

ITC Midwest contributes \$5,000 to support new Readlyn Emergency Services Building



Readlyn, IA—ITC Midwest has announced a \$5,000 contribution through a Power of Connection grant administered jointly with the Iowa Rural Development Council to the City of Readlyn Volunteer Firefighters Association to support the planning of a new regional emergency services facility. This essential funding will enable the creation of architectural renderings for the proposed community emergency services building, which will serve several rural communities in the region.

“We’re deeply grateful for ITC Midwest’s support, which will enable us to move forward with a key step in our planning process,” said Readlyn Emergency Services Building Project Lead Scott Broten. “This new facility will strengthen emergency services across multiple communities, enhancing safety for residents and helping our volunteer responders do their job more effectively.”

The new facility will be a critical asset to Readlyn and surrounding areas, providing improved resources and space for emergency

response teams. The renderings will help the Volunteer Firefighters Association and local leaders visualize the proposed facility and secure additional funding to bring the project to fruition.

“We are proud to support the City of Readlyn Volunteer Firefighters Association in their vision for a new regional emergency services building,” said ITC Midwest President Dusky Terry. “By investing in this initial planning phase, we’re helping to create a foundation for enhanced emergency response capabilities that will benefit multiple communities. This project aligns with our commitment to safety, and we are excited to help make it a reality for the people of Readlyn and surrounding areas.”

The community emergency services building is expected to house vital equipment and provide workspace for first responders, creating a regional hub for fire and emergency medical services. By supporting the creation of renderings, ITC Midwest is contributing to a crucial first step in the development of a fa-

cility that will help rural communities respond quickly and effectively in times of crisis.

About the Power of Connection Program

The Power of Connection community grant program is an initiative of ITC Midwest and the Iowa Rural Development Council (IRDC). This innovative economic development program is designed to pair rural communities seeking assistance with IRDC resource teams. Those teams drive both community conversations and solution development for problems or projects.

Communities eligible for the Power of Connection program must have populations of under 10,000 and be outside of a metropolitan area. Power of Connection grant dollars cannot be used for construction, real estate or equipment.

About ITC Midwest

ITC Midwest LLC is a wholly-owned subsidiary of ITC Holdings Corp., the nation’s

largest independent electricity transmission company. ITC Midwest operates more than 6,600 circuit miles of transmission lines in Iowa, Minnesota, Illinois and Missouri, and holds utility status in Wisconsin. ITC Midwest is headquartered in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and maintains regional operating facilities in Dubuque, Iowa City and Perry, Iowa; and Albert Lea and Lakefield, Minnesota. For further information visit www.itcmidwest.com. ITC is a subsidiary of Fortis Inc., a leader in the North American regulated electric and gas utility industry. For further information visit www.fortisinc.com.

Author to present ‘Lost History of Bremer County’

Plan to attend the program, “The Lost History of Bremer County” at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 26 with historian and author Linda McCann. The program will center on the lost towns, railroad, and some prohibition history of Bremer County. The program will be held at the Readlyn Library with Readlyn’s Museum open after the event, too.

Bremer Co. launches opioid settlement grant program

The Bremer County Board of Supervisors announces their plan for launching the Bremer County Opioid Settlement Funds Grant Program, a new grant opportunity designed to support community-based initiatives aimed at opioid abatement activities. Eligible applicants are encouraged to apply for funding to support projects that align with the grant’s objectives.

The Bremer County Opioid Settlement Funds Grant Program will award grants to qualified applicants. For the initial application years, grant funding will be prioritized to entities looking to address core strategy areas of medication-assisted treatment distribution and other opioid-related treatment, expansion of warm hand-off programs and recovery services, Naloxone or other FDA-approved drugs to reverse overdoses, or prevention programs.

“We are excited to offer this new grant to organizations working to make a difference in our Bremer County communities,” said Dewey Hildebrandt, Chair of the Bremer County Supervisors. “Through this initiative, we hope to empower local organizations to tackle important challenges and create lasting change.”

Organizations interested in this grant opportunity should submit the letter of intent form to Bremer County by February 25, 2025, in order for the County to gauge interest and funding availability. This letter of intent form, detailed guidelines, application instructions, and other information can be found by visiting www.bremer-county.iowa.gov. This grant opportunity is made available through National Opioid Settlements against pharmaceutical manufacturers, distributors, pharmacies, and others, that bear responsibility for the national opioid crisis. Bremer County is expected to receive over \$1 million in settlement funds until the year 2039.



60 Years of Friendship — Front row, left to right, Kathy Heinemann, Judy Leistikow, Velda Hagenow, Jeanette Brase, Shirley Schweer; back row: Larry Heinemann, Ron Leistikow, James Hagenow, LaVern Brase and Ron Schweer.

Sixty years of friendship

By Judy Leistikow

As these five couples gathered for a light meal, playing the card game 500 and bringing in New Year 2025, they reflected back on the last 60 years that they have been celebrating together.

Our families would get together for potluck meals on Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day. Yes, sometimes we would all bring sweet corn and meatballs, but we always had a variety of desserts. Our children would play volleyball, baseball, tag and other games and always had fun together.

After the kids were grown, the adults continued to grill out and play cards.

Six couples were together originally, as friends, classmates and farmers. We have lost some of our original group. The remaining couples are Larry and Kathy Heinemann, Ron and Judy Leistikow, James and Velda Hagenow, LaVern and Jeanette Brase and Ron and Shirley Schweer.

We still enjoy each other’s company and hearing about their families after all these years.



Grump's Grumblings

By Bonnie Wittenburg, 2024 Grump

Wasn't it grand?
 Christmas in Readlyn was so pretty. Thank you to all the elves who helped pull this off. The Community Club is working on what worked and what needs tweaking. People of Readlyn, we welcome your ideas and your helping hands. But none of that would matter if the community did not come out to enjoy the activities. All decorations are down, and we are moving on to talk of Grump Days... when I relinquish my title. So soon?

Did you know the average person gains one pound over the holiday season? How did that go? I have cleared my home of all the sweet homemade goodies following our final Christmas this year, with my siblings. We call it Garage Christmas, but it has trickled into the house with such a nice family turnout. Guess you know it was enjoyed when you are told it is not long enough.

The holidays were a bit different for us this year. If you don't know by now, we were offered a cancellation spot at Iowa City and Rod chose to have both knees replaced. That has slowed us down a bit. But not for long.

Less than a month until Valentine's Day. Wow, I always start thinking of spring once that happens. Time flies. Nothing makes that clearer than babysitting my great-nieces. How quickly they change and learn. We are so lucky to be a part of their lives.

As I watch the news, I always feel blessed that we are here in Readlyn with so much of our country facing disasters. Sometimes it is hard to understand. Just feel grateful for today.

Resolution... I got one. Just do better. Be kinder.

Registration Night at CLS is Feb. 20

Current and new families are encouraged to attend Schoolwide Registration Night on Thursday, February 20 from 5-7 p.m. This is for three-year-old preschool through eighth grade students.

