

## New law firms opens for business in town

By John Carpenter  
Gazette Staff

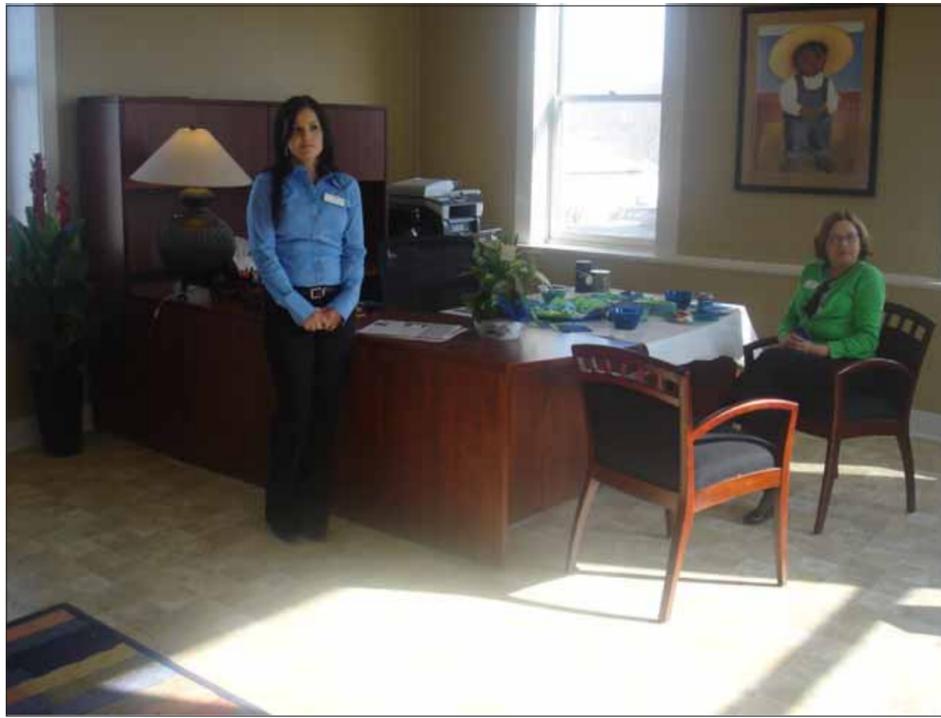
Where once seed, fertilizer and farm supplies were disbursed, now legal advice will be disbursed in the new offices of Scheldrup, Blades, Schrock, Sand, Aranza P.C.

The firm is located in Cedar Rapids, with offices in Des Moines and Omaha. Last Monday the firm opened a new location in the Ivan Arthur Accounting building, formerly Weber and Huston.

"We will offer complete legal services," said attorney, Curtis Scheldrup, "and we will be able to offer these services in Spanish. We hope that clients will get a basis of trust when we are able to use their native language."

The firm will offer legal advice in immigration, worker's compensation, small business law, and criminal matters. The facility also includes a video conference room where clients can meet with attorneys via a video arrangement if the attorney happens to be in another location.

The office is part of the firm's Iowa Immigrant Worker Initiative program, and individuals will staff the office on a daily basis.



Pictured above is Judith Morales of the law firm Scheldrup, Blades, Schrock, Sand, Aranza, P.C., in the outer lobby of their new office in Columbus Junction.

## County prepares to say good-bye to LDG Director Angie Sanders

Angie Sanders, Executive Director

Louisa Development Group has a lot going on right now: business seminars, housing connections, cop assistance, tourism opportunities, meetings with entrepreneurs, regional work, Lighten Up program, etc.

But the latest update is one I share with mixed emotions. My last day with LDG will be April 30<sup>th</sup>.

I came to LDG and Louisa County with what I call realistic optimism, and I leave in that same mind-set. I also leave, however, as a more mature person and development professional. I will miss the possibilities, the natural resources and the people here in Louisa County.

