

Readlyn Chronicle



Home of 857 Friendly People and One Old Grump

Volume 14, No. 12, Compiled by Readlyn Community Club — Designed/Printed by Horizon Publishing Co., Jesup, IA, December 29, 2021

Christmas Lighting winners are named

Four couples bravely accepted the challenge of selecting Readlyn's best Christmas light decorations for the Readlyn Community Club's Christmas Lighting Contest. With so many homes to choose from, it was a tough task, but the results are as follows:

First Place

First place winners Denise and Scott Schock - 123 Highland have gone all out by decorating the front, side, and back of their house. When they first looked to purchase their home just a few months ago, Denise immediately noticed all of the outdoor outlets; her immediate thought was, "Whoa, lots of Christmas lights!" Scott willingly obliged, and the rest of us get to enjoy the fruits of their labor.

Since they both love to camp, finding the Santa and dog blowup with a campfire became a necessary purchase; hence, that became their theme. The screened in area also reflects this camping theme.

Scott and Denise feel it is rewarding to have people slowly drive by looking at their Christmas lights. Being chosen as one of the winners of the Readlyn Community Club's Lighting Contest has been an unexpected bonus and is greatly appreciated. Denise's wheels are already turning with ideas for next year's decorating. Scott and Denise are happy to call Readlyn home.

Second Place

Second place winners Kelly and Kyle Shores - 503 Malone - made Readlyn their home back in 2006; as a young couple they were really excited to be part of this community. They started putting their Christmas lights up not only to show their Christmas spirit, but mainly because of their kids, Lane, Weston, and Ashtyn. The kids loved the lights, so Kyle and Kelly continued to add more and more decorations over the years so that the kids and the community could enjoy something a little different each year. This year they added the white tree in the center of their lawn.

It was a good feeling receiving nice comments about their display from their neighbors, members of the community, and noticing people slowing down and even stopping as they went by. This encouraged the Shores to continue to show their Christmas spirit year after year. They are very grateful to be recognized by the Readlyn Community Club and feel they couldn't have picked a better community to call home.

Third Place

Eric and Aubrey Johnston - 308 Magill - have, for years, lightly decorated the outside of their house for Christmas. As they have made more and more friends around this great town and have become more involved in the community events each year, they decided to up their game on Christmas decorations.

Their decorations are based on their favorite Christmas movie, "Christmas Vacation." From the burnt chair and sled at the curb to "Clark" hanging from the roof and him greeting visitors at the door, every detail is something from the movie.

The Johnstons would like to thank



Denise and Scott Schock's home (above and below) was the first place winner.



Kelly and Kyle Shores earned second place.

the judges for their votes and the residents of Readlyn that have complimented their work.

Honorable Mention:

Ron & Louie Hartman - 248 West Clark

Rhino and Abby Cox - 409 5th Place

Kenny & Bonnie Piehl - 605 West View Drive

David & Lisa Matthias - 511 Malone Avenue

Dusty & Jenny Platte - 124 Goodell



Eric and Aubrey Johnston earned third place with their Griswold-themed decorations.



Grump's Grumblings

By Marlys Deterding
2021 Grump

On Nov. 24, 10 former Grumps, along with Larry Sauerbrei and myself, got together at The Center Inn to fill Christmas sacks for Santa's visit. They were filled with peanuts, candy, fruit and juice boxes.

On Nov. 27, Santa came to visit with the children, and we handed out 150 sacks while Miss Readlyn handed out cookies. Jim and Bev Collins provided five different tasty soups. Thank you very much.

Roger and I have enjoyed watching our granddaughter, Maci, bowl for Trip-

oli and watched the Winter Concert. Our three great-grandchildren performed their Christmas concert at Wapsie Valley, and we also attended their Christmas program at St. Matthew's Church. In January, grandson Tanner will be playing basketball for Wapsie Valley.

I made and donated a dozen cookies to the library for their annual cookie walk.

That is all for now, see you next year, MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Grump 2021 Marlys Deterding.



Miss Readlyn Comments

By Lydia Imbrogno

Merry Christmas, Readlyn!!

In the spirit of the season, the mystery item last month was the Christmas decorations in the City Park. Specifically the new snowman!

