

# Earlham Echo



April 23, 2018

Volume 2 No. 13

Your Hometown Newspaper since 1890

earlhamecho@gmail.com

\$1.00

## Students Compete in Invent Competition

Earlham Community Schools had a record number of students who qualified for the Invent Iowa State Competition in Coralville. We had 16 students who worked on 14 inventions. The students were very clever and creative. They produced interesting models of their inventions. The students had to present their inventions to a team of judges and other students. The day was a lot of fun going around and seeing what other students from other schools had come up with.

The Students are looking forward to next years competition.

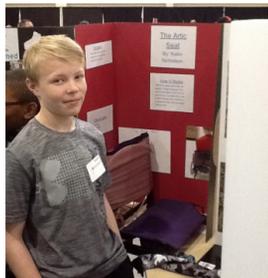
Below is a list of names of the students who participated:

Gavin Hulbert	8th
Carly Schaffer	8th
McKenzi Young	8th
Rowen Fisk	6th
Lily Conry	6th
Ty Forcht	6th
Kallin Nicholson	6th
Zoya Humphrey	6th
Caleb Smith	5th
Warren Sigwalt	5th
Blake Reynolds	5th
Brianna Redmond	5th
Haley Coil	5th

By Teacher Rene Nuss



Gavin Hulbert.



Kallin Nicholson.

## Local Business Expanding in Downtown Earlham



Kasey and Jordana Henke, owners of Rescued Junk in Earlham, have placed signs in their new store front revealing their business expansion.

Kasey is a 1995 graduate of Earlham High School. The two met at an auction while bidding on the same item. They are now married with two daughters, and have a successful 'junk' business right here in Earlham.

The Henke's purchased the former Shelley's Electronics building in

downtown Earlham many years ago. At the end of 2010 they debuted the new business, Rescued Junk.

In March of this year, another building in downtown Earlham was for sale. The Henke's moved forward and purchased this building to expand their growing business. The location is the former LPB Welding shop.

The two buildings are just a block away from each other, located on the same street (Chestnut Ave). The new store will

feature a showroom and a salvage room.

The "market" is typically open on a single weekend (Friday- Sunday) of each month (hours of operation may vary during the holiday season). Check their website, rescuedjunk.com or their Facebook page, Rescued Junk, for their hours of operation and additional information.

As their sign shows "Twice the shopping, double the fun."

Best of luck to the growing Rescued Junk business!

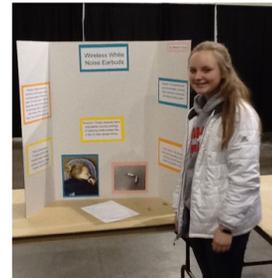
by Nicole Petersen



Photos provided by Rene Nuss.



Blake Reynolds.



McKenzi Young.

## UNDERGROUND RAILROAD: THE VITAL ROLE OF PIONEERS IN THE EARLHAM AREA

Part III

by Jess Lillie

The rich, fertile soil of Iowa drew settlers to venture west into uncharted territory to set up their homesteads. Before towns were established, pioneers that moved here created settlements. Earlham and its surrounding area was known around 1850 as a settlement called North Branch. Herman Mueller in his 1915 book called "History of Madison County and its People" eloquently described the Earlham area as the following:

*"It is peculiarly fortunate in its location for the country surrounding it can well bear comparison with any other section of Iowa, or with any country in the universe, for richness and variety of soil and its adaptability to easy cultivation; for the purity of the water and invigorating, life-preserving qualities of the air; for its beauties of landscape and the general prosperity and evidences of wealth, apparent to the naked eye on every hand."*

That description of Earlham explains the great attraction that brought Quakers from the eastern Midwest states to settle here. Those early Quakers not only brought their families to this area but also their views of great opposition to slavery. The Wilson family were among those early settlers who not only played a large part of forming and naming the town of Earlham, but they also played a large role in the underground railroad in this area.

