



# The Wright County MONITOR



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## Wright County Welcomes New Economic Development Director

Amanda Rink, Editor  
Wright County has a new face helping guide its future growth, and for Aaron J. Budweg, the role feels like “the right fit at the right time.”

Budweg recently stepped into the position of Wright County Economic Development Director, bringing with him decades of experience in public service, leadership, and community-focused work. While he is new to the county, he says the warm welcome he has received has already made Wright County feel like home.

“Since arriving, I’ve been impressed by how welcoming and supportive the people of Wright County have been,” Budweg said. “It’s energizing to work in a community where resi-

dents are engaged, forward-thinking, and committed to helping their cities and the county continue to improve and thrive.”

Budweg’s career spans more than 45 years and reflects a strong commitment to serving people. He began his professional life in healthcare, working as an orderly before continuing his education and becoming licensed as a paramedic, respiratory therapist, and physical therapy provider. His work later took him around the world as a medical consultant for nearly two decades, where he gained exposure to diverse communities, economies, and problem-solving approaches.

Closer to home, Budweg has served in local government as both a city council member for three years and



(Photo: Wright County)

a city administrator for the past four and a half years. He says those roles reinforced the importance of

listening, communication, and follow-through, skills he plans to use in his new

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## Late-Night Thefts Reported Across Clarion



Screenshot from a Clarion resident’s security camera showing an individual near a vehicle during the early morning hours of December 23. (Photo: Screenshot/Chrystal)

Amanda Rink, Editor

Clarion residents reported a series of late night and early morning thefts occurring between Monday night, December 22, and early Tuesday morning, December 23, involving vehicles and at least one mailbox in several areas of town.

According to residents, individuals dressed in dark clothing were first captured on an outdoor security camera along 1st Avenue southeast. A social media post by the property owner encouraged others to review footage from their own outdoor cameras. As residents checked their recordings, additional footage surfaced, appearing to show the same individuals in multiple locations throughout Clarion.

Among the reported incidents was a theft from a mailbox along 6th Avenue northwest. Theft of mail is considered a federal offense.

Dispatch records indicate the incidents were officially reported the morning of December 23. One report noted that 80 dollars worth of groceries was taken from a vehicle.

The Clarion Police Department is currently investigating three underage individuals and one adult suspect. According to Police Chief Steve TerHark, the investigation is going by quicker thanks to help from the public and those affected.

## Area Headlines

### Belmond

On the afternoon of December 28 The Belmond Volunteer Fire Department opened the doors of its fire station to help stranded motorists after Interstate 35 was closed due to severe weather. The closure stretched from Ames to the Minnesota border, leaving many drivers in need of shelter.

### Clarion

The City of Clarion has received a safety grant that will fund the purchase of a K9 law enforcement vehicle, an additional patrol vehicle, and a new fire truck to support local emergency services.

### Dows

Members of the Dows Volunteer Fire Department spent the afternoon of December 28 assisting motorists who were stranded along Interstate 35 during the weather-related closure.

### Eagle Grove

Eagle Grove Police Officer Mark Hennigar has been placed on paid leave and has pleaded not guilty to a charge of encouraging a stabbing, according to reporting by The Eagle Grove Eagle.

### Hampton

A man was arrested and faces an OWI charge along with multiple traffic citations after driving a vehicle into the front of Hampton-Dumont High School on the night of December 27, according to reporting from The Hampton Chronicle.

## 8 Day Weather Outlook

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Wed. December 31<br>Cloudy<br>29°/8°             | Sunday, January 04<br>Partly Cloudy<br>33°/25°    |
| Thursday, January 01<br>Partly Cloudy<br>21°/16° | Monday, January 05<br>Partly Cloudy<br>33°/19°    |
| Friday, January 02<br>Mostly Cloudy<br>21°/13°   | Tuesday, January 06<br>Partly Cloudy<br>29°/19°   |
| Saturday, January 03<br>Partly Cloudy<br>25°/22° | Wednesday, January 07<br>Partly Cloudy<br>24°/17° |

## County Invests Opioid Dollars in Early Childhood

Initiative focuses on children who have been impacted by prenatal or environmental drug exposure.

Amanda Rink, Editor

Wright County is now directing opioid settlement dollars toward a new local health initiative designed to support infants and young children affected by substance exposure, a move county officials say reflects both a county-level strategy and a broader effort in Iowa to put opioid settlement funds to work for community needs.

At the December 15 meeting of the Wright County Board of Supervisors, Public Health Administrator Sandra McGrath highlighted Wright County Public Health’s decision to allocate \$10,000 in opioid settlement funds to the Family Resiliency Program at the Allen Child Protection Center in Waterloo.

The contribution was recognized with the Gerard Circle Award for Giving, according to press from the Wright County Economic Development office. McGrath shared that the Family Resiliency Program “fits right into” the county’s opioid-related public health goals, as the initiative focuses on young children who have been impacted by prenatal or environmental drug exposure in early childhood.

The Family Resiliency Program serves infants and children up to age five whose development may be affected by a caregiver’s

substance use or manufacturing of substances. Program staff conduct evidence-based assessments, create individualized treatment plans, provide education for caregivers, and work to change how children’s behaviors and development are understood by caregivers, teachers, and medical providers.

A team including pediatric nurse practitioners, registered nurses, family navigators, family advocates, and mental health therapists all work together to help those in need access services like therapy, developmental support, and even follow-up care.

In the first four-and-a-half years since its launch in 2019, the Family Resiliency Program has served about 120 children from 20 Northeast Iowa counties.

The federally distributed funds Wright County is using trace back to a series of national legal settlements with opioid manufacturers, distributors, and pharmacies. Opioids are drugs that interact with receptors in the brain to reduce pain. They include prescription medication used for pain management and also illegal drugs like heroin.

The settlements, totaling billions nationwide, were reached with companies accused of contributing to the U.S. opioid crisis through their marketing and distribution practices.

**Companies accused of contributing to the U.S. opioid crisis through manufacturing, distributing, selling, or advertising have agreed to pay national settlements involving billions of dollars. These lawsuits were brought by state or local governments.**

**Dollars from these settlements come with strict terms of use.**

A few major companies paying into the settlements include, but are not limited to:

- Manufacturers (Purdue Pharma, Johnson & Johnson, Teva) were accused of misleading marketing by exaggerating the benefits of opioids while minimizing the addiction risks, and aggressively promoting their use for chronic pain.
- Distributors (McKesson, Cardinal Health, AmerisourceBergen) were sued for allegedly failing to monitor or report suspicious orders for huge quantities of opioid pills. This allegedly allowed the opioids to flood communities.
- Pharmacies/Retailers (CVS, Walgreens, Walmart, Kroger, Rite Aid) faced lawsuits stating that pharmacists gave out large amounts of opioids without regard to warning signs or the potential for illegal use.
- Consulting Firms (McKinsey & Company) paid settlements for their role in instructing opioid manufacturers on how to increase opioid sales.

Payments from the settlements are expected to be distributed to states and local governments for many years.

Under Iowa’s agreement, about half of the settlement money goes right to local government to spend on programs that help prevent opioid misuse, treat addiction, and support recovery.

The other portion of the settlement funds is to be deposited into the Iowa Opioid Settlement Fund, a separate account, which is managed by the state. Recent state legislation authorizes that 75 percent of the

state’s portion be sent to the Department of Health and Human Services, with the remainder supporting the attorney general’s office.

The county’s use of opioid settlement dollars for this program shows a shift toward early intervention and prevention. McGrath said she sees the investment as an opportunity to help young children and families access support that might otherwise be unavailable, noting the importance of timely identification and intervention in early childhood development.



Susan Toftey (left - Board of Health Chair) and Sandy McGrath (right - Wright County Public Health administrator/Opioid Task Force) gathered with the Wright County Board of Supervisors on Monday, December 15, 2025, to present the Gerard Circle Award of Giving received from the Family Resiliency Program. The money donated came from Opioid Task Force dollars. (Photo: Kim Demory)



Happy New Year from the Wright County Monitor!

# Apply for a 2026 Wright County Charitable Foundation Grant January 1 - February 15, 2026

Wright County Charitable Foundation is calling on area non-profit organizations to submit grant applications for funding to help complete projects and programs that benefit the people of Wright County, Iowa. The Wright County Charitable Foundation



2026 Granting Cycle opens on January 1, 2026, with applications being accepted through February 15, 2026. Late applications will not be considered.

Each grant applicant is required to match 20 percent (20%) of the funds necessary to complete the project. Volunteer labor hours can be considered as match, along with the funds needed to complete each project. If possible, applicants should submit their applications before the deadline to allow the grant committee time to conduct a preliminary review of all the applications to ensure all information needed is included. Early submissions allow more time should revisions or more information be requested.

The links to the Application and Guidelines for the 2026 Granting Cycle can be found on the Wright County Charitable Foundation section of the Wright County Economic Development web page at: [https://www.wrightcounty.iowa.gov/departments/economic\\_development/charitable\\_foundation.php](https://www.wrightcounty.iowa.gov/departments/economic_development/charitable_foundation.php)

For more information, contact Wright County Economic Development at (515) 532-6422 or send an email to [wced@wrightco.iowa.gov](mailto:wced@wrightco.iowa.gov)

Wright County Charitable Foundation is an affiliate of the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines.

About Wright County Economic Development: Wright County Economic Development is an official department of Wright County, Iowa. Created in 1987, the department addresses the need for business, housing, and workforce growth, retention, and expansion.

## New Economic Development Director continued from page 1

position. “The common thread throughout my career has been customer service,” he said. “Listening carefully, understanding challenges, and helping turn ideas into action.”

Budweg sees Wright County as a place with strong economic foundations already in place. Agriculture continues to be a major driver, along with a well-established healthcare system. Manufacturing and food processing are growing, and he believes there is a significant opportunity to support and expand small businesses throughout the county.

“There is a strong sense of pride, ownership, and entrepreneurship among lo-

cal business leaders here,” Budweg said. “That creates real opportunity for growth.”

Instead of arriving with a one-size-fits-all plan, Budweg says his approach will focus on collaboration. He plans to be visible and accessible, working closely with local businesses, city leaders, and residents to understand each community’s needs.

“Every community is different,” he said. “My role is to help connect people with the right resources, information, and partnerships to move ideas from planning to progress.”

Budweg also credits the work of those who came before him, noting that Darrel Steven Carlyle and

Kim Demory built a strong foundation at Wright County Economic Development. He sees his role as building on that work, strengthening relationships with chambers, development groups, elected officials, schools, and civic organizations across the county.

Looking ahead five years, Budweg hopes residents will see steady progress and a stronger, more connected local economy. His focus will be on helping existing businesses grow, encouraging innovation, and attracting new investment that supports Wright County for the long term.

Outside of work, Budweg enjoys gardening, canning, baking, cooking, and

smoking food on the smoker. He also enjoys dancing and listening to music. Family is an important part of his life. He has four adult children, Mara, Ann, Nolan, and Lauren, and two grandsons, Brody and Hudson. He and his significant other, Crystal, also enjoy spending time with her three adult daughters.