Thank you Readlyn Community Club and all volunteers! Zoomed out picture is shown at left...

For this month, we are going to look for something that:

1. Would have been spotted on November 27
 2. Santa was involved
 3. It was merry and bright.
- Zoomed in picture below...
Good luck and have a Happy New Year!



Grump's Grumblings

By Larry Sauerbrei
2021 Grump

Christmas is coming soon. I love seeing all the lights around town. I'm sorry I didn't get my lights up as I normally do on our house as I have been busy on other things. There's always next year...

Last month, Marlys and I handed out the Christmas sacks for kids who visited Santa Claus at The Center Inn. I know my grandson, Nixon, was looking forward to seeing Santa all week and he especially made up a list to show Santa. Santa did a good job with the kids. There was a really good turnout of kids from the community. I think the grumps had made up about 154 sacks, and we only had two left. That's cutting it pretty close. Jim and Bev had made up a lot of different soups for everyone. They were certainly delicious! Thank you again, Jim and Bev!

The weather has been very nice lately.

I was even able to get a few more days of golf in at "the Mape" with a lot of friends from Readlyn. As I said last month, it's great to be retired!

Basketball season has begun. It's enjoyable going to see the Wapsie boys and girls play. They have some good teams. Traeton and Weston play on JV and 9th/10th. We have also been going to some Denver games as one of our grandsons (Braxton) plays on 9th/10th grade and JV. It's really nice that a lot of the schools are livestreaming the games on YouTube, so we can watch a lot of them at home also. Thank you to the sponsors for allowing this to happen.

That's all for this month. Happy New Year to everyone!

Larry Sauerbrei



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Readlyn Community Happenings

VFW Auxiliary holds meeting

The Wayne Teisinger VFW Auxiliary had a potluck at the Readlyn Library at 6:00 p.m. Patrick Brodigan opened the program by introducing the veterans and they told what years they were in service and what war: Charlie Albrecht, 1958-1961 Korean; Ron Wolf, 1951-1953 Korean and served in Okinawa; Burton Thies, 1951-1953 Korean; Tom Power, 1967-1969, Vietnam and was tank commander; and Jim Wolf, 1969-1970, Vietnam. Then Betty Powers presented them all a patriotic Quilt of Valor, which were each different and sewn by her.

We had a table prayer and enjoyed the potluck with 14 there. A short meeting was held with eight members and one guest and opened with prayer and Pledge of Allegiance. The minutes were read and accepted. The treasurer's report was read and accepted. The General Orders and chairman reports were summarized by Verdeen Pavelec. A motion was made by Betty Powers and seconded by Melissa Brodigan to accept and pay the bills, carried. Volunteer hours were turned in.

Mid-winter conference will be Jan. 21-23 at Des Moines. The 3rd District Meeting will be held at Nashua Jan. 15.

Charlie and Wilda Albrecht attended the Veteran's Day program at Wapsie Valley High School. We sent 2565 canceled stamps to the wounded veterans in Falls Church, Virginia. A thank-you was read from wounded veterans. A card was read from Donna Landswerk with contest papers for the Red, White, and Blue National Anthem singing for grades k-12.

A motion was made by Darlene Peters and seconded by Ellen Thies to adjourn, carried. The meeting closed with prayer.



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Just a reminder to be respectful of the recycling center in Readlyn. Cans and plastic bottles are redeemed there to help pay for the cost of fireworks for the Readlyn community.



Please take care of the items you discard at the recycling center

Submitted by Chris Davis

Readlyn has a nice recycling center. **This is not a garbage dump.**

We are getting more and more nasty trash. We haul recyclable cans and plastic bottles every couple weeks, when we can get our redemption center to pick them up. This is also becoming a problem as they can't keep up in our area. We **do not** want glass bottles.

We do get reimbursed for **proper** recyclables and that money is used to purchase fireworks for the community. We are receiving more and more from nearby communities because their centers are being closed.

Roger and his helpers, LaVerne and I, were a little upset the other day with gar-

bage in some of the sacks. Let's do a better job and keep a good thing going.

Thank You

A big thank you for all the birthday wishes, cards, food, visits & gifts on my 95th birthday.

I love you all!