But what I'm looking forward to is starting a life with my significant other, Paul. We tried to start that life, right here in Louisa County. His professional expertise, however, didn't find a home here. So he had to look somewhere else. I can attest, firsthand, to how Iowa is losing that generation they so crave (the 18-35 year olds). Both Paul and I have Masters Degrees, want to make good wages and have more "creative" careers than what are typically found in this part of Iowa, unfortunately. Right now anyway...

I tell you this personal part of my life so that you understand that I'm not leaving LDG because of LDG. I'm leaving it for personal reasons, and reasons that are somewhat uncontrolled by Louisa County at this point.

LDG is still a young organization, but it becomes more sustainable every day. I have no doubt that if it continues to attract high quality board members and directors, then it will flourish as the years go on. Even if it changes somewhat, and that is inevitable.

As the community has witnessed LDG's birth and infancy, it's also witnessed three Executive Directors

in four short years. That shouldn't be thought of as a negative aspect to the organization, but a positive one – it is molding and teaching creative, capable people to be better leaders for our communities. Yes, I hope that in time, it will be able to attract an Executive Director that will stay on for several years.

You, the residents of Louisa County, however, have some control. You have some say in your destiny. You can support LDG through membership, volunteering to be a board member or other activities. You can Shop Louisa and keep your money in your county to make it better year by year. You can encourage an entrepreneurial culture here to build and grow your own businesses, and thus families, social identity and that elusive "quality of life." You can even help LDG to be a better organization by providing connections, ideas and resources.

All of this is that realistic optimism I saw when I first came and I see as I leave. It's going to be tough sometimes. And we have to come to grips with the fact that Louisa County doesn't have everything for everyone. But Louisa County has assets and the potential that you can foster, that you can support, that we can work with. And LDG can help.

LDG is in the process of searching for a new Executive Director. If you know someone who is a self-starter, can work independently and has some education or experience in economic development or marketing, please encourage them to apply. We will be starting interviews the first week of April. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at 319-527-5182 or [ldg@louisacomm.net](mailto:ldg@louisacomm.net). You may also contact the board members: their names are at [www.louisadevelopmentgroup.org](http://www.louisadevelopmentgroup.org).

"All the flowers of all the tomorrows are in the seeds of today."  
- Indian Proverb

## School Board and CEA reach agreement

By Jim Rudisill

Negotiations between the Columbus School District and the Columbus Education Association ended Monday, after both sides approved a two-year agreement that will total 4.54% each year. Superintendent Rich Bridenstine presented the package to the school board Monday during its regular monthly session.

Under the terms of the agreement, the district's base salary will increase \$700 from \$26,800 to \$27,500 for the 2008-09 school year. The base salary is what a first-year teacher with a BA will earn. The agreement also includes a one-year aging of the salary schedule for other certified staff. The district also agreed to absorb the 3% health insurance increase.

The only other provision in the agreement covers language changes concerning teacher evaluations.

Although the labor deal will span both the 2008-09 and 2009-2010 school years, next year's distribution of funds between salary and other benefit increases will need to be identified next year. Bridenstine said the total package will use the 4.54% increase approved this year, but the district's cost for health insurance will be the first cost determined next year. After that figure is established, any remaining funds can be earmarked for base salary and other benefit increases.

"It's a done deal," Bridenstine told the board after the vote.

In other financial action, the board approved almost \$140,000 in summer maintenance projects. Included in the list was \$92,000 in roof repairs, \$34,000 in middle and high school restroom repairs, \$50,000 in high school track renovations, \$97,750 in tuckpointing of the middle and high school buildings and \$15,500 in high school locker replacements. Additional work will include installing a new shed at the swimming pool, radiator replacement at the middle school, installation of electric heat and air conditioning in the kitchen and purchase of a high school floor scrubber. The work will be financed from the School Infrastructure Local Option (SILO) sales

tax fund.

In addition to the summer maintenance work, the board also approved purchasing a new school bus for \$75,128 from School Bus Sales Company, Waterloo; a new van for \$19,710 from Mincer Ford; and a new car for \$14,950 from Mincer Ford. The school bus will be paid from the district's Physical Plant and Equipment Levy (PPEL), while SILO funds will be used to purchase the other two vehicles.

