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## Leinen retires from MCMH after 39 years

Tess Nelson  
The Red Oak Express

After nearly 40 years of looking after the finances of the Montgomery County Memorial Hospital as its Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Rick Leinen is retiring.

Leinen's last day at MCMH is Dec. 30.



Leinen

"When I started at MCMH we didn't have a CFO, we had a controller," recalled Leinen. "I was the controller for six or seven years. As the hospital grew, and we moved out here to the new facility, our roles were expanded, my job title changed to CFO, and they hired a controller."

As the CFO, Leinen conducts financial studies, provides financial justification for newly purchased equipment, invests the funds of the hospital, reports to Medicare/Medicaid, works on cost reports, and oversees the billing, payroll and accounts payable departments.

"What I will miss most are the people. When you spend eight to 10 hours a day here, it'll be hard to just shut that off; it'll be tough," said Leinen. "We have a great culture up here; it's a family culture."

A finance and accounting graduate of Northwest Missouri State University, Leinen is a native of Council Bluffs. He initially was a broadcast major with the hopes of one day writing comedy for the Johnny Carson show. Once he started talking to other broadcast majors and learning how little they made; he switched majors.

When he and wife, Rita, came to Red Oak in 1983 for the MCMH job interview, he recalls pulling into the hospital and noticing plywood windows on the west side of the facility.

"A big hailstorm had gone through. I also remember as we were leaving town, a bolt of lightning struck not too far ahead of us on the road. We were thinking it was a sign, but we didn't know what for," he chuckled.

He said at the time it wasn't an easy decision to uproot and move to Red Oak, but it was the right decision.

"This is a great community," he said.

Working with the hospital's budget, Leinen said he was the first person at MCMH to get a personal computer for their office in 1986.

"It was an Apple computer and it had floppy drives."

He recalled it would take the PC roughly two hours to recalculate when working on the hospital's budget.

"Equipment has changed so much, and moving up here in 1989 was a huge change for us as well."

Additionally, medical advancements have improved greatly since Leinen began.

Leinen said the opportunity for him to retire hinged on finding the right person, which they did, in Bryant Blay, who is the Controller at MCMH.

"He will sit in my seat after the first of the year. Knowing he'd be my replacement definitely helped me make the decision to walk away."

Rick and Rita have three children, Nick, Andy and Sara, as well as six grandchildren. After retirement, Rick says he plans on spending time with his grandchildren, finishing up several projects and traveling with Rita. He added his parents reside in Council Bluffs and need his help more as they age. On top of that, Leinen plans to remain active in the community organizations he is in. Leinen is a Red Oak Optimist, Red Oak Ambassador and serves on the Red Oak Chamber and Industry Association Finance committee.

"All of us at MCMH owe Rick a huge debt of thanks," said MCMH CEO Ron Kloewer. "His financial stewardship has helped our community hospital be successful for 40 years. That is amazing and all of us are the beneficiaries of his lifetime of service and good work. On behalf of so many people whose lives he has touched over the years, and that of a grateful community, I want to thank him for his lifetime of service and offer him good wishes and a long life in retirement. Thank you, Rick."



## Making spirits bright

More than 150 children received gifts through the Montgomery County Toys For Tots program this year. Toys were delivered Wednesday, Dec. 21, by members of the Red Oak Police Department, Red Oak Fire Department, Elliott Fire Department, Villisca Fire Department and Montgomery County Sheriff's Office. Pictured is Mayor Shawna Silvius, Red Oak Police Department Liaison Amber Jennings, Dani Treat, and Adam Smith. Back row, from left: Josh Roberts, Red Oak Police Chief Justin Rhamy, Michael Crouse and Red Oak Fire Chief John Bruce. (Photo provided)

## Peer support group started for first responders

Nick Johansen  
The Red Oak Express

The Red Oak Fire Department has teamed up with the Red Oak Police Department and Montgomery County Sheriff's Office to create an in-house peer support program for emergency responders.

Red Oak Fire Chief John Bruce said the departments have always used stress debriefing teams in the state, which sometimes led to issues.

"We had to wait for them to get a team together and come in, and if someone doesn't do what we do, it's a little hard for them," Bruce said. "Obviously, because of the nature of what we do, everyone is a bit of a type-A personality anyway, and it would take a long time to get set up. By that time, attitudes would change, people would change, and it was hard to get people to engage, as they've lost the freshness of the incident."

Also, Bruce said a lot of the situations he and the other first responders go to are end of life situations, which can come in varying levels, such as car accidents, suicides, or even simply natural causes.

It was Mike Crouse, Bruce explained, who found the opportunity for the staff to take peer support training, allowing them to offer support to the local departments in-house.

"Crouse brought up the idea of us having something internal, and we reasoned that the guys and gals between the departments are more likely to talk to each other about it, and it can be done in an informal fashion, and let people talk about the situation and get those tough situations off their chest, and we decided to take advantage of it," commented Bruce.

From there, they approached the Red Oak Police Department and Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, and they each sent one representative to join the two from the fire department.

"They had three days of training, and then they put them through various scenarios, and teaching them the legalities and confidentialities. If you don't have the

"If it's a broken arm, people can see that. But the emotional side is looking for changes in behavior, and we're small enough here that the peers can recognize issues, diagnose it, and get people into what they need."

Red Oak Fire Chief John Bruce

confidence, you're done. But here, we have that, and they trust each other," Bruce stated.

The other benefit, Bruce said, is the peers will be able to intervene in potential mental health situations.

"If it's a broken arm, people can see that. But the emotional side is looking for changes in behavior, and we're small enough here that the peers can recognize issues, diagnose it, and get people into what they need," advised Bruce.

Bruce felt getting someone healthily through a decades long career was by helping people with their mental health.

"When I first started in emergency services, you just didn't talk about it. If you did, you could end up classified as being unable to handle the job. The world has changed drastically, and there's been a large emphasis on mental health through the National Volunteer Fire Council and peer support trainings. We can now stay proactive, because mental health is just as important as the normal training."

Bruce said thanks to the new training, they've been able to establish a protocol for other area departments who need assistance.

"Any of the area departments can call the communications center, who will contact the point of contact for this program, and then our point of contact will speak directly with the individual who made the request. It'll allow for more immediacy to

PEER SUPPORT, Page 8A

Happy New Year!  
2023

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# Byers presents pipeline ordinance drafts

**Nick Johansen**  
The Red Oak Express

The Montgomery County Board of Supervisors heard an update on an ordinance related to the proposed Summit Carbon pipeline project through the county.

At the Dec. 20 supervisors meeting, the supervisors discussed the two 18-page ordinance drafts that they received from zoning administrator Barry Byers. Supervisor Charla Schmid asked Byers if he would highlight the differences between the two drafts. Byers said both were largely the same.