Both Community Lutheran School campuses will have light refreshments and the Klinger gym will be open at the Klinger campus. Registration forms can be printed from the school's website under the Parents tab: www.communitylutherschool.com.



Thank You

I want to thank you all for the cards, gifts and phone calls for my 100th birthday and our 76th wedding anniversary.

Paul and Marrillee Tiedt



Miss Readlyn Comments

By Jaylin May

Happy New Year, Readlyn!!
 I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday and began their New Year's resolutions with a strong start. The temperature has been dropping significantly, but we've been pretty lucky with the amount of snow that we've been getting. Hopefully, I don't jinx it by saying that.

Basketball is continuing through the season as we have had quite a few games the past couple of weeks. We played Gladbrook-Reinbeck during the first week of the new year, where we took a loss to them, but we played Tripoli and Columbus Catholic the week after where we earned both wins. The last week of January we have three games, so that will be a lot of fun.

Musical rehearsal has begun for our show, "Grease," which will take place April 25, 26, and 27. It's really fun meeting new people in the cast and making many memories throughout the season. We received our scripts a couple of weeks ago, so that's what made all of the excitement of the show become real.

I've gone to a couple of track and field

clinics at Wartburg College that have taken place over the weekends in January. They were really fun and I learned a ton of new things to help me going into my senior track season. We worked a lot on power skills as well as sprinting technique and form. There is one last sprinting camp in February that I am going to see if I can make it to. It will be a lot of fun if I'm able to go!

Second semester of the school year began on January 15. Senior year is really flying by. In just four months, I will be graduating, which still sounds crazy to me. There are a lot of great things to look forward to in second semester like track season, musical, the New York music trip, graduation, as well as spring time that brings nicer weather.

I hope everyone stays warm and healthy. There are a lot of illnesses going around, so make sure to stay hydrated, get good sleep, and stay home if you're sick!

I hope everyone had a great first month to the new year!

~Jaylin May

Deadline for the February 26 Chronicle is Thurs., February 13 at 5 PM
Send news to ReadlynChronicle@gmail.com

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 will observe the following holidays in 2025. There will be **NO GARBAGE PICKUP** on the following days:

Memorial Day	Monday, May 26, 2025
Independence Day	Friday, July 4, 2025
Labor Day	Monday, September 1, 2025
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 27, 2025
Day after Thanksgiving	Friday, November 28, 2025
Christmas Day	Thursday, December 25, 2025

If garbage is not picked up due to a holiday, the next garbage pickup day, each household is allowed to put out 1 (one) extra bag without a tag. This bag may not be larger than 32 gallon and must not weigh over 50 pounds.

Please remember that all lids must be snapped down and attached or garbage will not be picked up.

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Hailey Broten

Lincoln Savings Bank welcomes Hailey Broten

Reinbeck, Iowa -Lincoln Savings Bank (LSB) is thrilled to welcome Hailey Broten as its newest LSB Wealth Management, LPL Registered Representative, based in the Cedar Falls branch. With 12 years of experience, Hailey brings a wealth of knowledge and a deep passion for helping clients pursue financial success.

In her new role, Hailey will provide personalized financial guidance to individuals and businesses. Her holistic approach to financial services considers all aspects of her clients' financial lives and helps develop tailored strategies that align with her clients' unique goals and values.

"I am excited to embark on my new role because it allows me to make a meaningful impact in helping clients pursue their financial goals," Hailey shared. "I look forward to building strong relationships with clients, understanding their unique needs, and providing personalized solutions to support their financial success."

Hailey earned her bachelor's degree in financial management from Upper Iowa University in 2018, and also maintains FINRA Series 6, Series 63, and Series 7 certifications.

Originally from Readlyn, Iowa, Hailey currently resides on an acreage outside of Readlyn. She and her husband, Scott, are proud parents of three children. In addition, Hailey's younger brother also lives with them. Their family wouldn't be complete without their German Shepherd, Duke, and two cats, Peanut and Zoey.

Outside of work, Hailey enjoys camping, UTV trail riding, traveling, and attending sporting events. She is passionate about spending quality time with her family and giving back to the community through volunteer work.

Hailey's journey into the finance industry began unexpectedly. She initially applied for a customer service position without fully understanding what the role entailed. From there, she discovered her passion for finance and has since held various roles within the industry.

When asked what drew her to Lincoln Savings Bank, Hailey stated, "LSB has long been a trusted name in the community, preserving a small-town atmosphere while delivering top-notch, big-city service. The people I've met at LSB further reinforce the incredible culture and values that make it such a great place to work."

Lincoln Savings Bank is excited to have Hailey as part of the team. Her dedication to personalized service and passion for empowering clients aligns perfectly with LSB's mission to support the communities it serves.

For more information or to schedule an appointment with Hailey Broten, email her at hailey.broten@lpl.com

Readlyn Community Club's next meeting is February 6 at library

Readlyn Community Club held its meeting January 8, 2025, 6:00 p.m., at the library. Present: Michelle and Ed Harrington, Louie and Ron Hartman, Tiffany Matthias, Bonnie Wittenburg, Marge Quigley, Ron Leistikow, Kira Stover, and Pat Wehr. The meeting was called to order at 6:10 by Michelle.

Secretary report: Emailed to members Monday, January 6, 2025.

Suggestions: Numbers for the parade. Ask Bruce Piehl to come and bring two buddies to judge the Christmas Lighting.

Louie moved and Ron H. seconded to accept the minutes. Approved unanimously.

Treasurer's report: Moved by Ron L. and seconded by Ron H. to accept the report. Passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Cans: \$400 last week. Slowing down but continuing to do well.

Since the paper generated few new candidates, the following are declared officers:

President: Michelle Harrington

Treasurer: Louie Hartman; Kristie #2 with Quicken expertise

Secretary: Pat Wehr

Directors: Bonnie Wittenburg, Tiffany Matthias, Marge Quinby, John Galyean

Take down Christmas in the park Saturday, Jan. 11. Start at 10:00 at the shed. Ron H. will have the trailer. Check lights as the decorations are put away. Buy LED lights for replacements. New electrical cords worked great until it rained and some boxes flipped over. Ron Hartman has Main Street done. Thank you!!

New Business:

Add an assistant treasurer: Kristie Boies

Membership renewal: Louie has letter possibilities her nephew created using AI. She'll check into the best type of mailing. Possibly send out the letter in April.

A separate letter will be sent to businesses for Grump Days' donations the first week in May.

Jess Anderson volunteered to run the Easter Egg hunt April 19.

Grump Days 2025: It's Friday the 13th, so ... Halloweenish theme?

