



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NEWS

Another benefit of your West Union Chamber Membership!

www.westunion.com

Back to School Time!

August 2012

FIREWORKS DONATIONS

A special thank you to all the businesses and private residents who contributed to the annual fireworks celebration in West Union on Wednesday, July 4th. Thank you to the West Union Rec Center for again allowing the Chamber of Commerce to hold the event on the park grounds. Many of the areas around the site were full of folks gathering to enjoy great music, food and fun, and to watch the fireworks! Thank you to fundraising chair Marge Crandall for her assistance in helping to raise the \$4300 needed to put on this event. Donations are accepted year round, so if you would like to make a contribution you can do so at anytime. Thanks to the following folks who donated to this year's show: Barrel Drive In, Black Hills Energy, German Mutual Insurance, Baumler Implementations, Allen & Debrah Chensvold, CIVIC Club, Marjorie Kilburn, Palmer Lutheran Health Center, Farm Bureau Financial, Mark & Deb Thies, Donald & Marilyn Mueller, First National Bank, Therese & Paul Kaiser, Saboe Jewelry, Tap't Out Stein-N-Dine, Northeast Iowa Appraisal & Real Estate, TeKippe Engineering, Woodard Insurance, Susan Wolf, Kremer Kehe Financial Services, Haven Electronics, Barb & Ron O'Kones, Kerwin & Marlys Anderson,

Gary & Jane Blumhagen, Marge & Bruce Crandall, McJ's Embroidery Accents, Scott & Shantelle Bohner, Hair Designs, Dessel-Roach Furniture & Floors, Elwood, O'Donohoe, Braun & White, Spahn & Rose Lumber Co., John & Sally Falb, Garvin's LP Gas, Wilbur Ford Sales, Moss Service Center, Kerndt Brothers Savings Bank, Kevin & Susan Brockway, Fayette County Abstract Co., West Union Monument Co., Marilyn Kamaus, Bemiss Distributing co., Don Kamaus CPA, Cameron Elmer DDS, Harlen & Margaret Anderson, Kristi Dienst, and Janet Stahr. Without your generous donations the show would not go on. Also, thanks to those who donated their cans out at Old Mill Redemption. A total of \$1,059.25 was collected in can redemption in the last year.

THANKS TO ALL OF YOU!!



Thanks to Our 4th of July Sponsors!

Thanks to all of you who helped to sponsor the activities for the July 4th Celebration! The following Lilac Plaza businesses sponsored the Highway 52 Bluegrass Band: Anytime Fitness, West Union Hardware, Moore's Foods, Alco, Pizza Palace, Union Drug, Pleggenkuhle Chiropractic, and State Farm Insurance. The Kiddie Train was sponsored by the CIVIC Club and Osmundson Lawncare and was driven by Mitchell Ihde. Thank you to Sarahh Scher, Miss Fayette County Victoria Berst, and the Miss West Union candidates, Kayla Lueder and Rendi Denberger, for helping with the face painting. Thanks to Imperial Roofing and the Chamber for sponsoring the mini golf and to the board members who helped with all the set up and tear down. Thanks to the WU Fire Department! We hope everyone enjoyed the event and thanks to anyone we missed!

CONGRATULATIONS KAYLA LUEDER

The Chamber would like to congratulate Kayla Lueder, Miss West Union 2012. Kayla also just won the Fayette County Fair Queen contest! We know that Kayla will represent West Union and Fayette County proudly as she attends area community events. Kayla is the daughter of Kevin & Sue Lueder. She is active in North Fayette Danceline, as a Cheerleader, Student Council Member, FFA, Band, and on the Honor Roll. Outside of school she is involved in her church and the Windsor Sparkplugs 4-H Club. Congratulations Kayla!

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Chamber Spotlight: West Union Hardware

In 1990, Ken & Marlys Fink moved their hardware business to West Union after owning and operating Fayette Farm & Home Center for 25 years. After Ken's death in 1994, their son, Bruce Fink, became part owner of the business. Since then, Marlys and Bruce have owned and operated West Union Hardware together.

"Not your typical hardware store." Marlys has taken advantage of opportunities to expand the store inventory and meet the needs of area residents. When the Ben Franklin store closed in West Union, she began selling sewing and craft supplies in their store. The store offers sporting goods, flowers and plants, seeds and other garden supplies, gift items, as well as more ordinary hardware store merchandise. Always trying to please the customers, if they don't have it in the store, they will try to order it! They also offer these special services: hunting and fishing licenses, cutting keys, and repairing of windows and screens.

