



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NEWS

Another benefit of your West Union Chamber Membership!



March 2010

NEW IOWA UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE TAX PROGRAM

Iowa's Unemployment Insurance Tax program is getting a new online filing system, called My Iowa UI. The development of My Iowa UI was based in part on feedback received from staff, employers and other 3rd party filers. The new system will improve on the functionality of the Unemployment Insurance Tax System that is approaching 40 years of age. My Iowa UI gives employers, accountants and other 3rd party filers the power to manage their tax account securely and conveniently.

A training workshop will be held on Wednesday, March 10, 2010 from 9:30—11:30 a.m. at the Iowa Work building, 680 Main Street, Dubuque, Iowa in Room 200. There is no cost to attend and 2.0 HRCI credits will be awarded as well to no cost. The speaker will be Andrew Harrison, Business Marketing Specialist for My Iowa UI. Employers will have the opportunity to see actual screens of the system before Iowa Workforce Development rolls it out in April 2010.

Mr. Harrison will share important functions available to users of the system and allow time for questions and answers. To register please contact Peggy.Murray@iwd.iowa.gov. Please include the following information in your registration email: name of persons attending, name of business or organization, contact phone number and email address, and whether or not you want HRCI credits.

GREEN BUILDING TRAINING CONTINUES IN MARCH

The Center on Sustainable Communities (COSC) continues to offer their free workshops on "Affordable Green Building Training" in West Union. COSC is an independent non-profit and serves as Iowa's trusted educational resource for sustainable building. The workshops will be held on March 5 & 19 in the upper level meeting room at TAP'T Out Stein n Dine. Registration is free and lunch is provided. The March workshop will focus on Insulation and Infiltration, and the

March 19 workshop will focus on plumbing & electrical.

A homeowners track continues on March 6th and will cover essential elements including windows, doors, and mechanical systems. All workshops begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 1:00 p.m. There is no cost for the homeowners sessions and lunch is provided.

sponsored in part by Fayette County Economic Development, Main Street West Union, IDED, Wells Fargo, and Northeast Iowa Community Action.



To register, call 515-707-2787 or email leslie@icosc.com. The workshops are



WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBER

We would like to welcome new Chamber Board Member Lisa Miller to the board. Lisa is the new owner of the Edge FX Salon located on Walnut Street and will serve a 3-year term.

Lisa is replacing former board member Emily Ihlen who left the board in January. Lisa brings a lot of youthful energy to the board and we thank her for her willingness to serve!

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

	President
Jackie Loomis	Vice President
Deb Merrill	Secretary
Brian Reichter	Treasurer
Cheryl Meyer	
Justin Steinlage	
Jason Zander	
Brent Parker	
Lisa Miller	

VISTA'S VIEW by Ben Lewis

VISTA

Volunteers In Service To America

A lot has happened in the last month here in West Union. The streetscape project seems to be making a lot of headway through the controversy as residents start to get some factual answers to their concerns, funding becomes available, and spring approaches. We can talk about gardens and gardening without seeming like we are getting too far ahead of ourselves. Creative juices are starting to thaw out as a new long-arm quilting shop and retreat center edges closer to bringing some new faces and some artistic expression to downtown.

At the February 22 special council work session, council members and residents talked openly about the functionality of funding the streetscape, the necessity of the project in its form and function, and why it is an essential corporate purpose

for the city. My feeling after the meeting was that every concern that the project has generated, was met with an honest and factual answer. I would like to see the council schedule more work sessions, because the pressure is off to change minds, or influence city decisions, everybody could talk and listen to each other.

