



# The News-Review

\$1.50

SERVING THE KEOKUK COUNTY AREA SINCE 1860

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 31, 2025  
NUMBER 53, 164<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

Community CALENDAR

**Knights of Columbus Harper Pepper Tournament**

1/10, 1/31, 2/7, 2/21, 3/7, 3/21. 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

**Bingo Night at the Roost**

January 17, 7:00 p.m. El Gringo Loco food truck will be serving food from 4-7 p.m. All proceeds go to support Little Eagles Childcare

**Keokuk County Democrats Caucus Meeting**

Feb. 2, 2026, Doors open at 6:00 p.m. Sigourney City Hall for ALL Keokuk County Voting Precincts Voter registration provided on-site

**Sigourney American Legion Post #19**

Meets 4:00 p.m., Third Tuesday of every month at Memorial Hall

**Keswick American Legion Post #319**

Meets Monthly @ 5:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month At the Keswick American Legion Post

**Men's Caregiver Support Group**

Bridget's Public House 208 1st Ave E. Oskaloosa, IA 52577 1st and 3rd Wednesday from 10:30am - 12 Noon.

**Richland Public Library**

Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday: 2:30-6:00 Friday: Noon-5:00 Saturday: 10:00-1:00 Closed Sunday and Monday. For more information call 319-456-6541

**Wilson Memorial Library**

Mondays 10-6pm



**In this issue**

- Agri-View..... 4B
- Church Calendar.....5
- Classifieds.....6
- Local..... 2-3, 7
- Records.....2B
- The Sun Spot.....8
- Sports..... 9-10



## YEAR IN REVIEW 2025

### New Richland Childcare Center Has Soft Opening

**By Casey Jarmes | The News-Review**  
RICHLAND – The Jerry B. Robinson Childcare Center in Richland held a soft opening on Dec. 9, bringing the end to the years-long quest to establish a licensed childcare center in Keokuk County. In 2022, it was reported by the Des Moines Register that Keokuk County was a “childcare desert,” meaning it had more than three times as many children under the age of five to spots at licensed childcare facilities. In that shocking report, there were five counties listed as childcare

JANUARY pg. 3



January

### Keota Hardware Store Reopens With New Owner

**By Casey Jarmes | The News-Review**  
KEOTA – Malley Hardware and Variety, a hardware store on Broadway in Keota, has reopened with new owners. The hardware store, which was opened by Jim Malley in 1982, closed down at the end of 2024, due to Malley's failing health. The store has now been bought by locals Julianna and Brandon

FEBRUARY pg. 3



February



### English Valleys Students Perform a Marvelous Murder Mystery

**By Casey Jarmes | The News-Review**  
NORTH ENGLISH – On the evenings of March 14 and 15, the English Valleys Drama Department put on the play “Deadline” by Don Zolidis. The play stars an ensemble cast of struggling murder mystery writers who are invited to an island mansion for a writing competition. Things turn deadly serious when their host offers \$1,000,000 to them if they can successfully carry out

MARCH pg. 3

March

### Twenty Years, \$1.8 Million in Grants: County Endowment Holds Annual Award Night

**By Casey Jarmes | The News-Review**  
KEOTA – In 2005, the State of Iowa created the County Endowment Fund Program, which distributes 0.8% of the state's commercial gaming tax revenue to county endowment organizations, to fund projects for non-profits

APRIL pg. 7



April

### What Cheer Memorial Centered on Three Words: “Lest We Forget”

**By Casey Jarmes | The News-Review**  
WHAT CHEER – The Memorial Day service held at the What Cheer Opera House on the morning of May 26 featured prayer, poetry, music, and a listing of the names of local veterans who had passed away in the last year. Gary Van Patten led people in singing several patriotic songs, one of which he dedicated to Tom Barons, a friend of his who died in Vietnam. The center of the service was an address given by United Methodist Church Pastor Vince Homan, who tied together the biblical story of Moses instructing Joshua to remember all God had done for

MAY pg. 8



May



### Governor Signs Bill Supporting Fire Departments at Packwood Fire Station

**By Casey Jarmes | The News-Review**  
PACKWOOD – HF1002, a bill designed to help volunteer fire departments retain and recruit members, was signed into law by Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds at the Packwood Fire Department on June 3, as the governor was surrounded by firefighters from Packwood and surrounding communities. “Across Iowa, volunteer first responders are the

JUNE pg. 7

June

## Print your favorite memories



**The News-Review**

120 E Washington St.,  
Sigourney, Iowa  
(641) 622-3110  
M-F 9 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.



## Garden Academy to Be Offered Spring and Fall 2026

Iowa gardeners are invited to grow their knowledge in the online horticulture program

The Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Master Gardener Program will provide its statewide horticulture training in the spring and fall of 2026. Garden Academy, previously known as Iowa Master Gardener training, offers a comprehensive approach to consumer horticulture education.

- From the training, participants can expect: 10 weeks of asynchronous online instruction, featuring video lectures, reading assignments and quizzes
- A comprehensive overview of 17 horticultural topics to build a varied foundation of horticultural knowledge
- Additional resources for deeper exploration of specific interests
- Completion of a pre- and post-test to meet course requirements
- Three optional live interactive Zoom sessions with campus specialists

Interested participants can choose from two program tracks: Iowa Master Gardener Volunteer or Iowa Home Gardener. All participants, whether enrolled to become an Iowa Master Gardener Volunteer or an Iowa Home Gardener, will complete the same course designed to enhance horticulture knowledge and skills.

Alicia Herzog, Iowa Master Gardener program manager for ISU Extension and Outreach, explained the goals of both course tracks.

"The Iowa Master Gardener Volunteer track is focused on developing and supporting passion-

ate volunteers, providing them with knowledge and resources that instill confidence in them as they serve their communities. Participants do not have to be gardening experts to complete this option," she said. "The Iowa Home Gardener track is great for those looking to enhance their own knowledge and personal gardening skills."

Applications for the spring Iowa Master Gardener track will be open from Jan. 5 through Jan. 30 on the Iowa Master Gardener website. A list of participating counties is also available on the website.

Iowa Home Gardener participants will be able to purchase their spot in the course starting Feb. 2 on the ISU Extension Store website.

The spring training period for both tracks is Feb. 16 to April 24.

Garden Academy will be offered again in the fall from Aug. 31 to Nov. 6. Applications for the Iowa Master Gardener track will be accepted July 20 through Aug. 14. Iowa Home Gardener spots will go on sale Aug. 17.

Review the application and completion guidelines for both tracks below.

### Iowa Master Gardener Volunteer Track

**1. Submit an application and background check.** Apply to be an Iowa Master Gardener Volunteer and successfully complete a background check by contacting an ISU Extension and Outreach county office.

**2. Make a payment.** Be accepted into the Iowa Master Gardener Volunteer track and pay a one-time Garden Academy fee to the ISU Extension and Outreach county office.

**3. Complete training.** Complete the 10-week

online Garden Academy training and pass the final quiz.

**4. Complete orientation.** Attend in-person volunteer orientation through the ISU Extension and Outreach county office. Dates, times and duration vary by county. County Master Gardener Coordinators will provide county-specific information.

**5. Volunteer in the community.** Complete a 40-hour volunteer internship within one full calendar year. County Master Gardener Coordinators will provide county-specific information and guidance throughout the application, training and internship period.

**6. Stay involved.** After completing the volunteer internship, Iowa Master Gardener Volunteers remain active members by completing 10 hours of continuing education and contributing 20 hours of volunteer service annually. Volunteer and continuing education hours should be reported online by Dec. 1 of each year.

### Iowa Home Gardener Track

**1. Access course materials.** Purchase access to the Garden Academy course through the ISU Extension Store.

**2. Complete training.** Complete the 10-week online Garden Academy training and pass the final quiz.

**3. Go garden.** Participants in this track will receive a certificate of completion as an Iowa Home Gardener but will not earn the title of Iowa Master Gardener.

For more information, prospective volunteers can contact their county office. General questions can be directed to mgardener@iastate.edu or 515-294-5104.

## Paramedic sues over claims of electronic eavesdropping, sex in the workplace

**Lawsuit: County medical director called ambulance service a 'Dumpster fire'**

By Clark Kauffman | Capital Dispatch

Jefferson County is the target of a federal lawsuit involving allegations of slander, unfair hiring practices, electronic eavesdropping and paramedics having sex in the county's ambulance barn.

Former county paramedic Judy Heisel is suing Jefferson County Attorney Chauncey Moulding, Jefferson County Ambulance Service Medical Director Dr. Amanda Moreno, former county supervisor Dee Sandquist, and county supervisors Lee Dimmitt and Susie Drish.

Court records indicate that in October 2023, Jefferson County created a public ambulance service to provide residents with emergency medical services. In May 2023, the board hired Heisel as the county's ambulance service base manager with a starting salary of \$65,000. Heisel then reported to Ambulance Director Brian Thomas, who earned \$85,000 at the time. In April 2024, Thomas resigned and Sandquist asked Heisel if she would step into the role as interim director.

The lawsuit alleges that on April 29, 2024, Heisel became aware that EMT Damien Wimmer of the Jefferson County Ambulance Service had engaged in conduct outside his scope of practice and that she immediately reported the violation to Jack Reed of human resources and to Moreno, the medical director. Wimmer was then suspended for two weeks, according to the lawsuit.

Moreno allegedly assured Heisel she would take care of reporting the matter to state regulators with the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services' Bureau of EMS. According to the lawsuit, Wimmer, while working as a Libertyville first responder in May 2024, again engaged in EMS work that fell outside his scope of practice. Heisel alleges she reported that incident to Reed and Moreno, as well as the state's regional EMS coordinator. Shortly thereafter, Heisel allegedly learned that Moreno had not formally reported the first incident with Wimmer to DHHS as required. On June 21, 2024, Heisel reported both incidents and Wimmer was terminated as an EMT with Jefferson County Ambulance Service the same day. The lawsuit alleges Wimmer and Moreno "have been close friends for several years."

The lawsuit claims Moreno did not want Heisel to be hired as ambulance director due to Heisel's reporting of Wimmer's conduct.

State disciplinary records indicate Wimmer had been previously sanctioned for exceeding his authorized scope of practice. In November 2013, the bureau issued Wimmer a letter of warning for representing himself as a paramedic while certified as a less-qualified EMT.

In March 2014, Wimmer was alleged to have exceeded his scope of practice by initiating an intravenous line on a patient, and attempting to do so on a different patient. The bureau suspended his certification for one month and placed it on probation until April 2017.

In November 2015, he was again accused of using an intravenous line on a patient, exceeding his scope of practice. As a result of those allegations, the bureau suspended his license for two months and again placed it on probation for two years.

State records indicate the bureau has taken no public action against Wimmer as a result of the 2024 allegations.

### Allegations of sex in the workplace

According to Heisel's lawsuit, Supervisor Sandquist appointed Moreno and Reed to serve on the "hiring committee" to fill the position of ambulance director. Heisel was the only internal applicant for the job, the lawsuit alleges.

On June 20, 2024, Sandquist, Reed and Moreno conducted, via Zoom, Heisel's first interview for the ambulance director's position.

Four days later, Supervisor Dimmitt, while in Heisel's office, had a phone conversation with Supervisor Drish, about the hiring process, with Drish on speakerphone so Heisel could participate in the conversation.

According to the lawsuit, Supervisor Dimmitt expressed frustration with the hiring process, claiming Sandquist did not tell her fellow supervisors who any of the outside applicants were, and Dimmitt and Drish each voiced support of Heisel.

On June 26, 2024, Heisel's second interview took place with Moreno allegedly participating via Zoom due to her being at the Lake of the Ozarks in Missouri, vacationing with the recently fired Wimmer, according to the lawsuit.

The lawsuit alleges that about 30 minutes into the interview, Moreno stated that nobody was addressing "the elephant in the room," which she described as the "internal Dumpster fire" that was the ambulance service.

According to the lawsuit, Moreno then asked Heisel specifically what had happened with Brian Thomas, the former ambulance director, and then clarified that she was "referring to Heisel having sexual relations with Thomas."

In her lawsuit, Heisel alleges she responded by stat-

ing that she was not going to discuss her personal life, to which Moreno replied the issue wasn't her personal life but that Thomas had been her boss.

Moulding, the county attorney, allegedly advised the board members it was their interview and they could ask whatever questions they deemed appropriate, according to the lawsuit.

The lawsuit states a heated discussion between Dimmitt and Moreno ensued, during which the medical director said the county was being put at risk, adding that she'd "heard that Heisel and Thomas were having sex in the ambulance building," and that people were telling her that Heisel was abusing prescription drugs.

"Dr. Moreno said something like we can't have people abusing prescription substances or being put on EKGs and getting IVs at work — all in reference to Heisel," the lawsuit states.

### Electronic eavesdropping charges filed

On July 11, 2024, Reed, from human resources, allegedly had a phone conversation with Heisel in which he stated Moreno had opened up a floodgate of potential liability for Jefferson County based on the statements she had made during the second job interview.

The board subsequently voted to offer the ambulance director job to one of the outside candidates, Josh Hemminger, who accepted the offer and was hired at a salary of \$85,000.

Immediately after an Aug. 5, 2024, meeting that formalized Hemminger's hiring, the lawsuit alleges, county officials made "a theoretical job offer" to Heisel, although it did not provide her with the proposed job title, duties or pay and told her she had to accept the offer immediately or she'd no longer be employed.

"The county then presented her with severance paperwork, suggesting that the offer of employment was not bona fide," the lawsuit claims. "Heisel rejected the severance package," and Moulding indicated she should "pack up her belongings and leave that very day."

According to the lawsuit, a few hours after Heisel left the county's ambulance building, Fairfield police were dispatched to the building on a report of destruction of property. Moulding allegedly informed the officers the county's information-technology staff had notified him there had been a network intrusion of the computers at the ambulance building. It was reported that computers appeared to be "factory reset," resulting in the loss of all the information storied on the computers.

**PARAMEDIC pg. 8**

**LOCALS**  
Have More Fun  
Get out and support our local shops, restaurants and events!

*Sloan - Mohr*  
**MONUMENT Company**  
engraving · stone setting · customization  
OFFICE HOURS: By Appointment  
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641-660-1851 · 641--622-3121  
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**We can stop HIV, Iowa—by protecting our sexual health when we talk, test, treat.**

**talk** Talk with your partner before having sex. Talk about when you were last tested & suggest getting tested together.  
Talk to your healthcare provider about your sex life. Ask about HIV & STI testing—including what tests you need & how often.

**test** **Get tested!** It's the only way to know for sure if you have HIV or an STI.  
Many STIs don't cause symptoms, so you could have one and not know.

**treat** HIV & all other STIs are **treatable**.  
If you test positive for an STI, work with your healthcare provider to get the right treatment.  
If you test positive for HIV, your provider or testing location will connect you to treatment & resources!

Find testing near you! Scan the QR code or visit [stophiviowa.org](http://stophiviowa.org)

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# Community CALENDAR

Tuesdays, Wednesday, and Thursdays 10-5pm  
Fridays 10 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Saturdays 8-12.

**Sigourney Public Library**  
Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
Friday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
Saturday 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Hedrick Public Library**  
Monday/Thursday/Friday 2 - 6 p.m.  
Tuesday 1 - 5 p.m.  
Wednesday 12 - 4 p.m.  
Saturday/Sunday Closed

**What Cheer Public Library**  
Monday 12:00-6:00 p.m.  
Wednesday 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Friday 12:00-5:00 p.m.  
Saturday 9:00-11:00 a.m.

**Sigourney Kiwanis**  
Serving the community since 1969. Kiwanis meet Wednesdays, from 12 to 1 p.m. at Keokuk County Bowl, visitors are welcome.

**Free Grace Recovery**  
Wednesdays at 7 p.m. at Free Grace United at 107 E Broadway St. What Cheer.  
For: All Addictions: any hurt, habit or hang up. Come as you are.  
Childcare provided. Everyone is welcome.  
freegrace.tv/recovery

**Old Keota Business**  
Anyone having old photos of former Keota businesses, please contact Larry Gale Sanders. The photos will be used in a Keota Business Pictorial Album.

**Keota Food Pantry**  
The food pantry in Keota is open on the last Sunday of the month at the United Church of Faith, 10-11 a.m. Anyone needing food is invited.

**Richland Community Food Bank**  
Located at Richland Methodist Church, 106 W South St. Richland, (319) 456-2251 Sherry Jipp. Open Tuesday and Wednesday 9:30-11:30 a.m. and Thursday 5-7:00 p.m.

**City of Keota Public Meeting**  
Public meetings will be held on the First and Third Monday of each month. at 7 p.m. at Keota City Hall. Special Meetings will be posted at City Hall.