While growth and construction screamed to a halt in most of the country during this Civil War time period, the Quakers in and around Earlham were doing just the opposite by constructing homes and businesses. The early building materials of the time were timber but the rolling prairie of Penn and Madison Township led the early settlers to use the native limestone of the area. Between the years of 1854-1885 more than 100 stone buildings were built in Madison County and several of those stone homes in the area became a safe haven for slaves on their journey to freedom.

John Wilson and his two sons Christopher and Abihu made the long journey to Iowa in 1853. John entered land in Adams township in Dallas county and his sons entered land in Madison and Penn townships. Soon to follow was John's cousin Seth Wilson who entered land in 1854. The Wilson family purchased over 3000 acres and some of the land was purchased with \$20 gold pieces that were sewn into muslin fabric around the waist of Seth. Earlham now stands on a large portion of the land Seth sold to incorporate the town. Whether Seth was just a mastermind in design or truly a mason, he is credited with building several stone homes in the area. Two homes lived in by the Wilson family were known to be a part of the underground railroad.

Thomas, John's brother, and family arrived in 1957. Driving loaded wagons, twenty head of sheep, and forty head of cattle, the Thomas Wilson family spent the winter living with their daughter Huldah and her husband Wesley Cox who lived in the stone home that was once located on the ground where Earlham's football field now resides.



Right: Home of Huldah & Wesley Cox. Stone home on the football field that was part of the underground railroad. Photo provided by John & Geri Williamson

In 1863, cousin Seth Wilson constructed the family a stone home known to many as the Grout House for its masonry style. The land the Grout House was built on was purchased for \$7/acre. The stone home had solid oak joints, sandstone window sills, black walnut woodwork and tongue and groove floors. A light put in the round cupola on the roof was a beacon for travelers and fugitives in the night sky to find a place of refuge. A three-way road sign at the corner of the Grout House read, W - Omaha, E-Des Moines, N-Fort Dodge. The cellar was used to hide runaway slaves enroute to freedom in Canada traveling along John Brown's underground railroad. "About the house and grounds still can be seen curious trapdoors and tunnels where fleeing black men were concealed" according to an Earlham Echo from 1932.

continued on Page 2



## "Cows in the Kitchen"



On Thursday, April 19th, the Kindergarten and 1st Grade classes performed "Cows in the Kitchen" with the direction of Mrs. Homan. The actors/actresses were the following: **Papa:** Greyson Harskamp; **Mama:** Jovie Denney; **Goo Roo:** Rush Fagan; **Chickens:** William Ashenfelter, Mila Dvorak, Dalton Jordan; **Goats:** Coral Dobbins, Laura-Rae Hopkins, Jaxen Jones; **Cows:** Elise Fredericksen, Colter Lenze, Adam Schoonover. Photos by Jess Lillie



Bottom Right: The Grout House formerly located on the corner of Pitzer Road & 120th Street. Photo provided by Steve Martens

### Junior Parents, only one week until Prom and After Prom!

Thank you to those that have signed up to volunteer or have helped on the committee, it should be a fun night. We still have a few openings for volunteers and food donations, please see the link attached and sign up for a time or donation, every little bit helps!

Follow this link to sign up: [www.SignUpGenius.com/go/60B0B49AAA82CA1FB6-prom](http://www.SignUpGenius.com/go/60B0B49AAA82CA1FB6-prom)  
Food donations can be delivered to the office or you can contact Beth Richman at richmanb@hotmail.com.

