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WEST LIBERTY INDEX



McKenna McDonald with friend Lukas Jones

Egg hunters PAGE 19

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Thursday, April 21, 2022
Volume 155 Issue 16 - Stay informed for \$1 newsstand

Letters fuel 28E Agency feud

Volunteer fire fighters may walk-out

Tim Evans
Index Editor

Calling it a “quagmire,” West Liberty Fire Chief Kirt Sickels said members of the local fire department had no other alternative than to threaten the city of West Liberty that they may not have enough members to staff a fire department by the first of May if they don’t join a new 28E association.

In a letter to the city mayor Katie McCullough and city administrator Dave Haugland signed by 16 members of the fire department, the local department said what Sickels called a “very difficult decision” was made by the men and women volunteers “on the front lines” to save fire and rescue services in the community. “We had to draw a line in the sand,” he said.

Sickels said they warned the city on Tuesday, April 5, about the letter – including providing a copy of it – giving them 48 hours to respond. When there was no response, the department sent certified letters to the city, Mayor Katie McCullough, and council members, received on Monday, April 11 and promised to seek media attention concerning the issue.

It isn’t the first time the city has refused to be part of the new agency, Sickels said “All they had to do was give us an indication they were interested in being a part of it.”

The letter states: “In the event this is not resolved by May 1, 2022, other arrangements for Fire and Rescue service will need to be made.”

“It is important to remember that this situation will need to be reported to the regulatory authorities in accordance with state and federal law as it will affect the ISO rating for insurance coverage for all property owners that have been served by the West Liberty Fire Department. ISO ratings for the area will elevate creating a significant increase in homeowner’s insurance, business insurance, and insurance for the City of West

Liberty. This needs to be resolved immediately.”

“The bottom line is that this has been going on for two and a half years,” Sickels said. “It has not been healthy mentally for our volunteers.”

“We didn’t want to do this, but we had to do something because there was



West Liberty firemen use a ladder to get inside a burning stump late Tuesday afternoon, April 12, at a rental unit owned by Darren Brooks behind the Route 6 car wash on 7th Street. The abandoned stump somehow caught fire and was flaming when spotted by West Liberty Police Sergeant Kim Halpain, who helped evacuate four residents from the nearby home.

Index photo by Tim Evans

NOTHING being done,” he said, pointing out the Rural Fire District and the West Liberty Fire Department want to form an alliance with the City of West Liberty to form a new 28E Agency that would be governed by a board in which the department will answer to the representatives from the rural areas as well as the city.

“City can’t be trusted”
“Only through the establishment of

an area board for fire and rescue will this problem be resolved since the city cannot be trusted by the department or city residents to make rational decisions without letting the personal vendettas and demand for absolute authority enter into all decisions, which is how it is under the current system,” the letter stated.

The letter said the City of West Lib-

City responds with plan to keep services

Tim Evans
Index Editor

Working to keep fire and ambulance services in place after May 1, the city of West Liberty has responded to a letter sent to Mayor Katie McCullough and City Administrator David Haugland from members of the West Liberty Fire Department.

Responding as quickly as Thursday to the April 7 letter the city received on Monday, April 11 from members of the West Liberty and Rural Townships Fire & EMS Association, city officials are hoping complications can be worked out at a closed session meeting on Tuesday, April 19, in a closed session regarding the issue to be held at the West Liberty High School library previous to the city council’s regular public meeting to begin at 7:30 p.m. in the high school auditorium.

The meeting was proposed for a larger venue than the regular meeting room at the West Liberty Public Library by mayor McCullough following an array of outcry by local residents who may or may not speak out during the “public comments” portion of the meeting.

Haugland said he has not met with any fire officials from either the Rural Fire District or the West Liberty Fire Department regarding the matter of setting up a new 28E Agency since the exchange of letters although he did say he has reached out though an e-mail, with no response as of noon Monday. “We’ve offered to sit down and talk,” he said, hoping to find “work out a solution for all parties.”

“The letter contains substantive allegations that the city deems to be either wrong or wholly unfounded,” the response from the city read. “The dispute regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Rural Fire District and the City, which includes the West Liberty Fire Department in the suit, is currently pending in Iowa District Court.”

The city emphasized that, “The City is confident that there will be a successful outcome for the West Liberty and Rural Community.”

“We are not able to go into details regarding the Rural Fire District’s allegations due to the pending litigation; however, we can assure you that the City

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• **LETTER TO CITY, from page 1**

erty “has created an environment and enough obstacles to cause these volunteers to make the unanimous decision to stop volunteering under the current system. The department cannot keep enough volunteers or recruit more volunteers into the situation that exists today.”

Sickels said that the volunteers “love their community” and wouldn’t do the work they do if not for that reason, “forced” into a situation that called for desperate measures, noting many volunteers are up in age and could retire, including himself, having given years and years of volunteer service to the community.

Strictly volunteers

He said fire fighters in the community are not paid for any of their services and even he has refused to take a stipend he is entitled, pointing out he’d rather see the funds go toward recruiting new fire fighters, EMT’s or paramedics, honoring first responders for going “above and beyond” or even fulfilling equipment and supply needs. “To me, it’s money better spent in that way,” Sickels said.

“Instead of waiting for the department to be without volunteers within five years, the men and women of the department have made a reasoned – but difficult – decision. These men and women will not continue to volunteer in this environment. Since the city has made it clear over the last three years that it will not change course, these volunteers are forced to end their association with the city while continuing to make themselves available to save lives,” the letter states.

“The Volunteer Fire Department has done everything, withstanding all attacks to their brotherhood and sisterhood, to avoid the logical conclusion of this situation because they care about their neighbors and put their lives on the line as proof of that dedication to their neighbors. The logical conclusion to this situation has now arrived,” the letter continued.

Actively engaged in ‘war’

The letter said the city has “actively waged a war upon the department through dangerous bureaucratic moves that endanger the community, including deliberately stalling attempts to hire EMS personnel. In addition to making it more difficult for the volunteers to help the community when

seconds matter, multiple unfounded grievances have been filed against volunteer members of the department, with the intent to manipulate the process while attempting to cover their tracks.”

“These city officials have actively worked to avoid any transparency, hoping that residents will be left in the dark, wondering how this happened and who is to blame,” the letter continued.

“Unfortunately, for reasons unknown to the Department, the administration of the City of West Liberty has changed the way it views the department. The City is making arbitrary

demands of the Department, and personnel at the City have become territorial about micromanaging the department,” the letter said, Sickles adding that the whole dilemma started with allegations from interim city manager Elizabeth Hansen, who was put into place after the city struggled to find a replacement following the resignation of Lawrence McNaul, who took a county management position in central Florida. Hansen is president of Midwest Municipal Consulting LLC, of Ankeny.

“The department has repeatedly asked how it can continue to

volunteer in a way to make everyone happy while still providing this essential service to their friends and neighbors,” the letter stated. “However, the responses from the city manager, the city clerk and three members of the city council (Diane Beranek, Cara McFerren and Jose Zacarias) have made it clear that it wants to micromanage, control,



West Liberty Fire Chief Kirt Sickels puts a chainsaw to a fallen limb while fireman Larry Miller clear debris after the derecho wind storm hit the city nearly two years ago. Limbs were everywhere, including blocking a lot of streets, but thanks to local volunteer first responders and city workers, the city was quickly back in order.

Index photo by Tim Evans

and harass the department for reasons only they know,” the letter said.

“This is not about failing to provide an excellent service to the community as volunteers. This has become an ugly battle waged against the department for control over the operations and finances of the department. The department knows that the actions of the city are wrong,” the letter continued. “The department can see incorrect accountings, mixing of department funds with the city’s general account, incorrect classification of expenses and donations, and the city will not provide transparency with respect to financial reports.”

Operating fine since 1875

The letter started off by stating: “The West Liberty Volunteer Fire Department and has been operating since 1875 helping

the community when its residents needed them most – and earning the trust and respect of our community members.”

“The department continues to help admirably and is one of the most trusted and respected institutions we have. Although years have passed, the department’s record of serving bravely to help their neighbors in need has never changed,” the letter continued.

The chief said even though just 16 members of the department signed the letter to the city, the entire group voted unanimously to proceed with sending the letter, Sickels pointing out there were some fire fighters afraid of retaliation from the city.

Sickles said the Rural Fire District board, headed by Dick Brand, is behind the new 28E Agency and said mayor McCullough, as well as new council members Dana Rodriguez and Omar Martinez, have worked to try to resolve the issue but says there’s “a lot of friction” between “old and new council members and even city management.”

Sickels said he’s “absolutely appreciative” of all the efforts made thus far by supporters of the fire department and believes some of the council “has been misled and take what they’ve heard

as gospel.”

Sickels said members of his department wanted to be as “up front as possible” and said it’s important the public knows the situation as well, pointing out the department would go to the media without an agreement with the city.

A little history of the feud

The chief said the whole thing started with Hansen, noting, “When she showed up, it just blew it up.”

In January, in the first meeting of the new mayor and city council members, the city voted against the reappointment of Sickels as the fire chief, Zacarias, Beranek and McFerren all voting against the city appointment even through the fire department, in a previous meeting, had named Sickels as the chief.

The city has also dragged their feet on hiring personnel to fill ambulance department roles, including tabling hirings, before city clerk Lee Geertz admitted to a hiring error that also delayed filling ambulance personnel vacancies earlier this year.

The West Liberty Fire Department, represented by Sickels as well as Brand of the Rural Fire District and their volunteer attorney, William Tharp of West Liberty, all addressed a crowd of about 175 who came out to a public meeting on Sept. 21 at the Muscatine County Fairgrounds to learn about the problems between the city and the fire leaders.

At that time, the entities hoped to get a new 28E agreement in place that was initially signed in 2007 between the city, Rural Fire District and the West Liberty Fire Department.

But the two groups decided to pursue another avenue to reduce the control the city has over the West Liberty Department by working to form a new 28E agency, an idea that was enhanced by that meeting.

The Rural Fire District, which includes the cities of Atalissa and Nichols, also includes all or portions of the townships of Wapsi, Goshen and Lake in Muscatine County, Lincoln Township in Johnson County and Iowa and Springdale Townships in Cedar County.

• **CITY RESPONSE, from page 1**

remains committed to participation in formal mediation, where the parties sit down with a third-party neutral mediator in an attempt to reach a resolution to the dispute,” the response from the city continued.

“It is our sincerest hope that the Rural Fire District agrees to such participation, amicably resolving the pending dispute between all involved parties,” it said, emphasizing, “The City remains willing to mediate the matter over the next three weeks.”

“If an agreement cannot be reached and the Rural Fire District Association volunteer members follow through with their formal resignation, the City remains committed to providing emergency services within the City limits and rural community and is exploring options for alternate fire and EMS protection services, despite our wishes to agree upon a resolution with all involved parties,” the response continued.

“The City remains dedicated to the safety and security of ALL of our citizens,” it concluded.

Haugland said the city is working on a plan with mutual aid partners in the area to insure fire and ambulance services are available should negotiations in the next few weeks fail to create a compromise and said the city is working with Muscatine County Emergency Management manager Chris Jasper to insure those changes are in place.

The city may also look at hiring professional services to cover fire and ambulance calls. Haugland told members of the Rotary Club of West Liberty last week that it would cost the city hundreds of thousands of dollars annually to provide such services, calling it unaffordable for a city the size of West Liberty.

The city administrator told members of the organization he hoped the issue could get resolved because the whole issue gives the West Liberty community a black eye and goes against building a progressive city.

Community news briefs/events

Library fundraiser set

The Friends of the Library will host a book and bake sale on Saturday, April 23, to be held from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. to benefit the West Liberty Public Library and its programs.

The organization plans to have cookies, bars, pies and breads on sale for the event, coinciding a sale of fiction and nonfiction books, children's books, DVD's audio books and more, all being offered for free-will donations.

Anyone is welcome to attend.

Chamber event slated

The West Liberty Chamber of Commerce will host a special "Meet and Greet" event this Thursday, April 21, from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Chamber office in downtown West Liberty.

Residents and business owners will get an opportunity to meet the Chamber Board of Directors and the new Chief Operating Officer, Charles Brooke, who replaced Melissa Stagg, who decided to take a different career path.

The Chamber is looking for feedback and discussions on programs and will provide news for upcoming events in West Liberty.

Kelsey Meyers, the Muscatine County Fairgrounds Director, will be the special guest speaker, giving an update on the upcoming WMT Tractorcade to be held June 11-15 which is coming to the community. She will talk about opportunities for local businesses to take advantage of the 400-500 tractor families expected to participate from all over Iowa and the Midwest.

Everyone is encouraged to attend, Brooke pointing out there is a lot of information to give out that will impact Chamber members in a lot of ways.

In his new role, Brooke, who is a partner in various businesses in the community, says he's already communicated with other Chambers or organizations in other communities "to see where we can achieve success - whether it's together or feeding off each other to see what works well for each individual community."

He said his background in entertainment (Disney) should help impact businesses when events are held. "The Chamber, just like Disney, has memberships which are key to keeping people involved and focused on continuing greatness," he said.

"At Disney, I was in Leadership and my last role was with Resorts where

we would host 20,000 cheerleaders five times a year and I ran the overall operation," Brooke said. "You have to keep things operating no matter the weather, season, or hours of your business."

He said that role included everything from making sure restrooms were cleaned hourly to the overall impact it played on marketing.

Brooke said he's always looking for ideas on how to improve the Chamber for it's membership and entertains any ideas to make that a reality.

Spring play scheduled

The annual West Liberty High School Spring Play, titled "Leaving Iowa" by Spike Manton and Tim Clue will be presented May 12-14 at 7 p.m. in the high school auditorium.

Directed by Dorianne Rees, the cast of the play includes Vanessa Vargas as the sister, Terrance Salinas as the dad, Ben Haskell as Don Browning, Maddie Alke as the mom, and playing multiple characters will be Daniel Zeman, Tye Miller, Marina De La Cruz, Ashley Barhona, Reynolds Heath and Ambrose Eck. Jacob Zeman is the stage manager.

Improv show set Friday

The third Improv performance this spring for the West Liberty High School theatrical group, titled "The Part-time Simpletons Prom show," will take place this Friday, April 22, in the high school auditorium beginning at 7 p.m. according to improv coach Dorianne Rees.

Actors performing that evening will include Reynolds Heath, Jacob Zeman, Ben Haskell, Daniel Zeman, Maddie Alke, Vanessa Vargas, Lupita Vasquez, Terrance Salinas, Tye Miller, Ambrose Eck and Sam Garrido.