Budweg says he looks forward to becoming more involved in the community.

You can reach Budweg at the Wright County Economic Development office at the Wright County Courthouse. He can also be contacted by phone at 515-532-6422 or by email at [abudweg@wrightco.iowa.gov](mailto:abudweg@wrightco.iowa.gov).

## Avian Influenza Threatens Wintering Waterfowl

Lowell Washburn

Following the devastating statewide loss of wild birds that occurred last winter, highly pathogenic avian influenza (commonly referred to as Bird Flu) is once again sweeping through Iowa’s wintering bird populations. Waterfowl are most affected by the deadly virus. This year, the most notable die offs are occurring across the northern and western portions of the state where crowding and weather-related stress on wintering waterfowl is greatest. From southwest Iowa to Lake Okoboji to Clear Lake, Mason City, and beyond, sick or dying birds have become an increasingly common sight during the past several days.

Although Canada geese are the most impacted species; sick or dead trumpeter swans, snow geese, red-tailed hawks, American crows, and immature bald eagles have also been reported. Affected birds typically appear uncoordinated, may swim in circles, are lethargic, and may be reluctant or unable to fly when approached. Although the CDC considers the [human] risk of contracting the virus in the U.S. to be extremely low, interactions with sick birds is discouraged.

Although wintering bald eagles are actively feeding on infected goose carcasses, only limited mortality has been documented, according to State Wildlife Veterinarian, Rachel Ruden.

Young-of-the-year eagles appear to be most susceptible to the virus. By contrast, many mature bald eagles have antibodies against the virus based on birds that have been tested after dying of unrelated causes, said Ruden. A recent (2023) study



**Winter Airhole --** As wintering ducks and geese concentrate into shrinking areas of open water; the escalating effects of the deadly flu virus takes its toll. Reports of dead or dying birds are currently on the increase across western and northern Iowa, according to State Wildlife Veterinarian, Dr. Rachael Ruden. (Photos: LW)



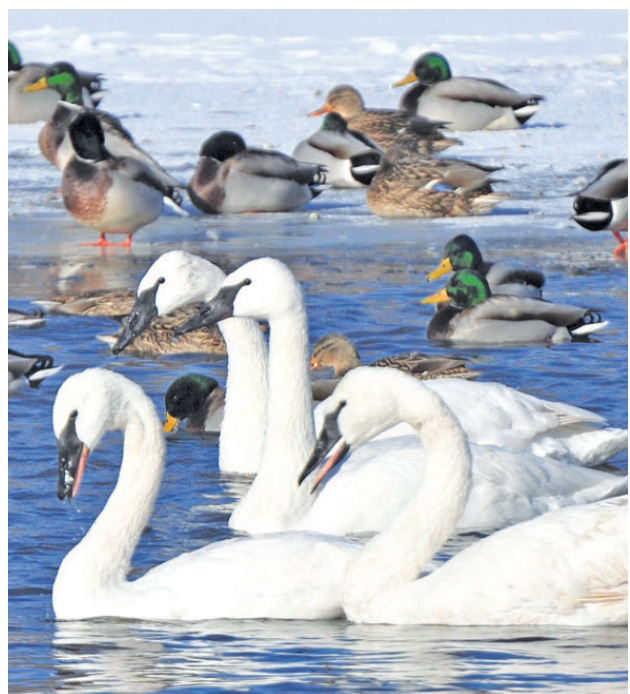
**Wintering Mallard Ducks –** Dabbling ducks, such as mallards, may harbor avian influenza viruses but remain healthy while distributing the virus to new areas and new populations.

conducted at the University of Minnesota’s Raptor Center revealed that more than 50 percent of the eagles examined had specific neutralizing antibodies for avian influenza. Other raptors appear to lack such immunity.

Learn more about Iowa wildlife online at Washburn’s Outdoor Journal at [iawildlife.org/blog](http://iawildlife.org/blog)



**Wintering Bald Eagle –** Although wintering bald eagles are actively scavenging on infected goose carcasses, many – especially adult birds – have effective antibody immunity.



**Trumpeter Swans –** Wintering trumpeter swans, along with Canada geese, suffer high mortality when exposed to the avian influenza virus.

**Look, a square!**  
Squares have four equal sides. Daddy’s kind of a square too, but that’s another story.

Everyday moments can be learning moments with your kids. For more tips, visit [bornlearning.org](http://bornlearning.org)



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- Display Ads ..... 1:00 a.m. Friday
- Submitted News..... Noon Friday
- Obituaries ..... Noon Monday



# reading between the lines

with Amanda Rink

## A Year (Not) in Review

**Amanda Rink, Editor**  
*"People can only meet you as far as they've met themselves." - Mel Robbins*  
 Being a small-town journalist means living with praise, criticism, and mistakes, and learning, mostly the hard way, that people will always interpret stories through their own lived experiences. Compassion, for yourself and for others, is often the only way to navigate that reality, and it benefits most in everyday life.  
 For the last two and a half years (it feels so much longer), I have been writing for The Wright County Monitor we often use our first issue of the year as a "Year in Review" special. I usually select a handful of stories that stood out to readers over the past year and highlight them on the front page. Part of that tradition exists because news tends to slow down around the holidays, and winter

doesn't help much either, but for me as a writer, it's also about reflection.  
 This year, we weren't able to do that. We recently lost access to all of our online back issues and had to start from scratch in September of 2025. Because of that, this issue of the newspaper is just a regular old issue. While that may not matter much to readers, it made me kind of sad. I've always appreciated the chance to look back at my work, to see my growth, and sometimes to clearly see where I missed the mark.  
 That reflection matters because journalism, especially community journalism, isn't perfect. Journalists like me, who didn't come up through traditional schooling, are especially aware of that. I'm learning through experience.  
 Sometimes we, journalists, approach a story from the wrong angle. Sometimes we miss a story entirely. And sometimes, we get things wrong. When that happens, we run corrections and take responsibility. I won't pretend I haven't made mistakes; there are times I messed up pretty badly.  
 And the secret I harbor is I'm a way better writer than I am editor. I'm sure there are times when I misspell, and I overlook it.  
 Thankfully, I work in a forgiving community. Most people understand that reporting is something I juggle alongside everyday life, and they respect the effort even when it isn't flawless. Still, mistakes tend to stick longer than successes. Readers may forget the awards or the heartfelt feature about their neighbor, but they remember the story that disappointed them. That's one of the hardest parts of being a small-town reporter.  
 It's also why living in the community you report on matters so much. When people know you, when they know your heart, they understand that your goal is always to serve the community.  
 Often, that service simply means sharing information, even when it isn't uplifting or easy to read.  
 Of course, the balance comes from the moments that are joyful.  
 Last year, I got to write about Amanda Meyer, our local auditor, rescuing an injured kitten from the side of the road. In that same issue, I interviewed out-of-town visitors touring our local museum as part of an Iowa history trip. Those stories remind me why I love this job.  
 I also get to meet local innovators, like Cole Lindaman, who runs a hydroponics farm right on Clarion's Main Street. A farm on Main Street still feels worth marveling over. But in that same issue, I reported on

Iowa Specialty Hospital no longer accepting certain Medicare Advantage plans. That story grew larger than I expected and was picked up by two bigger newspapers in the area.  
 At first, I was proud. The CEO of one of the most innovative hospitals in the country trusted me to deliver important news accurately and fairly. That pride faded when I read the comments online. People tore down the clinic, and it hurt because I knew the choice was made out of care for patients, not disregard for them. I knew this firsthand because I was there, and I felt the compassion in the room full of hospital officials.  
 That's when another lesson resurfaced. Once a story is released, I lose control over how it's received. Readers don't always see it through the same lens I used to write it. And that realization leads me to the main, somewhat drawn-out point of this column: people interpret information through their own perspectives, which are shaped by their own experiences.  
 That idea isn't just opinion; it's backed by research, something Mel Robbins discusses in her book *The Let Them Theory*. Normally, I'm skeptical of self-help books; they tend to feel like trends. But Denise Baker, our County Recorder, suggested I read it (after I admitted that yes, some people really don't like me. Denise, bless her, was, I think, genuinely shocked anyone could dislike me); I gave it a chance.  
 But the book changed how I consider feedback and how I interpret people's reactions. It helped me realize that most responses say more about the reader than the writer. That understanding has made me more compassionate, both toward others and myself.  
 As the new year approaches, many people resolve to lose weight, save money, or finally write that novel. All worthwhile! But I'd like to offer a simpler one to try alongside me: be more compassionate. Try to meet people where they are before reacting.  
 Spend a little more time Reading Between the Lines and less time reading the comments section.  
*Amanda Rink is the Editor of The Wright County Monitor and a children's book author. Her (mostly) weekly column is published in The Wright County Monitor and The Hampton Chronicle. She writes about everyday life in rural Iowa through a unique lens filtered through motherhood and other life experiences. 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.*



## In The Sky During January\* David Voigt

January will be a special month in the sky. Step outside on any night, and especially on a moonless night away from city lights, and you will be dazzled by one of the best sights in astronomy - the starry sky. Although January nights are cold, a quick look will be rewarding. Most of the brightest stars in the sky, accompanied by even brighter Jupiter, will be rising in the east, and in the west the three bright stars of the Summer Triangle will be setting during the early evening. Following them and higher in a dim part of the southwestern sky will be unmistakable Saturn and below it, bright Fomalhaut in Piscis Austrinus (the Southern Fish).

You don't need to know anything about astronomy to enjoy the night sky. Just pause on any night of the year and look up. The awe-inspiring starry expanse will be overhead. Take at least a few minutes and look all around the sky to fully enjoy it. Also, since the Earth orbits the Sun, the stars of the night sky gradually change. Each season has its own delights and at least one prominent constellation that can be used to find other stars and constellations. Winter features Orion (the Hunter), spring has the Big Dipper asterism in Ursa Major (the Great Bear) at its highest, summer has Scorpius (the Scorpion), and fall has Cassiopeia (the Queen) at her highest.  
 While each season is special, winter is grandest

of all. It is ruled by Orion, the brightest constellation of all. He can be found easily by looking in the southern sky for his belt of three stars. They are the only row of three evenly spaced and equally bright stars in the sky. Orion's belt is within a box of four stars. To its left or above are very bright Betelgeuse and fairly bright Bellatrix that represent his shoulders and to the belt's right or below are very bright Rigel and fairly bright Saiph that represent his knees. Note also that Orion's belt stars point up or to the right to Aldebaran the brightest star in Taurus (the Bull) and down or to the left to the brightest star in the sky, Sirius in Canis Major (the Great Dog).

