

HERALD'S CORNER

Schools take center stage

The momentum of economic activity in the Gateway area is a promising sight.

Jobs are great. More money is great. A thriving business climate is great.

With that economic activity, cities like Clinton must find a way to get people to not only work here, but live here. I've written about this subject many times in the past, and wrote about the economy last week, but attracting new residents is as important as creating a growing economy.

There are many factors in attracting residents, but this week I will focus on a particular asset that made news this week — schools.

No one can deny the impact that schools have on keeping and bringing in people to a particular city. This week's news of Clinton High School receiving a bronze medal in the U.S. News Best High School rankings is another positive step for Clinton in the constant battle of populating an area.

Just like creating jobs, keeping a strong population base is a cutthroat business. Schools need money and every student represents a dollar figure offered by the state. When Clinton High School scored well enough to be included with 97 other Iowa schools on this report, that helps not only the school, but the community.

That's a big honor considering the hundreds of schools in Iowa.

The bronze distinction measured Clinton High School's student-teacher ratios, college readiness, and math and reading proficiency. Clinton High School Principal Karrine Tharaldson Jones cited an "epiphany" six years ago that resulted in raising student expectations.

In a world of instant gratification, it's refreshing to see an institution not scrap a proposal just because it may take a few years to see the plan come to fruition. Change doesn't happen overnight.

With patience and a continued focus on raising expectations, teachers at Clinton High School stayed with the program and are now reaping the rewards. This distinction may not ward off all the detractors, but the honor provides the district with a validation that students can receive higher-level education from the school.

And the future of Clinton High School's educational approach also received attention recently when Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds visited the innovative classroom, showcasing the importance that school officials have placed on the future.

The classroom utilizes small group learning within a modern technological setting. It can provide crucial skills to subjects like science and math, and can teach workplace skills to students.

These developments are good news for educators and the city of Clinton. The city needs elements that will entice and keep citizens in the city, and the recent news involving the Clinton School District will go a long way in adding more ammo in the city's arsenal of attractiveness.

Mother's Day This weekend we will celebrate Mother's Day. Like most people, since becoming a parent, I have become more appreciative of what my parents did as my brothers and I were terrorizing the household on a daily occasion.

My mom held down a house with four boys (including my dad) and did it without complaining. Now, with a wife that is the mother of my two children, I appreciate another woman that keeps a household of crazy in line.

There's just something that dads don't bring to the table that moms can and my children (and I) wouldn't know what to do without the guidance of my wife.

Take a few moments or the entire weekend to thank the moms out there. I know I would have an uphill climb in life without my mom and my wife.

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