

13 inches of snow and 45 mph winds

By John Carpenter
Gazette Staff

Mother Nature visited the area last week and in her wake left a storm to be remembered. On Tuesday afternoon light snow began to fall, followed by heavier snow by evening, then accompanied by strong winds throughout the night.

By Wednesday morning over 13 inches of snow had fallen, and the winds created drifts in open areas reaching as high as 8 feet. Travel on area roads was nearly impossible, and the storm caused the cancellation of school on both Wednesday and Thursday.

No deliveries were possible on Wednesday, and grocery shelves emptied rapidly. Mail trucks were not able to reach town, and mail routes were cancelled for the day.

However city crews began work as soon as possible, and amazingly, most city streets were opened by Thursday morning. Also, neighbors jumped to the task and all day Wednesday one could see people up and down Main Street helping to shovel out businesses.

The Gazette witnessed a number of times when cars would get stuck



on Main Street, and people would come to their aid pushing the cars out.

Fortunately there were no injuries reported as a result of the storm, and

by Friday everything appeared to return to normal.

A big thank-you to everyone who helped out during the storm, and a

special congratulations to the city, county and highway crews for the remarkable work you did during and after the storm.

School Board discusses possibility of local college campus

By Jim Rudisill

Although the outlook for federal funding is dimming, local educators are still hoping a joint education center in Columbus Junction will still be built. Muscatine Community College (MCC) President Jeff Armstrong presented that optimistic outlook during a special work session Monday.

According to Armstrong, the Columbus center was initially identified as one of four to be located in Maquoketa, Wilton, West Liberty and Columbus Junction. Funding support from the community college was included in a \$33 million bond referendum approved by voters of the Eastern Iowa Community College District (EICCD) in 2007. Other funding was expected to come from the federal earmarks, the school district and other sources.

Although the college began holding classes and other activities in a building on Walnut Street, the devastating flood of 2008 cut plans short for developing that site into a more formal community education center.

"We had seven feet of water in the center and began discussions on relocating," Armstrong said.

The school district had already indicated some interest in replacing its current administrative offices; and the education center appeared to offer an opportunity for a joint project.

However, with the changing political landscape and other issues, the possibility of a federal earmark started to fade. Armstrong said he was not optimistic that funding would now be possible, which would mean the school district and other funding would be needed to fund the \$1.5 million project. He said the college had around \$500,000 to commit and asked the board to consider matching that amount.

"To build a center that would provide an administrative center for Columbus and activities would need \$1.5 million," he said.

If the two education agencies combined to meet two-thirds of that cost, it could be easier to convince potential supporters to fund the final one-third, Armstrong continued.

He also explained the original focus of the center to boost interest in educational opportunities at MCC had changed.

"Now we're focusing more on

community needs," he said, adding the building was now being identified as a career academy. He also said the switch to a facility that would meet community needs would mean the four centers could fill different roles in each community.

"The project for Columbus will look different than for West Liberty," Armstrong said.

He asked the board to provide him with suggestions for the center's focus, although he acknowledged support for using Project Lead the Way as the center's primary focus. Project Lead the Way provides an opportunity for students to acquire both high school and college credit for their coursework. Armstrong said the rigorous education program would be an ideal focus for the center.

"Even if you don't provide me with a direction, I'd do Project Lead the Way," he said, adding health care could also be an important focus area.

He said health care is one of the most heavily demanded curriculums at the college, but one that also shows a large amount of student attrition. He said a career academy program would

allow students to experience some career choices while still in high school and help them decide if they wanted to pursue those careers.

Armstrong also said that despite his own opinions on the focus for the center, it should remain with the local residents to ultimately make the decision.

"I want to be responsive to the community and not dictate what we do," he said.

School officials said they would continue to discuss the proposal.

In other action, the board reviewed a variety of curricular issues, including good news on student achievement testing. Curriculum coordinator Tara Paul provided initial test results that showed the district's first grade students had significantly boosted reading levels between 2010 and 2011. She said additional results would be provided at next week's regular school board meeting.

In final action, building and grounds director Dan Vogeler updated the board on a variety of continuing maintenance and improvement projects.

Local tractor featured in National Magazine

(Republished with permission from "Antique Power" Magazine.)

By Robert Nicholson

The apparent original owner of Kris Johnston's 1944 B.F. Avery model A tractor was the late William Rushing of rural Saint Joseph, Illinois. According to Bob Routh, Rushing's good friend and neighbor, "ol Bill" came to the area as a serviceman via Chanute Air Force Base at nearby Rantoul. He met the love of his life there, married her, settled in the area, and took up farming.

Rushing bought the tractor at a local Montgomery Ward store in Champaign-Urbana. B.F. Avery produced tractors for the Montgomery Ward chain of department stores, which sold the tractor under the Twin Row brand, and the Farmer's Union Co-Ops, which sold it as the "Co-Op" brand. All three tractors came off the same B.F. Avery production line in Louisville, Kentucky, which sequential serial numbers, so the idea of a B.F. Avery A coming from Montgomery Ward - for whatever reason - isn't completely out of the question.

Rushing used the Avery primarily for pulling wagonloads of grain to an elevator and performing other light duty tasks around his farm. Routh said that even though Mrs. Rushing never drove a car or even had a driver's license that he knew of, he remembers her driving the A up and down the road in front of his place many times. As sure as summer turns to winter, though, in due

time the little A made its last trip to the elevator.

