



# The Wright County MONITOR



clarionnewsonline.com • The Official Newspaper of Wright County, The City of Clarion, & The Clarion-Goldfield-Dows Community School District

157th year Number 6 Wednesday, February 4, 2026

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## Local Perspective on Hydrogen Exploration

Clarion native explains the science; residents submit questions to drilling company



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Editor

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But it also helps to hear



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from someone who not only knows the exploration firsthand, like Kristen Delano with Koloma, who is answering questions directly, but also someone who knows the area because they originated here.

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equipment are sent into that borehole to acquire data," Evans stated. "I interpret that data to determine what rocks and minerals and fluids or gas are down there and if they can be easily extracted."

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"My parents got me a rock tumbler, and from there, my interest in rocks grew. It wasn't until I was a junior at the University of Iowa, though, that I changed my major to geoscience and started off on the subsurface career path,"

she shared.

As reported in The Wright County Monitor and confirmed by Evans herself, much of today's exploration interest is focused on a geologic feature called the Mid-Continent Rift (MCR). This rift formed millions of years ago when the North American continent began to drift apart, but never fully split.

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## Wright County at Work

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## A Wildly Different Kind of Hospital Food

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If you've ever eaten at the Iowa Specialty Hospital cafe, The Wildflower, you already know this isn't your typical hospital food story.

Kari has been part of the food service team for 15 years. She holds a bachelor's degree in Human Services with a focus on Child and Family Services and is a Certified Dietary Manager (CDM), Certified Food Protection Professional (CFPP), and is current on all ServSafe food-handling requirements. But credentials aside, it's clear Kari's real focus is on people.

Hospital food doesn't always have the best reputation, but that's something Kari and her team work hard to challenge every day.

"We spend a lot of time planning menus around culture and meetings with several people from different parts of the hospital," she shared with The Wright County Monitor. "We also have an attached Independent and Assisted Living facility, so a lot of the older generation is glad to share their insight as well."

That collaboration shows



**Kari Henderson** and her team at the Wildflower Cafe located inside Iowa Specialty Hospital in Clarion. Back Row, Left to Right: Barb Tanner, Elisa Medina, Kendrek Torres, Kari Henderson, Izaac Morris, Mark Echelberger, Jordan Harrah, Lief Bentley. Front Row, Left to Right: Mary Eekhoff, Gloria Bittner, Emily Strait, Chris Zapata, Trisha Jaacks (Photo: Amanda Rink)

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people every day, from hospital staff starting early to visitors stopping in during stressful moments, patients staying on the floor, residents from the Independent (IL) or Assisted Living (AL) community, and even those just coming to eat. Because the food is really that good.

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vice menu where they can choose what to eat during their stay.

"Our staff is trained to bounce between stations and help wherever needed," Kari explained. "Serving food out front, running trays to patients, or helping AL/IL residents, everyone goes above and beyond for patient satisfaction."

One tradition that continues, with a small update,

is the special meal offered to parents after a baby is born.

While the cake has been replaced with cheese cake,

families now receive a baby bag, with a bib that reads I

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## Wright County Supervisors Act on Roads, Insurance, and Housing Updates

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**February 2, 2026** - The Wright County Board of Supervisors met in regular session on Monday, approving a road contract, local agreements, employee health insurance options, and hearing updates on housing improvement efforts across the county.

The Supervisors also went into a closed session to "review the performance of the engineer and to evaluate the [professional] competency of an individual whose appointment, hiring, performance, or discharge is being considered when necessary to prevent needless and irreparable injury to that individual's reputation and that individual requests a closed session."

Following regular approvals, the board voted to approve a new paving contract.

The project includes paving work on C-25 from R38 to Highway 69, as well as O'Brien Avenue/185th Street from C-25 to Nelson Avenue, covering both the North and West sides of the lake. The contract was awarded to Heartland Asphalt of Mason City, the low bidder at \$1,381,305.33.

Supervisors then approved the 28E agreement for county road maintenance within the city limits of Goldfield. Under the agreement, the county will provide snow removal and summer maintenance on Davis Avenue entering town from the Northeast, Dillon Avenue from the South corporate limits, and 210th Street from the East to Davis Avenue.

County Engineer Adam Clemons provided his routine secondary roads update, noting limited activity because of winter conditions. Crews focused on shop work, equipment maintenance, and completing five work orders. A damaged bridge rail north of Eagle Grove was also brought up, with Clemons reporting impacts from large trucks and manure haulers. Repairs are planned once temperatures allow concrete work.

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Under the approved option, single plans will see a \$30 monthly increase to the side fund, and family plans a \$31 increase, while employee premium contributions will also rise a little. The new plan keeps the existing benefit structure while keeping enough funding.

Wright County Economic Development Director Aaron Budweg shared a summary of the Heart of Iowa Regional Housing Trust Fund.

Budweg reported that four housing improvement projects were completed in Wright County last year, with work ranging from roofing and windows to water heaters and doors. Projects were done in Eagle Grove, Clarion, Belmond, and Goldfield, keeping a balance of services across the county, Budweg noted. He also stated that Wright County was the second-largest recipient of funding in the region, only behind Webster County.

Budweg said the program currently has about \$88,000 available for future projects and encouraged residents to spread the word to neighbors who may need assistance with basic home repairs to prevent long-term deterioration, which can ultimately affect county tax revenue.

In other business, the board:

- Approved a liquor license for Oakridge Recreation Corporation.

The board of Supervisors will meet again on Monday, February 9, at 9:00 a.m. at the Wright County Courthouse. This meeting, and past meetings, can be viewed online at youtube.com/@WrightCountyIowaOfficial8312.

## AREA HEADLINES

### Belmond

Belmond native Sue Followill was recently named Ambassador of the Year in recognition of her 40 years of service with the Greater Franklin County Chamber of Commerce.

### Dows

The Dows Legion Riders delivered 33 Christmas stockings to veterans in four care centers and will host a fundraising dinner February 15 beginning at 11 a.m. at the Legion building.

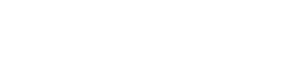
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## Wright County at Work

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was born at Iowa Specialty Hospital.

When asked about her favorite part of the job, Kari was upfront, and again, it was mostly about the people she serves daily and the team she works with: "I enjoy visiting with patients, guests, and residents, hearing what they liked and didn't like. And having a team that supports each other, all working toward the same goal of sending out good food."

That team support is obvious when you step behind the scenes. One of those team members is Izaac Morris, a cook who has been with the hospital for three years.

Izaac holds an associate degree in business and maintains an active food safety certification. His role in the kitchen is best described as flexible, by design.

"I work as a universal worker, and I'm also responsible for placing the kitchen orders," he said. "My day varies depending on the shift, which is one of the things I enjoy."

On any given day, Izaac might be baking, prepping food, cooking for the next day, assembling and delivering room-service trays, running the register, stocking kitchenettes throughout the hospital, preparing items for outreach clinics, or serving meals to residents at The Meadows.

"I'm trained in nearly all kitchen positions, so I'm able to adapt wherever I'm needed," he said.

What keeps him coming back to work every day is the people.

"One of the things I love most about my job is the patients and the staff I work alongside," Izaac shared. "It feels good helping people who truly need our services, whether they're sick, having a baby, recovering from surgery, or just relying on us for convenience and comfort."

As for his favorite menu item? "Taco salads," he said, a true Midwestern. "You can have it in a taco bowl or a Dorito bag, and we have so many toppings you can add to make it even better."

The key to every meal served or treat baked is a team that understands food in a hospital isn't only about nutrition; their work is about providing comfort, routine, and a small bright spot in an otherwise hard day.

Thanks to Kari Henderson and her team, the Wildflower Cafe at Iowa Specialty Hospital in Clarion continues to be a place people actually look forward to enjoying a meal at, and that is why they are the latest Wright County at Work highlight.

## Local government officials raise concerns about revenue cap in property tax bills

*Advocates of tax relief praise 2% revenue limit in House GOP's and governor's plans*

*Robin Opsahl, Iowa Capital Dispatch*

Though lawmakers at the Iowa Capitol are still far from reaching a consensus on property tax legislation, House lawmakers heard from lobbyists for local governments and advocacy groups about the House Republicans' and governor's proposals Thursday.

House Study Bill 596, the House GOP bill, and House Study Bill 563, the bill from Gov. Kim Reynolds, were the subjects of back-to-back subcommittee meetings Thursday. The two measures share several similarities, such as a 2% revenue cap for local governments with certain exemptions, as well as provisions related to reducing local entities' spending by finding efficiencies.

Many of the comments at the meetings about the two bills came from the same lobbyists who shared similar praise — or concerns — about the limits on local government revenue.

Lucas Beenken, representing the Iowa State Association of Counties and Iowa State Association of County Supervisors, warned that a 2% cap on revenue would not necessarily lower tax costs for Iowans in the way lawmakers are intending.

If a county's general fund is maxed out, Beenken said counties have a supplemental fund that is "limited by use," but is not limited by a levy rate or dollar amount. The uses counties are required to pay for are itemized in Iowa Code, he said, which include services like in-patient and out-patient substance abuse treatment programs and county courts.

"What I'm suggesting to you is to look at the list, as it's a lot of things that are required of counties by the state," Beenken said. "... All these sorts of things that counties are forced to pay for, they would then be under this 2% cap competing against the services at the county level that the citizens desire to depend on."

He said a "one size fits all" doesn't fit for regulating Iowa communities, which have largely differing income, business and spending needs.

But groups advocating for tax cuts said they are strongly in favor of the 2% revenue cap. Chris Hagenow, president of Iowans for Tax Relief, said his organization has been in favor of the revenue limit for many years, and believes this approach is "the best way to begin bending the cost curve down for Iowans."

However, Hagenow warned that lawmakers need to ensure there are not "carveouts" included in this limit, saying previous laws signed in Iowa intended to lower property taxes were not effective because they contained "loopholes" and "back doors" that allowed local governments to not abide by the limits set by the state.

"We've seen in well-intentioned property tax reform for the past, is that if there are escape hatches, that they will be found and used," Hagenow said.

House File 718, signed into law in 2023, included caps on levy rates for local governments. Rep. Larry McBurrey, D-Urbandale, said the 2023 law's precedent shows the new proposed revenue cap would not "accomplish what this Legislature is looking for at all" in lowering property taxes, and said adding mechanism for local governments to go above the cap when inflation surpasses 2% is an "absolute must" if these proposals move forward.

While the two bills have some overlapping ideas, there are many distinct differences. The governor's bill contains measures limiting the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts, requiring property tax assessments to be conducted every three years instead of every two years, and moving up the timeline for using Secure an Advanced Vision for Education (SAVE) funds for property tax relief.