Marj Macken

Buhrs are pepper touney winners

The pepper tournament was held on Saturday, December 4 at The Center Inn with 12 players participating.

Winners and their scores were:

1st Place: Connie and Roger Buhr - 199
2nd Place: Karan Boevers and Shirley Kuker - 187

3rd Place: Joan Matthias and Judy Henn - 186

4th Place: Lynnette Biermann and Suzy Heineman - 161

Thanks for playing and have a Merry Christmas!

The next tournament will be Saturday, January 8 at 2:00 p.m. at The Center Inn.

Thank You

A special thank you for all the messages, food, cards, and flowers after my knee replacement. It was really appreciated. God bless you all.

Mary Lou Billhorn

THANK YOU!

It is with much appreciation and a grateful heart to each of you for your prayers, cards, visits, phone calls, text messages and many expressions of kindness to us in these past months. Special thanks to the Readlyn First Responders, the ambulance crew, Highway Patrol and Sheriff's Dept. for their professional and quick response. Your caring and understanding has humbled us and your prayers continue to encourage and uplift us. We are so blessed as a community to have caring family and friends. God has answered prayers and we continue to go forward in His grace and mercy.

With much appreciation,
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Thank You!

Thank you for your generosity

Our first post-COVID cookie walk was an amazing success. Thank you to everyone who donated treats and/or braved the snow to come enjoy them. Not only did we have a terrific fundraiser, we also had a great visit with friends and neighbors. We look forward to seeing you all again next year!



We are Empty Without You!

Do you have any interesting hobbies or collections you would like to share? Please ask us about having a month long showcase in the library display. This is a great opportunity to share an interesting passion with the community.



Baby's First Book

The Readlyn Library strives to promote a lifetime of reading. If you know anyone in the Readlyn area that is expecting, stop by the library and register them to receive a free book. Help us welcome new Readlyn's newest residents to the world and also to the world of reading!

Readlyn Reads - Book Talk

January's title: Waiting For The Night Song
Pick up a copy at the library and join us for discussion on **January 20th.**

Visit Our Webpage!
<https://www.readlyn.lib.ia.us/>



Hours:

Monday	10:00 - 7:00
Tuesday	10:00 - 5:00
Wednesday	10:00 - 5:00
Thursday	10:00 - 7:00
Friday	10:00 - 5:00
Saturday	9:00 - 12:00

Cadie Kessler has spent decades trying to cover up one truth. One moment. But deep down, didn't she always know her secret would surface?

An urgent message from her long-estranged best friend Daniela Garcia brings Cadie, now a forestry researcher, back to her childhood home. There, Cadie and Daniela are forced to face a dark secret that ended both their idyllic childhood bond and the magical summer that takes up more space in Cadie's memory than all her other years combined.

Now grown up, bound by long-held oaths, and faced with truths she does not wish to see, Cadie must decide what she is willing to sacrifice to protect the people and the forest she loves, as drought, foreclosures, and wildfire spark tensions between displaced migrant farm workers and locals.

Waiting for the Night Song is a love song to the natural beauty around us, a call to fight for what we believe in, and a reminder that the truth will always rise.





Compiled by Bob Thran

Readlyn, Long Ago

Things to know about Wapsie Valley

As I was researching for an article on Wapsie Valley on the Internet I found four listings for Wapsie Valley.

1. Wapsie Valley Schools
2. Wapsie Valley Creamery
3. Wapsie Valley Corn
4. Wapsie Valley Whiskey

Wapsie Valley Schools

The Wapsie Valley School District is located in northeast Iowa. The district has seven attendance centers.

1. Junior-Senior High School equidistant between Readlyn and Fairbank
2. Fairbank Elementary School in Fairbank
3. Readlyn Elementary School in Readlyn
- 4-7. Four one-room rural schools serving Amish children

Wapsie Valley Creamery

Wapsie Valley Creamery, Inc. (Wapsie) is a family-owned business that manufactures cheese, lactose and whey products at its Independence, Iowa processing plant. Wapsie purchases its milk for the manufacturing of its products from over 160 independent dairy farms in east and northeast Iowa, southwest Wisconsin and northeast Illinois. Wapsie Valley Creamery, Inc. employs 120 people in northeast Iowa. Presently Wapsie has openings in production and technical positions.