Fireworks are booked. • Nick Kuker volunteered to do vendors. • We need the same

size tent; Ron L. will check on sponsors. • Kira will be in charge of Kids in the Park • We need the sale of wristbands closer. • We need volunteers monitoring the wristbands. • Kira will check with Hailey about the bouncy houses. • Harringtons will check with Jeremy about cotton candy. • Possible petting zoo. • Kira will ask Eric Johnston about minnow races. • Ed will do the sound system. • Michelle will contact the art teacher and Grumpy's. • Ron L. will contact the balloon man. • Pat will contact Brevan for music after we find out Grumpy's plans. • Shirts will be an on-line order form. • Hurling Hatchets-Michele will look into it. • Pat will contact Bruce Piehl about spike ball. • Hartmans will ask LaVerne Leistikow about his triathlon idea. • Michelle will ask Kyle Spores about baseball and concession stand. • Bonnie and Pat will be in charge of the queen contest.

CAPS would like to help us; Louie will contact Jordan Cusick, director.

Louie moved and Kira seconded to adjourn the meeting. Passed unanimously.

Next meeting: Feb 6, 2025, at the library. Respectfully submitted,

Pat Wehr, secretary

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from her family

Memorial Books

In Memory of Miriam Westendorf Walker

A Moving Story by Beth Ferry and Tom Lichtenheld given by Dean and Lois Buhr

In Memory of Ron Kohagen

Knight Owl by Christopher Denise

given by Dean and Lois Buhr

LOST HISTORY OF BREMER COUNTY PROGRAM -

READLYN LIBRARY - WED. FEB 26. 2:00



Author and historian Linda McCann will share some of the fascinating history of our area, from 'lost towns' to the Cedar Valley rail service, to the Prohibition era. Please join us for this informative and entertaining event, then walk over to the **Readlyn Historical Society** afterward to view their collection!



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The Bremer County Health Department has temporarily suspended the Foot Clinic until a new county health nurse can be hired and trained.

HOURS
 Mon - 10am - 7pm
 Tue - 10am - 5 pm
 Wed - 10am - 5pm
 Thurs - 10am - 7pm
 Fri - 10am - 5 pm
 Sat - 9am - 12pm
 Sun - Closed

E-books and e-audio book popularity continues to rise. Nationwide, Bridges reports these were the most-read titles in 2024:

1. The Women: A Novel
2. Don't Believe It
3. It Starts With Us
4. Fourth Wing
5. Verity
6. The Four Winds
7. The Woman in Me
8. The New Yorker (magazine)
9. Us Weekly (magazine)
10. Pride and Prejudice





Gloria! — The CLS students told the story of Christ's birth through song and Bible passages on December 18. *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.* Luke 2:14



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Readlyn Chronicle from 1936 is found

Pages from the 1936 *Readlyn Chronicle*, entitled the "Campaign Issue," were found in the time capsule at the Bremer County Courthouse recently.

The front page was in the Dec. 25 issue of the *Chronicle*. Page 2 is shown below.

The *Chronicle* will continue to publish the 8-page newspaper in upcoming months.



If you have an interesting story about Readlyn's history, share it by sending it to the *Chronicle* at readlynchronicle@gmail.com.



Readlyn Senior Citizens met for their Christmas party lunch and meeting on Dec. 18. Enjoying their time together with a meal and cookies were, front row, left to right: Luann Happel, Roland Schmidt, Wayne Kuethe, Larry Ladage, Marlys Deterding, Roger Deterding, Don Billhorn; back row: Marylou Billhorn, Millie Crawford, Charlie Albrecht, Wilda Albrecht, Janet Ladage, Joyce Heineman, Don Heineman, Larry Sauerbrei, Judy Henn, Judy Leistikow, Doris Hagenow, Mary Chapin, Shirley Kuker, Ron Leistikow. NOT pictured were Marilyn Lampe, Jim Collins, Debra Sauerbrei, Larry and Vicki Pavelec and Lois Thacher.

Twenty-two Senior Citizens meet Dec. 18

On December 18, 2024, 22 members attended the 11:30 a.m. Senior Citizen's Christmas Party lunch and meeting at the Tripoli Bowling Alley in Tripoli, IA. Everyone brought cookies to share with the group after our meal. A picture of our group was taken and we included it in the January *Chronicle*. Fun was had by all.

The meeting was called to order by Ron Leistikow, our President, before our meal.

The birthdays celebrated for the month of December were Ron Leistikow, Doris Hagenow and Larry Sauerbrei. We all sang "Happy Birthday" to them. There were no anniversaries for the month of December.

The treasurer's report was read by Charlie Albrecht. The balance in the account after expenses was \$141.00.

We made a correction on the balance of \$245 on the October 2024 treasurer's report to reflect a corrected balance of \$225 at that time. Lois Thacher made a motion to correct the balance to \$225 for the October balance and Wilda Albrecht seconded it.

The secretary's report for November 20, 2024 was read by Lois Thacher.

Janet Ladage made a motion to approve the treasurer's report and the secretary's report and Roland Schmidt seconded it. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS: The Readlyn Community Library bake sale and cookie walk on December 7, 2024 was a success. Nearly \$800.00 was raised to be put towards the Summer Reading

Program. 140 sacks were given out by Santa to the children at the Readlyn Christmas on Main event. There were 22 entries in the Readlyn Christmas on Main Lighted Parade. The fireworks were amazing. Thank you to the Readlyn Community Club that put this all together.

NEW BUSINESS: Ron Leistikow made a motion to donate \$100.00 to the *Readlyn Chronicle*. Don Heineman seconded it. Motion carried.

We welcomed new members Larry and Deb Sauerbrei to the Readlyn Senior Citizens.

The next Senior Citizens Meeting will be January 15 at 11:30 a.m. at the Panther Lanes in Tripoli. Larry Ladage made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Wilda Albrecht seconded it. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

Lois Thacher, Secretary

Pepper Tournament

The first pepper tournament of 2025 was held Saturday, January 4 at Grumpy's. There were 12 players participating. The winners and their scores were:

1st: Suzy Heineman and Shirley Kuker - 213; 2nd: Ron and Judy Leistikow- 186; 3rd: Doris Hagenow and Therese Schumacher - 173; 4th: Dave Schumacher and Judy Henn - 167.

Thanks for playing! The next pepper tournament will be Saturday, February 1, at 1:00 p.m. at Grumpy's. Registration fee is \$3.00. Bring a partner.



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Obituaries

Ronald Lee Kohagen

Ronald Lee Kohagen, 76, of Readlyn, Iowa, passed away on Wednesday afternoon, December 25, 2024, at the Unity-Point Health Allen Hospital.



Ron was born on March 16, 1948, in Waterloo, Iowa, the son of Willard John and Wil-

ma Marie (Doepke) Kohagen. He was baptized on April 11, 1948 at St. John Lutheran Church and graduated from Wapsie Valley High School in 1966. On January 9, 1972, Ron was united in marriage to Nancy Lee Bruns at St. John Lutheran Church – Maxfield. Ron was a carpenter and worked for Thies Construction in Readlyn.