**Keota School Board**  
The Keota School Board meets the second Thursday of each month, typically at 6 p.m.

**Keota VFW Auxiliary**  
The VFW Auxiliary meets the third Tuesday of each month, typically at the VFW building.

**Keokuk County Historical Society**  
Open Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
KCHS will be closed the weeks of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years. During winter, when school is cancelled, KCHS will be closed.

**Keokuk County Supervisors**

The Keokuk County Board of Supervisors meets weekly on Mondays at 8:30 a.m.

**Alcoholics Anonymous Sigourney**  
AA Meetings at Community Outreach Center - Sigourney: Wednesdays at 8 p.m. for more information, call (319) 461-6869.

**Narcotics Anonymous-Sigourney**  
NA Meetings Community Outreach Center - Sigourney: Thursdays at 6 p.m.  
615 S Jefferson St Sigourney

**Food Pantry-Sigourney**  
Food Pantry Community Outreach Center-Sigourney: Call the Lord's Pantry at 641-224-2588 or contact a minister

**Keokuk County Public Health**  
Keokuk County Public Health is here to serve you. We offer an array of services such as: home health services, immunizations, education, diabetic care, foot care, partner's program, etc. We have walkers, wheelchairs, shower chairs, canes, etc. to loan out free of cost. Please call us if you or a loved one is in need. For more information, call (641) 622-3575.

**Alcoholics Anonymous-Keota**  
AA every Monday at 7 p.m. at the Good Neighbor

Fellowship Church on Broadway.

**Alzheimer's Support**  
Alzheimer's Support Group meetings are held the first Monday of each month at the Presbyterian Church in Washington at 6:30 p.m.

**Take Off Pounds Sensibly**  
Weekly meetings Tuesdays, 4:30pm - 5:30 pm  
Keokuk County Extension Office, 641-777-1653

**Grief Share**  
Sigourney Christian Church, 308 S Jefferson St  
Wednesdays at 1 p.m., beginning Nov. 6  
No charge

**Fiddle Dee Dee**  
3rd Wednesday of every month, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Junk Journal Workday. Bring your own junk journals to build and work on. You can collaborate, share supplies, or ideas.

**Keokuk County Democrats Open Meeting**  
First Tuesday of the Month  
Meet & Greet at 6:30 p.m.  
Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**Webb Masonic Lodge #182**  
A.F. & A.M.  
Meets first Tuesday every month  
Dinner 6:30 p.m.; Stated meeting 7:30 p.m.  
For more information call 641-660-4605

# MENUS

**Pekin**  
Jan. 5th  
No School  
Jan. 6th  
Breakfast: Cereal Bar, GoGurt, Fruit, Juice.  
Lunch: Chicken Tetrazzini, Hot Roll, Munchable, Diced Fruit Cup, Strawberry Cup, Green Beans, Baby Carrots, Milk.  
Jan. 7th  
Breakfast: Tortilla Omelet, Fruit, Juice.  
Lunch: Chicken Patty on Bun, Uncrustable, Pineapple Tidbits, Craisins, French Fries, Broccoli, Milk.

**Sigourney**  
Jan. 5th  
No School  
Jan. 6th  
Breakfast: Cinnamon Apple French Toast, Assorted Cereal w/ Fruit Muffin, Donut, Fruit, Juice, Milk.  
Lunch: Walking Taco, Buffalo Chicken Grilled Cheese, Seasoned French Fries, Pizza Bar, Sub Bar, Salad Bar w/ Cornbread, Garden Salad, Refried Beans, Fruit, Milk.  
Jan. 7th  
Breakfast: Pancake Sausage Griddle, Assorted Cereal w/ Yogurt, Waffles, Fruit, Juice.  
Lunch: Chicken Patty w/ Hot Roll, Taco Joe on a Bun, Seasoned Fries, Pizza Bar, Sub Bar, Salad Bar w/ Hot Roll, mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Fruit, Milk.

**Tri-County**  
Jan. 5th  
No School  
Jan. 6th  
Breakfast: Uncrustable.  
Lunch: Mr. Rib Sandwich, Potato Cubes, Apple Sauce, 9-12 Baked Chips.  
Jan. 7th  
Breakfast: French Toast Sticks.  
Lunch: Chili w/ Cheese, Corn, Crackers, Pineapple, Cinnamon Roll.

**English Valleys**  
Jan. 5th  
Breakfast: Colby Egg Omelet w/ Toast w/ Margarine, Assorted Cereal, Fruit, Juice, Milk.  
Lunch: Honey Bacon Glazed Tender Sandwich, Com Dog w/ Seasoned Fries, Pizza Bar, Sub Bar, Garden Salad, Fruit, Milk.  
Jan. 6th  
Breakfast: Cinnamon Apple French Toast, Assorted Cereal w/ Fruit Muffin, Juice, Milk.  
Lunch: Walking Taco, Buffalo Chicken Grilled Cheese w/ Seasoned Fries, Pizza Bar, Sub Bar, Garden Salad, Refried Beans, Fruit, Milk.  
Jan. 7th  
Breakfast: Waffles, Assorted Cereal w/ Yogurt, Juice, Milk.  
Lunch: Chicken Patty w/ Hot Roll, Taco Joe on Bun w/ Seasoned Fries, Pizza Bar, Sub Bar, Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans, Fruit, Milk.

**Keota**  
Jan. 5th  
Breakfast: Strawberry Boli, Pears, Juice, Milk  
Lunch: Soft Shell Taco, Romaine and Tomatoes, Corn Apples, Chips and Salsa, Milk.  
Jan. 6th  
Breakfast: Sausage Patty English Muffin/ Jelly, Pineapple, Juice, Milk.  
Lunch: Turkey & Cheese Sub, Romaine Lettuce, Tomato Slice, French Fries, Peaches, Milk.  
Jan. 7th  
Breakfast: Breakfast Egg Wrap, Orange, Juice, Milk.  
Lunch: Chicken Patty on a Bun, Sweet Potato Puffis, Baked Beans, Orange, Chocolate Chip Cookie, Milk.

**Milestones (Sigourney & Delta)**

**Goodwin Senior Dining Center (Wellman)**  
Jan. 2nd  
Hot Ham & Cheese Sandwich, Macaroni Salad, Cottage Cheese Salad, Oatmeal Crunchies.  
Jan. 5th  
Pizza Casserole, Lettuce Salad, Bread Sticks, Jello Salad.  
Jan. 7th  
Pork Chop, Mashed Potatoes/Gravy, Brussel Sprouts, Chocolate Poke Cake.

Jan. 2nd  
Loose meat Sandwich on Bun, Potato Salad, Seasoned Peas, Fruit.  
Jan. 5th  
Pizza Pasta Casserole, Corn, Pears, Cookie.  
Jan. 6th  
Pot Roast, Roasted Red Potatoes, Buttered Carrots, Wheat Roll, Frosted Cake.  
Jan. 7th  
Ham & Beans, Tossed Salad, Dressing, Peaches, Cornbread.

**Births, Engagements, Weddings, Anniversaries**  
• story (no photos) runs for FREE  
• story with black and white photo- \$12  
• story with color photo- \$24  
\* Some restrictions may apply.  
If the story is an invitation to a celebration or request for cards, it must run as an ad.

**Share your story!**  
Contact us at 641-622-3110  
info@sigourneynewsreview.com  
120 E Washington St, Sigourney, IA 52591

**JANUARY from pg. 1**

deserts. The county with the second worst ratio, Calhoun, had a child/space ratio of 3.63. Keokuk County was the absolute worst in the state, with a staggering 26.87 child/space ratio. This report spurred Richland residents to form the Richland Area Child-care Organization and work tirelessly and fundraise the money needed for a childcare center.  
The new childcare center, named after a philanthropist who grew up in Richland who donated substantially to the project, is located across from Trinity Friends Church, where the Richland school once stood. The old school building sat abandoned for more than 20 years before being torn down in 2021. Ground was broken for the new building in June of 2023, with the project completing in June of 2024. RACCO originally planned to fundraise 1.5 million dollars to com-

plete and furnish the building, as well as fund staffing as the childcare center opened, managing to raise \$1.4 million thanks to countless donations and grants from community members or local organizations. The childcare center has a capacity of 65 spots.  
"The Des Moines Register ran two pretty significantly large articles about Keokuk County being a childcare desert. So I feel that this is just a wonderful opportunity to be able to have an additional 65 slots," said Tammy Wetjen-Kesterson of Early Childhood Iowa, who managed the project. "We did a market analysis, through some of the work we've been doing, and Keokuk County as a whole was short 755 slots. So, I mean, 65 is wonderful, but we still have much more work to do. This is a giant impact in being able to help families and kids."

Wetjen-Kesterson hopes the Richland childcare center will be a catalyst for other childcare projects around the county. Early Childhood Iowa also helps the Keota School District find funding for its afterschool program and is working with the Keokuk County Childcare Network to plan additional projects in the county, potentially including daycares in Keota and Sigourney.  
"Things at the childcare center) have been going really well," said Tabitha Unternahrer, the childcare center's director. "We've had some amazing parents who have been coming in that we've been working with...The families that have enrolled have been wonderful, it's just been great getting started and being able to interact with the kids and the staff. You know, learning and practicing. There are things that we'll be going into that have been go-

ing really nice and smoothly. It's been a pretty great soft opening."  
The center takes children from two-weeks-old to 13-years-old and is open from six a.m. to six p.m. on weekdays. The center still has plenty of openings. Applications are still coming in for both children and staff. Unternahrer stated there are enough staff members for the current number of children enrolled and that there are applications on file for when enrollment grows. The center is also looking for volunteers.  
"I think it's an exciting venture for Richland and the community we're surrounding and just the staff and the kids," said Unternahrer. "I think it's a great service for the community and the family. I think it's exciting all around for what it's going to provide for families, the community, the children and early childhood and families in general."

**MARCH from pg. 1**

and get away with a murder. Bodies soon begin dropping. The English Valleys performance starred Ellie Patterson as Penelope, a social media influencer; Kaylee Frazier and Cyrus Morrison as Deborah and Greg Haskins, a bickering pair of married writers; Daige Sabin as Carswell Chalmers, an elderly, grumpy old writer; Kaylynn Hoyleman as Vampetta, a goth writer obsessed with vampires and demons; Phoenix Sorden as Brenda, an enigmatic writer; Jack Osborn as Zak, a dimwitted party bro; and Stacia Linder as Jennifer, a Southern self-published mystery writer.  
Rounding out the cast were Tyler Wiseman as Dellacroix, their mysterious host; Clara Karr as Bella, an ill-tempered barista; Olivia Debevec and Mckenna Rugg as Morris and Norris, a pair servants; and Clare Hart as Meyers, the boat captain and secret

mastermind. Adam Forbes, Emily Sieren, Peyton Conrad, Chyar Mcgaffee, Miley Clubb, Ambryn Hoyleman and Pantera Spies played minor roles in the play's opening scene. Channing Stratton, Victoria Threlkeld and Aliza Walker worked as student directors. Korbyn Brecht was the crew lead, with Declan Patterson handling sound, Forrest Schott and Aadin Clingan handling lights, Whitney Walker handling the curtain, and Jack Johnson, Brodie Beabrower, Vinny Westphal, Chance Mcgaffee, Channing Stratton, Brody Williams, Miles Krebs and Landon Van Dee handling various crew duties.. The play was directed by Carrie Burdick, who has been directing plays at English Valleys for 15 years. Practices for the play began right after Christmas Break.  
"It was time for another murder mystery dark comedy

type," said Burdick. "We like to do them. We like to rotate different types of plays and give the kids different types of experiences. These are good ones to do because they can work on both theatrical acting, you know, dramatic acting and comedy."  
"I've been doing the play for about two years now. I was kind of a late bloomer, but I've always had fun with it. I've done two plays and a musical...I enjoy a good comedic role. I feel like that's my specialty," said Cyrus Morrison, who played dimwitted husband Gregory.  
Ellie Patterson and Kaylynn Hoyleman, both Sophomores, stated they had been doing plays since Freshman year. "My director just thought I'd be good at this part, so I tried it out," said Patterson.  
"Yeah, same for me," added Hoyleman. "I think she just thought it matched our per-

sonalities and attitudes"  
"Yeah it was really based on personalities...What I liked about this play was, you know, it was kind of a different thing from the past. We've done, I don't quite remember the plays, but it wasn't like a good murder mystery. I love all types of mysteries, so it was really fun to actually get to do a mystery," said Morrison.  
"I just really like my character and my costume," said Hoyleman.  
"I really liked all the jokes that were made. I thought there was a lot of comedy in there. It's funny for us to say, said Patterson.  
"A lot of these kids do track or other sports," said Burdick. "They will get here for morning practices at like 6:00 a.m. and they will be here til 8:30, or this last week, 9:00 at night. It is a lot of work."

**FEBRUARY from pg. 1**

Berg, who have tentatively planned to reopen on Feb. 14.  
Julianna Berg explained that they decided to purchase the store because of how important it is to the community. "My husband and I put a lot of thought into this, and we had a lot of conversations. Crunched the numbers," said Julianna. "We did our due diligence, and at the end of the day, it made sense, and it is such an important asset to our community...It was really hard to see it, the possibility that it wasn't going to be there anymore. And you kinda wonder, is somebody else going to come in? Does somebody else want to buy it? And a few months went by, and a few more months went by, and nobody was champing at the bit to buy it. So, Brandon and I sat back down and kinda revisited it and said, 'You know, we want this hardware store in town. We can't just sit by and wait for somebody else to do it. So let's go ahead and take matters into our

own hands and explore this.' As we explored it, and talked about it, just everything kind of fell into place and it made so much sense for us."  
"I'm glad they got it, I really am," said Malley. "I'm glad to see it stay. Keota needs a good hardware store."  
The Bergs plan to keep the "Malley" name. They plan to gradually modernize the store, for example by adding credit card processing, but to try and maintain its hometown hardware store feel. The west side of the store will continue to be a hardware store, but the east side, currently used for appliances, will be liquidated and be used for Julianna's sewing and upholstery work. "Our goal here really is to serve the community, and if we don't serve the community, it doesn't do anybody any good...So nothing that's going to be big and scary for anybody. It's going to feel very similar to what it is now," said Julianna.

**PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORY**

**MEDICAL SERVICES**  
KEOKUK COUNTY HOSPITAL AND CLINICS  
**MEDICAL CLINICS:**  
SIGOURNEY CLINIC 641-622-1170  
**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH** 641-622-1170  
**HERDRICK CLINIC** 641-653-2437  
**SPECIALTY CLINICS:**  
**CARDIOLOGY** 641-672-3360  
**DERMATOLOGY** 515-348-6383  
**ORTHOPEDICS** 641-621-2376  
**PODIATRY** 641-622-1180  
**WOUND CARE** 641-684-8448

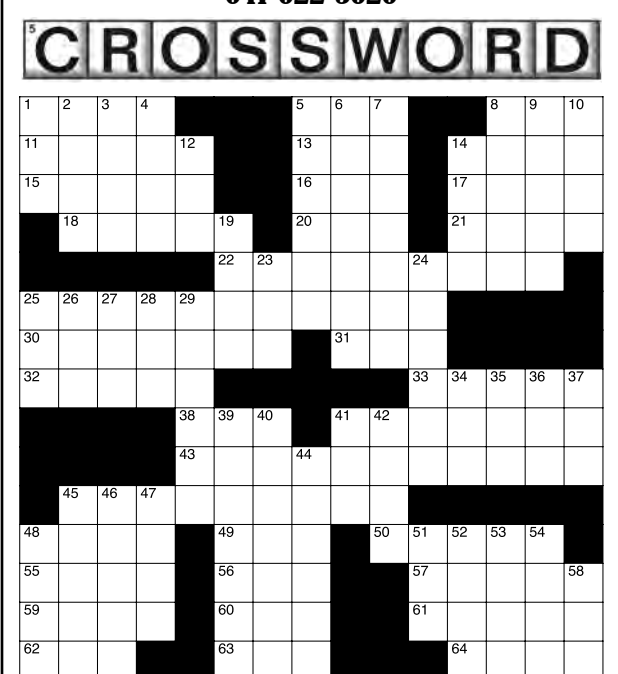
**ABSTRACTING SERVICES**  
KEOKUK COUNTY

**ABSTRACT CO.**  
100 S. Main St. Sigourney, IA 641-622-3321

**CARE FACILITIES**  
MANOR HOUSE CARE CENTER  
DEER VIEW MANOR  
Assisted Living, Intermediate and Skilled Care Facility  
1212 S. Stuart St., Sigourney, IA 641-622-2142