2018 After Prom Committee Members

### UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

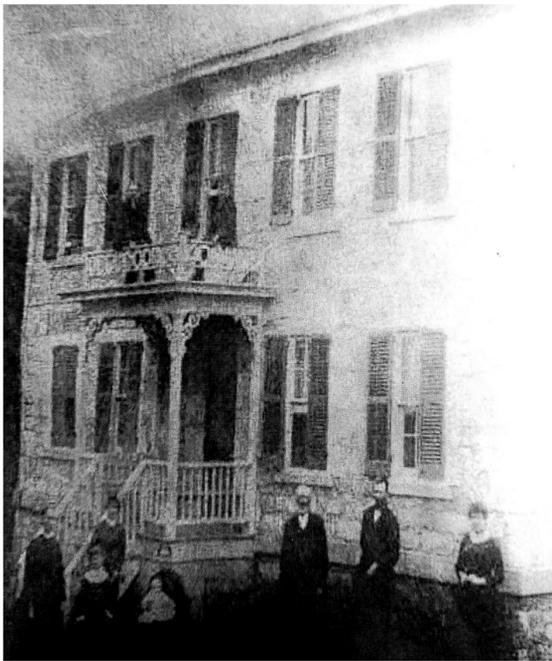
Continued from page 1

The home sold to Charlie & Katie Scar in 1920. Their daughter Anna Lenore Scar Martens remembers a woman stopping by to visit who used to live in the home. She remembers running into an escaped slave hiding in their cellar one day after school and her father reassuring her to not be afraid and he would be leaving that night. Sadly, somewhere around 1961-62 the home was torn down to build a more modern style home. A small piece of this home can be found still within the Scar family. Steve Martens, whose mother was Anna Lenore Scar Martens, has a salvaged windowsill from the old Grout House that is used as a fireplace mantel in his home.



Memories and memorabilia now align a fireplace mantel that was once the former windowsill of the Grout House. Photo by Steve Martens

John Wilson's stone home was also a stop on the underground railroad and was also built in 1861. The home was built of native limestone and has a natural spring right outside the back door. The barn on the property was used as a stop on the underground railroad to harbor runaway slaves.



James and Ann Brown and family stand in front of the John Wilson home located on 365th Street. The Browns were the second owners of the home. Photo provided by Deb Rex

The home was renovated by the Kennedy family and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. It is currently owned by Deb Rex who graciously allowed me to wander about the property. She built a barn down in a valley and added a cupola to the top that lights up at night when the lights are on in the barn to pay homage to the former Grout House. Rays of hope from a beacon of light in the night sky once guided weary travelers and fugitives to the Grout House during the underground railroad days and it was important to Deb to send out the message to the night sky once again that this is "a safe place". Deb is a homeowner full of pride and her stamp on the home was renovating the fireplace in the summer kitchen that was stoned up three years after the home was built. This intriguing home so full of Quaker history has been featured in the Home & Garden show in Iowa and also Minneapolis.

It has been a wonderful honor to immerse myself in the past so you may read about it in the present. The exploration into the roots of Earlham's settlers has led me to summarize that they were people that had great faith and at a time where the country was greatly divided by war, they were united. I can only hope that Earlham and its residents continue on our forefather's path of progressive growth and prosperity with a community based mindset.

The John Wilson home as it looks today in 2018. Photo by Jess Lillie



### Chad Elliott to Sing at Bricker-Price, Earlham

submitted by Ken Sidey



Award-winning Iowa folk singer/songwriter Chad Elliott will bring his musical storytelling to the Bricker-Price Block in Earlham on Saturday, May 12, 7 pm. Performing for more than a dozen years, he has shared the stage with a diverse list of notable talent, such as Eric Church, Lonestar, Counting Crows, Brantley Gilbert, R.L. Burnside, Odetta, Tom Paxton and Loudon Wainwright III, among others. Tickets are \$10, available in advance at the Bricker Price Facebook page under Events, or at the door. The BPP's Hadley Family Social Club will be set up club style (tables and chairs), with wine, beer, soft drinks and snacks available that evening.

Like the dark earth of his Iowa origins, Chad Elliott's life has served as fertile ground for music. Elliott has turned love, loss, fatherhood, divorce and homelessness into lyrics. He performs more than 200 shows each year, has cultivated more than 1,000 songs and released 20 albums. In his latest, "Wreck and Ruin", Elliott dives into his love of roots-rock, soul and blues music with a rocking band behind his artfully crafted songs.