"While there were two versions sent out, one was a red line version, which was edited after lawsuits were filed in Shelby County and Story County. The red line draft allows you to see what was there and what it was changed to. The other draft is merely the clean version of the ordinance draft," Byers explained.

Byers said the ordinance draft will be reviewed at a meeting of the Montgomery County Planning and Zoning Commission at 5:30 p.m. Dec. 29, and action will be taken as necessary.

If that draft is approved at the meeting, it will then come before the Board of Supervisors for approval. Robinson asked if the county



Montgomery County Supervisor Donna Robinson and Montgomery County Auditor Jill Ozuma at the Dec. 20 meeting. (Nick Johansen/Red Oak Express)

would be able to end services with the Ahlers & Cooney Law Firm of Des Moines, which had drafted the ordinance.

Byers said ordinarily he would say yes, but he had a feeling that if the supervisors passed the ordinance, they would be in the same boat as Story County and Shelby County and have a suit filed against the county.

"Whether it has any merit or not, I imagine a suit will be filed. Tim Whipple, the attorney we've been working with through Ahlers & Cooney provided some links that I would urge the supervisors to review," commented Byers.

Jan Norris also sent a letter to the supervisors highlighting action at a Dec. 14 meeting of the Iowa Utilities Board.

"In addition to their regular monthly meeting with 15 public comments, they held oral arguments for the safety and preemption issue and a scheduling conference. These proceedings demonstrated the importance of filing to intervene. Each intervening party was given time to make their case, as well as the opportunity to answer questions from the IUB members. These proceedings were informational only, no decisions were made," Norris said.

Norris said some of the concerns expressed at the meeting included what is safe enough, information that leaks and ruptures are inevitable no matter how spotlessly they follow safety rules, and information about how long some counties might have to wait for regional HazMat to be dispatched. Ordinances were also brought up and information was presented on how local governments have control over land use and zoning and the importance of intelligent application.

"A scheduling conference was held to discuss considerations in setting up a timeline for the rest of the process for Summit's petition application. The IUB started by saying there are still 1,300 parcels, referred to as Exhibit H, along the route that have not signed easements. Each parcel will need to be reviewed by IUB staff which will take an enormous amount of time. Dakota Access only had 39. There are 1,600 parcels on state and local land and Summit is not seeking eminent domain on them," Norris commented.

Norris' letter also stated that an intervention deadline was also discussed. This will end the opportunity for landowners, counties, and other entities to secure legal representation or file to intervene.

"When asked the earliest each could truly believe the hearing could be set, Summit said less than 90 days, March 20, 2023. Others said the IUB shouldn't hold a public hearing before the new Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration rules draft is available in November, 2024. There is a two-year gap in opinions. Everyone other than Summit said March was unreasonable, including the IUB. We need to wait for the legislative session to conclude and see where the ordinance litigation goes. There are still just too many things that can change everything, and the undue leverage with landowners should be considered," stated Norris.

## Rezoning request near Villisca approved by 4-1 vote

**Nick Johansen**  
The Red Oak Express

By a split vote, members of the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors approved a petition from Joshua Kendrick for rezoning filed by Joshua and Megan Kendrick for property at 2663 U Ave., near Villisca, specifically, lots 15 and 16 in south Villisca in the NE-NE of section 28-71-36. The request was to change the zoning designation from residential to commercial.

After postponing a vote at the Dec. 13 meeting, the supervisors held the third and final reading with a public hearing at the regular meeting Dec. 20. During the public hearing, Supervisor Donna Robinson read comments from Kadee Myers, who had property close to the one being considered for rezoning and was not supportive of the rezoning petition.

"My boys and I have lived on our acreage for almost 15 years, and we enjoy the quiet country life. My main concern is how the property would be taken care of. I do not want to live near an eyesore, nor do I want that for the town of Villisca. I am also concerned about what this will do to the value of my property," Myers' letter said.

Also present was adjacent property owner David Shum, who had concerns about the quality of the storage place Kendrick was proposing.

"Most people that have expensive campers or boats want them inside. Whether it's inside or outside, people still have to pay their own insurance on them, and I don't see that happening around Villisca," Shum said. "Also, what's to say in five years if he's not making what he wants to make, that he sells it to somebody who puts a junkyard up there. To me, I'd just as soon see a house go up there, and make it residential, rather than have a storage outfit put there."

Jon Spunaugle also made comments during the hearing. Spunaugle also spoke as an adjacent property owner to the proposed location and was against the rezoning proposal.

"We don't want to see a storage facility, we don't want to see an eight foot fence with barb wire. We don't want to see lights on all night long, and we don't want to look at other people's stuff," Spunaugle commented.

Spunaugle presented photos of similar types of storage areas on Highway 34, and in Red Oak, and stated he didn't take photos of the worst locations he could find, but he did select the most visible. He cited that in both locations there was junk, and weeds were tall. Spunaugle also shared Shum's concern about the property being sold to someone who wasn't as stringent as Kendrick.

"It's not a question of if, but when this property is sold off, and it stays commercial, then the seller can do whatever they want. We don't need another junkyard or salvage yard. Especially one where it's the first thing a person sees when they come into the city from the south," advised Spunaugle.

Kendrick also spoke in the past about tree breaks that had been left to shelter the facility from some of the adjacent property owners. Spunaugle advised some of the trees were dead within those tree breaks, and they would take years to come back. Spunaugle felt the supervisors had heard enough complaints from the neighbors to warrant the petition being denied, and felt there was no benefit to the county or residents that lived there.

Joshua Kendrick then spoke before the supervisors, sharing some of the clean-up efforts he had taken with the property's upkeep and repairs he had made to the existing barn structure. Kendrick also cited that he had left behind more trees on the property for breaks than was necessary.

"It would have been more beneficial to our plans to remove more trees, and I completely agree some of the remaining trees are possibly dying, but we're hopeful now that we've done some clean-up they may come back. However, based on the size of the lot in question, we could make a much bigger storage lot if we removed more trees and the existing barn," said Kendrick.

Kendrick also responded to the comment about the facility being



Megan and Josh Kendrick answer questions from the board of supervisors at the Dec. 20 meeting. The Kendricks requested a zoning change from residential to commercial in rural Villisca. (Nick Johansen/Red Oak Express)

an eyesore to travelers approaching the south side of Villisca, saying it was less traveled than in the past.

"With the viaduct closed on U Avenue into town, it's my argument that most of the traffic into the city, unless you're a resident, would be by the north side near the Casey's. I think that's worth considering as well," explained Kendrick.

According to Kendrick, he had no intentions to ever sell the land in question, and he'd already turned down multiple offers.