The board also agreed to hold the line on school tuition, as well as the admission and swimming lesson fees at the swimming pool. However, the board approved raising lunch prices for the 2008-09 school year. Students paying full price and adults will pay \$.05 more for breakfast, raising the cost for that meal to \$.80 for full-price students and \$1.25 for adults. Breakfast cost for students who pay the reduced rate will remain at \$.30, which is dictated by the federal government. Lunch prices will go up \$.10 for students paying the full price and adults. The new cost for students will be \$1.60 per meal while adults will be charged \$2.10. Students with the reduced meal cost will pay \$.60.

The board also approved the third and final reading formally establishing the school district's current graduation requirements into school board policies. The requirements, which had been approved last year and included in this year's student handbook, were never included in the board policies. The oversight was discovered several months ago.

Under the requirement policy, students must earn 58 semester credits to graduate. These include eight credits of English, six credits of math, six credits of science, six credits of social studies and eight credits of physical education. Students must also complete a computer application class unless they pass a competency test.

In final action, local resident Rick Stroud asked the board to consider adding girls bowling to the district's varsity sports list. Stroud said the Iowa High School Girls Athletic Association had recently added bowling to its list of recognized varsity sports. He said Louisa-Muscatine currently is the only Southeast Iowa Superconference school offering the sport, but other districts he has talked to are interested.

Mike Samuelson, owner of the local bowling alley, also supported the proposal and said he would provide free lane use for practices. Officials will poll the school to determine interest and report back to the school board.

In final action, the board also met with representatives of the music and athletic boosters to discuss those groups' activities. The board also agreed to create a new technology specialist position, but tabled a proposal to create a school-to-work coordinator.

## Briefly -

### After Prom meeting scheduled

The Columbus Junior Class parents will hold an After-Prom Planning Meeting today, Wednesday, March 26, 2008, beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the Columbus Junction Fire Station. All parents interested in helping with the After-Prom festivities are invited and encouraged to attend. For more information, call Mindy Conaway during the evening at 725-6706.

### Alumni Banquet scheduled

Continuing the custom of holding the Columbus - Cotter - Conesville Alumni Banquet on the second Saturday in June, the 2008 Banquet will be held at Roundy Elementary School on June 14, 2008. Make your plans to attend the banquet and to schedule your class events to coincide with the date.

### City Council to meet

The City of Columbus Junction will have its regular council meeting today, Wednesday, March 26, 2008, at 5:30 p.m., in the New Civic Center/ City Hall.

### Cub Scout pancake supper

Cub Scout Pack 54 (from Letts, Grandview, and Fruitland) will hold their annual, all-you-can-eat pancake supper (with whole hog sausage and scrambled eggs) on Monday, March 31, 2008, from 5-8 p.m. at the L-M Elementary School. The cost is \$5.00 for 7<sup>th</sup> grade through adults; \$3.00 for kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade and seniors; and preschool age is free. All profits go toward covering the cost of Pack 54's registration fees, Boy's Life, crafts, camping, awards, badges, and other fun things that the pack might do. Please come and support your local boy scouts!

### Diabetes Clinic scheduled

The Carver College of Medicine Mobile Clinic will be holding a diabetes clinic with blood glucose, cholesterol, and blood pressure screening at Roundy Elementary School on March 29<sup>th</sup> from 10 am to 1 pm. There will also be a bilingual nutrition educator to discuss diet, how to shop for healthy foods within a given budget, and more. Everyone is welcome.

La Clinica Móvil de la facultad de medicina estará a Roundy Elementary School el 29 de marzo de las 10 am hasta la 1 pm. Esta clínica se especializará en el tema de diabetes y habrá estudios del azúcar, el colesterol, y la presión de sangre. Habrá también una nutricionista hispanohablante. Ella hablará de la alimentación, como hacer compras para comer sano y con poco dinero, y más. Todos son bienvenidos.