**PRINTING SERVICES**  
THE NEWS-REVIEW  
Envelopes, Letterheads, Forms, Register Forms, Business Cards, Posters, Banners, Invitations and More  
120 E. Washington St.  
P.O. Box 285 Sigourney 641-622-3110

This week's crossword, sponsored by:  
**Atwood Electric, Inc.**  
641-622-3626



**CLUES ACROSS**  
1. Paddles  
5. Sunscreen rating  
8. Very fast airplane  
11. Immune responses  
13. "Partner" to feather  
14. New England river  
15. Longest river in New Guinea  
16. Midway between east and southeast  
17. Israeli politician  
18. Back bones  
20. Consumed  
21. One you can rely on  
22. Dressed up gaudily  
25. Representatives  
30. Dog breed  
31. Pitching statistic  
32. Manpower  
33. S. Korean entertainer  
38. Outsourcing firm  
41. Viceroy of Egypt under Turkish rule  
43. One who removes antlers from a flower  
45. Potluck dish  
48. Discount  
49. Airborne (abbr.)  
50. Cavalry sword  
55. Basics  
56. Hollywood director Howard  
57. Afflicted in mind or body  
59. Horsley and Majors are two  
60. Midway between northeast and east  
61. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation  
62. Malaysian isthmus  
63. Fall back  
64. Cheek

**CLUES DOWN**  
1. Former CIA  
2. Baseball's best pitchers  
3. \_\_\_ Nui, Easter Island  
4. Invests in little enterprises  
5. Constant  
6. Hobby  
7. A place to store food  
8. Short-tail marten  
9. Burn with a hot liquid  
10. Left his heart in San Francisco  
12. Swedish krona  
14. Legendary actor Connery  
19. French cleric  
23. Former measure of length for textiles  
24. Opaque glassy substance  
25. Residue of burned item  
26. A place to unwind  
27. Japanese honorific

28. Terminus  
29. Fails to make a shot  
34. Journalist Tarbell  
35. College hoops tournament  
36. Monetary unit of Macao  
37. Of she  
39. Spoke ill of  
40. Elements  
41. Kilocalorie (abbr.)  
42. Shades  
44. Poem of fourteen lines  
45. Pole used in Scottish sport  
46. Hollyhocks genus  
47. Street name for marijuana  
48. Polio vaccine developer  
51. Swiss river  
52. Prejudice  
53. Actor Idris  
54. Confederate soldiers  
58. Criticize

**LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS**

U	L	A	N	C	O	C	O	S	U	M	B	O
N	A	R	A	W	R	A	P	S	L	O	O	P
A	R	A	M	M	A	N	E	T	N	A	N	A
U	D	D	E	R	T	O	R	C	A	B	A	L
S	E	R	E	N	A	D	E	S				
M	A	S	D	A	D	T	A	O	C	A	P	
U	N	I	T	E	D	S	I	B	B	O	G	Y
L	I	R	A	S	M	A	C	S	O	L	A	R
C	L	U	B	C	E	E	C	A	B	A	N	A
T	S	P	C	U	D	P	U	G	S	A	N	
S	I	L	I	C	A	T	E	S				
U	S	N	E	A	C	O	L	S	A	B	E	R
G	H	E	G	C	A	R	A	T	B	A	R	I
L	E	N	O	I	R	A	T	E	I	B	I	S
I	D	E	S	D	E	L	E	D	N	E	C	K

ENCOURAGE KINDNESS TODAY

PUT A SMILE IN SOMEONE'S DAY

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Bill Van Dee  
Trenching and Backhoeing  
North English, IA  
319-664-3516

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A L B G H V N S R A L M H Q L S T S C C  
U T E G D U B E N C L C P P T P F N F O  
A Q Q Q A H P O H D S A L E I F B V P U  
D A C T D P N E D P C N B E Q M L E L P  
I O B S O E C R P O E U C D E H D C N O  
K N G H B K E V C E P E T R F A T N O N  
B L S R O I C U F I R B C C N C N A K Y  
D I F U H G G E Y N S H R D O S V R R B  
L N T S S C Q R T V A M Q H V V K A E C  
M E A A E O O A K N P U R C H A S E T A  
T C Y C A T L O K D H V Q U N E I K U L A R  
M Y I S N L O I G V G U T O E B E C I T  
G R D E A V S D N P A O Q N N L A O L V  
P H V M G E P Q L T V A G V U V S G O U  
F N M E G T N O R F E R O T S O Q I U V  
I Y R E V I L U E D R N I V K G T C L A D  
S H Q M Q L U I P O B D B I I P C S L P  
B B Q L G V S I B O U T I Q U E M F I P  
O U S S I I I E D O C R A B C R P O V D  
G D D N U F E R Q E N Y N A E V S A B Q

WORDS

- aisle
- bag
- barcode
- boutique
- budget
- cart
- cashier
- checkout
- clearance
- coupon
- delivery
- discount
- inventory
- mall
- merchandise
- online
- price
- purchase
- receipt
- refund
- retail
- sale
- shopper
- storefront

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

THE HISTORICAL VIEWPOINT

One Year: 2023

By Casey Jarmes | The News-Review  
I've been doing these monthly "One Year" columns for half a year now, always covering a year

from decades before I began working at this paper, usually decades before I was even born. This week, though, I am doing news stories that I remember, be-

cause they came from 2023, the first full year I worked for this paper. And, to be self-deprecating, I was a terrible writer three years ago. I remember the day the

biggest story of that year came very well. It was March 31. It had been a slow news week, and I kept complaining to Katie about having nothing to write. Then, on Friday, the sky turned green, that dark, sickly green all Iowans know to fear. I have since been banned from mentioning when it is a slow week.

I hid in a basement, as 136 mph winds tore through Iowa. Around 19 different homes in this county were destroyed after two separate tornadoes, one EF3 and one EF4, tore through the county. That weekend, I drove around the countryside, staring at the devastation, interviewing those who had lost everything. The southwest part of the county was covered in houses reduced to rubble. I saw a pile of 200 dead pigs lying there, rotting. Family farms, owned for generations, were obliterated. I was particularly moved by the story of Jon Roop and Judy Dietrich. Their house was torn away by the storm as they hid in the basement, behind a brick wall. Roop told me that the wall came loose, as he leaned against it, bracing himself from the wind; the wall was lying there, at a 60 degree angle, when I arrived. Marianne Millikin described her son opening the basement door, after the wind died down, and seeing that the entire house was gone.

The thing that struck me was that, at every farm I stopped by, I saw an army of people helping dig through the wreckage. Friends, neighbors, kids from local



Photos from the tornado

VIEWPOINT pg. 5

Letter to the Editor Policy

The News-Review welcomes the opinions of our readers in the form of letters to the editor, as long as the submissions are not in bad taste and refrain from attacking individuals without supporting documentation or a rational and legally defensible justification. In any event the newspaper reserves the sole discretion to decide whether or not a reader submission will be published. If your letter is selected it will be run on a single occasion and you agree to give us the right to publish it in print and digital form. The News-Review will not accept letters that are duplicated, reprinted, copied, or otherwise reproduced. Letters should be original, type-written or neatly handwritten. Letters should not exceed 300 words. Letters exceeding this length could be subject to editing and may not be published in their entirety.

The News-Review does not as a general rule print form letters or letters which are also submitted to other newspapers. We are most interested in sincere personal views as opposed to canned publicity releases or talking points for

an individual or a cause, therefore if a writer cannot assure us that their submission is individual and personal, it may be rejected.

- Your Letter to the Editor must include:
- Your full name with signature
  - Your complete address
  - Your telephone number

Your address and telephone number will not be printed in the newspaper, but will be used for verification by newspaper editorial staff.

Unsigned letters and letters containing personal attacks the newspaper deems to be of a libelous nature will not be published. The News-Review reserves the right to end debate on a topic after both sides have had ample chance to express their views. The News-Review reserves the right to edit or refuse all letters. All columns and letters on the opinion page are the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of The News-Review.

Correction and Retraction Policy

The News-Review strives for accurate and complete news reporting but occasionally we get it wrong. In cases where an error has been made we will run a correction, clarification, retraction or editor's note in the next edition. Our goal in any event is to inform readers of corrections clearly and quickly, citing the incorrect information and updating with the correct information.

All corrections will be printed on page 2A in the next issue published. The correction will denote the issue, article and incorrect information along with the correction. Digital corrections will also be made and an editor's note will be added to the bottom of the article in question noting what was inaccurate and noting when the article was amended. If the article was posted on Facebook, Twitter or any other online medium controlled by The News-Review, a post will be made linking to the corrected article, noting the correction.

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**Sports Editor:** Mark Schafer sports@sigourneynewsreview.com  
**News Editor:** Casey Jarmes news@sigourneynewsreview.com

**Deadlines**  
Legal Notices Noon, Friday  
Classified Ads Noon, Friday  
Display Ads Noon, Friday  
Submitted News Noon, Friday  
Obituaries Noon, Monday  
Event coverage requests 24 hours

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If The News-Review shall fail to publish a notice as required, in whole or in part, it shall in no event exceed the amount of the charges allowed by law for the publication of the notice which was not published.

# Worship Guide

Please check with your church for updates, online services, postponements and cancellations. In light of COVID-19 measures, please contact your church to find out how services are being held or streamed online before attempting to attend.

**DELTA**  
**Delta Christian Church**  
 108 W 3rd St.  
 Worship: Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

**Delta Methodist Church**  
 Pastor Vince Homan  
 Worship: 9 a.m.  
 Sunday School for Elementary age children is at 9:30-10:15 a.m.

**FREMONT**  
**Fremont Community Church**  
 Sunday Worship 9 a.m.  
 Children's Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
 Adult Sunday School 10:15 a.m.

**First Baptist Church of Fremont**  
 Pastor Robb Bruns  
 Sunday School, 9 a.m.  
 Sunday Worship, 10 a.m.

**GIBSON**  
**Gibson Presbyterian Church**  
 Pastors Amy McGriff and Robert Elgin  
 Worship, 10 a.m.  
 Communion on the third Sunday of the month.

**HEDRICK**  
**The Church Of Living Water**  
 Pastor Shane Jarr  
 13 North Main St., Hedrick  
 Sunday School - 9:30 a.m.;  
 Sunday Worship -10:40 a.m.;  
 Evening Services - 7 p.m.  
 Bible Study Wednesdays - 6 p.m.

**Hedrick First Christian**  
 206 Park St. Hedrick  
 Sunday School 9:45 a.m.;  
 Gathering for Worship, 10:45 a.m.

**Hedrick Community Church A Global Methodist Church**  
 Pastor Michael Elrod  
 203 N. Spring Street, Hedrick  
 641-653-4477  
 Sunday: 9 a.m. Worship  
 In Person, or online through our Facebook Page or www.hedrickumc.org

**KEOTA**  
**Good Neighbor Fellowship**  
 126 E Broadway  
 Sunday: 9 a.m. Sunday School,  
 10 a.m. Service

**Holy Trinity Parish**  
 109 N Lincoln St.  
 Rev. Fr. Robert Lathrop  
 Office Phone: 641-636-3883  
 Sunday Mass: 8:30am

Religious-Ed Sundays 9:30-10:45am

**United Church of Faith**  
 201 North Ellis Street, PO Box 208  
 Keota, IA 52248  
 (641) 636-3825  
 keotaucf@cloudburst9.net  
 www.keotaucf.org  
 Sunday Worship Service 9:00 a.m

**KESWICK**  
**Keswick and Webster UMC**  
 Pastor Brandi Meyer  
 319-430-7299  
 Keswick United Methodist Church  
 Service: 9:00 a.m.  
 Webster United Methodist Church Worship service: 10:00 a.m.  
 Communion is on the 1st Sunday of the month for both churches

**New Life Fellowship**  
 Hwy. 22 South, Keswick  
 319-738-3851  
 Pastor John Stringfellow  
 Service Sunday at 10 a.m. and Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.  
 Teaching Tuesday is Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.  
 Evening of Praise: every third Saturday of the month at 7 p.m.

**NEW SHARON**  
**The Lighthouse Church**  
 641-637-2251  
 www.nsfcc.org  
 Pastor Eric Sneed  
 Sunday: Sunday School 9 a.m.;  
 Worship 10 a.m.  
 Wednesday: WOW Kids 6-7:30 p.m.  
 Thursday: Prayer Connect 5:50-6:20 p.m.

**New Sharon Assembly of God**  
 www.newsharonag.org  
 Pastor Shane Farnum  
 Youth Group: Wednesday: 6:30-7:30 p.m.  
 Sunday: 9 a.m. Sunday School  
 10:30 a.m. Worship Service

**New Sharon Friends Church**  
 Sunday Worship, 9:30 a.m.  
 Sunday School, 10:45 a.m.

**New Sharon Harvest Community Church**  
 Pastor David Pinkerton  
 2083 Hwy. 102  
 641-295-0109  
 Sunday School 8:45 a.m.  
 Fellowship 9:30 a.m.  
 Worship 10 a.m.

**New Sharon Lower Grove Church**  
 Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.  
 Worship, 10:30 a.m.

**New Life Fellowship New Sharon**  
 Lead Pastor Rick Baarda  
 www.newlifefellowships.org  
 641-637-2561  
 newlifefellowships@gmail.com  
 Worship Service: Sunday, 9:15am (Church)  
 Children's Sunday School during pastor's morning message. (Church Basement)  
 Adult Small Group: Sunday, 10:30am (Church)  
 Adult Small Group: Wednesday, 1:30pm (McVay FC)  
 G2C Youth Group (2-6th)- Wednesday, 6:00 -7:30pm (Church)  
 PROS Youth Group (7-12th) - Wednesday, 6:30 - 8:30pm (McVay FC)

**Union Mills Christian Church**  
 Pastor Josh Martin  
 1405 Parkin Ave, New Sharon, IA 50207  
 641-637-2339  
 Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.  
 Worship, 10:35 a.m.

**NORTH ENGLISH**  
**St. Joseph's**  
 221 N Knollridge St.  
 Rev. Fr. Robert Lathrop  
 319-664-3325  
 Mass Time: Saturdays 5:00pm (Nov through Feb: 4:00pm)  
 Religious-Ed: Wednesdays 6:00-7:15pm

**Christian Church**  
 Pastor Luke Caster  
 131 N. Howard St.  
 Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.  
 Ph. 319-664-3338

**OLLIE**  
**Grace Family Church**  
 Rev. Dar Eckley, Pastor  
 24536 Hwy. 78, Box 64, Ollie, 52576  
 Sunday Worship - 10:15 a.m.  
 Sunday school-10:15 a.m.  
 RockKnowledge Youth Group is Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

**Ollie Baptist Church**  
 Church Phone: 641-224-9797  
 Ollie Pastor Tom Grove  
 Sunday: 9:30 a.m. Worship  
 Thursday: 9 a.m. Sewing and Quilting

**Prairie View Church, A Global Methodist Church**  
 Pastor: Steven Lamb  
 641-667-2502  
 27131 Hwy 78, Ollie  
 Sunday: 9:00 a.m. Worship,  
 Followed by Fellowship  
 Sunday School 7:50 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

**OSKALOOSA**  
**Park Church of Christ**  
 Minister David Pearce  
 1804 Burlington Road  
 Oskaloosa  
 Sunday Morning  
 9:30 a.m. Classes  
 10:30 a.m. Worship

**RICHLAND**  
**Richland Methodist Church**  
 Pastor Michael Elrod  
 106 W. South St., Richland  
 319-456-2251  
 Sunday Worship: 11 a.m. in person or Facebook page.

**Trinity Friends Church**  
 Pastor Jerry Hoover  
 206 Main St,  
 641-919-8922  
 Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.

**Woolson Friends Church**  
 Pastor Jerry Hoover  
 1005 Jasmine Ave,  
 641-919-8922  
 Sunday Worship 11:00 a.m.

**ROSE HILL**  
**Rose Hill Community Church**  
 Pastor: Mike Sennett  
 2011 Main St.  
 Sunday School- 9 a.m.  
 Sunday Worship- 10:15 a.m.  
 Free Food Bank Distribution- Every second Friday of the month.

**SIGOURNEY**  
**Be the Light Ministry**  
 200 Kramer St.  
 Sunday- 9 a.m. Traditional  
 11 a.m. Contemporary  
 Sunday School (PK-6) 10-10:45 a.m.

**The Bethel Church**  
 Pastor Nick Needham  
 319-329-6070

6 miles East of Sigourney on Highway 92.  
 Website: thebethelumc.org  
 Sunday School at 9:30 a.m.  
 Worship at 10:30 a.m.  
 Member of the Global Methodist Church

**First Baptist Church**  
 Pastor Joe Hohenshell  
 3038 N. Jefferson St. 319-450-8333  
 Sunday School, 9 a.m.;  
 Worship Service, 10 a.m.