"My grandfather bought the property in the late 1940s. I will not sell it. It will be in my will that it will never be sold for my children. The property has a lot of sentimental value to me, and if we don't do anything productive, it will remain vacant, and people will park equipment there, or put their hay bales on there," Kendrick said. "If five years go by, and there's just one person sitting there, then it's our investment lost, and the property is not going to be sold in my lifetime, or my children's lifetime."

Supervisor Mike Olson asked if there were any DNR regulations associated with the land. Kendrick said he was not aware of any.

Robinson said she had received numerous phone calls and comments in regards to the petition, and those in opposition were greater than those in support.

"I have to weight that heavily, because when we get elected, we take an oath that we're supposed to represent, and I have to look at what the concerns have been," advised Robinson.

Supervisor Randy Cooper confirmed that the petition had been reviewed and approved by the Montgomery County Planning and Zoning Board. Zoning administrator Barry Byers confirmed the board had done so.

Robinson asked if there had been any public comment during the planning and zoning meeting. Byers said there had been no public comment, and all the adjacent property owners were contacted by certified mail, and no public comment was received prior to the planning and zoning board's approval of the project.

Robinson stated her reason for asking the question was so that the supervisors didn't discredit the work the planning and zoning board had done. She also stated that since the final decision was made by the supervisors, that may have weighed in to why no one commented during the public hearing at the planning and zoning board meeting.

The supervisors approved the petition by a 4-1 vote, with Robinson voting no.

## Rewarding resolutions that won't require a major commitment of time

Much like money, time does not grow on trees. That reality is all too familiar to busy adults juggling multiple responsibilities at work, at home and other places where they spend their time.

A time crunch can make it hard to commit to a New Year's resolution. But resolutions, which are often focused on self-improvement, can be worthwhile endeavors. So what are busy adults to do? Perhaps the best approach is to choose resolutions that don't necessarily require much time.

• Exercise more: A commitment to getting fit and being more physically active is a popular New Year's resolution. Though choosing such a path may seem like it requires a significant time commitment, the Physical Activity Guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommend that adults perform at least 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 to 150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity each week. That might seem like a lot, but it can be combined with other leisure activities you already engage in. For example, a sports fan can watch the big game while on a treadmill or elliptical, while readers can swap the couch with an exercise bike as their go-to reading spot. Doing so for as little as a half hour per day can help you get the recommended amount of daily exercise without taking up a large chunk of your time.

• Read more: Adults across the globe lament a lack of time to curl up with a good book. But some brief reading before bed each night can help adults achieve this goal and can even improve their quality of sleep. In fact, a 2021 study published in the peer-reviewed medical journal Trials found that reading in bed before going to sleep improved sleep quality compared to not reading a book in bed.

• Journaling: Journaling is another worthy resolution that won't take up much time. Individuals can take 15 minutes out of their day to write down their thoughts and feelings and reflect on the day's comings and goings. That simple activity can produce profound results, as the University of Rochester Medical Center notes that journaling helps people prioritize their problems, fears and concerns; reduce stress; cope with depression; and identify negative thoughts and behaviors.

• Become more organized: This resolution won't take up much of your time. In fact, becoming more organized should free up time. A lack of organization can make it harder to meet work deadlines, keep a house clean, tackle everyday tasks, and keep a clear mind. By taking steps to be more organized, whether that's through using a daily organizer, avoiding procrastinating in regard to cleaning up around the house or other means, individuals will gradually discover they have more free time to use as they see fit.

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## SHARON BRUNING, 79

Sharon Sue Bruning, 79, Villisca, passed away peacefully, Sunday, Dec. 18, 2022, surrounded by her family.

Sharon was born Jan. 28, 1943, in Red Oak, the daughter of Warren and Phyllis (Bates) Kneisel. She graduated from Griswold High School in 1961 and attended Commercial Extension in Omaha, Neb.

Sharon then worked for Mutual of Omaha and during this time was united in marriage to Richard Bruning on July 3, 1965, in Omaha, Neb. They moved to the southwest Iowa area in 1966 and currently live on their farm near Villisca. Sharon was a homemaker who was a member of the Neighborhood Garden Club and Central Church of Christ. She enjoyed gardening, playing cards, had a wonderful sense of humor, and was an avid Nebraska Cornhusker fan. Her greatest joy came from spending time with her family, especially the grandchildren.

Preceding her in death were her parents; sister, Janet Kneisel Hargis; father-in-law and mother-in-law, Leo and Mildred Bruning; and brother-in-law, John Bruning.

Survivors include her husband, Richard Bruning of Villisca; children, Elaine Carlson and husband Kerry of Red Oak, and Terry Bruning and wife Jeannie of Red Oak; grandchildren, William Bruning and wife Brittany of Clarinda; Brandon Bruning and wife Nicole of Villisca; Thad Bruning and wife Bailey of Council Bluffs; Alec Carlson and wife Grace of Long Island, N.Y.; Brittany Prokupek and husband Josh of Pella; and Kaylin Carlson of Red Oak; great-grandchildren, Oliver, Myah, Kaylee, and Raelyn; brother, Doyle Kneisel and wife Sandy of Griswold; brothers-in-law, Jim Bruning and wife Deanna of Washington, D.C.; Larry Bruning and wife Linda of Austin, Texas; Duane Bruning and wife Minnie of Englewood, Colo.; and Don Hargis of Omaha, Neb.; sisters-in-law, Janey Armbrust and husband Jerry of Millard, Neb.; and Nancy Jantze and husband Butch of Milford, Neb.; many nieces, nephews, and other relatives and friends.

Funeral services will be held at 10:30 a.m. Friday, Dec. 23, 2022, at Nelson-Boylan-LeRette Funeral Chapel in Red Oak. Burial will be in the Evergreen Cemetery.

Visitation with the family will be held from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 22, 2022, at Nelson-Boylan-LeRette Funeral Chapel. Memorials are suggested to the Villisca Food Pantry.

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

## CHERIE GRAHAM, 54

Cherie Kay Penry Graham, 54, Omaha, Neb., formerly of Red Oak, passed away Dec. 19, 2022, at Montgomery County Memorial Hospital, Red Oak.

Cherie Kay Graham, the daughter of Francis and Myrna (Gogiv) Penry, was born Oct. 22, 1968, in Iowa City. She was a 1987 graduate of Red Oak High School. She married Dale Graham on July 23, 1992.

Cherie was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Dale, on Dec. 31, 2012; and two brothers, Eldon and Darwin.

Cherie is survived by a sister, Carolyn Lombard and husband George of Red Oak; niece, Heather (John) Lyons of Blair, Neb.; nephew, Chris Lombard of Red Oak; great-nephew, Cody Lyons of Blair, Neb.; best friend of 30 plus years, Patty Grace of Red Oak; and companion, Darren Rahn of Omaha, Neb..