Donations needed

Donations of good new or used clothing is now being accepted for Amy's Attic, a project of Atalissa resident Amy Windus. She will be accepting clothes at the City maintenance building on the corner of Third and Cherry Streets in the city of Atalissa.

Clothes may be dropped off from 3-5 p.m. on Tuesday, May 10. No shoes, handbags or intimate wear will be accepted and used clothes items should be washed.

Anyone with questions should contact Windus at 563-554-7676.

Obituaries

Daniel A. Rossmann, 59

Daniel Allen Rossmann, 59, of Iowa City, Iowa, died on April 12, 2022 in his home.

He was born on Nov. 13, 1962 to Merle and Ruth (Jensen) Rossmann in La-Salle, Illinois. Dan graduated from Tiskilwa High School in Tiskilwa, Illinois in 1981 and served in the United States Army overseas in Germany from 1982-1986.

He was employed at the IAC Iowa City plant for 16 years as a Maintenance Mechanic and was most recently employed as a Mechanic at Jerry's Hauling in Iowa City.

Surviving are his one brother, Michael (Cindee)

Rossmann of Williamsburg, and three sisters, Michele Rossmann of Tiskilwa,

Laurie (Hubert) Aber of West Liberty, and Christine Rossmann of Creve Couer, Missouri as well as several neices and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Daniel was an honest hardworking, loving brother and a friend to all. Cremation rites have been accorded and a private burial will take place at a family gravesite.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date. Arrangements are being made through Gay & Ciha Funeral and Cremation Services in Iowa City.



Craig Wayne Maurer, 75

Craig Wayne Maurer, 75, of West Liberty died Sunday, April 17, 2022 at Mercy Hospital in Iowa City.

A graveside service will be held Friday, April 22, at 2:30 p.m. at the Oak Ridge Cemetery, West Liberty, with a celebration of life to be held later in the afternoon from 5 to 8 p.m. at the West Liberty Community Center, 1204 North Calhoun St. West Liberty.

Online condolences may be made to the family at www.hendersonbarkerfuneralhome.com. Memorials may be made to Craig Maurer Memorial Fund.

Craig was born Nov. 11, 1946 in Muscatine, the son of Wayne "Barney" and Nellie (Rorick) Maurer. He was a graduate of West Liberty High School in the class of 1965.

On April 17, 1965 Craig was united in marriage to Donna Birkett in West Liberty. For a short time he had been employed with the West Liberty School system as a custodian and bus driver, Collins Radio in Cedar Rapids and later, Monsanto, where he worked until his retirement in 2001.

Craig was a member of the Sons of the American Legion, Masonic Lodge, enjoyed fishing with trips to Minnesota and Canada, his many trips to Jamaica with Donna and social time with friends and family.

He is survived by his wife, Donna of West Liberty, as well as four children including Nicki (Ed) Green of Downers Grove, Illinois, Jeni (Zach) Weaver of Atalissa, Tim (JoAnn) Maurer of West Liberty and Chris (Tara) Maurer of West Liberty. Also surviving are 12 grandchildren including Rachel, Jessica, Morgan, Samuel, Stephanie, Sara, Chloe, Kayla, Riley, Loni, Eddie and Lindley, as well as four great grandchildren, a brother, Rick (Sue) Maurer of West Liberty and a sister, Gloria (Mike) Martensen of Lisbon.

He was preceded in death by his parents and two brothers, Wayne and Chuck.



Legion Auxiliary to give scholarships to WLHS seniors at Awards Night

The Legion Auxiliary Post 509 met Monday, April 5 for it's monthly meeting, learning scholarships for West Liberty High School seniors will be selected on April 18 and will be awarded at the

annual Awards Night on May 3 at 6:30 p.m. in the school's auditorium.

The next monthly meeting of the group will take place on Saturday, May 7, beginning at 9:30 a.m. at the Legion.

Members will share items for brunch.

The organization was reminded of the Poppy Days fundraiser on Friday and Saturday, May 20-21. Volunteers plan to distribute poppies at various locations in the city and donation cans will be available in some local businesses as of May 1.

The Mansell L. Phillips American Legion Post 509 will celebrate it's 100th anniversary on Sunday, June 12, beginning at 1 p.m. at the Legion located on Calhoun Street in downtown West Liberty.

Members with long continuous memberships to the Legion will be honored at the event. Anyone is welcome.

Watch for more on that celebration in upcoming issues of the Index.

Senior Mealsite

Operates Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the West Liberty Community Center. Serving begins at 11:15 a.m. although all meals are being delivered at this time because of the virus. Anyone over 60 years of age are welcome. Home delivery ONLY! No dine-in! Suggested donation of \$5 For information call 319-627-6848

Menu

Friday, April 22
Potato encrusted fish, macaroni & cheese, carrots & onions, wheat roll and fruit.

Monday, April 25
Baked chicken, creamy noodles, baked spinach casserole, wheat roll and fruit.

Wednesday, April 27 Cook's choice
Meat loaf ball, mashed potatoes w/ gravy, carrots, fruit cocktail, wheat berry bread, cupcake and raspberry sherbert.

For cancellations, call 563-260-9921

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Owner
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Editor-Tim Evans
indexnews@lcom.net
217-840-8704

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anads@netwct.net
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Guest Column - Mayor Pro-tem Dana Dominguez

City council member addresses 28E agreement issue

Editor's note: The following article is being reprinted from a personal social media page of Dana Dominguez, a new West Liberty City Council member. Please note that this is her personal opinion and not necessarily the opinion of any other council member. It is reprinted with the permission of Dominguez (pictured).

Hello West Liberty,

In the effort to uphold my promise of transparency, of which was a pillar of my campaign when I ran for City Council, I feel that I need to address those I serve regarding the notice that the public received about the May 1st deadline to move forward with exploring the 28e agreement. (I must add that this is coming directly from me and not for the City of West Liberty, and that I am choosing to make a statement at my own risk that I feel is worth taking.)

Even before I was elected, I spent much time getting to know the volunteers on the fire and ambulance side who risk their lives everyday to serve and protect our community and rural neighbors. I sat through their regular meetings, I went on ride alongs, and most importantly, I listened to their concerns about what they have experienced in the past couple of years.

When I was elected, I got the opportunity to also listen to those who work for the city and got to know the "three council members" who have also suffered a great deal of stress and criticism these past couple of years. This whole experience has made me question often, "Why do we humans have an easy time degrading and tearing each other down about things that don't go well, but have a really hard time acknowledging all of the things that people contributed to which have gone right?"

Well let's not forget some of the things that have gone right recently. . .

After the Derecho, the volunteers came together and helped the City with cleanup, while City staff worked hard to get the electricity back on. Did you know in other communities they were without electricity, and trees and debris blocked streets for almost 2 weeks?

During the pandemic, the volunteers were met with a record breaking number of service calls, and risked exposure to save lives and property. The City staff had to quickly adjust to ensure that our services were not interrupted and that the operations that keep our community afloat would continue, unscathed.

As the world shutdown, they still went to work.

Our garbage was picked up, our parks were cleaned and mowed, our electricity and water stayed running, and our office staff came to work so that residents could pay bills and sign their kids up for sports --along with many other things that we just can't begin to imagine that they must get done each day amongst their small, but mighty staff...

These are all incredible people, and they are even more incredible when they work side-by-side to serve the community they love.

If there is one thing I've learned from this experience it is that EVERYONE, even "the City" honors and appreciates the volunteer fire and ems members. It pains me to hear though, that the city staff, who are evenso dedicated, have experienced an intolerable amount of verbal abuse from our residents simply because they work for the City. This is unacceptable.

I've been there, and it really takes

an emotional toll. In my past job, as the legislators and higher ups were disagreeing on how we operated and the programs we provided, it was the day-to-day staff who received the threatening emails, voicemails and verbal abuse from the public. Yet, we still had to work against deadlines and complete our duties just like our city staff members do for us each and every day.

I've spent a considerable amount of love and labor to try to understand why the community has trust issues with the

City, and in all honesty I have yet to discover any evidence that would confirm the allegations of illegal activity that have been thrown at our City Clerk. I have however, discovered A LOT of misunderstanding, miscommunication and a substantial amount of lack of empathy for all parties involved.

I can assure you that we will and have been actively doing what we can to come to an agreement in how to strengthen the relationships that are paramount in providing the best service to West Lib-

erty residents and our rural neighbors. Both the volunteer fire department and the City desparately want this battle to conclude in a way that we can come together once again and serve side-by-side as we've done for the past 100+ years.

In the meantime, I will invite everyone who loves this town as much as I do to have hope, and let positivity drive us, not hate.

Yours in Service,
Dana Dominguez
Mayor Pro-Tem

History Column - A bit of West Liberty's past



Rare did you ever find a scene like this - the United States Calvary camping at what is now the Muscatine County Fairgrounds in West Liberty back in 1910. Index photo contributed by Phyllis Owen Sterba

U.S. Calvary comes to West Liberty in 1910

Phyllis Owen Sterba

Index Contributing History Writer

I found this interesting piece of history via the *West Liberty Index* of Oct. 13, 1910, concerning the United States Calvary that followed the American Civil War of the 1860's.

The article read:

"West Liberty was very much honored last Thursday by a visit from the Sixth U.S. Calvary. The boys were enroute from Ft. Harrison, Indiana to their headquarters at Fort Des Moines. The command was transported by rail to Geneseo, Illinois, and from thence made the road to Des Moines on horseback by easy stages.

The regiment embraced about 650

men and 750 horses, with wagon train and all the accouterments of real war.

Tents were pitched on the fairgrounds and, during the afternoon, the camp was visited by hundreds who had never before set eyes on real soldiers. The oldest inhabitant cannot recall that United States regulars have ever before visited the town.

The boys were very quiet and orderly and took great pains to leave the camp grounds in as good condition as they found it. They were a fine bunch of young men, viewed from a physical standpoint. The great wonder is why so many young men choose the life of a soldier in preference to the pursuits of peace.

While in camp, the men consumed a

large quantity of provisions furnished by local merchants. The rations for the horses consisted of five tons of hay and 275 bushels of oats. The command consumed three cords of wood.

Lieutenant Colonel Day was in command of the regiments on their march across the state, its colonel having recently placed on the retired list.

The regimental band gave a fine concert at four o'clock to a great crowd on the streets. The boys will be cordially welcomed should they ever come this way again."

Phyllis Owen Sterba is a West Liberty High School graduate and a history columnist for the Index. She can be contacted at indexnews@lcom.net.

Letter to the Index Editor

Protect our schools

Editor,

We need to protect our schools and teachers. Schools are the heart of Iowa communities. When rural communities lose their schools, the community dies. No families or businesses want to move to a town without a school. Just look at the small towns in eastern Iowa that lost their schools. Houses and businesses sit abandoned because people move away and no one will buy them.

When privatization happens in urban school districts, it creates racial, economic and disability segregation.

Private schools can cherry-pick which kids they enroll. There are no equal education rights in private schools.

Some groups are stoking racist fears to make a profit. They claim our teachers have a "sinister agenda" and are indoctrinating our children. They claim teachers are teaching "critical race theory" to make white children ashamed of their heritage. Not only is this untrue, it has a deeper purpose. So, what is the end-game of Critical Race Theory fear-mongering? The complete privatization of public schools.

Some groups are stoking racist fears to make a profit....at the expense of our

public schools. If they take away funding for public schools and drive away teachers from public schools, they eliminate the competition for their private schools, and increase the revenue for their private schools.

Don't let the idea that a church or non-profit entity is running that private school fool you. It is still about increasing the income from that business... which in this case is a private school. It's all about the money, and our public school system will be destroyed in that quest for money.

Deborah VanderGaast, RN, BSN
Candidate for Iowa SD41, Tipton

Former superintendent gets job in Mannheim SD

Tim Evans
Index Editor

Former West Liberty Superintendent of Schools Dr. Diego Giraldo has been appointed the next superintendent at the Mannheim School District 84 in Franklin Park, a western Chicago suburb in Illinois, it was learned late last week.

Dr. Giraldo served the district during the COVID-19 pandemic for two years from June 2019 through June 2021, fulfilling his contract. He was replaced by the district by Shaun Kruger. The former superintendent left the district on good terms, citing family responsibilities in leaving his position.

His new pre-K to eighth grade school district has 2,700 students and 216 teachers and operates on a \$67 million budget. He will begin his duties with the district in June. He will be replacing Kimberly Petrusek, who is retiring after 11 years with the district, which has six schools

including four elementary sites and two middle school buildings. The district, established in 1869, is 83 percent Hispanic and serves the communities of Franklin Park, Melrose Park and Northlake.

Giraldo, who came to West Liberty from the Chicago Public School District, praised his time in West Liberty as one of the reasons he was appointed to the position, commending the people he worked with in his first superintendent position, especially through the pandemic.

Dr. Giraldo earned his Bachelor of Education in teaching from Northeastern Illinois University, earned a Master of School Business from Roosevelt University and a Doctorate EdD from National-Louis University. He has served as a bilingual teacher, middle school bilingual teacher, assistant dean, department chair, preK K-8 principal, chief officer of early learning, coordinator of language programs and superintendent at West Liberty.

His many years of experience has assisted Dr. Giraldo in working with many personnel in the areas of curriculum and instruction, bilingual education, operations, business, strategic planning, leadership, professional development, grants, budgets evaluation and assessments.

Dr. Giraldo said he is really looking forward to getting back to full-time work in education and said the district is a short distance from his residence.

Community news briefs/events

Puppet camp offered

Eulenspiegel Puppet Theatre is offering a Summer Puppet Camp for children aged 7-12, to be held at Owl Glass Puppetry Center, 319 North Calhoun St., West Liberty, on Monday, July 25 through Friday, July 29, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Each participant will build several puppets of different styles and learn how to work with them. The group will present a show at the end of the week. Participants will be asked to bring sack lunches. Eulenspiegel will provide snacks and drinks.

The camp will be led by the incomparable team of Stephanie Vallez and Christopher Eck with the assistance of Monica Leo. Stephanie and Monica are Eulenspiegel's puppeteers and teaching artists with fifty years of experience between them. Chris, Owl Glass Puppetry Center's Outreach Director, is the newest member of the team. He has had years of experience working with and nurturing children as a teaching musician.

The cost of the camp includes all materials. Group size is limited, so register as soon as possible by calling Owl Glass Puppetry Center at (319) 627-2487 or emailing eptcoutreach@Lcom.net.

