



# CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NEWS

Another benefit of your West Union Chamber Membership!



**NOVEMBER 2009**

## SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER KICKS OFF NOVEMBER 4TH

The 2009 holiday punch card shopping promotion will kick off for West Union merchants on Wednesday, November 4th. This will be the first day merchants will begin handing out punch cards valued at \$150 to local shoppers. The goal of the punch card promotion is to encourage holiday shoppers to shop locally, and every time they shop in participating stores they can have their card punched. Completed cards should be brought to the Chamber office every week which enables customers the chance to win weekly gift certificates valued at \$25. These weekly prize drawings will encourage shoppers to return to local stores as they redeem their gift certificates. Shoppers will also have a chance to win one of two grand prizes—an iPod Touch and a Kitchen Aid Mixer along with a cookie gift basket. This year's theme, "Spreading Holiday Cheer" features a town-wide Cookie Walk during the

Holiday Open Houses scheduled for November 12, 13, & 14. All merchants are encouraged to offer a selected holiday cookie to shoppers during these three days. Customers can register in each participating store for their chance to win 4 dozen holiday cookies! Those merchants that provide a recipe to the Chamber office will have printed recipe cards featuring their selected cookie to hand out to customers. Shoppers that visit all the stores will have a full selection of holiday cookie recipes to try out at home this holiday season.

Group advertising opportunities include a billboard already up on Hwy 150 by the fairgrounds, newspaper ads in the local newspapers, and radio ads on the 4 Chamber-member stations—KVIK, KOEL, KDEC, and KCTN. Be sure to listen for the ads beginning the week of November 9th.

Wooden Gingerbread cut-outs and all POP materials including punch cards will be delivered to all participating merchants by Tuesday, November 3rd.

We hope that this year's event helps create some "sweet sales" for all our member businesses!



## HOLIDAY LIGHTING AT REC CENTER BEGINS NOVEMBER 27



Volunteers will once again be decorating the West Union Rec Park with lights this holiday season. The "Festival of Lights" will kick off the day after Thanksgiving, Friday, November 27th. Santa will be at the Rec Center at 5:00 p.m. to throw the switch illuminating the park with glowing holiday lights. Elementary school students that bring a canned food item for the Fayette County Food Bank will have their name entered for a chance to help Santa throw the switch. Cookies and hot cocoa will be served. Local businesses and residents are encouraged to "Adopt a Tree" and provide LED lighting for one of the trees in the park. The park will be lit every evening from the day after Thanksgiving until January 3, 2010. If you are interested in donating lights or assisting with this project, please contact Judy Roach at 422-3019 or Laurie Thompson, 422-3002, volunteer project coordinators.

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**LOOKING BACK . . .**



Wow, time does fly when you're having fun! November 20th is my last day of service as your AmeriCorps Green Pilot VISTA. Thank you so much for allowing me the opportunity!

What fun I've had getting to know you. Being involved with the workshops about water, lighting, rain barrels, community gardening, permeable paver, and green roofs . . . I really enjoyed those! And I learned so much from collaborating with experts in relative industries like the DNR, Soil and Water Conservation District, Holophane/AEL, Prairie Solutions, ER Systems, Moss Roofing, Hardscape Solutions, Borgert, Advanced Pavement Technology, Annie's Garden and Greens, the City of West Union, Iowa Department of Economic Development and all our local businesses.

Working with the middle school kids to build their rain garden was such a blast!

They are eager and open to the green initiatives. I will not forget the experience working with science teacher Sean Singewald and his four classes planning, digging, and planting their rain garden.

A huge big thanks to all the volunteers I worked with! Whether we were gathering shopper's opinions, or feeding the Conservation Corp, it has been exciting for me to be involved with painting West Union beautiful and discovering market opportunities that will expand, develop, and grow the community's economy. And speaking of surveys, I cannot forget the fun we had trying back-in-parking and learning everyone's opinion of it!