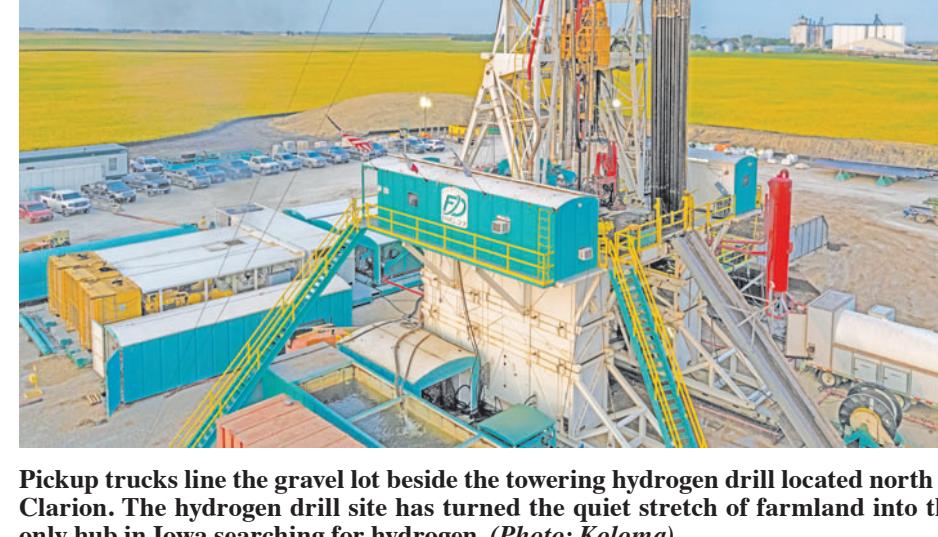
Local officials criticize governor's election changes

Reynolds' proposal would also eliminate election mandates for county treasurers, auditors and recorders

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## Hydrogen Exploration

### continued from page 1



Pickup trucks line the gravel lot beside the towering hydrogen drill located north of Clarion. The hydrogen drill site has turned the quiet stretch of farmland into the only hub in Iowa searching for hydrogen. (Photo: Koloma)

#### Are the tailings flushed with water?

Our operations do not produce tailings in the same way the mining industry does. Our operations produce drill cuttings, which are stored in bins on location, then loaded onto trucks and hauled off for disposal at a landfill. The rest are kept for analysis

and shipped off to laboratories or other repositories, such as the Iowa Geologic Survey.

#### What does the drill pit look like?

We do not utilize drilling pits. All of the drilling fluid is contained inside specialized tanks designed to hold it. At the end of the job, the drilling fluid is hauled away to an authorized disposal site.

#### How big is the dome?

At this stage of exploration, the exact size of the underground hydrogen structure, often referred to as a "dome", is not yet known. Determining its size will require additional drilling, along with detailed geophysical surveys and reservoir engineering studies.

These steps help geoscientists understand how far the structure extends underground and how much hydrogen it may contain.

These activities are designed to gather information before any long-term development decisions are made. This step-by-step approach is standard in early exploration and helps ensure that potential development is well understood and responsibly managed.

#### What is the end product?

Natural hydrogen can be the Swiss Army knife solution to our growing energy needs. It has multiple clean energy applications, including power generation, long-haul trucking fuel, and industrial uses like steel manufacturing.

The most exciting thing for Iowa is that natural hydrogen enables cost-effective, clean ammonia production for fertilizer, supporting local farmers, lowering food costs, and allowing fertilizer to be produced domestically.

#### How fast is the drilling?

According to McGrath, during the final week of January, flu activity is currently very high, while COVID-19 and RSV remain at moderate levels. Influenza A is the predominant strain circulating, and the current season is tracking similarly to last year's flu season.

Flu season typically runs from October through May, meaning illness-related absences could continue into the spring.

Statewide data reflects what is being felt locally. Schools across Iowa are reporting absenteeism rates of 10 percent or higher, with most absences tied to influenza or COVID-19.

Public health officials consider sustained absenteeism at that level a sign of significant community spread.

For students at Clarion-Goldfield-Dows Elemen-

ting community.

Second, significant natural hydrogen resources will create jobs and more prosperity. Third, natural hydrogen resources will increase local and state tax revenue, creating more funding for schools, health-care, local infrastructure, and other needs.

#### Where is the company at right now with the search and drilling?

We are roughly 75% finished with our desired drilling efforts for this current operation. Once drilling concludes, data collected from well cuttings, down-hole logs, and geophysical surveys will be analyzed to determine the next phase of exploration in this region.

#### How many workers are at the site at any given time?

There are 12-15 rig personnel and technical experts on site.

How far down will the drill be and how wide is the hole?

The well was permitted to be drilled as deep as 12,000 ft. The hole is 7-7/8" in diameter, similar in size to a personal pan pizza.

What is the temperature and atmospheric pressure at the bottom of the drilling hole?

The exact temperature and pressure conditions at the bottom of the drilling hole will not be known until drilling is completed and downhole logging tools are run.

These tools are standard in drilling operations and are used to directly measure subsurface conditions such as temperature, pressure, and rock properties.

What are the dimensions of the casing?

The surface casing is 13-3/8". The intermediate casing is 9-5/8".

How does this benefit the greater good of the people?

A commercial-grade natural hydrogen resource in Wright County and the surrounding area would benefit the community in multiple ways.

First, the most likely end use for that hydrogen would be for the production of anhydrous ammonia, a key component of fertilizer that is critical for Iowa's lucrative farming industry.

Adding supply in the region where it is in the highest demand will drop prices, benefiting the entire farm-

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There are 12-15 rig personnel and technical experts on site.

How far down will the drill be and how wide is the hole?

The well was permitted to be drilled as deep as 12,000 ft. The hole is 7-7/8" in diameter, similar in size to a personal pan pizza.

What is the temperature and atmospheric pressure at the bottom of the drilling hole?

The exact temperature and pressure conditions at the bottom of the drilling hole will not be known until drilling is completed and downhole logging tools are run.

These tools are standard in drilling operations and are used to directly measure subsurface conditions such as temperature, pressure, and rock properties.

What are the dimensions of the casing?

The surface casing is 13-3/8". The intermediate casing is 9-5/8".

How does this benefit the greater good of the people?

A commercial-grade natural hydrogen resource in Wright County and the surrounding area would benefit the community in multiple ways.

First, the most likely end use for that hydrogen would be for the production of anhydrous ammonia, a key component of fertilizer that is critical for Iowa's lucrative farming industry.

Adding supply in the region where it is in the highest demand will drop prices, benefiting the entire farm-

ing community.

Second, significant natural hydrogen resources will create jobs and more prosperity. Third, natural hydrogen resources will increase local and state tax revenue, creating more funding for schools, health-care, local infrastructure, and other needs.

Where is the company at right now with the search and drilling?

We are roughly 75% finished with our desired drilling efforts for this current operation. Once drilling concludes, data collected from well cuttings, down-hole logs, and geophysical surveys will be analyzed to determine the next phase of exploration in this region.

How many workers are at the site at any given time?

## Letters to the Editor

I took sports pictures for the Wright County Monitor for four years while in high school and junior college. Editor Bill Hauser always said a good picture was worth a 1000 words. This week, the Internet was full of a picture of a little 5 year old boy with a cute bunny hat with ears sticking out and a Spiderman backpack.

It looked like someone who has good parents who take good of him. But he is being held by an ICE of-

ficer and looks terrified. I can read at least three different stories from ICE, a female in the house, and a school representative. Who are you going to believe? Take a look at the picture and tell me.

This comes after a 37-year-old white female is killed in Minneapolis. Again, look at the pictures and tell me what I see. There are several versions going around. I can tell you

what I see. In most places, it is against the law to shoot someone in the back when they are going away from you and do not pose a threat. I fail to see what ICE tells me to see.

Thanks to Bill Hauser for the job and education. Also, he made sure to send me a Wright County Monitor every week I was in Vietnam. My whole platoon read it.

Dennis Mraz, Clarion

Regrettably, I did not do this before leaving Clarion. I am writing in the hope that someone in the community may own a painting by Rose Marie Draheim, a member of our congregation, and might be willing to part with it,

hopefully at a reasonable price.

If so, I would be deeply grateful to hear from you. (reveurt55@gmail.com)

Peace and blessings,  
Rev. Curt Miner, Clarion  
UCC congregation

At the time of writing this column, there are 138 days until summertime officially arrives here in Iowa. After an entire week of my kids, my spouse, and myself all being sick... I'm counting every single one of them.

I'll be honest... I'm done with winter.

I'm done trying to look at snow with awe in my eyes. Done romanticizing cold days with cozy blankets and warm drinks. Done with the grumpy attitudes that come from kids who just want to be outside but keep coming in with wet socks and frozen toes.

I'm ready to sit around a campfire, barefoot, with stars overhead, while those same kids run around collecting cool rocks instead of asking for another snack.

So yes, I'm counting down the days until warmer weather like a kid on December 1<sup>st</sup> waiting for Christmas.

But why is this part of winter, the tail end, always the hardest?

Technically, it should be easier. February actually gives us more daylight than late December.

But December comes with distractions. Holidays.

And if reaching out feels

## The Heartland Museum Monthly Newsletter

February and the chill of winter is still here, but the promise of spring is around the corner. We are using these winter months to make to make plans for the summer! We do have several ideas brewing, which we hope will encourage you

**The Wright County Monitor**  
www.clarionnewsonline.com  
304 W. Broadway St.,  
Eagle Grove, IA 50533

**Office Hours:**  
Monday-Friday  
9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

**Clarion contact information:**  
Phone: 515-448-4745,  
515-364-2344  
FAX: 1-800-340-0805

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**News Tips:**  
The Monitor welcomes any and all news tips. At the office, call 515-364-2344 or email news@wrightcountymonitor.com To request a photographer, please give at least a day's notice.

**Deadlines:**

Legal Notices Noon Friday  
Classifieds 11:00 a.m. Friday  
Display Ads 11:00 a.m. Friday  
Submitted News Noon Friday  
Obituaries 4:30 p.m. Monday  
Breaking News 5 p.m. Monday  
Event coverage requests 24 hours

\* This news may not be published in the current issue.

**The Monitor Staff:**

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

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City of Dows  
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## reading between the lines

with Amanda Rink

### Waiting for Summer

Amanda Rink,  
Editor

"We're all traveling through time together, every day of our lives. All we can do is do our best to relish this remarkable ride." - Richard Curtis

At the time of writing this column, there are 138 days until summertime officially arrives here in Iowa. After an entire week of my kids, my spouse, and myself all being sick... I'm counting every single one of them.

I'll be honest... I'm done with winter.

I'm done trying to look at snow with awe in my eyes. Done romanticizing cold days with cozy blankets and warm drinks. Done with the grumpy attitudes that come from kids who just want to be outside but keep coming in with wet socks and frozen toes.