Ron was a member of Zion Lutheran Church in Readlyn where he served numerous terms on the council. He was a past member of the Readlyn Jaycees, serving as president, secretary-treasurer, and director, and was a former member of the Readlyn City Council. Ron was proudly voted the 2015 Readlyn Old Grump. He was a talented woodworker, enjoyed playing cards, and was a master Solitaire player. He also enjoyed watching MeTV, westerns, and game shows. In his 'spare time,' he would write poems for special family events.

Also known as "Klutzy," he was never one to shy away from a good time. With his quick wit and sense of humor, Ron could always be counted on to brighten the room with a well-timed joke or an unforgettable story. Not always PG! A tough exterior, his heart was soft and he loved his family fiercely. His five grandchildren were his pride and joy, and he loved nothing more than to talk about their accomplishments to anyone who would listen. This year he was promoted to Great-Grandpa, of which he was so proud.

Ron is survived by his wife of nearly 53 years, Nancy; his children, Marcia (Jeff) Joerger of Denver, Iowa and Gail (Ryan) Hull of Le Grand, Iowa; five grandchildren, Sam (Claire), Tessa and Jackson Joerger, and Ellie and Sydney Hull; one great-grandson, Tate Joerger; four siblings, Darrol (Joan) Kohagen of Sumner, Iowa, Diane (Mark) Rourke of Fairbank, Iowa, Virgil (Tina) Kohagen of Waterloo, Iowa and Joel Kohagen of Readlyn, Iowa; a sister-in-law, Carole Bruns of Waverly, Iowa; and many nieces, nephews and cousins. He was preceded in death by his parents; three sisters, Carolyn Lohmann, Marlene Barnes, and Shirley Kohagen; parents-in-law, Elmer and Glenyce Bruns; and brothers-in-law, Ronald Lohmann and James Bruns.

Funeral services were held at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, December 31, 2024, at Zion Lutheran Church in Readlyn with Rev. Dr. Jean Rabary presiding. Burial followed in Zion Lutheran Cemetery with military honors provided by Acker-Matthias American Legion Post #653. Visitation was on Monday, December 30, 2024, from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Kaiser-Corson Funeral Home in Readlyn and one hour prior to the service at the church on Tuesday. Memorials may be directed to Zion Lutheran Church or Readlyn EMS fund and online condolences may be left at www.kaisercorson.com. Kaiser-Corson Funeral Home in Readlyn assisted Ron's family.

Jeffrey M. Buss

Jeffrey M. Buss, 59, of Tripoli, Iowa, died Saturday, December 21, 2024, at his home.



Jeff was born on December 26, 1964, in Waterloo, Iowa, the son of Mervin and Edith (Franzen) Buss. He was baptized and confirmed at

St. John Lutheran Church Crane Creek in Tripoli and graduated from Tripoli High School in 1983. Jeff enjoyed farming with his dad and worked as General Manager at Tyson Foods for 23 years.

Jeff enjoyed the outdoors including deer and raccoon hunting. He was an avid Dallas Cowboys fan. Over the last 16 years, Jeff raised a variety of cattle with his family. Jeff is known for his heart of gold and most especially loved spending time with his family.

Jeff is survived by two daughters, Tiffany (Hunter Wason) Buss of Marion, and Haley Urich of Springfield, Missouri; a son, Alex (Jenni) Buss of Tripoli; four grandchildren, Gabe, Emily and Henry Buss and Vivian Wason; his brother, Brad (Theresa) Buss; his sister, Sherri (Mark) Zanotti; his nieces, Kara (Jose) Pineda; Emily Jones; Lisa (Tony) Patterson; his nephew, Brian (Ashley) Buss; along with great-nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents.

A Celebration of Life will be at a later date. Memorials may be directed to Jeff's family for later designation and online condolences may be left at www.kaisercorson.com. Kaiser-Corson Funeral Home in Waverly is assisting the family.

Miriam Westendorf Walker

Miriam Westendorf Walker, 93, of Denver, Iowa, formerly of Readlyn and Cedar Falls, Iowa, passed away on Tuesday, December 17, 2024, at Willow Winds Assisted Living in Denver, Iowa, following a slow decline in health.



Miriam Mae was born in rural Sumner, Iowa, the daughter of Robert and Viola (Tietje) Judisch, in rural Sumner, Iowa, the second oldest of six children. She was baptized on February 1, 1931, and confirmed on April 2, 1944, at St. John's Lutheran Church of Buck Creek. Miriam married the love of her life, Orlyn Westendorf on October 30, 1949. They made their home in rural Readlyn, where they farmed together for 38 years until Orlyn's tragic death in 1988. Their marriage was blessed with three sons: Robert, Keith and Kevin. Orlyn and Miriam were active members of Zion Lutheran Church, Readlyn. In addition to their busy farm life, they found time for lots of round and square dancing and loved to travel. They were some of the first Americans to visit China and Russia in the early 1980s, as farm ambassadors.

Miriam met Donald Walker through a singles' group at a church and they became great companions with the same interests in travel and dancing. They were married

on February 24, 1991, and she moved to Cedar Falls, Iowa. They attended Nazareth Evangelical Lutheran Church. Don passed away on March 23, 2019, and Miriam later moved to Willow Winds in Denver, Iowa.

Miriam was a nurturer by nature and always upbeat and positive. You rarely saw anything but a smile on her face and a positive can-do attitude about life. Tiny but mighty!

Miriam strongly believed in the power of prayer. She was near death twice and, by the grace of God, survived a serious childhood infection that destroyed one kidney and survived the car accident that took her husband, Orlyn's, life. The physicians at St. Mary's in Rochester said medical science could not explain a large blood clot that miraculously disappeared from her brain just prior to a second brain surgery. Miriam has seven grandchildren and so she designated one day a week to each grandchild to pray for them and focus on their needs, safety, and passing on her faith in God.

She will be most remembered as a loving wife, mother, grandmother, and friend to many, with a strong faith in God and someone with an incredible gift for hospitality, making everyone feel loved and welcomed.

Miriam is survived by three sons: Robert (Debra) Westendorf of Oro Valley, Arizona; Keith (Karen Damske) Westendorf of Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Kevin (Norma) Westendorf of Readlyn, Iowa; seven grandchildren: Erica (Jawad Tifak) Westendorf, Bethany (Scott) Berscheid, Andrew (Stephanie) Westendorf, Melissa (Steve Kinnard) Westendorf, Michelle (Mark) Sanborn, Lisa (Ryan Coss) Westendorf, Kyle (Kate) Westendorf; and 12 great-grandchildren: Issak and Eva Tifak, A.J. and Gavin Berscheid, Davis and Andie Westendorf, Summer, Isla and Lillie Sanborn, Joey and Luke Westendorf, and Walden Coss; one brother: David (Gale) Judisch, and one sister-in-law, Dorothy Boevers Judisch.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Robert Judisch and Viola (Tietje) Judisch; her sisters, Ruth Peters-Steinbronn, Dorothy Gloede-Niemeyer, Shirley Lahmann-Shookman; her brother, Lawrence Judisch; and her husbands, Orlyn Westendorf and Donald Walker.