**First Presbyterian Church**  
 First Presbyterian Church  
 215 N Jefferson St, Sigourney  
 Pulpit supply for Pastor  
 641-622-2247  
 Sunday Worship: 9:30 a.m.

**Christian Church of Sigourney**  
 308 S. Jefferson, 641-622-2151  
 Pastor Dan Glandon  
 Sunday School all ages: 9:30 a.m.  
 Traditional Service: 10:45 a.m.  
 Adult Bible Study: Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

**Hope Lutheran Church, LCMS**  
 The Rev. Richard Meyer  
 315 W. Kelly Street  
 Office: 319-668-2999  
 May-Sept.  
 Sunday: Worship at 11 a.m.  
 Communion the first and third Sunday  
 Oct-April  
 Saturday: Worship at 5 p.m.  
 Communion the first and third Saturday

**Lancaster Christian Church**  
 Pastor Don Frost  
 22934 W. County Rd. V5G  
 815-262-5273  
 Sunday School: 9 a.m.;  
 Worship Service: 10 a.m.

**St. Mary's Catholic Church**  
 415 E Pleasant Valley St.  
 Rev. Fr. Robert Lathrop  
 Office Phone #641-622-2316  
 Sunday Mass: 10:30am  
 Religious-Ed Sundays  
 9:00-10:15am  
 Bulletin Deadline is Wednesday 9:00am  
 Email: sigourneymary@diodav.org

**Sigourney United Methodist Church**  
 Website: sigourneymc.com  
 (641) 622-2641  
 Pastor Brandi Meyer  
 Sunday Worship Services - 11:00 a.m.  
 Everyone is Welcome

**SOUTH ENGLISH**  
**English River Church of the Brethren**  
 29252 137th St., South English  
 319-667-5235  
 Worship 10 a.m.

**WHAT CHEER**  
**What Cheer Baptist Church**  
 Pastor DJ Danner  
 641-660-9948  
 109 E Briney  
 What Cheer  
 Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.;  
 Worship: 10:30 a.m. Sunday evening services, 6:30 p.m.  
 Adult Bible Study: Wednesday 6:30 p.m.

**What Cheer Methodist Church**  
 The Rev. Vince Homan  
 Sunday School, 9:30; Worship, 10:30 a.m.  
 Second Tuesday - Local food event for Tri-County and Delta  
 Fourth Tuesday- Food Truck from Ottumwa Food Bank- Anyone in Keokuk County

**What Cheer Hilltop Chapel**  
 506 E Briney St., What Cheer  
 641-634-2990  
 Pastor John Bacon  
 Sunday Worship: 10 -11:30 a.m.  
 Kids Church: 10:30 a.m.  
 Women's Bible Study: Mondays at 6:30 p.m.  
 Men's fellowship: Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.  
 Community Kids Club: first-sixth grades Thursdays at 6 p.m.  
 Prayer Meeting: Third Friday each month at 6:30 p.m.

**Free Grace United**  
 107 East Broadway St. What Cheer, IA 50268.  
 10 a.m. Sunday service with Kids Church.  
 Recovery meeting weekly  
 Wednesday 7 pm

## VIEWPOINT from pg. 4

schools, everyone who could help did help. Millikin said 125 people, some of them practical strangers who had only spoken to her family once or twice, coming out to help. "How wonderful this community we've got. Within minutes, this place was covered in people who wanted to help. It's just amazing," said farmer Andrew VanDeHaar.

No person was killed by the storm, thankfully. Keota High School put on a humorous play about superheroes a few days later; the play had originally been scheduled for the 31st, and gave some much needed humor in that dark week. The church I attend also managed to put on a Living Last Supper play a week later; there was heavy worry that this was going to be cancelled, due to the actor who played Phillip being busy working 16-hour shifts getting power back on.

The second big news story came in June. Years of poor record keeping left no one in Richland sure who legally owned the fire department, with the city and township both claiming ownership. Tensions blazed over after disagreements between Fire Chief Mitch Ehrenfelt and certain members of the city council over insurance physicals and a new fire station resulted in Ehrenfelt saying that he worked for the township, not the city. Three members of the city council responded by firing Ehrenfelt. Infamously, they officially approved this as "accepting Ehrenfelt's resignation," despite Ehrenfelt having never resigned.

Ehrenfelt ignored this "firing" and continued working as fire chief, arguing that the city didn't have the authority to remove him. After several heated meetings, the parties involved decided the only way forward was to wait until after the fall election, in hopes that a new council would get along better with the fire department. In the fall, two of the three council members who tried to remove Ehrenfelt lost reelection; the city also got a new mayor, firefighter John Capps.

In other local government news, the City of Sigourney hired a code enforcer, added cameras to the square, and dealt with constant issues with the Façade project on the south side of the square. The City of Keota decided against switching garbage companies and investigated a council member for an alleged conflict of interest, ultimately exonerating him. Over the summer and spring of 2023, the Keota pool was constructed, following years of fundraising from the community. However, work on the pool was completed too late for a pool season, leading the formal opening to be pushed back to 2024. Still, the pool was opened for one day, on Sept. 10.

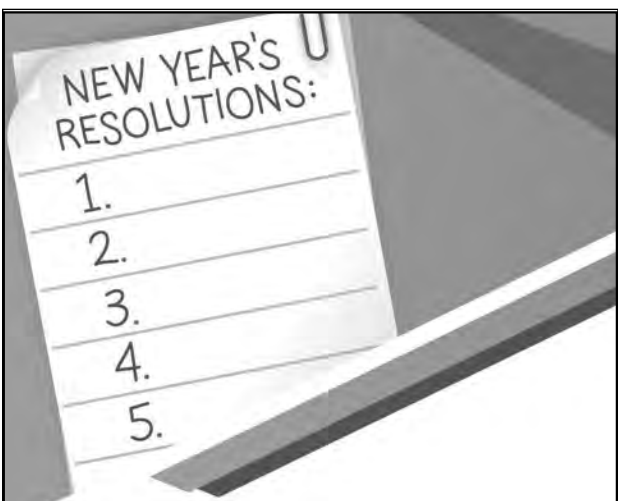
The final big story of that year came on October 14, the night of the infamous hayride crash. A Halloween party was held at Griffith Park in What Cheer, featuring a hayride through the gravel roads of Keokuk County. During this ride, the driver, Dan Brubaker, swerved into a ditch, injuring thirteen children and hospitalizing three. Brubaker and David Heady, who rode passenger during the hayride, would later be arrested for child endangerment in December, 2024 and sentenced in September and October of 2025 respectively. Our initial reporting, right after the accident, was sparse on details, but the story of the event would come out over the following weeks. I did manage to do an interview with Reanna Robb and Collin MacCready, two college students who were at the party,

who described the heavy drinking before the hayride, the horrors at the crash site, and an overhead conversation where Heady and Brubaker discussed lying to the police about what happened.

In January, a state criminal investigation began for Windsor Place Senior Living Campus in Sigourney, after a resident was found in a vegetative state, after the staff allegedly ignored her screams of pain and pleas to be taken to a hospital after suffering a stroke in November of 2022. On Jan. 24 the state implemented school vouchers, despite widespread backlash from public schools across the state. Sigourney wrestler Reannah Utterback placed eighth in the state wrestling tournament, only the second female wrestler to place on the state podium against boys in Iowa history. On March 3, Country Junction opened in Richland. On Mar. 17, Sigourney High School drama students performed "You Can't Take it With You." In May, Keota was designated a Heart Safe school. On May 26, Sigourney softball pitcher Carly Goodwin struck out 17/21 English Valleys players, leading to a 9-0 victory. On May 31, the Sigourney School Board approved issuing \$7,500,000 in bonds to fund the work overhauling the elementary school that began summer 2024.

In June, the City of Keota celebrated its 150th anniversary. On June 7, ground was broken for the new Richland daycare. On June 26, a car crashed through the wall of the new Public Health office, delaying the move to there from the court house; no one was hurt. On July 6, Chloe Zittergruen was crowned Keokuk County Fair Queen. On July 7, Zaylee Hunter and Colsyn Bruns were named Little Miss and Mr. Keokuk County respectively. On July 13, Autumn Belvel was crowned Expo Queen. On July 24, State Senator Adrian Dickey was arrested during RAGBRAI; the charges were later dropped. Also on July 23, Keota Police Chief Doug Conrad resigned. On Aug. 18, "What Cheer: Coal, Clay, & Community," a documentary directed by Jacob Glandon, premiered at the What Cheer Opera House. On Aug. 20, Dick and Merla Morse were inducted into the Iowa 4-H Hall of Fame. On Oct. 18, the City of Sigourney hired a new police chief, who subsequently retired in 2024. On Oct. 19, Keota drama students performed a series of short plays. On Oct. 27, Tri-County students performed the Vince Hraskey written play "Romeo & Juliet 2: Zombie Apocalypse. In November, Pekin students performed "Beauty and the Beast." On Nov. 15, the Sigourney School Board approved creating a girls wrestling team. In December, Pekin retired the jersey number of alum and professional baseball player Keaton Winn.

In the final months of the year, the county received repeated visits from Republican presidential hopefuls, including: a meet and greet from Asa Hutchinson that featured a number of attendees I could count on one hand, including me and Hutchinson; two Vivek Ramaswamy rallies in a single week, which was very repetitive; and a packed Ron DeSantis rally at Grant Ranch. At that last one, DeSantis stated that, if he was elected, he would begin arresting and deporting immigrants who attended protests over the U.S. government's funding of the Gaza Genocide. I will never forget how loudly I heard people cheer at the idea of abolishing the first amendment and criminalizing criticizing the government.



“Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and he will establish your plans.”  
 Proverbs 16:3 (NIV)

## Reflection on the Year

People often rush to determine or begin their "New Year's resolution" as the turn of December into January occurs. While this is often rooted in motivation and desire to make a positive change in oneself, it can also come from a negative mindset. We often focus on the qualities we do not have rather than the ones we do. Further, we also tend to focus on the achievements of others, rather than our own. Considering this, a great habit we can develop is an annual evaluation of and reflection on our year - what we achieved and how we improved, even if just slightly. In doing this prior to setting ourselves to a resolution, perhaps we can find a greater appreciation for our abilities. We can also gain a better understanding of our capabilities for achievement and improvement, year by year.

-James Stone

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JUNE from pg. 1

backbone of our small towns," said Reynolds. "You answer the call day or night, balancing service with family, jobs, and everyday life, often without expecting anything in return. Your courage and commitment makes all the difference, whether it's a volunteer firefighter running towards and not away from the flames, a medical caregiver who is on hand when our neighbors are in need, or a reserve peace officer with the courage to wear the uniform and accept all the dangers it entails. These everyday heroes are true pillars of our society, and to honor our first responders and encourage more volunteers to join their ranks, we more than doubled the Volunteer First Responder Tax Credit from \$100 to \$250, and with the signing of House File 1002, we're taking yet another important step to recognize and reward that service...This is about more than just dollars, it's about valuing commitment, encouraging retention, and showing our appreciation for those who make our communities stronger."

Reynolds signed the bill in Packwood in recognition of one of its fiercest champions, Senator and longtime member of the Packwood Volunteer Fire Department Adrian Dickey.

"It's neat. You know, a neat event for the community of Packwood, a neat event for our department," said Dickey. "We've got a great department, between our EMS and our firefighters. Sadly, just five days ago, we had a pretty tragic accident that we had to respond to, where a young gal lost her life, and

it's tough. That's tough on our EMS, our fire department, you have to go through something like that. So this is kind of a nice, maybe part of the healing process. So the timing's great, having the governor come here to Packwood. You know, we always say Packwood is God's gift to Iowa, so having this here is a nice little treat."

The Iowa Firefighters Association had worked for ten years to get the bill passed, the last five of which with Dickey's help, before it was passed unanimously by the legislature.

"When I ran for the Senate for the first time five years ago, one of the major reasons was because of the fire service," said Dickey. "I've been a volunteer firefighter for 33 years, and of the 50 senators and 100 reps at the capital, none of them are volunteer firefighters. None of them have the ability to understand what these men and women go through, and they needed a voice to stand up for the issues that they have."

The bill allows departments to create length of service award programs for volunteer firefighters, volunteer emergency medical care providers and reserve peace officers. For departments with yearly revenue under \$100,000, the state will match every dollar departments put towards award programs threefold, up to \$500. The bill, passed after midnight on the final day of the legislative session, also appropriates \$1.5 million from sports betting receipts to fund this program.

"I've always been an advocate for what I call the 'true

volunteer fire departments,' departments like Packwood, you know?" said Dickey. "If they're having a fundraiser to raise money for a fire hose, it's a different level. They're struggling to buy hose, or turn out gear, and they need a little more support than a department like Fairfield that has 10,000 people, who still help their department, but it's just a different dynamic."

Dickey explained that different departments will be able to decide the criteria volunteers must meet to receive the funds, for example requiring volunteers attend trainings or go to meetings to be eligible. "One of the problems in these services, when you're doing it for free, it's kinda hard for the fire chief to tell them to do stuff, because I'm doing this for free. It's on my own time. This is a carrot that the chief can put out there as an incentive," said the senator.

Dickey explained that 95% of Iowans rely on volunteer first responders and that, over the past ten years, the number of volunteers has decreased from 19,000 to 15,000. He stated that, if these volunteers were paid minimum wage, they collectively would be paid \$100,000,000 yearly, and stated that the bill was a way to give thanks for all they did.

"We're awfully proud of the efforts that he's put in and what he's done for the firefighters here in the state, in a lot of the small communities that a lot of times struggle to get volunteers. I think everyone's real happy to have him be a part of our team," said Packwood Fire Chief Jeremy Atwood."

APRIL from pg. 1

and local governments. Since then, 36,884 grants have been given out statewide, totalling \$148,000,000. The Keokuk County Community Endowment Foundation has given out roughly \$1,800,000, helping fund equipment for fire departments, the rebuilding of damaged community centers and town halls, the building of pools and childcare facilities, and so much more.

"We're very happy to be able to do this," said Secretary Ann Spillman. "We've been doing it twenty years, I've been on the board for twenty years, and it keeps growing each year, and it's just a very good thing for the community, for everybody, the whole county."

On April 17, KCCEF held its annual award ceremony, where members gave out 31 grants to local organizations, totalling \$126,000.

"This is a fun night for us board members, because we get to interact with all of you guys," said Director Connie McLaughlin. "You guys are the ones who are making the impact throughout Keokuk County, and that's huge, and we are honored to be working with you. So, thank you."

Grants distributed include:

- \$3,000 to the City of Hedrick for new swings and fall protection material at the civic center.
- \$5,000 to the City of Keswick for a new outside warning siren.
- \$5,000 to the City of Ollie for new playground equipment.
- \$4,885 to the City of Richland to add red ball dirt to the ball fields
- \$,000 to the City of Sigourney Park and Recreation Committee to replace the buckets at the city pool splash pad.
- \$,000 to the City of Sigourney Public Safety Committee for a digital speed sign by the high school.
- \$,000 to the City of Thornburg for street repairs.
- \$,000 to the City of Webster for codebook updates.
- \$3,000 to the Delta Town and County Center to remodel the gym bathrooms.
- \$4,000 to Food Bank Iowa to support local food pantries.
- \$3,000 to the Hedrick Public Library for children's books and patron computers.
- \$5,000 to the Keokuk County Childcare Network to expand childcare throughout the county.
- \$4,000 to the Keokuk County Expo for renovating the Expo hall.
- \$5,000 to the Keokuk County Fair for lighting at Thomas Hall.
- \$4,000 to the Keokuk County Historical Society to digitize old newspapers.
- \$2,745 to the Keota Athletic Boosters for weight

room and locker room wall decals.

- \$4,000 to the Keota Food Pantry for non perishables and food vouchers for low income families.
- \$3,363 to the Keota Veterans Memorial Foundation to replace flags and rebuild a small memorial for veterans who died in service.
- \$5,000 to the Keswick Fire Department for 16 fire helmets.
- \$5,000 to the Richland Area Child Care Organization for playground work.
- \$3,000 to the Richland Public Library to update computers.
- \$5,000 out of the Disaster Fund to the Sigourney Ministerial Alliance Community Outreach Center for repairs to the kitchen wall and flooring.
- \$1,000 to the Sigourney Public Library for seating and furniture updates.
- \$5,000 out of the Disaster Fund to the St. Peter and Paul Clear Creek Heritage Association to repair storm damage to the steeple.
- \$4,000 to the Tri-County Food Pantry for new amenities.
- \$3,000 to Unleashed for three isolation banks.
- \$3,000 to the What Cheer Betterment Committee to repair the wooden fence at city park.
- \$4,850 to the What Cheer Brick Museum to reinforce basement window wells, coal chutes and doors.
- \$5,000 to the What Cheer Opera House Board to put a vapor barrier on the basement floor.
- \$1,168.99 to the What Cheer Public Library for a new computer.
- \$4,995 to the Wilson Memorial Library to update children's computers.