I'm ready to sit around a campfire, barefoot, with stars overhead, while those same kids run around collecting cool rocks instead of asking for another snack.

So yes, I'm counting down the days until warmer weather like a kid on December 1<sup>st</sup> waiting for Christmas.

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Technically, it should be easier. February actually gives us more daylight than late December.

But December comes with distractions. Holidays.

Gatherings. Things to look forward to... assuming you enjoy your family, which I mostly do.

February just feels heavy.

There's science behind that feeling. Less sunlight means our bodies produce less vitamin D, which affects mood, and melatonin levels can get thrown off, making us tired and irritable. When we feel low, we tend to isolate, because even the idea of being social can feel exhausting.

Trust me, I get it. I'm right there with you.

I don't feel especially creative or overly friendly right now. I feel tired. A little cranky. Like only a sunny day by the lake could fix me.

But here's the deal: this is the part of winter where we actually have to keep showing up.

Even when it's cold. Even when it's wet. Even when the world feels grey, and we feel a little grey, too.

It doesn't have to be anything big. Invite a friend over for a movie night.

Bake something together.

Fold laundry side by side.

Change the oil in your car.

Invite your mom over to

make you a grilled cheese.

Sit with a friend and read.

Or stare at your phones together in comfortable silence.

That counts, too.

Winter is isolating enough without us doing it to ourselves.

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## Legal notices

### PUBLIC NOTICE Wright County Treasurer's Semi Annual Report

Wright County Treasurer - Accounting Semi-Annual Report Peggy Schluttenhofer, Wright County Treasurer, Clarion, IA For the period from July 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025, Inclusive Statement of Account By Fund						
Fund	Balance July 1, 2025	Revenues	Total to be Accounted for	Disbursements	Fund Balance December 31, 2025	Auditor's Warrants Outstanding
01 General Basic	4,818,209.66	3,813,387.13	8,631,596.79	3,195,945.74	5,435,651.05	39,816.57
02 General Supplemental	1,108,211.00	2,039,104.02	3,147,315.02	1,657,001.14	1,490,313.88	87,000.00
03 Rural Services Basic	73,235.89	2,131,867.00	2,805,102.83	1,872,446.59	95,526.65	58,065.35
04 Rural Services Supplemental	0.00	20,723.58	0.00	0.00	20,723.58	0.00
05 Secondary Road	2,491,693.64	3,822,454.73	6,314,148.37	4,423,508.20	1,890,640.17	4,905.73
12 Capital Projects	312,530.56	3,834.00	316,364.56	9,509.88	306,854.68	0.00
13 Debt Service	1,298,095.07	973,296.90	2,271,395.97	52,710.00	2,218,685.97	0.00
14 Debt Service Funds	1,594,154.54	3,000.00	1,594,154.54	3,000.00	1,594,154.54	444,483.11
15 Drainage Administration	126,325.25	143,591.52	269,916.77	31,046.72	238,870.05	65.49
16 Local Emergency Management	185,985.87	117,776.11	303,761.98	156,688.43	147,073.55	105.64
18 Property Tax Agency	47,221.76	14,451.54	61,673.30	16,364.30	309.00	0.00
20 Township Control	91,926.16	29,492.56	121,512.41	213,958.18	26,234.24	0.00
21 Corporation Control	82,103.47	4,496,984.29	4,579,004.40	4,532,004.40	57,314.36	0.00
22 School Control	77,984.44	9,073,573.38	9,151,557.82	9,053,775.68	97,782.14	0.00
23 Area School Control	8,197.07	1,035,049.69	1,043,246.76	1,032,219.13	11,027.63	0.00
24 Sanitary District	0.00	9,337.66	9,100.87	0.00	0.00	0.00
25 Co Mt Extension	1,599,714.78	19,729.00	180,400.78	179,400.75	1,490,313.88	0.00
30 Con Land Acquisition Trust	631,678.53	149,307.78	780,986.31	448,16.16	711,538.15	0.00
31 Co Assessor	466,217.50	371,318.75	837,536.25	321,939.86	515,596.39	1,520.91
32 Motor Vehicle Trust	248,096.75	1,872,536.50	2,120,633.25	1,802,033.25	318,600.00	0.00
33 Use Tax Trust	169,691.53	992,829.53	1,162,521.39	198,539.51	171,275.09	0.00
34 City Tax Assess Project C	304.42	11,146.36	1,162,521.39	198,539.51	476.80	0.00
35 Tax Redemption Trust	0.00	153,465.05	153,465.05	153,465.05	0.00	0.00
54 Emergency Medical Services	943,823.21	365,334.90	1,309,158.11	332,943.79	976,214.32	0.00
55 Resource Enhancement	49,807.09	11,429.11	61,236.20	0.00	61,236.20	0.00
56 E911	330,760.84	117,874.06	448,634.90	181,692.64	266,942.26	1,643.00
57 Wright County Revolving Housing	229,470.70	1,200.00	230,470.70	1,200.00	230,470.70	0.00
59 Public Health Revolving	113,586.51	3,252.44	116,838.95	1,836.77	115,002.18	0.00
60 Recorder's Records Management	29,099.09	1,611.97	30,711.06	0.00	30,711.06	0.00
62 Wt Co Employees Side Fund	603,454.72	1,329,793.31	1,933,248.03	1,223,470.12	709,777.91	164,375.03
64 FMHA ICL Releaving Loan	173,827.52	198,711.99	1,162,521.39	244.49	198,238.02	0.00
66 Statewide Communications Commission	45,159.39	361,048.99	405,624.51	313,615.75	93,242.16	585.58
68 Econ Dev Marketing	80,893.55	1,250,61.61	82,146.16	1,830.00	85,316.16	0.00
69 Bangs & TB	11.25	0.00	11.25	0.00	11.25	0.00
70 Sheriff's Donation Fund	2,411.09	381.76	2,792.85	0.00	2,792.85	0.00
71 State Fund	5,201.27	8,000.00	12,001.27	9,259.26	2,742.01	0.00
72 State Equitable Sharing Fund	20,330.70	269.82	20,600.77	0.00	20,600.77	0.00
74 Drivers License Trust	0.00	25,191.50	25,191.50	0.00	0.00	0.00
75 Recorder's Electronic Fee Fund	0.00	1,171.00	1,171.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
76 Empowerment YDC	9,684.44	98,411.03	108,095.47	81,906.68	26,188.79	111.32
77 Wright Co 4-H	109,129.20	6,659.05	115,788.11	4,180.50	109,593.81	0.00
79 Jail Room & Board	120,249.33	1,962.34	120,311.67	7,665.50	122,446.17	0.00
91 Wright Co Search and Rescue	3,114.03	0.00	3,114.03	0.00	3,114.03	0.00
91 American Rescue Plan of 2021	252,635.93	0.00	252,633.95	185,408.73	67,225.22	6,155.55
93 LG Opioid Abatement Fund	116,306.33	23,025.57	139,331.90	1,794.40	137,537.50	0.00
93 Boone River WKA Fiscal Agent	28,198.82	7,340.01	35,538.83	11,564.28	23,974.55	0.00
94 Agribusiness Park Water Supply	16,632,499.49	34,317,734.06	50,950,233.55	32,505,622.53	18,444,611.02	721,920.78

Balance on Hand \$18,444,611.02

Clarion, IA 50525

January 26, 2026

I, Peggy Schluttenhofer, Wright County Treasurer, do hereby certify that the report given is a correct summary of the business transacted by me as said during the period therein specified.

Published in the Wright County Monitor on Wed. Feb. 4, 2026

### PUBLIC NOTICE Estate of Mary L. Lester

**Public Notice**  
**IN THE IOWA DISTRICT COURT  
FOR WRIGHT COUNTY  
IN THE MATTER OF THE  
ESTATE OF  
MARY L. LESTER, Deceased**  
**Probate No. ESPR017774  
NOTICE OF PROBATE OF WILL,  
OF APPOINTMENT OF  
CO-EXECUTORS, AND NOTICE  
TO CREDITORS**  
To All Persons Interested in the Estate of Mary L. Lester, Deceased, who died on or about December 11, 2025. You are hereby notified that on the 16th day of January 2026, the Last Will and Testament of Mary L. Lester, deceased, bearing date of the 2nd day of November, 2004, was admitted to probate in the above named court and that Janice I. Morford and Kathy L. Stahl were appointed Co-Executors of the estate. Any action to set aside the will must be brought in the district court of said county within the later to occur of four months from the date of the second publication of this notice or one month from the date of mailing this notice to all heirs of the decedent and devisees under the will whose identities are reasonably ascertainable, or thereafter be forever barred. Dated this 21st day of January 2026.

**Janice I. Morford**  
2012 Elm Lake Drive  
Clarion, Iowa 50525  
Co-Executor of Estate  
**Kathy L. Stahl**  
P.O. Box 164  
Clarion, Iowa 50525  
Co-Executor of Estate  
Collin M. Davison  
ICIS Pin No. AT00109050  
Laird Law Firm  
120 Central Avenue W  
P.O. Box 73  
Clarion, Iowa 50525  
Attorneys for Executor  
Date of second publication  
4th Day of February, 2026

Published in the Wright County Monitor on Wed. Jan. 28 &amp; Feb. 4, 2026

### PUBLIC NOTICE Estate of Richard E. Pletcher

**Public Notice**  
**IN THE IOWA DISTRICT COURT  
FOR WRIGHT COUNTY  
IN THE MATTER OF THE  
ESTATE OF  
RICHARD E. PLETCHER, Deceased**  
**Probate No. ESPR017756  
NOTICE OF PROOF OF WILL  
WITHOUT ADMINISTRATION**  
To All Persons Interested in the Estate of Richard E. Pletcher, Deceased, who died on or about September 30, 2025. You are hereby notified that on the 3rd day of November, 2025, the Last Will and Testament of Richard E. Pletcher, deceased, bearing date of the 20th day of November, 2013, was admitted to probate in the above named court and that there will be no present administration of the estate. Any action to set aside the will must be brought in the district court of said county within the later to occur of four months from the date of the second publication of this notice or one month from the date of mailing this notice to all heirs of the decedent and devisees under the will whose identities are reasonably ascertainable, or thereafter be forever barred. Dated this 13th day of November, 2025.