A memorial service was held at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, December 20, 2024, at Zion Lutheran Church in Readlyn, Iowa with Rev. Dr. Jean Rabary officiating, with burial following at the church cemetery. The memorial service was live streamed on Zion Lutheran Church Facebook page. Visitation was held for two hours preceding the service Friday at the church. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be directed to Zion Lutheran Church or Readlyn Emergency Services Building Fund. Online condolences may be left at www.kaisercorson.com.

Kaiser-Corson Funeral Home of Readlyn assisted Miriam's family with arrangements.

**Deadline for the
Feb. 26 Readlyn
Chronicle is
Thurs., Feb. 13 at
5 PM - Send
news to:
[readlynchronicle@
gmail.com](mailto:readlynchronicle@gmail.com)**

Thomas James Sexton

Thomas James Sexton, 80, of St. Paul, Minnesota, passed away peacefully yet suddenly on



Thursday, December 12, 2024 at his home in Indian Wells, California.

Tom was born on November 7, 1944 in Sumner, Iowa, the son

of DVM Joseph West and Mary Elaine (Devine) Sexton. Tom was baptized, confirmed, and blessed in sacramental marriage at Immaculate Conception Church in Sumner. He graduated as president of his class from Sumner High School in 1962, studied economics at Loras College and earned his JD from Boston College Law School in 1969. Tom served in the U.S. Army from 1969 to 1971, completing his basic training at Fort Lewis, Washington. He practiced law in Minneapolis, first at Oppenheimer Law Firm (1972-1980) and then as a founding partner at Winthrop, Weinstine and Sexton (1980-1985). From 1985 to his death, Tom built and sustained a successful enterprise in the community banking industry. For Tom, business partners, clients, and employees were also friends; he cared for them like family. He was a golfer, a letter writer, and a gentleman; Tom treated people with respect.

On July 30, 1966, Tom married Beatrice Bernice Callanan, quite literally the love of his life. Tom always said this was hands-down the best decision of his life. They first met in kindergarten and shared 58 wonderful years of marriage residing in Minnesota, wintering in California, and enjoying time at the lake in Wisconsin. Tom was Bea's champion when she battled and defeated pancreatic cancer. The experience brought them closer than ever and added to the long list of their blessings celebrated at their respective 80th birthday parties in Tom's final year.

Tom is survived by his wife, Beatrice; three children and their spouses: Mark Joseph (Kathleen Byrne), Andrew Garland (Christine Kasum), and Jennifer Barbara (Ryan Walther); 11 grandchildren: Meghan, Joseph, Emmett, Lauren; Zoe, Hazel, Sylvie; and Beatrice, Frederick, Abraham, Callanan; and five brothers and three sisters: Michael (Jana), Daniel (Maureen), Peggy (Edward Tateosian), Mary (Rod Wells), Timothy (Kristen Lochrie), Theresa (Jeffrey Thompson), Patrick (Stephanie Mitcham), and Matthew (Gail); as well as numerous nieces and nephews of The Sexton Clan. Nothing was as important or as precious to Tom as time spent with family.

Tom was preceded in death by his childhood brother, Mark; his parents; his in-laws, Garland and Bessie (Swartz) Callanan; two sisters-in-law, Barbara Kirchmann and Deborah Sexton; and two brothers-in-law, Roger Callanan and James Kirchmann.

A wake and visitation was held Thursday, January 2, 4-7 p.m. at O'Halloran & Murphy, St. Paul, MN. The Funeral Mass was Friday, January 3, 10:30 a.m., at Nativity of Our Lord Catholic Church, 1938 Stanford Avenue, St. Paul. A one-hour visitation preceded the funeral Mass. Memorials may be directed to either Tee It Up for the Troops (teeitupforthetroops.org) or the institution of the donor's choice.

Obituary

Theodore "T.J." James Welter

Theodore "T.J." James Welter, 30, of Fairbank, passed away at home very unexpectedly on December 31, 2024. Celebration of Life will be at the Fairbank American Legion at a later date. As per the family's request, everyone is encouraged to wear Steeler's apparel or the colors black and gold. Honorary pallbearers will be Kaysen Grigg, Kenneth "Kenny" Little, Dan "Dano" Sharp, Brandon Cornwell, Russell Benhart, Jake Garlow, Derek Macke and Layne Fischels. Brosh Chapel and The Avacentre in Cedar Rapids are in charge of arrangements.



Theodore "T.J." was born August 19, 1994, at 8:19 a.m. at Covenant Medical Center in Waterloo, the son of Terry and Shelley (Johnson) Welter. He graduated from Wapsie Valley High School in 2013. He was employed at Advanced Drainage Systems until they shut down the produc-

tion line. He was injured on July 26, 2017, in a work-related accident that caused a TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury). He was dealt a tough life — he tried to work at Prinsco but, due to seizures, he was unemployable.

He is survived by his mom, Shelley Johnson-Welter; his brother, Tyler Alan Welter; sister, Chrystal (Jon) Harkrider; niece, Hailie Niederhauser; nephews, Aaron Harkrider and Jon Harkrider; as well as his aunts, uncles, cousins and many friends.

He was preceded in death by his father, Terry Alan Welter in 2002, maternal grandparents, Diane and Lorraine "John" Johnson, paternal grandparents, Alvin and Marian Welter, and his uncle Dave Ryan.

Theodore "T.J." was a fun-loving guy who was devoted to his family. He loved his niece and nephews with his whole heart. He loved everything life had to offer. His friends were very important to him. He was a friend to whomever regardless of circumstances.

Online condolences may be expressed to the family at www.broshchapel.com. Memorials may be directed to the family. A GoFundMe account has been setup by the family at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/funeral-fund-for-theodore-loving-spirit?qid=6b2a8ea2cd0c-2f4935612abf9c3cfd48>

NEWS FROM THE WAPSIE VALLEY SUPERINTENDENT

It is hard to believe that we are already well into the month of January! Our winter activities are off to a great start and we hope that you have had the opportunity to see our students in action.

This month's school finance article is about three funds that are very important to all Iowa school districts: the Nutrition Fund, SAVE Fund, and Management Fund.

1) Nutrition Fund

The Nutrition Fund is specifically designated for the operation of school food service programs. It covers the costs associated with providing meals to students, including both breakfast and lunch. These funds are primarily derived from the following sources:

- **Federal Funds:** The federal government provides reimbursements for free and reduced-price meals, as well as additional funding through programs like the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP).

- **State Funds:** Iowa provides additional funding to support school nutrition programs, including funding to assist with food quality, training, and sometimes specific nutrition-related initiatives.

The goal of the Nutrition Fund is to ensure that every student has access to nutritious meals, particularly in districts with higher levels of poverty. The fund must be self-sustaining, meaning that it cannot be subsidized by general education or other operational funds.

