



The Wright County MONITOR



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City's Support for Rec Center Project Moves Forward Without Financial Commitment

Amanda Rink, Editor

February 25, 2025 - Community members and city officials gathered for a workshop Tuesday night to discuss the next steps for the long-anticipated recreation center project. The city signaled its support for the project stating that no taxpayer dollars are currently committed to the construction.

Mayor Rod Heiden opened the meeting by addressing feedback he had received from passionate individuals regarding his upcoming reelection and his commitment to doing what he believes is best for our community, "If I don't get reelected for doing what I think is right for the city, I'm okay with it. So let's stay respectful. The REC committee has put a lot of hours in this project."

The meeting reviewed various plans the REC committee has considered, but focused mainly on "Option C". The latest plan is a single-story design that reduced original costs and garnered the most support from attendees, even with the walking track on the same level as the basketball court.

"Show of hands supporting option C?" Presenter and REC Center board member Andrew Odland asked. The response was overwhelmingly positive, with most of the room rais-



When attendees of the REC Center and Clarion Council Workshop were asked to raise their hands in support of the revised center's plans, the majority of the crowd shot their hand in the air rather quickly. (Photo: Amanda Rink)

ing their hands. Despite the enthusiasm, fundraising remains a challenge.

Fundraising and Financial Concerns - With \$4.1 million pledged for the project, large donors remain hesitant to commit unless the city or the school district takes an official stake. Matt Odland, another board member for the REC, noted that even individuals he spoke with felt hesitant to donate to the project until they were further along. Lawyers may not approve donations to a private board, which the REC center is, adding another challenge to the mix.

City Administrator Clint Middleton, who did express personal support for the project, was vocal during the meeting and broke

down city concerns in a direct way. He acknowledged concerns about funding but emphasized the city will remain fiscally responsible above all else.

"We don't need another swimming pool," said Middleton, referring to the city's annual \$80,000 cost to keep the pool open. The city could own the facility similarly to how it owns the daycare center, with the center paying rent and the city handling maintenance and utilities but not daily operations.

While the city is open to owning the building post-construction, Middleton clarified that the city is not currently committing funds toward construction. This is because once a government entity is involved costs in-

crease because of engineering design requirements and national wage standards.

Grants were also discussed, though Middleton noted that while smaller grants may be available for equipment, major funding opportunities for large projects are limited. "There's not a lot of grants out there to pay for monstrous chunks of projects," Middleton stated.

Middleton reassured attendees that even if some city funds are ultimately required, which the city has offered to the REC Board for \$2 million and was denied, the city's budget has funds earmarked for The REC Center, a new fire station, and continued city pavement improvements.

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Wright County Leaders Push Through Unexpected Disruption

Amanda Rink, Editor

March 3, 2025 - The Wright County Board of Supervisors met on Monday morning to handle key issues, including drainage projects, funding for search and rescue services, and the county's budget amendments. All officials were present for the session. However, the meeting was unexpectedly disrupted when an unauthorized party disrupted the Zoom session in a "Zoom bombing" incident.

Drainage Trustees Approve Invoice - The meeting began at 9:00 A.M. with the board acting as Drainage Trustees. There were no claims or work orders needing approval. The board approved a drainage invoice to Allan Weicht for the trapping of beavers in the Grant drainage district for \$350. Drainage Administrator Courtney Morris also shared an upcoming March 10 conference call regarding a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DKM Natural Gas. The board then moved into their discussion as the Board of Supervisors after a brief interruption from a "Zoom Bomber".

Zoom Bombing Disrupts Meeting - During the Drainage District Trustees meeting, the board was unexpectedly interrupted by a "Zoom Bombing" incident. Unidentified individual(s) entered the meeting and displayed inappropriate content. The board was forced to end the live meeting and begin a new one.

The act of hijacking public virtual meetings has been an increasing issue at both state and local levels with reports of perpetrators using offensive language, images, or videos to derail discussions. While some

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Area Headlines

Belmond

The Belmond-Klemme Board of Education proposed a property tax levy increase of \$2.00 for the 2025/2026 budget year. The final vote is expected to come once government officials solidify public school funding.

Eagle Grove

Mark and Ann Sampson were awarded the Allbaugh Community Service Award for their years of service to the Eagle Grove community. The award was announced during the Chamber of Commerce Coffee event.

Goldfield

A new bar, The Gold Bar, opened its doors on Main Street on February 28.

Hampton

On February 27, City Councilor Kevin Blanford resigned from the city council. The announcement was made at the end of the council meeting. Blanford gave no reason as to why. The seat will be filled in a special election or by council appointment.

Rowan

The Iowa River Players hosted their first Mardi Gras Party last weekend. The party was said to be a success with voices from Brad Revland, Mark Havens, Caleb Avery, Rob Arnold, and Terri Avery filling the theatre. The River Players are also planning their next production, "Leaving Iowa," with auditions on March 30.

8 Day Weather Outlook Clarion, IA.

Thursday, March 6

Partly Cloudy 43°/24°
SW 13 mph



Friday, March 7

Rain/Snow Showers 42°/22°
NE 12 mph



Saturday, March 8

Sunny 47°/26°
W 14 mph



Sunday, March 9

Mostly Sunny 52°/30°
W 14 mph



Monday, March 10

Sunny 65°/43°
SSW 16 mph



Tuesday, March 11

Partly Cloudy/Wind 70°/39°
SSW 23 mph



Wednesday, March 12

Mostly Cloudy 56°/31°
NNW 23 mph



Thursday, March 13

Mostly Cloudy 52°/32°
WNW 19 mph



Celebrating Spear's 54 Years at Hagie Manufacturing at the Red Shed

Amanda Rink, Editor

Hagie Manufacturing, founded in 1947 by Ray Hagie in Clarion, has long been a leader in revolutionizing agricultural machinery. The company introduced the world's first self-propelled sprayer, setting the standard for innovation in crop protection equipment. Over the years, Hagie has continued to pioneer industry advancements.

Through it all, the company has held a strong tradition of employee dedication, people like Bill Spears, whose 54-year tenure reflects the loyalty and work ethic that define both Hagie and the town of Clarion. In 2016, Hagie partnered with John Deere, a move that expanded its reach. Despite changes in ownership, the company has remained involved in Clarion and dedicated to its employees.

Bill Spears' journey to Hagie began in his hometown of Traer, Iowa, where he worked as a mechanic at a Chevrolet garage. "I was a mechanic at a Chevrolet garage in my hometown of Traer, Iowa, and the Hagie salesman at the time, Gary Thomas, came in one day," Bill shared. "He mentioned that Hagie was looking for someone

with a pilot's license, and I had just completed my private pilot's license, so I applied."

Bill started his career at Hagie in 1971. "I started on February 15, 1971. My first job was working in the service department, repairing and rebuilding 437 sprayers," he said. "My boss at the time was Don Wyborn, the service manager, and I worked under Gordon Smith in the shop."

Hagie has changed immensely over the years, and Bill has witnessed it firsthand. "When I started, the most expensive machine was a 440 sprayer, and it sold for about \$7,500. Now, the most expensive sprayers are 100 times that," he explained. "The machines back then were simpler, easy to work on, and didn't have many problems, but they were also much smaller in comparison to what they are today."

Bill noted an evolution in the machines, especially in speed and efficiency. "Back when I started, sprayers were traveling at 4-5 miles per hour. Now, they can go much faster, and the booms have gotten much larger as well," he said. "The sheer size and speed of the machines today are amazing."

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CGD School Board Responds to Teacher Pay Raise Request, Considerations Made During Closed Meeting

Amanda Rink, Editor

February 25, 2025 - Teachers represented by the Clarion-Goldfield-Dows Education Bargaining Team have advocated for a 5% salary increase across all licensed positions within the district. The CGD Board of Education stated on Tuesday that the request wasn't feasible given the current financial limitations of state legislation.

In a statement read by Superintendent Joseph Nelson during the public portion of the meeting, the CGD Board of Education expressed appreciation for the dedication and hard work of its teachers, and overall staff. While acknowledging the importance of competitive wages, the statement explained that the district is not receiving additional funding beyond the expected 2% to 2.25% increase in state aid. Because of this, board officials said they cannot meet the 5% request.

Instead, the district proposed a two-year contract as an alternative. Under this plan, teachers would see a 2.65% average increase in the first year, making sure

that salaries meet the minimum thresholds required by the state. Other employees would receive a \$1,600 raise. In the second year, the average increase would be 2.49%, with the same salary minimums and a \$1,500 raise for other staff.

This would result in a total pay increase of 5.06% over two years, which is slightly more than the Bargaining Team's first request but spread over a longer period. As an added incentive, the district also offered to reduce the number of contract days from 191 to 190 if the two-year agreement is accepted. The proposal aligns with recent legislative changes in Iowa, which require teachers to be paid a beginning salary of 50,000 as their beginning wage for the fiscal year 2025-2026.

After presenting their counteroffer, the school board went into a closed session for further discussion. At the writing of this article, the bargaining team and the school board are in discussions leaving the team to decide if they will accept the revised offer or push for further negotiations.

At this time, no decisions have been made public.