**Judith K. Pletcher**  
Proprietor  
Andrew C. Johnston  
ICIS Pin No. AT0012303  
Laird Law Firm  
11 Fourth Street NE  
P.O. Box 1567  
Mason City, IA 50402-1567  
Attorneys for the Estate  
Date of second publication  
February 11, 2026

Published in the Wright County Monitor on Wed. Feb. 4 &amp; 11, 2026

### PUBLIC NOTICE Hiltabidle Demand For Deed

**DEMAND FOR DEED**  
**RE: LOTS 5 AND 6 IN BLOCK 1, WRIGHT'S THIRD ADDITION TO EAGLE GROVE JUNCTION, WRIGHT COUNTY, IOWA**  
To: Richard E. Hiltabidle, Wanema E. Hiltabidle, Mary Lou Hiltabidle, Matthew Hiltabidle, Aaron Hiltabidle, Melinda Hiltabidle, Christy Chapman, Kaitlin Hiltabidle, Kimberly Hiltabidle, Donna Small, Gabriel Small, Joshua Small, Aaron Small, Carna Jackson, Reid Jackson, any person interested in the Estate of Richard E. Hiltabidle, any person interested in the estate of Wanema E. Hiltabidle, and any other interested party: You are hereby notified that on October 23, 1986, Thomas D. Hiltabidle and Mary Lou Hiltabidle, husband and wife, as joint tenants with full right of survival and not as tenants in common, entered into a Real Estate Contract for the above described property as vendees in which Richard E. Hiltabidle and Wanema E. Hiltabidle were vendors and which was recorded October 27, 1986 in the office of the Wright County Recorder (the "Contract"). The Contract provided for monthly payments for 240 months with a final payment due date of November 20, 1996.

Published in the Wright County Monitor on Wed. Feb. 4, 11 &amp; 18, 2026

### PUBLIC NOTICE Wright Co. Conservation Board Special Hearing

The Wright County Conservation Board will hold a special hearing on Feb 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026, 7:15 p.m., at the Wright County Conservation Board office, 1768 Obrien Ave., Clarion, Iowa, 50525. The purpose of this meeting is to hear public input regarding the leasing of farmland, owned by the Conservation Board, for a term

Published in the Wright County Monitor on Wed. Jan. 21 &amp; Feb. 4, 2026

### PUBLIC NOTICE Wright County Supervisors Jan. 19, 2026 Minutes

January 19, 2026

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

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

Minutes of the last regular meeting of January 12, 2026 were read and approved.

Approved claims for payment.

Amanda Meyer, Wright County Auditor, read the letter provided by Andrea Evelsizer of Healthy Harvest for their annual update.



Representative  
Mark Thompson,  
House District 56

This past week was filled with bills working through sub-committees and committees. No voting took place in the full House this past week to allow time to get bills through the process listed above. Some of that legislation is the announcement of the anti-crime bills to ensure Iowa does not become a haven for career criminals.

One of the bills creates a cumulative strike system for repeat offenders, triggering a mandatory minimum 20-year sentence without parole once a career criminal reaches three full strikes. Under current law, repeat violent offenders are released back onto the streets where they become a risk to our children and loved ones.

The second bill is a pretrial accountability and bail reform act. The goal of this bill is to ensure those who are arrested and charged with a crime cannot simply skip out on bail or be released on their own recognizance in instances where they are unlikely to return to face judgement. Current loopholes and excessive judicial discretion have allowed career criminals to return to the streets shortly after arrest. These reforms close those gaps.

The third bill (HSB 631) House Study Bill 631 will create a dashboard to provide Iowans with objective data on how judges exercise their discretion. It requires the state to collect and publish information including:

—Bond & Sentencing Decisions: How often a judge departs from standard bail schedules or statutory sentencing recommendations.

—Legal Accuracy: The frequency with which a judge's decisions are overturned by higher courts for legal errors.

—Efficiency: How quickly a judge rules on motions and cases.

This information will help Iowans make educated decisions when it comes time to vote on judicial retention. Helping the general public understand the role and responsibility of Judges is one more way to increase confidence in the Judiciary and increase safety in our state.

It is important to address our mental health system as we address the criminal behavior in Iowa. This week, the House Health and Human Services Committee considered House File 2094 to expand

## The Thompson Times

REPRESENTATIVE MARK THOMPSON  
HOUSE DISTRICT 56



This week the Iowa Association of School Boards came to the Capitol. It was a pleasure to meet with Superintendent from West Hancock School District, Jason McLaughlin and Alison Marshall from the Clarion-Goldfield-Dows School Board. These discussions are so valuable, and I appreciate their effort to come to the Capitol

capacity at the state Mental Health Institutes and allow for additional federal funding to pay for that expansion. Last year the House passed mental health legislation. Those three bills (HF 312, HF 313, HF 385) were not taken up in the Senate but may be considered in this 2026 session.

I chaired a subcommittee on expungement of non-violent crimes of trafficked victims. I drafted the bill based on the victims to whom I have spoken. Many times, victims' identities are used and destroyed by their traffickers or they are forced into illegal behavior. Expungement allows a victim to get a job, rent a home and generally get a fresh start. Iowa is one of the few states without some provisions of expungement for trafficked people.

Some reminders and facts...

\*Tax filing season is upon us. Taxpayers can use Where's My Refund? to check the status of their 2025 income tax refund within 24 hours of filing their tax return electronically. Refund information is normally available after four weeks for taxpayers who filed a paper return. Information on the site will update overnight so there is no need to check more than once a day.

\* Annually, the state is up 2,700 jobs over the past 12 months. Construction has added the most jobs during that span (+7,100).

This sector has generally trended up over the past 12 months. Education and health care gained 5,900 jobs. Health care and social assistance alone has gained 3,900 jobs.

\*The last time Iowa school budgets were cut was in 2008 through 2011. In 2012 the state paid our schools \$5883 per student per year. Today in 2026 the state pays \$7988 per student. That is a 49.1% increase. That does not count federal dollars. The K-12 school budget is nearly half of the entire state budget.

Fertilizer: Nowadays, that is often another word used for chicken manure. Farming has changed radically over the past decades causing vast amounts of manure to be bought and sold on the market as fertilizer. When it's spread responsibly, that arrangement works well for both parties. When it doesn't, it causes problems.

Recently tons of manure were spread west of Britt creating a stench that blew towards West Hancock School, permeating the hallways days after it was dispensed. I visited Britt on Saturday to get an "appreciation" for the impact it was having. I will be looking at Iowa code and speaking with the folks responsible for ensuring we logically support agriculture while preventing toxic environments for our neighbors and communities.

## Heavy Flu Season continued from page 2

wash their hands frequently, classrooms sanitize desks regularly, and custodial staff disinfect high-touch surfaces such as door handles daily.

"It's really typical routines we do all the time," Lingenfelter said, "but during flu season, we're hyper-aware and remind one another of good hygiene practices."

While absences can interrupt learning, Lingenfelter said illness-related absences are typically short-lived and manageable with communication.

"Anytime there is an absence, it interrupts learning," she said. "However, illness is typically short-lived, and the child can work with the teacher to get caught back up." She added that students who attend school while sick often struggle to focus. "We want kids to feel good and be ready to learn."

District guidelines require students to be fever-free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school, regardless of illness. For influenza, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends staying home for at least five days from the onset of symptoms.

"Especially this season, it has taken two to three days after symptoms improve for kids to feel decent again," Lingenfelter said. "It's okay for your kid to have a weekend off to recuperate and relax so they're ready for school on Monday."

McGrath said that while handwashing and cleaning high-touch surfaces remain important, vaccination is still the most effective way to reduce serious illness. Even when vaccination doesn't prevent infection entirely, it has been shown to reduce severity, lowering the risk of hospitalization and complications.

Public health officials urge families to keep children home when sick and to monitor symptoms closely. Flu symptoms are often more severe than a typical cold and may include fever or chills, cough, sore throat, body aches, headaches, and extreme fatigue. Some chil-

dren may also experience stomach upset.

McGrath noted that antibiotics do not treat influenza, as it is caused by a virus. Children should return to school only when symptoms are improving, and they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.

The flu is most contagious during the first three days of illness.

While illness may first show up as a number on an attendance report, its effects are felt most clearly in the classroom.

Maycie Rector, a middle school teacher at Clarion-Goldfield-Dows, said days with higher absences require flexibility and quick decision-making.

"When a large number of students are out sick, lesson planning becomes a careful balancing act between the standards that need to be taught, grade-level content, and maintaining rigor so all students can be successful," Rector said.

Each morning begins with a check of attendance. "When I arrive at school, I log into [my computer] to see how many students have been reported absent by 8:00 a.m.," she said. "That gives me about 20 minutes, before the day starts, to decide whether I need to pivot my lesson plans."

During January, Rector said flexibility is the norm.

"There was a lot of pivoting and moving lessons around, slowing pacing, and avoiding starting new content," she said. "Instead, I used those days to review previously taught standards, break lessons into smaller chunks, or plan independent, stand-alone activities."

Experience helps, she added. "After six years of teaching, I have a variety of saved activities that align with different novels, standards, and content that I can use. But in those first years of teaching, it is hard to navigate."

When students return after illness, challenges move beyond missed assignments.

"Students returning after an illness could poten-

tially face knowledge gaps, reduced fluency and writing stamina, lower confidence, disrupted routines, and increased anxiety," Rector said.

To ease that transition, she prioritizes communication and flexibility. "When students return, I check in with them, give them their missing work, and a note explaining how much time they have to complete it."

Her classroom follows a clear guideline: "Students get one week from their return date plus the number of days they were absent to complete missed work." For longer absences, Rector said she prioritizes assignments tied directly to standards.

Built-in supports also help students regain their footing. Study hall time allows students to meet with teachers, and many take initiative. "Students do a nice job of advocating for themselves," Rector said.

"They'll ask if they can work during lunch, recess, or WIN (What I Need), or stop by before or after school."

Beyond academics, social reconnection plays an important role in recovery as well.

"When students return, they want to reconnect with their friends and classmates," Rector said. "They need those connections, and I don't want them missing lunch or recess every day just to get caught up."

Health officials also stress seeking medical care if symptoms worsen, particularly for high fevers, difficulty breathing, dehydration, or symptoms that improve and then return. Young children, infants, and older adults require particular caution.

While seasonal illness is nothing new, McGrath said its effects can feel more pronounced in small communities where schools, families, and workplaces are closely connected.

"Respiratory viruses are part of winter in Iowa," she said, "but prevention, vaccination, good hygiene, and staying home when sick can make a real difference in protecting our neighbors."

## Courthouse news

### Financial Liability

Lidiel Garcia Espinosa, of Council Bluffs, Speeding 55 or Under Zone (6 thru 10 over).

Deibis D. Franco Morales, of Kansas City, KS, Violation of Oversized Vehicle Requirements.

Kevin Glen Vieth, of Williams, Open Container – Driver 21 Years Old and Older.

Enrique Sierra Mercado, of Duncombe, Fail to Obey Stop Sign and Yield Right of Way.

Filemon Flores, of Hampton, Speeding 55 or Under Zone (6 thru 10 over).

Jordan Porter Julius Cook, of Belmond, Failure to Provide Proof of Financial Liability.

Juan Francisco Ajquijay Xicay, of Eagle Grove, No Valid Driver's License.

