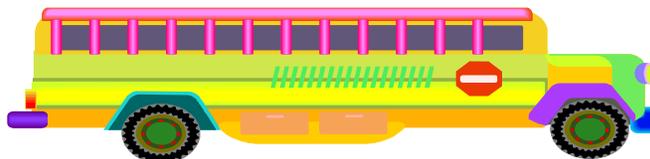




# CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NEWS

Another benefit of your West Union Chamber Membership!



**AUGUST 2009**

## WEST UNION RECEIVES GREAT PLACES GRANT

West Union has been notified that they have received an Iowa Great Places grant in the amount of \$160,000. The grant was submitted to assist with the engineering costs for the proposed streetscape project. West Union became a Great Place community in 2008 and was eligible to apply for funding for the first time this year. The city will be able to apply for additional funding in 2010 and 2011.

The city has also received word that an additional \$15,000 has been set aside to assist with grant writing for the streetscape project. The Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED) previously awarded the city \$20,000 to help pay a grant writer to assist the city with submitting grant applications to help secure outside funding for the project. That amount has now been raised to \$35,000. IDIED has already invested over \$300,000 in the proposed streetscape

project and the city has invested \$70,000.

To date, 5 grant applications have been submitted for the city totaling more than \$8 million dollars. They include:

Department of Energy—\$2,129,699

State Revolving Loan Fund—\$500,000

I-Jobs—\$5,000,000

EPA Clean Climate Showcase—\$500,000

Iowa Department of Land Stewardship (IDALS) - \$500,000

Additional applications will be submitted in the near future for the State of Iowa Community Development Block Grant, Community Attraction & Tourism Grant (CAT), and several other America's Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA—Stimulus Funding) programs.

The city should know by early fall which of the submitted grants have received funding. The goal is to secure as much outside funding as possible to help with the project. Many of the ARRA-Stimulus funding applications are due this fall and those funding sources will not be available after that time. Nearly \$445 million will be coming to the state of Iowa. We want to make sure that some of those funds come to West Union.

The Chamber staff has also prepared information regarding how the general obligation bonds would affect property taxes for both commercial and residential property owners. If you would like a copy, please contact Robin or Karla at 422-3070.



## ENERGY GRANT FUNDING STILL AVAILABLE

Funding is still available through the Main Street West Union Energy Efficiency Grant Program. 10 West Union businesses have already applied to the program which provides rebates up to \$1500 for new energy efficient equipment installed in a local business. Rebates apply to new windows, doors, light-

ing, furnaces, or equipment such as new fryers or coolers. Information about the program is available on the website or you can pick up information and a rebate form in the Chamber/Main Street office. Over \$25,000 is still available, so don't delay. You can also receive rebates from Alliant Energy or Black Hills Energy

for many of the items making it a great time to think about improvements that will help reduce your bottom line.



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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<b>Cheryl Meyer</b>	<b>President</b>
<b>Emily Ihlen</b>	<b>Vice President</b>
<b>Deb Merrill</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
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<b>Jackie Loomis</b>	
<b>Justin Steinlage</b>	
<b>Jason Zander</b>	
<b>Robin Bostrom</b>	<b>Executive Director</b>



# VISTA

Volunteers In Service To America

## PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE BEGINS WORK

As design work has continued over the summer on the streetscape project, the inclusion of public art inspired the creation of the Public Art Committee here in West Union. An invitation was made to local artists, city staff, engineers, and art teachers to come together to apply their artistic talents to the incorporation of artistic elements into the landscape of West Union. The group held their first meeting in April, and since that time has been working to learn all they can about public art—what is it and how can it be used in our city?

To help guide the committee, Conservation Design Forum arranged an evening

with artist/consultant Margo Mazer. She shared examples of how public art might be used in West Union and offered suggestions on how artistic elements might emulate West Union's original prairie knob and the surrounding expansive beauty.

The group also took a field trip to view public art in the Waterloo/Cedar Falls area. They toured the UNI campus and downtown Cedar Falls.