2) SAVE Fund (*Secure an Advanced Vision for Education*)

The SAVE Fund is a critical source of funding for school districts in Iowa, primarily used for infrastructure improvements. It was established through a state sales tax (also known as the school infrastructure sales tax) that generates revenue for the fund. The key points of the SAVE Fund include:

- **Revenue Source:** The SAVE Fund is funded by a portion of the state sales tax revenue, which is directed to school districts.

- **Usage:** The funds are intended to be used for specific infrastructure-related

projects, such as the construction or renovation of school buildings, repair and maintenance of school facilities, technology upgrades, transportation equipment (e.g., buses), and safety improvements.

- **Flexibility:** While the majority of the funds are intended for physical infrastructure, districts also have the flexibility to use some of the revenue for technology initiatives that support the educational environment, such as providing devices for students or upgrading network infrastructure.

The SAVE Fund is essential for maintaining and improving the physical learning environment, particularly in districts with aging facilities or those that need to adapt to increasing student enrollment.

3) Management Fund

The Management Fund is a school district fund that is used to pay for specific operational expenses related to risk management, insurance, and other legally required services. This fund is used for:

- **Insurance Costs:** This includes insurance premiums for property, casualty, and liability coverage. In addition, it may cover insurance for workers' compensation.

- **Employee Benefits:** Some districts use the Management Fund to finance the cost of employee benefits, such as early retirement programs or unemployment benefits.

- **Other Risk Management Expenses:** This may include costs associated with emergency preparedness, legal settlements, or other situations that require risk management or financial contingency.

The revenue for the Management Fund typically comes from local property taxes. The district can levy taxes specifically for the Management Fund, and the amount levied is subject to certain limits as defined by the state.

Together, these funds play an essential role in maintaining the overall health, safety, and quality of the educational experience in Iowa's school districts. As always, if you have questions please do not hesitate to contact me and Go Warriors!

Chris Hoover, Superintendent

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How to get involved:

- Sponsor an event
- Volunteer to help at events
- Attend meetings (Announced in the minutes in the *Chronicle*.)

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Readlyn City Council - Dec. 9, 2024

The Readlyn City Council met in open session on Monday, December 9, 2024 at 6:45 PM for the Finance Committee to review bills and at 7:00PM for the regular meeting. Meeting was called to order by Mayor Wedemeier. The following named council members were present: Rocco Imbrogno, Joey Jones, Nicole Barnes, Keith Brunscheon. Absent: Jason Franck. Others in attendance: Barney Wiersma, Craig Codner, Matt Mahoney, Lindsey Koehler, Steve Aiello.

by Barnes to approve agenda as printed. All said yes. Motion carried.

Council reviewed and discussed the ARC Flash Assessment from Stanley Consultants. Installing CMR reclosures was discussed. Motion by Imbrogno and seconded by Brunscheon to proceed with the CMR reclosure project. Roll call vote. AYES: Brunscheon, Jones, Imbrogno. NAYS: Barnes. Motion carried.

Electric rates were reviewed by Butler County REC representatives. Updated energy cost adjustment will be presented at the January council meeting.

Discussion with Lindsey Koehler, Bremer County Building & Zoning representative on possible changes to Readlyn Accessory Building Ordinance. Motion by Brunscheon and seconded by Jones to draft changes to the ordinance for the next city council. Roll call vote. AYES: Brunscheon, Jones, Imbrogno, Barnes, Franck. NAYS: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Imbrogno and seconded by Brunscheon to adjourn. All said yes. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:15PM.

Dan Wedemeier, Mayor

ATTEST: Lois J. Buhr, City Clerk

Motion by Barnes and seconded by Imbrogno to approve minutes from the November 11, 2024 council meeting. All said yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Imbrogno and seconded by Jones to approve bills presented for payment. All said yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Brunscheon and seconded by Jones to approve clerk and treasurer's reports. All said yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Barnes and seconded by Brunscheon to approve budget and library reports All said yes. Motion carried.

Motion by Barnes and seconded by Imbrogno to approve police report. All said yes. Motion carried. Motion by Brunscheon and seconded

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Wapsie Valley School Board - December 16, 2024

Wapsie Valley CSD Annual, Organizational & Regular School Board Mtg December 16, 2024

Pledge of Allegiance

1. President Wolfe called the Annual Meeting of the Board to order at 6:30 PM

A. Directors: Aiello, Kaufman, Sauerbrei, Wolfe-Declare quorum Auel (excused)

B. Supt. Hoover, Secretary Arndt & Principals- Murphy & Myers. Forsyth (excused)

C. Others: Vaughn Gross

2. Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Aiello to approve the amended agenda striking Spotlight on Education as presented. Motion carried 4-0

3. Public comment - No comment

4. The FY24 reconciliation financial report was accepted by the board as presented.

5. Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Kaufman to approve the minutes of November 18, 2024 as presented. Motion carried 4-0

6. Unfinished business -Nothing

7. Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Kaufman to adjourn the Final Meeting of the Board at 6:32 PM Motion carried 4-0

1. Arndt called the Organizational meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

2. Moved by Kaufman, Seconded by Sauerbrei to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 4-0

3. Arndt took nominations for President. Sauerbrei nominated Wolfe. Nominations ceased. Moved by Aiello, Seconded by Sauerbrei to name Wolfe as board president with a roll call vote ALL AYES, Motion carried 4-0. Arndt took nominations for Vice President. Wolfe nominated Auel. Nominations ceased. Moved by Wolfe, Seconded by Aiello to name Auel as Vice President with a roll call vote ALL AYES, Motion carried 4-0. Arndt administered the Oath of Office to Jeannie Wolfe (President). The oath will be administered to Angie Auel within 10 days of this meeting by the board secretary. President Wolfe led the meeting from this point on.

4. Aiello nominated Arndt with a second from Sauerbrei to appoint Kim Arndt as Board Secretary & Treasurer for the 24-25 school year as presented. Motion carried 4-0

5. Moved by Aiello, Seconded by Sauerbrei to ap-

prove Readlyn Chronicle and Fairbank Islander for publication of minutes and the Waterloo Courier for publication for budget information for the 24-25 school year as presented. Motion carried 4-0

6. Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Kaufman to approve Ahlers & Cooney, P.C. as the legal counsel for the 24-25 school year as presented. Motion carried 4-0

7. Moved by Kaufman, Seconded by Aiello to approve our financial depositories as Northeast Security Bank (\$5,000,000 limit) and Readlyn Savings Bank (\$2,000,000 limit) as presented. Motion carried 4-0

8. Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Kaufman to approve Level I Investigator – Guidance Counselor or Lead Teacher, Level II Investigator – Building Principal opposite the incident & Level III Investigator – Bremer County Sheriff's Office, Fairbank Police Department, or Readlyn Police Department as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

9. Moved by Kaufman, Seconded by Aiello to approve Homeless Liaison-Brett Bergman, Equity Coordinator- Supt. Hoover, Migrant Liaison & Foster Care Contact - Katelyn Nitz as presented. Motion carried 4-0

10. Moved by Aiello, Seconded by Kaufman to adjourn the Annual Organizational Meeting at 6:39 PM. Motion carried 4-0

1. President Wolfe called the Regular Meeting of the board to order at 6:40 PM

2. Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Kaufman to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried 4-0

3. Public Comment - Vaughn Gross discussed fund raising for FCCLA and having 22 students attend state conference. Also if there is a cell phone policy implemented by legislature, make sure the liability doesn't fall on teachers.