Softball camp slated

West Liberty High Schools girls' softball team will host a youth softball camp on Saturday, April 30, for second through seventh grade girls.

The event will begin at 9 a.m. and end at noon and is a fundraiser for the high

school girls team. It will be held at the high school softball field behind West Liberty Elementary School.

The camp includes individual skill instruction by current and former Comet players and coaches, competitive game situations and emphasis on both offensive and defensive skills, plus there will be individual and team contest and awards, according to new head coach Matt Hoepfner, who takes over a highly successful program.

In the last three seasons, the Comets finished 24-9 including fifth place in the Iowa Class 3A State Tournament, 14-2 and were a Regional finalist and 30-6, finishing third in the Iowa Class 3A State Tournament. The team has had a consistent top 10 state ranking the past three seasons as well.

Golf fundraiser slated

The 13th annual West Liberty Dream Catchers golf outing fundraiser is set for Saturday, May 14, beginning at 9 a.m. at the Pleasant Valley Golf Course in Iowa City.

Organizers are looking for four-person teams to play in the 18-hole, best shot outing. Contact Ed Moreno for more information at Gentle Family Dentistry.

Depot now open

The historic Depot museum building, located on the west end of Fourth Street and on the south side of the Hoover walking/biking trail, is open for the year with hours 1-3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, and 10-2 on Saturday. It will be open through October.

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La Semana Santa en los países hispanos

Mark Plum

Index Latino Culture Columnist

Este domingo las iglesias de West Liberty celebrarán el Domingo de Pascua, aquel domingo en que los cristianos conmemoran el día en que Jesús de Nazaret se resucitó y salió de su tumba. Algunas personas irán a iglesia el jueves, viernes y sábado como parte de esta observación. Pero en los países hispanohablantes, la observación ha estado en marcha desde el domingo pasado y dura toda esta semana, aquella semana que marca el apogeo del calendario cristiano: la Semana Santa.

Esto se debe principalmente a la herencia común que todos los países latinos comparten con España, que por la mayor parte de su historia era una sociedad oficialmente católica. Con el Imperio Español, estas costumbres fueron trasladadas a sus nuevos territorios aquí en América e, inevitablemente, se entremezclaban con las tradiciones indígenas que ya existían en las respectivas áreas del imperio. Así que cada región de América Latina celebra la Semana Santa en su propia manera, a la vez que se basan en las mismas creencias acerca de los respectivos días:

Domingo de ramos: Este domingo conmemora que Jesús entra a Jerusalén, donde la gente lo recibe triunfalmente con palmas:

Lunes Santo: Jesús saca a los mercaderes del templo.

Martes Santo: Jesús les advierte a los discípulos que será traicionado.

Miércoles Santo: Judas conspira para traicionar a Jesús.

Jueves Santo: Jesús celebra La Última Cena con los 12 apóstolos. Luego es entregado a las autoridades romanas por Judas.

Viernes Santo: Jesús es condenado a muerte por Poncio Pilato y procesa con la cruz, terminando crucificado.

Sábado Santo: La soledad de María, Madre de Jesús. Víspera de la Pascua.

Domingo de Pascua: Día de la resurrección.

Una de las celebraciones más conocidas de la Pasión de Cristo se hace en Iztapalapa, una zona en el este de la Ciudad de México. La obra se ha llevado a cabo todos los años desde su iniciación en 1843. En esta celebración, que es llevado a cabo completamente por la gente de la zona, participan más de 500 actores en sus varios roles, con maquillaje y efectos técnicos al grado profesional. Decenas de miles de personas observan la obra. La procesión termina con Jesús en la cruz en el Cerro de la Estrella, antiguo sitio sagrado para los Aztecas.

Una última nota: aunque la Semana Santa llegó a existir por hechos religiosos, cabe destacar que la tradición hoy es tanto para las personas seculares como para los creyentes. Claro que los que quieren celebran cada observación religiosa durante la semana, pero también para las personas no creyentes (o simplemente menos observantes), la Semana Santa representa un tiempo cuando los niños no van a la escuela, las oficinas cierran, las familias emprenden viajes y los amigos gozan juntos.

La Semana Santa, entonces, representa lo mejor de América Latina: una historia común que varía de región en región, y un tiempo para que todos, creyentes o no, celebren la vida con sus seres queridos.



Un desfile de la Semana Santa en España
A Holy Week procession in Spain



El Domingo de Ramos marca el comienzo de la Semana Santa
Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week.

Un actor, como Jesús, cargando la cruz en la Procesión de Iztapalapa
An actor playing Jesus, carrying the cross, in the Iztapalapa Passion

Photos contributed

Holy Week celebrations in Hispanic countries

This Sunday the churches of West Liberty will celebrate Easter Sunday, that Sunday in which Christians commemorate the day that Jesus of Nazareth was resurrected and came out of his tomb. Some people will go to church on Thursday, Friday and Saturday as part of this observation. But in Spanish-speaking countries, the observation has been underway since last Sunday and lasts all this week, the one that marks the apogee of the Christian calendar: Holy Week.

This is mainly due to the common heritage that all Latin countries share with Spain, which for most of its history was an officially Catholic society. With the Spanish Empire, these customs were transferred to their new territories here in America and, inevitably, they intermingled with the indigenous traditions that already existed in the respective areas of the empire.

So, each region of Latin America celebrates Holy Week in its own way, while based on the same beliefs about the respective days:

Palm Sunday: This Sunday commemorates that Jesus enters Jerusalem, where the people receive him triumphantly with palms:

Holy Monday: Jesus kicks the merchants out of the temple.

Holy Tuesday: Jesus warns the disciples that he will be betrayed.

Holy Wednesday: Judas conspires to betray Jesus.

Maundy Thursday: Jesus celebrates the Last Supper with the 12 apostles. He is then handed over to the Roman au-

thorities by Judas.

Good Friday: Jesus is sentenced to death by Pontius Pilate and processed with the cross, ending up crucified.

Holy Saturday: The solitude of Mary, Mother of Jesus. Easter Vigil.

Easter Sunday: Resurrection Day.

One of the best-known celebrations of the Passion of Christ takes place in Iztapalapa, an area in the east of Mexico City. The production has been performed every year since its inception in 1843. In this celebration, which is carried out entirely by the people of the area, more than 500 actors participate in their various roles, with make-up and technical effects professionally done. Tens of thousands of people watch the procession. The procession ends with Jesus on

the cross at Cerro de la Estrella, an ancient sacred site for the Aztecs.

One last note: although Holy Week came into existence for religious reasons, it should be noted that the tradition today is for secular people as well as believers. Of course, those who want to celebrate each religious observance during the week do so, but also for non-believers (or simply those who are less observant), Holy Week represents a time when children do not go to school, offices close, families undertake travel and friends enjoy themselves together.

Holy Week, then, represents the best of Latin America: a common history that varies from region to region, and a time for everyone, believers or not, to celebrate life with their loved ones.



La escena final de la Pasión en Iztapalapa, en el Cerro de la Estrella
The final scene in Iztapalapa, on the Hill of the Star

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Koellner to retire from health department board

Shining star through COVID-19 pandemic to be honored April 27

Tim Evans
Index Editor

After serving for 15 years, Bill Koellner of West Liberty is retiring from the Muscatine County Board of Health and will be honored at a special public outdoor celebration on Wednesday, April 27, beginning at 10 a.m. at Kimberly Park, 800 North Park Street, West Liberty.

Koellner has served Muscatine County in many volunteer positions for the past 40 years and continues to do so through the Rotary Club of West Liberty, Muscatine County Historic Preservation Commission, Grief Counseling Groups and more.

Christy Roby, the director of Muscatine Public Health said she's worked with Koellner for the past nine years and, prior to that, worked with his wife, Jan, through the Early Childhood Iowa Muscatine County Board.

"I have gotten to know them as truly humble servants of the county. They give of their time, talents and resources to serve others who may need extra support," Roby said. "I admire their commitment to doing God's work through their servant hands and hearts."



BILL KOELLNER

She said Koellner leads with a commitment to supporting his team through being "educated, present, encouraging, and always compassionate."

"He seeks to understand the need of the county residents and populations we are called to care for and is filled with wisdom from a lifetime of professional and personal experiences that allowed him to serve in this volunteer role for 15 years with strength, knowledge, passion and effective decision making," Roby said. "He always has the people at the center of his heart when making decisions. He seeks to serve others with kindness."

Due to the high rates of positive COVID-19 cases, industry and geographic make-up of Hispanic/Latino residents in West Liberty, the health department intentionally focused on dispensing and serving the West Liberty community as a priority location in their county wide efforts.

The Koellner couple "became true community health workers serving the public" during the pandemic, according to Roby. "Once vaccines became available, although sparse and difficult to access, they opened their home to help people sign up for on-line scheduling and transported individuals to pharmacies throughout the region to get their first dose vaccines - over 200 people!" A total of 900 local residents were vaccinated in the early stages of the pandemic when vaccines became available through clinics at the school and many more through clinics at West Liberty Foods.

Koellner said there were times they would sign up people as early as 4 a.m. to get appointments and would sometimes take those wanting a vaccine to the appointment - as far away as a CVS location in Cedar Rapids.

Koellner also supported and helped organize a large vaccine clinic in West Liberty through the partnership with Father Guillermo Trevino of St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Wester Drug,

Public Health and the West Liberty Community School District.

"He provided the volunteers and spent the entire day at the first and second clinic serving as a volunteer," said Roby, noting Knoeller has "always been a champion and advocate for public health and equity," noting his commitments and efforts "shined the brightest" during the pandemic.

Koellner, who was a civil engineer with the Corps of Engineers in Rock Island before retiring in 2002, said he got onto the board because he believes strongly in education and health, a member of the Area Education Agency for 37 years - the longest person to serve a school board in the state - and was a member of the Muscatine General Hospital board for 27 years. He also served on the senior resources board for nine years, helping seniors obtain housing and other resources.

Koellner will be replaced on the health board by Dr. Chris Scholz of Muscatine, an eye care specialist with Vision Center P.C., after getting reelected to the board for five straight three-year terms.

"I've served with a lot of great people over the years," said Koellner, noting all were very dedicated in their roles.

He said one of the main concerns when he started his role on the health board was the fact Muscatine County had one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in the state, forcing Muscatine to create an alternative high school for young women that has since become unnecessary. He said educating girls about pregnancy was a key to resolving the problem. Koellner said the biggest health problem in the county now is diabetes, noting education has turned toward an adult and Latino population fighting the disease. Anyone is welcome to attend the retirement event.

Atalissa garbage collection rates up; meter installations struggle

Work continues on heating/cooling center; Atalissa Day slated

Tim Evans
Index Editor

Due to an increase in garbage pick-up rates by the city's vendor, the Atalissa City Council voted Monday evening, April 11, at their regular monthly meeting to increase rates for residents by \$2 per month.

The city said it's the first increase in at least 18 months for the service provided by a Wilton firm, Oveson Refuse & Recycling. It was noted maintenance and replacement of the city owned garbage carts and the spring clean-up is being funded by the reserve amounts that were collected before the last vendor increase.

In other business, the city is still working on installing their new high-tech water meters in homes, city water department head Matt Goodale reporting less than 25 homes are yet to have the new meters installed which were bought with federal American Rescue Plan funds. The new meters are anticipated to save money for the city as well as residents.

The city had set an April deadline at their February meeting for residents as Goodale was having a difficult time connecting with residents to install the new meters.

In a related matter, the city is looking at putting together a study on water, sewer and garbage rates for residents. City Clerk Samantha Parry said the city may be charging appropriate rates for the services but said the study may prove that the city needs to increase rates.

The council also talked about a drainage culvert, which is being planned for Oak Street, pointing out it needs to be lag enough to eliminated flooding during a heavy rainfall. The city was checking into the project. A local resident was also asked to remove tree debris from a creek area after limbs from a tree cut down in the neighborhood of 227 Third

Street ended up in the creek. The removal was necessary to prevent possible flooding.

The clerk also pointed out the city is looking into a cyber security and Google Club back up system known as "IT in a box." Parry was asked to look into other options as well.

Holiday decorations were taken down by members of the Atalissa Fire Department and Chief Mike Smock. Smock also reported on working on getting new ISO insurance ratings for the city.

There was also an update on the Atalissa Community Fire Department's Heating/Cooling Station that became an idea in July of 2021. The Generac Generator for the station has been delivered to the fire house and is in the process of being installed. Other work is also being completed on the project.

Atalissa Day set

The 18-member department hopes to host Atalissa Day on Saturday, June 25, as a fundraiser for the fire department, which handles about 90 calls a year in a 46-square mile area through mutual aid exchanges with fire departments around Muscatine and Cedar Counties including West Liberty, West Branch, Nichols, Wilton, Tipton and the city of Muscatine.

Atalissa Day starts with a breakfast at the fire house at 8 a.m. followed by a cornhole tournament to gin at 9 a.m. with a car show and awards for top vehicles starting at 9 a.m. and running through 2 p.m. There will also be a silent auction beginning at 9 a.m. through 4 p.m., lunch beginning at 11 a.m., and power wheels race and kids games beginning at noon, followed by the kid's tractor pull at 1 p.m. put on by members of the West Liberty Lions Club.

The Atalissa Day parade will take place at 4 p.m. followed by a dinner at 5 p.m. and a live auction starting at 6 p.m. A dance featuring the band North of 40 will take place from 8 a.m. to midnight with fireworks set to be shot off at dusk that evening.

All proceeds benefit the fire department's programs and anyone interested in making a donation should contact the fire department or secretary/treasurer Ashley Blick at 219-321-7101.

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Meet WL Elementary's geography wiz kid

Tim Evans
Index Editor

The love of geography has grown in the mind of Rowan Madsen.

The West Liberty Elementary School fourth grade student was not only Champion of the Elementary Division in the 2022 International Geography Bee for the Southern Iowa Regional Finals held in Chariton on April 9, but claimed the National Science Bee title that same day.

The son of Kristin Madsen and Nicholas Tuthill, has always had a thirst for learning and knowledge according to his mother. "He would always rather watch a documentary over a cartoon," she said. "When it came to sources of entertainment (books, TV, games), I leaned into the educational forms of entertainment. If he was willing and wanting to learn, I wanted to give as many opportunities to do so."

That paid off in the competition when competitors two years older surrounded him. "As far as he knew- he had to be the smartest kid in the room to make it to Nationals, and he was," she said.