Cammie Sculley, Waterloo Center for the Arts, shared plans for their art projects and showed us examples of integrated public art in downtown Waterloo.

If you are interested in learning more, the next Public Art Committee meeting will be held at the Chamber/Main Street office on August 27 at 5:30 p.m.

Michelle Zander, AmeriCorp VISTA

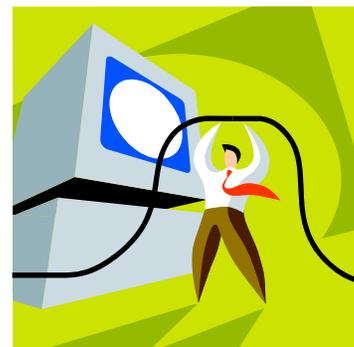
*The Chamber would like to thank Michelle for all the work she did to coordinate the recent Paint West Union Beautiful project!!*

*Way to go Michelle!! The Chamber building looks GREAT!!*

## FACEBOOK WORKSHOP OFFERED ON AUGUST 19TH

Fayette County Economic Development, in partnership with Northeast Iowa Business Network, is sponsoring a FREE Facebook Workshop at the Oelwein Chamber office on August 19th at 10:00 a.m. Facebook is a social networking revolution and is not just for teenagers anymore! It is an easy, free way to reach out to people and foster an online community. In these tough economic times, many businesses are using social media sites as a way to reach out to customers. Think of all the ways your business or organization could benefit from connecting to Facebook's rapidly growing user base. All it takes is learning the basics of how to use it.

In the workshop, NIBN interns will break down the Facebook process into simple, manageable steps. Even if you have never used Facebook before, by the end of the workshop you will have a Facebook page set up as well as the skills necessary to successfully maintain and market your page. If you'd like to bring a laptop along, please do, but you can still learn enough to easily start an account without one. To reserve a spot for the workshop, please contact the OCAD office at 319-283-1105 or [sfalb@alpinecom.net](mailto:sfalb@alpinecom.net).



## MARKET ANALYSIS SURVEYS BEGIN AUGUST 24TH

The next phase of the Market Analysis project for West Union will begin the week of August 24. Main Street West Union volunteers will begin distributing surveys for both businesses and customers. Main Street West Union was selected to participate in the study being conducted by Main Street Iowa and the Downtown Professionals Network. The study will gather information that will assist the city in determining how to help existing businesses expand as well as identify what types of new businesses the community needs and can support.

All businesses will receive a business survey to complete during the week of August 24-28th. The 3-page survey will gather information about local businesses and what types of programs and incentives local business owners would like to see offered. Volunteers will also be at several retail and service locations around town asking customers to complete a survey as well. 400 customer surveys are required for the study. The survey will help determine what zip codes shoppers come from, what types of services they shop for and how often they shop here. Demographic information is also included on the survey. The 2-page survey is very quick and easy to complete and will be a valuable tool in developing programs for new and existing business.

Both of the surveys will help establish a good baseline of information from which to build. Many Chamber members have expressed a concern that more needs to be done in recruiting new businesses to the area. This information will help the city analyze what is needed and be able to market more effectively towards businesses that would be a good fit for our area. We hope that all business owners will take a few minutes to complete the short survey. All surveys need to be completed by September 7th and a final report will be made available in November.

If you have questions about the survey, please contact the Main Street Office or survey chairman, Dick Woodard.



Welcome new Chamber Board member Jason Zander! Jason is a Vice President at Kerndt Brothers Savings Bank and is replacing Kristine Krivachek on the board. Kristine has taken a new position with Upper Iowa University and we wish her all the best. Jason has a wealth of experience in community projects and events including serving on many boards in his previous community. We welcome Jason to the board and thank him for giving of his time and expertise to his "new" community, West Union!

