



Your Award Winning Hometown Newspaper

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A review of Columbus Junction city offices

By Mary Masonholder Wilson

"You've gone from the outhouse to the penthouse," stated the computer tech in the year 2006 as he walked into the new city hall offices in the new Columbus Civic Center on Second Street. He was comparing the new city offices to the old city offices and city hall, which had been located on Walnut Street. The old city hall had been "built" in March of 1972 and before that had even housed the city fire department for years.

What a difference there was between the two structures! As we continue to examine the impact on the community of the current Columbus Civic Center, we see that much improvement and space has been added by moving to the new, current building. This building was dedicated six years ago on February 13, 2006.

Julie Heindel, City Clerk, stated this week that the old city office was a room about 6 x 10 feet. There was only one computer. There was a closet-size room for the Police Chief and the same size room for the mayor. There was a dark, paneled room at the back for city council meetings and there was barely any room for visitors or speakers to sit or stand.

Now in the new Civic Center there is a vestibule hall entry with city offices behind a protective glass window ante room for townspeople paying water bills, stating issues, etc. Both the city clerk and deputy clerk have desks with their own computers and a large room for the storage of files, technology equipment, etc.

Police Chief Donnie Orr has his own office right off the clerks. There is a separate room for the other officers and each officer has a computer. There even is a separate room for interrogation purposes. Chief Orr is particularly happy with this as it provides more privacy than the back room at the former city hall, which might have people entering and exiting often. Also this new room has an audio/video system that can tape interrogations and sometimes these videos are used in court.

There is also a heated garage for the police car and there is a secured evidence room, which is locked and only keyed to the officers. Before,



The home of the City Council, ICN meeting room, various community meeting room, along with many other activities in the room. The room also holds a sliding room that can be moved to create two meetings at one time. Truly a multi-functional room.

evidence was spread around in the old upstairs of the former city hall. The mayor has a spacious room looking into the other city hall offices so each worker knows what the other is doing. There is an elevator that can take people from the bottom floor to the library and meeting room above.

Orr pointed out that because the Columbus facilities are so good, other area officers come here for meetings, etc. Julie Heindel reinforced that the same is happening with other area groups: They are coming to the Columbus Civic Center for meetings.

Heindel said the current room used as the Council Chambers for City Council meetings is also used as an ICN room and meeting room. She says, "It is amazing how far some people come to use this room." Someone is coming from the Quad Cities to take an insurance test on the ICN; someone else is taking a nursing course on it. Every Monday night (for a few months) this room is booked for the All Iowa Principal's class and Thursday nights are booked for the sign language class. Another night is used to help the Burmese people get acclimated here, and at the last meeting there were 30 people helping including Pastor Gabriel from Tyson, Mallory Smith, the Catholic Foundation, Kathy Vance, Public Health, Mayor Dan Wilson, Representatives from Waterloo Tyson, and more.

There is a portable wall that can be pulled shut to make this big room two rooms. Each year during the Louisa County Fair, the queen contest interviews are here and several events can be going on at once. West Liberty Foods uses this room, not because they have a plant here, but because it is halfway between West Liberty and their other plant in Mt.

Pleasant. Social workers use this space, and the list is too long to continue, but this is one busy place.

Heindel commented how nice it is to have the town library, city offices, city police people, and the Community Development department all in one building. For example, people will pay their water bill when they come to the library. The library is in charge of scheduling the ICN room and the personnel of the Civic Center all work together to keep things running smoothly.

When Fred Lukavsky, city worker, was asked what was better about this Civic Center compared to the old City Hall, his answer was simply, "Everything." When one thinks back to the former city offices, it is easy to see that his answer is indeed true, as was the answer of the computer tech who said, "You've gone from the outhouse to the penthouse."

