



THE LAKES NEWS SHOPPER™



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1 Peter 1:3&4 NIV

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TO MAKE YOUR PICKS:

Enter Online at LakesNewsShopper.com

Or Enter in Person by circling your picks & dropping this form at The Lakes News Shopper by 4:00 PM Friday, February 6 for your chance to

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- PICK #3** First team to score a touchdown: Seahawks or Patriots
- PICK #4** First team to score a field goal: Seahawks or Patriots



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- PICK #5** Team with the most rushing yards: Seahawks or Patriots
- PICK #6** Team with the most passing yards: Seahawks or Patriots
- PICK #7** Team with the most turnovers: Seahawks or Patriots
- PICK #8** Team with the longest touchdown: Seahawks or Patriots



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Sat. 7:30 a.m. - 6 p.m. • Sun. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

- PICK #9** Winning call of coin toss: Heads or Tails
- PICK #10** National Anthem: Over 115 seconds or Under 115 seconds
- PICK #11** First team to have a penalty: Seahawks or Patriots
- PICK #12** Sam Darnold touchdowns: 2 or over OR Under 2



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HOURS: MON.-FRI. 4PM
SAT. 11AM | SUN. 2PM

- PICK #13** Drake May touchdowns: 2 or over OR Under 2
- PICK #14** Jaxon Smith-Njiba receiving yards: 50 or over OR under 50
- PICK #15** Who'll have more passing yards: Darnold or May
- PICK #16** How many total field goals will there be? 3 or more OR under 3



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SEVING YOU 7 DAYS A WEEK FOLLOW US ON 

- PICK #17** Who will have more penalty yards? Seahawks or Patriots
- PICK #18** Who will have more turnovers? Seahawks or Patriots
- PICK #19** Who will have more sacks? Seahawks or Patriots
- PICK #20** Who will have more punting yards? Seahawks or Patriots



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- PICK #21** Who will win the time of possession? Seahawks or Patriots
- PICK #22** Will Snoop Dog be in a Super Bowl Commercial? Yes or No
- PICK #23** Which team will score first? Seahawks or Patriots
- PICK #24** Which team will score last? Seahawks or Patriots

2 TIE BREAKERS: Total Super Ball Half Time Score: _____ **AND:** Total Super Ball Final Score: _____

Name: _____ Town: _____ Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

One entry per person. The winner will be whoever chooses the most correct picks. For rules go to: LakesNewsShopper.com

Birthday Announcement
Mary Ellen Inbody will celebrate her 92nd birthday on February 6, 2026. Her family would like to honor her with a card shower. Your warm wishes can reach Mary Ellen at Accura Health Care of Milford, 1600 13th Street, Room 212, Milford, Iowa 51351.

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WINNERS in the 2026 Winter Games Bridge Tournament, held Friday, January 23, at St. Joseph Catholic Church, in Milford, were, left to right, Lois Koelder, high, and Susan Reiser, low. (Photo courtesy Denise Cole)

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LOVE LOCAL

this Valentine's Day

Love Local Contest Details

To Enter the Drawing, LNS Readers & Online Followers Must:

1. Follow the participating businesses under the "LNS Love Local" header(s) on their social media business pages.

2. Comment on The LNS Facebook Page by Thurs., Feb 5th at 5pm with your top choice for a gift certificate from a participating business for a chance to win!

3. Tag a friend!

A random drawing will be held on Feb. 6th to determine winners of this weeks gift certificates.

Stay tuned for week two of The LNS Love Local Promotion!



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Midwest
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Midwest Wealth Management Announces
Rebranding to Midwest Wealth Group

Midwest Wealth Group to Elevate Client Services with Expanded Resources and Enhanced Financial Solutions

As 2026 gets underway, Midwest Wealth Management is excited to announce a significant evolution in its brand identity and service capabilities. Effective immediately, Midwest Wealth Management will operate as Midwest Wealth Group, reflecting the organization's expanded range of financial services and dedication to guiding clients confidently through their financial journeys.

This rebrand coincides with a strategic new partnership with Raymond James, granting Midwest Wealth Group access to advanced tools, in-depth research, and a broader array of resources designed to help clients pursue their long-term financial goals more effectively.

Alongside its new name a newly designed website, Midwest-WealthGroup.com (formerly PlanWisely.com) will provide an improved digital experience and more accessible client resources. Client communications will also transition to updated email addresses ending in @midwestwealthgroup.com.

Despite these exciting changes, Midwest Wealth Group remains steadfast in its commitment to personalized service. Clients will continue working with the trusted team they know, dedicated to putting their best interests at the forefront of every financial decision.

"We are thrilled to embark on this new chapter as Midwest Wealth Group," said Brittany Koch, VP Wealth Management. "Our partnership with Raymond James and enhanced service offerings position us to serve our clients better than ever before. We look forward to supporting their financial success for years to come."

Through comprehensive financial planning and wealth management services, Midwest Wealth Group helps individuals and families with their financial aspirations, striving to provide confidence and clarity. Securities offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc., member FINRA/SIPC. Securities are not insured by any financial institution insurance, the FDIC/NCUA or any other government agency, are not deposits or obligations of the financial institution, are not guaranteed by the financial institution, and are subject to risks, including the possible loss of principal. Investment advisory services offered through Raymond James Financial Services Advisors, Inc. Bank Midwest and Midwest Wealth Management are not a registered broker/dealer and is independent of Raymond James.

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Feb. 18: Ash Wednesday - 5 pm service

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View From The Bench

by John Adams, Jr.

Cyclones Bounce Back from Mid-January Slide

Iowa State had its best start ever, winning 16 straight games and earning a #2 ranking, but on January 13th they stumbled, suffering a lopsided 84-63 defeat against Kansas at Phog Allen Field House. That game didn't raise a lot of flags as many teams struggle in Phog Allen Field House and Iowa State was facing a very desperate Kansas team who had fallen out of the rankings and was just 1-2 in the Big 12 Conference at the time (they have now won five in a row and are 6-2). The Cyclones' next game, however, caused many to question if this team was as good as their #2 ranking and if they were hitting their usual late-season slide where they look wore down from how hard they practice and play, as Iowa State lost 79-70 at Cincinnati to a very mediocre Bearcat team. The Cyclones looked listless and a step-slow in both defeats, and had their script of success, forcing turnovers and scoring points off those turnovers, flipped on them in both games as they forced just 13 total turnovers in the two losses.

Fast forward two weeks and it appears that those two losses served as a nice mid-January wake-up call for the Cyclones. Iowa State has won four games in a row by an average score of 90.8-64. Now, it certainly has helped that the schedule got a bit easier but included in those wins are probable NCAA Tournament teams UCF and Oklahoma State (on the road). Iowa State's latest win came on Sunday, when they demolished Kansas State in Bramlage Coliseum 95-61 exactly one year ago when in a similar situation of records, Kansas State came into Ames and upset Iowa State. The Cyclones were definitely not going to let that happen, as they jumped on the Wildcats early and never let up, taking a 50-21 lead into halftime. Kansas State came out with a 10-4 run to start the second half, but a TJ Otzelberger timeout squished that run as Iowa State answered with an 11-0 run to blow the game wide open again. The most impressive stat from Sunday's blowout win is that the Cyclones had 28 assists on 33 of their field goals, just an amazing number that shows how unselfish this team plays. Balance is key for this Iowa State team, and that showed again on Sunday with five players scoring in double figures: Joshua Jefferson (19), Milan Momcilovic (18), Tamin Lipsey (16), Killyan Toure (13) and Nate Heise (11). Lipsey added nine assists while Jefferson added eight rebounds and Momcilovic continued his torrid 3-point shooting, hitting 5/9. The junior from Pewaukee, WI, leads the nation in 3-point shooting at an astounding 54%, hitting 88/163.

Iowa State enters their bye week at 20-2 and 7-2 in the Big 12, and as we go to press a #8 ranking, I am guessing that jumps a spot or two later on Monday. The Big 12 is the best conference in college basketball, with the BIG not too far behind, and the schedule after next week becomes an absolute beast for Iowa State, as they will host #14 Kansas on February 14, #10 Houston on February 16th, go to #13 BYU on February 21st, host #11 Texas Tech on February 28th and then travel to #1 Arizona on March 2nd. I'm not going to put the John Jinx on this year's Iowa State team and make any predictions on how far this year's team can go, let's just say to buckle up, it's going to be one fun run, Cyclone fans!!

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9/7/2025 - 5/24/2026

SUNDAY

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EDUCATION
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JOYKIDS Resumes Tomorrow, Feb. 4 • 3:30PM

Dance in Brewster

Steve Lang and Bobby will be providing music for the dance on Saturday, February 14th, at the Brewster Legion, 7-10:30. Great music and dancing so come and enjoy the evening.





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EDUCATION CLASSES

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Feb. 5, Mar. 19, Apr. & May 21
10am-9pm, Come and Go | \$10/\$15

Each month, florist, April Junge, of Hometown Florals, will curate a unique arrangement featuring distinctive blooms and unusual vases—perfect for artists of all styles. Bring your own supplies and work in any medium you choose. Drop-ins welcome. This is an open studio, self lead class. All Levels, 16+



CLOVERLEAF BASKET WEAVING
With Sandie Smith

Thursday, Feb. 26 | 5:30-7pm and Saturday, Mar. 7 | 10am-3pm | \$55/\$65 | Intermediate, 18+

Join us to create a lucky handwoven treasure with this two-part intermediate basket weaving workshop. Featuring a distinctive cloverleaf design at the base, this basket is perfect for St. Patrick's Day or just because! With guidance of instructor Sandie Smith, students will work with round reeds to shape, form, and finish a unique basket that highlights both skill and creativity. Register by Feb. 18

CULINARY CLASSES

Date Night Cooking Class
With Marisa Sides of Rissy's Dry Rubs and Seasonings

6pm | \$160/\$170 per Couple
Must register 3 days prior to each class.

A little flour, a little wine and a lot of love, the perfect date night with Marisa!

Friday, Feb. 13: Buttery Lobster Ravioli
Friday, Mar. 13: A Night In Naples
Friday, Apr. 24: Summer Grilled Tri-Tip with Salsa Verde

Create & Savor Cooking Class
With Marisa Sides of Rissy's Dry Rubs and Seasonings

Saturdays | 6pm | \$80/\$90
Registration required 3 days before each class.

In this hands-on cooking class, Marisa will guide you in preparing a delicious decadent meal, glass of wine included!


Feb. 14: Buttery Lobster Ravioli
Mar. 14: A Night In Naples

Winter Comfort Food
With Jay Norton of The Hen House

\$100/\$110 per dinner | 6pm
Registration required 2 days before each class.

Thursday, Feb. 19: Southern Cooking
Thursday, Mar. 12: Irish Country Supper

Join Chef Jay at the kitchen counter for a small group experience of timeless favorites! A glass of wine is served with each dinner.




THE LAKES NEWS
Auction Calendar

Tues., Feb. 3 – 10:30 AM— 3 tract land auction in Dickinson Co., IA. Auctioneers: Zomer Company Land Management. 712-470-2526. www.zomercompany.com.

Sat., Feb. 7 – 9:00 AM— Coin auction in Windom, MN. Auctioneer: Gravley. 507-822-0403. www.auctionsgo.com.

Thurs., Feb. 19 – 10:00 AM— 80 acres at auction in Royal, IA. Auctioneers: Midwest Land Management. 712-262-3110. www.midwestlandmanagement.com.

 **Page 2B**

Worship at the Rock – A Fresh Beginning
“And on this rock I will build my church.” – Matthew 16:18

You're invited to experience Worship at the Rock, a reimagined contemporary worship gathering at Spirit Lake United Methodist Church.

Thoughtfully designed to be engaging, welcoming, and meaningful, this new worship experience stays grounded in who we are—loving God and neighbor, connecting with one another, serving our community, and growing in faith.

Whether you're searching, returning, or simply curious, **Worship at the Rock** offers a space to connect hearts to God and to each other, encounter Christ in fresh ways, and discover a community where you truly belong.

Grand Re-Opening:
Sunday, February 15th at 10:30am
Spirit Lake United Methodist Church

Come As You Are. Come Be Connected.
Find Your Place at the Rock.

 **Spirit Lake United Methodist Church**

1812 Gary Ave. Spirit Lake, IA
712-336-3115 | spiritlakeumc.org

Lakes Area Activity/Senior Center


Stop in and see what we have to offer!!!

SCHEDULED PRESENTATIONS/EVENTS:

Tuesday, February 3, 12:30 PM — “Nature Center”: Danika’s theme this week will be “Animal Courtship”
Tuesday, February 10, 12:30 PM — DeNeitt — RSVP Coordinator
Tuesday, February 17, 12:30 PM — Mary Prentice — Topic: Medicare Updates
Tuesday, February 24 12:00 PM — Dickinson County Public Health will be providing free blood pressure checks

Thursdays - 11:00 AM - TaiChi
Fridays - 9:50 AM - Chair Yoga

UPCOMING BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER
Sunday, Feb. 15 • 8:30 AM-Noon



SIGN UP FOR FEBRUARY DINNER DATE MEALS!
Reserve your meal for next week
Low Cost: \$7-\$10 Donation
A Gift Certificate for Dinner Date Meals is the Perfect Gift!

9 Monday Taco Pasta Vegetable Fruit Bread	10 Tuesday Shepherd's Pie Fruit Bread	11 Wednesday Hot Beef, Gravy, Mashed Potatoes Vegetable Fruit & Bread	12 Thursday Chicken Salad Bun Vegetable Fruit	13 Friday BBQ Pork Bun Vegetable Fruit
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PLEASE CALL 712-336-5247 BY 1:00 PM FRIDAY TO RESERVE A MEAL FOR NEXT WEEK
Dinners are provided by **CARSTENSEN'S MEAT & GROCERY** of Lake Park. Meals are available for those 60 and older (and their spouse regardless of age)

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Daryl Madison Memorial Scholarship Established at ILCC

Iowa Lakes Community College is proud to announce the establishment of the Daryl Madison Memorial Scholarship, created in honor of the late Daryl Madison through generous donations from his family and friends.

The scholarship recognizes Daryl Madison's long-standing commitment to Iowa Lakes Community College and his unwavering support of Laker athletics. For many years, Madison served as a bus driver for Iowa Lakes athletic teams, traveling countless miles with student-athletes and becoming a familiar, encouraging presence at practices and competitions. More than transportation, Daryl provided consistent support, enthusiasm, and genuine care for the students he served.

"Daryl Madison represented everything we value at Iowa Lakes," said Dan Lutat, Executive Director of Foundation and Governmental Relations. "He showed up for our students time and time again, not for recognition, but because he truly believed in them and in the role athletics plays in shaping lives."

The Daryl Madison Memorial Scholarship will provide a \$2,000 award to a student-athlete involved in Men's Basketball, Women's Basketball, or Softball at Iowa Lakes Community College. The scholarship will support students who demonstrate dedication to their sport, their education, and the values of service and commitment that Daryl exemplified throughout his life.

"Through this scholarship, Daryl's legacy will continue in a very meaningful way," Lutat added. "It ensures that future student-athletes receive the same encouragement and support that Daryl so freely gave during his many years with Iowa Lakes athletics."

Madison's impact on Iowa Lakes athletics was formally recognized in 2023 when he and his wife, Sue Madison, were inducted into the Iowa Lakes Athletics Hall of Fame for their years of dedication and support.

For additional information about the Daryl Madison Memorial Scholarship or to inquire about contributing, please contact the Iowa Lakes Community College Foundation Office.

South Dakota State Announces Fall 2025 dean's list

Area students were recognized for their outstanding academic performance over the fall 2025 semester at South Dakota State University by being named to the dean's list.

To earn dean's list distinctions in SDSU's colleges, students must have completed a minimum of 12 credits and must have earned at least a 3.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale. Overall, 4,147 students from 40 states and 31 foreign nations are on the list. Congratulations to these distinguished scholars on earning this academic achievement.

Congratulations to the following area students:

Arnolds Park- Elli Hanson.
Estherville- Benjamin Borchers Carly Grange and Leah Williams.

Everly - Haley Berends.
Harris - Emma Graves.
Lake Park - Madison Gilmore and Ava Rasche of Lake Park.
Milford - Grace Jones.

Ocheyedan - Macey Hoekstra and Abigail Otto.
Spencer - Faythe Beall, Sean Connor, Ethan Hansen, Davis Hogge, Kaylee Iedema, Blake Kooker, Matayah Lowe, Sadie Nelson, Mallory Salton, Megan Schauer, Kale Schueller, Brogan Seier, Jacie Staedtler, Alec Stanley, Sydney Stanley, Aubrie Stell, Gavin Timmer and Ashley Vreeman.

Spirit Lake - Sophia La Doux, Megan Sandison, Abigail Slater and Kendyl Summers.

Jackson - Ashlyn Bohl, Samantha Henning, Lauren Johnson, Alexis O'Reilly, Braxton Pavelko, Bailee Pohlman, Sydney Sadusky, Meta Tewes, and Haley Tvinnereim.

Lakefield - Brylee Anderson, Thomas Liepold, Timothy Salentiny, and Audien Ybarra-Kraft.

Kiwanis Bingo Nights

Milford Kiwanis presents Bingo Nights on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. The next Milford Kiwanis Bingo Nights will be Thursday, February 12 and 26. Card sales begin at 5:30 and Bingo is from 6:00-8:00. A meal will be provided by the VFW Auxiliary for just \$7.00. The Spirit Lake VFW is located at 914 Lake Street. Bingo profits support Milford youth needs, programs, and scholarships.



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The importance of positive relationships

by Steve Weisman

Over the 33 years that I taught high school English and Journalism, directed plays and coached a wide range of sports, I learned the importance of building positive relationships with both colleagues, students and athletes. The more cohesive each class, group and team became, the better they performed.

Now, that didn't mean they all became straight A students or were all conference, all district or all state competitors, but the ones who bought in became better as individuals, groups and teams. I found it important both in the classroom and in athletics to celebrate successes in a positive way while continuing to execute and build with passion and a belief in what we were trying to accomplish.

An extension of this became the buy-in from the parents and then the community. Let's face it. The schools are really the hub of our communities. When all parts of the puzzle become part of the solution and celebrate the successes, it becomes a win-win. Once again, these successes don't have to result in a state championship. It can simply be doing our best as individuals. As a group with positive parental and community support, it's a win-win! Now, even though I am long past my teaching career, I still relish the opportunity to see schools and communities working together to become the best that they can be.

It Takes a Village
Really, this theme of creating positive relationships is the base from which all success is derived. As we get into the swing of things for 2026, I'd like to take a moment to issue a challenge for all of us. We live in a wonderful area with some of the greatest natural resources. The lakes, the public lands offer us so much. However, they are in need of protection.

We need to do more to protect our land and water. Each of us can do our part where we live and recreate, but there is also a bigger picture. We need to continue to come together in our

communities through organizations that work toward these goals. Through a membership, we can provide financial support, volunteer to help accomplish tasks and encourage others to join us in our efforts.

There are so many awesome non-profit organizations that we can be a part of. Just think back to last August's Blue Water Festival, where over 30 clean water/natural resources organizations shared their story. It was a time to share our collective successes and also to realize that there is much more to do. Here, then, is my challenge to all of us!

Becoming involved
We have so many options. Here are just a few. We have our county conservation boards, the Iowa Great Lakes Pheasants Forever, the Clay County Pheasants Forever, the Iowa Great Lakes Fishing Club, the different lake protective associations (Okoboji Protective Association, Spirit Lake Protective Association, the East Okoboji Lakes Improvement Corporation, Center Lake Improvement and Preservation and the Silver Lake Park Improvement Association) and the Friends of the Lakeside Lab, which supports water quality monitoring, environmental education and research initiatives.

Then on the state level there are organizations like the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, the Audubon Society, the Nature Conservancy of Iowa, the Iowa Environmental Council, Ducks Unlimited, just to name a few.

What I have found being part of these organizations is that, yes, there are membership dues, but it is through our volunteering that so much of the meaningful work gets completed. At the same time, there is a comradery and a joy when a plan comes together! Again, much of the success of these organizations goes back to building those positive relationships. When they do, we truly become a part of "The Village," and our lakes and natural resources benefit greatly!

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Okoboji Foundation Invites Grant Applications for 2026

Capital projects that strengthen lake quality, arts and culture, and outdoor recreation encouraged to apply

The Okoboji Foundation has opened its 2026 grant application cycle, inviting nonprofit organizations serving the Iowa Great Lakes region to apply for funding support. Through its annual grant program, the Foundation invests in capital projects that create lasting community impact across the region.

Grant funding supports capital projects that are focused on the Foundation's primary areas of interest including Lake Quality and Environment, Arts and Culture, and Outdoor Experiences and Recreation, with an emphasis on projects that are visible, broadly accessible, and sustainable.

"Each year, we are inspired by the passion and creativity of organizations working to strengthen our communities," said Mindy Gress, President of the Okoboji Foundation. "No project is ever too small to be considered. What matters most is the vision behind it and the long-term benefit it brings to the Iowa Great Lakes region."

Eligible applicants include 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations and government entities. Organizations without nonprofit status may apply through a qualified fiscal sponsor. Grant funds are designated for capital projects and may not be used for operational expenses, marketing costs, school uniforms, or short-term programming.

In 2025, the Okoboji Foundation awarded \$378,000 in Leadership Grants to support major community projects throughout the region. When combined with Youth in Philanthropy grants, total funding distributed reached \$472,462. Since its founding in 1988, the Foundation has awarded more than \$5.8 million in discretionary grants to strengthen communities across the Iowa Great Lakes area.

Grant applications must be submitted online by March 1, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. Organizations are strongly encouraged to review the grant guidelines available on the Foundation's website prior to applying. Foundation staff are available to answer questions, discuss project ideas, and help direct applicants through the application process.

Grant guidelines and application materials are available at okobojifoundation.org/grant-application. For additional information, contact the Okoboji Foundation at 712-332-7177 or info@okobojifoundation.org.

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SUN 2/8 1:00, 3:50 & 6:30
MON-THUR 2/9-12 6:45



Lakes Area Senior/Activity Center Events

Seniors Movin' On is an exercise group that meets every Monday, Wednesday & Friday morning at 9:00 a.m. The exercise program is based on the Silver Sneakers Program.

Blood Pressure Screening is the last Tuesday of every month.

Tai Chi at 11:00am and Zumba class at 4:00pm on Thursdays.

MahJong - 1st and 3rd Mondays this month at 1:00pm.

Pinocle Club- 2nd and 4th Mondays this month at 1:00pm.

Chair yoga every Friday at 10:00am.

Pool and ping pong tables available.

Puzzles and books available to borrow or enjoy.

Greeting cards are available for purchase for \$50

The center is now collecting pop tabs - collection proceeds will go to the Ronald McDonald House.

The Lakes Area Activity/Senior Center is located at 2101 Zenith Ave in Spirit Lake.

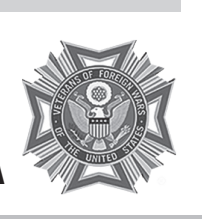
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Sunday, Feb. 8
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DAILY SPECIALS at 11am

DAILY SPECIALS

- Wed., Feb. 4: Pan Fried Chicken
Black & Bleu Burger
- Thur., Feb. 5: Loaded Potato Bowl
Mushroom & Swiss Burger
- Fri., Feb. 6: Country Fried Steak
- Mon., Feb. 9: Hot Beef
Taco Salad
- Tues., Feb. 10: CLOSED

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DCNC Kenue Coffee Hour

Slow down, sip a warm cup of coffee, and learn something new at Kenue Coffee Hour. This free adult program, hosted by the Dickinson County Nature Center, takes place on the first Thursday of the month at 10:30 AM inside the Maser Monarch Lodge.

This month's program, on February 5th, features Ashley Tieden, Naturalist at the Dickinson County Nature Center, who will share an engaging presentation on wetland ecology. Participants will learn what wetlands are, what role they play in our regional environment, and what wildlife can be found there.

Coffee is complimentary, and the relaxed setting encourages conversation and connection while enjoying the winter season. Preregistration is not required, so stop in and join. Kenue Coffee Hour is for adults who enjoy lifelong learning, nature topics, and friendly conversation.

For more events like this, stop by the Dickinson County Nature Center or go online to www.dickinsoncountyconservationboard.com.

Pianist Peter Bergin to Bring Ragtime Classics to Iowa Lakes

Pianist Peter Bergin will take the stage at the Janice K. Lund Performing Arts Center on Thursday, February 12, at 7:00pm, as part of the 2025-2026 Estherville Performing Arts Series at Iowa Lakes Community College.

Bergin's mission is to spread joy through the rhythms and melodies of Early American Popular Music. His performances feature a blend of ragtime, vintage American songs, and early patriotic favorites. A Michigan Humanities Touring Artist, Bergin has appeared at the Scott Joplin Ragtime Festival, West Coast Ragtime Festival, and Zehnder's Ragtime Festival.

Audiences can expect an evening of nostalgia and romance, with music ranging from timeless classics like "I Love You Truly" and "Our Love Is Here to Stay" to newer favorites such as "You've Got a Friend" and "A Thousand Years."

Tickets are on sale now - \$15 for adults (free admission for Iowa Lakes students and all children). Online at: <https://www.ticketleap.events/tickets/iowa-lakes/peter-bergin> or call 712-362-7918.

For more information, contact Jessi Strom, Performing Arts Center Promotions and Operations, Iowa Lakes Community College, at 712-362-6977 or jstrom@iowalakes.edu.


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Nature Night Out

Couples! Do you need some time to reconnect in nature away from the kids for a bit? The Dickinson County Nature Center is hosting a free special event, Nature Night Out, on Friday, February 13th, from 6:30-8:00 p.m.

During the evening at Maser Monarch Lodge, couples will learn about Dutch oven cooking equipment and techniques, then make some sweet treats. Couples will also enjoy a quiet time together, outside gathering natural materials to later create a heart home decoration.

Need someone to watch the kids? Childcare will be provided for children three years or older, and they must be fully potty-trained. Youth will spend time at the Nature Center in Pollinator Paradise, meet some of the nature center's live animals, and make Valentine's Day cards.

This event is designed for adults (18+) who are looking for a free and fun date night together in a distraction-free, natural setting. Adults and children must be registered to attend, and separate links can be found online under Programs/Events at www.dickinsoncountyconservationboard.com. Registration is open until 5:00 p.m. on February 11th, so don't wait to reserve your spot.





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Iowa State University Announces Fall 2025 Dean's List

Iowa State University students have been recognized for outstanding academic achievement by being named to the 2025 fall semester Dean's List. Students named to the Dean's List must earn a grade point average of at least 3.50 on a 4.00 scale while carrying a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded course work. Congratulations to the following area students:

Estherville - Addy Joan Cornwall, Eli William Hanson, Brock Alan Irwin, Grace Johnson, Gracen Love, Eli Ryan Ross, Quimby Ross, Hillary Jane Ruschy, Cara Marie Schiltz, Kya Linn Thiel, Mara Kay White, and Cael John Wodtke.

Lake Park - Tyce Christen Gunderson.

Milford - Lucy Kay Androski, Drew Behrens, Lauren Elizabeth Ditsworth, Hunter David Hallgren, Austin H Harms, Addison K Johnson, Griffin Kasperbauer, Kaylee A Parsons, Mason Vander Pol, Keegan Rasmussen, Sophia Vuanita Sires, and Noah H Walleck.

Okoboji - Caleb Michael Frostedstad.

Spencer - Caden M Atherton, Sophia Behrens, Caitlyn Ann Conrad, Jackson Dewitt, Autumn Kay Erdman, Emma Elise Fassbender, Cade Michael Freeman, Dawson Lee Glawe, Andrew Hough, Reese C Hough, Anna Elizabeth Jacobson, Odalys Garcia Jimenez, Otis Paul Kierscht, Kailey Elizabeth Krull, Mary Margaret Matthiesen, Jerri Lynn Merchant, Molly Moser, Jackson Freddie Schendel, Kinsey Schroeder, Leah Kathryn Sorenson, and Liz Ann Wempe.

Spirit Lake - Ellie M Albertoni, Addie Sue Baker, Andrew Deitering, Mikayla Catherine Farmer, Jackson Gjerde, Samuel Hawkins, Mackenzie Elizabeth Kauffman, Libby Ann Leinbaugh, Simon James Leinbaugh, Mallory Ann Mosher, Elsie Jane Parriott, Thomas John Profit, Caleb Reuter, Elise Jordan Richter, Camryn Louise Sexton, Hannah E. Spalding, Ethan David Stecker, Jessica Ranae Stucker, and Nathan Scott Zollman.



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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To The Editor:

Tree of Love

From the Lakes Regional Healthcare Volunteers and the Voluntary Action Center of the Iowa Great Lakes, we would like to thank the community for supporting our 36th annual Tree of Love. Those who attended our Tree Lighting ceremony enjoyed a heartwarming holiday message and carols from Pastor Perry Aalgaard of the First Lutheran Church. Hand painted wooden heart ornaments were created to pay tribute to a loved one. All donations from the sale of the hearts support scholarships from the LRH Volunteers for students entering the healthcare field and VAC's Meals on Wheels program. Thank you to all who participated in making this a successful project again this year!

Sincerely,
The LRH Volunteers and VAC Tree of Love Committee

Lucky Winners at Smokin' Jakes

On Thursday, January 29, four lucky winners won the Smokin' Jakes Key Chain Ca\$h Drawing. Linda Geske, owner, presented the cash to the winners. Congratulations to Ed Hansen (\$125), Robert Von Ehwegen (\$125), Rick Hilde (\$125), and Wayne Haht (\$141).

Enter by getting your Key Chain at Smokin' Jakes and you're entered for every Thursday's cash drawing. Smokin' Jakes is located at 117 West Broadway Street, in Arnolds Park.



Ed Hansen



Robert Von Ehwegen



Rick Hilde



Wayne Haht

Thank You SPONSORS!

The Lakes Area Activity/Senior Center would like to thank the following sponsors **FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND MAKING OUR WINTER GAMES CARD PARTY A HUGE SUCCESS!**

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MORE INFO





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Sunday, February 15th
8:30 am - Noon

Sausage Gravy over Biscuits,
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Lakes Area Activity/Senior Center
2101 Zenith Avenue • Spirit Lake
(under the water tower)



Have

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Nature Tots

The Dickinson County Nature Center invites children ages 2-5 years old and a chaperone to register for Nature Tots: Running Animals on Wednesday, February 11th. There are two identical sessions at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., offered at no cost.

The session will start off with a group activity, passing around toy animals that are either fast or slow. The group will learn about several speedy Iowa animals and whether they hop, fly, run, or swim. Activity stations will be set up to imprint tracks in playdough, make Valentine's Day cards, complete a Cheetah Letter Match, play a game of Animal Actions, and build a habitat with provided materials.

There is availability for the 1:30 p.m. session (morning session is full). Registration opens 8 weeks ahead of each event. Register for free before 5:00 p.m. on February 9th by visiting the Programs/Events tab at www.dickinsoncountyconservation-board.com.



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Caregivers Support Group

Lakes Area Caregivers Support Group is available for help dealing with the stress of being a caregiver to someone with Alzheimers or other dementia disorders. This community caregivers group meets at 10:00 every Wednesday morning at First Presbyterian Church in Spirit Lake. This is an opportunity to discuss with other caregivers stories and concerns in a comfortable and confidential manner.

A typical meeting might include a presentation or sharing personal methods of handling challenges faced every day by other caregivers.

For more information, call 712-336-1649 or 712-330-1270.

Lakes Area Activity/Senior Center Wish List

- City of Spirit Lake green garbage bags
 - Postage stamps
 - Paper towels and Kleenex
 - Toilet paper
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Chicken Casserole Serves 4-6

3 cups cooked chicken, shredded or cubed
2 cups elbow macaroni, uncooked
2 (10 oz.) cans cream of chicken soup
1 (14.5 oz.) can chicken broth
1 soup can milk (approx. 1 1/4 cups)
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1 small onion, finely chopped

In a large bowl, combine all ingredients until well incorporated. Transfer the mixture to a greased 9x13-inch baking dish. Note: At this stage, the dish may be covered and refrigerated for later use. When ready, bake uncovered at 350°F for 1 hour. Pro Tip: Since the macaroni goes in uncooked, ensure it is fully submerged in the liquid before baking to help it cook evenly!

Recipe Courtesy of: Sue Doyle

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Okoboji High School Concert Band Selected as 2A Honor Band at 99th Iowa Bandmasters Association Conference

Milford, IA - The Okoboji High School Concert Band has been selected to perform as the Class 2A Conference Honor Band at the 99th Iowa Bandmasters Association (IBA) Conference, one of the most prestigious honors a school concert band can receive in the state of Iowa.

The band, under the direction of James Kunz, will present a 50-minute concert on Friday, May 15, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. in the Marriott Hotel Ballroom in downtown Des Moines, as part of the statewide conference.

Each year, band directors from across Iowa submit recordings of their ensembles for consideration. These recordings are evaluated anonymously by a panel of judges, who select honor bands based on

musical excellence, balance, tone, and overall performance quality. Okoboji's selection as the 2A Honor Band marks the first time the school has received this distinction.

"This honor is often compared to winning a state title in concert band," said Kunz. "It is a reflection of the dedication and focus our students bring to rehearsals, as well as the incredible support from our school, families, and community."

The Okoboji High School Concert Band will begin preparing seven diverse musical selections, totaling approximately 35 minutes of music, representing a wide range of styles and technical demands. The performance showcases not only the musicianship of the students,

but also the collective efforts of Okoboji's staff, administration, the Okoboji Fine Arts Booster Club, and a community that consistently supports the arts.

The Iowa Bandmasters Association Conference brings together music educators and performers from across the state, making this performance a significant opportunity for Okoboji students to represent their school and community on a statewide stage.

If you would like to contribute via sponsorship to help defray costs for this trip of sending the entire band to Des Moines, please reach out via email, okobojifinearts@gmail.com. More information about the performance and related events will be shared as the date approaches.

Applicants Sought For Healthcare Scholarship & Loan Programs

Applications are now being accepted for the Bennie B. and Ernestine F. Shine Scholarship, Adam J. Anderson Scholarship, as well as the Cornwall Loan Program. All programs are designed to help area students pursue healthcare careers.

The Shine scholarship fund, administered by Spencer Hospital, annually awards funds to persons who have completed at least one semester of a nursing or allied health program, such as radiology, therapy programs (respiratory care, speech, physical or occupational), medical technology, laboratory tech, paramedic training, pharmacy, etc. These programs are not intended to fund individuals pursuing a degree in medicine, dentistry, physician assistant or veterinary science. The Adam J. Anderson scholarship fund, administered by Spencer Hospital, annually awards funds to persons pursuing education & training to become certified EMS provider (EMT through Paramedic).

Ben Shine was a long-time trustee of the Spencer Hospital Board. His wife, Ernestine Shine, was active in the hospital auxiliary and served as president of that organization. The Shines recognized the importance of quality health care for their community and were actively involved in maintaining a quality and progressive hospital. One effort toward achieving this goal was the establishment of the Shine Scholarship.

The Ruth Cornwall Loan Program was created by Wilson Cornwall in memory of his wife, Ruth, who had received quality hospital care and later home care from Spencer Hospital during an extended illness. The Cornwall family wished to help local people interested in receiving healthcare education. To accomplish this, a low-interest loan program was created.

The Adam J. Anderson Scholarship was created by Duane Anderson of Webb and Marcia Anderson Taylor of Spencer in memory of their son Adam who died in January 2001 of cancer. Adam had worked as a volunteer on the Terril ambulance crew after graduating from Iowa Lakes Community College and later took a job as an EMT for Spencer Hospital. According to his mother, Adam's goal was to obtain his paramedic certification, and he was accepted into paramedic school in August 2000; however, his illness had progressed so much he was unable to attend. The scholarship is intended to honor Adam's memory and his spirit, and to enable others to fulfill the dream to be of service to others as EMS Providers (EMT through Paramedics).

The application deadline for both the Shine & Adam J. Anderson Scholarship and Cornwall Loan is March 31, 2026. Recipients will be notified of their award in May. Applications are available on the Spencer Hospital Website at <https://www.spencerhospital.org/about-us/professional-education/scholarships/>

For questions, please contact Danelle Stumbo, Spencer Hospital Educational Coordinator at danelle.stumbo@spencerhospital.org.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The publisher does not necessarily share the views/opinions stated in the "Letters to the Editor" published in The Lakes News Shopper.

To The Editor:

Embarrassed-Ashamed-Disgusted-Abhorrent

These adjectives define the state of America today. Daily, Trump and his administration embark on anti-constitutional capers, economic madness, ally alienation, grift, lies and lawlessness. Trump's speech at Davos was the worse ever made by an American president showing total lack of historical knowledge, disregard for treaties/allies, disdain for former American and current world leaders and outright lies on the American economy. Americans should be abhorred at such a performance! Likewise, we should be abhorred by continued assault by ICE on American cities inflicting fatalities (murder) in the Twin Cities with officials and the President claiming victims to be terrorists or falsely accused of assault. This is not the America I grew up in or envisioned for my kids and grandchildren. In fact, polls show 71% of Americans feel the country is on the wrong path! In a recent TV program, Professor Eddie Glaude opined that since the eighties Americans have been quietly building on a system of selfishness, greed and hate. This is demonstrated daily by Trump as he appears to believe that we will not acknowledge our own complacencies. We have taken our Constitutional Democracy for granted leading to the Trump catastrophe; actually envisioned by our Founders. Theodore Roosevelt once said, "Americans learn best from catastrophe, and will learn that the help they once took for granted after disasters might be harder to come by." This is exactly where we stand and have a hard road ahead! J. Michael Luttig, a former federal judge stated, "If America is to long endure, we must summon our courage, our fearlessness, our hope, our spirited sense of invulnerability to political enthrall, and, most important, our abiding faith in the divine providence of this nation. We have been given the high charge of our forebears to keep the republic they founded a quarter of a millennium ago. If we do not keep it now, we will surely lose it." How do we not lose it? By demanding through continual writing and flooding calls to our congressional representatives/senators; demanding change, ensuring fair elections and reclaiming their status as an equal branch of government. By joining peaceful demonstrations and boycotts. By joining groups communicating truth. By support/votes for new candidates who renounce authoritarianism, uphold our constitutional ideals with supporting institutions, rebuild our international relations and promote sensible legislation to benefit future generations. It's hard, but patriotism calls!

Terry B. Yarns
Spirit Lake, Iowa

ILUUF Welcomes Allan Saugstad - Social Justice Dialogue

The Iowa Lakes Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (ILUUF) invites the community to an engaging morning of reflection and action on Sunday, February 8, at 10:00 AM. Featuring guest speaker Allan Saugstad from All Souls Unitarian Universalist in Sioux Falls, the program will center on the vital theme of social justice. As a fellowship known for its progressive and forward-thinking values, ILUUF provides a dedicated platform for exploring how diverse belief systems can collaborate to create a more equitable world. The event will be held at the Lakes Area Activity Center, located at 2101 Zenith Avenue in Spirit Lake, Iowa, with a virtual attendance option available via Zoom links at www.UUOkoboji.com.

As a "come as you are" community, the Iowa Lakes Unitarian Universalist Fellowship extends an open invitation to everyone, regardless of whether you identify as religious, secular, or are simply searching for a meaningful connection. Attendees can expect an open-hearted environment defined by inclusive fellowship and a diverse group of people from all walks of life. The morning promises a blend of soulful music designed to inspire and uplift, alongside engaging conversations that take deep dives into contemporary social issues.

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Obituary

Vernon Hammerstrom was born on April 21, 1945, to Vernon and Nellie (Conly) Hammerstrom. He grew up in the Leeds area of Sioux City. He was a 1963 graduate of Leeds High School, which he said had the best classmates ever! He proudly served his country in the US Army in Vietnam.

Vern treasured time with his family, especially with his son, Jeff, his daughter-in-law, Kristen, and his two grandchildren, Natalie and Casey, while cruising Lake Okoboji on the pontoon or beating them all in cribbage.

Vern was preceded in death by his parents and his sister, Diane Hammerstrom.

Condolences may be sent to Meyer Brothers Funeral Home Colonial Chapel, 3230 Stone Park Blvd., Sioux City, IA 51104. Memorial gifts may be made to the Gospel Mission of Sioux City.



Obituary

Layton W. Vick, 84, of Spirit Lake, Iowa, passed away on Saturday, January 17, 2026, at Lakes Regional Healthcare in Spirit Lake.

A memorial service will be held at a later date. Arrangements are being handled by Turner Jenness Funeral Home in Spirit Lake.

Layton was born on December 17, 1941, to Layton Clarence and Edna May Vick. He was one of five children: Beverly, Fredrick, Larry, and William. The family lived above the general store that later became known as Vick's Corner.

Layton later relocated to Des Moines, Iowa, where he worked in various trades. During this time, he met and married Janet E. Scholes. In the fall of 1964, Layton's father passed away. The following summer, Layton and Janet, along with their son, returned to Spirit Lake to live above the store and operate the family business.

Layton owned and operated Vick's Corner until his passing. Over the years, the store became a well-known local landmark, offering a wide variety of goods and attractions. Layton was one of the longest-operating U-Haul dealers in Iowa. The annual Antique Show and Flea Market grew into a major summer event held over Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day weekends.

Many will also remember renting movies and VCRs from Vick's Corner during the 1980s, the Ice Shack rentals of the late 1960s and 1970s, the CB radio era, and the CPR and First Aid classes Layton taught throughout the years.

Layton is survived by his four children, LaRonna L. Hoffer (Scott), Paul N. Vick (Shelly), Layton C. Vick II (Michelle), and Elizabeth A. Vick-Hermann (Rolf); brothers, Larry Vick, William Vick (Rachel); as well as numerous grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. Layton was preceded in death by his son, Robert; father, Layton C.; mother, Edna; brother, Fredrick; sister- and brother-in-law, Beverly and Warren Whitmer; sister-in-law, Susan.



Obituary

A Celebration of Life for Judy Eisenbacher was held Sunday, February 1, 2026, at the Lakes Area Senior Center in Spirit Lake, Iowa. A private family service will be held at a later date at St. John's Lutheran Cemetery in Ringsted, Iowa.

Judith Joanne Eisenbacher, age 85, passed away January 25, 2026, at Accura Healthcare in Spirit Lake. She was born on May 4, 1940, in Ringsted, Iowa, to Harvey and Geneva Pedersen.

Judy grew up in Ringsted and graduated from Ringsted High School in 1958. She went on to pursue her calling in nursing, earning her Bachelor's Degree in Nursing from Iowa Lutheran Hospital in May of 1961. Nursing was more than a profession for Judy; it was a lifelong commitment to caring for others. She worked as a nurse in Chicago, Armstrong, and Algona, before spending 29 years at Good Samaritan in Estherville, Iowa, where she eventually retired and moved initially to Spirit Lake and then Spencer, Iowa.

Judy was the oldest of eight children and spending time with family was her greatest joy in life. An avid traveler, she visited all 50 states, all the Great Lakes, and dreamed of ways to get rich so she could buy an island in the Bahamas. She loved her coffee and would often post funny notes about coffee and other bits of history or trivia on Facebook, much to the delight of friends. Judy also loved to challenge herself and try new things – walls were adorned by her watercolor paintings and artwork, she trained to become a Tornado Spotter, earned her green belt in Taekwondo, worked the polls during elections, gardened, was a wonderful baker, and always found time to give back to her community and to those less fortunate.

She is survived by her two daughters, Julie (Doug) Stahly of Lake Park and Jill (John) Dannels of Spencer; five grandchildren, Lacey (Adam) Reese-Hoogeterp of Lake Park, Lindsey Reese of Lake Park, Lexi (Austin Wassman) Stahly of Harris, Jared Dannels of Spencer, and Jordan Dannels of Spencer; four great-grandchildren, Justine Reese, Annistyn Hoogeterp, Beckham Reese and Vienna Hoogeterp. She is also survived by six siblings, Joan (Lenny) Pessick of Lone Rock; Dr. Jerry (Shirley) Pedersen of Paris, Texas; Dr. Jack (Karen) Pedersen of Corpus Christi, Texas; Joel Pedersen of Spencer; Jay (Lori) Pedersen of Spirit Lake, and Dr. Jeff (Allison) Pedersen of Arlington, Texas; along with many nieces and nephews whom she dearly loved.

Judy was preceded in death by her parents, Harvey and Geneva Pedersen; brother, Jim (Nancy) Pedersen; infant sister, Karen; sister-in-law, Nancy Pedersen; son-in-law, John Dannels; and a niece and nephew.

Judy will be dearly missed by her family, friends, and all who were fortunate enough to know her.

Arrangements are under the care of Turner Jenness Funeral Home.



Obituary

A visitation for Kirby Clark, age 79, of Spirit Lake, will be held Sunday, February 8, from 2:00-4:00 PM at Turner Jenness Funeral Home in Spirit Lake. There will be a Scripture Service at the funeral home at 4:00 PM.

Kirby Joe Clark, the son of Leslie and Venita (Fink) Clark, was born on April 13, 1946, in Sanborn, Iowa. He passed away peacefully on January 27, 2026, at his home in Spirit Lake, Iowa.

His family moved to Everly, Iowa, where Kirby grew up and attended school as a "Cattle-feeder". Kirby played football in his freshman year, but switched to basketball for the remainder of his high school years. He was also the girls' softball manager in his senior year, graduating in 1964. Next to his photo in the senior yearbook, Kirby's class motto was "Everybody should know how to work, although he doesn't need to let the knowledge warp his life."

Kirby proudly served his country in the United States Army, enlisting on September 30, 1965. He attained the rank of E5 and was honorably discharged on September 27, 1968.

On July 20, 1968, Kirby was united in marriage to Monica Milan in Armstrong Creek, Wisconsin. Throughout his working years, Kirby was employed as a handyman and CNC machinist, known for his skill, reliability, and strong work ethic.

Kirby enjoyed woodworking and spending time watching sports on television. He was an avid fan of the Iowa Hawkeyes, Los Angeles Dodgers, Los Angeles Lakers, and the Green Bay Packers. Kirby and Monica especially loved ballroom dancing and traveling together, as well as gathering with family and friends.

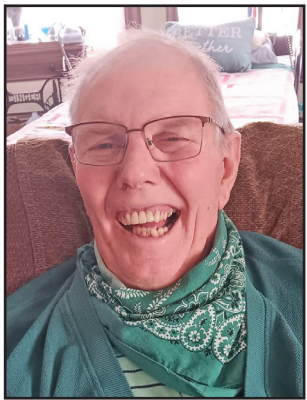
Aside from sports, Kirby's greatest love was his family; a loving and devoted wife, daughter, son and granddaughters. He felt truly blessed beyond words.

Everyone that met Kirby liked him. He had a way about him that drew people to him with his wit, good sense of humor and genuine good heart. One special person described Kirby perfectly: "A kinder man you could not find, one willing to give you all he had, willing to say he loved you and would always greet you with a smile."

Kirby is survived by his loving wife, Monica Clark; his children, Tricia (Brandon) Mansfield of Spirit Lake and Kyle (Sandra) Clark of Spirit Lake; his brother, Richard (Dreana) Clark of Cortez, Colorado; his grandchildren, Gwendolyn and Lillian; as well as many nieces, nephews, and other family members.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Leslie and Venita Clark; two sisters, Marley and Joan; and three brothers: Jack, Tom, and Gary.

Turner Jenness Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.



Obituary

Mary Sue Ackley (affectionately known as Big Sue) passed away on January 2, 2026, just nine days after her triumphant 95th birthday. She celebrated her birthday, Christmas, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day surrounded by family and all of her grandchildren—talk about going out surrounded by joy and love!

Along-time resident of Iowa, Bob and Sue moved to California to be close to their family in 1987. They lived for over 25 years in the Oak Valley neighborhood of Cupertino. They moved to The Hamilton in Palo Alto two years ago, and enjoyed meeting new friends and the wonderful staff who supported them with great kindness.

Originally from Decatur, Illinois, Sue moved to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, during her senior year of high school. After graduating from the University of Iowa, she moved to Salinas, California, to support Bob while he served his tour of duty with the Army at Fort Ord. When Bob completed his service, they moved to Bob's hometown, Ottumwa, Iowa.

She met her husband, Bob, in college. As fate would have it, they were set up on a blind date during their sophomore year, and they tied the knot just a day after graduation in 1952. Sue was a stay-at-home mom, raising their two children while Bob worked tirelessly at the South Ottumwa Savings Bank. Once the kids were off to high school and college, Sue jumped into the real estate game, eagerly becoming an esteemed realtor and self-appointed "tour guide" for newcomers to town.

Bob introduced Sue to golf, which quickly became a shared passion. In fact, he gave her golf clubs as a wedding gift and took her to the U.S. Open on their honeymoon. Summer highlights included Thursday morning Women's Play, Friday Mixed Couples Night, and a myriad of nine- and eighteen-hole adventures together. Sue racked up a number of Ottumwa Country Club Women's Club Championships, and she and Bob were often the Couple's Club Champions. A standout moment was their visit to the Masters Golf Tournament in Augusta—a bucket list achievement that they checked off together.

Cheering for the Iowa Hawkeyes, both in football and basketball, became yet another shared passion for Sue and Bob. You should have heard their cheers for the current college teams, along with fan favorites like Caitlin Clark, George Kittle, and Iowa State alum Brock Purdy. "Go Fever" and "Go 49ers!" echoed frequently in their household!

One of Sue's greatest loves was spending time at Lake Okoboji in Northwestern Iowa, her second home, where she cultivated fantastic friendships and cherished the company of "old" friends. She loved playing bridge and attending parties at the Okoboji Yacht Club, and dining with her gang at the Outrigger on Thursday nights. The "Ottumwa/Okoboji" family nieces, Linda Bloom (deceased) (Michael), Nancy Menke (Steve), and Amy Maris (John), and many great nieces and nephews welcomed Bob and Sue back to the lakes each summer with open arms.

Sue was also actively involved in PEO, a nationwide charity dedicated to women's education and philanthropy, and was a vibrant member of the Trinity Episcopal Church in Ottumwa and St. Alban's in Okoboji.

She leaves behind her beloved husband, Bob, and two children, Susan Sherwood of San Jose, CA; and Stephen Ackley, along with his wife Maryann, of Palo Alto, California. Sue was adored by her five grandchildren: Susan's two kids, Scott Sherwood (Los Angeles) and Sarah Sherwood, and fiancée, Jaya Batra (New York City), along with Stephen and Maryann's trio: Kate Ackley and her husband Phil Adamson (Palo Alto), Lucie Ackley (Santa Cruz), and Charlie Ackley (Palo Alto). Sue was also predeceased by her brother, Jesse M. Birks; his wife, Mary, and their two children live in Southern California.

A celebration of life will take place this summer at Lake Okoboji. In lieu of flowers, you may wish to consider a gift to the Okoboji Community Foundation or to St. Alban's Episcopal Church.



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Myhre Named New Director At Dickinson County Museum

The Dickinson County Historical Society is pleased to announce that Jean Ann Myhre of rural Spirit Lake has been hired as the new Director of the Dickinson County Museum. She began her duties February 2nd.

"Jean Ann offers many attributes as director that we found appealing," said Jonathan Reed, president of the Dickinson County Historical Society. "She has strong organizational and administrative skills, and as a lifelong area resident, she knows Dickinson County, is a familiar face to many residents."

Jean Ann has numerous contacts as both a volunteer, and operator of her own successful event planning business, supporting events for the Okoboji Blue Water Festival, Pearson Lakes Art Center, Okoboji Yacht Club, and others.

A crucial aspect in her hiring is that Myhre was raised with a passion for local history—her mother, Charlene Smith Thomsen, was named "Queen of the Iowa Navy" in 1955. That passion has carried over to her daughter, Emma, who created the popular historical podcast series The Okoboji Project with Museum Board member Ryan Maris.

First founded in 1961, the Dickinson County Museum at 1708 Keokuk in Spirit Lake holds the distinction of being the first railroad depot in the state to be converted to a museum.

In October, the Historical Society opened an exciting interactive educational installation in the 1884 depot, telling the story of railroading and its importance to Dickinson County.



THE LAKES NEWS
Auctions

Page 2B

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Love Local Contest Details

To Enter the Drawing, LNS Readers & Online Followers Must:
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2. Comment on The LNS Facebook Page by Thurs., Feb. 12th at 5pm your top choice for a gift certificate from a participating business for a chance to win!
3. Tag a friend!
A random drawing will be held on Feb. 13th to determine winners of next weeks gift certificates.

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Al-Anon Meeting Schedule

The new Okoboji Al-Anon Group meets every Thursday at 5:30 p.m. at Calvary United Methodist Church, located at 679 W. Okoboji Grove Rd. in Arnolds Park; for additional details, you may call 312-280-8732.

Meanwhile, the Milford New Hope Al-Anon group holds its meetings virtually via Zoom using Meeting ID 775 5729 0457 and passcode JXEU2H.

For further information or to find other local groups, please visit *Iowa-Al-Anon.org*, navigate to the "Meetings" tab, and search for Milford, IA 51351. You may also contact the area information line at 712-580-4406.

Yoga Class

Seniors are invited to participate in free chair yoga every Friday from 9:50 to 10:20 AM. These sessions focus on building balance and core strength to help participants stay healthy and active. The class meets at the Lakes Area Activity/Senior Center is located at 2101 Zenith Ave in Spirit Lake (behind PizzaRanch). No special equipment or clothing is required; attendees are welcome to come as they are and give it a try.

The benefits of yoga are well-documented by the medical community. They include improved balance, flexibility, strength, coordination, and energy. As muscles gain elasticity, daily tasks can be performed with considerably more ease. Furthermore, improved balance and core strength make individuals safer and less likely to experience accidents or falls. Beyond the physical benefits, the class offers a pleasant social gathering with a friendly community.

DCTA
DICKINSON COUNTY TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

An Open Letter to Iowa's State Representatives and Senators,

I am writing as President of the Dickinson County Taxpayers Association regarding ongoing discussions about property tax reform in Iowa. The Dickinson County Taxpayers Association has served local taxpayers since 1982. Our mission is to advocate for transparent government, fiscal responsibility, and the wise use of taxpayer dollars.

Across Iowa, property taxpayers are increasingly frustrated by rising tax bills driven by continued growth in city, county, and school district spending, coupled with limited transparency and accountability. From our perspective, the core problem in the property tax system is not assessments, levy rates, or complex formulas—it is spending.

If the Iowa Legislature wishes to enact meaningful and lasting property tax reform, it must directly address the growth of local government operating expenses. While our preference is always for the State to remain out of local affairs, many local boards and committees have failed to demonstrate sufficient fiscal restraint. As a result, we reluctantly accept that the State must step in to impose reasonable and enforceable limits.

If the Legislature proceeds, we strongly recommend the following reforms:

1. Spending Limits

Limit the annual growth of property tax revenue to 2 percent for all local taxing entities. Allow local governments to exceed the cap only with voter approval, ensuring transparency and accountability.

2. Property Tax Structure Simplification

Simplify the system so taxpayers can clearly understand how their taxes are calculated. Any changes to the rollback system must ensure that homeowners are protected from sudden and dramatic tax increases, and that levy rates accurately reflect any changes in taxable value.

3. Reserve Balance Limits

Limit aggregate reserve balances to no more than 30% of prior-year operating expenses, excluding capital and bonded projects.

4. Use of Excess Reserves

Require excess reserves to be either: a) Returned directly to taxpayers, or b) Used to reduce levy rates.

5. Voter Approval for Major Projects

Require voter approval for any capital improvement project—or allied projects—exceeding 20% of annual operating expenses. This would ensure taxpayer consent for large-scale expenditures.

6. Taxpayer Voice

Expand voter approval requirements for major decisions, including bonds, shared-service arrangements, and emergency tax increases.

7. Shared Services & Efficiency

Allow counties under 50,000 residents to voluntarily share services between counties, cities, and school districts to reduce duplication and costs.

8. Independent Efficiency Audits

Require third-party efficiency audits to improve transparency, eliminate waste, and ensure taxpayer dollars are being spent effectively.

9. Property Tax Fairness Review

Conduct a comprehensive review of all property tax exemptions and credits—residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural—to ensure fairness and prevent tax shifting.

We also urge the Legislature to pay close attention to definitions, as the success of any reform depends on clear and consistent language. In particular, definitions must address:

- *Population growth measurements* • *CPI index selection*
- *Exemptions and deductions (seniors, first responders, military, etc.)*
- *Reserves* • *Capital projects and improvements* • *Bonded projects*
- *Operating expenses* • *Treatment of grants, subsidies, and outside funding*

Without firm definitions, spending limits can be bypassed, and the burden will continue to fall on property taxpayers.

Thank you for your service and for your attention to this critical issue. Iowa taxpayers deserve reform that restrains spending, increases transparency, and restores accountability to local government budgets.

Respectfully,
Mark Sullivan
President, Dickinson County Taxpayers Association
info@dctaxpayers.org
dctaxpayers.org

Lake Park Mobile Food Pantry

The Food Bank of Iowa Mobile Food Pantry will be open for distribution on Thursday, February 5, 2026, from 4:30 - 6:30 pm at the Lake Park Methodist Church located at 1471 135th Ave, Lake Park. Registration will be inside the church beginning at 3:30 pm, you must be present to register. You may pick up groceries for someone that is not able to make it. Please do not line up at the front door (southeast corner of the church) before 3:30 pm. Please bring boxes, bags or containers for your groceries. Distribution will begin at 4:30 pm. Volunteers will help bring your groceries to your vehicle. Questions? Call the Lake Park Methodist Church at 712-832-3361 or Jerilyn Marra 712-348-0475.



Iowa Lakes Corridor Announces 2026 Business Recognition Award Winners

The Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corporation (Corridor) once again recognized great achievements by local businesses Wednesday at the organization's 15th Annual Business Recognition Luncheon at the Clay County Regional Events Center in Spencer in front of a record-breaking audience.

- Winners of this year's Business Recognition awards are:
- Young Professional of the Year – Andrew Geelan, Geelan Funeral Home, Spencer
 - Entrepreneur of the Year – Laura Bjornstad & Samantha Ring, Boat House Apparel, Arnolds Park
 - Small Business Excellence – VeSo Coffee, Storm Lake
 - Large Business Excellence – Buena Vista Regional Medical Center, Storm Lake
- Additional awards:
- Partner of the Year – First Children's Finance
 - Housing Champion – Talon Development
- Three individuals were honored for their years of service on the Corridor board:
- Brad Beck represented Beck Engineering, Inc., from July 2019 to December 2025, serving as Vice Chair in 2022, Chair in 2023-2024, and Past Chair in 2025.
 - Keith Deitering represented Bank Midwest from July 2021 to May 2025.
 - Jed Skogerboe represented Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative from January 2023 to June 2025, serving as Vice Chair in 2024 and Treasurer in 2025.



Laura Bjornstad

Also recognized was Toby Shine. In honor of Shine's contributions to the region, including being one of the co-founders of the Iowa Lakes Corridor Development Corporation and the Okoboji Entrepreneurial Institute, the Corridor Lifetime Impact Award was given to Toby Shine's family in his memory. JD's Creations of Spencer created a unique metal sculpture for this one-time award.

"It was an honor to celebrate these amazing businesses and individuals from across the region," said Corridor President & CEO Curt Strouth. "From small business owners to regional developers, and large businesses to Toby's legacy, each and every awardee was very deserving of this recognition, and we are glad to be able to recognize them today."

Nominations for the annual Business Recognition awards in the categories of Young Professional, Entrepreneur, Small Business and Large Business are made by area business leaders and community members. These nominations are then reviewed by a volunteer committee drawn from across the region and are evaluated based on commitment, impact and growth in Corridor communities.

Recipients accepted their awards Wednesday in front of a large gathering of over 330 community representatives and leaders, the largest audience for this event. The Business Recognition Luncheon also featured keynote speaker Devin Henderson.



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Okoboji After Prom Fundraiser

Okoboji After Prom is selling the World's Best Dishcloths as a fundraiser to support a safe and fun After Prom event for Okoboji High School students. Bundles of six dishcloths are available for \$20.

Dishcloths can be purchased online (<https://square.link/u/k5mZqDwC>) picked up at home basketball games, or by emailing afterpromokoboji@gmail.com for more information.

Thank you for supporting Okoboji After Prom and our local students.

Mobile Food Pantry Returns

The mobile food pantry from the Food Bank of Iowa is returning again. The free distribution will take place from 4-6 p.m. Thursday, February 5, at the Good News Estherville Church. The food will be distributed inside the church. Recipients are asked to bring bags, laundry baskets or boxes to carry the food. At the January Food Bank, 527 individuals (191 families) received 7,169 pounds of food. The Food Bank of Iowa partners with 700 agencies in 55 counties to distribute 2.5 million pounds of food each month, so that no one goes hungry in Iowa. If you have questions, call the Good News Estherville Church at 712-362-4984.

FREE FOOD

Rotary Car Is On The Ice!

Despite the weather conditions, the car for the annual Iowa Great Lakes car drop made it on the ice today just in time for Winter Games.

The Rotary Car Drop is an annual fundraiser for the Iowa Great Lakes Rotary Club. Tickets are sold for each minute of the day with one ticket including both the a.m. and p.m. time. The winner is determined when the car, which is placed on the ice of Smith's Bay on West Lake Okoboji, falls through the ice. Once the car is retrieved, the official winning time is confirmed by a clock inside the car and the winner receives a \$1000 cash prize.

Boji Towing, along with Rotarian Erin Reed, were on hand to get the car situated on the ice in Smith's Bay around 12:30 pm on Wednesday, January 21. Boji Towing annually donates the car and their time to assist Iowa Great Lakes Rotary with this endeavor to support community projects. Funds raised by Iowa Great Lakes Rotary are used for community projects, recently including the playground upgrades at Shelby Duis Park, mental health speakers for the schools, and the building of an outdoor Pavilion at Camp Foster YMCA. A donation is also made to Arnolds Park Fire and Rescue which uses the retrieval of the car each year as a training exercise after it falls through.

For more information or to purchase a time ticket, visit www.iowagreatlakesrotary.org or contact a local Iowa Great Lakes Rotary member.

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Spirit Lake Library News

Love At The Library

by Jill Jennings

It should surprise no one that the month in which Valentine's Day falls is also known as Library Lover's month! There are so many reasons to love the library and there are so many activities going on at the library in February.

Our Story Time theme on Thursday the 12th is Valentines, of course! Come at 10:30 a.m. to see what sweet stories, fingerplays, and craft Miss Nancy has ready for your little ones.

Saturday the 14th is the big day: Valentine's Day! It is also known as Library Lover's Day and International Book Giving Day. (A book would be a GREAT Valentine's Day gift!) We will be hosting a fun craft time for the young and young at heart. Join Miss Breanna in the Community Room from 10:00 - 11:30 a.m., where you can create your own love bugs and Valentine monsters! This is a come-and-go event.

On Tuesday, February 17th the Evening Edition Book Club will be discussing and sharing romance books and authors. This group meets at The Revelry and begins at 7:00 p.m.

All during the month of February, we will have our Wall of Love on display. Write on a heart why YOU love the library, and add it to our display.

Our scavenger hunt for the month of February will also be love-themed. Look for the Valentine animals hiding around the library, fill in the letters to answer the riddle, and pick a prize!

And last, but not least, we have many romance novels to read at your leisure.

As you can see, there is a lot of love at the library, not just in February, but always!

SLPL staff reading spotlight: Krista is reading The Shop on Hidden Lane by Jayne Ann Krentz.

Upcoming Activities:

- Monday, February 9, 1:00-3:00 p.m., Mah-Jongg
- Monday, February 9, 5:00 p.m., Library Board Meeting
- Tuesday, February 10, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Quilters
- Tuesday, February 10, 3:30-4:30 p.m., Children's Chess
- Tuesday, February 10, 4:30-5:30 p.m., Chess All-Play
- Wednesday, February 11, 12:30-4:00 p.m., Quilters
- Thursday, February 12, 10:30-11:15 a.m., Story Time (Theme: Valentines)
- Thursday, February 12, 1:00-3:00 p.m., Mah-Jongg
- Saturday, February 14, 10:00-11:30 a.m., Valentine Craft (come & go)

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Loran Anderson

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EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYMENT

WATER TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR 3

The City of Spirit Lake is seeking to fill an open position for Water Treatment Plant Operator 3.

Primary duties include operating and monitoring equipment in the water plant, water testing and readings, and involvement in all aspects of plant operations, supervision in coordination with the Water Superintendent of Water Treatment Plant Operations, involvement with water treatment plant projects and other duties as required. **Must possess** a State Water Plant Operator certificate and Water Distribution certificates up to and including Grade 2 at a minimum and Grade 3 Water to be obtained within one year if not already so certified. CDL preferred. Pay is dependent upon qualifications and experience. Complete job description and additional information is available at Spirit Lake City Hall, (712) 336-1871 as set forth below.

Address any communications to Gregg L. Owens, City Administrator, Spirit Lake City Hall, 1803 Hill Avenue, Spirit Lake, Iowa 51360, by noon on February 18, 2026. Application forms are available at City Hall. If emailed, email to gregg.owens@cityofspiritleake.org



City of Spirit Lake

The City of Spirit Lake, Iowa is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Females, minorities, veterans and members of other protected classes are encouraged to apply.

Posted 1/29/2026

The Dickinson County Sheriff's Office is currently looking for a FULL-TIME DISPATCHER

POSITION: Full-Time Dispatcher
DESCRIPTION: Taking emergency & non-emergency calls, working with law enforcement agencies, fire & emergency services & other department & agencies.
SCHEDULE: Mid and overnight shifts.
PAY IS \$26.27/HR

All applicants are subject to a complete background investigation. All applicants must obtain a valid drivers license. All applicants must complete a health physical, MMPI testing, first aid-CPR training & other required dispatch training & department training.


Applicants must be able do the following:


- Multi-Task • Active listening skills • Computer & typing skill
- Handle stressful situations • Make quick decisions
- Learn & understand Dickinson County geography, Plus much more that comes with the job & position
- Flexible working days, mid-shift & night shift

Those interested please complete & submit a cover letter & resume.

You may email to jfischer@dickinsoncountyia.gov, mail to Dickinson County Sheriffs Office P0 Box 214, Spirit Lake Iowa, 51360 or drop it off to the Sheriffs Office at the Dickinson County Court House. Questions please call 712-336-2525

Dickinson County Sheriffs Office is EOE. Taking resumes until the position is filled.





FARMERS SAVINGS BANK

Growing Strong Relationships

Real Estate / Consumer Loan Officer

Farmers Savings Bank has the need for a loan officer in our new Spirit Lake location. Lending duties will include residential real estate and consumer lending. Increasing levels of responsibility and decision-making are available with this position.

Areas of lending priority:

- Real Estate
- Consumer
- Ag / Commercial as experience allows

Qualifications/Skills

- 5-years bank experience preferred
- Secondary Market experience preferred
- Microsoft Office computer skills required

Benefits

- Full family medical insurance 90% of premium paid or 100% of single
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Present resume to Brad Simington by email or in person: 712-338-4800 or 712-262-2708 bsimington@fsbfostoria.com



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Competitive Pay and Benefits

Apply today at Matuska Supply Company 3735 Hwy 71 Spirit Lake, IA or send resume to matuskataxidermy@gmail.com

EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYMENT

Library Assistant

The Milford Memorial Library has an immediate opening for a Library Assistant, up to 12 hours per week. Successful applicants will be willing to learn of library trends through continuing education and involvement in library operations; process and maintain library collections and assist groups and individuals in locating and obtaining materials. Furnish information on library activities, facilities, rules and services. Explain and assist in use of reference sources including electronic resources. Provide circulation services. Assist with programming as needed.

Minimum Qualifications: Ability to work most Saturdays from 9:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Wednesday evenings from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., and Friday evenings 12:45 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Additional hours may be available. Ability to effectively communicate orally and in writing. Ability to provide quality customer service for library patrons of all ages. Experience with computer systems (word processing, database, spreadsheets, Internet). Ability to use a copy machine, computer and other office equipment and electronic devices.

Physical and Environmental Characteristics: This position requires regular physical activity including bending, reaching and prolonged periods of sitting or standing and regular lifting and carrying of objects weighing up to 50 lbs.

Preferred Qualifications: Experience in a library setting and familiarity with books and other informational sources.

Benefits: Paid time off based on hours worked and access to IPERS.

Starting hourly range is \$14.18 - \$15.58 dependent on qualifications.

Please submit an application to Gillian Anderson, Library Director, Milford Memorial Library, 1009 9th St., Milford, IA 51351.

Applications are available at Milford Memorial Library or online at: <http://milfordlibrary.weebly.com/employment-opportunities.html> or on Indeed.

Applications accepted until the position is filled. The City of Milford is an equal Opportunity Employer.



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IOWA LAKES COMMUNITY COLLEGE is accepting applications for a full-time NURSING INSTRUCTOR

on the Emmetsburg Campus.

Primary responsibilities are to deliver classroom instruction, provide clinical supervision for nursing students, and have current Medical/ Surgical experience. May include days/evenings/weekend hours. Master's Degree preferred. Bachelor's Degree with significant progress towards Master's Degree required. (Either Bachelor's Degree or Master's Degree must have a major in Nursing.) Three years clinical nursing experience in Medical/Surgical Nursing is required. Prior teaching experience and experience in medical/surgical nursing desired. Must be currently licensed as a registered nurse in Iowa. (Individuals are currently licensed when licensed in another state and recognized for licensure in Iowa, pursuant to the nurse licensure compact contained in Iowa Code Section 152E.1.) Must be in good standing and able to work at all clinical sites/hospitals affiliated with the Iowa Lakes Nursing Program. Salary commensurate with education and related experience for a 209-day contract. Position open until filled. Review of applications will begin February 16, 2026.

View complete job description and application process at www.iowalakes.edu/employment. Contact Lynn Miller at lmiller@iowalakes.edu or 712-362-0409.



IOWA LAKES
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Human Resources, 19 South 7th Street, Estherville, IA 51334
EEO/AA Employer

EMPLOYMENT

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5

3:30 - 6:00 PM

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The Lakes Area Activity/Senior Center has rooms to rent for your special event. Do you have a special weekend event in the future? A Family Get-together, Anniversary, Graduation, Birthday?

Their card/party room seats 40, has a small kitchenette and rents for \$75.00 per day.

There is also a small meeting room with tables/seating for 10 plus extra chairs for additional seating. \$40.00 per day.

Check out their building updates.

Consider renting their large dining room which seats 100 if extra tables are set up. Without kitchen: \$125.00 per day.

With kitchen: \$160.00 per day.

They have a beautiful, clean facility with most weekends available.

Call and visit with someone at the office for details. 712-336-5247.



IOWA LAKES COMMUNITY COLLEGE is accepting applications for a COMMUNICATIONS/SPEECH INSTRUCTOR

on the Estherville Campus.

Primary responsibility is to teach a full-time assignment of classes defined by the College which includes classes taught face to face or over other virtual modalities. Must evaluate and report student performances and progress in courses in accordance with College and division policies and procedures. Will require travel between campuses. Master's Degree in Communications or Speech from a regionally accredited institution or a Master's Degree in related discipline with at least 12 graduate hours in communications or speech, in addition to, or within the degree. Prior teaching experience at the College level preferred. Salary commensurate with education and related experience for a 169-day contract. Paid sick and personal leave. Employee health, dental, and vision insurance. Partially funded family insurance available. Employee life and disability insurance. Retirement package. Review of applications will begin February 23, 2026.

View complete job description and application at www.iowalakes.edu/employment. Contact Lynn Miller at lmiller@iowalakes.edu or 712-362-0409.



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www.pheasantforever.org

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General Manager

Darwin Pike
Sales Manager

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- One from Sioux Falls
- One right here from the Lakes Area

All three were looking for the same Toyota vehicle they saw in our ad.

The Lakes News Shopper doesn't just get our name out there; it gets us results. It connects us with serious buyers, whether they're across state lines or right in our own backyard.

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