

# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

A Quarterly Update From Vinton Unlimited

June 2015

## Upcoming Events

**Thursday, July 9**

Thursday Evening Concert Series - Zach Freedom Performing @ Celebration Park

**Friday, July 10**

Annual VU Golf Tournament

**Saturday, July 18**

4th Street Car Cruise

**July 22-26**

Benton County Fair

**Thursday, July 23**

RAGBRAI rolls thru Vinton

**July 31, August 1 & 2**

2nd Annual Mary Ingalls Pageant

**Thursday, August 6**

Thursday Evening Concert Series - Strait Run Performing @ Celebration Park

**August 28 & 29**

Boomtown

**Saturday, August 29**

Boom-Fest

## From the Director Desk

There is never a dull moment around the office, that's for sure! Summer has come and brought projects and opportunities galore!

We have wrapped up the Community Job Fair and the Taste of Vinton.

We were pleased with the results of the Job Fair and look forward to making some changes for 2016. The Taste of Vinton was a victim of damp, wet, windy weather. Turnout was average but the Craig Erickson Band in Celebration Park was wonderful! Hopefully we can bring this group back for another event! The Business Promotions committee is considering moving the Taste of Vinton to the fall, possibly September.

RAGBRAI is just around the corner on July 23. We have a very unique opportunity to show off our community to 10,000+ people in one day! Various committees have been very hard to plan everything that the day requires. Volunteers are still welcome!

The Membership committee has been busy evaluating the dues and membership structure. The structure hasn't changed in over 5 years so we decided it was time to take a closer look. We looked at many other Iowa communities to come up with the best fit for Vinton businesses and residents. We decided it was best to move away from a model based on the number of employees and move to a model based on benefits. More information to come in the fall.

I have been continuing to work with a few local businesses to align them with some resources to help ensure they are on the right track. I have been working with 2 perspective businesses as well. New business in town is always exciting!

Please consider joining us for the first night of the summer concert series on Thursday, July 9. Zach Freedom will be performing in Celebration Park at 6:30pm with Hesson Properties providing free hot dogs, chips & water while supplies last. Stop at the Farmers Market, grab a hot dog and relax in your lawn chair!

As always, my office door is always open. Stop by to say hello!

Melissa Schwan, Director  
melissa@vintonia.org  
472-3955

## Board of Directors

Kristi Storey ('17)  
President

Teresa Meyer ('15)  
Vice President

Kathy Tranel ('16)  
Secretary

Jon Clingman ('15)

Jessy Levy ('15)

Robin Martin ('16)

Bob Koenigsfeld ('16)

Dan LaGrange ('16)

Matt Johnson ('17)

Mona Garwood ('17)

Chris Ward  
City Representative

All Board of Director meetings are held at 6:30am at Windsor Manor. Members are always welcome to attend.



## Business Spotlight: Nelson Furniture

By Ben Hyland

"When we started out in the summer of 1976, we didn't have two nickels to rub together," said Bill White, longtime co-owner of Nelson's Furniture in downtown Vinton. "I was 22 and Jane was 19... we didn't know what we were getting ourselves into." But little did the newly married couple who had just purchased a furniture business from Bob Nelson know, this would be the start of a thriving mom-and-pop shop that ultimately lead them into a career spanning four decades.

Inside the iconic and well-maintained downtown three-floor showroom that has serviced Vinton's home furnishing needs for nearly forty years, Bill reflected on his business, his town, and his loyal customers that have continually patronized his store over the years.

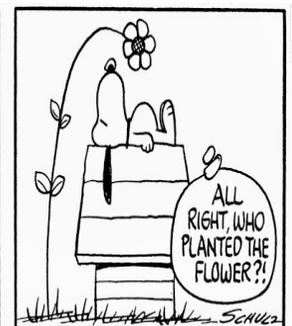
"A lot has changed over the years," said Bill, but much about Vinton remains the same as it did in 1976. "We've lost and gained some stores downtown; J.C. Penney's is gone and so are some other small retail places, but that's just small towns these days."

Bill credits his loyal customers with keeping his business flourishing throughout his and Jane's career, and was incredibly appreciative of the support from the community they have received. "We have fourth-generation customers coming into the store and buying furniture. It's unbelievable, and I can't thank them enough." In addition to the people of Vinton, he expressed his gratitude for the communities around his town such as Dysart, Van Horne, and La Porte City, saying that they were supportive of his small business as well. "Whether they spent \$50 or \$5000, it meant a lot to me."

While the Whites haven't quite decided how they will be spending their retirement, Bill is certain that he and Jane will keep the full schedules they have maintained throughout their lives. "I'll be in and out all of the time helping the new building owner with his plans. "We'll be around in Vinton, we'll stay busy."

Bill and Jane White, Vinton Unlimited members and owners of Nelson Furniture, are retiring after 39 years in business.

Are you interested in having your business 'in the spotlight' in upcoming editions of Community Connection? If so, contact the VU office.



## Vinton Unlimited Committee Schedule

Each VU member is welcomed and *encouraged* to join one of our five committees  
Contact the VU Office for more information and details

**Community Affairs** - 1st Thursday of each month - Noon @ City Hall

**Business Promotions** - 1st Friday of each month - Noon @ City Hall

**Destination Vinton** - As needed @ Iowa Land Management

**Membership** - 3rd Monday of each month - 4:00pm @ City Hall

**Industry & Business Development (BOG)** - 3rd Wednesday of each month - 6:30pm @ City Hall

Looking to get involved? Join a committee!