Javier Martinez Gonzalez, of Eagle Grove, Speeding 55 or Under Zone (6 thru 10 over).

Braydon Alan Carr, of Eagle Grove, Speeding 55 or Under Zone (11 thru 15 over).

Hunter Michael Venz, of Kanawha, Trespass – 1st Offense.

Jennifer L. Traub, of Clarion, Speeding 55 or Under Zone (11 thru 15 over).

Ashley Marie Cates, of Council Bluffs, Speeding Over 55 Zone (6 thru 10 over).

Kailei Shannon Valdiva, of Clarion, Failure to Have Valid License or Permit While Operating.

Alicia Morales, of Fort Dodge, Failure to Have Valid License or Permit While Operating.

Omar Adolfo Vasquez Alvarez, of Clarion, Dark Windows.

Jefferson Aleja Carranza Flores, of Dakota City, Excessive Speed (6 thru 10 over).

CRIMINAL

Victoria Suzanne Homeyer, of Clarion, motion for continuance; sentencing hearing

continued to Feb. 27, 2026, at 11 a.m.

Cory Wayne Bryan, of Eagle Grove, driving while barred; attorney waived preliminary hearing.

Wilson Amadeo Garcia Gonzales, of Belmond, driving while barred; preliminary hearing Feb. 5, 2026, at 1:30 p.m.

Christopher Michael Gates, of Eagle Grove, driving while barred; preliminary hearing Feb. 12, 2026, at 1:30 p.m.

Spencer Alan Stevenson, of Goldfield, willful injury causing serious injury; pretrial conference March 6, 2026, at 9 a.m.; jury trial March 19, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.

Orlando Melendez Macias, of Clarion, violation of no-contact/protective order (contempt); non-jury trial March 19, 2026, at 2 p.m.

Laura Lara Gonzalez, of Eagle Grove, violation of compulsory attendance requirements.

Roger Dale Simpson Jr., of Belmond, possession of a controlled substance, second offense; time served.

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### NOTICE NOTICE

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

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## Words of Wisdom

Last week's trivia questions:  
The 2026 Winter Olympics opening ceremony is Feb. 6 in Italy. What are the five colors of the "Olympic Rings" logo? Answer: Blue, yellow, black, green, and red.



What year was the first Olympics that were televised? Answer: The 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin, Germany, but only within the country. The first Olympic games televised in the United States were the 1960 Winter Olympics in Squaw Valley, California.

What man holds the record for most Olympic gold medals? American swimmer Michael Phelps has won 23 gold medals.

What two women are tied for the most Olympic gold medals? American swimmer Katie Ledecky and Russian gymnast Larisa Latynina have both won nine gold medals.

\*\*\*\*\*

This week's trivia questions:

What two pro football teams are tied for the most Super Bowl wins?

What two pro football teams are tied for the most Super Bowl losses?

\*\*\*\*\*

February is American Heart Month, Cancer Prevention Month, Cat Health Month, Financial Aid Awareness Month, Hot Breakfast Month, International Friendship Month, National Embroidery Month, National Weddings Month, National Cherry Month, Great American Pies Month, National Canned Food Month, National Grapefruit Month, and National Snack Food Month.

\*\*\*\*\*

Feb. 4 is Farmer's Day, Homemade Soup Day, World Cancer Day, and Sweater Day; Feb. 5 is National Weatherperson's Day; Feb. 6 is Bubble Gum Day, and National Wear Red Day; Feb. 7 is Rose Day, and Ballet Day; Feb. 8 National Iowa Day, Super Bowl Sunday, and National Kite-Flying Day; Feb. 9 is Chocolate Day, and National Pizza Day; Feb. 10 is International Cribbage Day.

\*\*\*\*\*

This week is Boy Scout Anniversary Week, Burn Awareness Week, and National School Counseling Week.

\*\*\*\*\*

Funny quotes from Super Bowl players:

"I've been to the Super Bowl four times, and I still can't figure out which camera is the one I'm supposed to look at." — Quarterback Peyton Manning

"We're going to Disney World... unless my wife says we're going home to do laundry." — New York Giants quarterback Phil Simms after winning Super Bowl XXI

"I want to thank God... and also my linemen for actually blocking somebody this year." — New York Jets quarterback Joe Namath

"If it's the ultimate, how come they're playing it again next year?" — Dallas Cowboys running back Duane Thomas, when asked if playing in the Super Bowl was the ultimate experience.

\*\*\*\*\*

This year's Super Bowl on Sunday, Feb. 8 matches the Seattle Seahawks against the New England Patriots. These two teams also met in the 2015 Super Bowl, with the Patriots defeating the Seahawks 28-24.

\*\*\*\*\*

The lowest-scoring Super Bowl was played in 2019, when the New England Patriots defeated the Los Angeles Rams 13-3 for a total of 16 points. The highest-scoring Super Bowl was played in 1995, when the San Francisco 49'ers defeated the San Diego Chargers 49-26, for a combined total of 75 points.

\*\*\*\*\*

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## Monitor Memories

FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE WRIGHT COUNTY MONITOR

1984 - 1949

42 Years Ago  
February 9, 1984

Damage to the Hannes Schilling workshop behind his house in north Clarion was limited because of the quick action of the Clarion Fire Department. The workshop was filled with tools and other items that could have caused major problems if they had become involved in the blaze. Smoke damage can be seen above the fireman's head on the top of the doorframe.

Robert Beckett, a fifth grader in the Clarion schools has won the local Geography Bee competition. The local competition is part of a nationwide contest sponsored by National Geographic "World" in the Society's magazine for children. The top three finalists at the national level will win \$25,000, \$15,000 and \$10,000 scholarships respectively: Beckett was awarded the local winners certificate plus a few small gifts such as an inflatable globe, books, maps, etc.

The second Clarion-Goldfield girl's basketball matchup with Algona went better than their first meeting, with the Cowgirls winning the game on their home court 40-34. "It was a defensive game," said Coach Elaine Hinton. "We had to hold the ball to bring them out and that's the way they have always played."

Wright county has contributed more than four times the amount of money collected in previous drives against polio in the 1949 campaign, according to Robert B Kay, Clarion, chairman of the campaign in the county. When all funds are in the sum is expected to amount to nearly \$5,000 according to Kay. The previous contribution was \$1087.

77 Years ago  
February 10, 1949

Two members of the Clarion city council resigned at the regular meeting Monday night, swapped jobs, and were reappointed council members, all in the space of a couple of minutes. Orville Cambler, formerly ward four council representative recently moved from that ward to ward one. Cambler was appointed as councilman-at-large and Leo Littlefield became ward four councilman.

To augment funds necessary to issue the 1949 edition of the Clarion high school senior class' "The Lasso," members of the yearbook staff and Larry Day, manager of the Clarion theater, have combined to bring to the theater the musical film "Carnegie Hall" the evening of March 2. Only one performance will be given. "Carnegie Hall" will be a treat not only to music-lovers but to picture fans in general, as it is one of the biggest hits to be produced in recent years.

Wright county has contributed more than four times the amount of money collected in previous drives against polio in the 1949 campaign, according to Robert B Kay, Clarion, chairman of the campaign in the county. When all funds are in the sum is expected to amount to nearly \$5,000 according to Kay. The previous contribution was \$1087.

## Men's Bible Study Meets at Kanawha's City Hall

Rodger Tveiten

Every Saturday morning at 9:00, eight to ten men gather at the Kanawha City Hall for a non-denominational Bible study. Study leaders are Herb Schreur and Casey Simmons. Sessions are limited to 60 minutes. The coffee and the cookies are free and students need to bring their own Bibles. The Bible study was founded ten years ago. Sessions are not held in the summer. New students are welcome.

## Wright County Economic Development Director Awarded State Scholarship for Advanced Training

Wright County Economic Development (WCED) is pleased to announce that Director Aaron J. Budweg has been awarded a professional development scholarship from the Professional Developers of Iowa (PDI). The \$500 award will support his attendance at the 2026 Heartland Economic Development Course, the premier regional training program for economic development professionals.

The scholarship, which is awarded to a select group of applicants across the state based on professional merit and commitment to community growth, reflects WCED's ongoing efforts to bring best-in-class strategies back to Wright County. The Heartland course, held in mid-April, is an intensive "bootcamp" that focuses on critical pillars of local success, including business retention and expansion, workforce talent development, site selection, and economic development finance.

"Staying competitive in today's market requires specialized training and regional connections," said Budweg. "This scholarship is an opportunity to strengthen our county's capacity while being fiscally responsible with our local resources. By pursuing external funding for this training, we are ensuring that Wright County remains at the table with regional partners and site selectors without adding a burden to the county budget."

The award comes at a time of significant momentum for the region. Following the recent announcement that the Wright County Charitable Foundation (WCCF) Endowment Fund has surpassed the \$1,000,000 milestone, this investment in professional leadership further signals a new chapter of growth for the area.

"Our goal is to ensure every community in Wright County—from our larger cities to our smaller rural towns—has access to the most effective economic tools available," Budweg added. "The strategies learned through the Professional Developers of Iowa will be directly applied to our 2026 initiatives in housing, grant readiness, and business support."

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## Obituaries

### Daryl Zwiefel 1938 - 2026



Daryl Zwiefel, 87, of Clarion, passed away on Tuesday, January 27, 2026.

Funeral service was held at 10:00 AM on Monday, February 2, 2026 at Clarion United Church of Christ Congregational.

Burial took place in the Evergreen Cemetery in Clarion.

Visitation was held from 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM on Sunday, February 1, 2026 at Ewing Funeral Home in Clarion.

Daryl Fred Zwiefel, son of Fred John and Lillian Thelma Zwiefel was born on June 19, 1938 in LuVerne, Iowa. He started school at Vernon Consolidated School. In 1952 his family moved to Goldfield, Iowa. Then in 1956 another move came to a farm in Dows, where he then attended Dows High School and graduated in 1957.

His interest in farming came about when he started to work for the Burt Brothers after graduation.

In addition to farming, he worked for Kelly's Standard Station and Adams Farm Equipment. On September 20, 1959 Daryl married Phyllis Ethel Marshall in Clarion, at the First Congregational Church. From this time on, he began farming and raising livestock. A family was started in 1960 with Laura, then followed by Linda in 1962, and Mark in 1967.

Daryl spent winters working at Wright County Implement and Cargill. Throughout his lifetime he was a member of the First Congregational Church, and served on many boards within the church. He was a 4-H leader, on the Wright County Fair Board, a member of the Beef and Pork Producers, Lincoln Township Trustee, and loved being a member of the North Central Antique Tractor Club.