Celebration of Life Service will be held Saturday, Dec. 31, 2022, at 10:30 a.m. at the Senior Center, 2700 N 4th St, Red Oak.



## JACK BAIRD, 91

Jack Baird, 91 of rural Red Oak, Iowa. Jack passed away on Sunday, December 25, 2022, at the Montgomery County Memorial Hospital, Red Oak, Iowa, at the age of 91 years and 13 days.

Jack Delaine Baird was born on December 12, 1931, at the family home of his parents, Leslie and Mae Baird near Villisca, Iowa. He grew up on his family farm southeast of Red Oak, where he began his lifelong love of farming. Jack graduated from Red Oak High in 1949. Jack married Joanne Peterson at Center Ridge Presbyterian Church on Sunday, December 2, 1951. He continued to be an active member of Center Ridge throughout his life.

Through age 89 Jack was actively working the family farm, which has been in the Peterson and Baird families for 148 years. He loved seeing his sons continue the farming operation. He also loved gardening and creating stunning flower beds across the farm.

Jack was honored as a 4-H Hall of Fame inductee with over 30 years of working closely with the woodworking and mechanics programs, 4-H Club leadership and assisting all his children and grandchildren with project work. He also showed Guernsey cows as a young man at the Iowa State Fair, which began his interest in helping other youth experience 4-H. In his younger years he also had a lot of fun competing in tractor pulls with his Montgomery Ward tractor.

Besides his love of family and farming, Jack loved everything about the joy and message of hope at Christmas time. When he started hanging lights on the farm to brighten the season for his own children, he had no idea of the joy he would bring to thousands of people as he grew the tradition to what it is today. For over five decades, he was always planning the next additions to enhance the display. His happiest moments each year were hearing from others that the lights made their Christmas more special.

Jack was preceded in death by his parents Leslie and Mae (Cardiff) Baird and his wife Joanne with whom he shared over 46 wonderful years of marriage.

He is survived by his partner of the past 21 years, Sandy Severn, children: Teresa K. Russell and her husband Miles of Red Oak, IA, Kirk D. Baird and his wife Linda of Red Oak, IA, Deanna J. Suchting and her husband Scott of Red Oak, IA, Chris L. Baird and his wife Christine of Red Oak, IA, and Yvonne M. Putze and her husband Loren of Jefferson, OR; six grandchildren: Michell M. (Rick) Sander of Ankeny, IA, Danielle K. (Luke) Smith of Loveland, CO, Jordan D. (Alicia) Baird of Des Moines, IA, Robin M. (Ben) Aslesen of Ankeny, IA, Garrett S. (Amanda) Suchting of Omaha, NE and Kaitlin Suchting of Red Oak, IA; Great grandchildren include Nolan, Austin and Macie Sander, Mason Baird, Kylie, James and Elliette Aslesen and Jack Suchting, along with many friends.

May God bless his memory and give strength to those who mourn.

Funeral service will be held Saturday, December 31, 2022, at 10:30 a.m. at Center Ridge Presbyterian Church northwest of Red Oak.

Burial with Military Rites (Army National Guard, service in Korea with the 44th Engineer Construction Group) the Center Ridge Cemetery.

Visitation with the family will be held at Sellergren-Lindell-DeMarce Funeral Home on Friday evening, December 30, 2022, from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

Remembrances and condolences may be shared with the family at [www.sldfuneralhome.com](http://www.sldfuneralhome.com)

Sellergren-Lindell-DeMarce Funeral Home is in charge of Jack's arrangements and serving his family.



## GEORGE PETTY, 78

George LeRoy Petty, 78, Red Oak, passed away, Sunday, Dec. 18, 2022, at his home.

George was born Nov. 29, 1944, in Montgomery County, the son of Harold LeRoy and Cleo (DeWitt) Petty. George graduated from Griswold High School in 1962. He started working for Hoye, Inc. right after high school.

George was united in marriage to Diana Lewis on June 25, 1965, in Elliott. They lived in many different places in southwest Iowa before settling in Red Oak in 1976. He worked for Eveready Battery for 33 years, retiring in 1998. The last two years before retirement, George and Diana lived in Maryville, Mo. After retirement, they moved to Elliott. George worked for Red Oak Community Schools for 12 years and moved back to Red Oak in 2019.

Over the years, George was a volunteer fireman for Villisca Fire Department and Red Oak Fire Department. His hobbies included bird hunting, fishing, playing cards, and spending time with his grandkids.

Preceding him in death were his parents; and sister, Dolores Schrier.

Survivors include his wife, Diana Petty of Red Oak; children: Lisa Bailey of Red Oak, Bill Petty and wife Lisa of Stanton, Jodi Petty of Red Oak, and Sarah Culver and husband Wade of Red Oak; grandchildren, Ashley Parker of Council Bluffs; Allison Petty of Elliott; Wyatt Bailey of Red Oak; Dakota Petty of Red Oak; Mary Kate Soc and husband Matt of Red Oak; Sierra Petty of Red Oak; Dawson Culver of Stanton; Xavier Olivio of Ft. Bragg, N.C.; Clayton Culver of Red Oak; and Cash Culver of Red Oak; great-grandchildren, Tierra Parker, Lane Bailey, and Clarke Bailey; brother, Duane Petty and wife Diana of Atlantic; brother-in-law, Dale Schrier of Hill City, S.D.; many nieces, nephews, and other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held Thursday, Dec. 22, 2022, at Elliott Church of Christ in Elliott. Burial was in the Hillside Cemetery.

Memorials are suggested to the Red Oak Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association or the Villisca Volunteer Fire Department.

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



## GUSTAF ALM, 96

Gustaf Adolf Emanuel Alm, 96, Nyman, passed away Sunday, Dec. 18, 2022, at the Red Oak Rehab and Care Center.

Gustaf was born July 24, 1926, near Stanton, the son of Malker Emanuel and Greta Gunhild Wilhelmmina (Dahlgren) Alm. He attended school at Nyman and later received his GED while he served in the U.S. Army during Korea. Gustaf farmed on the family farm and continued to do so after his time of military service.

He was united in marriage to Ruth Marie Johnson on Dec. 27, 1953, in Stromsburg, Neb. In addition to farming, Gustaf was a mechanic who could fix any piece of machinery. He loved to tinker and figure things out. He was a longtime member of the Fremont Lutheran Church at Nyman.

Preceding him in death were his parents; wife, Ruth Marie Alm; sons, Rodney Dwayne Alm and Craig Douglas Alm; brother, Clifford Alm; and sisters, Joanna Brokaw and Ruth Miller.