Legals and Courthouse News on page 4

Supervisors continued from page 1

may consider “Zoom Bombing” as a prank, legal experts warn that these disruptions can carry consequences like computer trespassing, disruption of a public meeting, hate crime charges, and cyber harassment. In past cases, individuals responsible for Zoom bombings have faced fines and even jail time but it is unclear if law enforcement or county officials will proceed with legal actions. Supervisor Rick Rasmussen offered an apology to those in person and online for the incident and the meeting moved on.

Wright County Search and Rescue - Longtime Wright County Search and Rescue leader Rod Heiden shared his retirement and introduced his replacement, Tony Olson. Heiden and Anderson reported aging equipment and requested that the county act as an agent of matching funds when Search and Rescue applies for the Wright County charitable grant next year.

Public Voices Concerns on Road Maintenance - A county resident, identified as Dan, raised concerns about excess dirt in roadside ditches, weed pressure, and dirt plugging intakes which don't allow for water to flow out of ditches. “Why do we want dirt in the ditch? I just feel like it is excessive,” the community member stated, urging Secondary Roads to review their current practices.

“We’re reviewing the process,” shared Wright County Engineer Adam Clemons who shares he thinks it is mostly soil in the ditches from gutter created rather than gravel. Later in the meeting, Clemons presented plans to establish an Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management Plan, which the board approved. In other road matters the board heard of a request to cover costs for road watering.

Belmond Area Arts Center Funding Request - The board heard and approved a \$1,500 request for road watering during the Belmond Area Arts Center Power Show, matching funds granted in previous years rather than the new request of \$2,000. They moved on to approve other fiscal matters.

County Compensation Increases - Resolution 2025-10 proposed a salary increase for elected officials, excluding the Supervisors. The County Compensation Board suggested a 2% salary increase for the county auditor, recorder, sheriff, and treasurer. The board then held a public hearing and scheduled other hearings.

Current and Upcoming Public Hearings - A public hearing was set for April 7, 2025, at 9:00 A.M. for the proposed property tax levy, which county residents will receive a letter regarding. On March 17 property owners in Iowa Township along Youngblood Avenue will have their chance to speak on vacating a portion of Youngblood Avenue, which would transfer ownership of the land to adjacent landowners and remove an aging bridge. A budget amendment for the current fiscal year was held, and the board noted that costs were being kept down while revenue had increased.

The next board of supervisors meeting is Monday, March 10 at 9:00 A.M. This meeting and past meetings can be viewed online at [youtube.com/@wrightcountyiowaofficial8312](https://youtube.com/wrightcountyiowaofficial8312)

Spears 54 Years continued from page 1

When asked about a standout achievement, Bill humbly stated, “No, not really. But I will say this: I always looked forward to coming to work. Talking to people, whether it was coworkers or customers, was important to me. I always tried to relay messages between the company and the customers to improve the product we were making.”

Bill attributed much of his long tenure at Hagies to the people he worked with. “It was the family atmosphere and the people I worked around. Even during frustrating times, I always felt treated with respect, and I tried to pass that respect along to others,” he said. As Bill prepares to retire, he’s thinking about a much slower pace of life. “I plan to keep traveling on my bike with my son, and occasionally take my wife on trips,” he said. “We still enjoy going to the river and out for suppers.”

Reflecting on his younger self, Bill shared, “If I could give advice to my younger self, I’d say listen more to people. When I was younger, I had an attitude of knowing more than others, but I realized that a lot of times, others knew more than I did. Listening is important, especially when you’re in a leadership position.” Bill emphasized, “Listen to people. You can learn a lot just by talking to them and understanding their perspective. I enjoy talking to people, especially when I travel. I love sitting down at a table in a restaurant, chatting with locals, and learning something new.”

As for family, Bill shared a bit about his loved ones. “I have my wife, Donna, who’s been a big part of my life. We have two sons, Cory and Kevin. Unfortunately, Cory passed away, but Kevin is still with us. We have no grandkids—just the three of us now.”

Bill’s hobbies have always been centered around motorcycles. “I’ve always loved motorcycles, a passion I inherited from my dad,” he said. “My wife and I used to take bike trips every summer. We traveled up into Canada and along the west coast multiple times. It’s something I’ve passed down to my son.”

Finally, when asked what he would have done if not working at Hagie, Bill replied, “I probably would have gone into flying professionally for an airline. I initially thought I’d work for Hagie and build flying hours, but due to health concerns, I decided to stay with Hagie and not pursue aviation.”

In summing up his career, Bill said simply, “It’s been a great career. I’ve loved what I’ve done, and I wouldn’t change a thing.” You can help Hagie celebrate Bill at the Red Shed on March 6.

Fundraiser Draws Outdoor Enthusiasts, Raises Funds for Wetlands

Edward Lynn, Eagle Grove Eagle

The Red Shed event center was packed with outdoor sports and hunting enthusiasts last Saturday night as Ducks Unlimited hosted its annual fundraiser, a key event for conservation efforts in the region. The evening featured fundraising games and a silent auction offering a wide range of high-end outdoorsman’s gear and accessories, including firearms, with all proceeds going toward wetland preservation.

Ducks Unlimited, an international nonprofit dedicated to wetland conservation, has been at the forefront of preserving and restoring habitats critical to waterfowl and other wildlife. “Last year, we conserved over a million acres of wetlands,” said Chris Sprott, state chairman for Iowa Ducks Unlimited. “We have another million on the books for this year.”

The organization’s impact extends far beyond hunting, benefiting entire ecosystems and communities. “Wetlands do so much more than just give us a habitat for duck hunting,” Sprott explained. “They are essential for water quality, watershed flood mitigation, and filtering out nitrates from agricultural runoff.”

For those unfamiliar with the importance of wetlands, Sprott broke it down simply: “A wetland is like a big sponge. It draws in water from fields and other areas, filters out harmful nitrates, and then releases clean water



Outdoors enthusiasts filled the Red Shed for the Ducks Unlimited fundraiser. (Photo: Edward Lynn)

downstream. That’s why wetland conservation matters to everyone, not just sportsmen.”

Travis Connor, a local organizer, emphasized the fundraiser’s role in supporting conservation. “We do this every year, typically on the last Saturday of February. The biggest thing is wetland conservation and preserving land for future generations.”

The Clarion event was part of a broader initiative by Ducks Unlimited, which hosts various fundraisers across Iowa, including skeet shooting, bingo nights, and golf tournaments. According to Sprott, “We hold roughly 150 to 200 events a year across the state, with 88 chapters leading the charge.” The organization is active across the entire continent of North America, throughout the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

Attendees were eager to show their support. Many took part in the silent auction, where premium hunting gear and firearms drew significant bids. “Ducks Unlimited invests 83 cents of every dollar donated back into conservation,” Sprott noted. “It’s one of the most efficient nonprofit organizations out there—supporters really get a lot of bang for their buck.”

Beyond fundraising, Ducks Unlimited actively engages in wetland restoration and lake improvement projects throughout Iowa. “Much of our work here focuses on lake restoration,” Sprott said. “We improve and restore existing wetlands and make sure they function properly. It’s all about science—figuring out where wetlands make the most sense and directing our resources there.”

Connor encouraged more people to get involved with the local chapter. “We have roughly 12 committee members, but we’re always looking for more volunteers. Every year, we hold social events where people can learn more and join our efforts.” For farmers and rural residents, wetland conservation is particularly relevant. “If you’re a farmer and you want to preserve your land for future generations, setting aside land for conservation programs like CRP or partnering with Ducks Unlimited is a great way to do it,” Connor explained. “It’s a proactive step toward sustainable land use.”

Connor emphasized that everyone should care about water. “When we preserve wetlands, we’re preserving the natural filter system of our waterways,” Connor said. “It’s not just about hunting—it’s about clean water, flood prevention, and protecting our way of life for future generations.”

Rec Center continued from page 1

“It’s not an either-or situation,” he explained, emphasizing that none of the development projects will surpass the city’s debt limit. All of the support the city is offering to the REC Center could also be provided by the Clarion-Goldfield-Dows School District. The only difference is where it would affect the taxpayers, the town of Clarion, or the entire CGD School District if the school takes the reins.

CGD Superintendent Joseph Nelson was present and vocal about his personal and professional support for the REC Center.

School Involvement- While the CGD School Board of Education has expressed support for the project, they have not earmarked funds for the construction of the project. With two major additions to the school in recent years, a bond measure to raise taxes in November would be required if the school were to consider a stake. The school and the REC held a public workshop in the Fall of 2024 and agreed on the type of support they could offer.

What the school has offered is the use of the High School parking lot, outdoor security cameras, lawn and snow maintenance, and rent of \$1,800 for use of the basketball court after school. Superintendent Nelson shared that he feels the REC Center would be an “opportunity center” for children in the district, offering a safe place for students to go after school. Current Clarion Fitness Director Ben Kenobbie was at the workshop as well,

offering his thoughts when asked directly.

Current Fitness Center and Community Impact- Concerns were addressed regarding how the REC Center would partner with the current fitness center. The Clarion Fitness Center is a private nonprofit run under the direction of a board that has been operating successfully for twenty years. The nonprofit currently does not pay rent to the building owner on Main Street, furthering the low cost of operation.

Some expressed concern that if the Clarion Fitness Center were to join the REC Center as soon as the doors open and the center were to fail, it could leave the community without a gym. Others worried that competition between the two facilities could weaken both.