Community Club meets with CCHS Juniors

By Donna Carpenter

The Columbus Community Club hosted the Columbus Community School's junior class at their regular meeting, February 21, 2013. Mark Huston opened the meeting, following the meal, introducing Joy Lekwa, current president of the Community Club. Mark explained the importance of the Wildcats group to the students, as well as their importance to the community. The following members explained the various duties of their respective committees:

- The Columbus Junction Benefited Fire Department-John Carpenter
- Louisa County Fair Board-Susan Pretz, Secretary-Treasurer
- Tyson Foods-Dave Duncan, Human Resources Director
- Colonial Manor-Sarah Hand, Administrator
- Louisa County Supervisors-Randy Griffin, Supervisor
- Louisa County Ambulance-Todd Heck, first responder
- Columbus Medical Facility-Mark Huston, board member
- Columbus Senior Center-Polly Prior, board member
- City of Columbus City-Mark Shear, Mayor
- Columbus Junction Police Department-Donnie Orr, Police Chief
- Community Development Center/United Fund-Mallory Smith
- Public Library-Cathy Crawford, Librarian
- Columbus Community Schools-Superintendent Dr. Marlene Johnson; Principal Jeff Maeder



CCHS students during a visit with the Columbus Community club in conjunction with the Wildcats First Group

City of Columbus Junction-Dan Wilson, Mayor
Each person spoke of the significance of volunteerism in a small town, as he or she explained their tasks, as well as interesting facts

about various projects, and noted that it would not be possible to achieve many of the accomplishments that have occurred in Columbus Junction without the tireless dedication of these volunteers. Their hope is that

any of the members of the junior class that decide to settle in Columbus Junction in the future, will consider volunteering, in order for progress to continue, making our town a vibrant community.

Blood Drive

Columbus Community High School FFA will host a community blood drive from 7:30 AM to 12:30 PM on Thursday, February 28th in

the School Gymnasium, located at 1004 Colton Street, Columbus Junction. To donate, please contact Julia Townsley at 319-728-2231 or e-mail her at: julia.townsley@columbuscd.org. Walk-ins welcome! 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 1/3/2012 are eligible to give blood at this drive. Blood donation is a safe, simple procedure that takes about 45 minutes to one hour.

Individuals with diabetes or controlled high blood pressure may be accepted as eligible donors. Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center is the provider of blood and blood components to 81 hospitals in Illinois, Iowa, Missouri and Wisconsin. In your area, MVRBC is the exclusive provider to Washington County Hospitals and Clinics, Iowa City VA, and Mercy Iowa City.

Briefly -

American Legion Fish Fry

The next Columbus Junction American Legion Fish/Chicken Fry will be held on Saturday, evening, March 9th. Come enjoy the great food and a fun evening. This will be the last fish fry for the season.

Fredonia needs City Council member

The City of Fredonia will be taking applications for a city council member. These applications will be accepted until Monday, March 11, 2013. If you have any questions, please contact Lisa Exline at 319-750-0801 or they can be dropped off at City Hall in Fredonia. Reminders: Sewer bills are due by the 20th of the month, if late, a \$25 fee will be charged. Dogs running loose - owners will be ticketed.

Etude Club to meet

On Tuesday, March 5, 2013, a meeting of Etude Club members will be held in the Colonial Estates Assisted Living Center at 7 p.m. The lesson on "Music from the Vietnam Era," will be presented by Stephanie Duncan. Paul Duncan will be present to direct the club chorus in practicing music to be presented at the April 30th Spring Show, which will focus on honoring our American heroes: "A Tribute to Our Veterans." All Etude members planning on doing special musical selections for the spring show are asked to have that information available on Tuesday, March 5th.

Historical Society Soup Supper

Louisa County Historical Society will sponsor a soup supper for the public on Saturday, March 2nd, at 5:30 p.m. The supper will be held at the museum on Highway 61 in Wapello and will be a free will offering. Also, the museum will reopen to the public on Friday, March 1st. Museum hours will be Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays, 1:00 - 4:00.