Jason Decker of Top Deck Dairy in Westgate, one of the largest dairies in our area, stated that Top Deck is milking 600

cows and employs 18 people. Top Deck sells its milk to Wapsie Valley Creamery.

Wapsie sells its cheese products to large wholesale companies that cut, slice and shred its products into smaller private label packages for retail store shelves. Wapsie lactose (sugar that is in milk) products are purchased by large manufacturers and used as an ingredient mainly in food applications, including confectioneries (candy, cakes, wafers, ice cream, etc.), sweeteners and various dairy blends. Wapsie sells its whey, a by-product of cheese, to wholesale companies which use them in processed cheeses, cheese spreads and calf milk replacer.

Wapsie has successfully produced products in the dairy industry since 1906. Although the dairy industry has shown little growth over the years, Wapsie has adjusted its manufacturing processes and equipment to compete in the volatile landscapes of the dairy industry. Wapsie continues to invest in new equipment that is able to process milk more efficiently to obtain the best yields in its products. Although the company has grown over the years, Wapsie is a relatively small company in the dairy industry.

Over the years, Wapsie has produced butter, cream, orange juice, bottled milk, cheese, lactose and whey products. Four generations of the Nielson family have had significant involvement in the direction of the company. Clarence Nielson was the first family member to run Wapsie, beginning in 1924. Currently, three generations are involved in the day-to-day activities at Wapsie: Wilbur, Clarence's son, 60+ years, Mark Nielson, involved in



management, 30+ years and Ryan, Mark's son, since 2009. Many other members in the family have worked at Wapsie over the years.

Wapsie Valley Corn

Wapsie Valley Corn dates back to the 1850s in Iowa and has been a staple in the Amish communities for years. It is an heirloom variety (passed down from generation to generation much as jewelry and furniture). It is two-color, producing ears either of all coppery red or all dark yellow kernels. It produces huge stalks and well-formed ears.

Wapsie Valley Corn likes high fertility soil and does not like wet feet. It does not compete well with weeds and requires frequent cultivation to perform well.

Wapsie Valley Corn is named for the region in Iowa, in turn named for the Wapsipinicon River. The name of the river, from the Obijwe language, is Waabizipinikaan-ziibi ("river abundant in swan potatoes") on account of the arrowhead plant Wapato, also known as "swan potatoes" found along its banks.

Wapsie Valley Corn can be ordered from Felco Feeds, Clinton, Maine at a cost of 2 lbs. for \$15.00 or 50 lbs. for \$213.75, or from Hoss Tools, Norman Park, Georgia, 150 seeds for \$3.99 or 1 lb. for \$13.99 (4,100 seeds per pound).

Wapsie Valley Whiskey

Wigle, Pennsylvania Wapsie Valley Bourbon shows off the tasty fruits of our commitment to working with local farmers.

Consistently, one of our most popular and critically-acclaimed spirits, Penn-

sylvania Wapsie Valley Bourbon is the result of commitments by local family farms to bring back an heirloom style of corn known as Wapsie Valley Corn. This open-pollination corn is challenging to grow but rewards us with giant stalks and bright beautiful multi-colored ruby ears.

When Nigel Tudor at Weatherbury Farms, outside of Pittsburgh, first approached us in 2014 to see if we might be interested in working with his corn, we jumped at the opportunity. With its protein content higher than that of yellow corn, we thought that it had the potential to make a heck of a bourbon. Time has proven that Nigel and the other local farms that followed in his footsteps to supply us with this heirloom corn variety have given us a great gift. Wapsie Valley Corn does indeed make a superlative bourbon.

Production on Wapsie Valley Bourbon begins when we grind the whole grains into grist at our Distillery. Once we ferment the mash, we transfer the ferment to our copper kettles stills before filling barrels to age in our Northside Barrelhouse. The last batch of Straight Whisky Bourbon was aged for more than two years in new, charred oak barrels. Bottled at 92 proof with notes of butterscotch, brown sugar and leather.

Mash Ingredients: Wapsie Valley Red Heirloom Corn (65%), Malted Barley (17.5%), Wheat (17.5%), aged two years in American Charred Oak Barrels.