Survivors include his son, Kevin Alm of Nyman; daughter, Joyce Alm-Nichols of Red Oak; grandchildren, Benjamin Nichols and wife Tes of Kansas City, Mo. and Andrew Nichols of Sherman, Texas; many nieces, nephews, and other relatives and friends.

Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2022, at the Fremont Lutheran Church at Nyman. Burial will be in the Mt. Hope Cemetery at Nyman.

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



## Law and Order



lisca Redmon's Addition Lt 25.

### COURT OFFICER'S DEED

- Katherine Robinson Estate to Samantha Johnson, Red Oak Thompsons Addition Lt 18.

- Harry Leffler Estate, Barbara Leffler, Executor, and Barbara Leffler, Executor, to TC Accommodator 294 LLC, 6-71-39.

### QUIT CLAIM DEED

- Cheryl Miller to Cheryl Miller Revocable Trust, and Cheryl Miller, Trustee, Red Oak Engquist SD Lt 14.

### MOD/AMENDMENT OF MORTGAGE

Cooperative Finance Corporation, Stanton Original Plat Lts 227, 229-230, 234-236.

- Bradley and Luann Groszkrueger to Castle & Cooke Mortgage LLC, Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems Inc, and MERS, Villisca Lightbody Addition Lt 10, Villisca Redmon's addition Lt 25.

- Samantha Johnson to US Bank NA, Red Oak Thompsons addition Lt 18.

**TON**ton, 60, Carter Lake, possession with intent to deliver methamphetamine, unlawful possession of prescription pills, drug tax stamp violation, ongoing criminal conduct, held on bond.

### CRIMINAL

- Felony, State of Iowa vs. Justin Marsden, 30, Red Oak, contempt - resist order or process of district court, terms violated, probation extended to Dec 19, 2023.

- Felony, State of Iowa vs. Tucker Miller, 16, Emerson, case transferred to juvenile court.

- Simple misdemeanor, State of Iowa vs. Heather Porter, 35, Ottumwa, driving while license denied, suspended, cancelled, or revoked, pled guilty, \$250 fine.

### SMALL CLAIMS

- Midland Credit Management vs. Raymond Vannausdale, Villisca, dismissed without prejudice.

### DISMISSED

- City of Red Oak vs. Angela Baier, 46, Red Oak, civil infraction, dead tree, dismissed.

### ARRESTS

- Filed Dec. 23, Jamie Neville, 30, Red Oak, driving while barred, \$2,000 bond.

- Filed Dec. 25, Pamela Hoselton, 60, Carter Lake, possession with intent to deliver methamphetamine, unlawful possession of prescription pills, drug tax stamp violation, ongoing criminal conduct, held on bond.

### OWI

- State of Iowa vs. Kevin Mutschler, 33, Omaha, Neb., first offense, \$1,250 fine, half waived if produces valid driver's license in four months, two days jail, time served.

- State of Iowa vs. Curtis Oakman, 28, Bellevue, Neb., first offense, two days jail, time served, \$1,250 fine.

- State of Iowa vs. Cody Hudson, 34, Red Oak, first offense.

- State of Iowa vs. James Durbin, III, 59, Red Oak, first offense.

- Thomas Kupfer, Elkhorn, Neb., speeding.

- Tanner Abraham, Villisca, unlawful passing of school bus - first offense.

### TRAFFIC

- Scott Dodenhof, La Vista, Neb., no valid driver's license.

- Nicholas Turnbull, Red Oak, no valid driver's license, speeding.

- Randall Lane, Red Oak, no valid driver's license.

- Andrew Johnson, Red Oak, failure to maintain or use safety belt.

- Michael Utterback, Shenandoah, unsafe passing.

- Victorino Trejo Hernandez, Dry Ridge, Ky., speeding, violation of instruction permit limitation.

- Christian Dukes, Essex, registration violation.

- Jennifer Nottle, Bellevue, Neb., speeding.

- Caleb Solari, Corning, registration violation.

- Noah Smirniotis, Stanton, no valid driver's license.

- Sarah Martins, Plattsmouth, Neb., stopping, standing, or parking where prohibited.

- Jordan Jones, Essex, registration violation.

- Thomas Kupfer, Elkhorn, Neb., speeding.

- Tanner Abraham, Villisca, unlawful passing of school bus - first offense.

- Damage to each vehicle was about \$5,000, and Wegman was issued a written warning for failure to obey stop sign.

### ACCIDENTS

- On Dec. 21, at 3:25 p.m., Red Oak Police officers investigated a two-vehicle accident in the Hy-Vee parking lot. Natasha Davis, 26, Red Oak, driving a 2018 Ford Explorer, was traveling east in the parking lot. Lisa Artherolt, 49, Red Oak, driving a 2012 Jeep Liberty, was traveling south through the parking lot. According to the report, neither driver saw the other vehicle and the Artherolt vehicle struck the Davis vehicle, causing about \$5,000 damage to the Davis vehicle and about \$1,500 damage to the Artherolt vehicle. The Davis vehicle was towed from the scene, and no citations were issued.

- On Dec. 21, at 8:36 a.m., Red Oak Police officers investigated a two-vehicle accident at the intersection of Broadway and Elm streets. Amber Gonzalez, 34, Red Oak, driving a 2010 Chevrolet Tahoe, was traveling north on Broadway. Emily Wegman, 19, Red Oak, driving a 2004 Ford Taurus, was traveling west on Elm Street and was stopped at the stop sign. Wegman proceeded into the intersection without yielding to the Gonzalez vehicle and struck it. Damage to each vehicle was about \$5,000, and Wegman was issued a written warning for failure to obey stop sign.

## REAL ESTATE

### WARRANTY DEED

- Sharon Bradley, President, Bryant Blay, Treasurer, Elaine Carlson, Director, and Red Oak Chamber and Industry Association, Inc., to G & S Rentals, Red Oak 5th Industrial Addition Lts 7-8.

## School Beyond School has active first semester



It has been a busy and fun first semester for the School Beyond School kids. They went Trick or Treating on the Trail, been to dinner and met the artists at the Five One Eight, visited the Durham Museum, made fuzzy tie blankets, made Christmas gnomes, visited the History Center, went to see "Fred Claus," visited the library, had fun at the YMCA, attended the middle school musical to watch some of their friends perform, and recently had a Christmas party with pizza and dodgeball. (Photo submitted)

## Essex Student Council holds service day



The Essex High School Student Council recently completed another one of their monthly service days by preparing Christmas goodie trays and volunteering at the Food Pantry. After putting the trays together, they delivered them to businesses and supporters of the school in appreciation for all they have given to the district. The students then volunteered at the Shenandoah Food Pantry, where they helped with recycling and restocking the shelves. Previously they asked the 6-12th grade homeroom classes to make a tie blanket so they could take it to the pantry to donate to those in need. Pictured are, from left: Sponsor Mrs. Johnson, Alex King, Olivia Baker, Johnny Resh, John Staley, Qwintyn Vanatta, Bradley Franks, Mariska Kirchert, Addy Resh, and sponsor Miss Craig. Not pictured: Brianne Johnson. (Photo submitted)

## Stanton choir performs Christmas songs



Members of the Stanton School Choir, led by music instructor Leland Lantz, recently performed Christmas carols for residents of the Stanton Care Center before the Christmas break. (Photo submitted)

## Blair named to honors list

Roary Blair, from Stanton, was named to the Milwaukee School of Engineering's honors list for the 2022 fall quarter. Blair is pursuing a bachelor of science in mechanical engineering.