Routh doesn't recall any official sale or auction, suggesting the Rushing may have sold his farm machinery piecemeal after he quit farming. This falls in line with what the next owner, who lives in Gibson City, Illinois, said when Johnston purchased it from him via eBay in March 2003. The owner said that he had acquired it from a man near Saint Joseph. The Avery was still in good shape, so about all Johnston has done is rework the driveshaft U-joints, change the fluids, and paint it.

The little tractor is a study in the elegance of functional simplicity. In 1944, World War II material shortages forced tractor manufacturers to build tractors only with available parts on hand, so the Avery has no belt pulley or power take-off. It doesn't have a lighting system, but does have an electric starter. The frame consists of two parallel steel channels, and everything on it is easily visible and accessible. A modest curved sheet metal guard covers the driveshaft.

The seat-mounting bracket is a piece of formed steel bar stock bolted to the transmission/differential housing; springing is provided via the flex in the bends of the bracket. The hitch is nothing more than a straight piece of bar stock that swivels on a pin and is supported by a formed bar stock carrier.

All controls are push/pull cables or levers-their purpose directly ob-



vious. The tractor has no foot pedals for the brakes. Levers on each side of the seat allow the operator to apply the brakes on either rear wheel individually and lock them in place.

The 4-cylinder Hercules 133ci IXB3 engine has a 3 1/4-inch bore and a 4-inch stroke, with a drawbar rating of 21-22hp and a belt pulley (which this A doesn't have) rating of 16hp. It drives the rear wheels

through a transmission with three speeds forward and one reverse.

The single front wheel was standard on the Model A, and although Johnston thinks the front tire may be original, he's not sure about the rear tires. The sheet metal and grille are the same design as the 1939 Cletrac General GG, built by the Cleveland Tractor Co. in Cleveland Ohio.

Briefly -

Legion to hold Fish Fry

The American Legion will be holding a fish and chicken fry on Saturday, February 12th at the Legion Building. Serving will be from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. The price is \$8.00

CCHS Junior Class to be guests of Community Club this week

The Community Club will meet this Thursday at noon at the American Legion Building. The CCHS Junior Class will be guests of the Club. Please note the change in date and location.

Great Backyard Bird Count

The Columbus Junction Community Development Center invites you to participate in The Great Backyard Count (GBBC). This is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. The GBBC count will take place February 18 to 21. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. The Community Development Center will collect Columbus area tallies through Friday, February 15 and will publish the results in the following week's newsletter. Drop them off at City Hall or email cde@columbusjunctioniowa.org. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds. Let's have a Columbus GBBC! See www.birdsource.org/gbbc/ to begin preparing.

City Council meets tonight

The City of Columbus Junction will hold a regular Council meeting today, Wednesday, February 9, 2011, at 5:30 p.m. in the New Civic Center/City Hall.

Vote for Prince and Princess of Hearts

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 Friday, January 28th through Friday, February 11th, 2011. The Prince and Princess will be crowned on Saturday, February 12th, 2011 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.

Habitat for Humanity Soup Supper

Louisa County Habitat for Humanity will host their annual Celebration Soup Supper, Sunday, February 27 at the United Methodist Fellowship Hall in Wapello from 5 - 7 p.m. There will be entertainment, a brief recognition program starting at 6:15 p.m., and door prizes. Everyone is welcome!

Junior Class Parents' Meeting

The junior class parents will hold a meeting today, Wednesday, February 9th at 6:00 p.m. at the High School student center, for the after-prom party. Any questions, please call Cindy Johnston at 319-728-5032 or 319-212-0330.

Visual Support Group to meet

The February meeting of the Louisa County Visual Support Group will meet on Thursday, February 17th at 1 p.m. We will meet in the East Room of Corner Market located at 340 North 2nd in Wapello. Susan Howard from the Department for the Blind and Handicapped in Des Moines will be our speaker. Everyone is welcome to attend. Any questions, please call Lois Richers at 319-527-2630.

Conservation Board to meet

The Louisa County Conservation Board will hold a meeting today, Wednesday, February 9, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. in the Louisa County Conservation Board Office.

Valentines at the Library

Mark your calendar - Valentine story time on February 10th after school. All kids are welcome, from K - 6th grade. We will have our craft expert Jill back, along with stories and cookies.

Parents ITBS meeting scheduled

Parents of 6th-11th grade students are encouraged to attend an informational presentation about the upcoming ITBS and ITED tests. The meeting will be held at the Las Vegas Ballroom on Saturday, Feb. 26th from 6-7 p.m. The Columbus Parent Organization will provide light refreshments. School administrators and staff will be presenting information about the importance of the tests, and ways parents can help their children be prepared to give their best effort. For more information, you may call the school at 319-728-2231. Translation services will be provided.

Shellbark Club to meet

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

Blood tests at Senior Center

In cooperation with Colonial Manor Nursing Home the Columbus Community Senior Center will be offering Glucose, Cholesterol Testing and Blood Pressure Checks on Tuesday Feb.15, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. at the Senior Center. These tests are free. Please come and be checked. Feb. is heart month and all of these contribute to heart disease. See you Feb. 15th at 9:00 a.m.

Love from Above

The 1st United Presbyterian Church family in Morning Sun is inviting all widows/widowers to come enjoy a very special worship service this Sunday, February 13 at 10:45 a.m. Our mission is to make YOUR Valentine's Day extra special with gifts of love from above. Be our guest and be blessed by God. Bring the entire family. The children will help prepare these gifts during the children's sermon. Experience what God is doing through His church and this family of faith!

School Board to meet

The Board of Education for Columbus Community School District will hold a public meeting on Monday, February 14, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. in the Roundy Elementary School Library.