Cost of Wapsie Bourbon is \$58.00 per fifth and can be ordered on the Internet. There are 17 shots in a fifth of liquor. At \$4.00 per shot, Center Inn would little more than break even.

Author's Note: I learned: All bourbons are whiskey, but not all whiskeys are bourbon.





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Kohagens/50th Anniversary

Ronald and Nancy Kohagen are celebrating their 50th anniversary with a family dinner and card shower.

Ronald Kohagen married Nancy Bruns on January 9, 1972 at Maxfield Lutheran Church in rural Denver.

Ronald is retired from construction and Nancy is retired from John Deere.

They have two daughters, Marcia (Jeff) Joerger of Denver, IA, and Gail (Ryan) Hull of Le Grand, IA.

Mr. & Mrs. Kohagen also have five grandchildren: Sam, Tessa and Jackson Joerger, and Ellie and Sydney Hull.

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Past and present Readlyn Grups got together to fill Santa sacks. Pictured are, left to right, Burton Thies, Larry Ladage, Ron Leistikow, Marlys Deterding, Larry Sauerbrei, Roger Deterding, Roland Schmidt, Don Billhorn, Louie Hartman and Charles Albright.



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American Savings Bank merges with Readlyn Savings Bank

Readlyn, IA and Tripoli, IA – The respective Boards of Directors of American Savings Bank (ASB) and Readlyn Savings Bank (RSB) are pleased to announce their official merger and operation as Readlyn Savings Bank effective December 1, 2021.

RSB/ASB greatly appreciates every single customer relationship and is privileged to operate in a wonderful community. The “new” bank will retain most of the individual branch branding customers are familiar with, and customers will not notice much change in day-to-day operations.

The big difference is that customers will be able to utilize the location most convenient for them.

The Tripoli location will now be known officially as “American Savings Bank, a location of Readlyn Savings Bank” while

the Readlyn office continues as Readlyn Savings Bank.

“This is a win-win for our respective communities, customers, and combined staff which will result in a stronger bank built to withstand the challenges rural America must face together,” states Andrew Sexton, RSB’s CEO. “ASB and RSB have been closely affiliated for about 40 years.

“Just as our rural communities increasingly cooperate on so many levels, we believe the formal unification of the banks will enhance the quality of life we share living in the heart of Bremer County, a beautiful part of the country,” Sexton concluded.

RSB President Ed Traeger adds, “I have spent my entire career building a bank that lives up to the promise to each and every

customer that we will always be focused on one thing: Taking Good Care of You. RSB has been around since 1904 and I’m excited that this merger will help ensure that our dedicated staff can continue to take care of our hard-working customers well into the future.”

ASB Market President and RSB Chief Operations Officer, Steve Edeker, echoes Mr. Traeger’s sentiment. “ASB was founded in 1899 as German Savings Bank, so a bit of a name adjustment will not change who we are. We have weathered two World Wars, The Great

Depression, and more recently the 2008 Financial Crisis and COVID-19. We will continue to epitomize The Spirit of American Banking, in all that we do. Uniting with our sister-bank represents our natural evolution as a small business. Our organization is adapting so as to carry on our mission to serve customers by providing quality solutions for their financial goals. Our merger provides institutional strength to do just that for years to come.”

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News from Community Lutheran School



November baptismal birthdays at the Readlyn campus. God bless you and keep you!



Celebrating our December baptismal birthday at the Readlyn campus. God bless you Sophia!



Four-year-old preschoolers like building with everyday objects like cups and popsicle sticks.



The Christmas service on December 16 featured kindergarten through sixth grade Community Lutheran School students.

News from **Community Lutheran School**



The 3- and 4-year-old preschool students celebrated Jesus' birth with songs and scripture. Happy birthday, Jesus! Glory to God in the highest! Luke 2:14

The kindergarten through sixth grade students led our Christmas worship service on December 16 at Immanuel Church in Klinger. They told the story of Jesus' birth through song and scripture- "Christmas means Jesus to me."





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Business **Spotlight**

**Denver Family Dental
moves to new location**

Dr. Robert Pipho and Dr. Brendon Boerm are pleased to announce that Denver Family Dental has moved to their new location at 131 Tower Street. They are very appreciative to Josh Larson and Dr. Laura Larson for being so accommodating during their successful startup in the Larson's Main Street building these past two years.