In Greek mythology, Orion was the son of Poseidon (Roman, Neptune) and a giant. He was generally regarded as a crude and boastful hunter. However, he is revered in Messina, a seaport on the coast of Sicily. According to legend, he smoothed the rugged land along the coast for a protected harbor and city. He is honored by a large and beautiful fountain in the city square.  
**Observing Highlights**  
**Jan. 1** At midnight, brilliant Sirius in the constellation Canis Major (the Great Dog), will be at its highest, straight south and about half way up in the sky. It will be twinkling like a bright diamond welcoming in the New Year.  
**Jan. 3** When they rise in the early evening, the full Moon will be to the left of

brilliant Jupiter and to the right of Pollux, the slightly brighter star of the twin stars of Gemini (the Twins). During the evening, the Moon will move eastward in its orbit, and by midnight it will be directly in line below Pollux and Castor above Pollux.  
**Jan. 5** The Moon will rise just before Regulus, the brightest star in Leo (the Lion), at about 9:00. It will follow Regulus into the sky on the 6th.  
**Jan. 10** After they rise at about 1:00, the Moon will lead Spica, the brightest star in the constellation Virgo (the Maiden), across the sky until dawn. The Moon will follow Spica on the 11th.  
**Jan. 10** Brilliant Jupiter will be at opposition when it is opposite the Sun in Earth's sky. It will rise at sunset, be at its highest and straight south at midnight, and set at dawn. It will be at its closest to Earth and brightest for the year.  
**Jan. 14** Just before dawn, the crescent Moon will rise to the right of Antares, the brightest star in Scorpius (the Scorpion).  
**Jan. 22** The Moon will be to the lower right of Saturn at nightfall and farther above Saturn on the 23rd.  
**Jan. 27** The Moon will be above Aldebaran, the brightest star in the constellation Taurus (the Bull).  
**Jan. 30** The Moon will again be between Jupiter to its lower right and to its left Pollux and Castor above Pollux, the bright twin stars in the constellation Gemini (the Twins).

**The Wright County Monitor**  
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 Submitted News Noon Friday  
 Obituaries 4:30 p.m. Monday  
 Breaking News 5 p.m. Monday\*  
 \* This news may not be published in the current issue.

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| Moon Phase    | Date    | Rises    | Highest Point | Sets     | When Visible |
|---------------|---------|----------|---------------|----------|--------------|
| Full moon     | Jan. 3  | Sunset   | Midnight      | Sunrise  | All night    |
| Last quarter  | Jan. 10 | Midnight | Sunrise       | Noon     | A.M.         |
| New Moon      | Jan. 18 | Sunrise  | Noon          | Sunset   | Not visible  |
| First quarter | Jan. 25 | Noon     | Sunset        | Midnight | P.M.         |

\*Dates and times are approximate.  
 Sources: StarDate, Jan-Feb 2026. Vol. 54, No. 1.  
 Schaaf, Fred. The 50 Best Sights in Astronomy and How to See Them. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. pub. 2007.  
 SkyandTelescope.org

## Out With the Old, In With the New

One of the traditions in my family growing up was that my younger brother and I could have anything in our stockings when we woke up on Christmas morning. All presents, however, had to wait to be opened until my parents were up and at least had a cup of coffee in hand. We would usually have a few small toys in our stockings as well as fruit such as oranges or apples and walnuts still in the shell.

Another tradition that many people have as the year wraps up is the mindset of "Out with the old, in with the new." To go along with that mindset, here are a few recipes that may help you use some leftover items you have in your kitchen.

**CHICKEN SPINACH BAKE**  
**SOURCE:** "The Four Ingredient Cookbooks"  
 1 (8 ounce) package fine egg noodles  
 1 (9 ounce) package frozen creamed spinach, thawed  
 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil  
 1 1/2 cups chicken, cooked and cubed  
 Cook noodles and drain.  
 Coat 9x9-inch baking



# Nibbles

By Nichol Hohenbrink

dish with cooking spray.  
 Turn noodles into dish and stir in spinach and oil. Top with chicken and bake for 15 minutes at 400 degrees.  
**APPLE-HONEY DUTCH BABY**  
**SOURCE:** "2003 Taste of Home Annual Recipes"  
**YIELD:** 4 servings  
 3/4 cup all-purpose flour  
 1 tablespoon sugar  
 3 eggs  
 3/4 cup milk  
 2 tablespoons butter or margarine  
**TOPPING:**  
 2 large apples, sliced  
 1 tablespoon  
 butter or margarine  
 1/2 cup honey  
 2 to 3 teaspoons lemon juice  
 1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom  
 1 teaspoon cornstarch  
 2 teaspoons cold water  
 In a mixing bowl, whisk the flour, sugar, eggs and milk until smooth. Place butter in a 10-inch oven-proof skillet. Heat at 400 degrees for 3-4 minutes or until melted; tilt pan to coat bottom and sides. Pour batter into hot skillet. Bake for 16-20 minutes or until edges are lightly browned.

Meanwhile, in a saucepan, sauté apples in butter until lightly browned. Stir in honey, lemon juice and cardamom. Combine cornstarch and water until smooth; add to apple mixture. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Spoon onto pancake.

Serve immediately.  
**QUICK CHICKEN & BROCCOLI STIR-FRY**  
**SOURCE:** "2016 Taste of Home Annual Recipes"  
**YIELD:** 4 servings  
**START TO FINISH:** 25 minutes  
 2 tablespoons rice vinegar  
 2 tablespoons mirin (sweet rice wine)  
 2 tablespoons chili garlic sauce  
 1 tablespoon cornstarch  
 1 tablespoon reduced-sodium soy sauce  
 2 teaspoons fish sauce or additional soy sauce  
 1/2 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth, divided  
 2 cups instant brown rice  
 2 teaspoons sesame oil  
 4 cups fresh broccoli florets  
 2 cups cubed cooked chicken  
 2 green onions, sliced  
 In a small bowl, mix the first six ingredients and 1/4 cup chicken broth until smooth. Cook the rice according to package directions.  
 Meanwhile, in a large skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the broccoli; stir-fry 2 minutes. Add the remaining broth; cook 1-2 minutes or until broccoli is crisp-tender. Stir sauce mixture and add to pan. Bring to a boil; cook and stir 1-2 minutes or until sauce is thickened.  
 Stir in chicken and green onions; heat through. Serve with rice.



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## Courthouse news

### BIRTHS

Zaetriel Jax'Son Lee Smith was born on December 7, 2025, to Jaylee Smith of Renwick.

Lorelai Ruth Guscette was born on December 7, 2025, to Paige Wickert and Derek

Guscette of Sheffield.

Sadie Eliza Tilton was born on December 9, 2025, to Stacy and Justin Tilton of

Humboldt.

Mary Noelle Wagner was born on December 9, 2025, to Rebecca and Joel Wagner of Latimer.

Tanner Garrett Uker was born on December 10, 2025, to Trista and Christian Uker of Charles City.

Isaac Jeffrey Earl Chambers was born on December 11, 2025, to Emily and Jeffery Chambers.

Clover Beth Schupanitz was born on December 12, 2025, to Cassandra and Brandon Schupanitz.

Cecily Anne Schupanitz was born on December 12, 2025, to Cassandra and Brandon Schupanitz.

Jensen Dean Adams was born on December 13, 2025, to Jenna Nicholas Adams of Belmond.

Selena Marie Martinez was born on December 13, 2025, to Kayla Sheriff of Belmond.

Estrella Mary Cavanaugh was born on December 14, 2025, to Alicia Cavanaugh and Trey Paul of Mason City.

Jose Daniel Brito Velasco was born on December 15, 2025, to Juana Velasco Guzman De Brito and Miguel Brito Melendrez of Webster City.

Wynter Annamarie Ziemman was born on December 15, 2025, to Karina and Michael Ziemman of Thornton.

### DEATHS

Glenda Kay Elston (Williams) of Clarion was born on January 18, 1952, and died on December 4, 2025, at the age of 73.

Mary Filena Akins (Gross) of Eagle Grove was born on July 7, 1957, and died on December 7, 2025,

at the age of 68.

Jerry Dean Lindstrom of Clarion was born on October 12, 1935, and died on December 10, 2025, at the age of 90.

Nathaniel Haakon Christensen of Eagle Grove was born on October 25, 2024, and died on December 12, 2025, at the age of 1.

Esther Irene Larson (Vinnene) of Eagle Grove was born on June 20, 1925, and died on December 16, 2025, at the age of 100.

### TRAFFIC

Isaac Jay Sadler, Eagle Grove – Speeding 55 or under zone (6 thru 10 over)

Jet McGlynn Berger, Ames – Speeding over 55 zone (6 thru 10 over)

Alexey Quiala Zayas, Pflugerville, TX – Speeding over 55 zone (6 thru 10 over)

Benjamin Jay Gilderoy, Eden Prairie, MN – Fail to obey stop sign and yield right of way

Santiago J Martinez Rodriguez, Grand Island, NE – Speeding 55 or under zone (11 thru 15 over)

Justin Alexander Beauvais, Ankeny – Speeding 55 or under zone (6 thru 10 over)

Chad Andrew Zurfluh Jr., Polk City – Speeding 55 or under zone (6 thru 10 over)

Jason Alexander Weigel, Nevada – Speeding 55 or under zone (6 thru 10 over)

Phap Victor Van Phan, Houston, TX – Speeding 55 or under zone (6 thru 10 over)

Carlos Enrique Sican Chavez, Storm Lake – Blue light on non-emergency vehicle

Carlos Enrique Sican Chavez, Storm Lake – No valid driver's license

Cheila Larae Frayne, Garner – Speeding 55 or under zone (6 thru 10 over)

Dylan Andries De Kock, Goldfield – Failure to maintain or use safety belts

Malachi Allen Garvey, Webster City – Speeding 55 or under zone (11 thru 15 over)

Carsten Ray Grady, Fort Dodge – Possession/purchase of alcohol by person

18/19/20 (1<sup>st</sup> offense)

Victoria Ann Fisher, Platte City, MO – Speeding over 55 zone (6 thru 10 over)

Eduardo Ruiz Bonilla, Algona – Speeding 55 or under zone (11 thru 15 over)

Eduardo Ruiz Bonilla, Algona – No valid driver's license

Mallison Hopan Burk Rummans, Mankato, MN – Speeding over 55 zone (16 thru 20 over)

Shamique Oshaya Denise Foster, Des Moines – Speeding 55 or under zone (6 thru 10 over)

Angela Grimaldo, Hickory Hills, IL – Speeding over 55 zone (11 thru 15 over)

Josue Zeferino Barajas Aranda, Fort Dodge – No valid driver's license

Darwin Ernesto Ordonez Gomez, Houston, TX – Speeding 55 or under zone (6 thru 10 over)

Sara Jane Overholtzer Fliehe, Humboldt – Excessive speed 11 thru 15

Henry Uriel, Clarion – Failure to have valid license or permit while operating

### CRIMINAL

Misty M. Schaffer, Fort Dodge – Driving While Barred; plea hearing continued to 1/16/2026 at 9:00 AM

Ronald Kermit Allen Jr., Jefferson City, MO – Attempted Burglary 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree; jury trial 2/5/2026 at 8:30 AM

Mathew Lee Reed, Scranton – Burglary 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree; arraignment 1/9/2026 at 9:00 AM

Tasha Jean Rork, Fort Dodge – Violation of No Contact/Protective Order (contempt); dismissed

Dawn Marie Didio, Belmond – Public Intoxication

Jaxson Alexander Baack, Eagle Grove – Possession of Controlled Substance (Marijuana, 1<sup>st</sup> Offense); guilty, negotiated/voluntary plea

LeRoy Brown, Opalocka, FL – Possession of Controlled Substance (Marijuana, 1<sup>st</sup> Offense); serious misdemeanor, pretrial conference 1/2/2026 at 9:00 AM

## World-champion wrestler sues NCAA over eligibility to compete for Iowa State

Clark Kauffman  
Iowa Capital Dispatch

A world-champion Cuban wrestler, Reineri Andreu Ortega, is suing the National Collegiate Athletic Association over rules that he says have unfairly barred him from wrestling for Iowa State University.