Crop farming and rais-

ing livestock was his joy in life along with driving tractors and working farm ground. He loved spending time with his children and grandchildren by attending sporting events, teaching them how to drive tractors and sharing his passion for parades with them. In his later years, you could find him with his coffee buddies in the mornings talking about the latest town news and in the evenings sharing cookies with his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

He is survived by his wife Phyllis, daughter, Linda (Tom) Garner of Trimble, MO., son Mark of Clarion, IA., five grandchildren: Kyle (Allison) Garner, Denise Garner, David Garner, Brandon (Sarah) Zwiefel, and Megan (Brady) Brott. Five great grandchildren: Ainsley and Lincoln Garner, Tucker Zwiefel, and Knox Brott. One sister, Vicki (Philip) Montag of Dows. One sister-in-law, Inez Hanig and brother-in-law, Carl Hollebrands, and many nieces and nephews.

He is preceded in death by his parents, his daughter Laura, sister Darlene Triggs, and numerous in-laws, nieces and nephews.

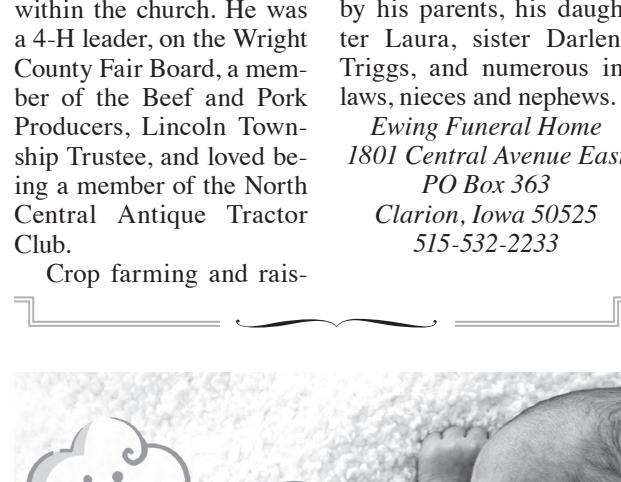
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Clarion, Iowa 50525

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## Birth ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Baby Girl

Rhiana and Graham Schope would like to announce the birth of their daughter Emelia Ann. She was born Friday, January 23, 2026 at the Iowa Specialty Hospital in Clarion, IA. Proud

Grandparents are: Elaine and Wayne Schope and Kim Hanus of Eagle Grove, IA.

### Baby Girl

Marcy Aiton Rabanaks and Jose Humberto Xalamius Zopiyac of Clarion, IA would like to announce the birth of their daughter Nathaly Yoana. She was born Monday, January 26, 2026 at the Iowa Specialty Hospital in Clarion, IA. She weighed 6 pounds 9.8 ounces. She joins her sibling: Elizabeth (3).

## Grant Opportunity: Support for Your Summer Youth Internship Program

This is a significant grant opportunity recently announced by Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) that could provide substantial funding for your organization's youth outreach and workforce development efforts.

The Summer Youth Internship Program grant is now open for applications. This program is designed to help Iowa employers, nonprofits, and community organizations create meaningful summer work experiences for young Iowans, particularly in high-demand industries.

How This Grant Can Benefit Your Organization

If your business or agency is looking to build a future talent pipeline, this grant provides the financial support necessary to jumpstart or expand an internship program. Awarded funds are flexible and can be used to cover:

- Participant Wages and post-program compensation.

- Training Resources and materials.

- Program Supplies and administrative costs.

- Eligibility and Priorities

Priority for funding will be given to programs that focus on youth who face barriers to the labor market or are from low-income households. Additionally, programs should align with high-demand occupations as defined by the state of Iowa.

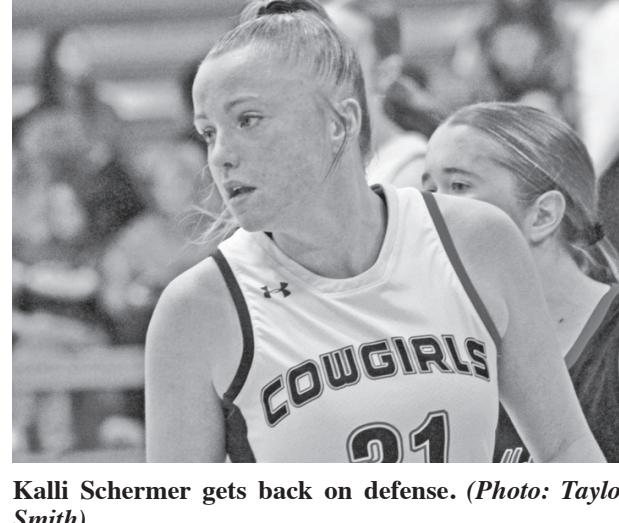


## SPORTS

### Egland Leads CGD vs. Bulldogs



Audrey Egland had a team-high 11 points vs. Hampton-Dumont-CAL. (Photo: Taylor Smith)



Kalli Schermer gets back on defense. (Photo: Taylor Smith)

Taylor Smith,  
Sports Editor

The Cowgirl basketball team played three North Central Conference games last week.

Against Clear Lake (12-3 overall, 9-1 conference) on Tuesday night in Cerro Gordo County, Clarion-Goldfield-Dows would lose, 88-3.

Brianna Reyes had two points and two rebounds. Haddi Lantzky grabbed three rebounds, and Ruby Poac hit a free throw.

On Thursday night, at home in Clarion and hosting

Hampton-Dumont-CAL (6-11, 4-6), the Cowgirls were defeated, 54-13.

Forward Audrey Egland banked in a teardrop to put CGD on the board in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. The hot-shooting Bulldogs used the three-point line and a helpful backboard to jump to a 31-4 lead in the 1<sup>st</sup> half.

CGD's only other 1<sup>st</sup> half basket came on an Egland baby hook.

In the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Egland hit a three and showed off her speed on a fast break layup. She finished the night with a team-high 11 points.



Daphne Tijull Villatoro fights for a loose ball. (Photo: Taylor Smith)

Junior Kalli Schermer scored two in the loss.

A night later, the Iowa Falls-Alden Cadets (9-8, 6-5) bested the Cowgirls,

60-7.

Full statistics were not made available at the time of publication.



Taylor Johnson shoots a free throw. (Photo: Taylor Smith)

### Lane Torches Conference Foes on Back-to-Back Nights



Chaz Lane is averaging 18.1 PPG, 8.4 RPG, and 1.8 BPG in his junior campaign. (Photo: Taylor Smith)



Paxton Lingenfelter has proven to be a fierce defender in his first year of varsity basketball. (Photo: Taylor Smith)

Taylor Smith,  
Sports Editor

After a pair of North Central Conference hoops victories last week, the Clarion-Goldfield-Dows Cowboys sit at 11-5 overall and 6-5 in conference play.

It all began with a difficult Tuesday evening road loss to (3A) #9 Clear Lake (11-1 overall, 8-0 conference).

Chaz Lane had 13 points and seven rebounds in the contest against last year's 3A state runner-up squad.

The Cowboys would lose, 69-27, to the conference front runners.

Fortunately, the boys would regroup to overcome Hampton-Dumont-CAL (5-10, 3-6) a few days later.

Coach Berning's Cowboys knocked off the visiting Bulldogs, 63-51.

Everything seemed to be

clicking for the team in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. Tristan Kakacek sank a corner three, and a steal from JD Morrical led to a fastbreak layup on the other end.

Chaz Lane was

automatic against HDC, and he even cashed in on a rare three-pointer. The 6'4" forward had 14 of CGD's 24 1<sup>st</sup> quarter points.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, Kakacek continued to

provide valuable offense for CGD. Tristan finished the night with 10 points, five steals, and three dimes.

The Cowboys led 37-23 at the half, but the energized Bulldogs would

find a way to cut that lead to single digits midway through the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The comeback attempt was short-lived, however, and a late floater from Lane proved to be the dagger. He would later seal the deal for CGD at the charity stripe.

Lane had a season-high 33 points on 62% shooting and also chipped in 10 boards and two blocks.

Morrical finished with 11 points, six assists, six steals, and five rebounds.

The team would make it two in a row and close out their week with a blowout road win in Iowa Falls on Friday.



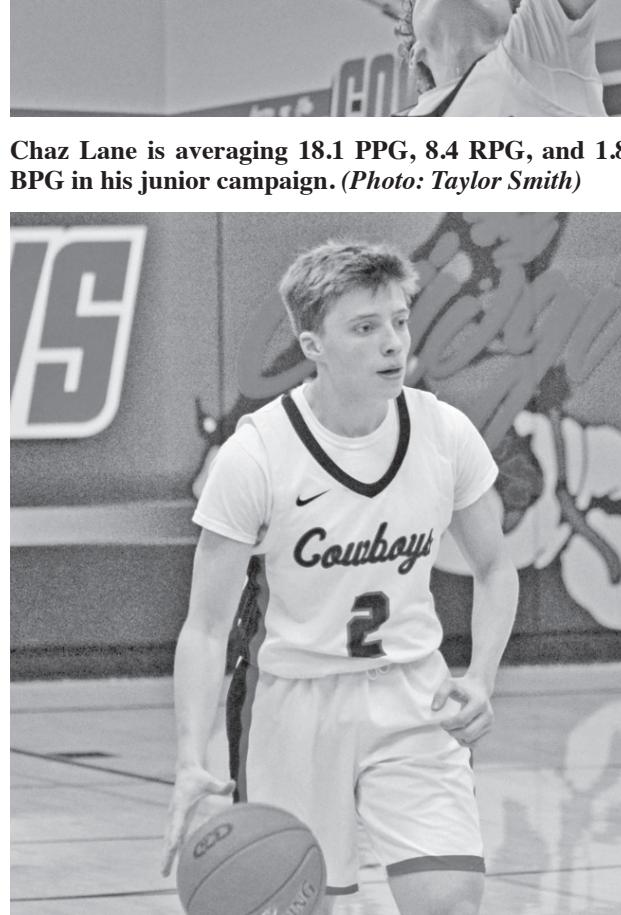
Jacob Ruba had 13 points and five steals in CGD's 70-42 win over Iowa Falls-Alden. (Photo: Taylor Smith)

The Cadets (2-14, 1-9) led by six after a quarter. However, they would fall to CGD, 70-42.

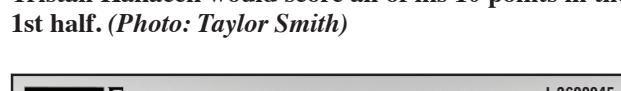
Lane shot 11-for-18 from the field and had another masterful performance with 26 points, 11 rebounds, and two steals.

Jacob Ruba scored 13 and snagged five steals, and Huxley Lingenfelter dropped in 12 in the win.

Thursday night, the Cowboys will face West Fork (6-9 overall) in a non-conference away game.