Getting to know everyone on the public art committee really has been fun! I learned so much, gained a greater appreciation for public art and enjoyed getting wrapped up in the creative decision making processes.

Oh, and I won't forget the Fayette County Fair. Both the VISTA and the Main Street booths offered the opportunity to visit with so many people. Then at the Iowa State Fair, I got to share all that is great about West Union, eat interesting fair food (like chocolate covered bacon and deep fried Snickers), and lose it all on the midway rides.

Initially, I had hoped that my volunteering experience would increase green practices in the community and provide networking opportunities. I feel fortunate to have gained so much more. It has been an awesome experience that I look back at with fond memories and new friendships.

Thank you!!

*Michelle Zander, VISTA*

**MARKET ANALYSIS REPORT NOVEMBER 17TH**

The Chamber Board and Main Street Board members invite all business owners to an informative luncheon on Tuesday, November 17th at TAP'T Out Stein-n-Dine beginning at 11:30 a.m. Jim Thompson, Main Street Iowa Business Improvement Specialist and Jay Schlinsog, consultant with Downtown Professionals Network will review and discuss study findings from the business and customer surveys done in August. The meeting will also identify and build consensus on "first steps" for implementation in each of the four major work areas—Organization, Promotion, Business Improvement, and Design. Lunch will be provided and you are asked to please RSVP to the Chamber office at 422-3070 so we can prepare enough food.



**"FALL ON THE COURT HOUSE SQUARE" PAINTING NOW AVAILABLE**



Speltz Studio of Wildlife from Armstrong, Iowa has been commissioned to paint the picturesque Court House Square as a fundraising project for Main Street West Union. Limited edition signed and numbered lithographs are available for sale through November 30th. The print can be viewed at the following locations: Haven Electronics, Lauer & Lauer Insurance, Kerndt Brothers Savings Bank, First National Bank, Saboe Jewelry, The Fayette County Union, TAP'T Out Stein n Dine, Old Mill Floral, Woodard Insurance, City Hall or the Chamber/Main Street Office. The prints can be personalized and framed, and will be delivered in mid-December just in time for Christmas. They would make lovely gifts for family, friends, or employees. Please contact any of the above locations for more information.

**GREEN PILOT UPDATE**



**\$1 Million CDBG Grant Award:** The City of West Union has been awarded \$1 million through the Federal Community Development Block Grant program for the proposed streetscape project. The award is for the geothermal system and the snow/ice melt system. The funding comes from the Downtown Revitalization Fund and the Community Sustainability program.

**SHARED GEOTHERMAL LOOP SYSTEM:** As a part of the street reconstruction project, the City is hoping to install a district-wide geothermal heating and cooling system and a snow and ice melt system for downtown businesses. The cost for constructing both systems will be funded by state and federal grants. If a property owner elects to connect to the district heating/cooling system, it will replace their natural gas service for winter heating needs. It will also provide cooling for their building in the summer. Property owners may also choose to keep their natural gas-fueled heating and existing cooling systems if they wish. If a property owner chooses to use the system they will need to install a geothermal heat pump in their building. A contractor will need to make an analysis of the building's heating and cooling needs and some reconfiguring of the building's ductwork may be required. These are costs that will be borne by property owners. Private property owners that install heat pumps are eligible for a REAP grant from the USDA that covers up to 25% of installation costs. In addition, Main Street West Union has an Energy Efficiency Grant program that offers up to \$2,000 per customer in grants and low-interest loans. A one-time rebate from Alliant Energy is also available that amounts to approximately \$300 per ton of capacity. Public agencies located within the project area can take advantage of the State's Energy Bank program to finance their installation costs. All downtown property owners have received basic information about the proposed system, and to date over 74,000 sq. ft. of downtown buildings have indicated interest in the system. Building owners are encouraged to contact Gage & Gage Plumbing & Heating or any other geothermal installer for more detailed information about their specific building. Watch for additional public meetings that are being scheduled to ask questions and learn more about how this system works, what costs are involved, and funding sources available to help small business owners.

**HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSES**

Town-wide holiday open houses are scheduled for November 12, 13 & 14 in West Union. All businesses are encouraged to have holiday cookies for customers to enjoy as they shop or do business these three days. Businesses who participate in the Holiday Punch Card event will have customers register for their chance to win 4 dozen holiday cookies! We're spreading holiday cheer!

**NF PRESENTS WIZARD OF OZ**

The North Fayette Music Department will be presenting "The Wizard of Oz" at the NF PAC on November 13, 14, & 15. Over 100 students make up the cast for the production. Tickets are now on sale at the high school office. For more information please call 422-3852.



**GOOGLE ANALYTICS WORKSHOP OFFERED**

Jason Trout is back for another workshop sponsored by FCED and NIBN! Learn how to use Google and other search engines to generate additional revenue for your business. The workshop will cover specific strategies that will drive more traffic to your website and ultimately lead to greater profitability. The workshop is FREE and will be held on Thursday, November 5th, at Upper Iowa University in the Betty Andres Center, Room 202, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Please register by calling 800-477-5073.

**DIABETES RISK APPRAISAL**

Palmer Lutheran Health Center is hosting a Diabetes Risk Appraisal on Tuesday, November 3rd from 6:30—8:30 a.m. In the Boeke/Freed Education Center in the lower level of the hospital. The event is FREE and open to the public. Find out if YOU are at risk! For more information, please contact Jenni Elsbernd at 422-3811.

**COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE**

Palmer Lutheran Hospital Auxiliary is sponsoring the West Union Community Blood Drive on Wednesday, November 4th. The drive will be held at Echo Valley Banquet Center, 10201 Harding Road/Hwy 18 from 12:30 p.m.—5:30 p.m. You can schedule your appointment online at [www.bloodcenterofiowa.org](http://www.bloodcenterofiowa.org) or call The Blood Center of Iowa at 800-287-4903.



**Yard Waste Collection Day is Monday, November 9th!**

All items should be in an approved bag and at the curb by 8:00 a.m.

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«Name»  
«Contact Information»  
«Street Address»  
«City», «State» «Zip»

Check us out at [www.westunion.com](http://www.westunion.com) !

## NOVEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- |   |  |                                     |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Lions Club Pancake Breakfast            | 9 Yard Waste Pick-up Day                   | 21 PSAS Craft Show at NFHS          |
| 2 City Council Meeting                    | Lions Club Meeting                         | 23 Lions Club Meeting               |
| NF Football Play-off game                 | 10 Chamber Board Meeting                   | 26 Happy Thanksgiving               |
| 3 Fayette County Tourism meeting          | NIBN Meeting in Oelwein                    | 27 Festival of Lights at Rec Center |
| Barn Quilt painting night                 | MSWU Board Meeting                         | 30 Final day to order "Fall on the  |
| MSWU Business Improvement Committee       | 11 Fayette County Local Housing Trust Fund | Court House Square" print           |
| 4 Holiday Punch Cards begin               | WU Planning & Zoning Committee             |                                     |
| MSIA Fall Conference—Spencer              | 12 Holiday Open Houses                     |                                     |
| MSWU Organization Committee               | 13 Holiday Open Houses                     |                                     |
| Blood Drive at Echo Valley Banquet Center | Barn Quilts Bake Sale                      |                                     |
| WU Planning & Zoning Meeting              | Wizard of Oz at NF PAC                     |                                     |
| 5 Barn Quilts Board Meeting               | 14 Holiday Open Houses                     |                                     |
| MSIA Fall Conference—Spencer              | Wizard of Oz at NF PAC                     |                                     |
| Google Workshop with Jason Trout          | 15 Wizard of Oz at NF PAC                  |                                     |
| 6 Football Quarter Finals                 | 16 City Council Meeting                    |                                     |
| Iowa Great Places Committee Meeting       | NF School Board Meeting                    |                                     |
|   | 17 Market Analysis Lunch Meeting           |                                     |
|   | MSWU Design Committee                      |                                     |