The new facility has five treatment rooms, a sizable increase from has two treatment rooms. The new dental office has been designed to accommodate the possibility of even further expansion.

In addition to Drs. Boerm and Pipho, other members of their Denver team include full-time hygienist Mary Jaquith and full-time dental assistant Savannah

Walvantne. Lori Lamb and Leta Schmit are office manager and scheduling coordinators. Staff from the LaPorte City office are available to fill in as needed.

The new office hours are Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. In the near future, they anticipate offering Friday appointments, as well.

New and returning patients can schedule appointments by calling Denver Family Dental at 319-984-6191.

Dr. Pipho said "Our staff is really excited about establishing our new office, building on the many years of dental experience we have, and joining with the success of the Denver community."




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December 2021

Iowa winter is upon us with all the festivities that come with the holiday season. I hope your Thanksgiving celebration was spent with family and friends! The upcoming Christmas break will be here sooner than we realize, and hope for a healthy and safe winter for the Wapsie Valley communities!

I would like to congratulate the WVCSD volleyball, football, and cross country teams on very successful seasons as a whole this past fall. Good luck to the basketball and wrestling teams as they start their seasons. I also noted last month that the WV choirs and bands will be performing throughout the month of December.

I would like to welcome some recent new hires to the WVCSD. Austin Jeanes will be an instructional associate in the JH/HS special education department. Kaleb Krall has joined the WV wrestling program as an assistant wrestling coach on the JV/Varsity team level. Jess Lampe, Brett Studebaker, and Abby Sullivan are all instructional associates at Fairbank Elementary. Paige Burgart is a custodian for our four rural buildings.

We will continue to utilize KWWL, KCRG, and KGAN for weather-related changes to school schedules. We also will inform district families via social media channels and through the Infinite Campus student information system. Please contact our building secretaries for any changes in your contact information so you can stay informed. As much notice as possible is given when making school closing decisions due to inclement weather. These decisions are made after consultation with area superintendents regarding their individual districts' decisions. Please remember that January 17, 2022, is now a school day since we canceled a school day for the August storm clean-up in the area.

We as a school district continue to stay under the 10% threshold for reporting to the Bremer County Health Department of any outbreaks within the district. Our highest absenteeism rate has been 3.5% in mid-November. Positive COVID cases are rising in the district among staff, students, and the general public. We are also seeing cases of influenza and strep. Please continue to take any safety precautions that you deem necessary.

Stay Warrior Strong and Safe,

Dave Larson - Wapsie Valley CSD Superintendent

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What's Cooking?

A recipe to share can be sent to billhorn@rtc279.com

Fruit Cookies

The recipe this month comes from Lavern Brase, 1999 Grump Grandma Brase's recipe

- 1 tsp. soda
- 1/4 c. water
- 2 c. chopped dates
- 1 scant c. shortening
- 1 1/2 c. sugar
- 2 eggs beaten
- 1 c. coconut
- 1 c. raisins
- 1 c. chopped nuts
- 2 1/2 c. flour

Dissolve soda in water, pour over dates. Cream shortening and sugar. Beat in eggs, stir in raisins, coconut, nuts, and prepared dates. Fold in flour. Drop by tsp onto greased cookie sheet. Bake at 350 about 12 minutes.

These cookies make a tasty substitute for the traditional fruit cake.

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Community Foundations encourage giving to local nonprofits this holiday season

With the holiday season upon us, giving to those we care about most is at the forefront of our thoughts. For many, this also includes giving to causes we are passionate about as nonprofits in our community need charitable support to address ever-growing local needs.

Now is a great time to give to a nonprofit agency fund of the Bremer County Community Foundation or give to the Readlyn Community Impact Fund to support local grant efforts. Giving a gift through the Bremer County Community Foundation or Readlyn Community Fund, affiliates of the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa, is an easy way to impact Bremer County and the nonprofits serving the people who live there while also providing unique tax-benefits to the donor.

"The giving spirit of the holidays and our 'here for good' philosophy are a powerful combination for creating transformational change in our communities," said Laurie Everhardt, director of development with the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa. "There are many different ways to give and charitable giving can be tailored to how you want to make an impact in your community."