“If there’s not a governing body financially behind this to make sure it doesn’t go broke, what happens if the private entity fails?” one attendee asked.

Organizers emphasized their goal of working with the fitness center rather than competing against it. “The only way we’re going to move forward with this is if we have the current fitness center on board and working with us, as they have been,” Andrew Odland noted.

“The fitness center board continues to support and partner with the REC board for the success of the community as we have since the beginning of the project,” Kenobbie shared with The Wright County Monitor.

Additionally, questions

were raised about how current fitness center members would transition to the new facility. Discussions indicated that efforts would be made to ensure a smooth transition if the current fitness center moved to the REC Center.

Community Support and Next Steps- A formal city council vote of support is expected soon, maybe before this issue of the newspaper is printed, which would allow the REC Board to begin fundraising and grant writing efforts again.

One community member expressed confidence in raising the remaining funds, stating that even with only 5% of the community contributing there is already 40% of the total pledged. He further emphasized that “the money is out there”

especially considering the REC Board has a “new plan that’s \$8.5 million, which is a lot less scary number than \$10.2 million. We’re halfway there already!”

The goal remains to complete the project without relying on bond measures, or the city’s direct funding. Some community members have expressed concern over choosing between a fire station and a recreational center, but city officials reassured them that both projects are budgeted to move forward.

The community’s enthusiasm and an ongoing discussion between the city, school, the rec board, and the current fitness center will be key in determining the project’s ultimate success.

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Over 1,000 Participants Have Benefited from Parkinson's Disease Education

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach delivers 'A Journey Through Parkinson's Disease' to Iowans and others

Leah Brooke, Elizabeth Stegemoller,

Parkinson's disease affects millions of people worldwide, bringing challenges not only to those diagnosed but also to their families and caregivers. Addressing these challenges requires support, education and resources that empower individuals to live fulfilling lives.

That's why, for more than five years, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach has been delivering "A Journey Through Parkinson's Disease," an educational series to guide participants through the complexities of this progressive neurodegenerative disease.

"We now have reached over 1,000 participants through 'A Journey Through Parkinson's Disease.' This educational series has been a beacon of hope for many in Iowa and across the country," said Leah Brooke, a health and human sciences educator who leads the program team.

Improving quality of life with support and education

Participants in "A Journey Through Parkinson's Disease" workshop. The program began with a mission to provide support and education to individuals living with Parkinson's Disease, their caregivers and



(Photo: Participants in "A Journey Through Parkinson's Disease" workshop.)

healthcare professionals, noted Elizabeth Stegemoller, associate professor in kinesiology, who conducts research on slowing the progression of the disease.

"We educate participants on the disease, offer strategies for managing its symptoms and provide opportunities for people to connect with others facing similar challenges," Stegemoller said.

The goal is simple yet profound: to improve the quality of life for those affected by Parkinson's disease by providing relevant, practical information and fostering a supportive community. The program provides participants with the tools and knowledge they need to better understand Parkinson's disease and navigate its impact on daily life.

The 1,000-participant mark is a significant milestone for ISU Extension and Outreach, Brooke said. It reflects not only the program's growth and reach but also the increasing demand for support and information about Parkinson's disease.

"The program has been instrumental in raising awareness, and this milestone underscores the importance of ongoing education. Reaching 1,000 participants is a testament to the growing recognition of the challenges associated with Parkinson's disease and the desire for resources that can help individuals live full, happy lives," Brooke said. "This achievement reflects the program's dedication to providing quality education and fostering a sense of community among those impacted by the disease."

Over the years, the program has included a variety of virtual and in-person educational offerings, covering topics such as:

Understanding Parkinson's disease. Participants gain in-depth information about recognizing the symptoms and seeking medical care. They also learn what to expect when visiting a neurologist and receiving a diagnosis.

Causes and treatment. Participants learn about the causes and the science behind Parkinson's disease, as well as the treatment options.

Physical activity and wellness. Participants learn about alternatives for therapies and at-home activities that can help manage symp-

toms and improve quality of life.

Fostering a sense of community

"The feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive. Many have praised the program for its comprehensive approach, which not only provides valuable medical and scientific information but also emphasizes the emotional and psychological aspects of living with Parkinson's disease. For many, the program has been a lifeline, offering not just education, but a sense of belonging to a community that understands their struggles," Brooke explained.

Testimonies from participants highlight how the program has changed their lives. One caregiver said the knowledge and coping strategies gained through the program helped them become a more effective and empathetic caregiver. Another participant, newly diagnosed with Parkinson's, expressed how the program helped them understand the disease better, increasing confidence and clarity in managing symptoms.

"Reaching the milestone of 1,000 participants is a stepping stone toward further growth and innovation in the program. ISU Extension and Outreach is committed to continuing its efforts to expand its reach, refine its offerings and adapt to the evolving needs of those affected by Parkinson's disease," Brooke said.

As the program moves forward, it remains focused on its mission: to empower those living with Parkinson's disease and to ensure that every participant knows they are not alone in their journey.

"We want to ensure that individuals and families affected by this challenging disease receive the information, resources and emotional support they need to navigate their journey with confidence," Brooke said.

Upcoming in-person and virtual offerings of "A Journey Through Parkinson's Disease," as well as outreach and research opportunities, are listed on the Health and Human Sciences Extension and Outreach website. For more information about the program, contact Leah Brooke, lbrooke@iastate.edu. To learn about research opportunities, contact Elizabeth Stegemoller, esteg@iastate.edu.



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reading between the lines

with Amanda Rink

Want to Ban Books? Maybe Start with Your Child's Internet History—Because Parenting Works Better Than Censorship

Amanda Rink, Editor

"So now do you see why books are hated and feared? They show the pores in the face of life. The comfortable people want only wax moon faces, poreless, hairless, expressionless." - Professor Faber

Libraries have been a lifelong love of mine. They've always been a safe space where I can learn, grow, and feel at home. I'm even writing this column at the Clarion Public Library.

In 2019, I was hired as the Technical Services Librarian in Belmont, and it was probably the best job I've ever had the pleasure of doing. Shortly after my youngest daughter was born, I briefly served as Rowan's library director. No matter where my life takes me, being a librarian will always be part of my identity, even if I'm not currently employed as one.

That is why recent legislation, particularly discussion about book bans under the pretense of "protecting children" has really bothered me. Now, I promised a while ago I would keep politics out of my column but... I don't feel what I have to say is inherently political, really I'm only sharing what you maybe don't know about a librarian or library's role in society.

Libraries are for everyone. They service people at every stage of life, from early childhood to old age. Librarians don't just manage books, they safeguard knowledge, protect privacy, and uphold the fundamental right to read without fear or judgment. Literally, it is in the Library Bill of Rights.

But what does this all mean in practice? It means a librarian could never tell anyone what someone else checked out last month. And that matters more than people realize.

A few scenarios to consider... A woman quietly leaving an abusive relationship wouldn't want her research to be exposed. Someone who is struggling in private with their mental health wouldn't want their list of self-help books released.

There are actual legal protections in place to ensure a patron's borrowing history remains confidential. According to Iowa Code 22.7(13), library records that reveal the identity of a patron cannot be disclosed without a court order.

Yup, that includes minors. Even if a parent demands to know what their child has checked out, a librarian cannot legally provide that information without proper authorization. But two pieces of legislation in Iowa introduced recently threaten these principles.

House File 274/521 would repeal the Iowa Code that exempts educational institutions and libraries from obscenity laws, meaning libraries could be held accountable under vague definitions of "obscenity".

Senate File 347 would prohibit public libraries from offering any material that contains descriptions of visual depictions of sex acts. The bill states that libraries, even entire cities since libraries are technically city entities, could face penalties if a librarian "knowingly provides obscene material to a minor".

The problem? Along with what librarians have time to read every single book in the library to know the contents, they don't just sit around reading, what qualifies as obscene is entirely subjective. Suzy Knipfel, Director of the Hampton Library, voiced similar concerns:

"It remains very, very vague. It does not give libraries any direction to go. There is no guidance at this point. The main premise of it is obscenity-related materials. And the word obscenity or obscene is a very vague, subjective term. So what I may feel is very obscene, you may feel is fine."

If these laws pass, libraries would be left to consider undefined moral standards, with no clear guidelines on how to proceed. And if they guess wrong? Fines. Lawsuits. Potential jail time. Are we really prepared to throw librarians in jail for not parenting someone else's child?

Because here's the thing, it isn't a librarian's job to decide what someone can or cannot read. Parents who want to control what their children consume have

every right to do so, but that is their responsibility, not the government's. If a parent is concerned about a book, they should be the ones guiding their child's reading choices, not dictating what materials are available for everyone else.

And let us be super clear, Iowa already has safeguards against obscenity. Iowa Code 728.2 makes it a serious misdemeanor for any person to distribute or display obscene materials to those under 18. We can assume laws still apply in libraries.

Imagine the absurd waste of taxpayer money if a librarian were taken to court, who would likely need a public defender because let's be honest, librarians don't make enough to afford their own legal representation (that is another conversation for another day).

Imagine a world where fear dictates a library's collection, where a single complaint can lead to a book being pulled because someone somewhere found it offensive.