The lawsuit was filed this week by lawyers for Ortega, a student and prospective college wrestler at ISU, in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Iowa. The lawsuit challenges the NCAA's so-called "Five-Year Eligibility Clock" and the manner in which the NCAA decides when that clock begins running and thus when a student's eligibility to compete expires.

Attorneys for Ortega argue that the NCAA's application of the rule violates antitrust laws and unjustifiably restrains the ability of Ortega and other college athletes to "earn meaningful compensation that is now available to (other) NCAA Division I athletes."

The lawsuit has its origins in a 2021 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court that paved the way for college athletes to receive compensation for use of their names, images, and likenesses. Since then, the market for name, image and likeness compensation opportunities available to NCAA Division I athletes has "exploded into a multi-million dollar industry," the lawsuit claims.

However, the lawsuit adds, that form of compensation is largely available only to NCAA Division I athletes. Athletes who compete outside of what the lawsuit calls "the NCAA monopoly" have no meaningful opportunity to collect revenue-sharing income or profit from their name, image or likeness.

Under NCAA bylaws, an athlete has five years of eligibility to play four seasons of "intercollegiate competition" in his or her chosen sport. This five-year window is known as the "eligibility clock" and begins to run from the date on which an athlete registers as a full-time student at any "collegiate institution" – regardless of whether the institution is a member of the NCAA and regardless of their participation in sports.

Lawyers for Ortega say this rule has had the effect of barring students from competing in NCAA sports even if they've never competed. They say students such as Ortega "can attend a non-NCAA college for three years without playing any sports, take two years off from school for personal reasons, transfer to a four-year NCAA school, and the

student will have used all of their eligibility without ever having competed in a college sport for a non-NCAA or NCAA college."

The lawsuit claims Ortega completed high school in Cuba in the spring of 2016, and then, beginning in the fall of 2016, he began taking courses at Manuel Fajardo University in Cuba. In 2017, Ortega began training and wrestling for the Cuban National Team, which has no affiliation to a college or university, while continuing to study at Manuel Fajardo University until the spring of 2019.

Ortega is a two-time U23 world champion and two-time Pan American gold medalist, according to USA Wrestling.

In December 2022, Ortega left the Cuban National Team and came to America as a refugee. In the spring of 2023, Ortega enrolled at ISU where he earned a spot on the wrestling team but without competing during the 2022-23 season.

According to the lawsuit, the NCAA has denied Ortega's request for eligibility beyond the 2022-23 season due to the five-year rule, indicating Ortega's eligibility clock started while he was attending Manuel Fajardo University, not when he enrolled at ISU.

Counting the years that a student attends a non-NCAA institution as years on their NCAA eligibility clock is arbitrary and capricious, the lawsuit alleges. "Ortega, and other wrestlers or prospective athletes in other sports who are harmed by this illegal restraint have a small window of time to compete in Division I sports and earn the permissible compensation now available to them," the lawsuit claims.

Ortega claims that the NCAA has effectively excluded him from an NCAA Division I college career, and because, as a 130-pound athlete, he has very limited pro-wrestling opportunities open to him after college, a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction barring the continued application of the eligibility rule is necessary.

According to the NCAA, the purpose of the five-year rule is to "move student-athletes toward graduation in a timely manner" – eliminating any incentive to remain in school simply to compete. Lawyers for Ortega, however, contend the rule doesn't exist "for reasons of competitive balance or it would preclude other older athletes from competing" in Division I NCAA sports.

The lawsuit notes that students who graduate high school and become a profes-

sional athlete in one sport can play that other sport for years, then go to college and still have five years of eligibility to play four seasons of some other sport.

"The NCAA rules, therefore, do not limit the ability of the former professional athlete to earn permissible compensation while competing in Division I athletics, even though they have had a chance to physically mature well beyond a typical 18-year-old college freshman," the lawsuit alleges. "For instance, Chris Weinke entered Florida State University as a freshman following a six-year professional baseball career and ended up winning the Heisman Trophy, awarded annually to the most outstanding player in college football, at 28 years of age."

The lawsuit claims the NCAA's application of the five-year rule violates the Sherman Act by restraining the market for NCAA Division I college athletes by barring Ortega and similarly situated athletes from having an opportunity to earn money through revenue sharing and the use of their name, image and likeness.

As part of the lawsuit, lawyers for Ortega also argue that should the court grant their requested injunction against the NCAA, it must also address a separate NCAA rule. That rule says if a student-athlete who is deemed ineligible by the NCAA is permitted to participate in sports in accordance with the terms of a court order that is later vacated or reversed, the NCAA can take punitive action against the school – such as vacating wins or imposing postseason-competition bans and financial penalties.

The lawsuit seeks an immediate temporary restraining order, a preliminary injunction, and then a permanent injunction that will block the NCAA from applying the five-year rule to students such as Ortega.

The NCAA, which is an association of post-secondary institutions that functions as the governing body of college sports, has yet to file a response to the lawsuit.

The NCAA includes more than 1,100 member colleges and universities organized into three divisions, with 350 of them in Division I.

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## Legal notices

### PUBLIC NOTICE Wright County Freedom Mortgage Corporation

IN THE IOWA DISTRICT COURT FOR WRIGHT COUNTY FREEDOM MORTGAGE CORPORATION, PLAINTIFF vs. ALL OF THE UNKNOWN CLAIMANTS, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO ALL OF THE UNKNOWN HEIRS, SPOUSES, ASSIGNEES, GRANTEES, LEGATEES, DEVISEES AND BENEFICIARIES OF DONNIE HAUSER, DECEASED, NICOLE HAUSER, LNVV FUNDING, LLC, CAPITAL ONE, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, SUCCESSOR IN INTEREST TO CAPITAL ONE BANK (USA), NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, MIDLAND FUNDING, LLC, HAUGE ASSOCIATES, INC., STATE OF IOWA, IOWA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND FINANCE AND PARTIES IN POSSESSION, DEFENDANTS EQUITY NO. EQCV025458 ORIGINAL NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANTS: You are hereby notified that there is a petition on file in the office of the clerk of the above court which petition prays for a judgment in rem against the property involved in this action for the sum of \$41,998.50 with interest at 3.875% per annum from and including May 1, 2025, on the promissory note executed by Donnie Hauser, a married person and mortgage executed by Donnie Hauser and Nicole Hauser, husband and wife to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as mortgagee, as nominee for Embrace Home Loans, Inc., its successors and assigns and assigned to Plaintiff, who is the sole and absolute owner thereof. Said note, together with the mortgage given to secure the same are due and payable by reason of the failure of the Defendants Don-

nie Hauser and Nicole Hauser, husband and wife to pay the installments of principal when due. Plaintiff also prays in said Petition for the foreclosure of said mortgage dated December 18, 2012 recorded in Book 2012 Page 2915 in the Recorder's Office of Wright County, Iowa, with said note dated December 18, 2012 on the following described property, to-wit: The South Half of Lot 6 and all of Lot 7 in Block 9 of Hewett's Park Addition to Eagle Grove Junction, Wright County, Iowa and also asking that said mortgage be declared a prior and superior lien to that of each of the above named Defendants; for appointment of a receiver; for the amount paid by Plaintiff for attorneys' fees, abstract expense, costs and accruing costs of this action; that special execution issue for the sale of said real estate to satisfy said judgment, interest, attorneys' fees and costs and for such other and further relief as may be just and equitable. FOR FURTHER PARTICULARS, SEE COPY OF PETITION NOW ON FILE. THE PLAINTIFF HAS ELECTED FORECLOSURE WITHOUT REDEMPTION. THIS MEANS THAT THE SALE OF THE MORTGAGED PROPERTY WILL OCCUR PROMPTLY AFTER ENTRY OF JUDGMENT UNLESS YOU FILE WITH THE COURT A WRITTEN DEMAND TO DELAY THE SALE. IF YOU FILE A WRITTEN DEMAND, THE SALE WILL BE DELAYED UNTIL THREE MONTHS FROM ENTRY OF JUDGMENT IF THE MORTGAGED PROPERTY IS YOUR RESIDENCE AND IS A ONE-FAMILY OR TWO-FAMILY DWELL-

ING OR UNTIL TWO MONTHS FROM ENTRY OF JUDGMENT IF THE MORTGAGED PROPERTY IS NOT YOUR RESIDENCE OR IS RESIDENCE BUT NOT A ONE-FAMILY OR TWO-FAMILY DWELLING. YOU WILL HAVE NO RIGHT OF REDEMPTION AFTER THE SALE. THE PURCHASER AT THE SALE WILL BE ENTITLED TO IMMEDIATE POSSESSION OF THE MORTGAGED PROPERTY. YOU MAY PURCHASE AT THE SALE. The Plaintiff's attorneys are Petosa Law LLP by Benjamin W. Hopkins, whose address is 1350 NW 138th Street, Suite 100, Clive, IA 50325, telephone number 515-222-9400, facsimile number 515-222-9121. You must serve a motion or answer on or before the 21st day of January, 2026, and within a reasonable time thereafter file your motion or answer in the Iowa District Court of Wright County, at the Courthouse in Clarion, Iowa. If you do not, judgment by default may be rendered against you for the relief demanded in the Petition. This case has been filed in a county that utilizes electronic filing. You should refer to (i) Iowa Court Rules Chapter 16 for general rules and information on electronic filing; and (ii) Iowa Court Rules Chapter 16, division VI regarding the protection of personal information in court filings. If you require assistance of auxiliary aids or services to participate in court because of a disability, immediately call your district ADA coordinator at (641) 421-0990. (If you are hearing impaired, call Relay Iowa TTY at 1-800-735-2942). YOU ARE ADVISED TO SEEK LEGAL ADVICE AT ONCE TO PROTECT YOUR INTERESTS.

Published in the Wright County Monitor on Wed. Dec. 17, 24 & 31, 2025

## NOTICE

Please kindly note that the main staff of The Wright County Monitor works remotely and does not operate an office in Clarion.

For direct communication, please contact Newspaper Editor and Writer Amanda Rink by phone/text at 515.364.2344 or by email at news@wrightcountymonitor.com.

### PUBLIC NOTICE Wright County Supervisors December 15, 2025 Minutes

**December 15, 2025**  
Chairman Rasmussen called the regular meeting of the Wright County Board of Supervisors to order at 9:00 a.m. Members present were Kluss, Bosch, Rasmussen, Loux, and Ellis.

Motion by Ellis and seconded by Kluss to approve the tentative agenda. Motion carries.

Minutes of the previous regular meeting of December 8, 2025 were read and approved.