4. Consent Items - Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Kaufman to approve the consent items including the bills being reviewed by Angie Auel with no open enrollments. Motion carried 4-0

5. Board - Brent inquired about Science scores being low in ISASP data from Community Report. Mr. Murphy discussed the OpenSciEd Curriculum that is being worked on and intervention being revamped. ACT scores were discussed as they are lower than the state average due to the number of students taking the test.

Superintendent Hoover: Report includes link to student progress, and the dates and times of the Rural Christmas concerts.

District/PK12 Principals Report includes Events, Professional Development, & Activity updates.

6. Personnel - Resignations - None

Contracts: Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Kaufman to approve a contract to Gunner Rodgers-JHG/Wrestling Coach Base 1-Year 0 - \$1,905 as presented. Motion carried 4-0

Addendum-Moved by Aiello, Seconded by Kaufman to approve the addendum for Tina Kaufman-Increase effective 1-1-25-Salary from \$56,067.43 to \$58,656-Based on regulations issued under section 13(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act implementing the exemptions from minimum wage and overtime pay requirements for executive, administrative, professional, outside sales, and computer employees as presented. Motion Carried 4-0

Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Kaufman to approve the early retirement resignations- Brian Weepie-Elementary PE Teacher-Effective 5-31-2025, Kathy Bachman-Elementary Teacher-Effective 8-31-2025, & Roxie Gipper-Special Education Associate-Effective 5-31-2025 and thank them for their service to the students and staff of Wapsie Valley CSD as presented. They will be missed. Motion carried 4-0

7. New Business-Adam Kaufman was appointed to

the Buchanan County Conference Board, Aiello to the Bremer County Conference Board, and Angie Auel to the Fayette County Conference Board. Wapsie Valley doesn't have a board member that lives in Black Hawk County so no county conference board appointment was assigned. Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Aiello to approve 24-25 At-Risk/Dropout Modified Supplemental Amount of \$114,832 as presented. Motion carried 4-0

Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Aiello to approve the SBRC request for Modified Supplemental Amount Open Enrollment Out not in Fall 2023 (\$41,812) as presented. Motion carried 4-0

Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Kaufman to approve the SBRC request for Modified Supplemental Amount for ELL Beyond 5 Years (\$8,228) as presented. Motion carried 4-0

Moved by Kaufman, Seconded by Aiello to approve the quote from Primary Systems for Fire Alarm upgrade to voice evacuation \$133,545 as presented. Motion carried 3-0 Wolfe-Abstain

8. Board Talking Points-Parking issue at Fairbank is not a problem. Snow removal bids for upcoming years will be posted/mailed soon. Thanks for everything you do to make the board meetings run smoothly.

9. Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Kaufman to adjourn at 7:20 PM. Motion carried 4-0

Respectfully, Kim Arndt



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2025 is in full swing and we are inching closer to longer days and budding blossoms!

You can't fully appreciate the Spring without the Winter, so you might as well embrace this season of cold and dark. We are building character, after all!

Like the seasons of the year, there are swings in the stock market that sometimes feel like the cold, dark days of winter or the easy, sunny days of summer...it is just less predictable than the flip of a calendar.

When you listen to the market analysts or read about the 2025 stock market outlook, there is general optimism that there is a strong economy and declining interest rates that will support gains in 2025. (per Investopedia citing Wall Street Analysts)

Logically, there are troves of data you can explore to make market predictions, but at the end of the day, nobody really knows what is to come. This is why investors should be careful to never take one slice of time too seriously. Instead, you should look at investments from a long-term goals point of view. Over time, returns will smooth themselves out and large swings up or down become less obvious as you “zoom out” from day, week, month, or even one-year market performance charts.

This is especially true when unprecedented or unpredictable events occur:

- *Nobody knew 9/11 was coming until it happened.*
- *Nobody knew COVID would be what it was.*
- *Nobody knew Russia would invade Ukraine and set off a chain of geopolitical tensions.*
- *Nobody knows what, when, if, or why the next large tragedy will occur affecting lives and stock market valuations.*

The only thing you can do to mitigate the emotion that comes with volatility is stress test your portfolio with **financial planning**.

I used to think that financial planning was a waste of time because life and world events are so fluid, by the time you walk out of my office, it is already practically out of date. While that ever-changing world will always remain true, I do now appreciate the way planning prioritizes a client's goals. Most importantly from the client's point of view, the visual outlooks help to provide financial clarity and understanding for anyone making large financial decisions, like retirement or the sale of a business, etc. It takes a little bit of data gathering and submitting personal details, but I have never met a client who regretted the time spent once they saw a visual representation of their hard-earned dollars paying them back for years to come.

While documents flow in from end-of-year 2024, and our 2025 is still fresh and shiny, I can't think of a better time to sit down with a professional who can give credence to how to get on track or how to stay on track for your life's biggest ambitions!

It's never too late to make this year great!

Ashlea (Kleitsch) Jones

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By: Eric Johnston



“Ice Fishing”

ejohnston@mossyoakprostaff.com

The wind whisked light snow across the ice as I carefully bounced my jig just above the bright red mark on my sonar flasher. With one more light flick of the wrist, the red mark raced to the mark of my jig on the screen and my line went slack. A hookset and the battle was on!

The light 2 lb. test line stretched and strained against the small, iced up rod and words of my grandfather went through my head, “Don’t horse him, take your time!” The drag started screaming and doing its job and, after a long battle, I was rewarded with a beautiful crappie.

As we roll through winter, a lot of folks dread the winter season. I, on the other hand, get excited! With all the cold and snow. The lakes freeze and ice fishing season begins!!!! Yes, some think we are crazy to sit on a bucket on a frozen lake. But ice fishing can be very productive and a lot of fun!!!

Over the years my ice fishing addiction has grown as I’ve added nicer equipment with flashers, tents and Skandia Tungsten

jigs. But it really doesn’t take a lot to get started ice fishing and we have some great opportunities for fishing right here in our area. This month, I’ll take you through getting started in a sport I’ve become so addicted to.

As with any sport, it’s best to get started by talking with sportsmen that are already skilled in the sport. Friends, co-workers or family that can get you started in the right direction. Also, the Internet becomes a useful tool in getting started. There are literally thousands of YouTube videos on ice fishing. Another great place to start is our local outdoor stores such as Hank’s Live Bait and Tackle, located on 15th Street in Waterloo. Paying them a visit can get you an endless supply of knowledge on the sport and up-to-the-minute fishing reports. You also may meet other fishermen at these stores that would love to show you the ropes.

