



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NEWS

Another benefit of your West Union Chamber Membership!

www.westunion.com

January 2012

COMMUNITY AWARDS BANQUET PLANNED

The annual Community Awards Banquet will be held on Saturday, January 21st beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the West Union Country Club (formerly Country Hills) on Echo Valley Road. This annual event will honor many of our local residents who make West Union a great place to live.

The Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors have chosen from the Nominees that were submitted for this year's award winners. The Fayette County Union's "Citizen of the Year" will also be honored as well as Main Street West Union volunteers.

This year's banquet theme is "Celebrating our Local Treasures." Attendees will have a chance to enjoy great food, and a fun celebration.

Tickets are now on sale at the Chamber office for \$16 each. Local businesses are encouraged to be a sponsor for either the evenings appetizers or dessert for only \$50. A sponsorship form is included with this newsletter and should be returned to the Chamber office by January 13th. For more information about any of the evenings events, please contact the Chamber office at 422-3070.



Celebrating our
Local Treasures

Saturday, January 21st
West Union Country Club

HOLIDAY PUNCH CARD A GREAT SUCCESS!

The annual holiday punch card promotion continues to grow every year and 2011 was another successful year. We would like to thank all the participating merchants and sponsors! Thanks to the retail committee members for their hard work on the promotion.

Special thanks to David Gross for making the Jingle Bell cutouts and to Gail Hackman and LeAnn Larson for their painting & decorating talents! Business owners are reminded to return their cut-outs to the Chamber office so they can be used for a future promotion. As always, we appreciate any feedback or ideas you may have for next year's Punch Card promotion. Please call our office at 422-3070 or email wuchamber@alpinecom.net.

The grand prize winners of \$100 in West Union scrip money were: Becky Moore, Fayette, Trudy Campbell, Hawkeye, Heidi Streif, West Union, Virginia Schmelzer, West Union, and Randy Stepan, West Union. These lucky winners will continue to enjoy shopping locally into the new year.

We are in the process of counting the tons of completed cards that were turned in and have hopes of exceeding last year's total dollars spent! 21 weekly winners were each awarded gift certificates to participating businesses and we had the pleasure to surprise and reward people for shopping locally again this year.



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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jackie Loomis	President
Lisa Miller	Vice President
Deb Merrill	Secretary/Treasurer
Justin Steinlage	
Jenni Elsbernd	
Ryan Hoey	
Melody Patrick	
Brent Parker	
Bill Ziegler	Executive Director

CHAMBER BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS CONTINUE INTO 2012



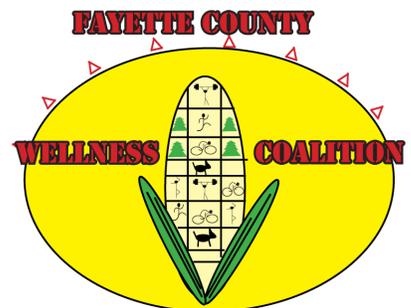
All of us in the office are anxiously awaiting the finished remodel project as I'm sure you can imagine. Trim was installed in the front office area recently and looks very nice! We also recently had the remainder of the new ceiling tiles put in and work is being done on the "Green" rear deck made of recycled composite material. A large portion of the electrical work was completed right before Christmas and we were in the dark for most of the day!

Carpet should be installed next week and at that point we should be able to relocate our furniture back to the front of the office and have a functioning board room again. A special thank you to our patient renters and to First National Bank for hosting the Chamber Board meetings in their conference room for the past many months! The front counter and cabinets are scheduled to be installed the week of January 16th. We invite all our members to stop in and check out all the work that has been accomplished!

FAYETTE COUNTY WELLNESS COALITION

Area officials and other health enthusiasts have enthusiastically announced that the Fayette County Wellness Coalition "Healthy Fayette County" website is up and running. Similar to its mission statement, the coalition is hoping the www.healthyfayettecounty.org website will become the cornerstone for further educating and promoting health and wellness throughout the county. Plans are for the website to become the bulletin board for schedules of special activities and guest speakers at local health facilities, and community events such as fun runs/walks and bicycle rides.

As part of setting the groundwork for the foundation, Fayette County residents are being asked to "Live Healthy" and participate in the statewide 100-Day Iowa Wellness Challenge beginning Monday, Jan. 23. Registration is currently underway for the challenge, which is open to teams of 2-10 adults. Team captains can register a team and team members and report their progress weekly on the statewide website at www.livehealthy.org. The site also provides a daily journal and message center to help keep team members connected and involved in making health changes to reach their fitness and weight-loss goals.