Undergraduate students who have earned a GPA of 3.20 or higher (out of 4.0) for this quarter are on the honors list.

## SWCC students named to dean's, president's lists

The following students from the local area are among the students named to the fall 2022 semester dean's and president's lists at Southwestern Community College. To be on the president's list, a full-time student must obtain a 3.50 grade point average or above during a semester. To be on the dean's list, a full-time student must obtain at least a 3.00 grade point average. There were 217 students named to the president's list and 146 students named to the dean's list.

## President's list

- Aiden Bruce, Red Oak.
- Landon Couse, Red Oak.
- Grayson Hewett, Red Oak.
- Destiny McAlpin, Red Oak.
- Lindsey Porter, Red Oak.
- Hannah Whitten, Red Oak.

## Dean's list

- Madison Hewett, Red Oak.
- Christopher Skorna, Red Oak.

## Hernandez a 2022 graduate from UNO

Perla Hernandez of Red Oak was a fall, 2022 graduate of the University of Omaha. Hernandez graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree.

To qualify for a Magna Cum Laude distinction, the students must maintain a GPA of 3.63 – 3.86.

## VIEWPOINTS

*Stronger the Press, Stronger the People*

THE TIME CAPSULE | ROY MARSHALL

## When Jimmy Caras played Red Josephson

Jimmy Caras (1910-2002) spent much of his childhood in his father's tavern.

Articles about him say that by age 5 he could see the top of a pool table and learned the game. At 10, he was hustling.

While attending school in Scranton, Pa., Jimmy was to check in each afternoon on his way home. Some days there was no action; on others the old man had a game lined up.

In later years, Caras liked to tell of the time he put his homework on the bar, had a soda and noted \$30 and some change in the cash register.

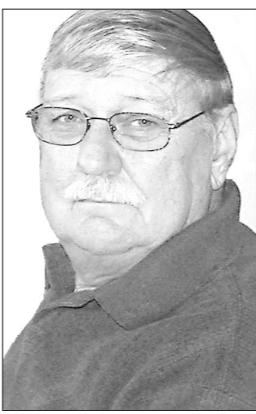
His dad pointed to a man at the pool table, telling Jimmy he was to play him for \$100. Knowing there wasn't enough to cover the bet, Jimmy asked what happened if he lost. "You won't," was the reply, and he didn't.

By 17, his reputation was such that Ralph Greenleaf, then world's champion, gave him a match. Jimmy won handily and turned pro shortly thereafter. He won the world's open championship in 1936, '38, '39 and '49.

Well established as the best, or at least as good as Willie Mosconi, he stepped back from tournament play and took a job with Brunswick Sporting Goods.

For Brunswick, he traveled the country giving demonstrations and doing what he could to increase the popularity of his sport.

In November of 1962 he came to Red Oak. Jim Logan was then editor of the Express. He was



also the news reporter, photographer, contributed to the editorial page and wrote the sports. Logan and the Murphys put out two papers a week, every edition containing more pages and stories and having a larger circulation than today, doing so with a smaller staff that worked without computers, internet, email or cell phones.

How they managed this I don't know, but I do know that Logan relied heavily on a network of correspondents.

On game nights he was taking and making phone calls, then worked into the wee hours writing articles that caused some to assume he'd covered games in several towns on the same night.

Correspondents gave Logan game recaps — and more — and the result was an eclectic array of articles.

His sports page from November 29, 1962, tells us Jon Nazarene scored 20 as Red Oak beat Harlan. Stanton's Hi-Vikings (the preferred name at the time) started the season with five returning lettermen (John Sholeen, Gary Foote, Tom Schenck, Steve Lantz and Lorin Peterson).

We also learn the "Sure as Shootin' Fox Hunting

Club" would hold their first hunt of the season on the Paul Carlson farm near Red Oak. The club, formed in 1954, had a career total of 307 foxes and was out for more.

Racoon trappers were reporting success, with pelts bringing \$30 and up. There was an article on pheasants, good news for motels, restaurants, service stations and anyplace that sold ammo. Quail were also abundant, but harder to hit.

Another article was on an unnamed Red Oak resident who heard a thumping on the side of his house.

He investigated and found the neighbor's Cocker Spaniel had chased a rabbit into a downspout and was trying to shake the bunny out.

Although it doesn't seem to fit a sports page, Logan included news that George Peterson of Rt. 2, Villisca, had purchased a Hereford bull.

These stories were probably from correspondents. Logan covered Jimmy Caras himself.

Gene DeMarce, owner and manager of Gene's Bowling and Billiards, booked Caras with performances scheduled for 3 and 8 pm.

The billiard half of his establishment drew about 75 for the matinee, which Caras began with a few trick shots. The main event was a match with DeLaine "Red" Josephson.

Josephson was long-time owner of a bar just off the square, where he played a lot of pool. He may not have been Red Oak's best, but he was apparently the best DeMarce could produce at 3 p.m. on

## Letters to the Editor

The Red Oak Express supports healthy community discourse and encourages readers to submit a letter to the editor. Letters must be signed and include a phone number for verification purposes. They can be submitted by mail or dropped off at 2012 Commerce Drive, Red Oak, Iowa, 51566, or emailed to news@redoakexpress.com, or entered through our website at redoakexpress.com. Letters should be concise and centered on a single topic. All letters are subject to editing for length, taste, accuracy, liability, or other reasons. The Express is under no obligation to print any letter. If you have questions, contact the Express office at 712-623-2566 or news@redoakexpress.com.

## a working day.

No one expected Josephson to win, and he hardly got a shot. Caras ran five straight racks, Josephson had no answer, and the remainder of the afternoon saw Caras take questions and offer lessons.

Around 400 spectators packed the billiard room for the night session, at which Caras was matched against Red Oak's Don Buehler.

Buehler was one of the area's better bowlers, rolling a 768 series which for years (according to our paper) was the highest ever in Red Oak. He also recorded a rare "Dutch 200."

This was pool, though, and Caras dispatched Buehler as easily as he had Josephson.