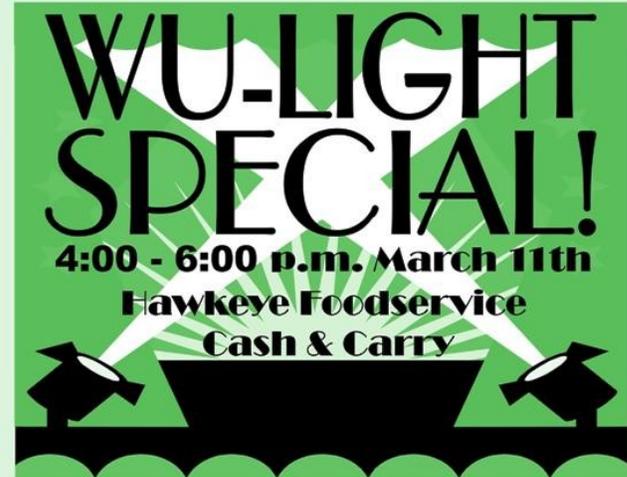
The snow is melting around the community garden, and soon it will be time to plant seeds outdoors. No doubt you have been enjoying the extra minutes of daylight that we receive every evening. CDF (Conservation Design Forum—the city's design firm for the streetscape project) is seeking your advice on which plants you would like to see along the streetscape. These gardens and flowers will help the public realm feel a lot more like a private space.

I'm looking for people who are interested in having a plot in the community garden this summer. Give me a call at the office if you are interested in learning more.

Spring is a great time to talk about the arts. A new business is opening downtown that caters to artistic souls. There are some concerts scheduled this summer to bring more people to our court house square. The Public Art Committee has also been working with a blacksmith from Decorah on some sculptures of wildflowers that might be placed around the downtown as sections of the street are finished. A decorated place has a way of feeling pleasant, and both the quilt shop and the public art sculptures will prove to everybody that West Union cares about its appearance.

CHAMBER AFTER FIVE IS MARCH 12

Unionland Feed & Supply is hosting our first Chamber After Five social event for 2010 on Friday, March 12th. Chamber After Five events allow Chamber members to network with other members and celebrate great accomplishments - which is exactly what we will be doing at Unionland as they will be celebrating 5 years in business! Time flies when you are having fun! Mark your calendar to join Gary, Justin, and the whole staff for food and fun all day long. Watch for additional specials and more details on the "This Week in WU" email blasts. If your business would like to host a Chamber After Five event, please call the Chamber office. We'd love to help you celebrate a business milestone, special event, or just increase your customer traffic counts!



120 East Elm, West Union

CHAMBER TO HOST REGIONAL CHAMBER TRAINING

The West Union Chamber Board of Directors will be hosting a regional training event for Chamber Board members in West Union on Friday, April 23rd. The event will feature Chamber Executive Steve Horman from Dubuque, who has over 20 years experience in chamber and community development and will speak on board orientation. The event will begin at 5:00 p.m. in the upper level meeting room at TAP'T Out Stein-n-Dine. The regional chamber group has been meeting for about 2 years to share best practices and plan for joint events that will benefit the entire region. The communities of Decorah, Cresco, Elkader, Waukon, Marquette, Strawberry Point, Osage and West Union have been regular participants. Hosting all of these chamber groups here in our community gives us a chance to share all the good work that our community is doing.

We would like to put together some small door prizes of goodies from the West Union businesses that will be in our "Shop West Union" green shopping bags. If your business would like to contribute, please call Robin at the Chamber office. Any chamber member is welcome to attend the event on April 23rd as well.

GREEN PILOT UPDATE



GRANT UPDATES: On February 24, 2010 the city was notified that their application to the Watershed Improvement Review Board (WIRB) was funded for \$500,000. This application was submitted with the assistance of the Fayette County Soil and Water Conservation Commission. Because parts of the streetscape project deal with storm water management, the project has direct impact on the Otter Creek Watershed area. Currently all of the storm water run-off through the downtown area flows into Otter Creek. These grant funds will assist with porous pavers and rain gardens that reduce the amount of run-off flowing into Otter Creek and eventually the Turkey River.

CAT PRESENTATION: The City of West Union will be making a presentation on March 10th to the Vision Iowa Board for their Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) application. The application for \$1,150,000 will help fund many components and amenities for the streetscape project.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY COMMUNITY BLOCK GRANT: The city plans to submit an application by mid-March to this energy efficient program to help cover the cost of new lighting for the downtown project. This funding source is available from the Office of Energy Independence.