Woo-Hoo Wednesdays at the W.U. Library

Each Wednesday in January, the West Union Parks and Recreation Department will be hosting Woo-Hoo parties from 10 am to 3 pm at the West Union Library. These parties will allow West Union residents the chance to go online and vote in the Readers Digest "We Hear You" Contest.

West Union was submitted for the grant program in hopes to receive funding dollars to be put toward the purchase of new Christmas decorations for the new Streetscape. There will be a representative available to help people with the voting process. Please contact Kathy Guyer at (563) 380-8496 with any questions.



GREEN PILOT UPDATE

STREETSCAPE WEBCAM: Be sure to check out the progress on the streetscape project on the webcam that is recording all the progress currently taking place on Vine Street. Check it out at <http://www.iowalifechanging.com/community/west-union-camera.aspx>.

FAÇADE MASTER PLAN MOVING FORWARD:

The West Union City Council approved submitting a pre-application for the downtown district to the Façade Master Plan program through the Iowa Economic Development Authority at their December 19th meeting. This program provides funding for downtown businesses to make improvements to their facades as a unified group effort. Step One is a pre-application from the City due in mid-January. If accepted, the State of Iowa will ask for a full application which would be due in March. Any non-governmental building located within the downtown urban renewal district is eligible to participate. Building owners will be expected to contribute at least 20-25% of the improvement costs on their building. Two public meetings have already been held and a third meeting is scheduled for January 5th at 5:30 p.m. in the Community Room at Kerndt Brothers Savings Bank. Interested businesses will need to submit an initial letter of commitment outlining the improvements they would like to make to their building. Improvements can range from very simple painting to entire rehabs – the improvements are entirely the building owners decision. The application for the City will be prepared by the FCED and Main Street office. If you would like more information about this program or are interested in participating in the pre-application, please call the FCED office at 422-5073 or the Main Street West Union office at 422-3070.

DOE FUNDING NOW AVAILABLE:

The City of West Union received \$100,000 from the Department of Energy to create a mini-grant program to assist downtown businesses with energy efficient upgrades. The goal of the grant program is to assist small business owners in making improvements to their buildings that will reduce their energy needs and ultimately, reduce the out of pocket costs they pay for energy usage. Businesses are eligible for up to \$5,000 per business or \$10,000 per business if they are making the conversion to the district geothermal system. You can pick up informational packets at West Union City Hall or the Main Street West Union office.



BOARD MEMBERS

The start of a new year always means new board members representing our membership. This year we will welcome four new board members who will begin serving a 3-year term on the board. These folks represent you, so please welcome them and give them a call with your suggestions, questions, or concerns. More information on new Boards Members will be published in the February newsletter.

**Community Awards Banquet
“Celebrating our Local Treasures”**

**Saturday, January 21st
West Union Country Club, Echo Valley Road
(formerly Country Hills)**

**6:00 p.m.--Social Hour
7:00 p.m.--Dinner
8:00 p.m.--Awards Ceremony**

Tickets are \$16 each at the Chamber of Commerce Office



COMING SOON!!

Beginning in February, the Chamber newsletter will have a new feature. We plan on having a monthly Chamber Member spotlight. This will be designed to inform fellow Chamber members on the products and services the featured business has to offer.

Other insightful information such as what changes the business has seen and vision for the future they have may be included. We hope you will look forward to this segment each month!

GRASSLEY VISIT

U.S. Senator Chuck Grassley is scheduled to tour Art's Way Manufacturing in West Union on January 12th from 7:30 to 8:30. He will be touring the facility and will host a question and answer with Art's Way employees.

JANUARY 2012

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«Contact Information»

«Mailing Address»

«City», «State» «Zip»

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The City of West Union invites all community residents and stakeholders to a series of four Community Think Tanks to be held on the on the following Wednesdays: January 11th, 18th, 25th and February 1st. Facilitated by staff from Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission, the four sessions will cover a variety of community elements.

Each session should last approximately one hour. The goal of the Think Tanks is to gather resident and stakeholder input into what they envision for their community in the future. Background information and historical data will be shared as it pertains to the topics of the day prior to a community discussion on existing assets and future needs or desires. Participants will be asked to envision West Union in 2025 and 2030 – will West Union be a place our children want to live, work and play? Please join us and provide your valuable ideas for the future of West Union. For additional information, contact Bob Vagts at City Hall: 563-422-3908.



Come to a
Community Think Tank!

How do you envision our
community in the future?

****January 11, 2012 noon - 1:00 p.m. @ Tap't Out**

Topics: Culture, Natural & Agricultural Resources

****January 18, 2012 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. @ City Hall**

Topic: Economic Development

****January 25, 2012 noon - 1:00 p.m. @ Tap't Out**

Topics: Transportation and Housing

****February 1, 2012 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. @ City Hall**

Topics: Community Facilities, Infrastructure and Utilities