"It really censors everybody's ability," says Knipfel. "What's obscene to one person is not obscene to somebody else."

History has shown us what happens when government decides what people can and cannot read. Book bans strip away knowledge, diversity, and the freedom to think critically.

If lawmakers want to protect children from explicit material, they should be far more concerned about the phone in a child's hand, offering unrestricted access to all kinds of explicit content than about a book they can pick up at the library.

The public library belongs to everyone, regardless of gender, race, sexual identity, or age. That includes children, even if they sometimes check out materials their parents might not approve of.

If you want to limit what a child reads, that responsibility belongs to caregivers, not the government and not the local librarian.

The simple solution to all of this is to require parents to read what their children are reading. Is there a bill for that? Probably not, policing what people read is silly. Maybe just go to the library with your kids.

Amanda Rink is the Editor of The Wright County Monitor and a children's book author. When she isn't caring for her family, writing for the newspaper, or avoiding laundry, she can be found hiding in the woods with a cup of coffee and a romance novel.

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Event coverage requests 24 hours
*This news may not be published in the current issue.

The Monitor Staff:
Regular employees in order of continuous years of service:
Sarah Duda, Composition
Amanda Rink, Editor
Taylor Smith, Sports Editor

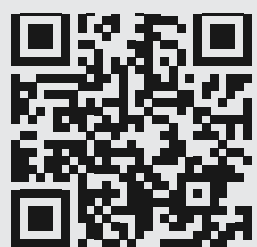
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Wright County

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The Thompson Times

Representative
Mark Thompson,
House District 56

Our Majestic Capitol has many Stories to Tell this Week.

The Cattlemen's Association treated those at the Capitol to a great breakfast. Mary Greiman from Hancock County was at the Cattlemen's Breakfast.

Subcommittee for HF463

I was able to chair the subcommittee for the bill I wrote regarding an enhanced multi-disciplinary Human Trafficking force. It goes to full committee this coming week to make it through funnel week.

Teresa Davidson, CEO and co-founder of Chains Interrupted visited the Capitol. Teresa has been instrumental in helping so many trafficked victims and being an advocate for ways to treat and help our most vulnerable. Her wisdom has helped me in drafting legislation.

This past week our Capitol and those working there experienced citizens exercising their right to free speech in the form testifying before the judiciary committee and public protest. Many were voicing their opinions for and against removing gender identity from the Iowa Code. As with other legislation that has come to the floor, its portrayal in the media is more often subjective, lacking both accuracy and context. Thus, clarification is provided.

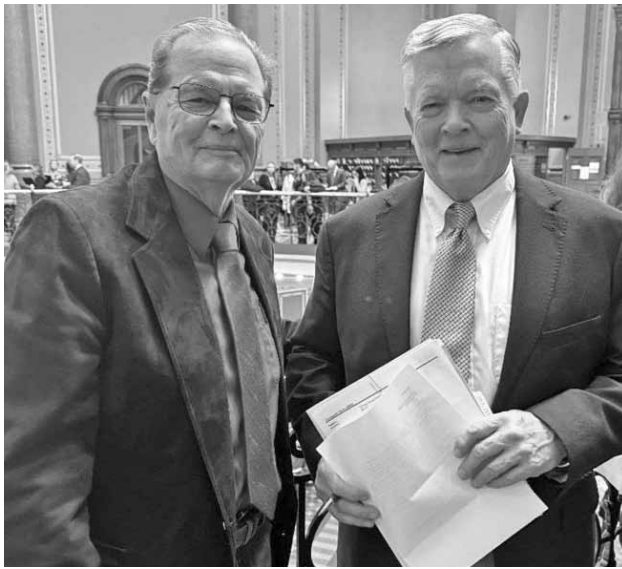
This Bill Will Not Protect:

- Use of public bathrooms, dressing rooms, and showers designated for the opposite sex
- Biological males gaining access to prison cells, homeless shelters, domestic abuse shelters, and other spaces designated for females
- Biological males participating in sports designated for females, taking away women's opportunity to participate on the team and do so safely and fairly.
- Free sex reassignment surgeries or hormone treatments paid for by the taxpayers.

McKinley Bailey - Executive Director of Building Families Early Childhood Area. Building Families financially helps several of District 56 preschools to include Belmont-Klemme Preschool, Clarion Preschool and Gilmore City-Bradgate Preschool. McKinley came to the Capitol to discuss funding changes that may affect their ability to financially help the schools.

Quick Review of More Legislation

Improving Our Foster Care System



Wright County farmer, Bob Ritter discussed his CO2 pipeline concerns with Representative Mark Thompson last week.



McKinley Bailey - Executive Director of Building Families Early Childhood Area. Building Families financially helps several of District 56 preschools to include Belmont-Klemme Preschool, Clarion Preschool and Gilmore City-Bradgate Preschool. McKinley came to the Capitol to discuss funding changes that may affect their ability to financially help the schools.

One of the caucus priorities we entered session with was to ensure Iowa laws are protecting our youth and setting them up for success in life.

We must make sure that we are supporting children born into tough situations.

This week, the House Health and Human Services Committee passed multiple bills to support children in foster care and to help foster parents support children in their care.

House File 374 allows for DHHS and foster parents to consent to routine medical care for a child placed in their care. This will help ensure children have access to the health care they need.

House Study Bill 146 appropriates \$275,000 for additional Department of Health and Human Services employees focused on finding relatives for children placed in foster care, and provides additional emphasis on foster parents that have cared for the child for at least nine months in determining custody. This will hopefully provide more stability for the child in foster care.

House Study Bill 215 allows for expedited kinship

licensure. The bill defines fictive kin as an adult who is not a relative of a child but who has an emotionally positive significant relationship with the child or the child's family. This aims to use the child's existing support system to provide the care they need and improve their well-being.

Recently, the Iowa House unanimously passed two bills to support veterans.

House File 175 opens up in-state tuition at Iowa's community colleges and regent universities for all veterans, their spouses, and their dependents. Veterans often do not have a single place of residency and this bill helps support those veterans and their loved ones seeking an education and attracting high quality individuals to Iowa.

House File 250 comes from the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs to update a legislative report to be based on the fiscal year, rather than calendar year, and to provide oversight over the training of county executive directors and administrators by the commandant of the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs.

The View From Here

Senator Dennis Guth,
R-Klemme

The big issue in the news this week was the passage of Senate File 418. SF418 removes the phrase "gender identity" from the list of protected classes in the Civil Rights code. This means the code protects only traits that are unchangeable (sex, race, etc.) or are protected by the Constitution (religion).

There are already 28 states that don't have gender identity in their Civil Rights code, and Iowa now joins them. As I was discussing this bill with another senator, we agreed that perhaps we should just get rid of the Civil Rights code and go back to "all people are created equal" as our standard. SF 418 also defines the word "sex" as being either male or female as observed or clinically verified at birth. It also defines male, female, mother and father.

One motivation for doing this is that the court had a hard time reconciling bills to protect women's sports and keeping biological men out of women's restrooms while gender identity was protected in our code. Removal of gender identity helps us protect women and children.

The left was truly outraged by this legislation and showed up in full costume to protest loud and profanely. We had a lot of security present and it was certainly an interesting day.

SF 8 is a bill that prohibits a school board from taking disciplinary action against an employee or student who uses a student's legal name or refuses to use a preferred pronoun.

A small issue, but a big deal for residents of a nursing home, is SF 255 which changes the personal needs allowance from \$50 to \$65.



The crowd protesting SF 418

This means that residents on Medicare will have a few more dollars to spend on personal items each month. This bill still has a long ways to go, but I am hopeful it will be passed this session and provide more discretionary funds for residents of a nursing home.

My newsletter reporting may seem brief because I just returned Wednesday, February 26th from an 8 day tour to Israel. It was an amazing trip. We visited Jerusalem, the Dead Sea, Tiberius, and the Sea of Galilee, and many more places mentioned in the Bible. Our tour guide grew up just blocks from where the Virgin Mary's parents lived. All of the locations mentioned in the Bible are so close together. Jerusalem is in a bowl, surrounded by mountains. From the Mount of Olives you can see the Temple/Wailing wall, the Garden of Gethsemane, the route that Jesus carried His cross (Via Dolorosa) and so

much more. We never had a concern about security. We heard F-16 fighter jets zoom overhead and found out they do regular patrols, so even that was comforting.

If you have been thinking of visiting Israel, now is a great time to go. Places we pulled into would normally have 15 busses in the parking lot at the height of tourism. Last week they only had two. The country's economy lives on tourism and the Israelis were so happy to welcome visitors after an 18 month absence.

I will be holding town hall meetings on March 8th in Clarion at the Library at 10:00 AM and in the Humboldt City Hall at 12:30 PM.

I will also have forums in Hancock County on March 15. Time and place is still being determined.

This week was a reminder that doing the right thing sometimes does not appear popular, but pursuing truth is always the right thing to do.

Senate panel advances death penalty bill for murder of peace officers

By Robin Opsahl
Iowa Capital Dispatch

A Senate subcommittee advanced this year's proposal to reinstate the death penalty in Iowa in cases where a person is found guilty of the intentional killing of a peace officer.