"I've been a part of this organization since its inception, for twenty years, and we were talking about it beforehand, a couple of us gals, and it seems impossible that we've been here that long," said KCCEF Chair Laurie Luetjohann. "I don't know. There's something about the group of people in this room, because each of you go back to your communities and create a difference. We are just a small part of that. We know that. We know we have a lot more things behind the scenes that you do to make things go and make things work, but if we can be just a little bit of that, it's why we all do it. It's one of the funnest organizations you can be a part of, because we always get to help people. That's what I really love about it."

KCCEF also gives out a \$25,000 major grant in the fall. Last year, this grant was awarded to the City of Martinsburg, to help complete rebuilding city hall, following a devastating fire. The grant

money went towards adding a handicap-accessible parking lot in front of the new building.

"Two years ago, we had a devastating fire at the old city hall and it wiped out everything," said Mayor Pro Tem and KCCEF board member Todd Harbison, "All the city history that we had in the city hall, all the stuff that we had from the school, it was all gone. Through various hard work, and especially through the endowment fund, we have been able to actually rebuild that up and also put in a handicap ramp parking. It's a whole new building, and so it will always kind of keep a space in our heart, as they were one of the very first ones that contributed money to get this project rolling, and it's like a night and day difference when you come and see it in Martinsburg. We've made it so, basically, without the years it will last for generations to come."

"It's looking really nice, and we're going to be able to really finish it up, and everything is going to be really nice," said Spillman, who is also the Martinsburg city clerk.

"We also got to go to their building last month, a beautiful facility for the town to have," Luetjohann. "I mean, it's a good community center that people can go to. They really don't have anything like that in the community at all."

The News-Review also asked several board members about the past grants they were most proud of. "Unleashed just does a lot of great stuff with animal rescue, and it's all funded by donations. I mean, she just does it out of the goodness of her heart... There's just, it's hard to pick (thing most proud of)," said Luetjohann.

"You know, I've been on it for five years and stuff. The Sigourney pool was one we kinda contributed to," said Harbison. "That was actually, when I was on the board, the very first one...I mean, there's just been so much stuff that we've helped with around the community and stuff."

"We did LUCAS devices for all of the fire stations in Keokuk County, and then in Keswick, they got the major grant for their tanker truck, to be able to help the communities surrounding Keswick," said board member Becky Leer. "We had some renovation to the Legion Hall in Kewswick, and then the What Cheer Opera House, and even the Flea Market we gave some grants to the fairgrounds to do some rehabilitation to their areas and stuff. We've helped a little bit with the Keota pool, I believe we gave some of that, and the Sigourney pool, their slide and things."

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COUNTRY GIRL'S CORNER

# Good-Bye 2025!!

By Sheryl L. Carter

Christmas week was upon us this past week with all the last-minute things to do. Huff & puff! But I took it little by little, checking things off on my list one by one. The stockings out from the high closet shelf—which I also totally emptied as I have no business getting up on my three-step ladder, and reaching clear up there any longer. There wasn't much left anyway, but it is empty now.

I filled the stockings, but first I had to FIND what I did with those stocking fillers—oh, yes, there they were—right where I put them. Got those filled, and hung up on the wide woodwork that is around the big double doorway into the living room.

The Christmas letter had been written previously, and last week most all of the cards with the letter tucked inside went out by mail, or in people's mailboxes out at church. I still have a small number to send as a few more have come in even yet today.

Scottie had been here last week Friday (Dec 19) and had run the big vac for me plus some other much needed things, so my house was pretty much in order, just would need a few touch-ups at the last. I expected Wes, Dana, and Susan all on Friday, (which was yesterday, as I write this on December 27) who all planned to stay overnight, so this week was the count-down.

Monday, I did the laundry plus some housework and errands, and a great visit with my dear friend who resides in Mom's old apartment across the driveway and around the corner. It had been much too long, and we had a lovely chat. We are a blessing to each other. After my errands, I finally

got busy and finished the remaining bookcase in the living room—all done! Yay! Of course, I had to look through every family calendar I have crafted for us the last 13 or so years. Last year was the first time since 2012 that I didn't make one. Oh, the memories.

On Tuesday, I rolled into Pella with Jazzy to do a bit more shopping—I hadn't planned on coming in, but had some last minute changes. After I unloaded the few bags back home, I laid all the gifts for my family out on the bed, and got them all wrapped and bagged and placed under and around the old antique sewing machine that sits in front of the big picture window in the living room. Done and good.

Christmas Eve Day, I did some things around here, and brought frozen stuff in from the freezer in preparation for the weekend. That night was our Christmas Eve Service out at church. I was pleasantly surprised to see the church nearly full, with the lights dimmed over the congregation, just leaving the stage and pulpit area illuminated.

I had volunteered to read a poem. I hadn't felt real perky all day, and hadn't eaten much so by the time I got there, I was kind of nervous, but got some juice from the kitchen and began to feel better. I loved the poem I was about to read, and so wanted to do it well to glorify the Lord, and briefly thought maybe I will have to have them bypass me, but as time went on and the others did their part, and thankfully, my turn was half way down the program, I was feeling much better.

I made my way to the front of the audience, and stepped in front of the mic. It helped

so much that everyone was sitting in dimmed lighting. The Lord was gracious to me and I was able to read the poem just fine. There were some really good presentations that night from start to finish, a blessing all through. Then Pastor Jerry gave a short devotional, and we sang another Christmas hymn. The whole evening was lovely all the way around.

Thursday, on Christmas Day, Dorothy, Scottie, and I met at our sis and brother in law's, Norma and Lawrence, at their Pella apartment for Christmas dinner. Norma had a big feed made for us, and so we feasted. I went home mid-afternoon, and soon found the fog was much thicker than it had been driving down. I was glad to be safely back home.

Yesterday and today, I haven't down a whole lot, which is good no one was here, as Wes texted Wednesday night that he and Dana were both sick, so our festivities are postponed for now.

Yesterday we got the news that Loren's Aunt Mary Jane, 98, the last of their original family, had passed away on Christmas Day. What a blessing for her and her family that she was brought into glory and the arms of Jesus on His very birthday! Her funeral is next week and if all goes well, we hope to drive up.

It has been cloudy and foggy for some days now, but the temps are much warmer—in fact I just took a little walk with just a light jacket on, and was plenty comfortable. But the snow is almost all gone except for some really huge piles. We will be glad to see the sun one of these days! I am sure it's still up there behind all those thick heavy clouds.

Well, that about wraps it up for now, just hope you all had a Merry Christmas and will have a Happy New Year this coming week! 2026, how can it be?

Here is the poem I read for our Christmas Eve Service:

**"Noel, A Christmas Poem"**  
(1936)  
**JRR Tolkien**  
Grim was the world and

grey last night:

The moon and stars were fled,

The hall was dark without song or light,

The fires were fallen dead.

The wind in the trees was like to the sea,

And over the mountains' teeth

It whistled bitter-cold and free,

As a sword leapt from its sheath.

The lord of snows upreared his head;

His mantle long and pale

Upon the bitter blast was spread

And hung o'er hill and dale.

The world was blind,

the boughs were bent,

All ways and paths were wild:

Then the veil of cloud apart was rent,

And here was born a Child.

The ancient dome of heaven sheer

Was pricked with distant light;

A star came shining white and clear

Alone above the night.

In the dale of dark in that hour of birth

One voice on a sudden sang:

Then all the bells in Heaven and Earth

Together at midnight rang.

Mary sang in this world below:

They heard her song arise

O'er mist and over mountain snow

To the walls of Paradise,

And the tongue of many bells was stirred

In Heaven's towers to ring

When the voice of mortal maid was heard,

That was mother of Heaven's King.

Glad is the world and fair this night

With stars about its head,

And the hall is filled with laughter and light,

And fires are burning red.

The bells of Paradise now ring

With bells of Christendom,

And Gloria, Gloria we will sing

That God on earth is come.



MAHASKA COUNTY NEWS

OFF THE VINE

By Jackie Perkins

Sunday, December 28, 2025, the Third Day of Christmas! We need a little sunshine!

I hope you all enjoyed your Christmas with family and friends. I had a wonderful Christmas Day! The answer was "simplicity." This year I didn't shop, never would have thought that would happen. Some gifts were found through the year, some were things I had already owned and passed on, and some were handmade! I hope they were received with the joy in which they were given.

We hosted 15 on Christmas from Greg's family. It was wonderful to be in the same room, and almost around the same table. And that is where we all spent the whole day. No running to another room to concentrate on phones or watch TV. We visited, told stories, played a game and consumed treats like it was 1955! (almost)

I received a wonderful gift on Christmas morning. Upon checking Facebook, I saw a friend request from Silvia! In August, 1992, we traveled to the airport in Des Moines and welcomed this 17-year-old from Germany to spend the school year with us. The next stop was Living History Farm to meet Alicia where she was working for the summer. I can only imagine entering a country where you knew no one. I had searched for Silvia several times and did not find her...and suddenly there she

was! She sent pictures of her beautiful family as well as her parents, Fritz and Margot. Hopefully we will now keep in touch.

I also had a very long phone conversation with Hollee. What a busy family they are! We promised to get together soon and with Alicia & her Aunt Sue we plan on making popcorn balls! Her mother, Cynthia, made the most awesome popcorn balls ever! Hollee has the special enameled dish pan she used, so we will give it a try! I have attempted in the past, and the taste was wonderful – but a trip to the dentist could follow.

A long visit with my friend MJ in Texas last night was wonderful. I met MJ the first day at Ottumwa Heights College in 1969. We were receiving some information when I noticed this beautiful girl with long, thick dark hair. Her eyes were so blue and at her feet sat a big box of Oxadol detergent. Funny the things you remember. We roomed across the hall from each other and although we do not see each other, kept in touch for well over 50 years.

Barring a potential storm, our table will be surrounded by a bunch of Siereens tonight. Lasagna and hot rolls are the plan. I better get moving.

The longer you stay on the wrong brain, the more expensive it becomes to return home.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy 2026!

PARAMEDIC from pg. 2

No one was arrested as a result of the police complaint, the lawsuit alleges.

On Aug. 13, 2024, a formal complaint was filed with the Iowa Public Information Board alleging the board violated Iowa's Open Meetings Law when two of the three county supervisors discussed the hiring process on June 24, 2024.

Attached to the complaint was an audio recording of the phone conversation, which IPIB forwarded to Moulding, the county attorney.

The IPIB complaint was then resolved with an "informal resolution" in which the parties agreed the county could be found in violation of the law. According to the lawsuit, Moulding then signed an affidavit alleging Heisel had recorded her end of the Aug. 5, 2024, discussion about her future with the county in violation of Iowa law, then forwarded that affidavit to the Washington County Attorney's Office for consideration of criminal charges.

The lawsuit claims that in his affidavit, Moulding alleged Heisel was asked to show Hemminger around the building, at which point the two left the ambulance director's office. Moulding, Drish and an assistant county attorney allegedly remained in the director's office where, at some point, Moulding noticed Heisel had left her cell phone on

her desk. Moulding allegedly waved his hand above the phone, activating the screen, which indicated the conversation in the room was being recorded.

In January 2025, Fairfield police criminally charged Heisel with felony interception of communications and misdemeanor electronic and mechanical eavesdropping. On June 6, 2025, a jury found Heisel not guilty of both charges.

Heisel's lawsuit, which was recently transferred from state court to federal court, seeks unspecified damages for alleged slander, malicious prosecution and abuse of process, as well as alleged violations of the Iowa Civil Rights Act through gender discrimination, Iowa's law prohibiting retaliation against employees for engaging in protected activity, and Heisel's Fourth Amendment rights as it relates to the county attorney's actions with her phone.

The county has yet to file a response to the allegations. The county's attorney in the matter, Holly Corkery, declined to comment on the lawsuit.

Read more from Kauffman online at IowaCapitalDispatch.com

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Obituaries

## James McNurlen

1945-2025

HARPER—James "Jim" McNurlen, age 80, of rural Harper, died peacefully Saturday, December 27, 2025, at his home.



James "Jim" McNurlen

Jim was born November 29, 1945, in Washington, Iowa, the son of William and Dorothy "Evelyn" (Kleinschmidt) Mc Nurlen and graduated from Keota High School. On April 30, 1967, he married Donna Haugen at the Sigourney United Methodist Church. The couple lived in rural Harper where Jim sold Super Sweet feed and knives for many years. Jim enjoyed hunting, fishing, trapping, selling knives, raising livestock and spending time with his grandchildren.

Survivors include his wife: Donna of Harper; two sons: Joseph "Joe" Mc Nurlen of Houston, Missouri and Jason "Jake" (Sonia) Mc Nurlen of Sigourney; six grandchildren: Chelsea, Brianna (Jon), Justin, Shawn, Preston and Madison; five great grandchildren: Kolby, Liam, Calli, Cordell and Kaier; two brothers: Dick (Janis) Mc Nurlen of Keota and Charlie (Linda) Mc Nurlen of Carlyle, Illinois and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents.

According to Jim's wishes, his body will be cremated and no services are planned at this time. There will be a celebration of life at a later date.

A memorial fund has been established for Lake Belva Deer Park. Powell Funeral Home and Cremation Service in Sigourney is caring for Jim and his family. Tributes may be made at www.powellfuneralhomes.com.

Celebration of Life: held at later date  
POWELL FUNERAL HOME  
SIGOURNEY

MAY from pg. 1

them, the Rudyard Kipling poem "Recessional" and the ending of the John Ford directed movie "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon," all of which feature the same three word message: "Lest We Forget."

"It was a call not to forget the brutality of war," said Homan. "No matter your race, no matter your heritage, war is a brutal thing, and we ought not forget the price paid by those who are forced into harm's way and those who make peace in the middle of that...During our military conflicts, over 600,000 Americans have lost their lives since the First World War...I read that number to myself at home, because I don't want to forget and how my freedoms came to me. The deadliest conflict for our country during this time frame was World War II, of course, and during that time, over 400,000 service members died. And yet it still seems our remembrance of the human cost of war is fragile. 139,000 plus from the Korean War. There were 211,000 U.S. casualties between 1955 and 1975, all connected to Vietnam. More than 7,000 have died as part of the 21st Century military operations tied to Afghanistan and Iraq.

I will not forget those numbers. And yet, these crisis member counts do not reflect all the military lives that are lost, do they? Overall, from 1980 to 2022 there have been 61,000 non-hostile military deaths, amounting to 1,400 deaths annually, including an average of over 250 every year, who died by a self-inflicted wound. Accidents, illness, homicide, self-inflicted wounds, they have taken a toll on our armed forces, even when war was no more. But, despite our best intentions, these numbers, I fear, will only grow in coming years. Many years from now, someone else will be here besides us, and those numbers will have gone up...In the words of former Senate chaplain Reverend Peter Marshall, it is the price that must yet be paid for the Republic, but it is the price that comes with a heavy toll...And should we ever forget, every time there is a conflict or war, we see the flag draped on coffins coming home. It is a stark reminder."

The service concluded outside, next to the Freedom Rock, where the Keswick American Legion gave a military salute.

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## Sports year in review: APRIL

### Glosser, Hadley come home with top-6 finishes at Drake Relays

By Mark Schafer | The News-Review  
DES MOINES - When you go against the best in the state you tend to want to show off your best.

For two days in April the contingent of local athletes that participated in the Drake Relays seemed to not only bring their best, but excel in what had previously been accomplished.

Anna Hadley had entered the discus event feeling like she was stuck. Her throws weren't traveling as far as she had wanted during the final week of April. Overall, she kind of felt stuck.

Then came the very first throw of the Drake Relays. She was able to launch the disc 135-feet-10-inches which was one of her best throws throughout April.

It also launched the junior up the leaderboard for the event.

"I had been in a slump lately with discus. I just haven't seemed to be able to get to the 135-foot mark lately with any of my throws. So it was



Pekin's Anna Hadley throws the discus during a throw at the Drake Relays held in late April. Hadley would finish sixth overall in the discus event.

nice to have that first throw go that far," Hadley said in April. "That was a good start to me because it proved to me that I could hit where I wanted to hit. It also got me ready for the next throws. Sadly I wasn't able to get back to that mark for the rest of the meet."

Hadley would eventually finish sixth. However, the strong first throw would help her gain confidence which would come in play later in

the track season. Before she ran in the 3,000 meter race at Drake, Pekin's Chloe Glosser had been hampered by injuries which were slowing her down. When it came time to show how fast she is against the rest of the high school field, Glosser seemed to feel no pain.