Once you decide you want to try ice fishing, you will need the basics to get started. A rod is a great first purchase, and the choices are endless. You can spend as little as \$10 to a couple hundred dollars. With just starting out, I would suggest a nice, modestly priced spinning rod such as a K&E Tackle Whippr rod or even a Schooley brand rod with the plastic reel.

Next on the list would be a decent ice auger. Again, there are a lot of choices out there. But, with starting out, I would go with a hand auger that can be purchased for \$30-\$50 brand new.

Also, you will need a five-gallon bucket. Not only can you carry your gear with you, but it makes a nice seat, too!

Watch marketplace or other classifieds for deals on used equipment. A lot of times you can get a bundled deal on everything you need.

Next comes the jigs. A lot of this will

depend on what types of fish you will target. I’m mostly a panfisherman in the winter targeting bluegills and crappies. I prefer Skandia Tungsten jigs, moon jigs, and Arnold jigs. These are all great jigs that won’t break the bank. I’ve really started using the Tungsten over the last five years or so. The Tungsten is heavier than lead and shows up on sonar better. The denser material gives you more weight in a small jig to get back in the strike zone quicker and is more sensitive to feel those sluggish bites.

You may also want to add an ice tent to your arsenal depending on your cold tolerance. Again, there are lots of options when it comes to them and I suggest talking to your local outdoor store and seeing a lot of tents and choosing what best suits your needs and budget.

When I start an ice fishing trip, especially midwinter as we are currently at, I start with a look at a map of the body of water I plan to fish. The first thing I look for are drop-offs and structures consisting of man-made brush piles, natural rock piles, or fallen trees in the water. For panfish, the brush piles and fallen trees are where I begin my search.

I will drill a series of holes around the structure and begin fishing. I usually start out with my jig of choice “tipped” with a plastic, wax worm, or spike on the hook. If you have a flasher, watch your jig fall and look for fish to rise to it. Without a flasher my general rule is drop your bait all the way to the bottom, reel up about 6 inches to a foot and start there. Vary your depth until you get a bite and remember how deep your strikes are coming.

From that starting point, move around the structure until you find the biggest concentration of fish either by catching fish or seeing them on your flasher. Again, this is a good starting point and you can get a feel for your style of fishing from there. Don’t forget to try different lures, colors, and presentation of the bait (jigging, bouncing, rising and falling, etc.) And, most importantly, have fun putting the puzzle together!

The biggest thing with ice fishing, and I can’t stress this enough is SAFETY!! Ice can be a tricky animal that is always



changing with temperature fluctuations. Some of your most important gear to own is your safety gear. I suggest, especially early and late in the season, carrying a spud bar with you. You can use the spud bar to check the ice ahead of you. I usually do not venture onto the ice each year until there’s a good four inches of solid clear ice on the ponds. It’s important to have a fifty-foot throw rope and some ice spikes you can wear around your neck should the unthinkable happen. I suggest never fishing alone and it doesn’t hurt to wear a life jacket or purchase a striker ice suit that floats you should the ice break.

There are a lot of ice fishing opportunities right here in our area. Lakes like Big Woods, Volga, and Beeds, are lakes that have healthy fish populations and are great places to start. Look for areas where the water falls off of flats into deeper water. Those drop-offs are great fish holders, and, in lakes like Big Woods and Volga, they’ve added lots of structure for the fish, such as brush piles and pallet structures. The structure was placed to attract fish. Find some of these areas and you will be on the fish. Lake maps with GPS coordinates of these structures can be found at the Iowa DNR website.

Always be on the lookout for small, out-of-the-way ponds and backwaters along the Cedar and Wapsi Rivers. Sometimes those small waters can yield big results! And, if you’re lucky enough to access a farm pond, you can get into some phenomenal fishing!

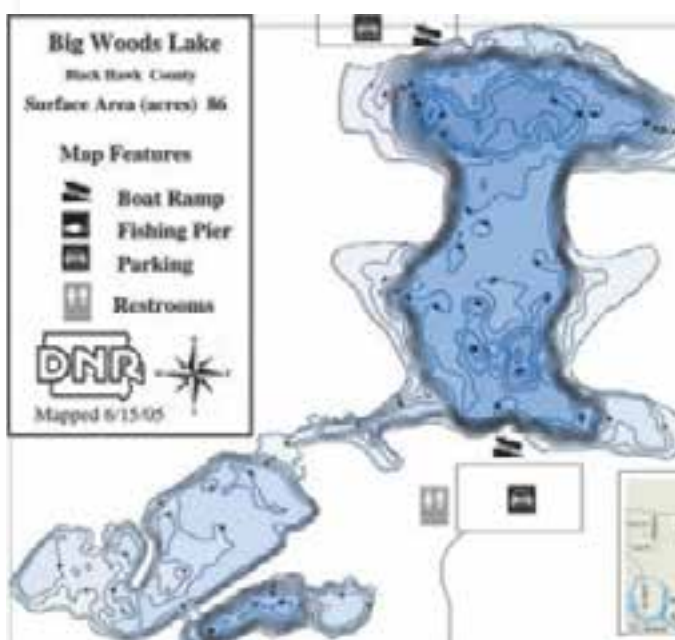
So, as the weather man starts to show those freezing temps heading our way, it’s time to get that ice gear ready and enjoy a sport that gets you through those long winter months! Be safe and, until next time, Get Outdoors!



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WVEF dinner and auction raises almost \$25K to support children and teachers

The Wapsie Valley Education Foundation (WVEF) held their annual dinner and auction fundraiser on November 22, 2024 at Grumpy's in Readlyn. WVEF's mission is to provide resources to support learning for WV students. Their efforts have raised more than \$605,000 total since being established and this year they were able to raise \$24,800 more to support our local children and teachers.

WVEF uses the money raised to provide teachers with materials they need to supplement the curriculum. This has included things like technology devices, supplemental learning materials, books, science and computer science kits, sewing machines, industrial tech machines, and much more!

In addition, the Foundation provides several scholarships to WV seniors each

spring. The application process will open this winter and they look forward to awarding these scholarships at senior awards night in May! High school seniors should talk with Mrs. Nitz if they are interested in applying.

Thanks to all the wonderful donors and supporters who made this year's event a success!

WVEF has also done a few 50/50 raf-

fles during home events and will hold another one on February 4, 2025 during the WV vs. Jesup basketball game. We hope you will consider donating to this great cause!

WVEF Committee Members: Doug Sheppard, Mischa Matthias, Jill Krall, Nichole Griese, Darren O'Donnell, Lisa Oberle, Marla Harder, Leah Woods, Tonya Hagenow, Alex Schmitz, Annette Hyde



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