L-M to hold Donkey Basketball

New rodeo stars will be born during the wild and crazy "Dairyland Donkey Basketball Show" at Louisa-Muscatine High School Gym on Wednesday, March 6th starting at 7 p.m. It's basketball played on real, live donkeys and it will be wilder than a rodeo and funnier than a circus. ALL Louisa County FFA teams and L-M seniors will be riding, so come out and see someone you know try to ride a donkey and play basketball at the same time. It's a thrill a minute, a spill a minute. Laugh as you've never laughed before at the wild and crazy donkey basketball show. This fun-filled show is sponsored by Louisa-Muscatine FFA Alumni. All of the proceeds will be for the benefit of FFA Scholarships. Advance tickets can be purchased from members of the sponsoring organization or by

Longbeards Banquet set

The thirteenth annual Louisa Longbeards Banquet is being held Saturday, March 2. This event is being held at the Briggs Community Building, Wapello. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. for guests to participate in games, raffles, review items for silent and live auction, etc. Supper is served at 7 p.m. Any questions concerning the banquet or becoming a member, please contact Todd Shutt at 319-572-1522. New members are always welcome.

Ham and Bean Supper at Masonic Lodge

There will be a Ham and Bean supper at the Columbus City Masonic Lodge on Friday, March 1st, from 5:30-7:00 p.m. A free will donation will be accepted.

Breakfast at Ainsworth Opera House

The Ainsworth Opera House will hold their breakfast buffet on Saturday, March 2, 2013 from 7 am to 9 am. Cost is \$7 per person, children 10 and under free with adult. Will be serving biscuits and gravy, ham, links, eggs, hash browns, 6 salads, fruit, rolls, juice and whatever else the cooks come up with. This is a fundraiser for the Opera House. Hope to see you there.

Legion Auxiliary to meet

Legion Auxiliary will meet on Tuesday, March 12th at 6:00 p.m.

CCHS Parent Survey encouraged

ALL PARENTS of COLUMBUS 9TH-12TH GRADE STUDENTS are invited and ENCOURAGED to complete the Iowa Youth Survey from now until March 1, 2013. The survey can be found on the school's homepage at www.columbuscd.org under Parent Links. Columbus is participating in the Iowa Safe and Supportive Schools grant and parental completion of the survey is a requirement. Please go to the website and complete the 20 minute survey today. Call Dayle Pretz, Grant Coordinator, at 728-2231 ext. 9403 with questions.

Port City Coin Club to meet

The PORT CITY COIN CLUB will hold its annual coin show on March 3 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at THE RENDEZVOUS, 3127 Lucas Street, Muscatine, IA. Admission is free and open to the public. For more information call 563-264-8148.

Two Legislative Forums set

Two Legislative Forums will take place this Saturday, March 2, 2013. The first is with Senators Jim Hahn and Tom Courtney, and Representatives Tom Sands, Jeff Kaufmann and Mark Lofgren at the Muscatine Community College Student Center from 9:00 - 10:30 AM. The second will take place at the State Bank of Wapello Community Room from 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. with Senator Tom Courtney and Representative Tom Sands.

United Methodist Women to meet

The United Methodist Women of Columbus Junction will meet on Wednesday, March 6, 2013, for a 12:30 p.m. luncheon honoring "Call to Prayer and Self-Denial." Delores Gentzler will have the lesson and Kathleen Sands will be hostess. This is our first meeting of 2013. Please come and join the fellowship.

World Day of Prayer

World Day of Prayer will be held in the Columbus Junction United Methodist Church on Friday, March 1, 2013, at 2 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Alumni Banquet scheduled

The Columbus area Alumni Banquet will take place at Roundy Elementary School on June 8, 2013. Social Hour will begin at 5:30 p.m., and Dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m. Special recognition will be given to the 50-year (1963) class and the 25-year (1988) class. Put the date on your calendar now! Tickets are \$10 and are available at both Columbus Junction Banks.