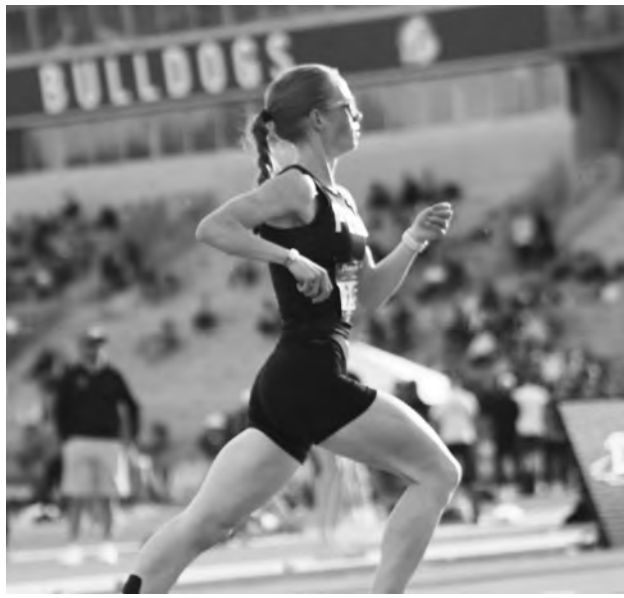
During the final lap of the 3,000 meter run Glosser cut through the field and would eventually finish third overall in the race.

"I always try to take about 10 hard steps once I get to the final 500 meters of the race," Glosser said last April. "Those 10 hard steps get me in the mindset that I need to be in a little earlier in the race for the last lap. That was what I needed to catch up to the girls that were in front of me. As I got onto the the front stretch I was able to catch the third place girl and pass her."

Glosser finished the 3,000 meter race with a time of 9:57.37 which placed her third overall in the race.

English Valleys senior Gage Heyne also ran at the Drake Relays. The senior was able to compete in the 1,600 meter race where he finished 21st overall.

Photos by Mark Schafer



Chloe Glosser from Pekin runs in the shadow of the grandstand at Drake Stadium during the Drake Relays. Glosser finished third overall in the 3,000 meter run.



Anna Hadley poses with her first place medal after winning the class 1A State discus title in Des Moines. Hadley set a new class 1A and Pekin school record with her winning throw of 150-feet-9-inches.

## Sports year in review: MAY

### Hadley sets new school record with discus State championship

By Mark Schafer | The News-Review

DES MOINES - The final throw of the season wasn't a necessity.

By the time the sixth throw for Anna Hadley had come up the Pekin junior had already known she was the class 1A State champion. During her previous marks Hadley had been feeling good in the late May spring weather that Des Moines had to offer.

On her third throw of the competition Hadley was able to send the disc soaring for 149-feet-2-inches. That throw propelled her to the top of the

leaderboard, and it reset the Pekin school record.

As the discus event went into the final three throws, none of her fellow class 1A competitors would challenge Hadley. Her mark of 149-feet-2-inches stood strong. It was actually a throw that won her the meet.

Despite not needing to throw a sixth disc, Hadley did anyway. It would prove to be a good decision.

The Pekin junior was able to send the disc slicing through the air. When it finally plummeted to earth the numbers were truly shocking. Hadley had just thrown the disc 150-feet-9-inches. Not only was that another new Pekin school record, it was a new record in class 1A for discus throwers.

"I was completely awe struck when I saw that number pop up," Hadley said back in May, and somewhat in disbelief over the throw she had. "It was amazing to see that number pop up."

Her final throw was the third-best throw that an Iowa girl had recorded throughout the 2025 spring track season. In terms of all-time best throws, the mark that Hadley put up at the State track meet was the 49th-best throw in Iowa history.

"I didn't think I was going to be able to break the school record this year," Hadley said. "I was for sure thinking I was going to have to wait until my senior year to get the school record. To get that and the state record as well, that is just amazing."



Sigourney's Hunter Sellers slides safely into home plate during the June 16 game against Lynnville-Sully. Sellers game-winning run came in the bottom of the seventh inning and helped the Savages finish the month of June with a 21-1 overall record. Photo by Mark Schafer

## Sports year in review: JUNE

### Sigourney baseball stays strong, raises to No. 2 in class 1A

By Mark Schafer | The News-Review

SIGOURNEY - Everyone knew that they were going to be good.

Just how good they were going to be was the question that waited to be answered. Some of the questions were answered throughout the month of June as the Sigourney baseball team would finish the month of June with just one defeat.

In the first month of the season Sigourney was only challenged a handful of times. They would only fall once when they came up short in a 5-3 game against North Linn. Still, that didn't seem to bother the Savages as they worked well through the month of June.

One game that nearly everyone still remembers, even half a year later, came on June 16 against the 2024 State champion, Lynnville-Sully.

The game was against two teams that were ranked in the top-5 of the class 1A rankings, and would go a long way in deciding who was going to be named the 2025 South Iowa Cedar League champion.

Sigourney seemed to take control of the game early on.

The Savages would take an early lead, but Lynnville-Sully would answer and tie the game at seven during the seventh inning.

Hunter Sellers was the leadoff batter for the Savages in the seventh inning and he would reach base off a single. He eventually took second after a wild pitch, and made it safely to third base off a sacrifice fly ball from Ike Molyneux.

Sellers was just 90 feet away from giving the Savages, at the time, their 13th-straight win. And a bit of revenge along the way too.

"When we have a runner on third with two outs, we tell all of the kids to read

dirt," said Lee Crawford, the head coach for the Sigourney baseball team. "If they see the ball hit the dirt off a pitch in any situation they are going to take a bigger lead, and read the situation."

It didn't take long for Sellers to read the dirt. On the third pitch of Cole McKay's at-bat the ball fell into the dirt and rolled to the left of the Lynnville-Sully catcher.

Sellers took off. So did the Lynnville-Sully pitcher. They both arrived at home plate at roughly the same time.

When the Hawks catcher located the ball all he could do was pick it up and admire it. It was too late. Sellers had already slid safely across the plate for the game-winning run, and giving the Savages their 13th win. They were the last undefeated team in class 1A.

Overall the Savages would finish the month of June with a 21-1 record. They were ranked No. 2 in the class 1A rankings.

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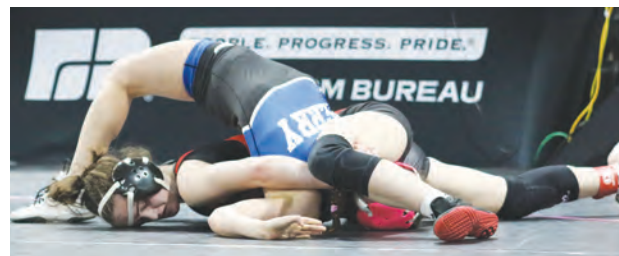
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Isaac Bruns from Sigourney goes up for a shot against the defense of Keota. Bruns was able to pass the 1,000 point career mark during the Jan. 21 game against Keota.



Keota senior Billie Kindred goes up for a shot during a Jan. 21 game against Sigourney. Kindred was able to set a new career rebounding record in the game.



Pekin wrestler Lexa Nelson starts to pin a Perry opponent during one of the early rounds of the State wrestling tournament held last February at the Xtream Arena. Nelson finished sixth overall.

## 2025 sports year in review: JANUARY - A record night in Sigourney

By Mark Schafer | The News-Review

**SIGOURNEY** - The first month of 2025 featured at least one very special night.

On Jan. 21 Sigourney hosted Keota in a late-season basketball game that proved to be more than just a regular game.

In both the boys and girls game something happened that would rewrite the record books.

The girls game proved to be another Sigourney win as they were able to pull away with a 68-44 victory over their friendly foes to the east. What was more impressive that night was the fact that senior Josephine Moore was able to set a new school record.

On that night in January Moore would score 41 points and grab 11 rebounds. That night her 11 rebounds helped Moore set a new career rebounds record. The 11 rebounds that Moore secured gave her the record, which she would continue to build upon until the end of the sea-

son.

Moore's record breaking game wasn't the only record that was set that night.

In the boys game the Sigourney boys won 62-55, grabbing their first win over the Eagles since 2022, but only their second since 2018.

While the win was historic in that sense, what was more historic was the fact that both a Keota player and a Sigourney player set a new record that night.

For Keota, Billie Kindred was able to finish the game with 24 points and 14 rebounds. That gave him the Keota boys school record for most rebounds in a career.

On the Sigourney side Isaac Bruns would finish the game with 13 points and three rebounds. That allowed Bruns to pass the 1,000 point mark in his career. He is one of a very short list of Sigourney boys basketball players that have passed the 1,000 point mark. He may be the only Sigourney boys basketball player that has scored 1,000 points in a career.

Photos by Mark Schafer



Sigourney's Josephine Moore lines up a shot during a Jan. 21 game against Keota. Moore would set a new career rebounding record in the game.

## Sports year in review - MARCH

### Sigourney girls advance to regional final

By Mark Schafer | The News-Review

**IOWA CITY** - Ten points. That's all that separated Sigourney from a possible trip to the State basketball tournament.

In late February last year the Sigourney girls basketball season came to an end when the Savages fell to Springville in the class 1A regional final contest. Although the Savages would ultimately fall 65-44, for a few times in the second half the Savages were just 10 points away from the lead.

One key moment came late in the third quarter when Ava Fisch had been able to take a long outside jump shot that fell right through the nylon. That trimmed the Springville lead to nine points and put the Orioles in a precarious position.

Sigourney was on the attack, but Springville would

take a timeout and adjust their play to be able to go on and extend their lead over the course of the final quarter.

The game ultimately ended the Sigourney season with a 19-6 overall record. They had also made strides from the start of the season until

the end, allowing first year coach, Kaylee Weber to gain experience and trust with her team.

"My message to the team was that Springville was a really good team and that tonight's game doesn't take anything away from how

proud I am of the team," Weber said. "The girls were able to grow with me, and I grew with the team. My last message to the team was we are going to be back to this game, and I have every intention to bring that promise true in future seasons."



Members of the 2024-25 Sigourney girls basketball team walk off the court following a defeat to Springville in the class 1A region 6 regional final. Photo by Mark Schafer

## Sports year in review - FEBRUARY

### State wrestling success

By Mark Schafer | The News-Review

**CORALVILLE** - What a few days it turned out to be in Coralville last February.

To start off both Pekin and Sigourney-Keota were able to send record amount of athletes to the IGHSAU State wrestling tournament. For Sigourney-Keota they would end up sending three total wrestlers to the State wrestling tournament.

Everyone would have their eye on undefeated wrestler, senior, Reannah Utterback. She wouldn't disappoint as she pinned her way through the 115-pound bracket. In the championship match Utterback was able to pin her Don Bosco opponent and capture her second-straight State title. She was also able to finish her career with over 175 wins. Her last two seasons on the wrestling mat, she was never defeated once.

The rest of the Sigourney-Keota wrestlers also

experienced success. Kia Montgomery finished the tournament with a 1-2 overall record. Freshman Karley Greiner would go 0-2, but her experiences at State wrestling would help her as she prepared for the future.

Pekin would send four wrestlers to the State meet with Lexa Nelson having the most success.

Nelson qualified in the 105-pound bracket and would eventually finish sixth overall.

Throughout the tournament Nelson had to overcome a lot of adversity. She fought through every challenge and was able to climb the podium. That has helped her start this season undefeated.

The other Pekin wrestlers had success as well.

Hailey Pedrick wrestled in the 140-pound bracket where she finished the meet with a 1-2 overall record.

Lila Miller would wrestle in the 135-pound bracket. Although she was defeated

in both her matches, she was able to gain experience.

Rylee Frye wrestled in the 235-pound bracket. She was pinned in both of her matches, but as a freshman making it to the State tournament, she gained valuable lessons.

Photos by Mark Schafer



Sigourney-Keota wrestler Reannah Utterback and her dad (and coach) Shane (left) share a moment on the podium after Reannah was able to finish the season undefeated and with a State championship.

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# The News-Review

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2025  
SECTION B, NUMBER 53, 164<sup>th</sup> YEAR

SERVING THE KEOKUK COUNTY AREA SINCE 1860

## COURT RECORDS

**Civil**  
**Dec. 25th**  
Petitioner's Crystal Martin, Trevor D. Martin; Respondents; Community 1st Credit Union, Travis E. Martin; Self-Respondent Travis E. Martin; Motion for Continuance.  
**Criminal**  
**Dec. 19th**  
Defendant Travis Ryan Ewoldt; Plaintiff State of Iowa; Order for Arraignment, Trial

Information.  
**Dec. 21st**  
Defendant Andrew Scott Masterson; Plaintiff State of Iowa; Criminal Complaint.  
**Domestic**  
**Dec. 22nd**  
Defendant Paul Anthony Davis; Plaintiff Lorna Davis; Motion for Continuance.  
Defendant Thomas Matthew Hadley, Payee Keokuk County; Plaintiff Christine Marie

Hadley, Motion to Dismiss.  
**Scheduled Traffic**  
**Dec. 21st**  
Defendant Devin Lee Fleenor; Plaintiff State of Iowa; Driving or Towing Unsafe Vehicle.  
**Small Claims**  
**Dec. 22nd**  
Defendant Robert J. Davis; Plaintiff LVNV Fundings LLC; Motion for Continuance.

## PROPERTY TRANSFERS

**Dec. 15th**  
Warranty Deed: Vincent A. Taddonio, Brianna M. Taddonio to Marie M. Schmidt; PT Lot: 02 NE SE 21-77-12.  
Contract Assignment or Amendment: Kevin Bouslog, Mary Sue Bouslog, Kent D. Bouslog, Kent Bouslog, Christine A. Bouslog to Tyler J. Bouslog, Emily D. Bouslog; NE SE 08-76-10.  
Warranty Deed: Lisa K. Cowan Trustee, Richard J. Peiffer Residuary Trust, Meri C. Peterson Co Trustee to Kevin A. Bouslog, Kent D. Bouslog; NE SW 09-76-10, NW SW 09-76-10.  
Warranty Deed; Lisa K. Cowan Trustee, Richard J. Peiffer Residuary Trust, Meri C. Peterson Co Trustee to Tyler J. Bouslog, Emily D. Bouslog; NE SE 08-76-10.

LLC to Zedaka Land & Cattle Company LP; PT NE 06-77-13, EXCEPT PLAT 2025-1792.  
Deed Quit Claim: David W. Fisch, David Fisch, Michelle R. Fisch to Michelle R. Fisch; SIGOURNEY BRAYS ADDITION Lot: 05 Block: 09, SIGOURNEY BRAYS ADDITION Lot: 06 Block: 09, SIGOURNEY BRAYS ADDITION Lot: 07 Block: 09, SIGOURNEY BRAYS ADDITION Lot: 20 Block: 09, SIGOURNEY BRAYS ADDITION Lot: 21 Block: 09, SIGOURNEY BRAYS ADDITION Lot: 22 Block: 09, PT ALLEY SIGOURNEY BRAYS ADDITION Block: 09, PT WOODIN STREET NW SW 02-75-12.  
Warranty Deed: M P T C Farms LLC to Mark L. Haines, Trisha A. Haines; PT NE SE 29-76-12, SE SE 29-76-12, EXCEPT PLAT B279 P148.  
Warranty Deed: What Cheer LLC to Gladys J. Haworth Revocable Trust; SE 06-77-13, SE NE 06-77-13 Parcel: AUD PAR A, SW NE 06-77-13 Parcel: AUD PAR A, PLAT 2025-1792.  
Warranty Deed: Nicholas F. Hammes, Elaine M. Hammes to Ryan J. Fry, Ashley L. Fry; PT SE SE 25-76-13.

Ropp, Vicki L. Ropp to Myron Ropp Trustee, Vicki Ropp Trust, Myron Ropp Trust, Vicki Ropp Trust; UNDIVIDED ONE THIRD INTEREST, NW NE 01-77-10, SW NE 01-77-10, Lot: 06 SE NW 01-77-10, Lot: 07 SE NW 01-77-10, NE SW 01-77-10, PT SE SW 01-77-10, PT NW SE 01-77-10, PT SW SE 01-77-10, NW NE 12-77-10.  
Warranty Deed: Albert Mews, Albert D. Mews, Jayme Mews, Michael Steckly, Jennifer Steckly, Justin O'Rourke, Melissa O'Rourke, Jay D. O'Rourke, Gail R. O'Rourke to Three O Farms LLC; PT SW NW 08-77-11, PT NW SW 08-77-11.