Against Hampton-Dumont-CAL, team co-captain Tristan Kakacek would score all of his 10 points in the 1<sup>st</sup> half. (Photo: Taylor Smith)



L-2600045

### LAND AUCTION

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### Property tax bills continued from page 2

— a measure that advocates for these elected officials said could create conflicts in county governments. Warren County Recorder Jordyn Hill told lawmakers the measure "eliminates the voters' voice and choice in selecting their local government representatives."

"It erodes the separation of power and, we think, checks and balances within county government," Hill said. "The Board of Supervisors already have control over our budget, it removes voters' response of real-time, hands-on leadership, directly impacting service levels and responsiveness."

In contrast, the House bill has language upping the requirements to approve bonds payable through property taxes — stating a 60% vote of approval at

the ballot box is necessary. Chelsea Hoye with the Iowa League of Cities said the local government organization was concerned about this provision, saying if enacted, it would "fundamentally change how cities finance essential projects like roads, water, sewer systems, public safety equipment and disaster recovery."

"In practice, this would increase costs, slow projects and make it harder to respond to urgent infrastructure needs or compete for economic development opportunities where timing matters," Hoye said.

"Cities will often include clearly identified projects in a single bond issue as a cost-saving measure, so voters and residents can see the full scope of planned investments while avoiding

the added expense of issuing multiple separate bonds. Turning those routine decisions into repeated special elections would be costly and inefficient, and risky for public safety and economic growth."

Advocates from several groups praised the House bill for including language adding more requirements on information sent to property taxpayers explaining how these funds are used by their local governments.

Both of the House bills move next to the full Ways and Means Committee.

Senate Republicans also have introduced a property tax proposal that differs significantly from the House and governor's bills, which includes changes to Iowa's "rollback" system for calculating property taxes and

would eliminate property taxes entirely for older Iowa homeowners.

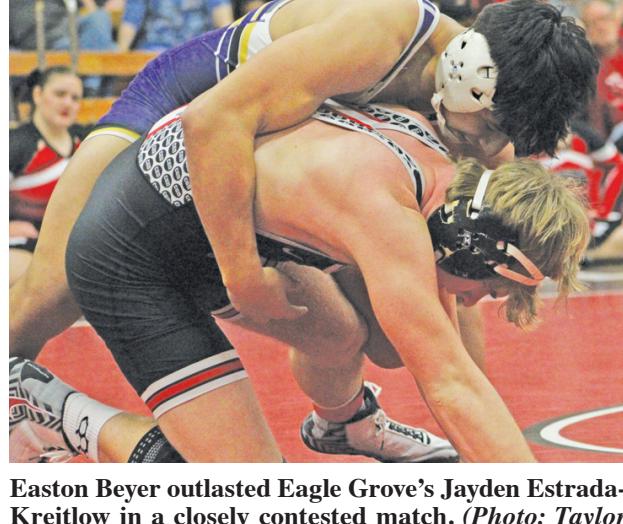
Rep. Carter Nordman, R-Adel, said discussions are still ongoing on all three of these proposals, and said leaders would "continue to work with everybody, all stakeholders, on these issues."

"I think it's important that all three of these plans are out," Nordman said. "We're talking about them. We're going to eventually find a place where we are doing something good for the taxpayer."

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**SPORTS**

## #2 Cowboys Triumph in Home Triangular



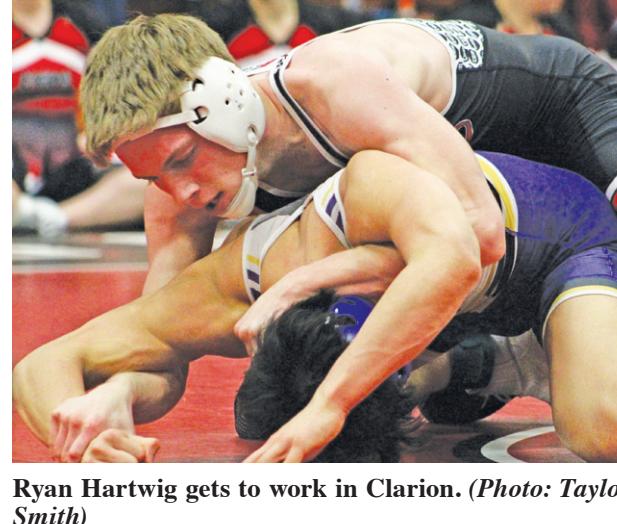
Easton Beyer outlasted Eagle Grove's Jayden Estrada-Kreitlow in a closely contested match. (Photo: Taylor Smith)

*Taylor Smith,  
Sports Editor*

Last week, the (2A) #2 Clarion-Goldfield-Dows Cowboys wrestling team hosted Forest City and Eagle Grove in an area triangular, and two upperclassmen wrestlers earned their 100<sup>th</sup> career win.

After Eagle Grove defeated Forest City in the first dual (40-33), the Cowboys swiftly dropped the Indians, 64-18.

Linden Phetxoumphone (138-pounds) and Ryan



Ryan Hartwig gets to work in Clarion. (Photo: Taylor Smith)

Hartwig (144) both won via technical fall against their Forest City counterparts.

Cole Wibholm (106), Paxton Redenius (120), Adrian Phetxoumphone (132), Dawson Beyer (150), and Easton Beyer (175) all won by fall.

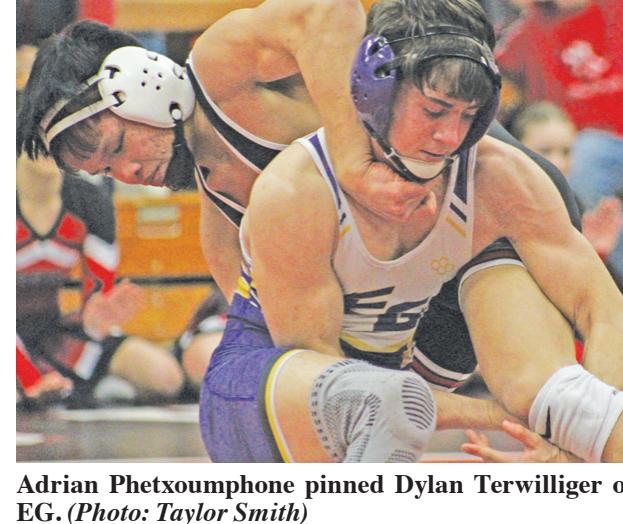
After his pin over Izaiah Duncan, the home crowd and cheerleaders helped Easton celebrate his 100<sup>th</sup> career wrestling win on the mat.

Then, after a short break, the Cowboys battled Eagle

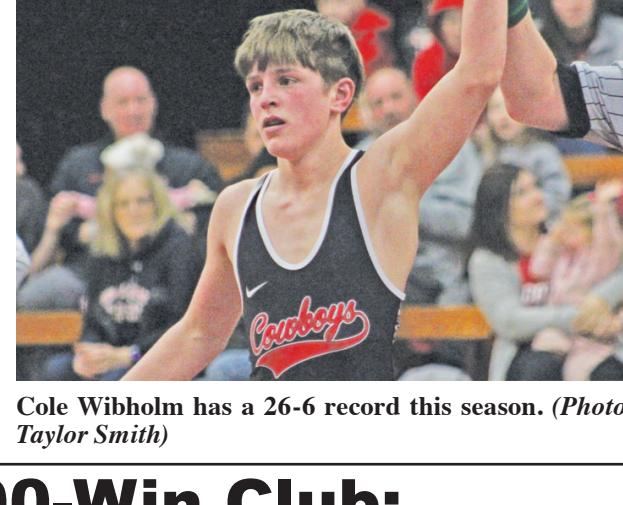
Grove for Wright County bragging rights in the final dual of the evening.

The powerful Cowboy lineup scored 34 unanswered points. They dominated from start to finish and won handily, 61-15.

Estuardo Lopez (113) and Redenius both won via technical fall. Adrian Phetxoumphone and Hartwig both won by fall. With that pin, two-time state qualifier Ryan Hartwig notched his 100<sup>th</sup> career win.



Adrian Phetxoumphone pinned Dylan Terwilliger of EG. (Photo: Taylor Smith)



Cole Wibholm has a 26-6 record this season. (Photo: Taylor Smith)

## 100-Win Club:

### Cowboy Questionnaire

**JT KELSO | JUNIOR | 285**

*Who initially talked you into going out for wrestling?*

My dad convinced me to try wrestling.

*Who's your wrestling role model?*

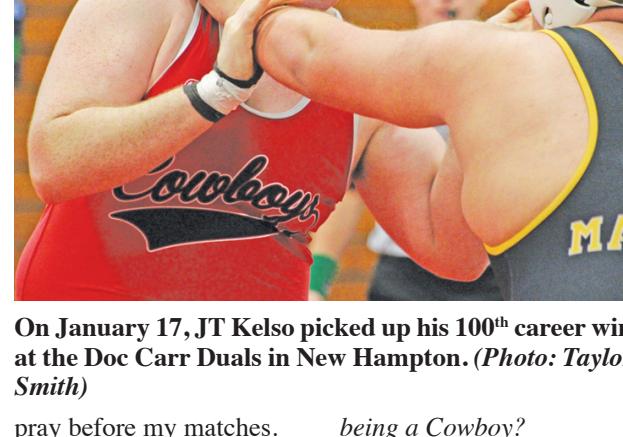
My dad. He taught me discipline and hard work.

*Other than your 100<sup>th</sup> win, what was the most memorable win of your career?*

One of my most memorable wins was at Fargo my sophomore year. I beat the #1-ranked heavyweight in the Class of 2027, 8-0.

*What are your pre-match rituals?*

I like to pace a lot and



On January 17, JT Kelso picked up his 100<sup>th</sup> career win at the Doc Carr Duals in New Hampton. (Photo: Taylor Smith)

pray before my matches.

*Who's your favorite teacher?*

Mrs. Warneke.

*What's the best part about*

*being a Cowboy?*

I like being a Cowboy because everyone here is super supportive and caring.

**RYAN HARTWIG | SENIOR | 138**

*Who initially talked you into going out for wrestling?*

Nathan Ysker introduced me to wrestling.

*Who's your wrestling role model?*

Slade Sifuentes.

*Other than your 100<sup>th</sup> win, what was the most memorable win of your career?*

Winning districts my freshman year.

*What are your pre-match rituals?*

I always give Slade a high five and put my ankle band on.

*Who's your favorite teacher?*

Mrs. Staples.

*What's the best part about*

## 100-Win Club:

### Cowboy Questionnaire



Two-time state qualifier Ryan Hartwig's 100<sup>th</sup> career win came on a fall vs. Eagle Grove. (Photo: Taylor Smith)

*being a Cowboy?* all of the meets and cheer everyone on.

## Girls Wrestlers Wrap Up Season

*Taylor Smith,  
Sports Editor*

A week ago, the Eagle Grove/Clarion-Goldfield-Dows girls wrestling program had two tournaments to close out their season.