Iowa abolished capital punishment in 1965. But Republican lawmakers have proposed bringing back the practice for specific crimes multiple times in recent years. In 2024, lawmakers considered a proposal to reinstate the death penalty for cases in which a person is convicted of first-degree murder for intentionally killing a police officer or prison employee.

The 2025 bill, Senate File 320, is another attempt at implementing the death penalty for the crime of first-degree murder of law enforcement officers. Under current Iowa law, the intentional killing of a peace officer, correctional officer, public employee, or hostage by a person imprisoned in a correctional institution constitutes a first-degree murder charge. The legislation would create a new first-degree murder charge for when a person "intentionally kills a peace officer, who is on duty, under any circumstances, with the knowledge that the person killed is a peace officer."

The death penalty, by lethal injection, could be considered when a person is convicted on the charge of intentionally killing a law enforcement officer.

Sen. Dave Rowley, R-Spirit Lake, said the legislation came at behest of the family of Officer Kevin Cram, an Algona police officer who was shot and killed in the line of duty in 2023, as well as others in the state who expressed concerns about justice served after law enforcement officers are killed.

"These people came forward with this bill, and I think it needs a serious discussion on where the death penalty, where life imprisonment applies, and where it may not," Rowley said.

A majority of speakers at the subcommittee meeting were opposed to the legislation. Many representing faith groups said the state as an entity should not have the power to decide to end an individual's life. Connie Ryan, executive director of Interfaith Alliance of Iowa, read a letter from 170 faith leaders that called these pro-

posals "wrong, immoral, and contrary to the facts" about the effectiveness of the death penalty as punishment and a deterrent for crime. She said she read the same letter during numerous meetings since 2018 in opposition to death penalty bills.

The Death Penalty Information Center, a nonprofit organization focused on capital punishment, found at least 200 people in the U.S. who have been sentenced to death since 1973 were wrongfully convicted and have been exonerated. Multiple studies, compiled by the organization, have found the death penalty does not effectively deter crime in states where the punishment is used.

"The government should not kill a human being as retribution or punishment, regardless of the person's actions," Ryan said. "It is unfair, it is unnecessary, it is ineffective, and it is morally wrong."

In addition to the moral arguments against the death penalty, several opponents to the measure said reinstating the death penalty would come at a high cost to the state. Amy Campbell, representing the League of Women Voters of Iowa, said during her time as a lobbyist at the legislature she has been repeatedly told "we don't have enough money" for efforts on issues like conservation or Medicaid waiver waiting lists.

"More than a dozen states have found that the death penalty cases are up to 10 times more expensive when compared to non-death penalty cases," Campbell said. "(And) I haven't heard the judge the courts talk about their impact to them — there will be a fiscal impact to the courts. There have been in every other state, and ... according to a Columbia Law School study, 68% of the cases, death penalty cases, are overturned. So that's a very costly process when we have others waiting for trial."

Jen Rathje with the Iowa Department of Corrections said the department, working with the Department of Administrative Services, found implementing the death penalty would come at a "conservative" estimated cost of \$3.45 million, a figure that does not take into account additional materials or equipment that would be required to carry out executions. She said estimates have found the cost of an execution would be roughly \$9,000, with \$2,000

for the pharmaceuticals used for a lethal injection and \$7,000 for the cost of contracting an executioner.

Senate Minority Leader Janice Weiner said the costs to the state of hiring an executioner was unintentionally one of the "most chilling" things she heard brought up in the discussion on the death penalty. She said while she understands why family members of police officers seek this form of justice, she said that reinstating the death penalty is not the best path forward for Iowa.

"I have the greatest, only the greatest, empathy and sympathy for the family of the slain officer. I cannot imagine what it is like to be in their shoes," Weiner said. "So I understand and appreciate some of the motivations. At the same time, I really ask that we not do this."

Sen. Scott Webster, R-Bettendorf, said he believed there needed to be support for police officers, while also understanding those not in support of the bill were not siding against police.

"I think this conversation is not easy to have," Webster said. "I think the conversation will probably continue, and I'm okay with that, because I think we need to continue to have the conversation over these particular items. Because that's what we need to do as Iowans and as Americans, is have difficult conversations and try not to politicize them too much, just try to have the difficult conversation and see which way we move forward."

Rowley said the death penalty would just be "an option" in the justice system as families, like the family of Officer Cram, seek closure following the murder of their loved ones.

"Not mandatory, but part of our justice system, integrated in to provide justice, not only for the family, but I also see it as an issue for society as a whole," Rowley said. "At some level, I feel — sorry — it needs to be addressed, and that's what brought the bill forward from the family. That's what brings it forward from my heart."

Read more from Robin Opsahl online at IowaCapitalDispatch.com ©Copyright 2025, Iowa Capital Dispatch. Published under a Creative Commons license, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0. Read more at iowacapitaldispatch.com

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Church news

CLARION AREA

CLARION FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
201 3rd Ave. NE, Clarion, IA 50525
Pastor Craig Luttrell
515-532-2845
website: www.clarion.church
Church Office
Hours: Monday - Thursday 8:00 a.m. - Noon
• Wednesday, March 5
7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service
• Sunday, March 9
9:00 a.m. Sunday School for all ages
10:00 a.m. Worship Service
• Sunday, March 16
9:00 a.m. Sunday School for all ages
10:00 a.m. Worship Service

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA
420 1st St NW, Clarion, IA 515-532-3440
www.firstlutheranclarion.com
"YOU are love, YOU belong, YOU are called, and YOU are gifted"
• 9:00 a.m. Sunday Worship Services

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, CONGREGATIONAL
121 3rd Avenue N.W., Clarion
• Sunday, March 9
9:00 a.m. Worship
10:00 a.m. Fellowship

CHURCH OF CHRIST
420 North Main, Clarion
Pastor Warren Curry
515-532-3273
http://clarionchurchofchrist.weebly.com
Facebook Clarion Church of Christ
9:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Worship, also live each Sunday on Facebook
6:00 a.m. Tuesday Iron Man, Fellowship Hall, Church Building
10:00 a.m. Wednesday, Weekly Prayer Time Fellowship Hall, Church Building
Ongoing Bible Studies - times and locations vary; check for more information at the church office week.

ST. JOHN CATHOLIC
608 2nd Ave. N.E., Clarion
Father Jerry W. Blake, Pastor
515-532-3586
Sunday, March 9
Baby Needs
7:15 a.m. Rosary, A/B at Sacred Heart, Eagle Grove
8:00 a.m. Mass at Sacred Heart, Eagle Grove
Confirmation
9:45 a.m. Rosary, A/B at St. John, Clarion
10:30 a.m. Mass at St. John, Clarion
• Monday, March 10
8:15 a.m. Rosary at St. Francis, Belmont
10:30 a.m. Belmont Care Center
5:30 p.m. Finance, Sacred Heart, Eagle Grove
6:00 p.m. CDA Rosary and Meeting at St. John, Clarion
• Tuesday, March 11
10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting at St. John, Clarion
5:30 p.m. Finance at St. Francis, Belmont
• Wednesday, March 12
Youth Faith Formation
7:40 a.m. Rosary at St. Francis, Belmont
8:00 a.m. Mass at St. Francis, Belmont
6:30 p.m. Communal Penance at St. John, Clarion
6:30 p.m. Adoration at St. John, Clarion
• Thursday, March 13
8:00 a.m. Sewing at St. John, Clarion
11:00 a.m. Fatima Rosary at Sacred Heart, Eagle Grove
Lenten Activities

5:30 p.m. Stations, Mass Soup Supper at Sacred Heart, Eagle Grove
5:30 p.m. Stations, Soup Supper at St. John, Clarion
• Friday, March 14
7:40 a.m. Rosary at St. John, Clarion
8:00 a.m. Mass at St. John, Clarion
• Saturday, March 15
Lent II Haiti Collection
3:15 p.m. A/B at St. Francis, Belmont
4:00 p.m. Mass at St. Francis, Belmont
5:00 p.m. Irish Stew Dinner at St. Francis, Belmont
7:15 p.m. A/B at St. Francis, Belmont
8:00 p.m. Spanish Mass, St. John, Clarion
• Sunday, March 16
Lent II Haiti Collection
7:15 a.m. A/B at Sacred Heart, Eagle Grove
8:00 a.m. Mass at Sacred Heart, Eagle Grove
9:45 a.m. A/B at St. John, Clarion
10:30 a.m. Mass at St. John, Clarion

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
219 First Street N.W. Clarion
515-532-2709
• Sunday 9:00 a.m.
• Sunday 10:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School Class
• Wednesdays 6:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study
• Saturdays 8:00 a.m. Men's Group

THE LIGHTHOUSE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE
Dana Wendel, Pastor
1010 2nd Street SW; Clarion
515-293-3003
FREE Dinner will be on the first Sunday of the month.
• Sunday
9:30 a.m. Coffee Time
9:45 a.m. Sunday School
10:45 a.m. Worship
• Tuesday
11:00 a.m. Prayer Time
• Iglesia del Nazareno
6:00 p.m. Sabado
6:00 p.m. Domingo
Lay Minister Mynor
515-851-9699
Bienvenidos