Longtime employees Lonnie Voshell and Nancy Davies are the backbone of the store, according to Marlys. They keep the business going and moving forward day after day. Marlys explains that the prosperity of the store is very dependant on the economy of West Union and the surrounding area. Declining jobs and population has affected the business.

Marlys thinks that West Union is a wonderful place to live. Born and raised here, she raised 5 children here also. She hopes the town will thrive and all the town's businesses prosper to make this "The best little town in Iowa"!



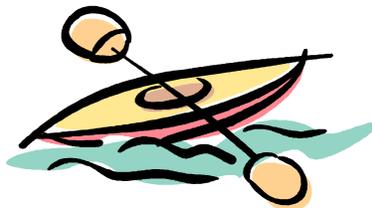
Well past a "typical" retirement age, Marlys Fink is still very active in the business along with her son, Bruce Fink, and employees, Nancy Davies and Lonnie Voshell. "Just like the Energizer Bunny, I keep going, going, going", brags Marlys!

Thank you West Union Hardware for your Chamber membership and support!

TURKEY RIVER ROCKS!

Iowa Rivers Revival and the Turkey River Recreational Corridor are hosting a special event to promote Iowa Rivers on Saturday, August 11th. The event, Turkey River Rocks!, is a day-long float from Elkader to the historic Motor Mill site in Clayton County. The Turkey River Water trail was designated as an Iowa Water Trail in July 2011.

The event includes educational programs about the Turkey River and the surrounding area, an evening meal featuring local foods, and live music provided by the group Kindred Minds. Cost is \$20. To register visit the TRRC website at turkeyrivercorridor.com.



FAÇADE MASTER PLAN MEETING

All building owners that are a part of the Façade Master Plan project are encouraged to attend a meeting to provide updates on the project on Thursday, August 2, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. in the Community meeting room at Kerndt Brothers Savings Bank. The City of West Union received \$500,000 in funding through the Community Development Block Grant program to assist in improving the facades of 21 downtown buildings. Requirements of the program will be outlined and a timeline discussed on how the project is anticipated to move forward.

Brain Gain, September 20th

NICC Dairy Center from 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Rural Iowa lures middle-aged newcomers: Northeast Iowa Business Network is hosting Ben Winchester from the University of Minnesota Extension on September 20, 2012 from 3:00-5:00 p.m. at the Northeast Iowa Community College's Dairy Center outside of Calmar to release a new study of U.S. Census data on how Rural Iowa continue to attract new residents aged 30 to 49.

The news that people are moving into rural areas may seem counterintuitive, especially when headlines and book titles proclaim a "brain drain" and the supposed demise of rural America when 18- to 25-year-olds leave. But, according to Ben Winchester, University of Minnesota Extension rural sociologist and author of the study, the rural in-migration of 30- to 49-year-olds who bring with them educational achievements and established earning power creates a "brain gain" for these rural areas.

"It's the rule that young people move to pursue educational and career goals, not the exception," said Winchester. "Instead of labeling that loss as 'doom and gloom' for rural, I've examined the population trends more deeply. Acknowledging the brain gain allows rural places to focus on their strengths and opportunities, which is the work of any community striving for a brighter future."

Recent Extension research on 30- to 49-year-olds shows they are choosing rural areas for a higher quality of life, specifically citing a slower pace, the low cost of housing, and safety and security.

Contact the Fayette County Economic Development office at 422-5073 to register.



GREEN PILOT UPDATE

FAÇADE MASTER PLAN PROGRAM:

The City of West Union has received their contract for the Façade Master Plan program. A meeting to update participating building owners on the requirements of the program will be held on Thursday, August 2nd at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Meeting Room at Kerndt Brothers Savings Bank.

GEOHERMAL ANALYSIS UPDATE:

Property owners who participated in the Geothermal analysis for their buildings received their written reports on July 12 & 13. Two meetings were held to discuss the reports along with one-on-one visits to building owners to discuss their individual buildings. The reports provided a cost analysis to convert their current system to geothermal including a life cycle cost analysis and a list of incentives available to assist with funding for the new system. Building owners are now asked to complete a letter on intent to connect to the system. The City of West Union needs an updated indication of the number and size of properties intending to use the district geothermal system. It is anticipated that the system will be operational by late spring or early summer of 2013. The more properties that use the system earlier on, the most cost effective the system will be for all users. Completed forms should be returned to the Main Street West Union office by Friday, August 31, 2012. Twenty-four buildings participated in the in-depth studies provided through USDA Renewal Energy funding.