Approved claims for payment. In open forum, Naomi Rothman was congratulated for 5 years of service to Wright County as a Public Health Nurse.

Lennea Groom, President of the Wright County Charitable Foundation, provided an update on the Foundation. She started by thanking the Board of Supervisors for their support of the Charitable Foundation and the Economic Development Department. She informed the Board that they currently have a full Advisory Board which consists of two members from each of the larger communities and one

member from each of the smaller communities. She also told the Board that the Charitable Foundation is self sufficient, therefore not asking for any financial support. She continued to inform the board that moving forward, the focus of the Advisory Board will be to build funds. Supervisor Kluss asked when the grant cycle is, Groom said it opens January 1st and closes February 15th. Groom was then asked if there is a matching funds requirement, she did advise that there is a requirement of 20%.

Discussion was held regarding having Christmas Eve as a Holiday. Motion by Kluss and seconded by Rasmussen to have Christmas Eve day off. Motion carries with Loux voting nay.

Motion by Ellis and seconded by Kluss to appoint Jailer, Ashley Kockuyt as Civil Process Server. Motion carries.

Jeremy Abbas, Assistant to the Wright County Engineer, gave an update on the Secondary Roads Department. Sandy McGrath, Wright County

Public Health Director, presented the Gerard Circle Award for Giving. The award was given to Wright County for the \$10,000 donation from the Opioid Fund to the Family Resiliency Program.

In Old Business, Supervisor Kluss explained that there were two donations for the Heart of Iowa Regional Trust Fund therefore the additional funding request is for \$2,270 rather than the previously noted \$3,270.

Also in Old Business, Supervisor Kluss discussed the previously denied claim #44026. Stating that we have gotten recommendation from our Auditing Firm that the claim should not be paid from General Basic without public purpose documentation. The claim will be presented again in next weeks claim run.

Motion by Kluss and seconded by Bosch to adjourn the meeting. Motion carries. Rick Rasmussen, Chairman, Wright County Board of Supervisors Deb Nesheim, Wright County Deputy Auditor

Published in the Wright County Monitor on Wed. Dec. 31, 2025

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### PUBLIC NOTICE Wright Co. Planning and Zoning Commission

Public Hearing for the Wright County Planning and Zoning Commission  
January 8th, 2026, 5:30pm  
Wright County Engineers Office  
416 5 th Ave. SW  
Wright County Planning and Zoning Board to consider recom-

mendation of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan to the Wright County Board of Supervisors. Written comments must be received by January 8th, 2026, 5:30pm. Please mail to Wright County Planning and Zoning 416 5 th Ave. SW, Clarion IA. 50525

Published in the Wright County Monitor on Wed. Dec. 31, 2025

## State of Iowa receives USDA approval to align Healthy SNAP, SUN Bucks summer food program in 2026

Governor Reynolds and Iowa Health and Human Services (HHS) today announced the state will participate in the federal SUN Bucks program (also known as Summer EBT) beginning in 2026 after being notified Friday that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) had approved the state's waiver to align the summer feeding program for children with Iowa's new Healthy SNAP program.

Iowa is one of a few states to request permission from the USDA to align allowable SUN Bucks purchases with the state's new Healthy SNAP guidelines which go into effect January 1, 2026. SNAP and SUN Bucks participants will be able to use the benefits to purchase healthy foods like grains, fruits and vegetables, meat and dairy to supplement families' nutritional needs. Iowa's guidelines will exclude the purchase of taxable foods such as candy, soda and some store prepared foods. The new guidelines support the state's goal to combat food insecurity and support child health and development during the summer months.

SUN Bucks eligible families will receive \$40

per child per month in grocery benefits over the summer to help ensure children have access to nutritious food while school is out. Benefits will be distributed via Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards and can be used at authorized retailers across Iowa.

"Food assistance programs that are nutrition focused do more to help low-income Iowans by addressing both hunger and health," Governor Reynolds said. "The SUN Bucks program has lacked a focus on nutrition, which was the reason we launched the Healthy Kids Iowa pilot program last summer. The response to the healthy, fresh foods that were available for families was overwhelmingly positive, but operating the program was challenging for some food banks and pantries. 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."

"We are committed to supporting Iowa families and ensuring children have access to healthy meals year-round," said Larry Johnson, Director of Iowa

HHS. "Joining SUN Bucks allows us to expand our reach and provide families with flexibility in how they meet their nutritional needs."

Eligibility for SUN Bucks will be based on household income and participation in programs such as SNAP, FIP, or eligibility for free and reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Most eligible children will be automatically enrolled. Children who aren't automatically enrolled in the program may still be eligible for SUN Bucks based on household income and other requirements.

The SUN Bucks program builds upon the established USDA SUN Meals and SUN Meals To-Go Programs administered by the Iowa Department of Education, which provide children with healthy meals and snacks during the summer months. Last summer over 3 million nutritious meals and snacks were served at more than 500 convenient locations across the state.

Additional enrollment and eligibility information will be available on the Iowa HHS website in early 2026.

## Judge pauses Summit opponents' lawsuit while proposed permit changes proceed

Cami Koons  
Iowa Capital Dispatch

The Iowa Utilities Commission will have to decide whether Summit Carbon Solutions can change the ending destination for its carbon sequestration pipeline before a case against the company's permit can proceed, an Iowa court ruled.

The Iowa District Court for Polk County ruled in favor of Summit's motion to pause the case that landowners, counties and the Sierra Club Iowa Chapter filed in 2024.

Opponents of the proposed carbon capture pipeline sued over the IUC decision to issue a conditional permit to Summit in June 2024. The permit allowed the company to use eminent domain to build a pipeline that would connect to biorefineries across the state and transport carbon dioxide to North Dakota for underground storage.

Per the IUC permit decision, Summit was required to obtain permission for its pipeline in North Dakota and South Dakota before it could begin construction in Iowa.

Since the permit was issued, however, South Dakota enacted a law prohibiting the use of eminent domain for CO2 pipelines, which complicated Summit's plans to transport the captured CO2 to an underground storage site in North Dakota. Eminent domain forces unwilling property owners to accept easements on their land for projects considered in the public interest, for payment deter-

mined by a county commission.

In light of these developments along with ongoing legal battles in North Dakota, Summit filed for an amendment to its permit with the IUC in September 2025 to remove the requirement that the company receive approval from the Dakotas. Instead of specifying a state, Summit asked for the permit to prohibit construction until the company has "secured access to one or more sequestration sites and permits or agreements to allow it to reach such storage."

Summit also requested the court stop proceedings on the lawsuit pertaining to the original permit until the IUC rules on the newly filed amendment. Polk County District Court Judge Scott Beattie sided with the company and remanded the case back to the IUC.

In the decision Beattie, wrote that the South Dakota ban is "influential" to the decision.

"Not only does the S.D. CO2 pipeline ban render the IUC's Final Order void, but it also requires Summit to reroute its pipeline in order to get to North Dakota without going through South Dakota," the decision said.

During oral arguments, opponents said Summit's requested permit amendment did not change the basis of their argument that Summit did not meet the definition of a common carrier and should not be granted eminent domain capabilities.

The groups also argued, as described in Beattie's decision, that it was unfair to pause judicial review based on "the mere possibility that a permit might be amended."

Beattie wrote, however, that a pause in judicial proceedings while the permit amendment is evaluated is "warranted" as the court would otherwise be evaluating "outdated" facts.

"Adjudicating the merits of a permit that is actively being amended serves no useful purpose," the decision reads.

Emma Schmit, an organizing director with the pipeline fighter group Bold Alliance, said in a statement the ruling did "not come as a surprise."

"After years of working to protect property rights from hazardous carbon pipelines, we know not every judge, regulator, or legislator will stand by us the first time around," Schmit said in the statement. "But, we know the people of Iowa stand with us. So, we'll continue to explore property rights protections through every possible avenue, including through the courts, the Iowa Utilities Commission, and the legislature."

Summit Carbon Solutions did not respond to a request for comment on the decision.

Read more from Cami Koons 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

## ASPCA says unlicensed Iowa breeder is still selling dogs and violating the law

Clark Kauffman  
Iowa Capital Dispatch

Animal-welfare advocates say that while one of Iowa's biggest puppy-mill operators is no longer licensed, he is still selling dogs and has ramped up the illegal practice of puppy laundering.

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals claims in a court filing that one of Iowa's most prolific violators of the Animal Welfare Act, Steve Kruse of West Point, hasn't ceased operations with the loss of his license, but has actually expanded the "illegal activities" intended to facilitate the sale of puppies and dogs.

In September 2024, the ASPCA filed a seven-count civil complaint against the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the federal agency that polices animal breeders and brokers at the national level.

The ASPCA alleged the USDA has knowingly allowed illegal activity to occur through its issuance of licenses to Kruse and two of his associates, Brian Lichirie and Wuanita Swedlund, and by failing to revoke any of their licenses.

The case centers on the USDA's alleged failure to act in response to its own written findings that Kruse has used Lichirie and Swedlund to engage in puppy laundering – the practice of routing dogs to retailers through intermediary breeders, allowing Kruse's dogs to be sold even in states that restrict the sale of animals originating from kennels owned by repeat violators.

Aside from a USDA motion to dismiss the lawsuit, there was very little activity in the case until Oct. 8, 2025, when U.S. District Court Judge Jia M. Cobb noted that so much time had passed that Kruse's three-year USDA license had expired. The judge asked the USDA and the ASPCA to each submit briefs as to whether the expiration of Kruse's license rendered any part of the case moot.

In its filing, the USDA recently suggested the five claims concerning enforcement against Lichirie and Swedlund remained live, while the two counts specific to Kruse were moot and should be dismissed.

Without a license, the USDA argued, there is no issue of enforcement the court can address.

Last week, the ASPCA filed its own brief, contending all seven counts should proceed, arguing the USDA "did not offer any indication that they had conducted an inquiry or investigation as to whether Mr. Kruse continues to participate in the venture even without his license, still owns the land on which the kennels operate, or otherwise maintains involvement in the ongoing enterprise."

The ASPCA alleges that while Kruse is no longer licensed, its investigation suggests he "remains actively involved in regulated activity under the Animal Welfare Act, despite the cancellation of his license."

The APCA notes that days after Kruse's license was canceled in August 2025, the USDA approved Christine A. Snakenberg for a license to do business at the same West Point address where Kruse has for years operated a large-scale kennel.

The USDA's pre-license inspection report for Snakenberg indicates there were 142 adult dogs on the property when the inspector visited and the federal agency agreed to grant her a license.

Kruse still owns that property, the ASPCA says, and Snakenberg, who is not a co-owner, owns a single family, owner-occupied home 19 miles away in Danville.

In addition, the ASPCA says, an Illinois Bureau of Animal Welfare inspection report dated Nov. 26, 2025, shows that Kruse himself "continues to supply dogs" to Ray Duckmanton, an Illinois-licensed breeder doing business as Racore Inc.

"These records demonstrate that Mr. Kruse has not ceased his unlawful activities," the ASPCA argues. "It appears that Mr. Kruse continues to engage in regulated activities, despite the cancellation of his license, and continues his scheme to launder puppies through his associates in violation of the Animal Welfare Act — including through Snakenberg, who the USDA has licensed to conduct regulated

activities on Mr. Kruse's property."