The latest cost estimate for the street project is \$8,638,390. Here is a list of the grant funds that have been awarded to the City to date: (Please Note: ALL of these grant funds DO NOT have to be paid back.)

Community Development Block Grant	\$1,000,000	geothermal/amenities
Department of Transportation RISE	\$2,327,034	pavers/bioretention systems
IDNR I-Jobs	\$ 100,000	pavers/bioretention systems
Iowa Dept Land Stewardship—I-Jobs	\$ 500,000	pavers/bioretention systems
Iowa Great Places	\$ 160,000	engineering
Main Street Challenge Grant	\$ 100,000	geothermal
WIRB	\$ 500,000	pavers/bioretention systems
Fayette County	\$ 10,000	anything
Main Street West Union	\$ 10,995	amenities
Federal Award	\$ 500,000	geothermal
TOTAL GRANT FUNDS AWARDED	\$5,118,029	



Did you know?

Eight former Atwood employees are nearing the completion of their computer training at New Horizons Computer Learning Center. The Center, currently utilizing space at Country Hills, has been working with these students for several months to retrain them for new employment opportunities. Upon graduation at the end of April, these students will have achieved certification in Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint and Access 2007. If you have an office position opening soon, or would be interested in allowing some job-shadowing at your place of business, please contact Mitzi Wamboldt, Student Services Manager with New Horizons by phone at 319-294-9035 or email: mwamboldt@newhorizonscr.com.

Main Street Iowa Design Consultant Tim Reinders will be in West Union on Thursday, March 11th for free design consultation visits with any West Union business. This service is offered free because our community participates in the Main Street program. Mr. Reinders can offer assistance in designing new signage for your building, façade improvements, or interior improvements you might be thinking about. If you are interested in scheduling an appointment, please call the Main Street office at 422-3070 or email wuchamber@alpinecom.net.



You're invited to MSWU's "Divas & Dining"

second annual event!
This year enjoy West Union's version of Mardi Gras:

"WU-di Gras!"

- Where:** Tap't Out Stein-n-Dine
- When:** Thursday, March 25th, 2010
- Time:** 5:30 p.m.
- Cost:** \$15.00 covers Dinner & Entertainment, Cash bar available



Register by March 11th to be entered into a drawing for a free makeover for the event! Call 422-3070

MARCH 2010

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www.westunion.com

Check us out at www.westunion.com !

MARCH CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|
| 1 | WU City Council Meeting | 12 | Chamber After Five at Unionland Feed and Supply |
| 2 | Turkey River Rec Corridor meeting | | One Block Over Quilt Retreat |
| 3 | MSWU Organization Committee meeting | 13 | One Block Over Quilt Retreat |
| 4 | MSWU Promotions Committee meeting | 14 | One Block Over Quilt Retreat |
| 5 | Affordable Green Building Workshop | 15 | WU City Council Meeting |
| 6 | Green Building Basics for Home-owners Workshop | | School Board Meeting |
| | Echo Valley Archers Shoot at Fair grounds | 16 | West Union Public Art Committee Meeting |
| 8 | Lions Club Meeting | | MSWU Design Committee meeting |
| 9 | Chamber Board Meeting | | Main Street Winter Workshop |
| | MSWU Board Meeting | 17 | Main Street Winter Workshop |
| 10 | CAT Presentation to Vision Iowa Board | 18 | Barn Quilts of Fayette County Meeting |
| | MSWU Business Improvement Committee Meeting | 19 | Affordable Green Building Workshop |
| 11 | MS Iowa Design Consultant | 22 | Lions Club Meeting |
| | WU-Light Special at Hawkeye Foods | 23 | FCED Board Meeting at UIU |
| | | 25 | Divas & Dining "WU-di Gras" |
| | | 26 | NF School Carnival |
| | | 27 | NF FFA Banquet |

