

# Johnston (Station) Historical Society

Volume 18, Issue 2

Newsletter

May 2010

## President's Column

We are sorry about the need to close the Museum the month of April but it was necessary in order to refinish the floors. They now look good and are a lot easier to keep clean. The Museum is now open on Monday from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. and Tuesday through Friday from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. You can take advantage of these hours to visit the Museum and browse or have a guided tour. We welcome anyone that has an interest in the history of Johnston. There are several rooms with displays depicting our history. Among them are the school room, military room, Johnston business room, two early history rooms and a research room. In the research room you will find a wealth of information on the history of Johnston.



## Johnston Park Named for Ray Schleih

The Johnston City Council recently named the park on Northwest 55th Avenue, formerly Brennan Drive, Ray Schleih Park. This tribute honors the many accomplishments and contributions made by Schleih, a 93 year old World War II veteran and one-time Johnston Citizen of the Year.

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Feature Story
- 2 Museum Information
- 3 Sarah Brown Wessling
- 4 Johnston Schools
- 5 Obituaries and City News
- 6 Mark Your Calendars

Schleih graduated from Johnston High School in 1935. The park now bearing his name is located near where Schleih grew up and where he later built the house in which he and his family lived for many years. Schleih sold his Northwest 55th Street home a few years ago and now lives in the Bishop Drum Retirement Center in Johnston.

The flowers in the gardens around the museum are up and in wonderful shape thanks to Jackie Reineke, Carla Johns and Jan Jensen. They have planted eight bittersweet plants around the windmill. Carla Johns and the city have provided mulch for the flower beds.

The April open house was well attended and everyone commented on the improvement of the floors. Cake and beverages were served. In May the "Bands in the Barn" fundraiser was held. The Johnston Station Jazz Band furnished the music and played tunes from the big band period. We hope to make this an annual event. I thank everyone who supported these events.

Dick Hyde, Board President

### **Volunteers Needed**

In order to continue to keep the museum open Monday through Friday we need more volunteers. We have the museum open on Monday evening from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. and Tuesday through Friday from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. The volunteers are needed to help around the museum and to give tours to visitors. If you can help please contact Dick Hyde at 515-331-6078 or at JSHS@Q.COM

## **Community Betterment Grant**

The Johnston Station Historical Society requested and received a Polk County Community Betterment Grant in the amount of \$2,500. This grant will be used to help to preserve the artifacts in the Museum for future generations. Thanks to Sharon Hyde and Jan Jensen for all their hard work to make this possible. We also would like to thank the Polk County Board of Supervisors and E.J. Giovannetti, Supervisor for the Johnston area.

### **Johnston History Quiz**

- 1. Merle Hay Road was closed for widening**
  - A. May 1956**
  - B. June 1960**
  - C. September 1982**
  
- 2. Ground broken for Merle Hay Mall**
  - A. December 1958**
  - B. February 1958**
  - C. June 1965**

Answers are on page 6

## Johnston Teacher Named National Teacher of the Year

Sarah Brown Wessling, a Johnston High School teacher, was recognized at a White House reception on April 29th by President Barack Obama as the 2010 National Teacher of the year. She was later recognized in Johnston at a public celebration on May 6th. Wessling is only the second Iowa teacher selected as the nation's top teacher since the recognition program began in 1952.

Wessling is a graduate of Winterset High School and Iowa State University. She is the chairwoman of the English Department at Johnston High School. She was first named Iowa Teacher of the Year and went on to compete along with 50 other contestants for the national award.

Claire Nagel, a student in Wessling's Advanced Placement English class credited Wessling with the ability to inspire and stated, "No matter what you want to learn about, she finds a way for you to learn about it through literature."

Wessling will spend the next year as a full-time national and international spokeswoman for education. According to Wessling, one of the ironies of being National Teacher of the year is that she will need to spend so much time away from actually teaching. But the flip side she said is that she will get to tell the rest of the county about a great place called Iowa. "I am truly a product of Iowa education," Wessling said. "I am so proud to take the accumulation of that experience and share it with a wider audience."

Sarah Wessling with President Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan



## Johnston Schools

On Sunday, May 30th members of the Johnston High School class of 2010 joined together at Drake University's Knapp Center for a final good-bye. The class of 2010 had 395 members. This is the biggest graduating class so far and future classes will be even bigger as the 2011 class has well over 400 students. Congratulations to the 2010 Johnston High School graduating class!



### Why were we late?

Sorry we are so late with the May newsletter. We were closed the month of April so we could get the floors refinished. In the process we didn't have our computer system up and running. This put us behind in working on the newsletter. Now the floors are done and we look forward to getting back to normal. Thank you for your patience and continued support.

## Obituaries

Obituaries are compiled by Dick Tarlton. This is a known list of deaths that Dick could obtain. If anyone knows of others please let Dick know. Contact us by mail at 6161 Northglenn Dr., Johnston, IA 50131; by email: [JSHS@Q.COM](mailto:JSHS@Q.COM); or by phone 515-331-0687. Over 700 Johnston School related obituaries are now on file at the Museum.

| Name                       | Class | Date of Death |
|----------------------------|-------|---------------|
| Ethel Conn                 | 1926  | 5-14-10       |
| Sharon Caruthers Holdelson | 1959  | 3-22-10       |
| Faye Marie Aschan-Cox      | 2010  | 3-18-10       |

## City News

Johnston Green Days will be held Thursday June 17th through Sunday June 20th. The Museum will be open on Friday, June 18th from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. and on Saturday the 19th from noon until 5 p.m. On Saturday the 19th we will have the Johnston Station Jazz Band perform on the south lawn at noon. Bring your chairs and enjoy an afternoon of the big band sounds. Hot dogs, walking tacos, and water will be sold both Friday and Saturday. Saturday morning we will be in the parade. Those who wish to join us can meet at the Johnston Fire Department (6015 NW 62nd Ave) at 8 a.m. for breakfast before the parade or you can meet us at 9 a.m. at the Pioneer south drive. We will be spot number #74. Thank you to Hyde Mowing for providing the truck and trailer for our parade entry.

## Museum Porches Need Repair

The floors of both the front and side porches are showing signs of rotting and there are several holes in the floor. The Board has decided to replace the old wood with the new composite decking. The new composite comes in a gray color, will be slip resistant, and will not need constant care and upkeep. The cost of the material is more expensive than wood so we are asking for donations for this project. Any contributions for this project may be sent to the Johnston Historical Society with a notation "Porch Project".

## Mark Your Calendars

Friday, June 18th: Open house at the Museum from 2 p.m. until 7 p.m.

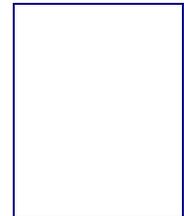
Saturday, June 19th: Open house at the Museum from noon until 5 p.m. and a band concert from noon until 2 p.m. featuring the big band sound of the Johnston Station Jazz Band.

Monday, July 12th: Tour of the Camp Dodge Gold Star Museum at 6 p.m. We will meet at the Museum at 5:30 p.m. and leave at 5:45 p.m. After the tour we will return to the Museum for a dessert meeting.

### Answers to history quiz

1. A
2. B

Johnston (Station) Historical Society  
6161 Northglenn Dr  
Johnston, IA 50131



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED