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**DESKercise**  
 Lunch & Learn presented by MCMH Wellness Committee  
**FREE**  
 and open  
 to the public!  
**Tuesday**  
**January 31st**  
**12:00 - 12:30 pm**  
**Conference Room B & C**

**BRIDAL**  
**GUIDE**  
**1B&2B**

# THE RED OAK Express

**WEDNESDAY**

Jan. 25, 2023  
 Red Oak, IA  
 Volume 156, No.04  
 redoakexpress.com

**DEDICATED TO FREEDOM SINCE 1868**

**\$1.00**



Commercial, residential and industrial lots are available at Clark Subdivision, just south of Red Oak city limits off Highway 48. Jones Mechanical of Red Oak will break ground on their new facility in the subdivision in the spring. (Tess Nelson/Red Oak Express)

## Clark Subdivision is offering a lot of lots

**Tess Nelson**  
 The Red Oak Express

Three years ago, Jeremy Clark, owner of ESB Clark Heavy Construction, was trying to find property in and near Red Oak to build a new facility.

When he wasn't able to find anything suitable for what he needed, he took matters into his own hands, purchased 54 acres just south of Red Oak city limits on Highway 48, and created Clark Subdivision.

Clark Subdivision includes 13 lots on the west side of the property ranging from 1.3 acres to 4.40 acres.

"The lots are sized be commercial, residential, or industrial," explained Clark. "They have each been graded and ready to sell."

Jones Mechanical of Red Oak has purchased the first lot on the site. Owner Andy Jones said over the past year they looked for a building locally that would suit their needs with no success.

"This location presented a great opportunity for the future of the company. It will give us

what we need to provide exceptional service to our customers," said Jones.

He said the location of the property on Highway 48, less than a mile from town, as well as the option for fiber optics were a few of the selling points. Jones said fiber isn't an option at their current location on Broadway.

Jones Mechanical will break ground on its new shop this spring at its new facility, with the project to be completed by the end of 2023.

At Clark Subdivision, there will be a gravel road in between the first and second set of lots, wrapping behind Clark's building on site, and leading to 222nd Street, which is currently a Level B road. Montgomery County Secondary Roads is in the process of grading and graveling the road to make it accessible to traffic, which Clark is paying for.

Once graveled, 222nd Street, will lead to 220th Street or Hickory Avenue, leading into city limits on the other side of the section.

On the far east side of the property are two larger lots that

would be perfect for residential homes. In the middle of the property sit 22 acres Clark isn't sure what to do with yet; although a pond is an option.

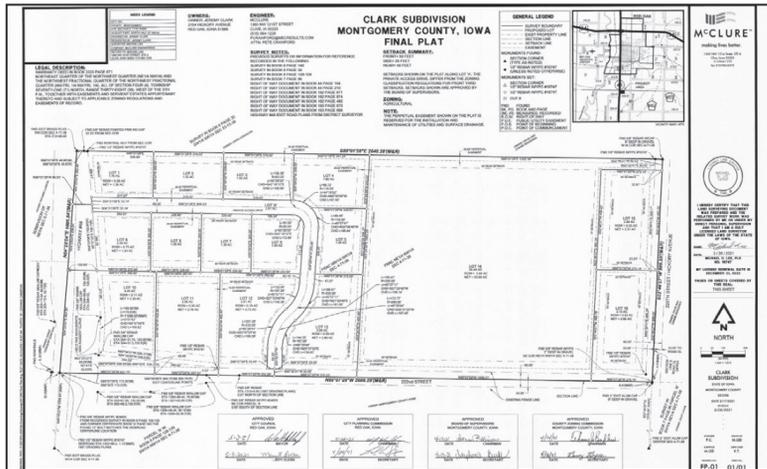
In addition to Highway 48 access, rural water, and fiber optics, there is phase 3 unlimited power from MidAmerican Energy.

"I'd like to see more small businesses decide to build here," Clark said. "There isn't large shop space available locally, but there are a lot of young guys interested in having their own shops."

Additionally, Clark's 45 foot by 120-foot two-sectioned shop already on site is for sale or for rent. Clark said if he did sell his shop, he'd have another one constructed on one of the available lots.

"This shop was built with the intention of selling it," Clark said.

Lastly, Clark said the county has been good with work with on the project, although he would like to discuss the possibility of having it designated as a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) area in 2023.



The approved plans for Clark Subdivision in Montgomery County just south of Red Oak offer various sizes for residential, industrial and commercial lots.

## Sheriff says tackling narcotic cases remains a top focus

**Nick Johansen**  
 The Red Oak Express

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office enjoyed an active 2022.

Both the Red Oak Police Department and Red Oak Fire Department saw an uptick in mental health calls, and Montgomery County Sheriff Jon Spunaugle said the sheriff's office was no exception, especially because the sheriff's office tackles mental health cases through the court system.

"We get all of the 72 hour committals or involuntary committals. We serve all those and transport a lot of them. The Red Oak Fire Department is transporting more of the voluntary committals, which takes some of the heat off of us, but we still deal with a lot of those committals," Spunaugle commented.

The sheriff's office also tackled a number of dispute and accident calls in 2022, but Spunaugle said much of their calls were self generated, as they tackle the county's drug cases.

"We're very proactive. Somebody in the office, sometimes a few of us, has always got a drug case going. We're always trying to work something. I got into working narcotics cases, and I'm a big promoter that we need to keep going," said Spunaugle. "I've always said we stay about three steps behind, but I

don't want to get further than that. We're very proactive on narcotics, which to me, leads to everything else, such as domestic abuse, thefts, even mental illness. It's always been a focus to tackle narcotics cases as hard as we can."

Also, the sheriff's office has been updating equipment. Spunaugle said they've started updating the five-year-old computers in the car, and will soon be finishing up the surveillance cameras in the jail.

"We've been updating cameras inside and outside of the building, and all the software. We've gotten more than 10 years out of that system, which is well beyond the life expectancy. Once that project is completed, everything will be new. We've also done some routine equipment replacements," Spunaugle stated.

The sheriff's office didn't add any more staff, and the sheriff's office, dispatch office, and jail are fully staffed at this time. Also, they've added a second administrative clerk at the front desk.

"Now we have two people so one can be covered for vacations, or sick days, or whatever. We'll always have someone up front. We've been running things single up there for a long time. I was grateful that I was given the approval to add another administrative clerk. It will make us much more efficient and take some of the workload off of the other departments, as well as



Spunaugle

making sure the public has somebody there," Spunaugle advised.

Another new addition was a second K-9 and officer, which provides more coverage to the county.

"We've got them on each side of the shift, so there's usually one available on every shift unless one of the K-9 officers is on vacation. That's been a nice asset to add," stated Spunaugle.

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office contracts with the cities of Villisca and Stanton, and other than the Red Oak Police Department, it is the only law enforcement in the county. Spunaugle said that allows for a lot of coverage and mutual aid.

**SPUNAUGLE, Page 8A**

## SFC Adams retires after 29 years in Army

Sergeant First Class Steven Adams has retired after a 29-year career in the U.S. Army.

SFC Adams retired on Jan. 8 in a ceremony at Fort McClellan near Anniston, Ala. He was joined in the ceremony by his mother, Goldie Adams, of Red Oak, and other members of his family.

SFC Adams began his military career in August 1994 with the 31st Combat Engineer Company in Fayette, Ala. He attended basic training at Fort Knox, Ky., in November 1994, before moving on to the Aberdeen Proving Grounds near Aberdeen, Md., for his Advanced Individual Training in January 1995.

In September of 1995, Adams came back to the Company C 200th Combat Engineer Battalion as a power generation equipment repairer, before being transferred in 1996 to Company D 145th Combat Engineer Battalion.

In 1999, Adams went to Company C 877th Engineer Battalion Combat Heavy and in 2001, became a heavy wheeled vehicle mechanic. From 2003-04, Adams served in Operation Iraqi Freedom attached to the 101st Airborne Division stationed at AO Glory in Mosul, Iraq. Adams worked the northern half Iraq on missions as a 91B



SFC Steven Adams recently retired from the Army after more than 25 years. He is pictured with his mother, Goldie Adams, at the reception. (Photo provided)

and H8 recovery operator.

Following his time in Iraq, Adams returned to Fayetteville, Ala. To the 168th Engineer Company where the heavy wheeled vehicle maintenance role was converted to Army wheeled vehicle mechanic and recovery vehicle operator.

From 2009-10, Adams took part in

**ADAMS, Page 2A**



**Provider Spotlight:**

**EDUARD GRASS, MD**  
 General Surgeon



# Partnership with Western Iowa Tourism declined by supervisors

**Nick Johansen**  
The Red Oak Express

The Montgomery County Board of Supervisors declined to renew a partnership with Western Iowa Tourism region at its Jan. 17 meeting.

The organization was requesting a partnership amount of \$500. Among the statistics were that the organization provided a 36 county Freedom Rock guide in Iowa Welcome Centers and was active on social media.

Supervisor Charla Schmid asked if the amount requested had changed from requests in previous

years. Supervisor Mark Peterson said the amount was the same. The organization was located out of Sac City and published tourism periodicals.

Supervisor Donna Robinson questioned renewing the partnership, even though the amount requested was not large.

"My feeling is that Red Oak promotes themselves, Stanton promotes themselves, and there's an entity in Villisca that promotes itself. I'm not sure if it's necessary," Robinson said.

Supervisor Randy Cooper was in agreement with Robinson, saying that the county departments had been requested to look for any

items they could cut, and this was something that would potentially save some money for the county.

The supervisors declined to make a motion to renew the partnership with the Western Iowa Tourism Region.

The supervisors also agreed to close out the Gardner Road Bridge project. Work was started on the project in November of last year, and only a small portion of the project remained to be completed. The bridge is located on 140th St, less than a mile west of T Avenue.

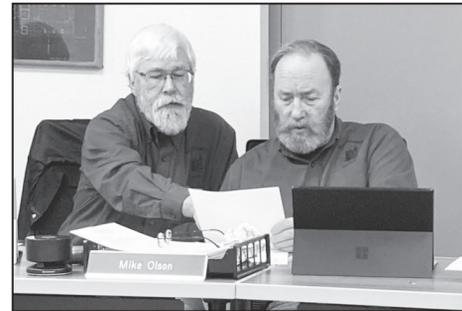
Robinson also advised the supervisors that they would need to appoint two new trustees in townships due to the trustees pass-

ing away.

"I've been in conversations with the clerks in the Douglas and Scott Townships, so we'll have to determine their replacements at an upcoming meeting," Robinson advised.

In other business, the supervisors:

- Approved a tax transfer from rural services basic to secondary roads, in the amount of \$14,783.
- Approved a tax transfer from general basic to secondary roads, in the amount of \$1,044.
- Approved the treasurer's ending fund balance for November, 2022, in the amount of \$12,450,400.



Montgomery County Supervisors Mark Peterson, left, and Mike Olson review an allocation request at the Jan. 17 regular meeting. (Nick Johansen/The Red Oak Express)

## Deadline for Red Oak city clerk position Feb. 1

**Nick Johansen**  
The Red Oak Express

The City of Red Oak is making progress on the hiring of a new full-time city clerk.

Interim city administrator Al Vacanti updated the council on the current progress being made at the regular Red Oak City Council meeting Jan. 16. Vacanti said there have been multiple people expressing interest in the post.

"We've had six applications for the position of city clerk so far, and it's my understanding that we will have one more application coming in before the February deadline. We are seeking applications until Feb. 1," Vacanti said.

Shortly after the deadline closes, Vacanti said he will begin the process of scheduling the interviews.

"My hope is that by the middle part of February, the council will have a candidate they wish to make an offer to, so that in the early part

of March, they can be seated and included in the city's budgeting process," commented Vacanti.

As for the search for a city administrator, Vacanti said he had sent out letters to the consulting firms for requests for proposals.

"These are firms that the city has used before. We're asking that the proposals be given to us by mid February, so a decision can be made and a start date for the new city administrator no later than March 31," Vacanti stated.

Vacanti added by extending the search date, that would allow active city administrators who may be interested in moving to the Red Oak position time to complete the budgeting process in their respective communities.

"We're still hopeful that we can get a proposal and get the new city administrator started before April 1," Vacanti commented.

In other business the council:

- Approved hangar lease agreements, per the Red Oak Airport Commission's recommendation, for KGL Aviation/Lynn Taylor, Terry Dalton, and Duane Harris.

## Supervisors approve annual SWIPCO, SWIHTF and SWITA funding requests

**Nick Johansen**  
The Red Oak Express

The Montgomery County Board of Supervisors approved requests for annual contributions to three entities serving Montgomery County.

The first request was from the Southwest Iowa Transit Authority, requesting \$6,000 for support of SWITA services in the county. Executive director John McCurdy said the contribution amount had not been changed for several years.

"In 2022, SWITA saw some of its biggest usage in history, which shows it's a vital service in our region. Now that we are moving past many COVID-related funding allocations, the continued local support is all the more vital and assists in matching grants that make up a large part of our budget," McCurdy said.

Supervisor Donna Robinson confirmed that the amount had already been factored into the county's budget. The \$6,000 allocation was unanimously approved.

McCurdy also spoke about an allocation to the Southwest Iowa Housing Trust Fund of \$8,000 for support of SWIHTF services in the county, stating the number had increased from \$7,000 the year prior.

"Back in 2020, the SWIHTF board approved dues increases of \$1,000 per year from the original \$5,000 dues until the per county contribution reaches \$10,000. We are in the third year of this increase. This has been the first dues increase in the 17-year history of the trust fund, and we are very proud of the level of service we've been able to provide at this level of local match," commented McCurdy.

The organization currently leverages more than \$400,000 of additional funds the trust fund brings in annually via the State Housing Trust Fund grant program, and a \$100,000 grant from the Iowa West Foundation.

"The Iowa Finance Authority is slowly increasing the funds allocated to trust funds like ours over the next several years, but these funds require a

local match investment which is why we need to request that the counties contribute more in order to be able to match these grant funds and ensure that Southwest Iowa is leveraging all the funds that are available to our residents," McCurdy explained.

While the county's budget included the allocation at the amount of \$7,000, it did not factor in the additional \$1,000 increase. However, the supervisors approved the requested \$8,000 allocation.

McCurdy also spoke on behalf of the Southwest Iowa Planning Council, which was requesting an allocation of \$3,077, which was the county's total population per capita multiplied by 65 cents.

"SWIPCO continues to be an effective mechanism for local capacity development and regional cooperation. SWIPCO's strength lies in the support and utilization of our member governments, and we're proud to be your partner. The per capita request has been in place for the last 15 years," commented McCurdy.

McCurdy added he was pleased with the organization's track record in bringing in far more funds to the region than were spent on operations.

"Currently, we are managing over \$100 million in grants that in many ways benefit everyone in Southwest Iowa. However, the overwhelming majority of these grant resources that we are bringing into the region are to complete projects, not to operate our agency. We need locally generated income to match several grants that give us the organizational capacity to serve the region," said McCurdy.

Robinson said the allocation request was actually less than what the county had initially budgeted.

"The amount that we put in our budget when figuring this was \$3,500, so this is actually down due to the population," Robinson stated.

The supervisors unanimously approved the \$3,077 allocation to SWIPCO. Robinson said the supervisors would need to change the amount in the budget to accurately reflect the modified allocation request.

## ADAMS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, attached to the 10th Mountain Division. Adams worked at Forward Operation Base Shank as a 91Bravo, and was later transferred to Bagram Air Force Base with the Mine Action Center, working with a minefield clearance platoon.

In July of 2013, Adams transferred to the 158th Support Maintenance Company as the support maintenance non-commissioned officer, section sergeant and later, platoon sergeant. His last transfer before retirement was in May of 2020, to Fort McClellan as a maintenance supervisor.



Goldie Adams of Red Oak, mother of SFC Steven Adams, pictured far right, went to Fort McClellan on Jan. 8 for the retirement ceremony for Adams, pictured center. Also in attendance were Goldie's granddaughter, Tara Semm, Sister Valerie Newkirk and her husband, Donald, Carly Adams, Neely Adams, Amber Spradlin, and Ella Spradlin. (Photo provided)

••• DIRECT FROM LAS VEGAS •••

# OH WHAT A NIGHT!

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FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2023 – 7 PM  
FIVE FLAGS CENTER – DUBUQUE IA  
Tickets available at the box office. [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com)

SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 2023 – 2 PM  
ADLER THEATRE - DAVENPORT  
Tickets available in person at the Adler Theatre. [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com)

SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 2023 – 3 PM  
BRIDGE VIEW CENTER - OTTUMWA IA  
Tickets at the Bridge View Center ticket office or [www.bridgeviewcenter.com](http://www.bridgeviewcenter.com)

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\*APY = Annual Percentage Yield. APY is accurate as of 1/16/2023 and is subject to change. Interest on CDs is compounded quarterly. APY is subject to change after account is opened. Interest rate locked when account is opened except for bump-up CDs, which can be converted to a higher rate once during the term. Penalty may be imposed for early withdrawal, and fees could reduce earnings on account. Other rates and terms available. Withdrawal of savings could reduce APY. Membership required to open a CD and is subject to qualifications and a minimum \$5 share deposit. Federally insured by NCUA.

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Iowa high school seniors may register for a chance to receive one of 50 scholarships worth \$1,000 each. To be considered, students should:

- ▶ Register between Nov. 1, 2022, and March 31, 2023, at [www.IowaStudentLoan.org/Know-How](http://www.IowaStudentLoan.org/Know-How)
- ▶ Follow the emailed instructions to complete two online tutorials before 4 p.m. on March 31.

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Programs from Iowa Student Loan Liquidity Corporation

[www.IowaStudentLoan.org/Know-How](http://www.IowaStudentLoan.org/Know-How)

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LINDA WINROTH, 73

Linda Kay Winroth, 73, Wildwood, Mo., passed away Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2023. Linda was born June 1, 1949. She was a loving mother, grandmother, sister and daughter. She had many loves and hobbies throughout her life including her love of family, pets, crafts, cooking and art.

Linda was preceded in death by her father, Gordon Wilson; her brother, Larry Wilson; her daughters, Angela Welker, Bloomington Ill.; and Rhea Hedstrom, Gretna, Neb.; as well as her husband, Rodney Winroth.

She is survived by her daughter, Koreen (Jorge) Rivera, Biloxi, Miss.; son, David (Rachel) Matthews, Wildwood, Mo.; son-in-law, Heath Hedstrom, Gretna, Neb.; brother, David Wilson, Seattle, Wash.; sister, Cindy Wilson, Nixa, Mo.; and her mother, Rosemary Wilson, Nixa, Mo. She is also survived by her grandchildren, Jonathan Welker, Nathan Welker, Cianna Rivera, August Hedstrom, Gunnar Hedstrom, Natalie Matthews, Landon Matthews and Addison Matthews, as well as her great-grandchildren, Angela and Alaina.

A private memorial is planned for a later date in Lacombe, La.



MICHAEL MEAD, 80

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" 2 Timothy 4:7.

Michael Nelson Mead, 80, was called Home after an extended illness on Jan. 20, 2023.

Mike was born in Charles City, March 28, 1942, to James and Cleo Detra Mead of Greene. Mike enjoyed a childhood growing up on the farm. He loved driving tractors, riding horseback, and performed with a group of riders called the Hoofbeats. Later, when the family moved to Greene, Mike often traveled by train to Iowa City to cheer on his Hawkeyes. After graduating from Greene High School in 1960, Mike earned his bachelor and master degrees from the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls.



While attending UNI, he met a young coed, Karen Pearson, whom he married Aug. 20, 1966, at the First Covenant Church in Red Oak. Mike taught middle school in Jefferson, and later in the Woodward-Granger School District. In 1976, he was given an opportunity by his father-in-law to pursue farming in Stanton. Mike took this opportunity. He often said farming was where he felt closest to God.

Mike was an avid reader, Iowa Hawkeye fan, enjoyed the outdoors, and loved to spend time with his dogs and horses. He treasured several trips trail riding with his brothers out west. Later in life, he started trapshooting and enjoyed the camaraderie with a special group of men. Mike was a man of integrity and a man of faith.

Mike is survived by his beloved wife, Karen; his daughter, Kim and her husband Dave Thomas of West Des Moines; son-in-law, Tim Salley of New Hudson, Mich.; and son, Tim Mead and his wife Jody of West Des Moines. Mike was proud of his seven grandchildren, Sam and Nick Thomas, Carter and Reese Salley, and Mara, Lucas, and Caleb Mead. Mike is also survived by his brothers, Steven (Jo) Mead and Philip Mead, sister-in-law, Janet Miller, brother-in-law, Dean Bishop; great-aunt, Helen (Don) Lester, and many cousins, nieces, and nephews.

Mike was greeted in Heaven by his daughter, Michelle Mead Salley, his parents; grandparents, Hazel and Walter Detra; and his in-laws, Earl and Berniece Pearson.

Visitation will be held on Wednesday, Jan. 25, from 5 to 7 p.m. at Nelson-Boylan-LeRette Funeral Chapel in Red Oak. A Celebration of Life service will take place on Thursday, Jan. 26, at 11 a.m. at the Evangelical Covenant Church in Stanton.

Memorials may be directed to the Evangelical Covenant Church in Stanton, Stanton Library, or Red Oak Public Library.

Nelson-Boylan-LeRette Funeral Chapel is in charge of arrangements.

CHERYL JONES, 40

Cheryl Lynn Jones, 40, Red Oak, passed away on Monday, Jan. 16, 2023, at the Griswold Care Center in Griswold.

Cheryl was born March 18, 1982, in Council Bluffs, the daughter of Joseph Jones and Monica Anderson. Cheryl grew up in Red Oak and graduated from Red Oak High School in 2000. She worked at CDS until it closed, then worked at Direct TV. She enjoyed spending time with her family and attending her kids' sporting events.

Preceding her in death were her grandparents, Marlys Jones, Richard "Woody" Anderson and Jonene Anderson; and step-father, Nick Polkowski.

Survivors include her children, Alexa Gilleland and companion Brad Spring, Hunter Gilleland and Brooklyn Gilleland all of Red Oak; grandson, Mason Spring of Red Oak; mother, Monica Anderson Hull of Wisconsin Dells, Wis.; father, Joseph Jones of Red Oak; sister, Lori Betts and husband Cliff of Red Oak; grandpa, Bill Jones of Red Oak; companion, Kyle Smith of Shenandoah; and many aunts, nieces, nephews and cousins.

A celebration of life service was held Saturday, Jan. 21, 2023, at Nelson-Boylan-LeRette Funeral Chapel. Burial was in Evergreen Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are suggested to the family of Cheryl Jones. Nelson-Boylan-LeRette Funeral Chapel is in charge of arrangements.



Law and Order

The following events were filed with the Red Oak, Montgomery County, State of Iowa, or other government offices. In regard to law enforcement and judicial activities, all parties are presumed innocent until proven guilty, and other details may be available at iowacourts.state.ia.us.

SMALL CLAIMS

- LVNV Funding LLC vs. Tyler Comer, Villisca, judgment default in favor of the plaintiff, \$901.04 with 6.73% interest from Jan. 19, plus costs.
- Midland Credit Management vs. Jennifer Richards, Red Oak, judgment default in favor of the plaintiff, \$1,370.62 with 6.73% interest from Jan. 19, plus costs.
- MM Finance LLC DBA EZ Money Check Cashing vs. Brandon Vanhoose, Red Oak, judgment default in favor of the plaintiff, \$215 with 6.73% interest from Jan. 17, plus costs.

REAL ESTATE

WARRANTY DEED

- Emma Pafford, Emma Bodwell, and Justin Rhamy to Teresa Regan, Villisca Original Plat Lts 253-254.
- Roger Ossian, Manager, and Craftsman Builders, LLC, to Jemmar LLC, 4-71-37 Lt 3.
- Vernon and Judith Nichols to David Hart Revocable Trust and Cathy Hart Revocable Trust, 33-72-37 Lt 1 Parcel A.
- Kelen and Tristen Caskey to Kenda Caskey, Trustee, and Karlette Hultman Farm Trust, 11-71-38.
- Nicholas and Susan Gray to Caleb and Beth Rehbein, 21-72-36, 22-72-36 Parcel A.
- Richard and Joanne Adams to Mathew and Adriana St. Lezin, Red Oak Alix Addition Blk 7 Lts 2-4.

TRUSTEE'S DEED

- Bret Hultman, Trustee, Donovan Hultman Trust, and Karlette Hultman Trust to Kelen and Tristen Caskey, 11-71-38.

QUIT CLAIM DEED

- Jose Carreon and Samantha De Leon to City of Villisca, Villisca Stoddard Addition Lts 34-35.

MORTGAGE

- Teresa Regan to Castle & Cooke Mortgage LLC, Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems Inc, and MERS, Villisca Original Plat Lts 253-254.
- Sherri Meeker, Sherri Meeker, Trustee, and Sherri Meeker Revocable Trust to Farm Credit Services of America FCLA, 10-73-38.
- Caleb and Beth Rehbein to Bank Iowa, 21-72-36, 22-72-36, Parcel A.

ARRESTS

- Filed Jan. 19, Christian Meek, 28, Red Oak, domestic abuse assault second offense, \$1,000 bond.
- Filed Jan. 19, Tyler Gibler, 29, Villisca, driving while suspended, \$491.25 bond.
- Filed Jan. 20, Jill Palmer, 45, Bellevue, Neb., driving while barred, \$2,000 bond.
- Filed Jan. 20, Richard Pierce III, 35, Council Bluffs, Shelby County warrant for theft second degree, \$5,000 bond.

CRIMINAL

- Aggravated, State of Iowa vs. Joshua Lowe, 29, Shenandoah, harassment third degree, pled

guilty, \$105 fine.

- Felony, State of Iowa vs. Matt Staley, 44, Chapman, possession of a controlled substance - second offense, pled guilty, seven days jail, time served, \$855 fine, DNA requirement.
- Felony, State of Iowa vs. Tracy Turner, 63, Elliott, possession of a controlled substance - methamphetamine, first offense, pled guilty, \$430 fine.
- Felony, State of Iowa vs. Dennis Vanderhoof, 75, Red Oak, criminal mischief second degree, operate vehicle without owner's consent, driving while barred.
- Felony, State of Iowa vs. Dezirae Kuhl, 28, Villisca, controlled substance violation, possession of a controlled substance - marijuana, first offense.
- Serious misdemeanor, State of Iowa vs. Christian Meek, 28, Villisca, domestic abuse assault, second offense.

OWI

- State of Iowa vs. Mark Coomer, 55, Oak Grove, Mo., first offense.

TRAFFIC

- Hugo Tapia Franco, Carter Lake, operation without registration card or plate.

- Mya Solem, Des Moines, speeding.
- Kristin Schill, Council Bluffs, no valid driver's license.
- Caroline Hall, Lincoln, Neb., speeding.
- Matthew Soe, Red Oak, fishing and hunting - no license over \$20.
- Peyton Tepoel, Stanton, restrictions on taking game - deer and turkey.
- Jayden Schwery, Stanton, restrictions on taking game - deer and turkey.
- Kelly Drake, Walnut, speeding.
- Christopher Beckman, Omaha, Neb., speeding.
- Mohan Krishna, Bellevue, Neb., speeding.
- Brandon Martinez, Corning, speeding.
- Randall Butts, Red Oak, registration violation.
- Lynn Jacobs, Council Bluffs, speeding.
- Anthony Parde, Bellevue, Neb., speeding.
- Susan Schuler, Springdale, Ark., speeding.
- Tuesday Straw, Red Oak, failure to maintain or use safety belts.
- Chloe French, Red Oak, speeding.
- Marisol Flores, Red Oak, speeding.

- Ginger Bahn, Clarinda, speeding.
- Trevor Pierson, Elliott, operation without registration card or plate.
- Paul Douglas, Corning, speeding.
- Samantha Wheatley, Shenandoah, driving while license denied suspended, cancelled, or revoked.

ACCIDENT

On Jan. 16, at 3:30 p.m., Red Oak Police officers investigated a two-vehicle accident at the intersection of 8th and Corning streets. Nevaeh Soar, 16, Red Oak, driving a 2008 Lincoln MKZ, was stopped at the stop sign on 8th Street. Emerson VanHoose, 17, Red Oak, driving a 1999 Chevrolet Lumina was stopped behind the Soar vehicle. Soar backed up when a bus turned north off of Corning Street because she was afraid the bus would hit her car. Her vehicle struck the VanHoose vehicle behind her, causing about \$2,000 damage to the VanHoose vehicle and about \$2,500 damage to the Soar vehicle. Soar was cited for unsafe backing on highway.

How to help preschoolers learn about emotions

From ISU Extension

Preschoolers have a lot to learn as they grow from toddlers to school age. Handling emotions begins in the preschool years, said Cheryl Clark, a human sciences specialist with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

As children learn about emotions, adults can help them understand that all the emotions they feel are normal, said Clark, who specializes in family wellbeing.

"Feelings are universal: everyone has them. There are helpful ways and less helpful ways to deal with feelings, but the feelings themselves are not bad or good," Clark said. Feelings can change quickly: a child may be happily giggling one minute, then quickly begin to cry; it's common to have more than one feeling at a time.

Parents or caregivers can take the first steps in helping preschoolers understand how they feel by naming the emotions they're feeling. "Most of us are pretty comfortable naming happy, sad or mad. But there are so many other emotions, and it's not just 4-year-olds who have trouble naming them. It can be hard for adults to know what our feelings are called, too," Clark said. "Especially in stressful times like the past few years, when so much is happening to and

around us, it's important to be intentional about noticing and naming our own feelings."

Clark offered some simple activities to do at home to help children name and recognize feelings.

Use your facial expressions and body language to play feelings charades. Act out different feelings and take turns guessing. Add a mirror so that your child can see how their face looks, too.

Keep a list of words that describe feelings on the fridge or bulletin board. When children learn new words, add them to the list. Or use magnetic alphabet letters to spell out feeling words.

Share books to open up conversations about feelings. Through books children can name and recognize feelings. They also learn that other people have feelings, too. Books let children see how characters manage their feelings in helpful or not-so-helpful ways. Ask your local children's librarian for suggestions on good books to share with children, such as "The Way I Feel" by Janan Cain.

For more information on helping your preschooler learn about emotions, explore The Science of Parenting resources from ISU Extension and Outreach, at [extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/scienceofparenting/](http://extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/scienceofparenting/)



Red Oak speech qualifies four events for large group state competition

Ten members of the Red Oak Large Group Speech team competed in five events at districts on Saturday at Thomas Jefferson High School.

Receiving a I rating and performing at State in two weeks:

- Short Film: Grace Goldapp, Lauren Dean, Josie Rengstorf, Tessa Rolenc, Jonah Wemhoff, James Gass, Sam Fields, and Ella Johnson
- Ensemble: Grace Goldapp and Michelle Grass
- Ensemble: Josie Rengstorf and Tessa Rolenc
- Ensemble: Griffin Eubank, Connor Knight, Tony Filpi, and Cash Berendes

Performing well and receiving a II rating:

- Ensemble: Madi Parker and Mariella Richards-Hernandez

"Mrs. Wisner and myself could not be more proud of how well these kids performed and all of their hard work!" commented coach Kelsey Mangold. The group will be performing a local show at the high school in the next two weeks at a time and place to be announced. Mangold

said, "You will not want to miss these amazing performers. We also have individual speech happening next."

RO Weather

**Monday, Jan. 16:**  
High 50, Low 33,  
Precip: .01

**Tuesday, Jan. 17:**  
High 52, Low 31,  
Precip: None

**Wednesday, Jan. 18:**  
High 42, Low 28,  
Precip: None

**Thursday, Jan. 19:**  
High 33, Low 29,  
Precip: .55

**Friday, Jan. 20:**  
High 32, Low 23,  
Precip: None

**Saturday, Jan. 21:**  
High 31, Low 23,  
Precip: None

**Sunday, Jan. 22:**  
High 32, Low 21,  
Precip: .14

**Weekly Total  
Precipitation: .70  
January Total  
Precipitation: 1.44**

ANSWER - PUZZLE ON PAGE

E	S	S						L	S	E	B									
d	E	E	S					S	N	I	E	H								
v	A	I	S					T	E	E	H	N	U							
C	I	B	U	C				S	V	L	I	H	V	C						
S	T	V	E	L				H	O	L	V	L	O	R						
E	O	R	N	O	W	N	A	T	I	H	V	M								
								R	V	T		P	E	P						
								D	O	H	K	S	A							
								D	E	F	V	T	O							
								R	E	L	T	U	B	E	H	T	S	S	A	P
								Y	E	T	N	A	T	S		E	H	U	N	E
S	T	H	G	I	T	B									N	V	L	I	L	
Y	R	T	N	V	P										T	V	L	S		
V	V	N	V	S											S	T	E	N		
S	P	V	D												S	R	I			

SUDOKU

	5	7								
	4			3	8	1				
6				7	4					
	6				3	9				
		3				7				
			9	4			5			
				6	9				1	
					8					
8									2	4

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

4	3	6	7	9	8	5	2	1
5	2	8	4	1	3	7	6	9
3	7	4	6	2	9	8	5	1
6	9	1	5	2	2	8	6	7
7	8	1	9	4	2	5	3	6
2	6	5	8	3	6	8	9	4
8	3	8	1	7	4	2	9	5
9	4	2	5	3	8	1	6	7
1	5	7	2	9	6	4	8	3

ANSWER

## University of Iowa fall 2022 dean's list

More than 7,500 undergraduate students at the University of Iowa were named to the dean's list for the 2022 fall semester.

Dean's list status was earned by only 2,427 first year undergraduates during the 2022 fall semester at Iowa, only 1,768 second year students, only 1,503 third year students, and only 1,845 fourth year students.

Students from the area who were named to the dean's list were:

- Madison Bruce of Red Oak, major: Gender, Women's and Sexuality Studies, third year.

- Nicholas Mueller of Red Oak, major: Anthropology, fourth year.

- Lennon O'Neal of Red Oak, major: Pre-Law, first year.

Degree seeking undergraduate students who achieve a grade-point average of 3.50 or higher on 12 semester hours or more of UI graded coursework during a given semester or summer session and who have no semester hours of "I" (incomplete) or "O" (no grade reported) during the same semester are recognized by inclusion on the dean's list for that semester

## Moore graduates from the University of Iowa

Shellby Moore of Emerson was among the nearly 2,000 undergraduate, graduate and professional students conferred their degrees last month at the University of Iowa.

Moore was a student in the University College and her program of study was Leadership Studies. The degree awarded was a Certificate.

## Marshall named to Coe College dean's list

Coe College in Cedar Rapids recognized its highest performing students as members of the fall 2022 dean's list, including Allison Marshall of Villisca, who is currently among this elite group.

The college recognized only 119 students for the fall 2022 term. To be named to the list, a student must earn at least a 3.5 grade point average for the term and rank in the top 10% of the student body.

## VIEWPOINTS

### Stronger the Press, Stronger the People

LETTERS TO | THE EDITOR

## Vouchers are bad for students and the future of Iowa's schools

**To the Editor:**

During her recent Condition of the State address, Governor Reynolds doubled down on her push to use public tax dollars to subsidize private school tuitions. As a means of promoting school choice, she recommended the state contribute significant sums to educational savings accounts that parents could use to send their kids to private or parochial schools.

I struggle with this proposal because it would divert scarce resources away from our students to private institutions that have little accountability, less transparency, and no mandate to serve all kids regardless of their race, religion, socio-economic status, or abilities.

I am sure that private schools are an acceptable alternative for some families, but I don't want my tax dollars to pay for them any more than I want to subsidize country club memberships for people who prefer to use their facilities over public parks and swimming pools. Taxes are supposed to be levied to fund essential services that benefit all citizens. There is no public purpose or greater good that is served by paying for country

club memberships or private school tuitions. On the contrary, vouchers create two competing systems that draw resources away from the vast majority of students. They pit private and public schools against one another on a playing field that is already slanted.

This is to say that private schools are not required to play by the same rules as public schools. Private schools aren't governed by publicly elected school boards. They aren't required to have public budget hearings and aren't limited in their use of funds. They aren't subject to open meeting laws or records requirements. They aren't bound by state accreditation or "offer and teach" requirements. They aren't required to administer standardized tests, share student outcomes, or report student achievement gaps.

Finally, private schools aren't obligated to serve all students. Unlike their public counterparts, private schools can pick and choose who they accept: they can refuse enrollment based on special student needs and they can expel students for not meeting their academic expectations. Ultimately, private schools are

not held to the same standards of oversight, transparency, accountability, enrollment, or services as public schools.

To say that educational savings accounts or private school vouchers are necessary to ensure school choice is a hollow claim. Iowans already have more school choice than most states. In addition to strong public schools, we have unfettered open enrollment policies, a growing number of virtual academies, permissive home school and private instruction options, charter schools, and School Tuition Organization tax credits for children attending private schools. Even before the expansion of charter schools, private and home school tax credits, and the removal of open enrollment deadlines, the Heritage Foundation's Education Freedom Report Card, ranked Iowa ninth in the country in terms of school choice options.

In reality, this voucher proposal would do little to enhance school choice. Almost 75% of Iowa's public schools are located in rural areas with little or no access to private schools. We have no private schools in Montgomery County and only a handful in Southwest Iowa. It is

extremely unlikely that private schools would start up in areas such as ours that are already experiencing declining enrollment. Thus, most Iowa families would be excluded from the program simply by nature of their location.

Even if they did have access to private schools, many families could not afford to send their kids to one. According to the Private School Review website, the average cost of private high school tuition in Iowa is \$9,208 per year. With the state subsidy of \$7,598 proposed by the Governor, families would still need to come up with over \$1,600 per child per year. This does not include transportation costs, meals, uniforms, textbook fees, supplies, and other related expenses. In light of this, it appears the real winners of the Governor's proposal would be families with financial means who already send their children to private schools. The losers would be public schools and the students they serve.

While Nebraska's governor is calling for \$2.5 billion in new funding for K-12 public schools by 2029-30, Governor Reynolds is proposing we funnel \$1.9 bil-

lion to private schools during the same period. These are funds that will not be allocated to schools serving 90% of the students in Iowa. The cost of Governor Reynolds' voucher program coupled with historic tax cuts that will lower state revenues by \$1.8 billion per year will make it increasingly difficult for the state to provide adequate funding for public education. We will be lucky to see the same meager increases we have experienced the last 10 years.

The bucket is only so big and, when you start punching holes in it, the contents drain quickly. The effects of this leaking bucket will be disproportionately felt by rural districts that are already cutting programs and staff due to declining enrollment and state funding that has not kept pace with inflation. Rural residents will be forced to plug the holes in the bucket by paying more in local property taxes to make up for the shortfalls in the state aid formula.

Make no mistake, your children and grandchildren will be harmed by the Governor's proposal. While more money will go towards private schools serving 6%-7% of Iowa's students,

much less will be allocated to public school districts that serve the overwhelming majority of young people in our state. There is only so much schools can do to offset minimal state funding. We need resources to provide students the programs and opportunities they deserve. These resources will not be available if vouchers come to pass.

Ultimately, I believe that parents should have the choice to enroll their children in private schools, but not at the expense of public schools or rural communities. Public tax dollars should be used to fund public schools that are held to the same standards, accountable to local stakeholders, and open to all students. They should not be used to sponsor a privileged minority that has the Governor's ear.

This proposal is being fast tracked and will likely be voted on in the Iowa House next week. Please contact your legislators and make your voice heard regarding this matter.

Ron Lorenz  
RO School superintendent

THE TIME CAPSULE | ROY MARSHALL

## To fly or not to fly

A recent column on cheese, which made reference to not finding camembert in local groceries, prompted a couple of comments.

Harold Hall, a subscriber from Red Oak, suggested Osceola Cheese, a specialty store south of Kansas City. After passing along this bit of information, Hall pointed out something else that isn't sold in our immediate area — the Iowa flag.

On Hall's front lawn flies both the U.S. and state flag. His Iowa was showing wear and he went shopping for a new one. He checked likely stores in Red Oak without success. Next he went to Glenwood, then Clarinda.

Hall could have bought a Cyclone flag, or Hawkeye or Cornhusker. Offerings included U.S. flags, garden flags, "Congrats Grad" flags, survey flags, windsock flags, OneCall color-coded don't dig flags, flagpoles and mounting brackets of various kinds, but not a State of Iowa flag. (If Mr. Hall missed a store that carries them, let me know. I promise free advertising in the form of a line or two at the bottom of the student section.)

I assume retailers do not stock Iowa flags for the same reason I couldn't find exotic cheese—lack of buyers. Drive around southwest Iowa and you'll see flags expressing allegiance to everything from Asgrow soybeans to The Donald, but not much of Iowa.



Hall tells me he checked the courthouse. The U.S. flag was flying, but not Iowa's. Neither, on the days he drove by, was an Iowa flag displayed on flagpoles at Red Oak schools.

This struck me as curious, so on a mostly sunny and reasonably pleasant weekday in mid-January I took a ride.

The Iowa flag was out at the hospital. It flew over Fountain Square Park and Iowa DOT, but not at either the courthouse or high school.

In the case of schools there's a compelling incentive. Iowa Code 280.5, para (1), under the title "Uniform School Requirements," states "The U.S. and Iowa flag shall be raised on all days when the weather is suitable."

There's no penalty section, but why not? Hall said the weather was fine when he went by, as it was when I did. Stanton's school doesn't fly the state flag either. Am I misreading the statute? Or is there another explanation?

On Jan. 17, I placed a call and posed the question to administrative offices of both schools. By

my deadline three days later I hadn't heard back from either.

As for the courthouse, I spoke with Mark Peterson, a member of the County Board of Supervisors. He then talked with maintenance staff. They say the state flag hasn't flown there for some time, they don't know why, felt it should and assured me that within a few days it will.

Stanton flies the U.S. flag at the town's main entry, but not the state's. In Red Oak the fire station used to fly Iowa, but no longer. Didn't the library at one time? And the sheriff's office? I'm not sure, but without doubt a symbol that our community formerly endorsed is no longer seen in places it once was.

That's notable, as previous residents of Montgomery County deserve some credit for the fact that Iowa has a state flag.

Judge Horace Deemer of Red Oak served on the Iowa Supreme Court from 1894 until his death in 1917. For several years he was Chief Justice. A patriotic and public spirited Iowan, in 1914 Justice Deemer wrote a lengthy letter (reprinted in The Express) to the Honorable W.W. Marsh of Waterloo.

Marsh, Secretary of the Greater Iowa Association, was soliciting suggestions for effective ways to elevate Iowa. Deemer provided a list

of 25 items that included better roads, promotion of tourism, reliable statistics, etc. Number 19 was "The adoption of a state flag and provisions for display with the national colors."

These things don't happen overnight, but Deemer's status assured that his suggestions were given consideration. Shortly thereafter National Guard units from Montgomery County were activated to help control the Mexican border, and not long after that the U.S. entered World War I. Local Guard units went from Mexico to trench warfare in France, with Iowa soldiers noting that those from other states had a flag. Iowa still did not.

Committees were formed, Iowa members of the Daughters of the American Revolution took up the cause, a design was settled on and, in 1921, the legislature made it official.

In December of 1922 the D.A.R., as part of an initiative to assure that every Iowa school flew an Iowa flag, gave flags to schools in Stennett, Coburg, Elliott, Wales and Frankfort Center.

Those schools are now gone. So, at many public buildings where it once flew, is our Iowa flag.

Roy Marshall is a local historian and columnist for the Red Oak Express. He can be contacted at news@redoakexpress.com.

### DEADLINES

Newspaper Inserts: Noon Wednesdays.  
Submitted News Items and Letters: 4 p.m. Thursdays.  
Public Notices: 4 p.m. Thursdays.  
Display & Classified Display Advertising: 4 p.m. Wednesdays.  
Classified Line Ads/Garage Sale Ads: 10 a.m. Thursdays.  
Obituaries: 9 a.m. Mondays.

### CONTACT US

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## THE RED OAK Express

Dedicated to Freedom Since 1868

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### WHO WE ARE

Employees in order of continuous service: Trish Deitchler, Graphic Design; Peggy Boeye, Office Manager, News; Ann Watt, Mail; Nick Johansen, News Reporter; Charm Carpenter, Sports Reporter; Tracy Schooling, Driver; Tess Nelson, General Manager/Editor; Nanny Crowe, Circulation; Joshua Byers, Regional Publisher.

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Single copies are \$1.00 each and available at (in Red Oak unless specified): Red Oak Express; Casey's (Red Oak, Stanton,

Villisca, Griswold); Cubby's; Dollar General; E-Stop (Emerson); Fareway; Hy-Vee; Hy-Vee Wine & Spirits; United Farmers Cooperative; Walmart (Shenandoah). Single copy sales are

also available from a coin rack in front of the Red Oak Express.

Community Calendar

26 January

Noon, SCORE webinar, "How to Turn Your Invention into a Product and Bring it to Market" Go to [omaha.score.org/content/take-workshop-242](http://omaha.score.org/content/take-workshop-242).  
12:30 p.m., Bingo, Red Oak Senior Center, 2700 N. 4th St. Call 712-623-3497 or Carolyn at 402-926-8683 for more information.  
4 p.m., Community Prayer Time, Fountain Square Park. Call Bonnie at 623-4759.  
7 p.m., Alcoholics Anonymous, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1101 Summit St.

27 January

Red Oak Public Library, Popcorn Friday, all day.  
10:15 a.m., Story time at the Red Oak Public Library, 400 N. 2nd St., theme: "Friends."  
3:30 p.m., Movie matinee, Essex Lied Public Library, 508 Iowa Ave., Essex.  
5:30 p.m., Alcoholics Anonymous, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1101 Summit St.  
6 p.m., Open House for artist Rick Goodvin, Wilson Performing Arts Center, 300 Commerce Dr.  
7 p.m., "Avatar: The Way of Water," theatre #1; "A Man Called Otto," theatre #2; Red Oak Grand Theatre.

28 January

10 a.m., "Theater of the Mind" meditation and movement class at the Wilson Performing Arts Center, 300 Commerce Dr. Call 623-3183 to register.  
5-10 p.m., Charity Night at the Red Oak Eagles Lodge, 200 E. Washington Ave. Soup and sandwiches from 5 to 7 p.m., live music and karaoke from 7-10 p.m., 50/50 raffle.  
7 p.m., "Avatar: The Way of Water," theatre #1; "A Man Called Otto," theatre #2; Red Oak Grand Theatre.

29 January

2 p.m. and 7 p.m., "Avatar: The Way of Water," theatre #1; "A Man Called Otto," theatre #2; Red Oak Grand Theatre.  
5:30 p.m., Alcoholics Anonymous, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1101 Summit St.

mous, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1101 Summit St.

30 January

12:30 p.m. Bingo, Red Oak Senior Center, 2700 N. 4th St. Call 712-623-3497 or Carolyn 402-926-8683 for more information.  
11:30 a.m.-5:15 p.m., Bloodmobile, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1101 Summit St.  
7 p.m., Alcoholics Anonymous, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1101 Summit St.

31 January

8:30 a.m., Montgomery County Supervisors, North Meeting Room in courthouse basement, open to public.  
Noon, Rotary Club meeting. For location, go to [rotarydistrict5650.org/clubinfo/red-oak](http://rotarydistrict5650.org/clubinfo/red-oak).  
Noon, SCORE webinar, "How To Create A Marketing Plan For Your Small Business." Go to [omaha.score.org/content/take-workshop-242](http://omaha.score.org/content/take-workshop-242).  
1 p.m., Card games (pitch and/or cribbage) Red Oak Senior Center, 2700 N. 4th St. Call 712-623-3497 or Carolyn 402-926-8683 for more information.  
5-5:45 p.m., Sports academy at the Montgomery County Family YMCA, 101 E. Cherry St., for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten.  
6-9 p.m., Winter Session I Singles Tennis League, Montgomery County Family YMCA, 101 E. Cherry St. Register at: [https://montgomeryco.recliquecore.com/programs/110014/high-school-adult-tennis-leagues/?location=s-13&fbclid=IwAR3kvAaAaBRHmw7\\_0ffBP2VG7Uykjy9TnHbuOah5cAL3-0IW6HC-6QZvmAUK](https://montgomeryco.recliquecore.com/programs/110014/high-school-adult-tennis-leagues/?location=s-13&fbclid=IwAR3kvAaAaBRHmw7_0ffBP2VG7Uykjy9TnHbuOah5cAL3-0IW6HC-6QZvmAUK)

1 February

1:30-5 p.m., Christ's Cupboard Food Pantry and Clothing Cupboard, 206 E. Coolbaugh St. Donations accepted 1-5 p.m. at back door.  
4-8 p.m., Calving Clinic, White Fair Building, 1809 N. 4th St., hosted by the Montgomery County Extension.



Mobile Food Pantry Jan. 25

Live Well Montgomery County is holding a mobile Food Pantry Jan. 25 at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds/football field parking lot at 1798 N. 1st St. Line up starts at 2 p.m., and the food distribution begins at 3:30 p.m. The event is free and open to anyone in need. There are no requirements. Pictured left, volunteers from a prior mobile food pantry pose for a photo. (Photo submitted)

WPAC featuring art of Goodvin

Rick Goodvin, of Corning is the featured artist at the Wilson Performing Arts Center at 300 Commerce Dr. from now until Feb. 1.



Additionally, at 6 p.m. Jan. 27, Goodvin will be present at the WPAC for an open house. The event is free and the public is invited to attend. Refreshments will be served.

Goodvin specializes in visual arts, as well as oil painting, ink drawing, and printmaking techniques like intaglio and linocut. Whether making portraits, figure studies, landscapes, animal

scenes, or illustrated scenarios, Goodvin creates an image with simple human experience as the underlying subject matter.

Dorff performs at Corning Opera House

The Corning Opera House at 800 Davis Ave., Corning, will host "An Evening of Stories and Songs" by Steve Dorff, an Emmy-nominated songwriter and composer, at 7 p.m. Jan. 28. Tickets are \$32 at [comingoperahouse.com](http://comingoperahouse.com).

2023 Montgomery County Legislative Briefings

- Saturday, Feb. 4 at 8 a.m. at the Montgomery County Family YMCA, 101 E. Cherry St.
- Saturday, March 4 at 8 a.m. at the Montgomery County Family YMCA, 101 E. Cherry St.
- Saturday, April 1 at 8 a.m. at the Montgomery County Family YMCA, 101 E. Cherry St.



ROCIA Annual meeting Jan. 25

The Red Oak Chamber and Industry Association is holding its annual meeting at 5:30 p.m. Jan. 25 at the Red Oak Country Club at 2038 200th At.

A cash bar and appetizers will be available.

RO Rural Fire Protection Association annual meeting agenda

- The Red Oak Rural Fire Protection Association will hold its annual meeting at 7 p.m. on Jan. 26 at the Red Oak Fire Station. Agenda items include:
1. Call the meeting to order.
  2. Read and approve/disapprove the minutes for Feb. 24, 2022. Action may/may not be taken.
  3. President's financial report for 2021-22. Action may/may not be taken.
  4. Fire Chief's activity report and future needs and equipment.
  5. Volunteer's activity report.
  6. Review contract with City of Red Oak for July 1, 2022-25.
  7. Review budget and tax levy for 2023-24. Action may/may not be taken.
  8. President's position. Action may/may not be taken.
  9. Other items of interest.
  - 10 Adjournment.

Happy Birthday!

Celebrating birthdays are:

- Wayne Sederburg – Jan. 28
- Jessica Redd – Jan. 29
- Marie Baker – Jan. 29
- Rogene Sederburg – Jan. 31
- Scott Carpenter – Jan. 31
- Ruth Hemphill – Feb. 1
- Alice Salisbury – Feb. 1

To be included on the free "Happy Birthday" list, e-mail your birthday (and those of your friends and family) to [news@redoakexpress.com](mailto:news@redoakexpress.com), mail to P.O. Box 377, Red Oak, IA 51566, or drop by our office at 2012 Commerce Dr.

**Happy Anniversary!**

Celebrating their anniversaries this week are:

Charlie and Pat Vestal – Jan. 27  
Lee and Delores Grismore – Jan. 29

Congratulations and happy anniversary to you!

To become a member of the free "Anniversary Club," e-mail your anniversary (and those of your friends and family) to [news@redoakexpress.com](mailto:news@redoakexpress.com), mail to P.O. Box 377, Red Oak, IA 51566, or drop by our office at 2012 Commerce Dr.

Senior Menu

Thursday, Jan. 26: Tuna salad sandwich on white bread, tomato cucumber salad, potato salad, cookie, milk/coffee.  
Friday, Jan. 27: BBQ pulled pork on a hamburger bun, au gratin potatoes, corn, fresh seasonal fruit,

milk/coffee.  
Monday, Jan. 30: Liver and onions or hamburger patty with onion gravy, whipped potatoes, mixed vegetables, white bread, fruit gelatin, milk/coffee.  
Tuesday, Jan. 31: BBQ rib patty

on a hamburger bun, pickle slices, parslid potatoes, carrots, fresh seasonal fruit, milk/coffee.  
Wednesday, Feb. 1: Not available.  
For more information, call the Senior Center at 623-3497 or Caro-

lyn at 402-926-8683.  
Please call for reservations by 9:30 a.m. the day before you plan to eat lunch.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

**Advent Christian**  
300 S. 2nd Ave., Villisca, Rev. Jeff Eason, Sunday School, 9:30 a.m., Worship, 10:30 a.m., Celebrate Recovery, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.

**Assembly Of God**  
1005 Senate, Red Oak, 623-2174, Services, 10:30 a.m.

**Baptist**  
The Bridge (First Baptist Church), 406 N. 3rd St., Red Oak, Rev. Len Taylor, Worship, 11 a.m.  
Grace Baptist, 1510 N. 6th St., Red Oak, Gary D. Walters, Bible class, 10 a.m., Worship, 11 a.m., Worship, 6 p.m.; Wednesday, Prayer, 7 p.m.  
Grace Baptist, 525 Main St., Griswold, Victor Maxson, Bible study, 10 a.m., Worship, 11 a.m. **Online:** 11 a.m. livestream.

**Southern Baptist**  
Crossroads Community Church, 303 E. Oak St., use the alley entrance, Rev. Ricky Rohrig, Sr., Celebration Services with Kids' Church, 9:23 a.m., Wednesdays in the Word, live on Facebook, 6:30 p.m. 712-357-1060, [crossroadsredoak.com](http://crossroadsredoak.com). **Online:** 9:45 a.m. approx. live on Facebook.

**Catholic**  
St. Joseph's, 131 W. High, Villisca, Father Sylvester Okoh, Sunday

Mass, 8:30 a.m.  
St. Mary's, 1510 Highland Ave., Red Oak, Father Lazarus Kirigia, Saturdays, 5 p.m. (1st, 3rd, 5th Saturday); Sunday, 10:30 a.m., in Spanish, 1 p.m.

**Christian**  
First Christian, 1909 Summit St., Red Oak, Pastor AJ Baratta, PreKindergarten - Sunday School, 9:30-10:15 a.m., Fellowship, 10 a.m., Worship, 10:30 a.m. **Online:** 10:30 a.m. live on Facebook.

**Christian & Missionary Alliance**  
Citylight Southwest Iowa, 705 Bradford, Emerson. Co-lead pastors Matt Keller, Tyler Mass. Worship with children's church, 10 a.m. in-person gathering. **Online:** 10 a.m. live on Facebook.  
Faith Community, 2701 N. 8th St., Red Oak, Pastor Dan Wetzel, Associate Pastor Stephen Beaulier, Worship, 9:30 a.m. Connection Classes for pre-kindergarten-adults, 11 a.m., Wednesday activities: Faith Kids, Pre-K grade 4, 6-7:30 p.m. Faith Midpoint, grades 5-6, 6-7:30 p.m. Faith Youth, grades 7-12, 7-8:30 p.m. **Online:** 9:30 a.m. on KCSI, 9:30 a.m. on Facebook.

**Church Of Christ**  
Church Of Christ, Elliott, Sunday Bible School, 9 a.m., Worship, 10 a.m., Men's and Women's Bible study and breakfast, first Sunday of the month at 7:30 a.m.  
River of Life Church, Hwy. 48 North, Red Oak, Interim Minister Kevin Berry, Sunday School 9 a.m., Worship, 10 a.m.

**Church Of The Nazarene**  
Red Oak, 401 E. Prospect St., Rev. Lori Lathrop. Radio ministry, 8:30 a.m., worship with children's church at 10:30 a.m.

**Covenant**  
Evangelical, Rev. Matt King, 308 Eastern, Stanton, Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Worship, 10:45 a.m. **Online:** 10:45 a.m. live on Facebook and later on Youtube.  
Faith Covenant Church, 212 Alice St., Essex, Pastor Gordon Scott, Pastor Staci Shearer, Worship, 8:30 a.m.  
First Covenant, Rev. Alan Dean, pastor, 3rd & Hammond, Red Oak, Worship, 9:30 a.m.

**Jehovah's Witness**  
210 Argus Road, Shenandoah, Thursday, 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m., public Bible discourse.

**Lutheran**  
Bethesda Lutheran, Rural Clarinda. Worship 9:30 a.m. Worship, Sunday School 10:30 a.m.  
Bethlehem Lutheran, 1101 Summit St., Red Oak, Rev. Jennifer Yeske-Drown, Sunday worship, 11 a.m.  
Strand Evangelical, Rural Villisca, Rev. Marietta Nelson-Bittle, Worship, 9:45 a.m.  
Fremont Lutheran (Nyman), 1147 Ironwood Ave, Red Oak, Pastor Ann Albert, Worship, 9:30 a.m., Sunday School, 10:30 a.m.  
Mamrelund Lutheran, 410 Eastern Ave., Stanton. Worship, 10:30 a.m. Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. **Online:** 10:30 a.m. FMTC Cable Channel 1, also live on Facebook.  
Mt. Calvary, 107 S. 5th, Villisca, Jerome Wagoner, Worship, 9:00 a.m. Tabor Lutheran, 1711 Q Ave., Stanton, Worship, 8:15 a.m., Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.  
Peace Lutheran, (A WELS Congregation), 411 Church St., Shenandoah, Saturday Worship, 5:30 p.m.; Bible and Sunday School, 6:30 p.m.

**Non-Denominational**  
Oaks Community Church, 41310 Ellington Rd., Emerson, Rev. Ron Perry, 712-824-7218, Sunday School, 10 a.m., Worship, 11 a.m.

**Presbyterian**  
Center Ridge, 1546 N. 110th St., Red Oak, Caryn Pedersen, Worship 1 p.m., two times a month. Call 623-9023 for more information.  
First Presbyterian, 109 S. 3rd Ave., Villisca, Rev. Sandra Wainwright, Sunday School, 9:30 a.m., Worship, 10:30 a.m.  
Red Oak Presbyterian, 511 E. Coolbaugh, PO Box 402, Red Oak, Caryn Pedersen, [redoakpresbyterianchurch.com](http://redoakpresbyterianchurch.com), Service, 10:30 a.m. **Online:** 10:30 a.m. live on Facebook/Red Oak Presbyterian Church

**Reformed Evangelical**  
Heartland Sovereign Grace Church, new church plant. Bible study Sunday, 5 p.m., [www.swiacrec.com](http://www.swiacrec.com), contact@swiacrec.com.

**United Methodist**  
First United Methodist, 600 E. Hammond, Red Oak, Rev. Jennifer Van Nostrand, Worship, Sunday, 9 a.m.; Youth group Wednesday 6:30-8 p.m., grades 6-12, snack is served. **Online:** 9 a.m. [fumcro.org](http://fumcro.org); click on the media tab to see previously recorded services.  
Wesley Chapel UMC, Rev. Carl Phillips, Worship, 8:45 a.m., Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.  
Red Oak Circuit, Linda Westerhold, Hawthorne, 1248 210th St., Red

Oak, Worship, 10 a.m.; Stratton, 1695 150th St., Red Oak, Worship, 11:15 a.m. **Online:** 11:15 a.m. live on Facebook.  
Elliott United Methodist, Rev. Terry McClain, Sunday School, 9 a.m., Worship, 10 a.m. **Online:** 10 a.m. live on Facebook.  
Emerson United Methodist Church, Rev. Denise Stevens, 801 Bradford Ave., Emerson, (712) 824-7368, Sunday School, 9:30 a.m., Worship, 10:30 a.m.  
Grant United Methodist, Pastor Casey Pelzer, Worship services, 8:30 a.m. **Online:** 8:30 a.m. live on Facebook  
United Methodist, 203 S. 3rd Ave., Villisca, Pastor Jennifer Van Nostrand, Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Worship, 10:45 a.m. **Online:** 10:45 a.m. live on Facebook.  
Strahan United Methodist, Hastings, Rev. David Kwangki Kim, Worship, 9:30 a.m., Sunday School, 10:30 a.m.

**United Church Of Christ**  
First Congregational, 608 Reed St., Red Oak, Sunday Worship, 11:30 a.m. in the sanctuary with fellowship prior to the service at 10:30 a.m. Rev. Holly Scherff, interim pastor.

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## The Heart of Southwest Iowa



### New year, new calendar, new goals



Elaine Carlson  
Director of Membership & Finance

We have rolled up our sleeves and are busy working on event planning, new programs and projects for 2023.

Marketing Red Oak, our business community and organizations are a huge part of what the Chamber does every day. I am happy to be working with Tami VanMeter as we begin a new year with new opportunities, new initiatives with a renewed energy.

As we begin a new year, it is a good time for our Chamber Members to look over their business listing on our website.

Please contact our office with any edits or additions as one of our focuses at the Chamber is to have the most up to date and accurate information available on our website. A reminder that 2023 ROCIA membership dues were sent out electronically in December. Let us know if you didn't receive yours.

#### Annual Meeting

The ROCIA Annual Meeting will be held on Jan. 25 at the Red Oak Country Club.

On the agenda is the review of the past year financials, activities, and programs were presented. We are also excited to have Matt St. Lezin, owner of the Neighborhood Bakehouse, share their family's story of moving to Red Oak and opening their fantastic new business.

#### 2023 ROCIA Board of Directors

- President –Andy Rea, United Group Insurance.
- Vice President –Ryan Beeson, Davis Taylor Insurance.

- Treasurer –Bryant Blay, Montgomery County Memorial Hospital.
- Past President –Sharon Bradley, Valley Antiques & Gifts.
- Director -Diana Hietbrink, Pudgy Pumpkin Patch Gift Shop and Rubey Realty & Rentals; Director -Ben Lundgren, Houghton State Bank; Director -Corrine Jenkins, The LaLa Project and Montgomery County Soil & Water Conservation.

- Ex Officio Directors: Brian Bills –City of Red Oak, Randy Cooper –Montgomery County Board of Supervisors, Ron Lorenz –Red Oak Community School District.

#### Leadership Red Oak 2023

We are currently accepting applications for the LRO program until Feb. 28. We have a limited number of openings available so reach out to us now if you are interested in being a member of the Class of 2023.

The Leadership Red Oak Program is for anyone who may be new to Red Oak or employees in leadership roles. It is a 10-week course that immerses community members in a hands-on experience of Red Oak industries, businesses, municipal departments, history of Red Oak and programs.

Leadership Red Oak is the community's only program that gives individuals the opportunity to tour assembly floors at Red Oak's many manufacturers and to learn about the businesses you may have wondered about.

The sessions are scheduled every Thursday from 8 a.m. to noon, March 2 through May 4. Graduation ceremony will take place on May 11.

The cost for ROCIA members is \$50 and \$75 for non-members. For more information or to register you may contact our office at 623-4821 or register at redoakiowa.com.

- Thanks to our Diamond Sponsor -Red Oak Greenhouse.
- Gold sponsors –Building Crafts, Inc., Carrick & Associates, LLP, and Clarios.
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• Bronze Sponsors –Bank Iowa, Michael J. Portz, O.D., P.C., Montgomery County Family YMCA, Montgomery County Memorial Hospital. Sponsors of the week include-Kiwanis Club of Red Oak, Larry and Faye Brandstetter, Milestone Financial Group, Montgomery County Farm Bureau, Nishna Productions, Red Oak Community School District, United Group Insurance.

#### Ribbon Cutting

We will be celebrating at the Neighborhood Bakehouse their grand opening with a ribbon cutting on Thursday, Feb. 16.

#### Cold Cash Reminder

If you have any Cold Cash laying around that you have not spent yet, be sure to use it soon. Cold Cash expires on Jan. 31, 2023, so check out those desk drawers, coat pockets, purses, or your vehicles to see if you still have any left to spend. A reminder that Cold Cash and Red Oak Bucks can only be redeemed by Chamber Members which are listed on our website.

#### Legislative Briefings

The first 2023 Legislative Briefing will be on Saturday, Feb 4 at 8 a.m. at the YMCA.

#### Mark Your Calendars for Upcoming Dates:

- March 2 – Leadership Red Oak Kickoff.
- March 4 – Legislative Briefing –8 a.m.
- March 21 – ROCIA Ag Appreciation Dinner –RSVP required.

For more information about our members, promotions, & events within and around our community, please visit our website at redoakiowa.com.

If you have questions about becoming a member of the ROCIA or are interested in volunteering opportunities, please contact me at 623-4821. On a personal note, I want to thank all who reached out to me and our family with the loss of my mom.

Your kindness and generosity has meant so much to us. We have comfort knowing that she no longer suffers with the limitations that she had for so long.

Warm wishes,  
Elaine Carlson

## LEADERSHIP Red Oak

March 2 - May 11, 2023  
Thursdays 8am - Noon

**COST**  
\$50 for Chamber Members & their employees  
\$75 for non-members  
Registrations are due by Feb. 28th

Call **712-623-4821**

**REGISTRATION NOW OPEN** [www.redoakiowa.com](http://www.redoakiowa.com)

**WHO**  
Newcomers to Red Oak or employees in leadership roles are encouraged to participate to better understand all aspects of our community.

**WHAT**  
A 10 week course that immerses community members in a hands on experience of Red Oak industries, businesses, municipal departments, history and programs. Leadership Red Oak is the community's only program that gives individuals the opportunity to tour assembly floors at Red Oak's many manufacturers and to learn about the businesses you have wondered about.

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# Cattlemen's Heritage Beef announces land acquisition in Mills County

**Joe Foreman**  
The Opinion-Tribune

Nearly 18 months since announcing plans to build to a 2,000-head per day beef processing facility in Mills County, Cattlemen's Heritage Beef Company has finalized the purchase of a 132-acre site in northwest Mills County.

The purchase of land north-west of the Highway 370 - Interstate 29 interchange was finalized Dec. 30 for an undisclosed amount. The land is just south of the Mills - Pottawattamie County line.

Plans for the beef processing facility were announced in June 2021. The plant is projected to employ up to 800 employees and provide a tax boost to local taxing agencies.

Mills County elected and economic development officials called the proposed a "win-win" when Cattlemen's Heritage announced plans for the facility.

"The tax base and the jobs this will bring is a win-win for everyone," said Mills County



Architectural rendering of Cattlemen's Heritage Beef's proposed beef processing facility in northwest Mills County.

Supervisor Lonnie Mayberry. Cattlemen's Heritage officials conceded the land acquisition was a lengthy process.

"I'm very appreciative of the cooperation, flexibility, patience and professionalism that the owners, their representatives and officials in Mills County demonstrated throughout this process," said principal developer Chad Tentinger. "Land purchases for projects of this size often take quite a while to complete and they often have unforeseen chal-

lenges, but everyone worked together very well from Day One and through negotiations until final documents were signed."

Groundbreaking for the facility will take place in 2023, Tentinger said.

"A facility of our size and scale requires a certain level of infrastructure and public utilities. In addition to those requirements, this site checks all the boxes for logistics when it comes to the level of truck traffic for cattle and raw goods com-

ing into the plant and processed goods leaving the facility," he said. "Its proximity to I-80 is another logistical plus. With the eventual need for up to 800 employees, its location in the Omaha-Council Bluffs metropolitan statistical area is another valuable attribute."

Tentinger noted that the site is zoned for industrial development with emphasis on agribusiness-type operations. Bunge North America operates a soybean processing facility on the opposite side of Interstate 29, just east of the Cattlemen's Heritage site. An ethanol plant is located nearby.

"Our facility and its state-of-the-art operations fit the neighborhood, but we'll also be putting our best foot forward in terms of an attractive public-facing design," Tentinger said.

The company last year selected Gross-Wen Technologies to provide contained treatment at the site. The technology will capture and offset several thousand tons of carbon dioxide per year from the atmosphere.

"That's the equivalent of

avoiding the use of 242,000 gallons of gasoline every year," Tentinger said. "The nitrogen and phosphorus that it will recover will be converted into

valuable, natural fertilizer for reuse by area farmers as part of our goal to create a carbon-neutral footprint."

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**Advanced Grain Marketing for Women**

Classes begin  
Tues., Feb. 21, 2023 & continue Feb. 28, Mar. 7 & Mar. 14  
6:00 - 9:00 p.m. (meal at 5:30 p.m.)  
Montgomery County Extension Office  
400 Bridge St. Suite 21 Red Oak  
Cost: \$75  
Register by February 14, 2023

REGISTER ONLINE AT [www.extension.iastate.edu/womeninag](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/womeninag)

Advanced Grain Marketing for Women is taught in the tradition of Annie's Project. The fees for service will be used to offset direct expenses and to support Agriculture and Natural Resources County Extension Program. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. For the full non-discrimination statement or accommodation inquiries, go to [www.extension.iastate.edu/diversitynet](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/diversitynet).

**DOG & CAT LICENSES MUST BE RENEWED ANNUALLY**

*Red Oak City Ordinances provide that all owners of dogs and cats must license their animals annually, if the animal is over the age of 6 months.*

FEE SCHEDULE IS:  
**\$5.00 per animal** (if animal is spayed or neutered)  
**\$25.00 per animal** (if animal has NOT been spayed or neutered)

PROOF OF RABIES VACCINATION IS REQUIRED WHEN LICENSING  
 All licenses must be purchased by **March 31, 2023**  
 or a **\$10.00 penalty**, per animal, will be assessed.

Licenses may be purchased at  
**Red Oak City Hall**  
 601 N 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
 8:00 am - 4:30 pm - Monday through Friday

## Better Financial Living

### Financial questions that count, Part 1

**Dan Miller**  
CFP

Will I be financially ready to retire? What is the best way to save for my kids' college? Should I take Social Security early? Is our home properly insured? When should I start looking at Medicare? Would my family be taken care of if something happened to me tomorrow? What if I became disabled? Could we still maintain our lifestyle? Yikes!

Questions, questions, questions!  
 When it comes to our financial lives there seems to be no end to the questions we need to ask and the decisions that have to be made. That's just how it is. The good news is that there are resources to go to for help. The bad news is that some resources are more reliable than others and that there are no easy cookie-cutter answers. So what is a person to do?

One of the first things you should do is try to find someone with experience in the areas that you need help in, and that you can trust. Someone that is truly in your corner, an advocate that will work with you on your behalf. Not everyone who calls themselves a "financial advisor" works in that manner.

So start by doing some research and finding someone with the training, the experience, and the integrity that you are looking for. Your brother, or the guy at the water cooler at work, may think they know what they're talking about, but do they really have the experience needed to help you make decisions that may affect the rest of your life?

So when it comes to our financial lives, what questions do you address first? Like most things, it's usually best to start with the basics, the areas that could potentially make a difference in your day-to-day life.

For example; do you have an adequate emergency fund? If not, please start one. Life happens to all of us. The furnace goes out, the car breaks down, kids get sick, etc. Do you have resources set back in case one of the breadwinners gets laid off? These types of events can potentially be a part of anyone's life. Being prepared for these "what-ifs" needs to be job one.

Another area of your basic financial health to think about is your credit rating. Do you know where you stand if you are looking to make a major purchase, apply for a new job, or perhaps rent an apartment? Each of these may be affected by the quality and integrity of your credit score.

So, have you checked your score lately? Do you understand what your credit score means and is the information included to calculate your score correct? Then, the next big consideration is, "Do I need to improve my score and how do I go about it?" Unfortunately, there is no quick fix, it's something that you have to work at over time. But it can be done. You may want to contact the credit bureaus to see how you may best be able to improve your score.

One of the most important basic areas of our financial lives is protection. Are we adequately protected against the "what-ifs" in life? What-if one of the family breadwinners became disabled? Would you be able to maintain your current lifestyle? What if you lost a child or another loved one, would you have resources available to take care of the family if you were unable to go to work right away? What if your house burned down, are you adequately insured? Could you rebuild? Are you properly insured against a catastrophic health condition or long period of illness?

What if you required someone to come into your home to care for a loved one? Are you prepared? Protection and insurance planning should be one of the foundation stones of everyone's financial house. Because without proper protection, the rest of your financial house may be on pretty shaky ground. This also includes protecting your identity. In today's day and age, protecting one's identity has to be taken very seriously. This is an area where if we drop our guard only for a minute, there can be potentially catastrophic damage inflicted on our financial health and well-being.

Questions! We all have them, that's to be expected. They key is, do you know where to go for help? In next month's post we will move beyond the basic questions to explore the questions we all must consider as we plan for our financial futures, including retirement, and beyond.

*Daniel S. Miller, Certified Financial Planner, President, Milestone Financial Group, Inc.*

*Daniel S. Miller is an investment adviser representative of, and securities and advisory services are offered through, USA Financial Securities Corp. (Member FINRA/SIPC). USA Financial Securities is a registered investment adviser located at 6020 E. Fulton St., Ada, MI 49301. Milestone Financial Group is not affiliated with USA Financial Securities.*

## Audit report released for MCMH

For public record, the accounting firm of Eide Bailly LLP released an audit report for Montgomery County Memorial Hospital, Red Oak, Iowa on Nov. 14, 2022.

The hospital's operating revenue totaled \$44,531,149 for the year ended June 30, 2022, a 4.3% increase from the prior year. Total revenue included \$43,953,344 in net patient service revenue and \$577,805 in other operating revenue.

Net nonoperating revenue was \$3,786,667, which was comprised of \$32,752 in investment income, \$1,648,418 in capital and noncapital grants and contributions, \$1,923,255 in county tax revenue, \$259,760 in net rental activity, and \$146,109 in interest expense.

Operating expenses for the year totaled \$47,139,048, a 3.4% decrease from the prior year, and included \$25,806,278 for salaries and employee benefits; \$16,092,428 supplies and other expenses; \$2,297,270 for purchased services and professional fees; and \$2,943,072 for depreciation and amortization.

A copy of the audit report is available for review in the Hospital Administrator's Office, in the Office of the Auditor of State and on the Auditor of State's web site at <https://auditor.iowa.gov/audit-reports>.

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**The Red Oak Express, 2012 Commerce Drive, Red Oak, IA**  
**or The Opinion-Tribune, 116 S. Walnut, Glenwood, IA.**  
*No phone calls, please.*

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

# Council discusses MidAmerican Energy electric and gas franchises

**Nick Johansen**  
The Red Oak Express

The Red Oak City Council is pondering franchise agreements with MidAmerican Energy for electrical services and natural gas.

Red Oak Mayor Shawna Silvius said the council had the opportunity to implement franchise fees.

"If we were to proceed, it would have to go through a public meeting process," Silvius said.

Councilperson Jeanice Lester said she appreciated the information, but felt the council wasn't in a position to have hearings.

"I don't think we know what we're looking at, or what we need to do. There were several things thrown out that we need to be prepared for," commented Lester.

City administrator Al Vacanti said he could compile information to provide to the council, and to the public, if it chose to charge a franchise fee for gas and electric.

"We can charge up to 5%. The city currently does not have a franchise fee for those. The water and wastewater collects something similar to a franchise fee called in lieu of tax, and



Interim city administrator Al Vacanti, right, shares details on MidAmerican Energy franchise fee with members of the Red Oak City Council. Also pictured is accounts payable/receivable clerk Christine Vanderholm. (Nick Johansen/The Red Oak Express)

those funds are then used to help cover the costs of the general operations, such as public safety, streets, parks, and the swimming pool that are not funded by the normal water and wastewater fees," Vacanti explained. "I've worked in a community that had all four utilities use a franchise fee. If you charge, it would be passed on to the consumer. The only concern is that you would lose the local option sales tax that is charged on those accounts."

Vacanti also said that if a 1% franchise fee was charged, the

city did not get the full amount. There were some other allocations out of the 1% sales tax.

"If you went over 1% on a franchise fee, you could use those funds through a statement of purpose to replenish what may be lost, primarily public safety and the parks and the streets. You can figure on about \$71,000 per each percent you charged in a franchise fee. That would also include some customers that are currently exempt from the sales tax. So if a 5% franchise fee was put into place, the city would generate around

\$350,000, and as I said, it could replace the 1% lost in sales tax funding," said Vacanti.

According to Vacanti, a discussion still needed to be had in the community to give consumers an opportunity to weigh in on the prospect, and then it would be up to the mayor and council to discuss the process and come up with a statement of purpose if the franchise fee was to proceed.

Silvius said the franchise fee could be one percentage amount on one utility, and a different percentage on another utility, or uniform percentages, or a franchise fee could be placed on one utility but not the other. Silvius said the franchise fee would generate more funding for the city.

"If we set even a 1% franchise fee, we would be capturing more funding than we get through the local option sales tax, because we would be receiving 1% from all utility uses, including nonprofits such as churches, the school, and the hospital, unless we exempt them. So it can be done in a number of ways. We can also do nothing for the first couple of years, and then start implementing the franchise tax in increments starting in 2025," Silvius stated.

Lester asked if there was any information on what the fran-

chise fee would cost the non-profits if included.

"Are there figures on how it will affect the schools, or the other places that currently do not pay sales tax? I would like to see that information before we make a decision on setting a franchise fee," Lester commented. "Right now, if we went to a public hearing phase I wouldn't know what to tell my constituents."

While Silvius said the exact figures were not available, the additional cost on the bill would be nominal.

"If a person has a \$146 bill per month, the franchise fee, if it was 1% would only be a \$1.46, so it will not be a huge increase on a residential bill, unless they are a large utility user. I will state that I have received calls from some of our industries that voiced some concerns, so I was thinking we would set a franchise fee of 1.5% so we would catch the loss of the local option sales tax funding, while generating a little extra funding for the city," advised Silvius. "Also, if we implement it and decide in a couple of years it's not working, we can eliminate it and return to the original funding stream."

Council member Tim Fridolph said that there were a number of communities in the

area that charged a franchise fee, and Red Oak was one of the few communities who did not currently have a franchise fee agreement in place. Council member Brian Bills agreed.

"I investigated how other communities did it, and I know that's not necessarily our best example on how to do things. However, most other communities do have some sort of franchise fee," Bills said.

Lester said she'd like to see more information on how the franchise fee would affect residents, businesses, and nonprofits before the council proceeded further. Silvius said she would contact MidAmerican Energy for further information on the community effects of the franchise fee.

If the franchise fee were implemented, Silvius said the city would determine the percentage. The city and MidAmerican Energy would agree to franchise ordinance language and the start date. A revenue purpose statement would be published, and then a public hearing would be held.

No other action was taken at the meeting. Further discussion on the franchise fees is expected at a future meeting of the Red Oak City Council.

# Route for Inman Trail Project discussed by park and tree board members

**Nick Johansen**  
The Red Oak Express

Discussions are still underway to determine a route for the Inman Trail project.

At the Red Oak Park and Tree Board meeting, Friends of the Red Oak Trails representative Beau Boeye updated the board on discussions regarding a trail. In October of last year, it was discussed that there was city right of way between Irene Court and Chautauqua Drive, and discussions centered on a dedicated route from the Evergreen Cemetery, through Inman, and then through Chautauqua Park.

At the park board meeting Jan. 12, Boeye said there were hesitations with the initial design of the trail cutting through the playground.

"The school discussed the route with their insurance company, legal representatives, and received some community feedback. In December, we had a meeting where they indicated they wanted to look at a different route," Boeye said.

Boeye added that the Friends of the Red Oak Trail had outlined an alternative route for the trail.

"On the northern part of the campus where they have Inman Drive, what we're looking to do is create a sidewalk segment that connects Eighth Street all

the way along Inman Drive to the eastern entrance of the cemetery," explained Boeye. "That would help with the parents doing drop offs, and helps get kids further east, since there's no sidewalks that go that way. There's no sidewalks east of Inman at all in that area."

A second portion of the project would include a parking lot that connected off of Miller Avenue.

"That sidewalk would connect to the parking lot, which would include 15-20 parking stalls, and alleviate some of the traffic congestion that's around the campus," commented Boeye.

The third part of the project would be a trail segment on the southern portion of the Inman campus on Inman Hill.

"It would connect from Eighth Street, run along the southern portion of the school east until the slope of Inman Hill reduces, then cut across the street to city right-of-way to get to Chautauqua Park, up to where the bathrooms are. We've gotten cost estimates from Snyder & Associates Inc. The trail piece was around \$300,000, and the parking lot portion was \$140,000," Boeye said.

In the initial plans, the parking lot was dropped from the initial cost estimates. Boeye said this time, they pushed to have the parking lot as part of the cost estimates due to it being a core component to alleviating



The Park and Tree Board held its organizational meeting Jan. 12. Pictured are, from left: Vice-Chair Alex McFarland, Chairman Bill Drey, and Secretary Amy Strebe. (Nick Johansen/The Red Oak Express)

the traffic congestion around the school.

Boeye added the project was still very much in the preliminary stage, and they were looking at the Iowa Transportation Alternative program as a way to get funding.

"The program pays around 80% of the cost. We still need to have further conversations with the City of Red Oak and get some numbers so the city can potentially budget for it. We'll see how those conversations go," advised Boeye.

Also, Boeye said there was

discussion during the levee recertification meeting about a trail on the city's levee.

"It was mentioned that the city has a lovely levee, and it was asked why there wasn't a trail on it. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers were also part of that conversation who were in favor of that project," Boeye stated.

According to Boeye, one of the Army Corps of Engineers representatives was from Griswold and said he would assist with locating potential funding for that trail project.

"The conversation has been started, but we're more focused on the Inman project. We will be working on this project a little and having some conversations with the mayor on what it will entail to move that project forward," Boeye said. "It would be a nice project that facilitates the entire western half of the community, so we'll see where it goes."

Lastly, Boeye said Friends of the Red Oak Trails are looking at revamping its fundraising program.

"We're hoping to kick start in the spring and raise some additional funds from the community which we haven't done for awhile now."

The board also held its organizational meeting. Bill Drey was re-elected as the chairman, Alex McFarland was elected to vice-chair, replacing Cliff Owen, and Amy Strebe was re-elected secretary.

Drey said he would be contacting Dave Sturm with Snyder & Associates, Inc. of Atlantic to determine if there were any outstanding bills associated with the Fountain Square Park stage project. Drey said the first phase of the project is now complete.

Also, Drey said a tree report was sent into Trees Please, and Drey submitted a Trees Please

application for funding for next year, and was waiting to see if it was approved. Drey also submitted an application to Tree City USA for potential funding as well.

**RED OAK GRAND THEATRE**

**THIS WEEK'S MOVIES**

**JANUARY 27-29**

**THEATRE #1 capacity is 182**

**AVATAR: THE WAY OF WATER**

Jake and Neytiri have formed a family and are doing everything to stay together. They must leave their home and Jake must fight a difficult war against the humans. PG 13

**THEATRE #2 capacity is 107**

**A MAN CALLED OTTO**

When a lively family moves in next door, grumpy Otto meets his match in a quick-witted, pregnant woman named Marisol, leading to an unlikely friendship that turns his world upside down. PG 13

**SHOWTIMES**

**FRI, SAT & SUN 7 PM**  
**SUN MATINEE 2 PM**

**ALL TICKETS \$2.00**

**712-623-3169**

## SPUNAUGLE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

"We help out a lot with the surrounding counties, mostly the ones that touch Montgomery County. We don't go to Pottawattamie County a lot, but we do a lot of mutual aid and assist Mills County a lot, and I know that if we're in a situation where we need help, the sheriffs in the surrounding counties will always send their guys. We have a good relationship with the surrounding counties."

While Spunaugle said there wasn't one particular call that stood out last year as the most interesting, one thing they know they must do with every call is to be prepared.

"You never know what you're going to. You may think you're going to something, and then when you get there, it turns out to be completely different. When you've seen almost everything, there's still something new to see," Spunaugle said.

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office has a peer support representative as part of

the Red Oak Fire Station's peer support program, and Spunaugle said they are mandated a number of training hours every year.

"There is ongoing training nonstop, between the deputies, jail staff, and dispatching staff. Also, one of the deputies was interested in hostage negotiation, so that's a new training we've

added. We're always looking for new trainings," commented Spunaugle.

Spunaugle added he's pleased that the sheriff's office can continue to provide a high level of public safety and keep growing year after year.

"I love where we're at as an office. We have a great staff, and

I've got a bunch of great deputies that are proactive, and I want to keep providing them specialized trainings and keep them on the streets. If I could ever get two more deputies, it would be awesome, because everything we do to enhance the office helps the public. That's what we're here for," stated Spunaugle.

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**THE 13TH ANNUAL DADDY DAUGHTER DANCE**

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**at the White Fair Building**

**\$2000 per couple ~ \$500 for each additional daughter**

**PreK to 12th Grade**

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**Red Oak Rotary**