Rejoice Church: A Word and Spirit Church
Pastors Cris and Jennifer Decious
Sunday worship 10:30 am
www.Rejoicechurchiowa.com or watch us on facebook
NEW LOCATION! We will begin IN PERSON WORSHIP services starting on DECEMBER 1, 2024 in our home worship room at 3320 210th St. Goldfield, IA 50542

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
220 E. Oak St., Goldfield, IA 50542
515-825-3581
goldfield.upc@gmail.com
Facebook@goldpres
"A Church for the Community"
Office M-F 7:30 - 11:30 a.m.
• Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.
LAKE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Goldfield
Pastor Ron Rasmussen
• Sunday, March 2
10:00 a.m. Worship Service and Fellowship Coffee in the Fellowship Room.
No Sunday School

GOLDFIELD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
P.O. Box 214
515-825-3754
New Pastor: Pastor Laurene Banza
We welcome all!
Pastor Laurene is from the Democratic Republic of Congo

Africa.
• Sunday Services
11:00 a.m. Worship time
HOLMES EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Pastor George Lautner
412-874-9878
• Sunday, March 9
9:30 a.m. Worship and Communion

HOLMES BAPTIST CHURCH
2137 Hancock Avenue
Pastor Cody Huber
515-825-3110
• Sundays
9:30 a.m. Sunday school, 10:30 a.m. Worship Service, 5 p.m. Evening Service
• Wednesdays
Prayer Meeting, youth group, kids club (1st - 6th grades - during school year)
WRIGHT CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
1730 130th Street, Kanawha
641-762-3947
• Sunday, March 9
9:30 a.m. Morning Worship, 10:30 a.m. Fellowship, 11 a.m. Sunday School, 6 p.m. Evening Worship

ROWAN AREA

UNITED CHURCH OF ROWAN
Pastor Nancy Hofmeister
811 Pesch St., Box 38, Rowan
• Sundays
10:00 a.m. Worship
• Tuesdays March 4, 11, 18 & 25
1:30 p.m. Bible Study
• Wednesday March 19
10:00 a.m. Council
11:00 a.m. Property, Maintenance and Memorial
• Thursday, March 20
2:00 p.m. United Church of Rowan Women
• Tuesday, April 1 & 8
1:30 p.m. Bible Study
• Sunday, April 13 Palm Sunday
• Sunday April 20
7:00 a.m. Easter Sunrise Service followed by breakfast
10:00 a.m. Easter Worship

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Missouri Synod
Jct. Highway 69 & 3
Pastor Mark Eichler
• Sunday, March 9
10:30 a.m. Divine Services, 11:45 a.m. Bible Study

DOWS AREA

SOVEREIGN GRACE CHURCH
109 N. Eskridge St., Dows
Dows / www.sgcdows.com
Doug Holmes, Pastor
• Sunday, March 9
10:15 a.m. Sunday school,

Coffee, 11:15 a.m. Worship at First Presbyterian in Dows
FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
Dows, IA
Masking is option
• Sunday, March 9
9:00 a.m. Conf/SS/Coffee
10:00 a.m. Worship
• Wednesday, March 12
5:30 p.m. Lenten Meal
6:30 p.m. Lenten Worship

UNITED METHODIST & PRESBYTERIAN
• Sunday, March 9
10 a.m. Dows Joint Worship at Untied Methodist
FIRST REFORMED
214 Brown St., Alexander
• Sundays
9:30 a.m. Worship, 10:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship

IMMANUEL U.C.C.
204 E. South St., Latimer
Joe Dunnwald
• Sunday, March 9
10:30 a.m. Worship

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN
304 W. Main, Latimer
Travis Berg, Pastor
• Sunday, March 9
9 a.m. Worship, 10:15 a.m. ABC/Sunday School

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Morgan, Lee Center, Bradford
Erling Shultz, Pastor
• Sunday, March 9
8:30 a.m. Worship (B), 9:30 a.m. Worship (LC), 10:30 a.m. Worship (M)

MISSIONARY ALLIANCE CHURCH
3rd & Lake Streets, Blairsburg, IA 50034
• Sundays
8:45 - 9:45 a.m. Café is open serving donuts, smoothies and coffee beverages
9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School

10:00 a.m. Worship Service
10:00 a.m. Nursery available for children up to age 2
10:00 a.m. Kids Church for children 2 years to grade 5
• Wednesday
5:45 - 6:15 p.m. Café Open
6:30 p.m. Youth
6:30 p.m. Kids Club for children grades 1-5

NAZARETH LUTHERAN
Coulter
Pastors Tom Dettmer and Stanley Peterson
• Sunday, March 9
9:30a.m. Joint Sunday Worship Service with Holy Communion, Coffee to follow
• Dinner is the first Sunday of the month

The Clarion Wire

** Wright County Farm Bureau hosts a Town Hall meeting on Saturday, March 8 at the Clarion library. Senator Dennis Guth and Representatives Mark Thompson and Shannon Latham have been invited to meet with citizens at 10 a.m.
** This is 'return to Daylight Savings Time' - early Sunday morning, March 9!
** "Stone Soup Community Bowls Event" on Sunday, March 9 from 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. at First Lutheran Church in Clarion. Get soup bowls created by local youth and artisans. Freewill offering for Wright Community Connections!
** "Easy Going Senior Exercises" at the Clarion Senior Citizens Center every Monday and Thursday afternoon, beginning at 1:30 p.m.
** Community Impact Night at Pizza Ranch on Monday, March 10 from 5 - 7:30 p.m. with Clarion's M & Ms, as the group embarks on raising \$ for pool passes to be given away for 2025!
** First Lutheran Church FOOD PANTRY in Clarion, 420 - First Street N.W., is open on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month, from 5 - 7 p.m. Next events are March 13 and 27!
** Celebrate St. Patrick's Day in Rowan on Saturday, March 15! Start with Irish Stew Lunch at the United Church of Rowan, serving between 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Join the fun with the Parade (weather permitting) beginning at 1:30 p.m. from the Rowan Events Center. More information? Contact Lennea at 515-294-1657.
** Clarion's Senior Citizens Center, Play '500 cards', the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Next one is on Wednesday, March 19 from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
** 2nd Annual Mattress Fundraiser for CGD Fine Arts programs - Saturday, March 22 from 10 a.m. - 5

p.m. Location: CGD Cafeteria.
** "Down Memory Lane: Park Soup Supper & Silent Auction" - Saturday, March 22 from 5 - 7 p.m. at Goldfield Community Center, in Goldfield. Freewill offering. Lots of delicious soups, cinnamon rolls, cornbread. Silent auction winners, need. not be present (will be notified).
** "Bingo at the BRU" the 4th of each Tuesday. Next one is Tuesday, March 25 at 6 p.m. \$20 for 3 cards and 10 rounds of Bingo; \$ for community fundraising!
** "MOM PROM 2025" at The Red Shed on Saturday, March 29 from 7 - 11 p.m. For women 21 years old and older! \$40 ticket!
** Save the Date for the 2025 Spring Fashion Runway Show at Italics Boutique on Thursday, April 3. Grab food and drinks beforehand then head to the show. Doors open at 6:30 pm. Show is at 7 pm. Store open for shopping afterwards. Tickets are \$15 each and include entrance, fashion show, treats, and a \$5 donation to our Clarion Playground Fund! Can be purchased in-store or online at https://www.italicsboutique.com/products/2025-spring-fashion-show-tickets
** AT THE CLARION THEATRE: Showing "Unbreakable Boy" on Friday - Sunday, March 7 - March 9 @ 7 p.m.; Sunday matinee, March 9 @ 2:30 p.m.
** MONEY SAVING TIP: "Monday FLIGHT NIGHT" at Main Scoop on South Main in Clarion, every Monday. Get 4 mini scoops for \$7 or 6 scoops for \$9 from 2 - 8 p.m.
** THANK YOU: To Clarion Cub Scouts for individual troops bussing tables all during the month of February; and for all of their efforts...troop members, leaders, parents. Not only for are Cub Scouts, but for all the levels of scouting!! February is Scouting Month!

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A Life Beyond Reproach
Writing in the 7th century A.D., Saint Isidora of Seville claimed that "Philosophy is the knowledge of things human and divine, accompanied by the desire to live a life beyond reproach." In ancient times, and up until a few hundred years ago, philosophers were expected to be exemplars of virtue, and not just people who knew a lot of arcane things. What happened to change this? There is a hint in the quote from Saint Isidora. He says that philosophy is the knowledge of things human and divine, and this quest for divine wisdom is largely what separates modern (and post-modern) philosophy from that of the ancients. We hardly ever hear the phrase "beyond reproach" anymore. It means that we should act in such a way that there is no question about our integrity; others will know that we will always do the right thing. Applied to limited areas of our lives, some of us may be beyond reproach, for instance when it comes to being trusted with money or someone's property. But who of us can say that our entire life is beyond reproach? Probably none of us, and yet that is what we should aim for.
-Christopher Simon

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Monitor Memories

FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE WRIGHT COUNTY MONITOR
1983 - 1948

42 Years Ago
March 10, 1983

The Clarion Community School has awkward numbers to work with while making plans for staffing the elementary classes next year. In several cases, it's a matter of going with fewer sections and large classes, or more sections and a smaller number of students in each classroom. As of Monday, student projections for the upcoming school year include: kindergarten—70, first grade—75, second grade—55, third grade—54, fourth grade—44, fifth grade—38, sixth grade—57, seventh grade—56, and eighth grade—63.