## CHAMBER BUILDING GETS A FACELIFT!

Thanks to work of the Conservation Corps and paint from the Paint West Union Beautiful Program, the Chamber Office received a much needed facelift in July. Several areas of rotten wood were removed and replaced and a fresh coat of paint was applied. A new front door is on order and updated signs will soon complete the project. Our AmeriCorp VISTA volunteer Michelle Zander coordinated this project that also benefitted several other businesses including TAP'T Out Stein-n-Dine, Spirits & Such, and the Fayette County Historical Society. The Fayette County Union, Burnham & Wood Funeral Home, NAPA Auto Parts, and the Bank Block buildings also received free paint and we look forward to seeing their improvements in the near future.



main street west union presents the Third Annual:

•music• •food• •friends•  
**WU•STOCK**  
 AUGUST 29th, 2009  
 downtown west union

# WU•hoo!!

- ♥ Dessel Roach Furniture & Floors ♥
- ♥ Fayette County Union ♥
- ♥ First National Bank ♥
- ♥ Kerndt Brothers Savings Bank ♥
- ♥ Lauer & Lauer Insurance ♥
- ♥ Moss Service Center ♥
- ♥ Oelwein Daily Register ♥
- ♥ WU Chamber of Commerce ♥

# We WUV WU!

- ♥ Cline Services ♥
- ♥ Heying Firms ♥
- ♥ NAPA Auto Parts ♥
- ♥ Steege Pharmacy ♥

# Partners:

- ♥ Barrel Drive-In ♥
- ♥ Baumler Implements ♥
- ♥ Bemiss Distributing ♥
- ♥ Black Hills Energy ♥
- ♥ Farm Bureau Financial ♥
- ♥ Fauser Energy Services ♥
- ♥ Haven Electronics ♥
- ♥ Lilac Lanes ♥
- ♥ McJ's Embroidery ♥
- ♥ Northeast Iowa Realty & Appraisal ♥
- ♥ Northern Rent-All ♥
- ♥ TeKippe Engineering ♥

**Bubba's  
BBQ**

extreme slide!

mini-golf!

cold drinks!

groovy photo ops!

**BRAWU Bike Ride: 8:30 a.m.**

**Beanbag Tournament: 12:30**

**C.E.W. Wrestling Show: 2:30-4:30**

**Swing Crew: 4:30-7:30**

**Bad habits: 7:30-11:00**

**music!**



**Bingo!**  
volleyball

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Email: wuchamber@alpinecom.net  
www.westunion.com

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

## AUGUST CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 13 Barn Quilts of Fayette County<br>Circus in Fayette  | 26 IDED Downtown Summit—Ames<br>Scenic Byways Conference—<br>Denver |
| 14 Watermelon Days—Fayette   | 27 Regional Chamber Meeting—<br>Monona                              |
| 15 Watermelon Days—Fayette   | 29 WU STOCK!!   |
| 17 City Council Meeting  |   |
| 18 FCED Meeting<br>MSWU Design Committee Meeting   |   |
| 19 First Day of School for NF<br>Fayette County Local Housing Trust<br>Fund Meeting<br>MSWU Market Analysis Training |   |
| 20 MSWU at Iowa State Fair<br>Food & Fitness Meeting   |   |
| 21 WUIDC Meeting   |   |
| 24 Fayette County Community Founda-<br>tion Meeting<br>Scenic Byways Conference—<br>Denver                           |   |
| 25 IDED Downtown Summit—Ames<br>Scenic Byways Conference—<br>Denver  |   |



## OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESSES...

**Check out these financial assistance  
programs available to West Union  
businesses:**

Energy Efficiency Grant Program—  
*Rebates for installing selected energy effi-  
cient equipment.*

MSWU Façade Grant Program—  
*Thinking about new windows, doors, signs,  
or a new paint job? Check out this grant!*

Below Market Interest Rate Loan Program—  
*Special loan program available from our  
local banks for approved physical improve-  
ment projects in West Union.*

Fayette County Revolving Loan Fund—  
*Micro loan fund available for a wide range  
of uses available to any business in Fayette  
County.*

Contact the Chamber office for more info on  
any of these financial programs!