



Larry Beckman, Chamber of Commerce board president, and ISD Superintendent Bill Johnson look at a pamphlet for the planned "Leadership Council Bluffs" program, designed to instruct future community leaders. — Nonpareil photo by Glen Fahrenkrug.

'Leadership Council Bluffs' to see, cure community need

By GLEN FAHRENKRUG
Nonpareil Staff Writer

The Council Bluffs Chamber of Commerce, like the Marines, is looking for a few good people.

The Chamber's board of directors has been working since last winter to develop a Leadership Council Bluffs program as an opportunity for 20 people to hone current leadership skills and gain a sense of what the community needs and how to better serve it.

"The thing I like about the program is the commitment to participate in community activities," said Iowa School for the Deaf Superintendent Bill Johnson, general chairman of the program. "We're asking for a commitment of time from about 20 people."

The Leadership Council Bluffs program is based on similar successful programs in cities around the country.

"The program addresses and educates the class about how things get done in a community, how people work with each other," said Council Bluffs lawyer Larry Beckman, president of the Chamber board of directors.

Beckman said he became interested in establishing the program when he saw a "leadership void" among young people.

"I thought, 'Where are they? I don't see them,'" Beckman said.

The Leadership Council Bluffs program is designed to find those young potential leaders.

"We want to find the doers," Johnson said. "We would like our class members to go to different boards, come back and share their experiences with the rest of the class. We're going to ask them to volunteer to be on one of the

boards, to participate."

Added Beckman, "We want them to get a good cross-section."

The intensive one-year program is aimed at helping Council Bluffs leaders of the future refine their skills and realize potentials they may not have known existed.

Participants will get a feel for Council Bluffs' history and how they can be involved in the city's future.

They will gain direct experience in areas new to them. And they will establish valuable relationships, both personal and professional, which will endure long after they've graduated.

Curriculum chairman Andy Ross of Children's Square USA has established course criteria. The first session will be an opening retreat in October, at which a panel of noted community leaders will discuss their vision of Council Bluffs, followed by a seminar on principles of leadership.

Other seminars will be:

- Heritage Day: Visions from the Past. The November session will include a tour of historical sites and insight into how the city's heritage relates to our current vision.

- Council Bluffs as an Economic Unit. The January 1989 session will focus on economic role of Council Bluffs and the factors that influence growth.

- Building Coalitions. The February 1989 session will deal with how successful coalitions are built in business and politics, various views of power structures within the city, and the role of the press in community advancement.

- Omaha-Council Bluffs Relationship Issue. The March 1989 session will include small-group

activities and panel discussions on the relationship between the two cities, benefits and drawbacks.

- Community Development. The May 1989 session will cover different types of boards, such as business, church, volunteer and elected, and various roles and expectations for membership.

- Graduation Retreat and Ceremonies. The June 1989 session will give participants a chance to share what they have learned and reflect on what the future may bring.

Council Bluffs lawyer Emmett Tinley is heading the participant-selection committee. Letters have been mailed to businesses and organizations, using a variety of approaches to gain applications from at least 20 participants. If too many are received, Johnson said, chances are the names will be retained for a class the following year.

"We want to get a well-diversified class," Johnson said.

"And we hope businesses will identify prospective participants and help with the fee," Beckman said.

Fees include all books, meals and lodging when a session is scheduled for more than one day.

Confidential applications ask for a variety of information, such as whether the person plans to be a longterm Council Bluffs resident, education, employment, and membership in organizations and activities.

Potential participants are also asked what they expect to gain from the Leadership Council Bluffs experience.

"We would really like to see people from all sectors of the city, even City Hall," Beckman said.

Added Johnson, "We want people who want to get involved."

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Janet Melchoir-Kopp

From Staff

Janet Melchoir-Kopp and A. Tate have been representatives at Savings Bank.

Melchoir-Kopp received a degree from Creighton and has been at American and associations.

She received her degree in philosophy from Creighton. She was the Pacesetter intern in the attorney's office.

She will be responsible for estate and trust accounts at Council Bluffs Savings Bank.

Tate has been a member at Arthur Andersen since she graduated from the University of Nebraska.

She was an intern at Natural Gas Co.

Tate will be responsible for account administration and internal operations.

With the two bank's trust department, expand to 18 employees. Thomas D. White is president and chief officer.

HELP Inc. returns to Bluffs

HELP Inc., the area's largest term life insurance company, has returned to the successful business after a two-year absence.

HELP Inc.'s new office, 1227 S. Main St. is south of where the company operated from 1968. Although the firm has gradually shifted its focus from Omaha to be near its clients, the owner, Bill Johnson, retained membership in the Council Bluffs Chamber of Commerce.

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