A new non-profit organization, Kid's Korner Day Care Incorporated, has been founded, and is rapidly moving toward opening the Kid's Korner Day Care Center in the next few months. According to the organization's chairperson, Terry Kreitlow, preparations for the opening of a Clarion day care center are moving right along.

Clarion fourth graders went for a blind hike as part of their environmental educational experiences held last Friday morning at Pike's Timber. The hike made the students put their senses to work while they explored the world around them.

77 Years Ago
March 4, 1948

Valentine's day gave Cupid a big boost in Wright county in the number of marriage licenses granted in February. Fourteen licenses were granted during the month at the office of Clerk of Court R. V. Goslin. And this in spite of the fact that the office was open only 23 days during the month. This makes a total of 22 licenses so far this year.

When Supt. C. J. Christiansen presented the Clarion high school basketball boys with the plaque which indicated they were winners of the sectional tournament which came to a close here Saturday night, it was the first time in many years that Clarion had won such a trophy.

New building and remodeling projects in Clarion totaled over \$225,000 during 1947, according to building permits issued last year by the Clarion city council. These included new homes, new business buildings, and home and business remodeling jobs. Project costs ranged from \$100 for the remodeling of a porch to \$16,000 for the new Ripley garage.



Annual Board Meeting First Steps Early Learning Center

210 2nd St NW • Clarion, IA 50525

Wednesday, March 12, 2025
at 5:30 pm

Public welcome to attend.

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Phone and Internet Discounts Available to CenturyLink Customers

The Iowa Utilities Board designated CenturyLink as an Eligible Telecommunications Carrier within its service area for universal service purposes. CenturyLink's basic local service rates for residential voice lines are \$34.50 per month and business services are \$54.50 per month. Specific rates will be provided upon request.

CenturyLink participates in the Lifeline program, which makes residential telephone or qualifying broadband service more affordable to eligible low-income individuals and families. Eligible customers may qualify for Lifeline discounts of \$5.25/month for voice or bundled voice service or \$9.25/month for qualifying broadband or broadband bundles. Residents who live on federally recognized Tribal Lands may qualify for additional Tribal benefits if they participate in certain additional federal eligibility programs. The Lifeline discount is available for only one telephone or qualifying broadband service per household, which can be either a wireline or wireless service. Broadband speeds must be at least 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload to qualify.

A household is defined as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. Services are not transferable, and only eligible consumers may enroll in these programs. Consumers who willfully make false statements to obtain these discounts can be punished by fine or imprisonment and can be barred from these programs.

If you live in a CenturyLink service area, visit <https://www.centurylink.com/aboutus/community/community-development/lifeline.html> for additional information about applying for these programs or call 1-800-201-4099 with questions.



Words of Wisdom

Last week's trivia questions:
Which U.S. president said, "Speak softly and carry a big stick."?
Answer: Theodore Roosevelt.
Which U.S. president said, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."?
Answer: Franklin D. Roosevelt.



Which U.S. president said, "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country."?
Answer: John F. Kennedy.
Which U.S. president borrowed words from Jesus when he said, "A house divided against itself cannot stand."?
Answer: Abraham Lincoln.

This week's trivia questions:
What 1992 courtroom drama movie starred Tom Cruise, Demi Moore, and Jack Nicholson?
What 1992 romantic thriller movie starred Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston?

March is Red Cross Month, National Noodle Month, National Reading Month, Social Work Month, Women's History Month, National Cheerleading Safety Month, National Frozen Food Month, National Flour Month, National Craft Month, National Peanut Month, National Umbrella Month, and National Nutrition Month.

March 5 is Ash Wednesday (Lent Begins); March 6 is National Dentist Day, National Frozen Food Day, and National Oreo Cookie Day; March 7 is National Cereal Day, National Employee Appreciation Day, and World Day of Prayer; March 8 is International Women's Day, National Preschooler's Day, and United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace; March 9 is Daylight Savings, World Kidney Day, and National Barbie Day; March 10 is International Day of Women Judges, and National Pack Your Lunch Day; March 11 is National Johnny Appleseed Day.

This week is National Sea Week, Women in Construction Week, and Chocolate Chip Cookie Week.

"If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is not for you!"

During the World Cup in Brazil, the England team visited an orphanage. "It was heart-breaking to see their sad little faces with no hope," said João, age 6.

What is the hardest thing about skateboarding?
Answer: the concrete.

I kept wondering why the baseball was getting bigger. Then it hit me.

Why did the football coach go to the bank?
To get his quarter back.

Why was the tiny ghost asked to join the football team? They needed a little team spirit.

What does a Vikings fan do after they win the Super Bowl? Turn off his Playstation and go to bed.

Dolly Parton is the only country artist to have a Top 20 hit on Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart for six consecutive decades, from the 1960s to the 2010s.

Shania Twain has sold over 100 million records, making her the best-selling female artist in country music history, and among the best-selling music artists of all time.



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Talk to your children now.

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For Immediate Assistance, call the Iowa Substance Abuse Information Center toll-free Help Line at 866-242-4111.



Obituaries

Janet Kee Pardun Kimmons

Beloved Mother and Grandma Ma, Janet Kee Pardun Kimmons passed peacefully into the presence of her Savior on Feb 25, 2025. Her love and support will be truly missed.

Pecans add the perfect finishing touch



Pecans can make any recipe better. Whether they add a nutritious crunch to oatmeal, star as the lead ingredient in pecan pie or give cookies that little something extra, pecans elevate the foods they touch.

In this recipe "Twice-Baked Sweet Potatoes" from "Simply Scratch" (Avery) by Laurie McNamara, honey-covered pecans are the crowning touch on sweet potatoes, helping to make this side dish one to remember at any special meal.

Twice-Baked Sweet Potatoes

(Serves 4)

- 2 medium sweet potatoes, scrubbed
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, plus a pinch
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 3/4 cup coarsely chopped pecans

Preheat the oven to 400F.

Massage the olive oil onto the sweet potatoes and set them on a small baking sheet. Bake for 1 hour or until a knife glides through effortlessly. Let cool until safe to handle. Keep the oven on.

Halve the sweet potatoes horizontally and carefully scoop out the flesh into a medium bowl. Set the skins aside. Add the butter, maple syrup, chili powder, cinnamon, and 1/4 teaspoon of the salt and use a potato masher to mash the filling until smooth.

In a small bowl, combine the honey, pecans, and a pinch of salt.

Place the skins side by side in a small baking dish. Spoon the filling in, dividing it evenly, and top with the honeyed pecans. Bake for 5 minutes. Serve warm.

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Wednesday, March 12th at 5:30PM

30+ gas pumps of Wayne, Dayton, Tokheim, Bennett, and others, Visibles, clock faces, and more * oil tanks * gas pump globes * signs and oil collectibles * 5 pop machines * Note: Short Auction please be on time. More Pictures coming on Tuesday, 11th on website and facebook
 Auctioneer Note: Many nice items for sale. Weather announcements will be posted on Facebook page.

HUNDERTMARK AUCTION SERVICE

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Local Student Places First at NIACC John Pappajohn IDEA Camp



The North Iowa Area Community College John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center held the inaugural IDEA Camp for middle school students on Presidents' Day, Monday February 17, 2025.

28 students from 12 schools across North Iowa attended IDEA Camp where they put into practice life's key skills: innovation, discovery, entrepreneurship, and achievement. This hands-on program guides young innovators through the essential stages of business creation, from brainstorming ideas to crafting a solid business model. During the day, students learned the key principles of entrepreneurship, created a business plan, and presented their business in a Pitch Competition. Three student teams were awarded the top prizes:

1st Place -
Preston's Lawncare,
Preston Gniadecki

(Clarion-Goldfield-Dows Community School District, 8th Grade)
2nd Place -

The Cat's Nook,
Aaliyah Dodge (Rudd-Rockford-Marble Rock Community School District, 8th Grade) and Lily Fitch (Homeschool, 7th Grade)

3rd Place -
Scrunch It!
Ellie Borcharding, (St. Paul's Lutheran School, 7th Grade)

IDEA Camp is one of many youth entrepreneurship initiatives at the NIACC Pappajohn Center. Raegan Hanson, NIACC Pappajohn Center Youth Entrepreneurship Coordinator, said "Teaching entrepreneurship is an investment in our students – the entrepreneurial mindset drives innovation, fuels economic growth, and empowers the next generation to turn bold ideas into lasting impact. When young minds learn to think like entrepreneurs,

they build the skills and confidence to redefine what's possible and shape the future."

The next IDEA Camp will be held on Wednesday, March 12, 2025 to coincide with Spring Break. The camp will run 8:30am to 3:30pm. Check-in begins at 8am. The camp will be held at the Pappajohn Center Room #117 at the North Iowa Area Community College campus in Mason City, IA. Register at <https://www.niaccamps.com/idea-camp.cfm>. For more information, please contact Raegan Hanson at 641-422-4234 or raegan.hanson@niacc.edu.

IDEA Camp is for creative and ambitious middle school students who are eager to explore entrepreneurship, develop creative problem-solving skills, and build confidence in their ability to create and innovate. No prior experience is required—just curiosity and enthusiasm!