In the adjoining room, bowling balls rumbled and pins clattered.

During tournament play that night, Bob Cozad rolled nine consecutive strikes. Jitters may have gotten him in the tenth frame, as he left a nasty split and settled for 265.

Caras left Red Oak and, wondering if he still had what he had 30 years before, rejoined the pro circuit.

He regained the world championship in 1967, then semi-retired to Florida.

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

## DEADLINES

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

## CONTACT US

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## THE RED OAK Express

Dedicated to Freedom Since 1868

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## WHO WE ARE

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

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## BUY A SINGLE COPY

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

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

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

# COMMUNITY

## Community Calendar

### 29 December

Noon, SCORE webinar, "Getting Certified as a Woman-Owned, Minority-Owned or Veteran-Owned Business." Go to [omaha.score.org/content/take-workshop-242](http://omaha.score.org/content/take-workshop-242).

12:30 p.m., Bingo, Red Oak Senior Center, 2700 N. 4th St. Call 712-623-3497 or Carolyn at 402-926-8683 for more information.

4 p.m., Community Prayer Time, Fountain Square Park. Call Bonnie at 623-4759.

5-7 p.m., Fall E Sports, Montgomery County Family YMCA, 101 E. Cherry St.

5-9 p.m., Lifeguard certification class, Montgomery County Family YMCA, 101 E. Cherry St. Call 623-2161 or email [lormab@mymcma.com](mailto:lormab@mymcma.com) for more details.

7 p.m., Alcoholics Anonymous, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1101 Summit St.

### 30 December

10:15 a.m., Story time at the Red Oak Public Library, 400 N. 2nd St., theme: "Babies."

5-9 p.m., Lifeguard certification class, Montgomery County Family YMCA, 101 E. Cherry St. Call 623-2161 or email [lormab@mymcma.com](mailto:lormab@mymcma.com) for more details.

5:30 p.m., Alcoholics Anonymous, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 1101 Summit St.

7 p.m., "Strange World," theatre #1; "Black Panther: Wakanda," theatre #2; Red Oak Grand Theatre.

### 31 December

8 a.m.-5 p.m., Lifeguard certification class, Montgomery County Family YMCA, 101 E. Cherry St. Call 623-2161 or email [lormab@mymcma.com](mailto:lormab@mymcma.com) for more details.

Noon, personal training package offered by the Montgomery County Family YMCA, 101 E. Cherry St. YMCA members \$20 for 30 minutes, \$40 for an hour; non members \$25 for 30 minutes, \$50 for an hour. Call Ember Adams at 621.3717 for further details.

## TRI-DEMIC

*The jump for this article was not included in the Dec. 21 edition of the Red Oak Express. We apologize for the error.*

students. It is also difficult for the teacher to judge the individual student's daily progress toward understanding the concepts/standards they are learning," Gute commented. "It is very important for the students and teachers to be at school every day. However, if you are sick you need to stay home to help prevent the spread of your illness."

Lastly, Gute said the Stanton District hasn't had any discussions around closing because of sickness at this time. However, it is a possibility with many different variables that would contribute to the need to close the school.

Griswold superintendent David Heinrichs said his district is also seeing an increase of absences on a day by day basis, and they are doing their best to help slow the spread of any and all diseases.

"On Dec. 14, we had 17% of our students absent at the middle school and high school level, and 21% were absent in the elementary. Illnesses have varied but mainly consist of flu, strep throat, and the common cold," Heinrichs said. "We're employing mitigation strategies using equipment and resources purchased with COVID-19 funding that includes fogging the building and cleaning surfaces that are 'high traffic' areas."

Heinrichs echoed the sentiments of Lorenz and Gute, saying having increased student absences has a negative effect on student learning.

"It's difficult for teachers to keep up the instructional pace that is needed for students to master the entire expected content, while making time accommodations for students while they are absent," commented Heinrichs.

No discussions have taken place yet on potential closings at Griswold, but Heinrichs said it is a day by day decision, and a large part of the decision is based upon the availability of staff.

Southwest Valley superintendent Chris Fenster said at his district, illness numbers increased last week, but thankfully, little of it appears to be COVID related.

"We monitor our absences related to illness on a daily basis. Our illness numbers have increased this week as compared to last week. Mostly influenza and strep with very minimal COVID," Fenster explained.

Fenster said they will do everything needed to keep disease spread at the district to a minimum, and urges sick kids to avoid forcing themselves to come to school.

"We will continue to monitor our illness rates and increase our sanitization as needed in each building. Fortunately, we have all the tools and knowledge from the COVID pandemic to increase our practices, as needed," Fenster advised. "The most important thing is for parents/guardians to keep their sick kids home and follow our illness policy on when their child is ready to return to school."

Fenster added Southwest Valley will continue to operate as regularly as possible, and they have no plans to close the schools.

## New Year's party at Country Club Dec. 31

The Red Oak Country Club at 2038 200 St. will hold a New Year's Eve party on Dec. 31.

The event begins with cocktail hour from 4-5 p.m., with formal dress. A dinner with filet mignon, orange roughy, and crab legs will be served beginning at 5 p.m., for \$150 per couple and \$75 per individual. All you can drink is included in the ticket price.

Music and dancing will begin at 8:30 p.m. with DJ Greg Brower. Valet parking and designated drivers are available.

## Card Showers

### SWENSON 60TH ANNIVERSARY



John and Mona Swenson will celebrate their 60th anniversary on Dec. 29.

In honor of the occasion, a card shower is requested. Send cards to the couple at 1803 Forest Ave., Red Oak, IA 51566.

## Grand Theatre fundraiser Jan. 4

The Red Oak Grand Theatre at 410 E. Coolbaugh St. will hold a curbside supper event Jan. 4 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., or while supplies last..

Residents are encouraged to drive by the theatre during the event and pick up a meal.

On the menu are chicken and noodles, mashed potatoes, green beans, and a cookie made by Brenda Vrba. Popcorn will also be available.

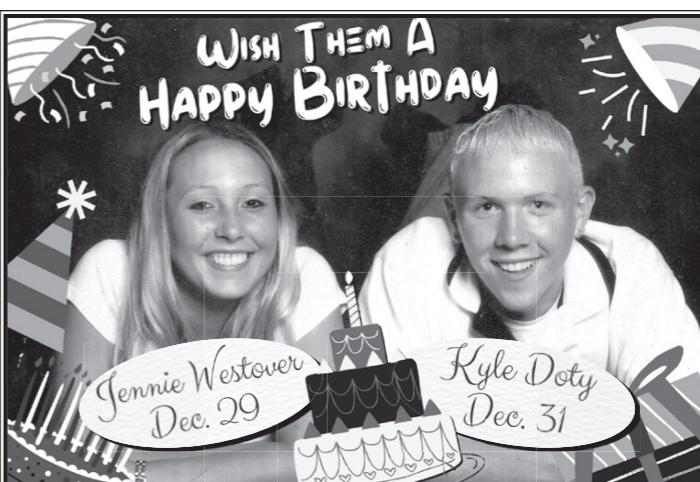
Free will donations will be accepted. All proceeds go to benefit the Red Oak Grand Theatre.

