will be grouped by types. Clothing can still be left at the Gazette Office even after Family Night. There is a great need in our community for clothing for individuals of all ages. After Christmas, the Gazette will work with the school to find people who can use any remaining clothing. Anyone in the community is welcome to come and browse through the clothes. You are urged to take anything that you or your family may be able to use. If you cannot make it on Tuesday or Thursday evenings, contact John Carpenter at the Gazette Office and special arrangements will be made. A thank you to everyone who has donated clothes. We will find a home for every piece.

# Meteorologist teams up with wife on book about summer disasters

## Local area featured in book

Quad City Meteorologist Terry Swails teams up with his wife, Carolyn Wettstone, to bring to life the incredible stories of survival from the devastating floods of 2008 and the monster tornado that stomped through eastern Iowa. Beginning with the evening of May 25, 2008, when the forces of nature unleashed an EF5 tornado, the shocking and tragic month-long string of natural disasters brought unimaginable levels of destruction, heartache and awe to the state.

The Memorial Day weekend twister with 205 mph winds tore across Butler, Black Hawk, Delaware and Buchanan counties to be quickly followed by floodwaters that exceeded 500 year flood levels. The flooding covered much of Eastern Iowa and left tens of thousands of Iowans scrambling for food and shel-

ter. Through riveting pictures, eye witness accounts, and graphic descriptions, the events that shaped this extraordinary period come to life in this captivating and historic account. Swails brings his vast meteorological experience to the table as he explains how these phenomena occurred and where they stand in history. "From a historical standpoint, this may very well be the worst two week period in Iowa storied weather history," said Swails.

Wettstone, a former broadcast news anchor and reporter, speaks first hand to the people who's lives were changed forever. "I interviewed a flood victim who was a cancer survivor. She told me beating cancer was easier than facing this type of devastation. She is just one of the many heroic people I spoke with whom I



Carolyn Wettstone, Terry Swails and daughter, Eden Malone.

will never forget," said Wettstone.

Un-Natural Disasters is a compelling weather story filled with hope, spirit, and triumph. From start to fin-

ish, the drama of Iowa's perfect storms will carry you away. The book can be purchased from [www.terryswails.com](http://www.terryswails.com).

# Police investigate three weekend burglaries

Columbus Junction Police responded to three burglaries in the community during the Thanksgiving weekend.

On Thursday, November 27th, burglars broke into the home of

Dorothy Morrison on 3rd Street and took a television valued at \$1,760.00

On Saturday, November 29th, burglars broke into the home of Douglas Scheets on 2nd Street and

made off with various tools and a car stereo. The items were valued at \$1,950.00

On the same day burglars broke into the home of Dennis Wagoner on 2nd Street and took cash, tools,

a set of binoculars and a DVD theatre set. The items were valued at \$544.99.

All three cases are being investigated by the Columbus Junction Police Department, and no suspects have been named as of yet.

## Briefly -

### Columbus City Family Night

Columbus City Family Night will be held on Wednesday, December 10th with a soup supper at the Masonic Lodge from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Santa will be there at 6:00 p.m.

### 2009 Fair Dates set

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

### Bus trip to see The Gaithers set

If you watch The Gaithers on tv, this is your opportunity to see them in person on Friday, December 12. The 1st United Presbyterian Church of Morning Sun is sponsoring a bus trip to see this concert at the iwireless center (formerly The Mark Of The Quad Cities). The charter bus will leave from Morning Sun at 5 p.m. and stop to pick people up in Wapello and Grandview. The show begins at 7 p.m. The cost of \$80 includes your transportation, your ticket (great seats) and a sack supper. There are only 3 seats left so call or email Ramona Wink today. 319-728-7041 or 319-212-0366 or [wink123@lisco.net](mailto:wink123@lisco.net).

### CCIC to hold Christmas Potluck

CCIC will meet on Tuesday, December 9 starting at 6:00 p.m. at the Columbus City City Hall. A Christmas Potluck will be held, with table service and drinks provided. A \$5.00 gift exchange will take place that evening.

### Christmas at the Heritage Center

WAPELLO - The annual Christmas at the Heritage Center will be celebrated at 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 7 at the Louisa Center Church, 609 N. James L. Hodges Ave., Wapello. Everyone attending is invited to join in singing Christmas carols. Special music will be presented by Alana Poage, Merlin Schneider and Lori Arnold, with Sandy Winter accompanying on piano. Harlan Winter, former pastor of the Wapello and Morning Sun United Methodist Churches will share Christmas stories. Following the program, refreshments will be served at the Museum building south of the church.

### Christmas potluck at Colonial Manor

Family, Friends and Guests please come join us for a Christmas Potluck on Wednesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> 2008 at noon in the Resident Dining Room. Meat, rolls, beverages, and table service will be provided. Please bring a dish of your choice. We hope you are able to celebrate with us!

### FCCLA selling personalized cakepans, mugs and cutting boards

FCCLA is selling personalized cakepans, mugs and cutting boards. If interest call Lois Mincks at Columbus Community Schools 728-2231 Ext. 3332. Orders will be placed by Dec. 4 and will be back in time for Christmas.

### Free coffee at meal site

The regular Second Thursday Free Coffee will be next Thursday, Dec. 11th, at the meal site in the City Hall at Columbus City. This has been organized for the community and everyone is welcome. Please join us for a free cup of coffee and a good time of visiting from 8:00 to 10:30.

### Half Hour Club to meet

The Half Hour Club will meet December 9<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m. at 812 Union Street, Columbus Junction, with Janet Pretz and Connie Lewis as hostesses. Please bring an unusual item to discuss and a white elephant for exchange.

### JEL to hold Holiday party

The public is invited to attend the year-end wrap-up and holiday party for Louisa County Clean Air Now and Wapello JEL. The event will be held on Friday, December 12 from 5:30 to 6:15 at the Briggs Center in Wapello. A presentation on both groups' history and purpose will be made with an opportunity for the public to ask questions and enjoy social time with members. Please contact Kaitlyn Wintermeyer with ISU Extension at 319-523-2371 or [kmwinter@iastate.edu](mailto:kmwinter@iastate.edu) for more information.

### American Legion Christmas party

The American Legion Auxiliary, and Sons of the American Legion, will hold their annual Christmas party and potluck on Tuesday, December 9<sup>th</sup>. Please bring a covered dish, table service, and a gift for a man and a woman. Social hour will be from 5-6 p.m., with dinner following.

### Shellbark Club to meet

The Shellbark Club will meet on December 11<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m., at the home of Dick and Anna Fullerton in New London, for a potluck dinner.

### Conservation District to meet

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

Don't forget to visit downtown columbus junction tonight for family night. It's a great way to kick off your holiday festivities