In its brief to the court, the ASPCA alleges that the USDA has historically failed to act even when its own inspectors have confirmed that a previously licensed individual is still engaged in breeding or brokering. The organization adds that the USDA, in its brief to the court, has not argued that the alleged illegal activity has halted and has instated stated only that Kruse is no longer licensed.

"There is nothing preventing Mr. Kruse from reapplying, and nothing suggesting that the agency would not re license him if he did," the ASPCA argues. "Thus, it is entirely likely, and expected, that the wrongful behavior by the defendants will continue."

The ASPCA claims the USDA wrote to Kruse nine years ago, in 2016, to inform him that federal law required him, Lichirie and Swedlund to operate under a single license. When Kruse failed to take corrective action, the ASPCA claims, the USDA continued to renew his license and never took any steps to revoke the licenses of either Lichirie or Swedlund.

The lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, seeks a court order that would force the USDA to void all current licenses issued to Kruse and his associates.

Read more from Clark Kauffman 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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## Lawsuit asks whether a wild, rampaging deer is an 'animal'

Clark Kauffman  
Iowa Capital Dispatch

An eastern Iowa veterinary hospital is suing its insurer in a dispute over the definition of an "animal."

Animal Eye Consultants of Iowa, located in the Linn County town of Hiawatha, is suing Sentinel Insurance Co. in U.S. District Court, alleging breach of contract and bad faith.

According to its website, AECI provides clinical and hospital treatment for animals specifically related to vision and eye health.

The lawsuit alleges that about 8:15 a.m. on Nov. 7, 2024, an adult deer crashed through one of the hospital's windows and entered the building. "The deer rampaged through the property's interior spaces, destroying numerous veterinarian specialty equipment, as well as computers, screens, media devices, and other pertinent veterinarian supplies," the lawsuit claims.

Later that day, AECI's chief executive, Dr. Sinisa Grozdanic, filed an insurance claim with the hospital's insurer, Sentinel. The

insurance company then sent a hired adjuster to the hospital to assess the damage and prepare an initial financial estimate of the loss.

The insurer later sent an estimate to Grozdanic, who concluded the adjuster did not have the knowledge or expertise to estimate the loss, according to the lawsuit. AECI then contacted actuarial experts in an attempt to secure estimates of what it perceived to be the actual damages sustained by the business.

According to the lawsuit, Sentinel then expressed its view that portions of AECI's claims were excluded under the supplemental policy that theoretically provided an additional \$350,000 in coverage for damage to computers and computer equipment.

That supplemental policy allegedly lists specific exclusions, stating in part, "We will not pay for loss or damage caused by or resulting from ... insects, birds, rodents, or other animals."

The lawsuit states that AECI countered with various legal opinions indi-

cating the exclusion was "not meant for large, wild animals causing physical damage to the property, but instead was designed to eliminate liability for the insurer should an infestation of similar nuisance animals be discovered on the property after a mechanical failure."

The lawsuit cites legal rulings that indicate when "general words follow an enumeration of specific items, the general words are construed to embrace only objects similar in nature to those enumerated."

Interpreting the insurance policy, as Sentinel has, so that the phrase "other animals" includes a large, noninvasive wild deer to be similar or reasonably similar in nature to insects, birds and rodents is "improper, and Sentinel's misinterpretation was purposeful, and intended to cause harm to AECI," the lawsuit alleges.

With the dispute still unresolved, losses at the hospital continue to accrue, the lawsuit claims.

Sentinel has yet to file a response to the lawsuit, which was originally filed Oct. 31, 2025, in Linn County District Court before being moved to federal court this week.

Read more from Clark Kauffman 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  
6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service  
• Sunday, January 4  
9:00 a.m. Sunday School for all ages  
10:00 a.m. Worship Service  
• Sunday, January 11  
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, January 4  
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  
• Thursday, January 1  
Solemnity of Mary New Year's Day  
12:00 p.m. Mass at Sacred Heart, Eagle Grove  
7:30 p.m. Bilingual Mass at St. John, Clarion  
Offices Closed  
• Friday, January 2  
7:00 p.m. Rosary at Sacred Heart, Eagle Grove  
• Saturday, January 3  
Epiphany of the Lord  
SCRIP Cards  
Food Pantry  
New Mass Schedule  
4:00 p.m. Mass at St. John, Clarion  
8:00 p.m. Mass in Spanish at St. John, Clarion  
• Sunday, January 4

Epiphany of the Lord  
SCRIP Cards  
Food Pantry  
New Mass Schedule  
8:00 a.m. Mass at St. Francis Xavier, Belmont  
10:30 a.m. Mass at Sacred Heart, Eagle Grove  
• Monday January 5  
8:15 a.m. Rosary at St. Francis Xavier, Belmont  
• Tuesday, January 6  
2:00 p.m. OCIA at St. Francis Xavier, Belmont  
• Wednesday, January 7  
7:40 a.m. Rosary at St. Francis Xavier, Belmont  
8:00 a.m. Mass at St. Francis Xavier, Belmont  
10:30 a.m. Mass at the Belmont Care Center

6:30 p.m. YFF Classes Resume  
6:30 p.m. Adoration at St. John, Clarion and Sacred Heart, Eagle Grove  
6:30 p.m. Altar Server Training at St. Francis Xavier, Belmont  
6:30 p.m. OCIA at St. John, Clarion  
• Thursday, January 8  
8:00 a.m. Sewing at St. John, Clarion  
11:40 a.m. Rosary at Sacred Heart, Eagle Grove  
12:00 p.m. Mass at Sacred Heart, Eagle Grove

**UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
219 First Street N.W. Clarion 515-532-2709  
• Sunday, January 4 Todd Studer will be leading the service  
• 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

### GOLDFIELD AREA

**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, January 4  
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  
Pastor: Ann Trimble Ray. Each bring a new perspective to our church and God!  
• Sunday Services  
11:00 a.m. Worship time  
Everyone Welcome!

**HOLMES LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
2139 Hancock Ave, Holmes, Iowa  
HolmesLutheran@gmail.com  
Pastor George Lautner  
Office hours 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. (Flexible)  
515-825-3660  
• Sunday, January 4  
9:30 a.m. Worship & Communion  
10:30 a.m. Sunday School for

all ages  
Everyone Welcome!  
(Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays)  
(Praise Songs & Worship last Sunday)

**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, January 4  
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  
• Sunday, January 4  
Take down decorations after worship  
• Sunday, January 11  
Annual Meeting following worship

**IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
Missouri Synod  
Jct. Highway 69 & 3  
Pastor Mark Eichler  
• Sunday, January 4  
10:30 a.m. Divine Services, 11:45 a.m. Bible Study  
October 7 - 28 and November 4 at 1:30 p.m. Women's Bible Study

### DOWS AREA

**SOVEREIGN GRACE CHURCH**  
109 N. Eskridge St., Dows  
Dows / www.sgcdows.com  
Doug Holmes, Pastor  
• Sunday, January 4  
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, January 4  
10:00 a.m. Worship

**UNITED METHODIST & PRESBYTERIAN**  
• Sunday, January 4  
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, January 4  
10:30 a.m. Worship

**ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN**  
304 W. Main, Latimer  
Travis Berg, Pastor  
• Sunday, January 4  
9 a.m. Worship, 10:15 a.m. ABC/Sunday School

**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
Morgan, Lee Center, Bradford  
Erling Shultz, Pastor  
• Sunday, January 4  
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, January 4  
9:30a.m. Joint Sunday Worship Service with Holy Communion, Coffee to follow  
• Dinner is the first Sunday of the month

## Homemade chicken soup is ideal for cold and flu season



Cold and flu season arrives each year. Though there might be little people can do to avoid catching a cold or coming down with the flu, certain approaches can make it easier to get through a bout with either illness. Flu vaccinations have been found to lessen the severity of infection with the influenza virus, while rest and plenty of fluids can help reduce the length of time a cold puts people out of commission.

Knowing what to eat when combatting a cold and the flu also can help people treat each virus. Chicken soup has long been a go-to when fighting a cold, and this recipe for "Homemade Chicken Noodle Soup" from Lines+Angles makes a worthy addition to anyone's cold- and flu-fighting culinary repertoire.

### Homemade Chicken Noodle Soup

- Makes 8 servings
- 1 3 1/2-pound whole chicken
  - 10 cups low-sodium chicken broth
  - 8 carrots, peeled and sliced
  - 6 stalks celery, trimmed and sliced
  - 3 onions, peeled and sliced
  - 2 cloves of garlic, peeled and minced
  - 8 sprigs fresh parsley
  - 2 sprigs fresh thyme
  - 1 bay leaf
  - 2 tablespoons butter
  - Salt, to taste
  - Freshly cracked black pepper, to taste
  - 12 ounces wide egg noodles

For the chicken stock:

1. Rinse the chicken inside and out under cold running water. Place the chicken in a large pot, set over medium heat and add the chicken broth. Add 1/4 of the carrots, 1/3 of the celery and 1/3 of the onions. Add the garlic, 2 sprigs parsley, thyme, bay leaf and enough water to just cover the chicken. Bring broth to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for about 1 1/4 hours, or until chicken is very tender, skimming any foam from the surface of the broth.
2. Remove chicken from broth and place in a colander to drain and cool. Strain the broth through a very fine mesh strainer into a large, clean soup pot. Discard the vegetables used to flavor the stock.

For the soup:

1. Skim any fat off the top of the strained broth.
2. Remove and discard the skin and bones from the chicken and cut the meat into bite-sized pieces; set aside.
3. Melt the butter in a large Dutch oven set over medium heat. Add the remaining carrots, celery and onions and cook for about 7 minutes or until the onions are translucent. Add the chicken pieces and chicken stock, season with salt and pepper. Bring soup to a simmer and cook for about 30 minutes or until the vegetables are tender.
4. Chop the remaining parsley; add the parsley and egg noodles, stirring frequently. Cook for 8 to 10 additional minutes or until the noodles are tender.
5. Ladle into soup bowls and serve hot.

### CLIP & SAVE

HAVE YOU TALKED TO GOD LATELY?



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**NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

"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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Laura Phillips  
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## Words of Wisdom

Last week's trivia questions:  
 What U.S. state produces the most Christmas trees? Answer: Oregon, with almost 5 million trees annually.  
 After Alaska, what two New England states receive the most snowfall each year?  
 Answer: Vermont and New Hampshire.



\*\*\*\*\*

This week's trivia questions:  
 What major world city, known for its spectacular fireworks display on New Year's Eve, is one of the first cities to ring in the New Year?  
 What Pacific Ocean island, which is an American territory, is the last place to celebrate on New Year's Eve?  
 What U.S. city, inspired by the Times Square Ball Drop in New York, instead drops a giant chocolate kiss on New Year's Eve?