### Eastern Star to meet

An Eastern Star School of Instruction with Emma Beckman #445, Columbus City, Mt. Pleasant, Wayland and Brighton Chapters will be held on March 29, 2008, at 12:30 p.m., at the Mt. Pleasant Masonic Temple. Cheryl Payne is the District Instructor. Emma Beckman, Chapter 445, Order of the Eastern Star, Columbus City, Iowa, will have a regular stated meeting on April 7, 2008, at 7:30 p.m.

### Etude Club to meet

The Etude Club members will hold their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, at 7:00 p.m., with the majority of the time used to rehearse selections for the Spring Show, which will be held on Monday, April 7, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. Both rehearsal and the Spring Show will be held in the United Methodist Church of Columbus Junction.

### Etude Club Spring Show

The Etude Music Club presents their annual Spring Show "Music That Moves You," on Monday, April 7, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. at the Columbus Junction United Methodist Church. Highlighting the performance will be the Etude Chorus and Etude Soloists. A Free Will Offering will be accepted. Proceeds will be used for Music Scholarships for high school music students.

### Storm Spotter Classes

The National Weather Service in Quad Cities, in conjunction with the Louisa County Emergency Management Agency, will be hosting a free storm spotter training class at 6:30 p.m. on March 31st at the Briggs Center in Wapello. This class is open to the public and takes about 2 hours to complete. Weather enthusiasts, firefighters, emergency first responders, Ham radio operators, and those interested in providing a valuable service to their community are encouraged to attend. For more information, please contact the Louisa County Emergency Management Agency at 319-729-5870 or visit the NWS Quad Cities Website at <http://www.weather.gov/quadcities>

### Habitat Kane County trip set

Louisa County Habitat for Humanity is taking their annual Kane County, Illinois Flea Market trip on Saturday, May 3. The bus will pick up at the Wapello Sale Barn at 7:30 a.m., and the Muscatine Hy-Vee parking lot at 8:00 a.m. The bus will arrive back at Wapello about 10:00 p.m. The cost is \$55 per person. Please send checks before April 29 to: Ruth Yackle, 110 N. Pine Street, Wapello, IA 52653. Her phone number is 319-523-2381.

### L-M Kindergarten round-up

The L-M School District is in the process of identifying next year's kindergarteners. If you have a child who will be 5 years old by September 15, 2008, or know of one, please contact the elementary office at 319-726-3634. Our pre-registration is Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup> and Friday, March 28<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Please bring your child's birth certificate with you. Kindergarten "Round Up" will be Thursday, April 24<sup>th</sup> and Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. This will be a 2-hour session. Teachers meet with students and the principal will meet with the parents. Sign up for this at pre-registration. We are also accepting students for our preschool/childcare program located in the elementary building. Please call Busy Hands Preschool/Childcare at 319-726-3645 ext. 200. The preschool and childcare have limited space so sign up soon.

### Lone Tree Fire annual dance

Lone Tree Fire & Rescue Annual Dance will be held at the Lone Tree American Legion Post 457 on Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2008, from 8:30 PM-12:00 AM. DJ service will be by *The Havels*. Children welcome with adults. \$5.00 donation.

### Historical Society programs

Sunday, April 13, 2:00 P.M. Barn History, by Michael Harker or Rich Tyler: "Visions of an American Icon." Michael Harker on old barns. Mr. Harker is the photographer of a book on barns. Louisa County Heritage Center, 609 James L. Hodges Ave., Wapello, Iowa

## Habitat for Humanity receives \$3,000 Foundation Grant

The Community Foundation of Louisa County (CFLC) awarded Louisa County Habitat for Humanity \$3000 to go towards Habitat House #11, scheduled to start construction late summer/early fall 2008. Pictured from l-r, Ken Purdy (CFLC), Bob Buckman (LC Habitat for Humanity), Nancy McGill (CFLC) and Rondalyn Weyrick (CFLC). Photo by Vivian Jennings.