Gold-Eagle Cooperative Scholarship Application

Gold-Eagle Cooperative is offering four \$500 scholarships to graduating seniors in Faribault (MN), Hancock, Humboldt, Kosuth, Winnebago, and/or Wright counties pursuing higher education/trade school beginning the following academic year. Funds will be distributed following receipt showing proof of successful completion of one semester's coursework.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION - ACADEMIC YEAR 24-25

1. The deadline for application submission is April 4, 2025. Any applications received after this date will be considered on a funds available basis.
2. Attach a current copy of your high school transcripts.
3. Two signed letters of recommendation (from non-relatives) must be attached to this application.
4. Choose one of the following topics for a 500



GOLD-EAGLE COOPERATIVE

word essay.

- Explain the global impact of Iowa agriculture.
 - What role does agriculture play in your local county?
 - What makes a cooperative different from a corporation?
5. Please include an introductory paragraph about yourself and why you should be considered for the scholarship (not included in the 500 word requirement).

Consideration for this scholarship award will be based on GPA, partici-

ation in extra-curricular activities, school organizations, community service, letters of recommendation, and grammar/content of the essay. This scholarship will not be awarded to any student who receives a scholarship which sufficiently finances all tuition, fees, and books during the student's initial year of study.

Please mail applications to PO Box 168 — Eagle Grove, IA 50533 attention Elizabeth McOllough or email to emcollough@gold-eaglecoop.com

Busy Week for Local Cub Scouts

(Photos provided by Scout Leader Tim Hamilton)

Cub Scouts kicked their week off by cleaning tables off at Clarion's Pizza Ranch! Tips went to the group for various events. Their week ended with a private awards banquet and a public pinewood derby at the Clarion High School.



A few Cub Scouts proudly display a check they earned at Pizza Ranch's Community Action Night, where they worked hard cleaning tables to support their troop!



1st row L-R Owen Smith, Graham Walton, Archer Staples, Barrett Durham, Lilian McLoughlin, Lee Smidt, Barrett Keller, 2nd row Griffon Clemons, Wilson Durham, Emmett Wood, Finn Warnke, Grady Clemons, 3rd row James Cook, Huxley Durham, Oaklyn Brown, Jackson Staples, Micah Lester, 4th row Wyatt Smith, Jake Schnittjer, JJ Torsell.



On February 24, Clarion Mayor Rod Heiden met with Drilon Zogaj during a celebration marking the 17th anniversary of Kosovo's Declaration of Independence. Heiden also had the honor of meeting Lieutenant Governor Chris



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Tim Hamilton stands at the start gate, while Wyatt Smith and Griffon Clemons wait on deck behind the track. Assistant Cubmaster and Tiger & Bear Den Leader Adam Clemons monitors the official timer at the computer. Finn

Dows Freedom Rock turning 10 years old!



The Wright County Freedom Rock will be 10 years old this summer. The organization is still accepting orders for pavers. Veteran pavers will be located next to the rock and supporting pavers will be located on the two sidewalks leading up to the Rock. See order form and send in before May 1st to have it installed before Dows Corn days in August. **TO ORDER:** Go online to <http://www.formstack.com/forms/FRB-wrightcofreedomrock> OR Complete the order form and return to this address: Wright County Freedom Rock, C/O American Legion Post 523, PO Box 231, Dows, IA 50071. Make Checks Payable to: American Legion Post 523, please direct any questions to Richard Echelberger at (641) 373-2788 after 3pm CST or email wright.freedomrock@gmail.com.

Aerial views

Bruce Voigts, Aerial Photographer (Photos taken February 25, 2025)



In just 2 days, the snow has really receded in the area with the nice warm temperatures. Photo above is Clarion looking west, northwest illustrating the snow is mostly gone. A landmark for reference is the green athletic fields on the bottom right. Photo Below is of Morse lake shows up well with the white ice. The lake is still low indicated by the edge of the water retreated from the original shore line.



Evaluate Rotations of Cover Crops, Summer Annual Forages at Virtual Field Day

Elizabeth Ripley, ISU Extension & Outreach

Iowa Learning Farms, in partnership with the Iowa Nutrient Research Center and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, is hosting a free virtual field day on Thursday, March 13, at 1 p.m. Central time. The live discussion will feature Iowa State University Extension and Outreach beef specialists Chris Clark, Erika Lundy-Woolfolk and Patrick Wall.

Cover crop growth. Since 2012, Iowa has lost 125,000 acres of permanent pasture, and beef cattle producers are maintaining or increasing production on fewer and fewer acres of permanent pasture. Cover crops and summer annuals can help provide an additional forage source to Iowa beef producers, while protecting water quality and preserving valuable topsoil and nutrients. This demonstration project conducted at three of the ISU Research Farms explored common cover crop and summer annual forage crops to evaluate their forage quality and yield potential to help support producers looking to improve the utilization and rest opportunities for their pastures.

"A benefit of utilizing summer annuals is that here in Iowa, we tend to rely on perennial cool season pastures that often experience a summer slump where the pastures don't grow very well during the heat of the summer," shared Clark. "I



(Photo: Cover crop growth in May 2021 at the ISU McNay Research Farm near Chariton, by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach)

think there's an opportunity to fill in that gap of forage production with those summer annuals and make the calendar a little more manageable to hopefully get more forage and more cattle on the land."

"One of the big things that I feel is exciting from this project is the response to nitrogen," noted Lundy-Woolfolk. "A lot of our producers here look at the annual forages as an option to help capture and keep some of those nutrients in the soil. We also know that those plants need some nitrogen to have the best productivity possible, so in this study some plots received no nitrogen while others received 50 pounds of nitrogen to determine the economic feasibility of the systems."

Participants are encouraged to ask questions of the presenters. People from all

backgrounds and areas of interest are encouraged to join.

Virtual field day access instructions

Participate in the live virtual field day at 1 p.m. Central time on March 13 through one of the following options:

Click the Zoom link or visit the Iowa Learning Farms events page.

Join from a dial-in phone line by dialing 646-876-9923 or 646-931-3860 with meeting ID 914 1198 4892.

The field day will be recorded and archived on the ILF website so that it can be watched at any time.

Participants may be eligible for a Certified Crop Adviser board-approved continuing education unit, if approved. Information about how to apply to receive the CEU will be provided at the end of the event.

Regenerative Agriculture, Impact of Tariffs, and Nitrogen Fertilization Application Consultation Tool (N-FACT)

Highlighted at the ISU Northeast Research Farm on Wednesday March 19th

Chad Hart, extension crop marketing specialist, Melissa Miller, project director of the Iowa Nitrogen Initiative, and Kelly Garrett, co-founder of XtremeAg will speak at the annual meeting of the Northeast Iowa Agricultural Experimental Association (NEIAEA) at the Borlaug Learning Center, ISU Northeast Research Farm, Nashua on March 19th.

The program starts at 9:30 a.m. with a Call to Order for the board meeting. Chad Hart will get us started with his presentation at 10:00 a.m. titled "Tariffs, Trade, and the Economy". In the next hour, Melissa Miller and Lauren Schwarck will discuss "The Iowa Nitrogen Initiative: 2024 Results and an Introduction to the N-FACT Decision Support

System". During lunch, Ken Pecinovsky, Farm Superintendent, will review 2024 research trial results conducted at the NE Research Farm and discuss future research plans. Kelly Garrett will wrap up the presentations at 1:00 p.m. as he shares his insights on "Regenerative Farming and the Benefits of Balancing Your Soil Health".

A free lunch will be provided, sponsored by Cor-teva. Following Garrett's presentation, the NEIAEA board of directors will meet. The day's sessions qualify

for four free CCA credits (3 CM, 1 NM).

The meeting is free and open to the public. The program will be held at the Borlaug Learning Center on the ISU Northeast Research Farm. Directions: From Nashua at the Jct. of Hwy 218 (Exit 220) and Co. Rd. B60, go west on B60 1.1 miles to Windfall Ave., then south 1 mile to 290th St., then east 0.2 miles to the farm. For more information about the event, call Terry Basol at 641-426-6801.

Menu

Monday, March 10, join the Dows Senior Citizens for a delicious meal at noon. The cost is \$10.00. Everyone is welcome. Carry-outs are available. For the next few months, the Senior Citizens are meeting at the Dows Community Center. March 10 Menu: Potato Soup, Beefburgers, Salads, Dessert.

Dows Business & Professional Directory

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FARMLAND AUCTION

Thursday, March 27th, 2025 at 1:00PM

WRIGHT COUNTY, IA 311.36 +/- ACRES

FARMLAND DETAILS:

| | |
|--|---|
| Tract 1 - 151.36 +/- Acres - 146.44 +/- Cropland Acres - 75.4 CSR2 Average - Norway TWP, Section 14 | Tract 2 - 160 +/- Acres - 154.51 +/- Cropland Acres - 76.4 CSR2 Average - Norway TWP, Section 13 |
|--|---|

AUCTION LOCATION: Red Shed 908 2nd St. NW Clarion, Iowa 50525

SELLERS: Bundy Living Trust

Closing: On or before May 13th, 2025 Farm Lease: Cropland is Leased For 2025

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