**Dec. 16th**  
Deed Quit Claim: Michael E. Herman, Julie Herman, Patrick C. Herman, Shannon Herman, Tomas J. Herman, Sherri Herman, Catherine E. Herman to M P T C Farms LLC; NE SW 20-76-12, SW SE 20-76-12, PT NE SE 29-76-12, SE SE 29-76-12, EXCEPT PLAT B279 P148, NE NW 29-76-12.  
Deed Quit Claim: Michael E. Herman, Julie Herman, Patrick C. Herman, Shannon Herman, Tomas J. Herman, Sherri Herman, Catherine E. Herman to M P T C Farms LLC; PT SE SW 20-76-12, PT NW NW 29-76-12, NE NE 30-76-12, PT NW SE 19-76-12, SW SE 19-76-12, EXCEPT PLAT B182 P22, PT SE SW 20-76-12, SW SE 20-76-12.

**Dec. 18th**  
Warranty Deed: M P T C Farms LLC to Michael L. Brown, Janice I. Brown; PT NW SE 19-76-12, SW SE 19-76-12, EXCEPT PLAT B182 P22.  
Warranty Deed: Brian J. Greiner, Kristian K. Greiner, Alice J. Greiner to M & M Norman LLC; SE SW 04-76-10 Parcel: AUD PAR A, PLAT 2025-1108.  
Warranty Deed: M P T C Farms LLC to Keith E. Luettjohann Co Trustee, Laurie L. Luettjohann Co Trustee, Keithe E. & Laurie L. Luettjohann Family Trust, Laurie L. Luettjohann Family Trust; NE SW 20-76-12.  
Warranty Deed: M P T C Farms LLC to I P E 1031 REV631 LLC; PT NW NW 29-76-12, NE NE 30-76-12, NE NW 29-76-12.  
Warranty Deed: M P T C Farms LLC to Catherine Elizabeth Herman; SE SW 20-76-12, SW SE 20-76-12.  
Deed Quit Claim: Myron D.

**Dec. 19th**  
Warranty Deed: Thomas F. Monroe, Loree L. Monroe to Patricia J. Herr; SIGOURNEY HOGINS ADDITION Lot: 01 Block: 05, SIGOURNEY HOGINS ADDITION Lot: 02 Block: 05, PT SIGOURNEY HOGINS ADDITION Lot: 03 Block: 05, PT ALLEY SIGOURNEY HOGINS ADDITION Block: 05.  
Warranty Deed: Steven D. Copeland, Holly A. Copeland to Copeland Real Estate LLC; PT HEDRICK ORIGINAL PLAT HEDRICK Lot: 01 Block: 02, PT HEDRICK ORIGINAL PLAT HEDRICK Lot: 02 Block: 01, HEDRICK ORIGINAL PLAT HEDRICK Lot: 03 Block: 02, EXCEPT PLAT 2025-0998, PT EAST ST HEDRICK ORIGINAL PLAT HEDRICK Block: 02, PLAT B2 P67, HEDRICK ORIGINAL PLAT HEDRICK Lot: 05 Block: 44, HEDRICK ORIGINAL PLAT HEDRICK Lot: 06 Block: 44.  
Warranty Deed: Steven D. Copeland, Steven Copeland, Holly A. Copeland to Copeland Real Estate LLC; HEDRICK ORIGINAL PLAT HEDRICK Lot: 04 Block: 43, HEDRICK ORIGINAL PLAT HEDRICK Lot: 05 Block: 43, HEDRICK ORIGINAL PLAT HEDRICK Lot: 01 Block: 51, RR ROW PT SW NE 36-74-13.  
Warranty Deed: Gloria I. Steinke, Nadine Steinke Atty In Fact, Mark Steinke Atty In Fact to Mark Steinke Trustee, Mark L. Steinke Revocable Trust; PT SE SE 17-77-13.



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Don't text and drive.

A message from the Iowa Department of Public Safety, Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau and your local law enforcement agencies.

**The News-Review**  
SERVING THE KEOKUK COUNTY AREA SINCE 1860  
WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 24, 2025  
NUMBER 20, 164<sup>th</sup> YEAR

**Homecoming Kings and Queens**

**6 Chevelle Best in Show, 1980 Trans Am**  
Sector's Choice at Richland Car Show

**Keswick Harvet Day**

## The News-Review

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**Call 811 Before You Dig**



**IOWA ONE CALL**

**Protect What Really Matters**

A Public Service Announcement of Iowa One Call

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**City of What Cheer • Public Hearing**

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**  
Notice is hereby given that a second Public Hearing shall be held on January 13<sup>th</sup> 2025 at 7:15pm at the What Cheer City Hall.  
This public hearing will be on the proposal of adopting a municipal code of ordinances. A copy of said codified ordinances is now available at the What Cheer City Hall for public review. City Clerk  
Melanie Vermillion 641-634-2590.  
*Published in The News-Review on December 31, 2025*

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**City of What Cheer • Receipts & Disbursements**

<b>CITY OF WHAT CHEER RECEIPTS</b>	<b>DISBURSMENTS</b>
GENERAL FUND, \$31207.21.....	WATER FUND, \$7832.61.....
ROAD FUND, \$9430.65.....	SEWER FUND, \$5026.46.....
DEBT SERVICE, \$0.00.....	LOCAL OP SALES TAX, \$5166.29.....
TRUST & AG, \$8691.71.....	LIBRARY, \$4195.57.....
GARBAGE FUND, \$5792.00.....	TOTAL, \$77342.50.....
	\$62609.33
	<i>Published in The News-Review on December 31, 2025</i>

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**City of What Cheer • Claims 12.9.2025**

<b>BILLS PRESENTED AT DECEMBER 9TH 2025 MEETING</b>	<b>MID AMERICA PUBLISHING</b> .....
WHAT CHEER FIRE DEPT.....	78.40
ALLIANT ENERGY.....	417.84
WATER EX TAX.....	510.66
941 TAX.....	2812.38
IPERS.....	1653.88
WAPELLO RURAL WATER.....	3551.34
DJ DAVIS TRUCKING.....	774.24
DOUDS STONE.....	1161.36
MCKIM TRACTOR.....	182.24
H&M FARM AND HOME.....	466.15
WASTE MANAGEMENT.....	6546.83
	TREMME BACKHOE SERVICE.....
	400.00
	GLOBAL LIFE.....
	431.76
	KINETIC.....
	313.17
	DSG.....
	1379.52
	BILL & RAYS.....
	882.75
	KEOKUK CO. AUDITOR.....
	635.56
	KEOKUK CO. HWY DEPT.....
	762.25
	CASEY'S.....
	619.38
	MICROBAC LAB.....
	329.50
	<i>Published in The News-Review on December 31, 2025</i>

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**Notice of Petition • Case No. JVVJ005988**

**TO: ALL PUTATIVE BIOLOGICAL FATHERS OF B.A., A CHILD BORN ON JULY 2, 2017, IN POLK COUNTY, IOWA**  
You are notified that there is now on file in the office of the Clerk of Court for Keokuk County, a Petition in Case Number JVVJ005988 which prays the child in interest, B.A., be found to be a child in need of assistance. For further details, contact the Keokuk County Clerk of Court Office at (641)622-2210. The petitioner's attorney is Terri A. Menninga, Assistant Mahaska County Attorney, whose address is 106 S. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Oskaloosa, Iowa 52577, and whose telephone number is (641) 673-9819.  
You are notified that the next hearing in this matter is scheduled to be held in the Iowa District Court for Keokuk County, at the Courthouse in Sigourney, Iowa, at 1:30 o'clock P.M. on March 11, 2026  
Sara Oden, Clerk  
Kim Andeway, designee  
CLERK OF THE ABOVE COURT  
*Published in The News-Review on December 24 and 31, 2025, and January 7, 2026*

**TRUST NOTICE**  
**Axmear Revocable Trust**

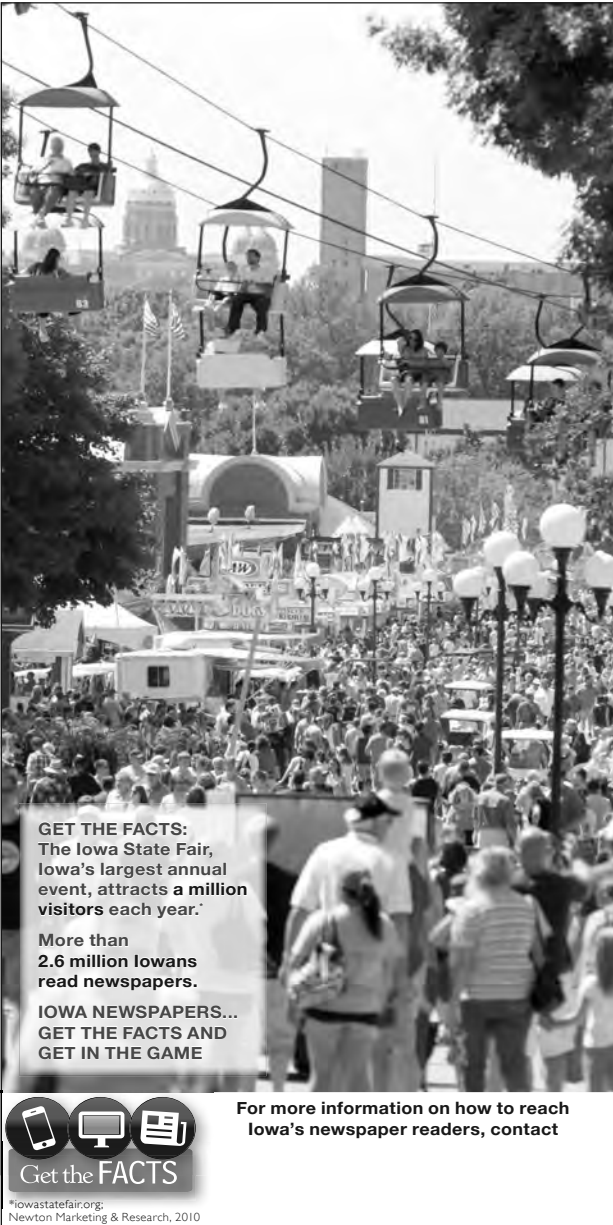
**IN THE MATTER OF THE TRUST: DAVID M. AXMEAR AND ELIZABETH ANN AXMEAR REVOCABLE TRUST DATED OCTOBER 22, 2009, AS AMENDED AND RESTATED TRUST NOTICE**  
To all persons regarding David M. Axmear, deceased, who died on or about the 27<sup>th</sup> day of November 2025.  
You are hereby notified that Douglas J. Wood and Darci Elizabeth Ann Axmear are the Successor Co-Trustee of the David M. Axmear and Elizabeth Ann Axmear Revocable Trust dated October 22, 2009, as Amended and Restated. That, at this time, no probate administration is contemplated with regard to the above-referenced decedent's estate. Any action to contest the validity of the trust must be brought in the District Court of Keokuk County, Iowa, within the later to occur of four (4) months from the date of second publication of this notice or thirty (30) days from the date of mailing this notice to all heirs of the decedent, spouse of the decedent and beneficiaries under the trust whose identities are reasonably ascertainable, or thereafter be forever barred.  
Notice is further given that all persons indebted to the decedent or the trust are requested to make immediate payment to the under-

**PROBATE**  
**David M. Axmear ESPR038653**

**THE IOWA DISTRICT COURT FOR KEOKUK COUNTY**  
**IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF David M. Axmear, Deceased Case No. ESPR038653**  
**NOTICE OF PROOF OF WILL WITHOUT ADMINISTRATION**  
To All Persons Interested in the Estate of David M. Axmear, Deceased, who died on or about November 27, 2025:  
You are hereby notified that on December 12, 2025, the Last Will and Testament of David M. Axmear, deceased, bearing date of October 22, 2009, was admitted to probate in the above-named court and there will be no present administration of the estate. Any action to set aside the Will must be brought in the district court of the county within the later to occur of four months from the date of the second publication of this notice or one month from the date of mail-

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**Notice of Petition • Juvenile Case No. JVVJ006025**

**IN THE IOWA DISTRICT COURT IN AND FOR KEOKUK COUNTY IN THE INTEREST OF R.S., Minor Child Juvenile Cause No. JVVJ006025**  
**NOTICE**  
TO: Joshua Rice, Father of R.S., born July 1, 2025  
You are notified that there is now on file in the office of the Clerk of the above Court, a Petition in the above-entitled action alleging that the foregoing child is in need of assistance. For further details contact the office of the Clerk of Court for Keokuk County, Iowa. The Petitioner is the State of Iowa whose attorney is Keokuk County Attorney Maddison A.E. Denny and whose address is 101 South Main Street, Sigourney, Iowa 52591, telephone number (641) 622-3500, facsimile number (641) 622-2688, email: attorney@keokukcounty.iowa.gov.  
You are further notified that said Petition has been set down for hearing before the Juvenile Court at the Courthouse, Third Floor, in Sigourney, Keokuk County, Iowa, on January 14, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.  
Note: You are advised to seek legal advice at once to protect your interest.  
If you need assistance to participate in court due to a disability, call the disability coordinator at (641) 684-6502. Persons who are hearing or speech impaired may call Relay Iowa TTY (1-800-735-2942). Disability coordinators cannot provide legal advice.  
*Published in The News-Review on December 17, 24 and 31, 2025*



**GET THE FACTS:**  
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More than 2.6 million Iowans read newspapers.  
IOWA NEWSPAPERS... GET THE FACTS AND GET IN THE GAME

For more information on how to reach Iowa's newspaper readers, contact

Get the FACTS  
\*iowastatefair.org; Newton Marketing & Research, 2010



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Quitting tobacco may feel like a never-ending cycle, but this November 20 you have a reason to quit for good. The American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout<sup>®</sup> is a chance to quit for a day – and then a lifetime. When you call or enroll online, a Quit Coach<sup>®</sup> staff member will work with you to change your behaviors and support you to become tobacco free. When you join the program, you may be eligible to receive 8 weeks of free NRT, which includes a choice of patch, gum, or lozenge.

**1.800.QUIT.NOW** [www.quitlineiowa.org](http://www.quitlineiowa.org)  
(1.800.784.8669)

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Produced with funding from the Iowa Department of Public Health, Division of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control  
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**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**City of Sigourney • Minutes 12.17.2025**

**SIGOURNEY CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**  
The following are summarized minutes of the regular city council meeting on December 17, 2025.  
The Sigourney City Council met in regular session in the Council Chambers at City Hall on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, with Mayor Morlan presiding and the following Council members answering roll call: Clark, Conrad, McLaughlin, and Schultz. Others present were: Don Northup, Public Works Director II; Brent Gilliland, Public Works Director I; Dave Goldman; Jesse Hannam; Larry Chmelar, Matt Walker, French Reneker Associates; Steve Shettler, with Steve Shettler Media; Casey James, Sigourney News Review; Kadie Conrad, Deputy City Clerk and Ashley Fry, City Clerk.  
The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. McLaughlin moved, seconded by Conrad, to approve the tentative agenda. Roll call vote Ayes: 4  
Conrad moved, seconded by Schultz, to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda: Minutes of Regular Council Meeting of December 3, 2025; Council Account Payable in the amount of \$19,042.46; Resolution # 2025-12-39 Providing for the Financial Support of the AREA 15 Regional Planning Commission; Credit Card Report and Set time and place for the January 7, 2026 Regular Council Meeting at 6:00 PM at City Hall. Roll call vote Ayes: 4  
Schultz moved seconded by Conrad to approve Resolution # 2025-12-40 Establishing Mayor- Pro Tempore for the City of Sigourney, Iowa Roll call vote Ayes: 3, Abstain: 1  
Schultz moved seconded by McLaughlin to approve Resolution #2025-12-35 re: to award the bid for the Water Tower Rehabilitation to Tanks Co, Inc, in the amount of \$308,500.00 – Sigourney Iowa -2025. Roll call vote Ayes: 4  
Clark moved seconded by Conrad to approve a 1/2 page ad in the 2026 Keokuk County Visitors Guide. Roll call vote Ayes: 4  
Conrad moved seconded by Clark to approve the Annual Council Member Remuneration for Calendar Year 2025. Roll call vote Ayes: 4  
Clark moved, seconded by Schultz, to adjourn the meeting. Roll call vote Ayes: 4  
The meeting was adjourned at 6:13 p.m.  
Jimmy Morlan, Mayor  
Ashley Fry, City Clerk  
*Published in The News-Review on December 31, 2025*

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**City of What Cheer • Minutes 12.9.2025**