Kristin said her son has always been fascinated by the world around him, telling a story about when he was in kindergarten and his teacher would ask the class to find items in the room that start with each letter in a provided work, like Spring, then they would have to find things that start with S, P, R, etc.

"Row would sit in front of the Globe to complete those assignments," she learned. "That's when I learned South Sudan was a country and he's been teaching me about the world ever since!"

The young lad got involved in the contests through the school's TAG (Talented and Gifted) program, directed by Sarah Wagamon. She learned Rowan had a great interest in geography, so the teacher researched and found an opportunity to participate in the contest, where he had to complete a qualifying exam.

"As far as I know, he is the first West Liberty student to compete in this competition," said Wagamon, pointing out that in the past, there have been middle school students who participated in a similar contest which is no longer available. She said it was the first she'd learned of the competition, known as In-



With a love and yearning for knowledge of geography, Rowan Madsen has helped put himself in national and international competition this summer. Photo contributed

ternational Academic Competitions.

She said Rowan was the only student to take the geography and science-qualifying exam. "His love and knowledge of geography are far beyond most students his age."

She said many of her other students competed in competitions this school year including art, robotics, and writing. "I try to find opportunities based on the students' interests to keep them motivated and to challenge them," Wagamon said. "Rowan has spent months studying for the geography exam and enjoyed every minute!"

Rowan said he gained interest in geography first through a road map and then pushed himself into finding out more and more about the world through studying geography. He said he's love to travel, learning more about other countries and cultures and has a strong desire to get to Europe but says his ultimate goal would be to travel to the mountains of Buane, Asia.

He said his career goal is to be a marine archaeologist, but said that will likely change as he gets older, saying he wants to be "open minded" about his fu-

ture.

"As a toddler, instead of playing with matchbox cars or trucks, he collected miniature figurines of skyscrapers across the world," Told Kristin. "His pretend play took place at the Burj Khalifa, Big Ben, or the Taj Mahal. During trips to Barnes and Noble his readers of choice were National Geographic's that taught him about space, weather, geography as well as people and events that changed the world. He didn't have a lot of room or time for Pete the Cat!"

She says love of geography had led him to develop power point presentations in his spare time at school on little known countries.

She is quite proud of her son's performance in Chariton. "Unfortunately, there were no other elementary children competing in Chariton. Therefore, for Rowan to participate and compete, he would have to sit in with sixth graders for geography and seventh graders for science," she said. "These are buzzer-based, Jeopardy-style competitions – speed and accuracy are both important. I thought he would succumb to the pressure or hesitate in answering because he

would be intimidated competing against older children, but I didn't need to worry – he dominated the competition."

Kristin said in the Geography Bee, Rowan excelled in every round. In Science, he scored just one point less than the seventh grade winner. "Science remains his 'for fun' competition, he didn't even study and came within one point of the seventh grade champion! Because of Rowan's success, we left Chariton as National and International qualifiers."

So now the family will be leaving for national competition in Orlando, Florida on June 15, competition with other students from throughout the country in International Geography and Science on June 17-20.

She said qualifying for the International Competition in Burlington, Vermont for a full week in July "was beyond what we ever imagined" and says the family humbly needs support to help sponsor Rowan for the trip, which could cost as much as \$5,000. She said a Rowan Takes on the World" GoFundMe social media page has been created to help or anyone can send a donation to Rowan at 515 N Clay Street, West Liberty, IA 52776

West Liberty library earns ALA Rescue Plan grant

Xiomara Levensen
Index Contributing Writer

The West Liberty Public Library was notified at the end of March that they were one of 200 libraries nationwide selected for a grant.

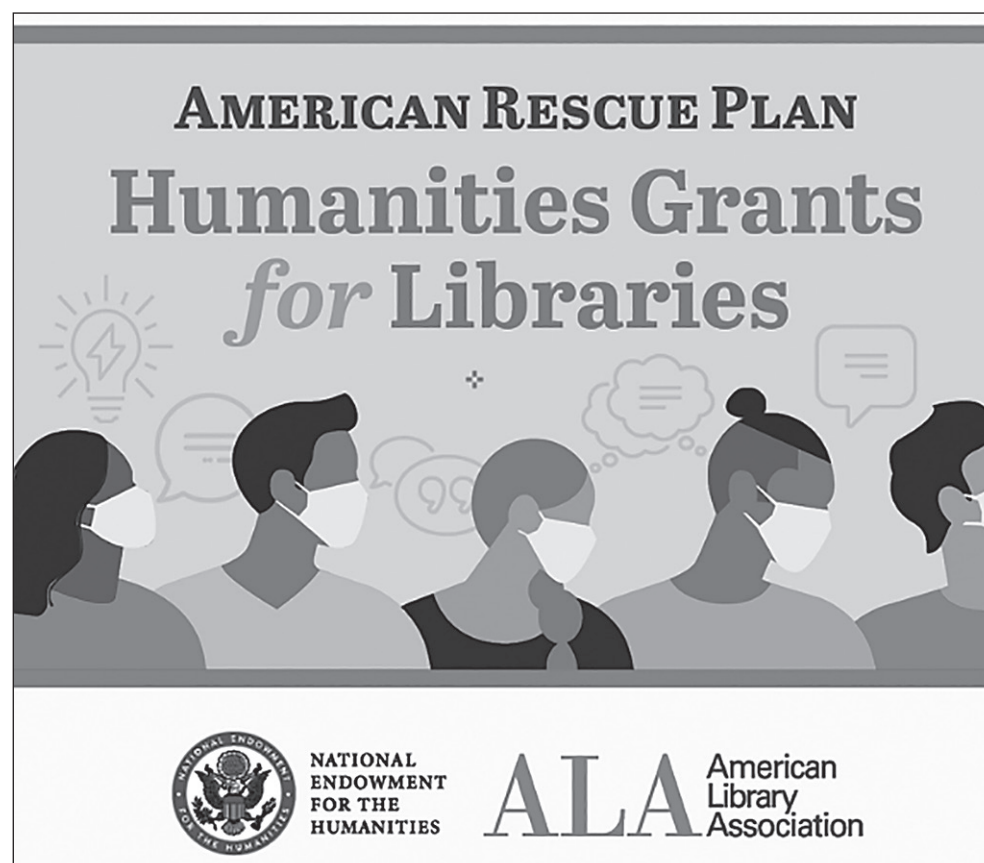
The grant is from the American Library Association's Rescue Plan: Humanities Grants for Libraries opportunity, which is an emergency relief program to assist libraries affected by the pandemic, according to a press release the West Liberty Public Library released March 25. The library will receive \$10,000.

"It's a great honor to be chosen for the grant and we deserve the award," West Liberty Public Library director Allie Paarsmith said. "We worked very hard on creating a strong application and we're very excited for the outcomes."

In the grant application it asked how the West Liberty Public Library responded to the pandemic, demographics of the community and how they would spend the money.

The plan is to use the grant money to help with the cost of wages for the Summer Reading Program.

"The theme this year is 'Read Beyond the Beaten Path,' so we are celebrating by emphasizing the history of our off the beaten path community," Paarsmith said. "Our programming this summer is focusing on encouraging our communi-



ty to tell their stories. We will be revealing specific programs for June and July sometime in May."

Over 370 libraries applied for this

grant, the press release said. Libraries were selected through a competitive peer-reviewed application which included public libraries, academic and college

libraries, kindergarten through twelfth grade libraries, tribal, special and prison libraries. The libraries were selected generally serve rural communities or underserved populations.

"Our library has been a presence in West Liberty since 1904," Paarsmith said. "The library has been very progressive with providing a significant Spanish collection as well as VR gaming. I've only been here since January 2020. During the pandemic, we were able to provide virtual or contactless substitutes for all our services. Since then, we've been adjusting services to meet the needs of our community without putting anyone needlessly at risk."

The West Liberty Public Library currently employs seven people and offers a variety of programs.

"We offer two monthly book clubs, a monthly program for all ages, weekly early programs for our school aged kids and a weekly story time," Paarsmith said. "Library cards are available to anyone with an Iowa address."

People who live outside of West Liberty, Atalissa, Nichols or rural Muscatine County will have limited access to the library's digital resources, she added.

The director does have a goal in mind for the library. "My goal for the library is to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our community and that our community feels comfortable using our resources," Paarsmith said.

FFA Chapter takes four state team titles

Tim Evans
Index Editor

Claiming four team state titles, the West Liberty FFA Chapter may have lost their top chapter in the state status, but won enough events to take third in the state in 2022, a performance West Liberty High School agriculture teacher and FFA Advisor Zach Morris was proud to hang on his list of achievements since coming to the community more than a decade ago.

“We were the top program in Building Communities (community service) and Strengthening Agriculture (agriculture literacy and advocacy),” Morris said, pointing out those are two difficult categories to claim first place.

The 94th annual state convention, held at Iowa State University in Ames on April 17-19, attracted thousands of FFA members from schools throughout the state as well as FFA alumni.

Morris said he was especially proud of his chapter’s Parliamentary Procedure team which will advance to national competition. The team included Amerie Alvarado, David Mahoney, Addyson Lehman, Paige Werling and Dominic Hernandez.

“I feel very proud of this team as they have been working for several months. They took a challenging event and made it manageable with their good team chemistry and consistent work ethic,” Morris said. “This group over three years has developed tremendously.” He said the State FFA Convention considers the parliamentary procedure competition as one of the “toughest events, and one that many try to win.”

He said when the team advances to Indianapolis in October it will be adding a sixth member due to national rules. That member will be Finley Hall from last year’s state third place team based on team decision. “She will bring a ton of commitment and success to the group,” Morris said.

Morris said the most surprising performance came from the Experience with Action team composed of Nellie Stagg, Kahly Thammavong, Daisy Kivi, Vayda Bryant, Mya Elizondo, and Jada Maas. Audience: Preston Clark, Mercedes Brocker, Payton Murphy, Payton Maas, Brenden McMichael, Audrina Bryant, Blake Jones, Delanie Madsen and Gavin Ryan.

“Winning a state championship with presenters that were freshman and sophomores and supported by nine eighth graders was awesome,” Morris commented, noting that’s the youngest West Liberty team to win the event ever. “I appreciated how the high school members wanted eighth grade to be on their team to involve more kids,” he said.

“I also am very happy for our Program of Activities Team (Tye Miller, Kylie Struck and Taylor Eason) who have been trying for many years to win a state championship,” Morris said. “They have advanced to state almost every year in FFA. Earning the state championship was important as it encompasses all of our chapter activities. They worked hard balancing school, FFA, and life. They truly are one of the most dedicated teams I have worked with.”

West Liberty’s Program of Activities Team, Experience in Action Team and the Ag CSI team were all state champions. Those on the Ag CSI team included Kiley Collins, Vivian Cardona, Jayleen Kivi, Mallory Wulf, Alyssa Lenz and Katherine Barten.

Other honors gained at the state convention went to Aly Harned, earning a Gold 3rd Place honor in the chapter website competition.

The Ag Impact team of Perry Lehman, Brady Laughlin, Owen Daufeldt, Torsten Nixt, Johnny Daufeldt and Cooper Gates claimed a Silver 3rd Place honor.

In Freshman Creed Speaking, Madi Stultz, earned a Silver award while Jack



Meet the West Liberty FFA Chapter's Experience the Action State Champion team. From left, beginning in the front row, is Payton Maas, Delaney Madsen, Mercedes Brockert, Audrina Bryant and Payton Murphy. In the middle row is Brenden McMichael, Preston Clark, Blake Jones and Gavin Ryan. In the back is Audrina Bryant, Mya Elizondo, Kahly Thammavong, Nellie Stagg, Daisy Kivi and Jada Maas. Photo contributed



Meet the West Liberty FFA Chapter's Parliamentary Procedure State Champion Team which includes, from left, Dominic Hernandez, David Hernandez, Addyson Lehman, Paige Werling and Amerie Alvarado. the team will advance to National FFA competition later this year in Indianapolis. Photo contributed

Mahoney also claimed a Silver in Prepared Public Speaking.

In Ag Radio Broadcasting, Sadie Peters also won a Silver honor while Rachai Aird won a bronze in Extemporaneous Speaking.

Addyson Lehman was recognized as a SE State Rising Star Top 6 and Iowa FFA Degree Recipients from the chapter included Jack Mahoney, Aly Harned, Rachel Aird, Mylei Henderson, Grace Evans, Macy Daufeldt, Caleb Wulf, Cassandra Alleman, Charlie Thrasher and Sailor Hall.

State Academic Achievements were also earned by Jack Mahoney, Aly Harned, Rachel Aird, Mylei Henderson, Grace Evans, Macy Daufeldt, Caleb Wulf, Cassandra Alleman, Charlie Thrasher and Sailor Hall.

The West Liberty chapter participated in many activities at the convention. On Monday, April 11, members competed in their respective contests. On Monday evening, they participated in the leadership session with over 5,000 members in attendance.

They also heard from the keynote speaker Eric Hanson, a newscaster for KCCI and a former Iowa FFA President.

On Tuesday, the local group attended a tour of the Iowa State Horticulture Greenhouse to learn about sustainable practices.

Aside from that, Morris said the group attended the session to receive National Chapter Awards, Addyson Lehman for State Rising Star, and hear from other keynote speakers.

A total of 21 Middle School members

attended the Iowa FFA Middle School Workshop at the convention to learn about leadership. This was the first year taking the middle school members for the entire conference.

Morris praised the district administrators for providing outstanding support to the chapter. “This would not be possible without them – Vicki Vernon for supporting our middle school program, Jeni Laughlin for supporting projects with Agricultural Literacy, Brenda Arthur Miller and Kyle Steffen for all the day to day events involving the high school members,” Morris said.

He also praised Superintendent Shaun Kruger and Activities Director Adam Loria for “spending time getting to know our program and activities. They do not get enough credit.”

Girls shine in Wilton

Senior leads Comets with pair of firsts

Tim Evans
Index Sports Writers

Winning three firsts including a pair of individual honors by senior Macy Daufeldt, the West Liberty High School girls' track and field team finished ninth overall in the 11-team Kreimeyer Relays Monday, April 11 in Wilton.

The Comet 4 x 100 meter shuttle relay team of Sydney Rivera, Rylee Goodale, Laney Esmoil and Macy Daufeldt finished second in a new school record time of 1:10.68, just short of Cascade's state best 1:09.33, but well ahead of Durant's third place showing of 1:16.47, followed closely by Iowa City Regina. It was one of three relay teams competing in the meet for coach Michael Hart and coach Hart said the performance dropped the Comets to a third place best in the state. He said the team has a goal of qualifying for the Drake Relays in the event.