Giving to a fund of the Foundation is one way to make your year-end gift. Donors can search funds across a 20-county region across northeast Iowa, including hundreds of funds supporting specific nonprofit organizations on the Community Foundation's website at www.cfneia.org/findafund. Generous individuals can

also consider creating their own fund with the Foundation, such as a donor advised or scholarship fund, that will impact the community and the causes you care about forever.

Gifts made to permanent endowment funds with a qualified community foundation, like the Bremer County Community Foundation or the Readlyn Community Fund, are eligible for a 25% state tax credit on the total value of the gift through the Endow Iowa Tax Credit Program. All qualified donors can carry forward the tax credit for up to five years after the year the donation was made. More information about Endow Iowa can be found at www.cfneia.org/endowiowa.

Important year-end giving dates can be found at www.cfneia.org/who-we-are/stories/yearenddates. Before making any significant gift to charity, the Foundation recommends you consult your professional advisor to understand the impact on your taxes and to ensure you are maximizing any tax benefits. For questions or help with year-end giving, contact Laurie Everhardt at 319-243-1352 or leverhardt@cfneia.org.

More information about the Bremer County Community Foundation and Readlyn Community Fund can be found at www.bremerccf.org or www.readlyncf.org.

The Bremer County Community Foundation and Readlyn Community Fund are local organizations making grants to organizations creating a stronger and more vibrant quality of life in Bremer County and helps people establish permanent funds for the causes they care about in their community. The Foundations are affiliates of the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa, a nonprofit committed to creating long-term impact in 20 counties in Iowa. For more information, contact 319-287-9106 or visit www.cfneia.org. CFNEIA is confirmed in compliance with National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations.

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Bow Season 2021

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As I caught a glimpse of his antlers through the thick underbrush to the south this sunny, frosty, November 6 morning, I grabbed my bow from the hanger and readied myself for the encounter.

Bow season 2021 was probably one of the best and most fun seasons I've had in many years, and it certainly wasn't measured by animals harvested, but memories made. This month and next, I'll reflect on a great season.

As the loyal readers of this column know, not a day goes by in the calendar year that I don't think about deer hunting, food plots, trail cameras, and everything surrounding the whitetail deer. Like every year, I started in February shed hunting and scouting as the snow melted away and all of last fall's deer sign showed itself. I started hunting close to home in 2020 after years of traveling to bow hunt, and, while I had a successful season in 2020, I'm always looking to gain more knowledge on how the deer use the properties I'm hunting.

There was one small area within the properties I hunt that had some oak trees all together that reminded me of how the crest of a ridge lays in some of the ground near Delhi I hunted so many years. It's a small rise that lays higher than the river bottom and creates an edge along native grass and leads out to a cornfield. I walked a small bit of it in late November 2020 and pinned it in my memory as an area to scout in winter.

This area of the farm was one of the first spots I started scouting last spring and quickly knew it was going to be a great spot. It had oaks for the acorns to hold deer in October and was also a bit of a pinch point where the terrain narrows down and funnels deer movement to a small area for rut movement in November, and was thick enough to be a staging area where they would mingle before reaching the cornfield. It holds all of the ingredients, so to speak. I knew this spot was going to be special and pinned a tree on my ONX hunting map app for a stand.

Throughout the winter, I had also hauled corn and mineral to a few different areas within the two farms every week

from late December until late March to help, not only the deer, but the pheasants, turkeys, song birds and any wildlife that would have it. Each week, as the snow got deeper, the job became tougher and eventually I had to leave the 4-wheeler behind and take the corn in by hand pulling a sled loaded with five gallon buckets of corn. Questioning my sanity at times as I did this job, but once you start feeding wildlife you can't just stop as they become reliant on it in sub zero temps, I began to think of ways to lighten my load.

As I covered in a previous column, I sat down with the landowners and made a plan to put in food plots to sustain the wildlife and have overall better health of all the wildlife in the area. As May rolled around, the landowners and I began work on the plots and they even planted more oak trees. We worked and manicured the food plots through the summer, and we had a stand of sorghum, chicory, alfalfa and clover. Each week I would check trail cameras, check on the plots and mow weeds as needed. This became a Sunday afternoon ritual for my daughter, Delana, and me. We would ride around on the four-wheeler and she began to ask a lot of questions about food plots and camera placement and really all things deer hunting while also telling me about everything going on in her world. It's something we both really enjoyed and looked forward to each Sunday.