On Tuesday at the East Sac County Tournament in Sac City, junior Catherine Orozco came away with a 4th place finish after going 2-2 at 100-pounds.

Sensational sophomore Marlee Thompson had an incredible three pins on the day and earned a championship at 110-pounds for the Eagles.

Baylee Steig (135) won by fall over Okoboji's Addilyn Benz for 5th place, and Elideth Santiago took 5th at 120 with two pins.

Kuemper Catholic (169), Sioux Central (154.5), and



Marlee Thompson finished her sophomore campaign with a record of 38-12. (Photo: John Jensen)



Junior Keylyee Collins finishes her season with a record of 16-31. (Photo: John Jensen)

wrestleback and won by fall over Humboldt's Gracie May in the 3<sup>rd</sup> place match.

Thompson's Janesville opponent placed 2<sup>nd</sup> after losing by fall to Emma

Schmit of Charles City.

Only the top two finishers in each weight class would earn a trip to state.

As a team, EG/CGD placed 15<sup>th</sup> overall with 42

points. Humboldt won with

a score of 184, followed by Sumner-Fredericksburg (143) and Denver (134).

Orozco went 1-2 on the day at 100-pounds and finished her year with a 26-

24 record.

Santiago (120) and Keylyee Collins (125) both went 2-2 for EG/CGD.

Santiago had two pins, and Collins had a fall and a major decision.

## Yoder Earns COTY Nod

*Taylor Smith,  
Sports Editor*

Clarion-Goldfield-Dows wrestling coach Cory Yoder recently caught up with The Wright County Monitor after being named Coach of the Year for the 2A Central District in his first year steering the ship for Cowboy wrestling.

"Winning the Coach of the Year Award for the IWCOA Central District means a lot to me," he admitted when asked about his range of emotions after receiving the coveted designation. "My dad won this award back in 1991 and then went on to win the Coach of the Year Award for the entire state of Iowa in Class 1A. I would love to put another plaque right beside his."

Cory's father, the late John Yoder Jr., was the 1A Coach of the Year for



Coach Yoder addresses his team at a dual in Clarion. (Photo: Taylor Smith)

an honor to be the head wrestling coach at CGD

and this community loves their wrestling!"



**Clarion-Goldfield-Dows  
School District**

**Middle School/High  
School Sports  
Calendar**

**Thursday, February 5**  
Esports vs. Osage, 4:00 p.m.  
7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys Basketball @ HDC, 4:15 p.m.  
JV/Varsity Boys Basketball @ West Fork, 6:00 p.m.

**Friday, February 6**  
JV/Varsity Boys & Girls Basketball vs.  
WC @ CGDHS, 4:30 p.m.

**Saturday, February 7**  
Boys State Wrestling Duals @ Xtream Arena,  
9:00 a.m.

**Monday, February 9**  
7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Boys Basketball vs. Clear Lake  
@ CGDMS, 4:15 p.m.

**Tuesday, February 10**  
JV/Varsity Boys & Girls Basketball @ HDC,  
4:30 p.m.

## Bobtail – Ten Years Old and Counting!

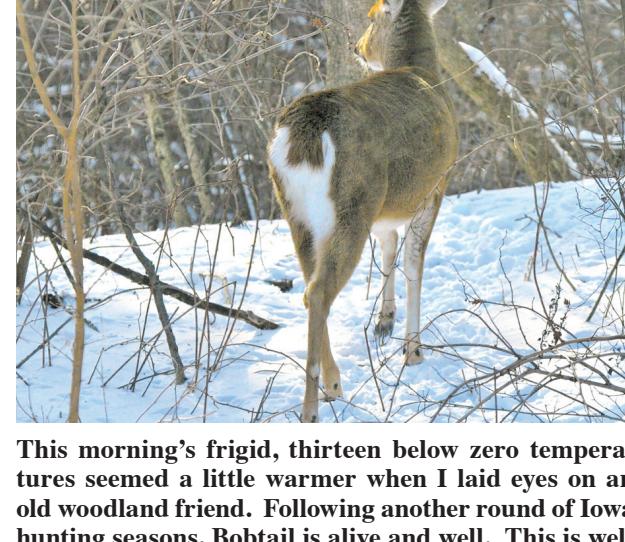
Lowell Washburn,  
Washburn's Outdoor Journal

This morning's frigid double digit, below zero temperatures seemed a little warmer when I laid eyes on an old woodland friend. Following another round of Iowa hunting seasons, the ten-year-old white-tailed doe I call Bobtail is alive and well. This is welcome news for everyone who has been following her remarkable story.

I call the deer Bobtail because, at some point in life, her tail was literally chopped in half. Although we'll never know the actual cause, an early encounter with a fawn-hunting coyote is a possible scenario. What is certain is that the short, squared off portion of the tail that remains makes Bobtail unmistakably easy to identify. Bobtail also has a distinctive white spot on her muzzle meaning that I can know it's her, even when she's coming down the trail head on. (Photos: Lowell Washburn)



In addition to her chopped off tail, Bobtail also has a distinctive white spot on her muzzle meaning that I can know it's her, even when she's coming down the trail head on. (Photos: Lowell Washburn)



This morning's frigid, thirteen below zero temperatures seemed a little warmer when I laid eyes on an old woodland friend. Following another round of Iowa hunting seasons, Bobtail is alive and well. This is welcome news for everyone who has been following her remarkable story.

of twins every year since 2017, and may have raised additional fawns before we first crossed trails.

Deer hunting is one of my favorite fall and winter pastimes. Our family thrives on eating venison, and I am not opposed to

harvesting does – I do it all the time – or at least I attempt to. But having said that, I'll also admit that I never draw my bow on an antlerless deer until I'm absolutely positive that the animal is not Bobtail. I realize, of course, that this decision is based purely on emotion rather than any fact or science. Let's just say that I wouldn't feel right about shooting a deer that I've been able to study and photograph for so many years.

## Dows Legion

## BINGO NIGHT

Friday, February 6 • 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

### North Iowa Real Estate, LLC

We are the key to your new home!

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218 1st St. S.W., Ste. B,  
Clarion, Iowa 50525  
Information@NorthIRE.com

Rod Brooks, Broker/Owner  
515-851-0918

Bob Powers, Owner/Salesperson  
515-851-0938

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• Farm Management  
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## Dows Business & Professional Directory

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Shannon Muhlenbruch,  
Agent  
**515-852-4156**

**Office:**  
**(563) 864-3333**  
**Cell:**  
**(563) 605-1078**



## YOUR JOURNEY STARTS HERE

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Cerro Gordo Public Health supports healthy communities through prevention, promotion and protection. They offer the following services:

- Testing for HIV
- Testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis
- Testing for hepatitis B and C (for those who qualify)
- Vaccines for adults, including hepatitis A and B and mpox
- Referrals for HIV prevention medication (PrEP)
- Substance use screening and referral
- Free condoms and safer sex supplies
- Free naloxone and supplies for reducing harms related to substance use



**PUBLIC**HEALTH  
healthier together

**STOP**  
**HIV**  
**IOWA**



Visit the Cerro Gordo Public Health website to learn more about testing services [and make your appointment now]:  
<https://cghealth.com/services/testing/>

## Casino Night Hosted by the CDA Brings Community Together

The Clarion Development Alliance (CDA) recently hosted a Casino Night, offering community members a fun and relaxed evening out. Guests enjoyed a variety of casino-style games, socializing, and a lighthearted atmosphere.

Those who attended had a good time and appreciated the opportunity to gather and try something different in the community. Volunteers helped the evening run smoothly, and their time and effort were greatly appreciated.

"We're thankful for everyone who came out to support the event," said Bailey Sebby, Executive Director of the CDA. "Casino Night was a fun way to connect with the community, and we look forward to continuing to host events



that bring people together."

The CDA looks forward to future events that encourage community involvement and local engagement in Clarion.

## Cottage Food Law Presentation Offered at Hancock County Extension Office

Individuals interested in starting or expanding a home-based food business are invited to attend a Cottage Food Law Presentation on Tuesday, March 26, at the Hancock County Extension Office. This educational event is hosted collaboratively by the Hancock, Wright, and Winnebago County ISU Extension and Outreach offices.

The event will provide participants with a clear understanding of Iowa's Cottage Food Law, including what foods can be produced at home, labeling requirements, food safety

considerations, and steps to legally sell products under the law.

To better meet individual needs, one-on-one business consultations will be available from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., allowing attendees to ask specific questions about their food products or business ideas.

Penny Brown Huber, Food Business Specialist, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach will then provide a whole-group presentation from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., offering a comprehensive overview of Cottage Food Law require-

ments and best practices for compliance and success.

This event is ideal for home bakers, food entrepreneurs, farmers market vendors, and anyone curious about selling homemade food products legally in Iowa.

For more information, or to register, contact either the Hancock, Wright, or Winnebago County Extension Offices:

- Hancock County: (641) 923-2856
- Wright County: (515) 532-3453
- Winnebago County: (641) 584-2261

## Iowa PBS presents the 2026 IGHSAU Girls Wrestling Championships

From regional battles to the big stage, Iowa girls are chasing championship dreams! Don't miss a moment - Iowa PBS will be there live as champions are crowned.

The statewide network's commitment to girls high school sports coverage continues as wrestlers from across the state compete in the 2026 IGHSAU Girls Wrestling Championships. Coverage will take place Friday, February 6 at Xtream Arena in Coralville. Each dual will be broadcast on statewide Iowa PBS and

livestreamed on iowapbs.org and YouTube.

On the call will be Kyle Klingman and University of Iowa wrestler Reese Larramendy. Live coverage will begin on Friday, February 6 at 6:30 p.m. \*Coverage and start time subject to change.

Stay tuned to Iowa PBS throughout the rest of the year for live coverage of state championships for girls basketball, softball and volleyball.

Programming support for the 2026 IGHSAU Girls State Wrestling Champion-

ships is provided by Fareway, Musco Lighting and Pella Rolscreen Foundation.

In addition to our state-wide broadcasts, Iowa PBS, WORLD and Create are available to livestream on iowapbs.org/live, pbs.org/livestream, and the PBS app. Iowa PBS KIDS is available to livestream on iowapbs.org/live or the PBS KIDS app. Iowa PBS programs are also available on most popular platforms.

See all the ways you can watch by visiting iowapbs.org/watch.

### Menu:

Monday, February 9, join the Dows Senior Citizens for a delicious meal at noon. The cost is \$10.00. Everyone is welcome. Carry-outs are available. Feb. 9 Menu:

### Schedule your appointment now!

- Ways to schedule:
- Make an appointment online at <https://cghealth.com/>
- Call (641) 421-9300
- Visit our office to make an appointment in person!
- All services are **completely confidential**.

**2570 4th St SW Ste 1**  
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