Daufeldt proved her dominance in the 100-meter hurdles as well as the long jump, taking firsts in both events as the senior leaped 16-02.50 feet to claim the long jump title by nearly a foot over Wilton's Catie Hock.

The Drake University recruit then ran a 15:64 in the 100-meter hurdles to take down a field of 17 athletes, more than a half second ahead of Devin Simon, a junior from Cascade that finished in 16:34.

West Liberty had a few surprising performances including a fourth place long jump finish from freshman Pearson Hall, leaping 15-02.25 while Sydney Rivera, a junior, claimed sixth place honors in the 100 meter hurdles with a time of 17.78. Coach Hart complimented Hall's performance, Pearson is long jumping really well this year, noting she has gone 15' 11.5". "I know she was disappointed with her marks from Monday, but that's a tough pit to jump in over there at Wilton," he said.

The 4 x 100 relay team of Sydney Rivera, Alissa Sanchez, Pearson Hall and Macy Daufeldt

claimed a third place honor in the meet with a time of 54.81, less than four-tenths of a second behind first place Wilton and two-tenths of a second behind Durant. Coach Hart said it was the first time the foursome ran with that lineup, noting "a couple handoff miscues hindered the time a bit but I'm excited for what that crew can do on a clean run."

The West Liberty 4 x 200-meter relay team finished sixth in the meet with a time of 2:00.88, well behind the first place effort of Davenport North at 1:52.71. The team consisted of Pearson



Stretching out for every inch, senior Macy Daufeldt took first place in the long jump.

Index photo by Tim Evans

Hall, Rylee Goodale, Laney Esmoil and Alissa Sanchez.

"That crew gave us a great effort. A couple of them definitely don't consider themselves 200 runners so it was good to see them stick their necks in there and compete hard," the coach said. "Alissa Sanchez has shown tremendous improvement from last year to this year. She has become an extremely valuable member of a lot of our relays and is running really tough."

In other field events, senior Grace Event finished sixth in the discus with a toss of 84-04 feet for the Comets while she placed seventh in the shot put, tossing the ball 27-07 feet.

In other individual running performances for West Liberty, Ava Morrison was ninth in the 800 meters with a time of 2:53.12 while sophomore Lila Guerra was 17th in the same event in 3:11.

Guerra also finished 11th in the 1500 meter run in a time of 7:03 while Addison Beaver was 19th in the 800 meters in 3:18.

Sydney Rivera, a junior, placed sixth for the Comets in the 100-meter hurdles, finishing in 17.78.

The coach said he had a limited team due to a conflicting soccer match and

state FFA convention, but said Sammi Goodale ran her first 400 hurdles and finished ninth in 1:08.44. "I'm really excited what she can do in that event as the season goes on. The first crack at that race is always tough on you, but she's excited to get back after it," the coach said.

Daufeldt finished the day second in medal counts, outdone only by Kaylee Corbin, a senior from Louisa-Muscatine who finished with three firsts.

"Overall I think it was a good showing. The ones that were there competed very well," Hart said. "We got to see quite a few times that will compete very highly at the state level. As of Monday us and Cascade were 1st and 2nd in the state for shuttle head to head and Macy got to compete against the only girl in 2A with a faster 100 hurdles time than her. Excited to compete again and even more excited to see some better weather... eventually."

Northeast won the meet overall with a point count of 94, well ahead of Davenport North with 83 and Maquoketa with 80.

Wilton, Cascade, Regina, Louisa-Muscatine, Durant, West Liberty, Midland and Marquette Catholic all followed in that order.

Boys golf team takes third at Mid-Prairie Invitational

Tim Evans
Index Sports Writers

The West Liberty High School boys' golf team finished third for the second major meet in a row Tuesday, April 12, in a 10-team meet hosted by Mid-Prairie at the Mid-Prairie Golden Hawk Invite at Kalona Golf Course.

Playing through difficult weather positions that included cold and wind, the Comets of coach Nick Frenz finished at 373 for their four players over the 18-hole course, with West Branch taking the title with a 323 showing followed by Washington, which was just one stroke ahead of West Liberty at 272.

Wilton finished fourth in the meet with a 379 while Mt. Vernon was nine strokes back at 388 and Iowa City Regina finished at 390. The hosts marked a 392 for the day while Durant finished eighth at 394. North Cedar followed with a 416 while Highland was the last place finisher with a 425 score.

Junior Ty Jones finished in a tie for sixth place in the medalist competition, marking an 85, while North Cedar's Jaydon Nabb won the title with a 75. Three players shot 77 to finish in a tie for second including Regina's Mikey Takacs, Washington's Roman Roth and Brady Knoop of West Branch.

West Branch golfers also finished fifth and sixth in the meet as Will Bridges shot an 80 and Dylan Countryman marked in an 81. Jones tied Gage Gingerich of West Branch at 85 while Logan Highly finished at 87 for the Bears, as did Nolan Townsend of Wilton.

Coach Frenz said nobody on his Comet team was "extremely pleased" with how they played individually, but said, "I will take that as a sign that we play good complementary golf. We are off to an awesome start and are excited for a busy week next week with two duals and a tournament."

After playing at Tipton and Durant on Monday and Tuesday, the golf team hosts Durant on Monday, April 25 for a 4 p.m. match at West Liberty Golf & Country Club before hosting a tourney beginning at noon on Tuesday, April 26.

Sorry, the *Index* did not get any results of girls play this past week.

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Comet boys roll to 5-0

Beat rival Bears 2-1; DeWitt 6-0

Kohlton Kober & Tim Evans
Index Sports Writers

Although not feeling his team is at their full potential yet, the West Liberty High School boys' soccer team of coach Walton Ponce claimed three more victories this past week to roll their season record to a perfect 5-0.

The team outscored their foes 17-2 with wins over Prince of Peace in Bellevue, Central DeWitt and previously unbeaten West Branch. The team has allowed just three goals this year while scoring a total of 35 points offensively.

"I feel like we are getting better," said veteran coach Walton Ponce, calling the past week a "great team performance" with six different players finding the back of the net.

The coach said he's patiently awaiting the return of two key players, Juan Mateo and Pascual Pedro, who will be back against Iowa City Regina on Thursday, April 28.

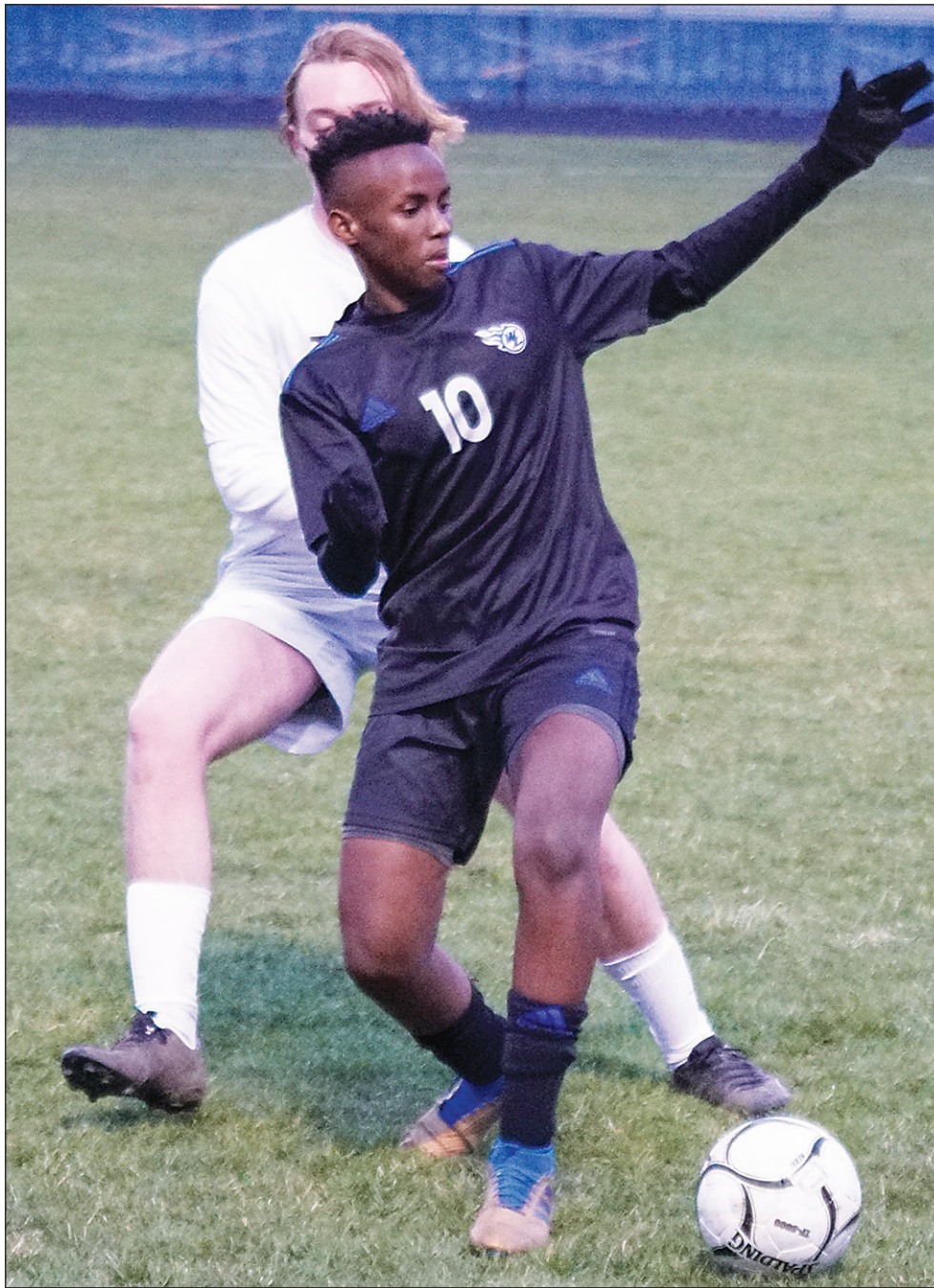
"We are definitely not at our full potential with not having Juan in the roster yet, but the team is building more and more, which hopefully means we are at our peak at the end of the season," Ponce said. "Teams are definitely going to give us their best knowing our rank and recent history the past two years, so we know that we will be played hard every time we step on the field, but that is a responsibility that we accept."

The coach said the 2-1 win over now 3-1 West Branch was played in "horrible conditions" on the Bears home field. He said the only mistake was the fact the West Liberty goal keeper "mistouched" the ball, giving it to the Bear's striker in front of the Comet goal.

"We definitely controlled the game in all aspects, but the wind and field conditions along with West Branch being aggressive and kicking the ball forward as hard as they could every time they had the ball allowed for a game with no rhythm," Ponce said, pointing out the Comets still found a way to win.

The week started off with a trip to Bellevue to play Prince of Peace. Taking control of the contest early, the Comets found themselves leading 3-0 heading into the halftime break. A further six goals came in the second half as the Comets cruised to a 9-1 victory.

Jahsiah Galvan continued his as-



saults on the nets, scoring six for the Comets on the evening. Teammates Joshua Zeman, Diego Sanchez, and Juan Bautista all scored a goal for the Comets to cap the night.

Ponce said Galvan brings a physical dominance to the team with his speed and agility, but the coach noted, "I think it is important to point out the players playing well around him making his job a little easier."

"To reiterate, against Central Dewitt, (6-0 win) we had six different goal scorers," Ponce continued. "This tells me that everyone is responsible to pitch in the attack for our team. The speed and strength that he (Galvan) provides as our striker does provide us a player that can not only go to goal but hold the ball

up in the attacking third as well."

Thursday's scheduled contest against Monticello was one of many to fall to the weather early in this season as spring athletes have fought the rain and cold to find time on the fields.

The Comets will take on a loaded slate this week, heading to Columbus Friday, April 22. The game begins at 7 p.m. before the JV boys squad travels to Ft. Madison for a tournament beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday morning.

Comet girls' soccer play

The West Liberty High School girls' soccer team fell in their contest this week against Northeast, 3-2. The Comets fall to 1-3 overall on the season.

The Comets headed to Bellevue Tues-



Above, Maggie Mahoney chases down a loose ball for the Comet girls' team as Bruce Songa battles for the ball in a recent outing for the Comet Boys' soccer team. Both Comet teams go to Columbus on Friday for a key outing. The girls kickoff at 5 p.m. followed by the varsity boys at 7 p.m.

Index photos by Kohlton Kober

day evening to take on the Rebels. It was all Rebels for the first 40 minutes of the contest, as they took a 3-0 advantage into the halftime break.

The Comets battled back in the second half, scoring a pair of goals falling short of the comeback bid.

Thursday's contest was one of many to fall to the weather early in this season as spring athletes have fought the rain and cold to find time on the fields.

The Comets will take on tough competition this week, hosting Solon Thursday at 5 p.m. followed by a JV match at 6:30 p.m. and heading to Columbus Friday, with the varsity kickoff at 5 p.m. followed by the JV game at 7 p.m. Watch for cancellations or changes in the schedule on the WLCSD website.