In early August, the landowners and I began work to get the fall plots planted for our annual plants. Turnips, radishes, sugar beets, oats and winter peas were on the menu this planting. We seeded on August 5 and, as usual, we prayed for rain. As luck would have it, we prayed a little too hard and boy did we ever get rain to the north of us. Ten-plus inches fell in a one day period and the Wapsie soon became very angry. A near-record crest in late August put four feet of water over top our food plots. A time lapse on my trail cameras was quite interesting as I watched the water rise from dry ground to completely submerge our cameras in the matter of four hours. I had pictures of carp swimming around in the food plots. Side note: even though my Covert brand cameras became completely submerged, they



survived and are currently taking pictures to this day.

Our hopes were dashed and it seemed at the time all our hard work had been washed away. As the water fell and I was able to get in to survey the damage, I was dejected, to say the least. All four of our plots were flat to the ground. I came home and showed Delana pictures of the plots. While she was disappointed, she told me, "Dad, we worked too hard to quit now." That was all it took and we immediately contacted our Biologic seed dealer and new plans were set.

When things finally dried out enough to rework the plots and reseed, it was September 8. Delana and I headed in shortly after work that evening. When we arrived to the plots, we were pleased to see that the sorghum looked to still be OK. The rest, however, was bad; all of it had begun to decay and all out stink. I quickly turned Delana loose with the ATV, pulling a lawn dethatcher behind her to drag all the dead plants off and work up the soil enough for reseeding. I mixed the seed varieties all together and readied the broadcaster. We decided upon a mix of oats, turnips, radishes, and clover. We decided to put the same mix across all four plots as this was a last-ditch effort. I remember Delana asking me if I thought it would grow well. I told her, "They could grow big and healthy, or be frosted out next week." Planting this late in the season was a big gamble. We left that evening and within a couple days we received a couple light rains to help germinate the seed.

The following Sunday, we did our ritual and were pleasantly surprised how quickly the seed took. Everything was germinated and growing rapidly and the chicory we planted in the spring that I was certain had drowned was coming back rapidly! A check of the cameras showed the deer and wildlife were moving back into the area and we were riding high, with the season a couple short weeks away. The following

week, I was able to get tree stands adjusted and put a new one up in the area I had found in the spring that Delana named the "North Oak Flat Stand."

Early bow season yielded a lot of deer sightings with each sit and a lot of mosquito bites to go along with it. After the flood, the mosquitoes locally, as many of you know, were absolutely terrible. Without a Thermancell and a good headnet I never would have survived the time on stand. I hunted quite often during early October and, as I said, saw lots of deer especially on the food plots. The weather stayed warm all through October and we got very lucky as most of the plants were able to near maturity before being frosted out.

I had three different bucks I was after in the two properties, and I had a doe tag that we decided I would only fill if Delana was with me. She couldn't handle the mosquitoes and waited until some died off to hunt with me. I had some very enjoyable hunts over the food plots early, seeing numerous does and small bucks. Any given evening would average 8-10 different deer walking by. It was so great watching the deer, turkey, and pheasants use the plants we worked hard to have there for them.

As October wore on and rubs and scrapes started to show up, I knew it was only a matter of time before the bigger bucks would start moving in daylight. October 26 was my first sighting of one of the bucks I was after; problem was, it was after legal shooting light and I was walking out to the ranger at the end of the hunt. He had no idea I was there and I watched him until he worked out to the north and was far away enough to not disturb him. This season, I was very careful of my entry and exit trails to not disturb deer and have them spooked from the property. The next sighting of another target buck came the evening of November 3.

Continued next month





Santa had his lap full when the David Szurley family paid him a visit!

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Grumps to meet Jan. 12

The Grump meeting to elect candidates for Grump Days 2022 will be held Wednesday, Jan. 12, 2022. The meeting will begin with an 11:30 a.m. lunch at The Center Inn. Spouses and Grumps are included, with the meeting to follow at 12:30 p.m.



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