**CITY COUNCIL MINUTES REGULAR MEETING**  
Tuesday December 9<sup>th</sup> 2025  
The What Cheer City Council met in regular session at City Hall, Tuesday December 9<sup>th</sup> 2025. Mayor Darrell Wilkening called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Council Members answering roll call were: Sandra VanPatten, Dwight Danner, Donna Rogers and Christine Howard. Rick Shafranek was absent. Also, present was Frank Calvert, Carl Hampton, Gary J. Van Patten, Terry Fogle, Lisa Bracklesberg and City Clerk Melanie Vermillion.  
Rogers motioned to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Van Patten. All in favor. Motion Carried.  
Mayor Darrell Wilkening gave his Mayors Report. He gave an update to the council that there has been no change on the appealed court cases. He gave some information to elected officials on open meetings and open records courses that need to be taken after being sworn in for the upcoming term. And lastly let the council know about a repaired water leak on Burlington St.  
Terry Fogle addressed the council about installing 50 amp service on the East Washington St Bridge for the band that will be playing on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July. He was asked to get an estimate from Atwood Electric and bring it back before the council.  
Van Patten motioned to set a resolution 25-12-14 to set a second public hearing on the adoption of the new city code. The meeting will be January 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:15. Van Patten seconded the motion. Roll Call: Van Patten, Aye; Danner, Aye; Rogers, Aye; and Howard Aye. Motion Carried.  
Rogers made a motion to proceed with selling the former state plow truck for parts and scrap. Howard seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion Carried.  
Howard made a motion to purchase a truck with a dump box, to be used for snow removal and sanding with a maximum purchase of \$20,000. Van Patten seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion Carried.  
Van Patten made a motion to purchase a blade with the maximum price of \$8000.00. Howard seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion Carried.  
During an employee's 30-day evaluation Dwight Danner made a motion to increase part time worker Carl Hampton's pay a dollar more an hour. Van Patten seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion Carried.  
Howard made a motion to adopt a resolution 25-12-15 providing for the financial support of the Area 15 Regional Planning Commission. Van Patten seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rogers, Aye; Howard, Aye; Danner, Aye; and Van Patten, Aye. Motion Carried.  
Rogers motioned to approve the Annual Finance Report, Danner seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion Carried.  
Danner motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:43pm, seconded by Howard.  
Darrell Wilkening, Mayor  
Melanie Vermillion, City Clerk  
*Published in The News-Review on December 31, 2025*



# English Valleys Bearometer

December 31, 2025

[www.facebook.com/Bearometer](http://www.facebook.com/Bearometer)

Issue: XVI - Student Recognition Issue

## English Valleys Elementary Students of the Month



Raelynn Knerr



Clara O'Rourke



Gavin O'Rourke



Bryan Johnson



Lilith Spence



Tessa Coover



Coraline Frazier



Bristol Bair



Warren Fisch



Laiah Zuniga



Cam Overy



Josslyn Zebuhr



Kelden Hoylman



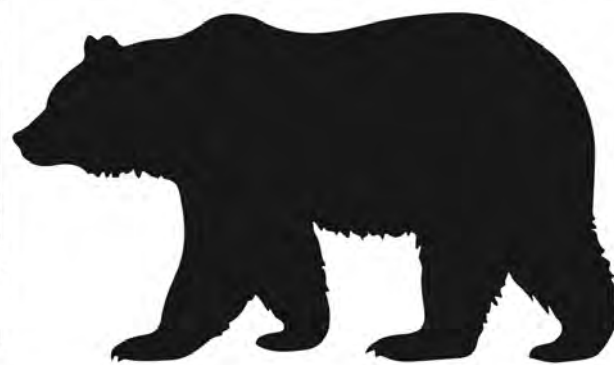
Marlie Holliday



Falyn Gent



Saige Knipfer



## English Valleys MS/HS Students of the Month



Cael Grove



Caleb McGaffee



Ben Axmear



Betty Brown



Tequilla Rester-Wells



Whittney Walker



Ellie McCullough



Asher Frederick



Evelyn Snakenberg



Lucas Sieren



Beyla Debevec



Jolie Voss



Makenna Morrison



Bristol Hebl

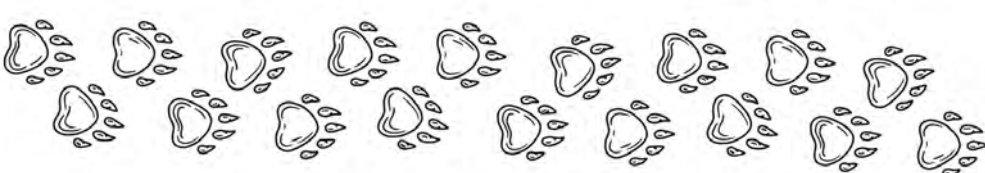
## Holly, Jolly Fun Days

The days leading up to Winter Break were packed with fun and festive spirit. PBIS sponsored six Dress-Up Days that filled the halls with cozy pajamas, ugly Christmas sweaters, holiday vibes, and lots of school pride. To top it all off, students earned a special reward day for their support of the food drive. Sponsored by Student Council, the celebration included movies, games, and even a special visit from Santa, making it the perfect, joyful send-off before break.



## Upcoming Activities:

**January 3:**  
HS Basketball vs Danville - 3:00 pm  
HS Boys Wrestling @ Williamsburg - 9:00 am  
**January 6:**  
Classes Resume  
HS Basketball @ Sigourney - 6:00 pm



## Grants available for forestry plans and programs in Iowa communities

Through the USDA Forest Service Inflation Reduction Act, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is a pass-through partner for the Urban Forestry Development grants for communities.

The Urban Forestry Development Grant provides reimbursable grants to complete projects such as creating community forestry plans, building urban food forests, hosting educational programming, and workforce development through forestry internships. The grant is a two-year program allowing for projects to take place in the spring and fall of 2026 and 2027. Grant funding is competitive, non-match, and awarded in amounts between \$10,000 and \$50,000 per applicant.

The Urban Forestry Development grants are available to community governmental entities, volunteer organizations, and service organizations involved with local urban and

community forest services, to improve management, care, and public engagement with trees growing in parks, natural areas, and along public rights-of-way. Grants will also support projects in Iowa communities through investments in community-identified urban forestry needs, advancing environmental or health benefits.

Eligibility is determined by the assessment tool. The application and requirements, including the assessment tool, are available online at [www.iowadnr.gov/urbangrants](http://www.iowadnr.gov/urbangrants). Applications are due by 4 p.m. on March 17, 2026. Award recipients will be notified by March 31, 2026.

Contact Chip Murrow at [chip.murrow@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:chip.murrow@dnr.iowa.gov) or 515-822-1031 for questions about the application, reimbursement and rules. Contact Laurie Dams at [lauren.dams@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:lauren.dams@dnr.iowa.gov) or 515-782-6414 for application assistance or to set up a site visit.

## Cornbelt Cow-Calf Conference 2026 to Feature 'Taste the Difference' Cookoff

By: Sherry Hoyer, Patrick Wall

AMES – The Cornbelt Cow-Calf Conference, Iowa's premier educational event for Iowa's cow-calf sector, enters its 54th year, and the trade show and program set for Jan. 23-24, 2026, will certainly continue that tradition. The Bridge View Center in Ottumwa will again be hosting the CCCC, and admission will continue to be available at no cost thanks to ag industry vendors that will fill the exhibit hall.

Patrick Wall, beef field specialist with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and Outbeef cow and calveach and CCCC program coordinator, said the event will again include a Friday afternoon/evening trade show, capped off by the "Taste the Difference" cookoff. Two products of the same cut will be prepared identically, and attendees can choose which one their taste buds prefer. The winner and the source of each cut will be revealed at the conclusion of the event. Visit with vendors, eat free beef and enjoy good company!

"Saturday morning will kick off with a topic that caused a lot of anxiety among cattle producers in southeast Iowa this year," Wall said. "Dr. Matt Brewer from the ISU College of Veterinary Medicine will speak about Asian Long-Horn Tick and New World Screw-worm."

Then, the focus will shift to the production side of the business and address the an-

tagonisms that exist between maternal and terminal traits with Matt Spangle from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, followed by the event keynote address.

"Our keynote speaker couldn't be more timely. I'm excited to hear what Cassandra Fish has to say about the current state of the industry, drawing from her experience at Tyson Foods," Wall said.

Afternoon break-out sessions will again hit very pertinent topics. Fish will be back, this time talking about beef imports and how the industry utilizes them. ISU Extension and Outreach farm management specialist Paul Martin and Wall will help aging producers more successfully transition their operation to the next generation or operator, particularly in a peak market. Doug Ruth from Country Roads Meat Market will detail how he sells locally produced beef through the ups and downs in markets. Finally, local producer Rob Wonderlich will introduce attendees to the newest beef breed in the U.S. — Rubia Gallega. This breed is known for its extreme marbling without sacrificing performance.

Doors will be open from 3 to 7 p.m. on Friday and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. On Saturday, the educational program will start at 9 a.m. Again, admission is available at no cost, and this event is open to the public. For more information, visit the conference website.

## Garden Academy (including Master Gardener training) to be offered in Winter/Spring

**Garden Academy has 2 tracks: Master Gardener training or Iowa Home Gardener. Mahaska County will offer Master Gardener training this winter/spring. Iowa Home Gardener is online training only. Enroll for either Jan 5-30. Training Feb 16-April 24.**

Alicia Herzog | Master Gardener Program Coordinator

AMES, Iowa – The Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Master Gardener Program will provide its statewide horticulture training in the spring and fall of 2026. Garden Academy, previously known as Iowa Master Gardener training, offers a comprehensive approach to consumer horticulture education.

From the training, participants can expect:

10 weeks of asynchronous online instruction, featuring video lectures, reading assignments and quizzes

A comprehensive overview of 17 horticultural topics to build a varied foundation of horticultural knowledge

Additional resources for deeper exploration of specific

interests

Completion of a pre- and post-test to meet course requirements

Three optional live interactive Zoom sessions with campus specialists

Interested participants can choose from two program tracks: Iowa Master Gardener Volunteer or Iowa Home Gardener. All participants, whether enrolled to become an Iowa Master Gardener Volunteer or an Iowa Home Gardener, will complete the same course designed to enhance horticulture knowledge and skills.

Alicia Herzog, Iowa Master Gardener program manager for ISU Extension and Outreach, explained the goals of both course tracks.

"The Iowa Master Gardener Volunteer track is focused on developing and supporting passionate volunteers, providing them with knowledge and resources that instill confidence in them as they serve their communities. Participants do not have to be gardening experts to complete this option," she said. "The Iowa Home Gardener track is great for those looking to enhance their own knowledge and personal gardening skills."

Applications for the spring Iowa Master Gardener track will be open from Jan. 5 through Jan. 30 on the Iowa

Master Gardener website. A list of participating counties is also available on the website.

Iowa Home Gardener participants will be able to purchase their spot in the course starting Feb. 2 on the ISU Extension Store website.

The spring training period for both tracks is Feb. 16 to April 24.

Garden Academy will be offered again in the fall from Aug. 31 to Nov. 6. Applications for the Iowa Master Gardener track will be accepted July 20 through Aug. 14. Iowa Home Gardener spots will go on sale Aug. 17.

Review the application and completion guidelines for both tracks below.

Iowa Master Gardener Volunteer Track

Submit an application and background check. Apply to be an Iowa Master Gardener Volunteer and successfully complete a background check by contacting an ISU Extension and Outreach county office.

Make a payment. Be accepted into the Iowa Master Gardener Volunteer track and pay a one-time Garden Academy fee to the ISU Extension and Outreach county office.

Complete training. Complete the 10-week online Garden Academy training and pass the final quiz.

Complete orientation. Attend in-person volunteer orientation through the ISU Extension and Outreach county office. Dates, times and duration vary by county. County Master Gardener Coordinators will provide county-specific information.

Volunteer in the community. Complete a 40-hour volun-

teer internship within one full calendar year. County Master Gardener Coordinators will provide county-specific information and guidance throughout the application, training and internship period.

Stay involved. After completing the volunteer internship, Iowa Master Gardener Volunteers remain active members by completing 10 hours of continuing education and contributing 20 hours of volunteer service annually. Volunteer and continuing education hours should be reported online by Dec. 1 of each year.

Iowa Home Gardener Track Access course materials. Purchase access to the Garden Academy course through the ISU Extension Store.

Complete training. Complete the 10-week online Garden Academy training and pass the final quiz.

Go garden. Participants in this track will receive a certificate of completion as an Iowa Home Gardener but will not earn the title of Iowa Master Gardener.

For more information, prospective volunteers can contact their county office. General questions can be directed to [mgardener@iastate.edu](mailto:mgardener@iastate.edu) or 515-294-5104.

About the Authors:

[ahertzog@iastate.edu](mailto:ahertzog@iastate.edu)  
Website: Garden Academy (including Master Gardener training) to be offered in Winter/Spring | Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Mahaska County

State-wide website: Garden Academy to Be Offered Spring and Fall 2026 | News



## Iowa to scrap Healthy Kids Iowa in favor of federal, summer feeding program

**State restrictions on sugary drinks and snacks will apply to the program**

By: Cami Koons | Iowa Capitol Dispatch

Eligible Iowa households can receive a monthly allotment to spend on certain food items at the grocery store throughout the summer now that Iowa plans to participate in the federal summer feeding program.

Gov. Kim Reynolds announced Monday the decision to participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's SUN Bucks, or Summer EBT, program, which the state has opted out of the past two years.

Key to Reynolds' decision to adopt the program for summer 2026 was the USDA's approval of a waiver that would align the summer feeding program with the state's changes to eligible foods under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP.

As it did for several other states, USDA approved a waiver in Iowa that prohibits SNAP recipients from spending their nutrition assistance allotments on sugary drinks, candy and other sweetened snacks. The Healthy SNAP program, as it is called in Iowa, takes effect Jan. 1.

"Food assistance programs that are nutrition focused do more to help low-income Iowans by addressing both hunger and health," Reynolds said in the news release. "Now, with the USDA's approval of our waiver to align the SUN Bucks program with Iowa's new Healthy SNAP guidelines, we can provide healthy food plus convenience for children and families."

The SUN Bucks program distributes \$40 each month during the summer, per child, to households that already participate in SNAP, are eligible for free and reduced-price school lunch or have a qualifying income. These funds are loaded directly to Electronic Benefit Transfer, or EBT, cards and can be used at authorized retailers. Under Iowa's waiver, these funds cannot purchase the same sugary drinks and snacks that are not allowed



After opting out of the program for two years, Iowa will participate next year in the federal summer feeding program for kids, which loads money for groceries on an electronic benefits card or EBT. (Photo courtesy of Metro Creative Connection)

under the state's SNAP waiver. Reynolds said the SUN Bucks program has "lacked a focus on nutrition" which is why the state launched its own summer feeding program, Healthy Kids Iowa, last summer.

Rather than loading funds on an EBT card, Healthy Kids Iowa provided qualifying households with a box of \$40 worth of food each month during the summer. These boxes were packed and distributed by food banks and pantries around the state which reported some logistical challenges with the program.

Advocates in the anti-hunger sphere in Iowa have been opposed to the state's summer feeding program, arguing it left federal funding on the table and wasn't as accessible to food-insecure Iowans.

Paige Chickering, the Iowa state manager with Save the Children Action Network, said the Monday announcement to participate in SUN Bucks was unexpected, but "tremendously exciting."

"We're really just overjoyed that this is being implemented in our state and that we're following suit with so many other states across the country who are utilizing this fantastic

hunger fighting program and ensuring that kids are getting the food that they need in the summer months," Chickering said.

Feedback from Iowans

In November, Chickering and volunteers submitted a petition to the state, with hundreds of signatures, urging it to participate in the SUN Bucks program.

"We're just massively excited that our advocacy efforts have really paid off," Chickering said. "I think the governor has listened to what Iowans want to see, which is kids being fed in the summer months in a way that will be super accessible, easy, equitable, feasible for their families, and that's what we get with Summer EBT."

The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services posted Monday the results of an evaluation of the Healthy Kids Iowa pilot program from the summer, as was required by the USDA waiver.

More than 80% of Iowans who were surveyed and used the program said they were satisfied with the program, with the variety of food, the quality of food and the nutritional value of the food, according to the published evaluation.

Despite satisfaction within the program, 57% of respondents said they would prefer the Summer EBT program instead of Healthy Kids Iowa. A quarter of respondents preferred the state program, according to the results.

Chickering said the federally funded program has the capacity to serve 245,000 children across Iowa this summer. Results of the Healthy Kids Iowa program show it distributed boxes to more than 65,000 children.

Regarding the Healthy SNAP restrictions on the Summer EBT funding, Chickering said her organization continues to believe that Iowans should "be able to make the right food choices for their families." She said it is "not necessarily surprising" the state wanted to include the same requests it has made to USDA on other feeding programs.

"Overall we really feel that the best possible choice we can make for Iowa's children though is to be opting into the summer EBT program," Chickering said.

According to the release, enrollment and eligibility information will be available online early in the new calendar year.

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