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"PRESTON FARM" - 122 ACRES M/O/L

SECTION 23 & 26, TOWNSHIP 84 NORTH, RANGE 4, FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP, JACKSON COUNTY, IOWA

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: The Northeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 26 and the East 29 acres of the Northwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 26, Township 84 North, Range 4 East of the 5th Principal Meridian, Jackson County, Iowa. Also conveying the following described piece of land, to-wit: Commencing at point 51 rods 6.6 links West of the Southeast corner of the Southeast Quarter of Section 23, running thence due North until it strikes the Sabula and Maquoketa Road; thence following said road in a Southwesterly direction until it strikes the Southwest corner of said Quarter Section; thence due East on the South line of said Quarter Section to the place of beginning, containing 36-106/160 acres. All being in Township 84 North, Range 4 East of the 5th Principal Meridian. SAVE AND EXCEPT a small parcel of land containing about one acre located in the Southwest corner of the Southeast Quarter of said Section 23, said exception being theretofore deeded by Henry Lehmkuhl to H.J. Lehmkuhl, it being in a triangular shape and lying South of the highway running Northeasterly through said quarter section. The South Half of the Northeast Quarter of Section 26, EXCEPTING THEREFROM the South Half of the West 23 acres of the Northeast Quarter of said Section 26 AND EXCEPTING that part thereof lying South of Highway No. 64 deeded to Gertrude Klobes and LaVerne Klobes, wife and husband, conveyed by Deed found in Book 136, Page 159, in the Office of the Jackson County Recorder, all in Township 84 North Range 4 East of the 5th Principal Meridian. ALSO FURTHER EXCEPTING THEREFROM: Lot 1 of Fuegen Subdivision located in the Northeast Quarter of Section 26, Township 84 North, Range 4 East of the 5th Principal Meridian, Jackson County, Iowa, as shown on Final Plat filed December 21, 1998 in Book 1-J Page 131, File No. 98-4530, Office of the Recorder of Jackson County, Iowa, containing 2.98 acres, more or less. Parcel A being part of the Southeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 26, Township 84 North, Range 4 East of the 5th Principal Meridian, Jackson County, Iowa, as shown on Plat of Survey filed January 23, 2004, File No. 04 331, Book 1-O Page 29, Office of Recorder of Jackson County, Iowa, containing 2.51 acres, more or less, including 0.50 acres in public roadway easement. Parcel B being part of the Southwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 26, Township 84 North, Range 4 East of the 5th Principal Meridian, Jackson County, Iowa, as shown on Plat of Survey filed February 15, 2006, Document No. 06 595, Book 1-Q Page 31, Office of Recorder of Jackson County, Iowa, containing 14.94 acres, more or less. Parcel D being part of the Southwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter, and part of the Southeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter, all in Section 26, Township 84 North, Range 4 East of the 5th Principal Meridian, Jackson County, Iowa, as shown on Plat of Survey filed January 23, 2007, Document No. 7-305, Book 1-R Page 23, Office of Recorder of Jackson County, Iowa, containing 9.57 acres, more or less. Parcel E, being part of the Northeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 26, Township 84 North, Range 4 East of the 5th Principal Meridian, Jackson County, Iowa, as shown on Plat of Survey filed February 23, 2017, Document No. 17-658, Office of Recorder of Jackson County, Iowa, containing 13.07 acres, more or less. Together with all easements and servient estates appurtenant thereto, but subject to all easements and restrictions of record.

TOTAL ACREAGE: 121.57 total taxable acres. 104 acres, more or less of tillable ground.

AVERAGE CSR: 51.41 (based on 111.36 acres of crop ground)

SALE: This farm property is being offered for sale by sealed bid. Bids must be in writing and include the name, address and telephone number of the bidder. Bids should be mailed or delivered to Steven J. Kahler, Attorney at Law, 123 N. Main Street, Maquoketa, IA 52060, and must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 16, 2022. Based upon the bids received the top 3 bidding parties will be contacted by telephone to submit a 2nd round of written bids to the law office of Schoenthaler, Bartelt, Kahler & Reicks no later than 1:00 p.m. on May 18, 2022.

CONTRACT FOR PURCHASE and DOWN PAYMENT: The successful bidder agrees to sign a contract to purchase the real estate by no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 18, 2022. The contract for purchase requires: A down payment of 10% of the purchase price upon signing to be paid in the form of cash, cashier's check, bank draft, money order or certified check made payable to Schoenthaler, Bartelt, Kahler & Reicks Trust Account, with the remaining 90% of the purchase price to be paid in cash at the closing; closing to be held at a mutually agreeable date, time and place on or about June 23, 2022. The contract for purchase will not contain any Buyer contingencies including, but not limited to, financing, and shall contain other usual terms and conditions for the sale of Jackson County farm real estate including, but not limited to, the proration of real estate taxes to the date of possession, and delivery of an Abstract of Title showing merchantable title to the real estate in the present owners.

FARM LEASE: Possession of the real estate to be given at closing subject to a farm lease for the 2022 crop year.

DISCLAIMER: All of the above information is believed to be accurate; however, no liability for its accuracy, errors or omissions is assumed. The bidders are responsible for conducting their own independent investigation with all due diligence concerning this property and the sale. **SELLERS DISCLAIM ALL WARRANTIES, EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED, AS TO THE SUBJECT REAL PROPERTY. THE REAL PROPERTY IS BEING SOLD IN ITS PRESENT CONDITION "AS IS".**

TERMS: Only bids for the purchase of the entire farm are being solicited. Final bid is subject to Sellers' approval. **Sellers reserve the right to reject all bids.**

QUESTIONS: Call Attorney Steven Kahler (563) 652-4963

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FARMLAND FOR SALE

CHRISTOPHER C. BANDY & JULIANNA M. BANDY

"ANDREW FARM" - 160 ACRES M/O/L

SECTION 18, TOWNSHIP 85 NORTH, RANGE 3, PERRY TOWNSHIP, JACKSON COUNTY, IOWA

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: The Northwest Fractional Quarter of Section 18, and the South 60 acres of the Northeast Quarter of Section 18, all in Township 85 North, Range 3 East of the 5th Principal Meridian, Jackson County, Iowa; subject to easements of record. EXCEPTING THEREFROM beginning at the East Quarter corner of said Section 18; thence South 89° 23' 24" West (assumed bearings), along the South Line of the said Northeast Quarter, 1005.97 feet; thence North 23° 14' 29" West, 383.18 feet; thence North 02° 25' 06" West, 589.84 feet; thence North 88° 47' 29" East, 1182.27 feet, more or less, to the East line of the said Northeast Quarter; thence South 00° 00' 00" East, 955.63 feet to the point of beginning; said exception containing 24.78 acres. FURTHER EXCEPTING THEREFROM ALL OF THE FOLLOWING: Parcel A being part of the East Half of the Northwest Quarter of Section 18, Township 85 North, Range 3 East of the 5th Principal Meridian, Jackson County, Iowa, as shown on Plat of Survey filed June 13, 2006, Document No. 06-2257, Book 1-Q Page 71, Office of the Recorder of Jackson County, Iowa, containing 4.00 acres, more or less; together with all easements and servient estates appurtenant thereto, but subject to all easements and restrictions of record. (NOTE: Access Easement and Utility Easement set out in Warranty Deed recorded July 6, 2006 as Document No. 06-2667.); Parcel B, being part of the Southeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter and part of the Southwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 18, Township 85 North, Range 3 East of the 5th Principal Meridian, Jackson County, Iowa, as shown on Plat of Survey filed November 24, 2009, Document No. 09-4565, Book 1-T Page 12, Office of the Recorder of Jackson County, Iowa, containing 11.44 acres, more or less; together with all easements and servient estates appurtenant thereto, but subject to all easements and restrictions of record. (NOTE: Access Easement and Utility Easement set out in Warranty Deed recorded April 7, 2010 as Document No. 10-1240.); Parcel 37-2021, being a parcel of land located in the Southeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter and in the Southwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 18, Township 85 North, Range 3, East of the 5th P.M., Jackson County, Iowa, as shown on Plat of Survey filed March 25, 2021 as Document No. 21-1279 in the Office of the Recorder of Jackson County, Iowa.

TOTAL ACREAGE: 160.45 total acres (122.77 taxable acres). 114 acres, more or less of tillable ground. 37.68 acres enrolled in the Forest and Fruit Tree Reservation Program. 28.30 acres enrolled in the CRP CP-33 Habitat Buffer Program, expiring on September 30, 2022.

AVERAGE CSR: 50.01 (based on 119.62 acres of crop ground)

SALE: This farm property is being offered for sale by sealed bid. Bids must be in writing and include the name, address and telephone number of the bidder. Bids should be mailed or delivered to Steven J. Kahler, Attorney at Law, 123 N. Main Street, Maquoketa, IA 52060, and must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 16, 2022. Based upon the bids received the top 3 bidding parties will be contacted by telephone to submit a 2nd round of written bids to the law office of Schoenthaler, Bartelt, Kahler & Reicks no later than 1:00 p.m. on May 18, 2022.

CONTRACT FOR PURCHASE and DOWN PAYMENT: The successful bidder agrees to sign a contract to purchase the real estate by no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 18, 2022. The contract for purchase requires: A down payment of 10% of the purchase price upon signing to be paid in the form of cash, cashier's check, bank draft, money order or certified check made payable to Schoenthaler, Bartelt, Kahler & Reicks Trust Account, with the remaining 90% of the purchase price to be paid in cash at the closing; closing to be held at a mutually agreeable date, time and place on or about June 23, 2022. The contract for purchase will not contain any Buyer contingencies including, but not limited to, financing, and shall contain other usual terms and conditions for the sale of Jackson County farm real estate including, but not limited to, the proration of real estate taxes to the date of possession, and delivery of an Abstract of Title showing merchantable title to the real estate in the present owners.

FARM LEASE: Possession of the real estate to be given at closing subject to a farm lease for the 2022 crop year.

DISCLAIMER: All of the above information is believed to be accurate; however, no liability for its accuracy, errors or omissions is assumed. The bidders are responsible for conducting their own independent investigation with all due diligence concerning this property and the sale. **SELLERS DISCLAIM ALL WARRANTIES, EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED, AS TO THE SUBJECT REAL PROPERTY. THE REAL PROPERTY IS BEING SOLD IN ITS PRESENT CONDITION "AS IS".**

TERMS: Only bids for the purchase of the entire farm are being solicited. Final bid is subject to Sellers' approval. **Sellers reserve the right to reject all bids.**

QUESTIONS: Call Attorney Steven Kahler (563) 652-4963



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FARMLAND FOR SALE

CHRISTOPHER C. BANDY & JULIANNA M. BANDY

“MONMOUTH FARM” – 51 ACRES M/O/L
SECTION 7, TOWNSHIP 84 NORTH, RANGE 1, MONMOUTH
TOWNSHIP, JACKSON COUNTY, IOWA

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: The East Half of the Southeast Quarter of Section 7, Township 84 North, Range 1 East of the 5th Principal Meridian, Jackson County, Iowa; EXCEPTING therefrom that part thereof included within Parcel A as shown on the Plat of Survey recorded October 21, 1994 in Book 1-H Page 129 in the Office of the Recorder of Jackson County, Iowa; AND FURTHER EXCEPTING therefrom Parcel B as shown on the Plat of Survey recorded August 15, 2007 as Document No. 07-3667 in Book 1-R Page 95 in the Office of the Recorder aforesaid, said Parcel B containing 10.69 acres; together with all easements and servient estates appurtenant thereto, including a permanent easement for ingress and egress over the 25-foot wide strip of land running from Jackson County 17th Avenue to said Parcel B, as shown on the aforesaid Plat of Survey of Parcel B, and as governed by the Access Easement Agreement recorded October 4, 2007 as Document No. 07-4370; but subject to easements and restrictions of record, if any.

TOTAL ACREAGE: 51.06 total taxable acres. 40 acres, more or less of tillable ground. 9.60 acres enrolled in the CRP CP-33 Habitat Buffer Program, expiring on September 30, 2022. 3.6 acres enrolled in the CRP CP-3A Hardwood Tree Planting Program, expiring on September 30, 2027.

AVERAGE CSR: 39.10 (based on 48.05 acres of crop ground)

SALE: This farm property is being offered for sale by sealed bid. Bids must be in writing and include the name, address and telephone number of the bidder. Bids should be mailed or delivered to Steven J. Kahler, Attorney at Law, 123 N. Main Street, Maquoketa, IA 52060, and must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 16, 2022. Based upon the bids received the top 3 bidding parties will be contacted by telephone to submit a 2nd round of written bids to the law office of Schoenthaler, Bartelt, Kahler & Reicks no later than 1:00 p.m. on May 18, 2022.

CONTRACT FOR PURCHASE and DOWN PAYMENT: The successful bidder agrees to sign a contract to purchase the real estate by no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 18, 2022. The contract for purchase requires: A down payment of 10% of the purchase price upon signing to be paid in the form of cash, cashier's check, bank draft, money order or certified check made payable to Schoenthaler, Bartelt, Kahler & Reicks Trust Account, with the remaining 90% of the purchase price to be paid in cash at the closing; closing to be held at a mutually agreeable date, time and place on or about June 23, 2022. The contract for purchase will not contain any Buyer contingencies including, but not limited to, financing, and shall contain other usual terms and conditions for the sale of Jackson County farm real estate including, but not limited to, the proration of real estate taxes to the date of possession, and delivery of an Abstract of Title showing merchantable title to the real estate in the present owners.

FARM LEASE: Possession of the real estate to be given at closing subject to a farm lease for the 2022 crop year.

DISCLAIMER: All of the above information is believed to be accurate; however, no liability for its accuracy, errors or omissions is assumed. The bidders are responsible for conducting their own independent investigation with all due diligence concerning this property and the sale. **SELLERS DISCLAIM ALL WARRANTIES, EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED, AS TO THE SUBJECT REAL PROPERTY. THE REAL PROPERTY IS BEING SOLD IN ITS PRESENT CONDITION “AS IS”.**

TERMS: Only bids for the purchase of the entire farm are being solicited. Final bid is subject to Sellers' approval. **Sellers reserve the right to reject all bids.**

QUESTIONS: Call Attorney Steven Kahler (563) 652-4963



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FARMLAND FOR SALE

CHRISTOPHER C. BANDY & JULIANNA M. BANDY

“OLIN FARM” – 78 ACRES M/O/L

SECTION 2, TOWNSHIP 83 NORTH, RANGE 3
ROME TOWNSHIP, JONES COUNTY, IOWA

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: The NE¼ SW¼ and the W½ of Fractional Lot 2, all in Section 2, Township 83, North, Range 3, West of the 5th P.M., Jones County, Iowa, AND PARCEL 2012-133 in the SE¼ SW¼ of Section 2, Township 83, North, Range 3, West of the 5th P.M., Jones County, Iowa as shown by Plat of Survey in Plat Book U, Page 77 (and as Doc. No. 2012 3094) of the Jones County, Iowa records. SUBJECT TO the rights of the public in all highways and to all easements and agreements of record. Also conveying all easements and servient estates appurtenant thereto, including but not limited to the 30-foot wide easement acknowledged and agreed to in the Agreement dated and recorded November 9, 2012 as Document No. 2012-3329.

TOTAL ACREAGE: 78.87 total taxable acres. 76 acres, more or less of tillable ground.

AVERAGE CSR: 55.97 (based on 78.87 acres of crop ground)

SALE: This farm property is being offered for sale by sealed bid. Bids must be in writing and include the name, address and telephone number of the bidder. Bids should be mailed or delivered to Steven J. Kahler, Attorney at Law, 123 N. Main Street, Maquoketa, IA 52060, and must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 16, 2022. Based upon the bids received the top 3 bidding parties will be contacted by telephone to submit a 2nd round of written bids to the law office of Schoenthaler, Bartelt, Kahler & Reicks no later than 1:00 p.m. on May 18, 2022.