Producer and drummer, Ken Coomer (Wilco, Uncle Tupelo) lined up the best rhythm and lead players in Nashville to create Elliott's greatest album to date. Guitarist and bassist Kenny Vaughan and Dave Roe, legendary Nashville players, add the needed touches to rocket Elliott's songs into a new arena of hard driving Americana. In August 2018 Elliott will release the album "Rest Heavy," recorded at the famed Sun Studio in Memphis, Tenn, with his band, The Redemptions. In 2009, he released "Redemption Man." Elliott worked with producer and guitarist Bo Ramsey (Lucinda Williams, Greg Brown) on this album to achieve its distinctive electrified roots sound. It also features Pieta Brown on the song, "Same, Old Way," which was the 2009 Woody Guthrie Festival song contest winner as well as a third place winner in the 2009 International Songwriting Contest for the Americana category. Two other songs on this album, "Redemption Man," and "Illinois," won Elliott a new folk finalist spot in the 2008 Grassy Hill Kerrville Folk Festival.

### Snow Crazy!

Submitted by Mindy Williamson

Instead of tractors and planting on April 15, 2018, many farmers were watching the snow fall on farm equipment. One farmer from Rockwell said that he left his equipment out of the shed because, "It is Iowa and he needs to be ready to roll tomorrow." Below are the snow fall totals for April 14 and April 15 across Iowa for the beginning of last week. It could have been worse as Green Bay, Wisconsin picked up an astonishing 24.2 inches of snow April 13-16, ranking as not only the city's heaviest April storm, but also the second heaviest of all time!



Photo credit: Andrew Lauver. A tractor sits idle under a layer of snow in Lake City, Iowa on April 15th - "We are now one day closer to 70 degrees and a 50 degree soil temp." Because of statewide snowfall, most farmers were kept out of the fields; however, in a typical year, farmers start planting on April 15th for crop insurance reasons.

### SNOWFALL TOTALS

SATURDAY, APRIL 14, - SUNDAY, APRIL 15, 2018

- Ruthven - 16"
- Ledyard - 14"
- Rinsted - 14"
- Swea City - 14"
- Algona - 13"
- Dakota City - 10"
- Hanlontown - 10"
- Peterson - 10"
- Thompson - 10"
- Rodman - 9.7"

### Host Families Needed! Two Earlham Foreign Exchange Students arriving in August 2018

submitted by Toni Parkins



Photos above and below are of Toni Parkins and her foreign exchange student, Meerimai, from Kyrgyzstan.

Do you have an extra bed? Do you want to make a young person's dreams come true? Do you want to teach your family about diversity and inclusion? Do you enjoy spreading love and friendship to others? If you said yes to any of these questions, then Earlham High School & World Link, Inc. need you!! World Link is a Non-Profit Placement Organization for international high school students and headquartered in Kalona, Iowa. World Link will place 45 students in Central Iowa for the 2018-2019 school year and two of those will attend Earlham High School so we need host families for these two students. They are required to do presentations about their homeland and culture as well as what they are learning in America, perform community service volunteer hours right here in our communities, participate in activities related to understanding diversity, tolerance, and opening themselves up to do things outside of their comfort zone, as well as being active & productive members of the Earlham community. The process to become a host family is very easy, and the rewards are too numerous to count. Any type of family unit may apply, single, married, with or without kids, empty nesters, etc. we just ask that you have an open and welcoming heart and home.

The students are on scholarship from the U.S. State Department. It is a rigorous application process in the student's home countries before being selected to come to the United States. While in the United States, these students are required to do a variety of leadership activities to teach them to be ambassadors of their

Contact me know to select the student who will best fit into you and your family's lifestyle and interests. For more information on securing your future family member, please contact your local World Link Coordinator Toni Parkins at 515-249-6079 or [ToniCParkins@gmail.com](mailto:ToniCParkins@gmail.com) or [www.WorldLinkInc.org](http://www.WorldLinkInc.org).



### Become an AFS Host Family!

Your family can experience the joys of welcoming an international high school student into your home. With the dedicated support of local AFS Volunteers, you'll have the chance to create lasting friendships and increase understanding between people of different cultures. There are also Volunteer Opportunities available in your community.