

A Day At Newton, IA

By Chris McShane

*"Every gun that is made,
every warship launched,
every rocket fired signifies, in
the final sense, a theft from
those who hunger and are not
fed, those who are cold and
are not clothed, the world in
arms is not spending money
alone. It is spending the
sweat of its laborers, the geni-
us of its scientists, the hopes
of its children...this is not a
way of life at all in any true
sense. Under the cloud of
threatening war, it is human-
ity hanging from a cross of
fire."*

These are the words of President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

In the spring of 1953, President Eisenhower and his wife Mamie were at the National Plowing Contest near Newton, Iowa. I had been given, one of my six total, clearances by the Secret Service in order to be a member of the news entourage that followed the President there. A news entourage for Presidents and Presidential candidates was a long line of Greyhound buses. In the years to follow, I was privileged to travel with Eisenhower also, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, and Khrushchev. At that time, I worked for the Western Union Telegraph Company as a teletype operator. I worked in Marshalltown for 5 years and 2 years in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. My job that day in Newton was to relay news press releases or send them via our teletype system to the various waiting, country, and worldwide media.

Back when elections were exciting there were press tents filled with long tables full of reporters with typewriters. When the writer would yell PRESS, a runner would grab their sheet, be it for UP, AP, UNP, N.Y. Times, or

perhaps local newspapers, and run it to the teletype operators. Our jobs alternated between runner and teletype operator.

In our main offices, we would type on a keyboard, device called a perforator; produce a tape about an inch wide, which was punched with holes that represented the letters and characters. The tapes were then fed into a transmitting machine that sent the messages out over the wire at our switching offices. I did this sort of work for Western Union for seven years. Eventually, automation came in the form of the FAX machines. We were 'down sized'.

There is more to my story, however. To show you how small the world is, read on.

In 1960, I married this handsome Naval Officer, Jim. At one point in his career, he served aboard the Flag Ship, USS Greenwich Bay in the Persian Gulf. Her officers and crew lovingly referred her to as the "Green Witch". When they were back in port, his Captain had us up to his cabin for dinner one evening. He told us he had been Ike's private pilot and flew air force one and was at Newton and Marion when I was. It seems one of my clearances was made when Jim was in the Gulf. The Captain had read my record of clearances and learned this. Jim was also in communications in the Navy and used the same machines I did; however, his work was top secret and he coded and decoded messages.

As for me, elections are now all computers and television, the excitement is NOT the same... Anyway, these are great memories for little ole farm girl from N.W. Iowa. This is NOT a brag just sharing thoughts --Chris McShane (nee, Helen Lorraine Christoffer "Chris")



"I had been given...clearance by the Secret Service...to be in the news entourage for the president."



Local, State and National Elections - 2008

By Karen Pratte

Democrats have opportunities to win elections at all levels in 2008. Here is a listing of open seats and candidates.

ALLAMAKEE COUNTY

Auditor

Mary O'Neill will not seek re-election.

Supervisor

Bill Clark has resigned and a replacement will be appointed or elected to complete Bill's term.

STATE OF IOWA

House District 16 and Senate District 8 represent Allamakee County.

State House of Representative - District 16

To date, **John Beard**, **John Franzen**, and **Tom Hansen** all from Winneshiek County will be running in a June 3, 2008 Democratic Pri-

mary to determine who will be the Democratic candidate opposing Republican Randy Schissel of Decorah.

State Senate - District 8

Mary Jo Wilhelm of Howard County will be running against Republican Mark Zieman.

US CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 4

Allamakee County is in this district.

William Meyers from Humboldt, has declared his candidacy.

Kurt Meyer from St. Ansgar will soon declare his candidacy.

Republican Tom Latham is currently representing Allamakee in Congress.

US SENATE

Democratic **Senator Tom Harkin** is seeking re-election.

Letter From Mary Jo Wilhelm Candidate for State Senate District 8

December 11, 2007

This is an exciting time for Democrats across Iowa to be involved in the process of the caucus. I would like to take this time to introduce myself. I am Mary Jo Wilhelm and I am running for Iowa Senate in District 8. I live in Cresco with my husband, Michael, of 24 years. We have two sons, Ben and Alex, who are both attending college. Mike works at a local factory, Donaldson's, and has been there for 30 years. I have served as a Howard County Supervisor for the past 11 years. Before that I worked at the local medical clinic and also as an EMT at the hospital. I have found much gratitude in helping others by being a public servant here in Howard County and now would like to continue serving the people of the area in Des Moines.

If elected I would take to Des Moines the concerns that I have about:

- Health care and programs for seniors and young families.
- With two children in college I understand that we need affordable schools that will minimize college debt
- Creating quality, good paying jobs in rural Iowa
- Quality education with quality teachers

I will meet with you, the citizens of District 8, to talk about these concerns and any other concerns and suggestions that you may have. Please feel free to call me at home if I miss you at the door.

I applaud you for partaking in tonight's caucus.

Thank you,

Mary Jo Wilhelm
Candidate for State Senate

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