CONTRACT FOR PURCHASE and DOWN PAYMENT: The successful bidder agrees to sign a contract to purchase the real estate by no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 18, 2022. The contract for purchase requires: A down payment of 10% of the purchase price upon signing to be paid in the form of cash, cashier's check, bank draft, money order or certified check made payable to Schoenthaler, Bartelt, Kahler & Reicks Trust Account, with the remaining 90% of the purchase price to be paid in cash at the closing; closing to be held at a mutually agreeable date, time and place on or about June 23, 2022. The contract for purchase will not contain any Buyer contingencies including, but not limited to, financing, and shall contain other usual terms and conditions for the sale of Jones County farm real estate including, but not limited to, the proration of real estate taxes to the date of possession, and delivery of an Abstract of Title showing merchantable title to the real estate in the present owners.

FARM LEASE: Possession of the real estate to be given at closing subject to a farm lease for the 2022 crop year.

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TERMS: Only bids for the purchase of the entire farm are being solicited. Final bid is subject to Sellers' approval. **Sellers reserve the right to reject all bids.**

QUESTIONS: Call Attorney Steven Kahler (563) 652-4963

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(319) 627-2814

Atalissa City Council Regular Council Meeting Minutes Monday, April 11, 2022

The City Council of the City of Atalissa, Iowa, located at the City Hall 122 3rd Street in Atalissa, IA: Mayor Angie Dickey convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, April 11, 2022, pursuant to the rules of the Council. City Council Members in attendance: Brian VanDusen, Karen Rock and Scott Skubal. DeVore and Smock were absent. Staff Members in attendance: City Clerk Parry, Water/Sewer Operator Goodale and Police Chief Bowers.

Regular Council Meeting Minutes from March 14, 2022, approved. Rock/VanDusen (3/0) Special Council Meeting Minutes from March 25, 2022, approved. Skubal/Rock (3/0) Council approved March 2022 Treasurer's Report. Rock/Skubal (3/0)

Council motioned to approve April Claims List. Total: \$12,641.16. Rock/VanDusen (3/0)

Mike Smock, Atalissa Fire Chief, requested update on potential ISO rating change. Goodale is collecting data to send to Verisk for review. Report of culvert going in across Oak Street between 3rd and 4th streets. Mayor Dickey will follow up with Muscatine County Engineer for potential flood mitigation risks. Holiday decorations were taken down and stored last weekend by Atalissa Fire Department. Generator for the Atalissa Warming/Cooling Center is in and is awaiting the concrete pad to be poured before being installed. Mayor Dickey will follow up on Curb Stop locate for the fire station. Curb stop at 227 3rd Street was located by the resident. Atalissa Day is June 25th. Special Event permit and donation request will be submitted to the city council at the May council meeting.

Flyer was received for the Atalissa Easter Egg Hunt on April 16th, sponsored by the Atalissa Church of Christ.

Limbs were reported in creek behind 227 3rd Street. Resident will follow up on removal to lower risk of flooding.

Council approved Liquor License application for the Atalissa Community Fire Department. VanDusen/Rock (3/0)

Council reviewed and amended Curb Stop Locate Bid. Bids will be accepted through May 9, 2022. Rock/VanDusen (3/0)

Alternative options for the Spring Clean-up were reviewed. Clerk will follow-up with Oveson for an update on date options for Spring Clean-up.

Water/Sewer/Garbage rate audit from 2017/2018 was reviewed. Still awaiting response from IRWA to conduct a new rate study. Garbage Ordinance to be drafted to raise garbage rates \$2 per month. Council will review at regular May council meeting.

IT in a Box quote reviewed for Cyber Security and computer back up. Clerk will source other potential options/costs before council votes.

Clerk reported that Utility Bill Penalties and Disconnects will be resuming on 4/20/22. Periodic Exam completion was extended by the State Auditor until June 30, 2022. ARP reporting will be completed by the end of the month.

Police Report provided by Chief Bowers. Updated council on nuisance abatements and March hours.

Water/Sewer Report provided by Goodale. Sewer plant will be quoted to have clarifier repairs completed. Almost all new meters have been installed. There is a leak in the water system that is trying to be sourced. Goodale updated council on septic tanks that were located and pumped in March.

Angie Dickey, Mayor

**Attest:
Samantha Parry, City Clerk**

Claims Payable List April 2022	
State W/H, 1st qtr 2022-paid in march	\$11.00
April Payroll	1,576.67
941 Federal Tax, p/r taxes	280.40
IPERS, p/r taxes	287.17
Treasurer State of Iowa, wet tax	247.97
Treasurer State of Iowa, sales tax	22.63
Action Septic, 111 4th street	463.90
Alliant, electric	1,432.81
D&R Pest Control, quarterly service	50.00
Eastern Iowa Light & Power, electric	565.74
Freds Feed, office key	1.87
Hawkins, chlorine	515.50
Hygienic Labs, testing	415.00
IMFOA, annual dues	50.00
IA Dept of Rev, 1st qtr 2021 tax fee	24.91
Liberty Insurance, cyber police renewal	1,260.00
Midamerican, heating	98.80
Oveson Refuse & Recycling, april service	2,320.00
Uniform Den, channon uniform	288.18
USPS, letter postage	58.00
Water Services, apr main/mar hours-meter installs	2,316.50
West Liberty Index, legals	223.59
West Liberty State Bank, safe deposit box	24.00
Windstream, phone/internet	133.52
Total	\$12,641.16

Revenue March 2022	
General Fund	\$4,301.35
Road Use Fund	1,654.88
Local Option Sales Tax	5,384.18
Water Fund	5,854.59
Sewer Fund	5,588.04
Totals	\$22,783.04

Expenditures March 2022	
General Fund	\$5,621.26
Road Use Fund	729.61
Debt Service	
Water Fund	2,630.30
Sewer Fund	1,986.40
Total	\$10,967.57

Nichols City Council

April 13, 2022

Mayor Linsey Reimers called the regular meeting of the Nichols City Council to order at 6:59pm.

Other officials present: Police Chief Jirak, Fire Chief JJ Hudson, Wastewater Mgr McCleary, Clerk/Treasurer Schmitz.

Motions carried with all ayes unless noted otherwise. Council Approved Consent Agenda, meeting minutes 3/9/2022, Treasurer Report, and Expenditures of \$14,297.93, including payroll. Motion to approve- Lampe, Hora.

Committee Reports:
Wastewater Mgr Tim McCleary reported the sewer line had to be jettied on Monday in the alley north of Ijem, east of Railroad St.

Police Chief Jirak mentioned that reports of pet issues have not been as frequent as years past, which is good.

Fire Chief JJ Hudson Flynn reported the breakfast fundraiser served around 300 people and was successful. The bathroom remodel was completed before the fundraiser. The issues regarding the West Liberty Fire Dept and the 28E agreement with the surrounding communities was discussed. One of the main concerns for Nichols is EMS transport. Nichols First Responder President Kathy Esmoil was also present to express concern on the issue.

Old Business:
Clerk Schmitz reported the lawyer has approved the nuisance letter drafts that will be served soon.

New Business:
The mowing bid from Reimer's Lawn Care was accepted. Motion to approve- Hudson, Massey, 5-0.

Resolution 22021304-4 for Nichols voting procedures to follow the State of Iowa chapter 45, which would eliminate the need of a primary for municipal elections. Motion to approve- Lampe, Massey, 5-0.

Approval to continue mosquito spraying. Motion to approve- Grim, Hudson, 5-0.

Future agenda items include big trash pickup in June

& alley work.

Mayor Reimers adjourned the meeting at 7:32pm. Motion to approve- Hora, Grim.

The next regular meeting of the Nichols City Council will be Wednesday, May 11, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Aeneas Schmitz City Clerk/Treasurer	Linsey Reimers Mayor
Nichols City Expenditures for April 2022	
Alliant (City Hall), utility	\$151.09
Alliant (Fire Station), utility	710.64
Alliant (Lift Station), utility	55.93
Alliant (Park Security Light), utility	48.05
Alliant (Street Lights), utility	775.15
Bi-State, member dues	248.00
Casesy, fuel-police	90.72
Genex, fuel-fd	49.86
Dan Ronan Snowplow, snowplow	2,400.00
lon, sewer	900.00
Oveson Refuse, garbage	3,045.00
State Auditor, annual fee	550.00
Tony Solomon, fd remodel	278.40
JJ Hudson, fd remodel	230.80
W Liberty Index, city official postings	93.50
Windstream, utility-city hall	256.09
Windstream, utility-fd	\$66.51
Pre Pay Items	
April payroll	\$4,348.19
Total Expense	\$14,297.93

Muscatine County Board of Supervisors Monday, April 11, 2022

The Muscatine County Board of Supervisors met in regular session at 9:00 A.M. with Holliday, Mather, Sauer, Saucedo and Sorensen present. Chairperson Sauer presiding.

On a motion by Sorensen, second by Mather, the agenda was approved as presented. Ayes: All.

The Board reviewed a variance granted by the Muscatine County Board of Adjustment on April 1, 2022. Case #22-04-02 is an application filed by Ashton F. or Michael J. Phillips, Record Owners. This property is located in Seventy-Six Township, in the NE 1/4 of Sec. 27-T76N-R3W, 2626 Burlington Road, containing approximately 3.31 acres and is zoned A-1 Agricultural District. This request, if approved, would allow the Zoning Administrator to issue a Variance in order to build a detached accessory structure in front of their dwelling, but it would be at least 50 feet back from the front line. The Muscatine County Board of Adjustment felt there are unique property limitations on this property, such as topography, that make strict application of the setback requirements a hardship. They also noted that the proposed outbuilding would be approximately 130 feet from the front lot line, instead of the required 50 feet. On a motion by Sorensen, second by Holliday, the Board accepted the Variance. Ayes: All.

The Board reviewed a Special Use Permit granted by the Muscatine County Board of Adjustment on April 1, 2022. Case #22-04-01 is an application filed by Heather R. Kahl, Record Owner. This property is located in Cedar Township, in the NE 1/4 of Sec. 1-T76N-R4W, East of Estle Avenue, 2239 Estle Avenue, containing approximately 4.79 acres and is zoned A-1 Agricultural District. The Muscatine County Board of Adjustment stated the reasons for allowing the request include the proposed dwelling would be slightly closer than the minimum of 750 feet to two residences, however it was noted that the vegetation and the topography is such that this residence would be screened from sight and it would be at least 750 feet from the Confined Animal Feed Operation that was constructed in 1999, which is the minimum State of Iowa requirement from this facility. This request, if approved, would allow the Zoning Administrator to issue a special use permit in order for Ms. Kahl to build a one family dwelling on this property for herself to live in. On a motion by Saucedo, second by Sorensen, the Board accepted the Special Use Permit. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Mather, second by Sorensen, the Board set a public hearing for Monday, May 2, 2022 at 9:00 A.M. on a request from Michael J. Birkinbine of Simply-Lean Enterprises Inc., to rezone 6 acres in Fulton Township from A-1 Agricultural District to C-2 Commercial District. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Sorensen, second by Holliday, the Board approved the Muscatine County Auditor's Report of Fees collected for the quarter ending March 31, 2022 in the amount of \$1,583.75. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Sorensen, second by Saucedo, the Board approved the Muscatine County Treasurer's Report of Fees collected for the quarter ending March 31, 2021 in the amount of \$137,378.55. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Sorensen, second by Saucedo, the Board approved the Muscatine County Recorder's Report of Fees collected for the quarter ending March 31, 2022 in the amount of \$69,837.82. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Mather, second by Saucedo, the Board approved the 8-month application for a Class C Liquor, Sunday Sales and Outdoor Service Permit for The Chart House, Inc. dba The Lighthouse, 2142 Water Street, Muscatine, Iowa. Ayes: All.

On a motion by Sorensen, second by Saucedo, the Board approved the minutes of the April 4, 2022 regular meeting. Ayes: All.

Correspondence:
All Supervisors received a letter from Gene Hammons with questions on the emergency management services for cities and townships.

All Supervisors received an email from County Engineer Keith White regarding Iowa House File 2536 regarding an act allowing vehicles transporting certain agricultural commodities on non-interstate highways to exceed maximum gross weight limits.

All Supervisors received an email from Saucedo regarding the final edit of the new West Liberty athletic complex on the current West Liberty High School campus.

Mather received several calls from residents regarding the 2022 Muscatine County Assessment Notice.

Sorensen received a letter from a resident in support of the new Muscatine health care clinic.

Saucedo received an email from the City of Muscatine regarding a grant for Kraft Heinz Company to upgrade the property. Saucedo contacted Kraft Heinz Company with the grant information.

Holliday received a call from a resident regarding a culvert at Keokuk and Bayfield Road. Holliday contacted County Engineer Keith White.

Committee & Meeting Reports:
Saucedo attended a meeting with Muscatine Mayor Brad Bark regarding county residents having allowed access to the transfer station to dispose of oil and grass clippings on April 8, 2022.

Saucedo attended a Habitat for Humanity Ground-breaking Ceremony on April 10, 2022.

Saucedo and Sorensen attended a Housing meeting on April 5, 2022.

Holliday attended the Muscatine County Fairgrounds Clean Up Day on April 9, 2022.

Mather attended the Muscatine Community Health Association meeting on April 6, 2022.

Mather attended the Mississippi Valley Workforce Area Board meeting on April 7, 2022.

Mather attended the Seventh Judicial District Department of Correctional Services Board on April 8, 2022.

Sorensen attended the Eastern Iowa Mental Health and Disability Service Region meeting on April 4, 2022.

On a motion by Sorensen, second by Saucedo, the Board approved Resolution #04-11-22-01 Endorsing "Ignite Vitality Through Workforce Housing" as the County's housing plan. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: All.

RESOLUTION #04-11-22-01
ENDORING IGNITE VITALITY THROUGH WORK-

Kent makes big donation

Kent Corporation has announced that they will be matching up to \$4 million in community donations to support the Mulberry Health Clinic Project in Muscatine, it was announced recently by the Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine.

"We are inspired by the generosity of Kent Corporation to support quality health care and leverage community resources through their matching gift," said Jamie Leza, Vice President of Operations, Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine. "Contributions from the community will now have double the impact to ensure access to primary local health care, ultimately leading to improved outcomes and increased quality of life."

The Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine in conjunction with the Muscatine Health Support Fund is leading a \$14 million project to build a new, three floor, 42,000 square foot, health clinic facility that is operated by

UnityPoint Health and connected to the UnityPoint Health – Trinity Muscatine Hospital.

The new clinic will include room for four additional providers, as well as improved spaces for all twenty existing providers as a Patient Centered Medical Home, a health care delivery model aimed to improve quality, efficiency, and experience of patients and providers.

"Muscatine is KENT's home, and the company is committed to the people, economy, and community of Muscatine. The Muscatine Health Support Fund Committee, along with the Community Foundation of Greater Muscatine, has done a tremendous job in the planning and development of the Mulberry Clinic," said Carol Reynolds, Corporate Spokesperson. "With the replacement of the facility, the new clinic building has the potential to provide the people of Muscatine with first-class healthcare for another 50 years. KENT believes a strong community has to have a strong healthcare system. We are asking fellow businesses and private citizens to please join us in supporting this capital investment in our community."

The necessary funding for the project will be derived from a philanthropic campaign primarily directed at targeted local businesses, industries, and community members, in addition to funding commitments already received in support of the project from the Muscatine Health Support Fund, Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust, and Muscatine County.

The project is anticipated to have an 18-month construction period with completion in October 2023. The new facility will provide easy access to lab and radiology, in-patient and out-patient services, and service delivery for emergent issues. The adjacent location of the new facility will allow for continued operation of the current clinic during construction.

For more information, contact the Community Foundation at 563-264-3863.

FORCE HOUSING AS MUSCATINE COUNTY'S HOUSING PLAN

WHEREAS, the Muscatine County Board of Supervisors recognizes the significant impact a healthy housing market has on the economic and social conditions of the county; and

WHEREAS, the County can impact housing conditions through the adoption of policies; and

WHEREAS, Ignite Vitality Through Workforce Housing identifies an array of strategies to support housing development within the County.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Muscatine County Board of Supervisors:

1. Endorses Ignite Vitality Through Workforce Housing to address housing conditions within the County.
2. Appoints Board members Jeff Sorensen and Santos Saucedo to represent the County on the Housing Council.
3. Commits to identify and take steps to support implementation of appropriate strategies to further the plan.

Passed and approved this 11th day of April, 2022.

ATTEST:

/s/Tibe Vander Linden

Muscatine County Auditor

/s/Scott Sauer, Chairperson

Muscatine County Board of Supervisor

On a motion by Sorensen, second by Mather, the Board authorized the Chair to sign a letter of support for a Community Project Funding proposal to replace the Mulberry Health Clinic building. Ayes: All.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:26 A.M.

ATTEST:

Tibe Vander Linden

County Auditor

Scott Sauer, Chairperson

Board of Supervisors

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Qualifications:

Must be high school graduate or equivalent. Associates degree in business or related field preferred. Work experience with an electric utility is desirable. Successful candidates must have knowledge of general office equipment and computer experience, including Microsoft Office products. Must possess excellent communication and interpersonal skills and be able to work in a team environment.

Background and reference checks are required.

If interested in this position, please send your resume to: careers@easterniowa.com or mail your resume to: Human Resources at Eastern Iowa Light and Power Cooperative, PO Box 3003, Wilton, Iowa 52778. Applications accepted until filled.

Eastern Iowa Light and Power Cooperative is an Equal Opportunity Employer - Minorities/ Females/ Vets/ Disabled



Races attract 74 cars at West Liberty Speedway

While the cold temperatures and wind made for less than ideal racing weather, the covered grandstands of the historic West Liberty Raceway were nearly full of race fans to see 2022 season opening event. Kile Motorsports Racing Events hosted six classes of race cars competing for a payout of over \$23K for the first of eight scheduled races being held this season.

A total of 74 race cars signed in and began the show with hot laps, followed by qualifying heat races, and ending the night with feature events for the six classes.

The first of the features was a 15-lap race for the Ag Services & Products Stock Cars. At the drop of the green flag, the competitors took the first corner with three-wide racing at the front of the field. Bristol Dirt Nationals Stock Car feature winner, Dustin Vis of Martell, IA took the lead on the first lap in the 20V car and never looked back. The 72H driven by Miciah Hidlebaugh of Manlo, IA got loose and spun in turn 4 on lap 4, resulting in a restart with the field of cars lined up side by side and the 20V of Vis in a row by himself to set the pace. The 20V took to the middle line around the track while the 00 of Johnny Spaw took advantage of the top side, gaining ground. Spaw, from Cedar Rapids, continued to pick off the competition gaining a total of six positions and taking over second position behind Vis.

As the laps turned to double digits, Spaw continued to close the gap on the race leader, but Vis held off his competitor to take the checkers. Spaw was followed by the 72H of Hidlebaugh taking third, the 27 of Matt Picray finishing fourth, and the 32 of Tom Cannon rounding out the top five.

The Chown Appliance Sport Compacts came next with a lower car count due to several cars scratched from the event. Despite the lower number of competitors, this feature event started off with side by side racing throughout the field on their first lap. Pole sitter Alex Hayes in the 23H stayed vigilant in retaining the top spot throughout the race and created a cushion of space between himself and the competition. An exciting tug-of-war for third position went on for third position between the 19L of Trent Lebarge and the 24A of Ashton Blain midway through the 10 lap feature. Hayes maintained the lead and took the checkered followed by Michael Lundeen in the 27, Lebarge in the 19L, 65C of Colton Stewart, and the 24A of Blain.

With the highest car count of the show, the Aupp Automotive Sport Modifieds took to the track with their 15-lap feature event. The line-up set defending All Iowa Points Champion Logan Anderson as the pole sitter in his 53 sport modified, which is designed to replicate the Hollywood automotive film character Herby the Love Bug. Under green with Anderson leading the way, a three-way battle took place for fourth position between the 9W of Ryan Walker, the 17C of Shane Paris, and the 32X of Skylar Woods. Lapped traffic became an obstacle for the front-runners by lap 10, but the 53 of Anderson weaved his way through without losing position. After Anderson took the white flag, the 71J of Justin Schroeder coasted down the front stretch causing thea yellow, which ended the race. Anderson took the win in the 53 followed by the 17C of Paris, the 00 of Shawn Slaughter, the 9W of Ryan Walker, and the 32X of Woods.

Auto Parts CarQuest Hobby Stocks came next with their 10-lap feature event. The 4R of Randy LaMar set the pace and led the first lap, but the 0 car of Ryan Havel quickly took over the top spot, leading the field for the remainder of the race. There was some three-wide racing action for third between David Crimmins in the 16C, the 14J of Jacob Floyd, and the 55 of Cody Staley midway through the race. Lapped traffic threatened our leader's position to pace setter LaMar on lap 7, but Havel held onto the top spot and took the checkered flag and

the win. He was followed by LaMar in the 4R, Crimmins in the 16C, Staley in the 55, and James Pilkington in the 22.

The 83 car of Jake Bridge set the pace for the Pit Crew BBW Late Models. Heat winner Andy Eckrich in the 56 took over the lead and continued to hold that position throughout the race. Nick Marolf in the 33 ran in third with sparks coming from his brakes as he went into turn 1. The 07 of Matt Ryan took over third from Marolf, and by lap 11 Marolf came off the pace, pulling into the infield pit area. A late race battle for fourth took place between the 74 of Ron Boyse and the 10 of Jacob Waterman with Waterman coming out on top. Eckrich took the checkers in the lead followed the 83 of Bridge, the 07 of Ryan, the 10 of Waterman, and the 74 of Boyse.

The night closed out with a 20-lap feature for the JR's Car & Truck Repair

Modifieds. Ray Cox, Jr in the 11 car set the pace alongside another Bristol Dirt Nationals feature (Sport Modifieds) in the 30M, Maguire DeJong. With two scratches, the field of 15 modifieds took the green and the teenage DeJong took a generous lead away from his competition. Chris Zogg racing the 9Z worked his way from his 11th place starting position through the field to challenge the 99 of Charlie Mohr for third position. Mohr spun on lap 12, which brought tough competition to start right behind DeJong. The race leader took to the cushion at the restart. The 21T of Mike McKinney battled Zogg for second until the white flag was shown. McKinney went too high in the final turn and over-corrected, coming down and causing himself and the 9Z of Zogg to spin. DeJong took the win in his first race in a modified, followed by the 20 of Brandon

Schmitt, the 77 of Kurt Kile, the 33x of Dan Roedl, and the 11 of Ray Cox, Jr.

Kile Motorsports Racing Events with the help of the Lil' Racer Car Club randomly selected a trophy presenter to give feature winners 3-foot tall red and gold trophies generously sponsored by MidWest One Bank in West Liberty. Saturday night's trophy presenter was 12-year-old Gage Moore from West Branch, who also took home his very own trophy to keep.

Kile Motorsports Racing Events would like to thank the fans, race teams, and workers for making this a successful show. They would also like to give a special thanks to the West Liberty Fire Department and the Speedway Fire Rescue for their work keeping all race team members, attendees, and staff safe. Lastly, they want to thank the Muscatine County Fair Board.

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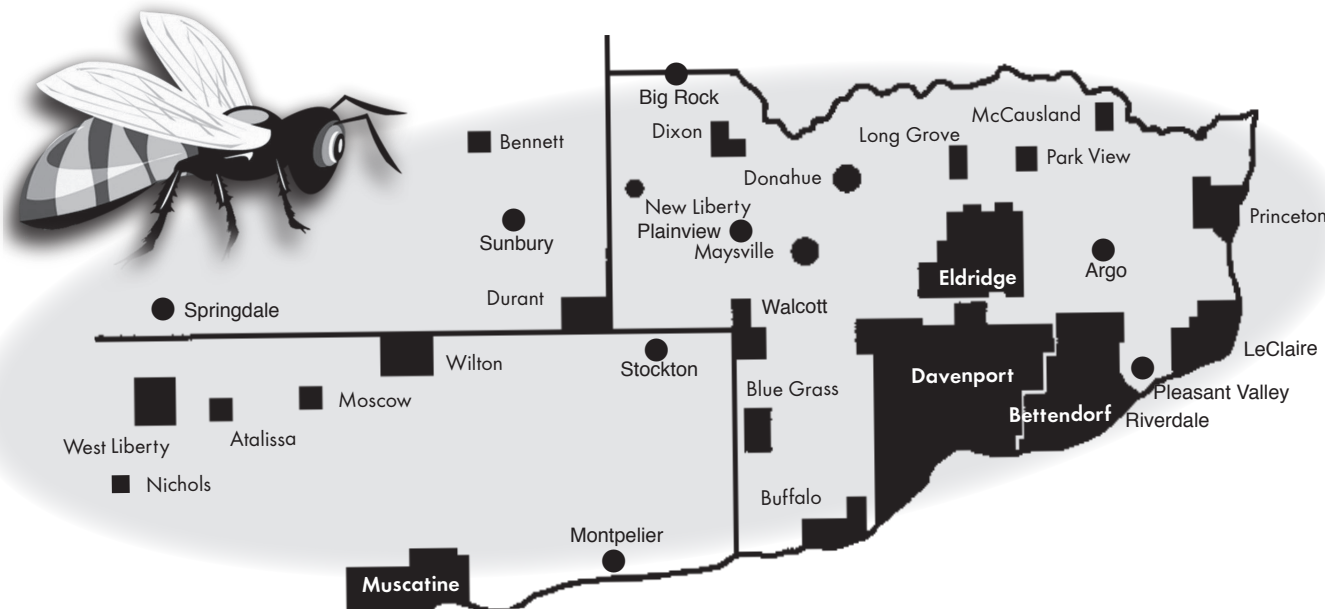
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Special prize winners gathered for this photo following the Sons of the American Legion Easter Egg Hunt at Kimberly Park in West Liberty Saturday morning. Below left, Paisley Daufeldt shows her prize winning egg. Below right, Ares and Aubree Aragon are happy about being at the hunt. Mom Genny Escareno said Ares was one of the kids that got the bunny in the field and won a basket. "He then gave the bunny to his little sister," she said.

Index photos by Phyllis Owen Sterba

Hunting down eggs

A better than anticipated crowd turned out on a chilly spring Saturday morning in Kimberly Park for the Mansell L. Phillip Sons of the American Legion Post 509 Easter Egg Hunt, where 120 dozen eggs were hidden according to members of the organization.

The event, being held for the first time in three years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, drew families from all over the West Liberty area and most were not disappointed as 20 prize Easter Baskets were given out to kids who found specially marked eggs.

Winners included Whitt Bowers, Forrest Hansen, Logan Sedlack Kruse, Lucy Schaapveld, Elliot Lopez, Ares Aragon, Yadrian Gallegos, Emmanuel Guerrero, Zen Ortiz, Addilyn Parizek, Dyker Distler, Pollias, Dylan Harvey, Susi Rivi, Paisley Daufeldt, Simone Fraser, Keilah Perdome, Raelynn Bowers, Cesar Almendarez and Lula Lopez. (Pardon any misspellings - some names were difficult to read from the list).

The Sons of the American Legion said the event would not be possible without donations from a number of area businesses and individuals including Precilla Haessig, MidWestOne Bank, JJ Nichting Company, Wiele Chevrolet, Buysse Enterprise LLC, Fred's Feed & Supply, Jeff's Market, Liberty Communications, U.S. Body Works-Tom 'Dog' Christiansen, Martin Agency Insurance Services, Active Health Chiropractic Clinic, West Liberty Golf & Country Club, JB's Pub and Grub, Ferrelgas- Ron Jacobs, Casey's General Store, West Liberty Index, West Liberty State Bank, Wink's Tap & Grill and the Sons of the American Legion Post 509.



Macey McDonald was all bundled up for the hunt.

Every year at the West Liberty Easter Egg Hunt, the family of the late Amos and Joann Morrison gather. Amos belonged to the Legion and it all just became a family tradition. The family loves Easter and Kelmo said they have never missed a year! Dozens turned out for the event, hosted by the Sons of the American Legion Post 509.

Index photos by Phyllis Owen Sterba

The hunt was on!

Sons of the American Legion member Jeff Owen gives instructions before sending dozens of youngsters on a hunt for Easter Eggs Saturday morning at Kimberly Park in West Liberty. The chilly morning didn't detour many kiddos from participating in the hunt, held for the first time in three years by the organization that is part of the Mansell L. Phillips American Legion Post 509. More photos and list of winners and donors on page 19.

Index photo by Phyllis Owen Sterba



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