IOWA ENERGY CENTER GRANT AWARD:

Main Street West Union was recently notified that they have received funding from the Iowa Energy Center's Technology Demonstration and Education Grant funding for \$25,000. The award will be used to create a 30-minute educational documentary film on the West Union district energy project. The project will also include creation of an educational whitepaper report and delivery of a workshop to Iowa local governments on district energy systems. The purpose of the documentary, whitepaper and district geothermal workshop is to transfer information on the West Union project on downtown energy efficiency to other Iowa local governments and property owners. Work on the project will be completed by June 30, 2013.



GOOD SAM QUILT RAFFLE

The West Union Good Samaritan Society is holding a quilt raffle. The quilt being raffled is purple and cream in color and was made by former resident Lavonne Feulner. It is on display at the First National Bank. Tickets are \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00 and are available until August 29th. To purchase tickets, please contact Marie Monroe or Sharon Shaffer at 422-3814.



CITY WIDE GARAGE SALES

Fall City Wide Garage Sales are set for September 6, 7, and 8. Look for more information in the Fayette County Union newspaper.



Retail Committee Sets Promotion Dates

The West Union Chamber of Commerce Retail Committee has set dates for upcoming promotions.

Fall Open Houses will coincide with North Fayette Homecoming and will be held Friday and Saturday, October 12th and 13th.

Holiday Open Houses were set for Friday and Saturday, November 16th and 17th.

The annual holiday Punch Card Promotion will begin on November 7th and run through the end of December. 6 weekly drawings will be held beginning November 21st.

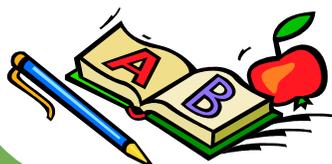
Watch for more details on these events in the coming weeks! **The next Retail Committee Meeting will be held at the Chamber office on Thursday, August 9th at 7:00 am. All are welcome and encouraged to attend!!**

CHAMBER AFTER FIVE

Please see the insert for information on the August 2012 Chamber After Five event!

Back to School!

North Fayette students will begin classes on Thursday, August 16th. Please be mindful of our area students when traveling in and around town, especially during the before and after school hours. Also be aware of students getting on and off the bus. Have a great school year!



AUGUST 2012

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NIBN Announces 2012 Dream Big Grow Here \$15,000 Competition

Northeast Iowa Business Network has partnered with the University of Northern Iowa to offer an online contest worth \$15,000 to regional entrepreneurs and small business owners beginning September 3rd. Contestants can win cash and gain widespread statewide publicity by competing in one of multiple online contests, followed by a statewide Pitch-Off event during the annual EntreFest! conference.

In its second year, the contest, called Dream Big Grow Here, offers entrepreneurs an opportunity to upload their business start-up and/or expansion idea online at www.DreamBigGrowHere.com then encourage customers, friends, family and community members to vote for them. The winner of each regional contest receives a \$5,000 cash award and a chance to compete for \$10,000 in a live, pitch-off during the statewide EntreFest! conference.

To participate, entrepreneurs are encouraged to visit the website to determine their eligibility, then upload a video, power point or photographs outlining their plans during the contestant entry phase from September 3rd to September 28th and others to vote for them between October 1st to October 19th. A pitch-off will be announced at a later date.

Dream Big Grow Here is sponsored by the University of Northern Iowa MyEntreNet, the Iowa Bankers Association, Renew Rural Iowa, ISU Community Vitality Center, Iowa Economic Development Authority, VentureNet, Delta Dental of Iowa and the Technology Association of Iowa.

For more information on the Dream Big Grow Here competition and for complete rules, go to www.DreamBigGrowHere.com or contact Rachelle Howe at 563-382-6171, rhowe@uerpc.org or Courtney Schwitzer at courtney.schwitzer@uni.edu or 319-273-4328.

The logo features the words "DREAM BIG" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. A yellow, multi-pointed star with a black outline is positioned between "DREAM" and "BIG". Below "BIG", the words "grow here" are written in a white, cursive script font. The entire logo is set against a dark blue rectangular background.