\*\*\*\*\*

Dec. 31 is New Year's Eve, and National Champagne Day; Jan. 1 is New Year's Day, and World Day of Peace; Jan. 2 is Swiss Cheese Day, and National Cream Puff Day; Jan. 3 is National Chocolate Covered Cherry Day; Jan. 4 is National Spaghetti Day, and Trivia Day; Jan. 5 is National Bird Day, and National Whipped Cream Day; Jan. 6 is Apple Tree Day, and National Technology Day.

\*\*\*\*\*

Funny New Year's resolutions:  
 "Stop procrastinating - starting tomorrow...or maybe next week."  
 "Eat more vegetables - mostly in the form of pizza toppings."  
 "Be more spontaneous - if I can plan it in advance."  
 "Get more sleep - without napping through important live events."  
 "Drink more water - especially if it's been transformed into coffee."  
 "Stop getting books that I'll never read."  
 Learn how to properly use the word "literally."  
 "Stop checking my phone every three minutes."  
 "Celebrate small wins - like finding matching socks."

\*\*\*\*\*

In 1974, Dick Clark began hosting the show New Year's Rockin' Eve on ABC. In 2005, Clark officially handed hosting duties over to Ryan Seacrest

\*\*\*\*\*

The 2026 Winter Olympics will be hosted by Italy, with the Opening Ceremony on Feb. 6 and the Closing Ceremony on Feb. 22. Approximately 90 countries and 3,500 athletes are expected to compete.

\*\*\*\*\*

The 2026 World Cup soccer tournament will be co-hosted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The event will feature teams from 48 countries, beginning on June 11, and ending with the championship game on July 19.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Monitor Memories

FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE WRIGHT COUNTY MONITOR  
 1984 - 1949

### 42 Years Ago January 5, 1984

Mr. R.L. Davison who has been associated with banking for approximately 50 years, 45 of which has been with The First National Bank of Clarion, wishes to announce that he is resigning as President and CEO. Bob started his banking career in Mason City, Iowa in 1934. In 1939, he was employed by The First National Bank of Clarion as Assistant Cashier.

A new era in the administration of the City of Clarion got underway last Tuesday night as Dennis Olson assumed the mayorship and two new city councilmen joined the local government. Olson vacated his Fourth Ward Council Seat, so it was up to the city council to appoint an individual to fill the vacant post. They appointed Darrel Mosher to the seat.

U.S. Senator Gary Hart of Colorado, a Democratic candidate for his party's nomination in the upcoming Presidential election, is currently touring the state in search of support prior to the Iowa caucuses, and will be making a stop in Clarion on January 11. Hart will meet with county residents at the New Home Café.

### 77 Years ago January 6, 1949

This week The Wright County Monitor celebrates its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a newspaper, serving Clarion and Wright County in general. It is the oldest of all continuous publications in Wright County. The Monitor is the oldest business in the city of Clarion in point of service. It is believed also that the Monitor is the oldest continuous business in Wright County.

Manager Larry Day of the Clarion Theater announces the organization of his 1949 "Birthday club." Membership is open to all youngsters up to and including the age of 12 years. Club membership is free. Once each month Manager Day will have a Birthday Club at the theater.

At the annual election of the Clarion Fire Department last week, Joe Sandmaier was reelected chief for the second year. Glen Doctor is assistant chief, Harvey Johnson, serving his sixth year is secretary; Art Gronwall, treasurer and W.G. McMilleu, trustee. During 1948, the department answered the call to 32 fires according to the annual report.

## Amanda Rosenkilde Joins Revolving Loan Fund Committee

Wright County Economic Development is proud to announce Amanda Rosenkilde of First State Bank has joined their Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Committee. She is replacing long-time First State Bank employee, Sherri O'Brien, who has retired from her post.

"I am honored to accept appointment to the Wright County Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund Committee. I look forward to collaborating with fellow committee members to support new and existing local businesses, encourage job creation, and foster long-term economic development throughout Wright County," said Rosenkilde.

The RLF provides financial assistance for businesses expanding or locating in Wright County who require assistance in order to create new job opportunities or retain existing jobs. This may include, but is not limited to, construction, purchase of improvement of land and buildings, equipment, and working capital. Assistance is provided to encourage new business start-ups, expansion of existing businesses and/or the relocation of businesses into Wright County, or the retention

of existing Wright County businesses with ownership change. The funds will be made available to non-agricultural, private for-profit businesses located/locating in Wright County. Local Development Corporations are also eligible to apply on behalf of businesses.

Wright County is not a lender of primary funding, but rather provides gap financing, providing no more than seventy-five percent (75%) of total sources. Interest rates of the RLF are considered on a case-by-case basis. Priority is given to projects that will create or retain jobs, add to the local tax base, add value to Wright County resources, and/or increase exports out of the state.

Rosenkilde joins four other members on the RLF Committee. These members include Gene Rosenbaum of First Citizens Bank, Bob Torkelson of Torkelson Construction, Tate Goeman of Green Belt Bank & Trust, and Aaron Wagner of First Bank.

For more information the RLF program, please contact Darrel Steven Carlyle at (515) 532-6422 or email wced@wrightco.iowa.gov

## Obituaries

### James Howieson 1936 - 2025

James Howieson, 89, of Clarion, passed away Wednesday, December 24, 2025, at the Clarion Wellness and Rehabilitation Center.

Funeral services for James Howieson will be held on Wednesday, December 31, 2025, at 11:00 AM at the United Presbyterian Church, 219 1<sup>st</sup> Street Northwest in Clarion, with Roger Kallem officiating. Burial will be held at Evergreen Cemetery in Clarion.

Visitation will be held one hour prior to services at the church on Wednesday.

James Harvey Howieson, the son of James R. and Irene (Nelson) Howieson, was born on August 25, 1936, in Clarion, Iowa. He attended Clarion High School, where he graduated and proudly earned the title of State of Iowa Wrestling Champion in the 165-pound weight class in 1955.

On June 24, 1956, Jim was united in marriage to Mary Mosher. The couple made their home on a farm near Clarion before later moving into town. Jim owned and operated a 66 Phillips filling station and tire shop, Jim's Tire, for more than 50 years. In addition to tires and fuel, Jim sold snowmobiles, Snapper lawn mowers, and Stihl chainsaws. His shop was well known as a gathering place for friends after work, sometimes to the point that if Jim came home too late for supper, his meal might already be headed down the garbage disposal.

Deeply devoted to his community, Jim drove school bus for over 40 years and served as a volunteer firefighter for 36 years. During that time, he held the positions of Assistant



Chief and Chief, roles he took on with great pride and dedication.

In his free time, Jim enjoyed snowmobiling, watching the Indy 500, and spending time with his family hunting and fishing. He was a devoted and supportive father and grandfather who never missed an event. If one of his grandchildren needed help, especially with their car, Jim was always there in an instant.

He is survived by his son Terry (Malinda) Howieson, four grandchildren Heath (Krissy) Anderson, Jesse (Brittany) Howieson, Casie (Mark) Pittman and Taylor (Austin) Keller; eight great-grandchildren: Levi Anderson, Ava Howieson, Lucy Anderson, Cooper Keller, Tucker Howieson, Harrison Keller, Wrenn Howieson and Harvey Keller; brother Darrell (Ruth) Howieson along with nieces, nephews and extended family and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, wife Mary Howieson, daughter Chris Anderson, and siblings Verla Brooks, Lynn Howieson, Robert Howieson and Merle Howieson.

www.ewingfh.com  
 Ewing Funeral Home  
 1801 Central Avenue East  
 Clarion, Iowa 50525  
 515-532-2233

## JoEllen Reynolds Joins Wright County Trails Committee

The Wright County Trails Committee (WCTC) is pleased to announce JoEllen Reynolds of Belmond as their newest member. Reynolds has lived in Wright County for more than 30 years and is an avid biking and walking enthusiast.

"I've been interested in the project since it started," said Reynolds. "I was the Belmond Chamber Director then...and I said if there's ever an opening, let me know."

Reynolds noted that she is a regular user of the Belmond portion of the trail, walking with her friend almost every morning when the weather is nice enough.

As a new member of the WCTC, Reynolds said she is looking forward to helping expand the trail so Wright County has more opportunities for bicycling and running.

The Wright County Trails Committee was formed in 2017 under the Board of Supervisors to develop a County-wide net-

work of trails that will benefit citizens, visitors, and the entire region. The Trail System will increase transportation options, encourage access to outdoor recreation and physical activity, and inspire appreciation of the County's natural beauty for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities.

It takes the time and talent of many great people and community members to make this dream become a reality, and the WCTC is please to have Reynolds joining other dedicated WCTC members including Brett Osterman representing Rural Wright County, Jeremiah Feltz representing Wright County Conservation, Teresa Sadler of Eagle Grove, and Luke Stevens of Clarion.

To learn more about Wright County Trails, visit the website at [https://www.wrightcounty.iowa.gov/departments/economic\\_development/wright\\_county\\_trails\\_plan.php](https://www.wrightcounty.iowa.gov/departments/economic_development/wright_county_trails_plan.php) or call (515) 532-6422.

**Birth ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
 Welcoming OUR COMMUNITY'S NEW ARRIVALS!

### Baby Girl

Randy Mitchell and Amanda Martin of Clear Lake, IA would like to announce the birth of their daughter Leona Jane Marie. She was born Monday, December 22, 2025 at the Iowa Specialty Hospital in Clarion, IA. She weighed 7 pounds 9 ounces. She joins her siblings: Randy (6), Cash (9) and Cruz (14). Proud Grandparents are: McClellan IA and Warsaw, MO.

### Baby Boy

Julie Bell and Kenneth Hyland of Clarion, IA would like to announce the

birth of their son Macklin Francis. He was born Sunday, December 21, 2025 at the Iowa Specialty Hospital in Clarion, IA. He weighed 7 pounds 9 ounces. He joins his siblings: Preston (14), Noah (14), Isaiah (10) and Brantley (6). Proud Grandparents are: Donald and Milissa Katschke of Clarion, IA; Jerry and Lynn Zeiger of Clyde MO. ; Mike and Barb Smith of Rowan, IA; Chuck and Cindy Bell of Dows, IA. Proud Great Grandparents are: John and Shirley Lager of Clarion, IA.

**The Wright County MONITOR**  
 Get all your news online:  
[www.clarionnewsonline.com](http://www.clarionnewsonline.com)

## The Clarion Wire

\*\* Welcome to 2026!!  
 \*\* Watch for changes of business hours and opening!  
 \*\* From Clint at the Bru: "New Year's Eve has drink specials and complementary Champaign at midnight. Opening early to watch the Iowa vs. Vanderbilt bowl game at 11 a.m."  
 \*\* Celebrate the upcoming New Year at Clarion Country Club dining with friends on Wednesday, December 31 between 5 - 9 p.m. Reservations required - 515-532-2911 or clarionmond16@gmail.com.  
 \*\* From Pete Gardner: "Cattleman's in Belmond has live entertainment on

New Year's Eve, Wednesday, December 31. BK jazz quartet entertains from 8:30 to 11 p.m. We are looking for other live music possibilities into 2026. Know someone who could play at Cattleman's some evening? contact me at 641-430-1688."  
 \*\* Clarion's Senior Citizens Center reopens on Monday, January 5! The center will no longer have exercises on Mondays!  
 \*\* Clarion's Blood Drive is the first Tuesday afternoon of each month. The next one is Tuesday, January 6 - United Presbyterian Church from 1 - 5:30 p.m.  
 8\* 500 card players: Play

'500' returns each Wednesday at Clarion's Senior Citizens Center; both men and women; from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.  
 \*\* Play (learn) Pickleball! From 6 - 8 p.m. at Clarion's Elementary/Middle School Multi-Purpose Room (entry on north side of school building). Pay \$2 to play. Every Wednesday evening in January - February. Contact Gloria Johnson for more information 515-835-7728.  
 \*\* 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 - 6:30 p.m. Next ones are Thursday,

January 8 and 22!  
 SV\_8xp7t3GEhTzNUDY - Spanish. If you need help or prefer a paper copy, stop by the CDA Office or call Bailey at 515-532-2256.: You have some time. But JUST DO IT!!  
 \*\* AT THE CLARION THEATRE: Showing "Eternity" (PG-13) on Friday - Sunday, January 2-4 @ 7 p.m.; Sunday Matinee at 2:30 p.m. - January 4.  
 \*\* THANK YOU: To Holmes Christmas Club for all the differences they make to so many at Christmas and throughout the year! And to all the businesses and people who make it happen!

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 NMLS #401695  
 641-494-5822

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[myfcb.bank/personal-home-loans](http://myfcb.bank/personal-home-loans)

**GABBY'S GROUND RULES**

Hey folks, CALL **BEFORE YOU DIG!**

**IOWA ONE CALL**

If you plan to landscape or do any home improvements that require digging, please follow Gabby's Ground Rules. Call Iowa One Call at least 48 hours in advance to have your underground utilities marked. Then avoid digging within 18" on either side of flags or paint markings. Know what's below – call Iowa One Call. It's fast. It's free. It's the law.

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www.iowaonecall.com

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**Classifieds**

**NOTICES**  
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**FOR RENT:** KANAWHA APTS. 2BR/IBA \$450. 1BR/IBA \$375. Updated Property, New Appliances, on site Laundry. Landlord Pays Water and Sewer. CALL AL 641-494-7965

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**Look, a square!**  
Squares have four equal sides. Daddy's kind of a square too, but that's another story.

Everyday moments can be learning moments with your kids. For more tips, visit [bornlearning.org](http://bornlearning.org)

**BE A CORRESPONDENT!**  
*Do you have a story to tell or photos to show off?*

**We are always looking for area residents to write a column, submit articles or sport features in the newspaper!**

**Share history, highlight your community, document events and more.**

Call 515-364-2344  
or email [news@wrightcountymonitor.com](mailto:news@wrightcountymonitor.com)

today, to talk about how we can include your voice and ideas!

**The Wright County MONITOR**

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Legal Notices .....Noon Friday  
Classifieds..... 1:00 a.m. Friday  
Display Ads ..... 1:00 a.m. Friday  
Submitted News.....Noon Friday  
Obituaries ..... Noon Monday

**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!

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

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# THE SCARLET & BLACK

THE CLARION-GOLDFIELD-DOWS STUDENT NEWSPAPER

www.clarionnewsonline.com

Wednesday, December 31, 2025 • The Wright County Monitor 9

## Holiday dress up days



Students pose for a photograph dressed as their favorite Christmas movie or character. (Photo: Tanja Jensen)

The High School Student Council planned Holiday dress up days for the entire district for the last few days before Holiday break.

“We saw so many creative outfits,” shared Tanja Jensen.

Wednesday, December 17: Something you would find in Santa’s Workshop

Thursday, December 18: Favorite Christmas Movie/Character.

Friday, December 19: Ugly Christmas Sweaters

Monday, December 22: Christmas in Hawaii

Tuesday, December 23: Merry Matchmas, Match with a friend



## Peer Helpers Spread Holiday Cheer!

In December, the Clarion Goldfield Dows Middle School Peer Helper group brought the holiday spirit to the community. Community outreach gives students a chance to practice empathy, responsibility, and teamwork, helping them connect what they learn in school to the world around them. It encourages social growth, builds confidence, and inspires students to contribute positively, shaping them into thoughtful, engaged members of their community.

This month, the CGDMS

Peer Helpers created lap blankets and festive Santa decorations, delivering them to the residents of the Clarion Care Center. While there, they sang Christmas carols, spreading cheer and brightening the day of everyone they met. They also visited the Meadows to share holiday songs with more members of the community.

Through small acts of kindness like these, students learn that making a difference doesn’t have to be grand; it just has to come from the heart.



A student is photographed while creating a lap blanket to donate to the Clarion Care Center. (Photo: Tanja Jensen)



Community outreach teaches students how to connect to the world around them. (Photo: Tanja Jensen)



## Letter to the Editor

To: All Clarion High School Students

From: Dennis Hoffman, Author of Clarion Stories: A Love Letter to Iowa, former Editor of the Clarion High School Ranch House Journal, who now resides in Omaha.

(Note: The motivation to write this letter came from a conversation I had recently with Amanda Rink, editor of the Wright County Monitor. She told me how T.A.G. teacher Tanja Jensen and her have relaunched the Clarion School student newspaper which was in my day was the RHJ and is now the Scarlett and Black. Amanda mentioned that they are struggling to find students interested in working on the paper. So, for what it's worth, here are my reasons why you should volunteer to work on the Scarlet and Black. If the spirit moves you, please respond with your own letter to the editor so we can engage in a back-and-forth conversation.)

Is working on a high school newspaper more fun than playing video games?

Probably not. But it's definitely more important. Let me give you a few reasons why you should volunteer to work on the Scarlet and

Black.

For starters, Clarion is being written about every week—by adults. People deciding what matters, what doesn't, and what gets ignored. There's one voice missing: yours.

Have you ever complained that nobody listens to teens in Clarion? Here's the truth—most adults will listen if you have a respectable platform to speak from. A newspaper can give you that platform. By working on a student newspaper, you can “own” almost any conversation. You can bring up stuff that adults are afraid to talk about. In other words, you can speak your own truth.

The town needs a student voice with a backbone. If that's you, prove it.

Based on my own experience serving as editor of the CHS student newspaper, I can tell you that working on a student newspaper can open doors you don't know exist.

When I first joined the school paper, I didn't think of myself as a “writer.” I was just curious. That curiosity grew into confidence as I learned how to ask good questions, check facts, meet deadlines, and work with a

team. Those skills helped me far beyond high school. They shaped how I think, how I solve problems, and how I understand my community.

I remember what it was like working on the CHS student newspaper. On the days when the newspaper was due to come out, at least 20 students would magically show up in the newspaper office. Each of them would ask one simple question: “What can I do to help?”

A newspaper staff becomes a family. You rely on one another, celebrate each issue you publish, and discover that your perspectives matter.

Plus you get the satisfaction of producing something that you can be proud of—something your classmates, families, and neighbors will read.

One more thing. If you've ever wondered what it would be like to write, take photos, design pages, or learn how a newsroom works, take a break from your video games and give the Scarlet and Black a try. You don't need experience. You only need curiosity, a willingness to learn, and an interest in being part of something bigger than yourself.

## Jr State Science Fair

The 3rd, 4th, and 5th-grade T.A.G. students competed at NIACC in late November, following the publication of the November Scarlet and Black. The event, the 2025 Junior State Science and Technology Fair of Iowa, brought together 636 students from 75 schools across 39 counties, showcasing a total of 501 projects.

According to T.A.G. teacher Tanja Jensen, students spent their time engaged in competition, being judged, and hands-on STEM activities, all leading up to the awards ceremony that ended their day. “Congratulations to all on a job well done! The world needs more scientists like them,” Jensen shared with The Scarlet and Black.

Several students received special recognition for their outstanding work:

- Ezra Freybler received the Energy & Enthusiasm Award
- Elijah Hauenstein earned the Future Scientist Award
- Eli Chavez was honored with the Innovation Award
- Bodey Staples received the Problem Solver Award



“Battle of the Bottles” was the title of one CGD student’s Science Fair project. They asked and answered, “What Popular Water Bottle Brand Works the Best?” (Photo: Tanja Jensen)

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# Wright County Aerial Views | 2025 in Review

Bruce Voigts, Aerial Photographer (Photos taken January - December, 2025)



1-29-25 CGD School and White Fox Landing no snow in January.



2-23-25 Quiet water area at Lake Cornelia.



3-8-25 Ice breaking at Lake Cornelia and Elm Lake.



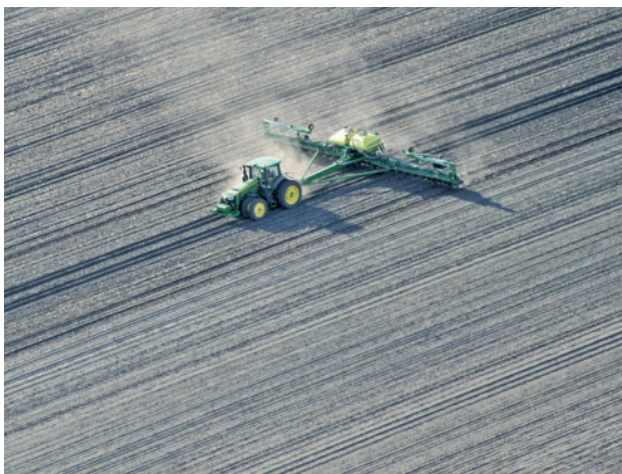
3-31-25 Clarmond green grass.



4-8-25 Starting field work with anhydrous application.



4-21-25 Storm damage from building parts blown into field.



5-5-25 spring planting.



6-14-25 Festival in the Park



6-26-25 Excess rain with farm fields ponding water.



7-12-25 Wet Wright County Fairgrounds in Eagle Grove.



7-12-25 Wet Wright County Fairgrounds in Eagle Grove.



8-26-25 Farm fields starting to mature and maybe some nitrogen shortage from excess rain.



9-7-25 Starting fall harvest.



12-2-25 Clarion area after early 12+” of snow.

Thank you Bruce for all the wonderful photos through the year!



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## Dows Community Food Pantry Christmas Party



First Lutheran Church and the Dows Legion had a Community Food Pantry Christmas party. There was a great turn out with lots of good food and goodies. They even had a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus.

## Dows Business & Professional Directory

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p><b>Muhlenbruch Insurance</b><br/>         Shannon Muhlenbruch, Agent<br/>         515-852-4156</p> | <p>Office: (563) 864-3333<br/>         Cell: (563) 605-1078</p> | <p><b>MORTS WATER</b> 1-800-HEY-MORT (439-6678)<br/>         Local Authorized Kineticco Dealer<br/>         Well Systems • Water Conditioning • Backhoe Sewer Systems • Trenching/Horizontal Boring<br/>         Drain Line Auger &amp; Jetting • Plumbing<br/>         www.mortsinc.com   Ken Morten, Owner<br/>         Geothermal • Heating • Air Conditioning<br/>         Air Quality Control • Plumbing • Duct Cleaning<br/>         1-800-579-6678</p> <p><b>GenComfort</b> Geothermal Systems</p> |
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