## Happy Birthday!

Celebrating birthdays are:

Brad Hicks – Dec. 29  
Bob Boeye – Dec. 29  
Noelle Parrish – Dec. 29  
Linda Olsen – Dec. 29  
Chris Bradfield – Dec. 29  
Danny Robertson – Dec. 29  
Joni Sallach – Dec. 29  
Jennie Westover – Dec. 29  
Katherine Robinson – Dec. 30  
Kyle Doty – Dec. 31  
Darwin Bailey – Jan. 1  
Lillie Williams – Jan. 3  
Don Lantz – Jan. 3  
Esther Mae Gotberg – Jan. 4

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



## CHURCH DIRECTORY

### Advent Christian

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

### Assembly Of God

1005 Senate, Red Oak, 623-2174, Services, 10:30 a.m.

### Baptist

The Bridge (First Baptist Church), 406 N. 3rd St., Red Oak, Rev. Len Taylor, Worship, 11 a.m.

Grace Baptist, 1510 N. 6th St., Red Oak, Gary D. Walters, Bible class, 10 a.m., Worship, 11 a.m., Worship, 6 p.m.; Wednesday, Prayer, 7 p.m. Grace Baptist, 525 Main St., Griswold, Victor Maxson, Bible study, 10 a.m., Worship, 11 a.m. **Online:** 11 a.m. live on YouTube.

### Southern Baptist

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

### Catholic

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

### Mass, 8:30 a.m.

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

### Christian

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

**Christian & Missionary Alliance**  
Citylight Southwest Iowa, 705 Bradford, Emerson. Co-lead pastors Matt Keller, Tyler Mass. Worship with children's church, 10 a.m. in-person gathering. **Online:** 10 a.m. live on Facebook.

Faith Community, 2701 N. 8th St., Red Oak, Pastor Dan Wetzel, Associate Pastor Stephen Beaulier, Worship, 9:30 a.m. Connection Classes for pre-kindergarten-adults, 11 a.m. Wednesday activities: Faith Kids, Pre-K grade 4, 6-7:30 p.m. Faith Midpoint, grades 5-6, 6-7:30 p.m. Faith Youth, grades 7-12, 7-8:30 p.m. **Online:** 9:30 a.m. on KCSI, 9:30 a.m. on Facebook.

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

### Church Of Christ

Church Of Christ, Elliott, Sunday Bible School, 9 a.m., Worship, 10 a.m., Men's and Women's Bible study and breakfast, first Sunday of the month at 7:30 a.m.

River of Life Church, Hwy. 48 North, Red Oak, Interim Minister Kevin Berry, Sunday School 9 a.m., Worship, 10 a.m.

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

**Covenant**  
Evangelical, Rev. Matt King, 308 Eastern, Stanton, Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Worship, 10:45 a.m. **Online:** 10:45 a.m. live on Facebook and later on YouTube.

Faith Covenant Church, 212 Alice St., Essex, Pastor Gordon Scott, Pastor Staci Shearer, Worship, 8:30 a.m.

First Covenant, Rev. Alan Dean, pastor, 3rd & Hammond, Red Oak, Worship, 9:30 a.m.

**Jehovah's Witness**  
210 Argus Road, Shenandoah,

Thursday, 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m., public Bible discourse.

### Lutheran

Bethesda Lutheran, Rural Clarinda, Worship 9:30 a.m. Worship, Sunday School 10:30 a.m.

Bethlehem Lutheran, 1101 Summit St., Red Oak, Rev. Jennifer Yeske-Drown, Sunday worship, 11 a.m. Strand Evangelical, Rural Villisca, Rev. Marietta Nelson-Bittle, Worship, 9:45 a.m.

Fremont Lutheran (Nyman), 1147 Ironwood Ave, Red Oak, Pastor Ann Albert, Worship, 9:30 a.m., Sunday School, 10:30 a.m.

Marmelund Lutheran, 410 Eastern Ave., Stanton, Worship, 10:30 a.m. Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. **Online:** 10:30 a.m. FMTC Cable Channel 1, also live on Facebook.

Mt. Calvary, 107 S. 5th, Villisca, Jerome Wagner, Worship, 9:00 a.m. Tabor Lutheran, 1711 Q Ave., Stanton, Worship, 8:15 a.m., Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.

Peace Lutheran, (A WELS Congregation), 411 Church St., Shenandoah, Saturday Worship, 5:30 p.m.; Bible and Sunday School, 6:30 p.m.

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

**Presbyterian**  
Center Ridge, 1546 N. 110th St., Red Oak, Caryn Pedersen, Worship 1 p.m., twice a month. Call 623-9023 for more information.

First Presbyterian, 109 S. 3rd Ave., Villisca, Rev. Sandra Wainwright, Sunday School, 9:30 a.m., Worship, 10:30 a.m.

Red Oak Presbyterian, 511 E. Coolbaugh, PO Box 402, Red Oak, Caryn Pedersen, [redoakpresbyterianchurch.com](http://redoakpresbyterianchurch.com), Service, 10:30 a.m.

Grant United Methodist, Pastor Casey Pelzer, Worship services, 8:30 a.m. **Online:** 8:30 a.m. live on Facebook

United Methodist, 203 S. 3rd Ave., Villisca, Pastor Casey Pelzer, Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Worship, 8:30 a.m. **Online:** 10:30 a.m. live on Facebook.

Strahan United Methodist, Hastings, Rev. David Kwangki Kim, Worship, 9:30 a.m., Sunday School, 10:30 a.m.

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

**United Methodist**  
First United Methodist, 600 E. Hammon, Red Oak, Rev. Jennifer Van Nostrand, Worship, Sunday, 9 a.m.; Youth group Wednesday 6:30-8 p.m., grades 6-12, snack is served.

**Online:** 9 a.m. [funcro.org](http://funcro.org); click on the media tab to see previously recorded services.

Wesley Chapel UMC, Rev. Carl Phillips, Worship, 8:45 a.m., Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.

Red Oak Circuit, Linda Westerhold; Hawthorne, 1248 210th St., Red

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The Red Oak Chamber and Industry Association would like to thank all those who participated, volunteered and organized holiday events in Red Oak this year. We hope you had as much fun as we did. (Finch & Lilac Photography)



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## Board of Supervisors approves raises for elected officials, sheriff's office

### Nick Johansen

The Red Oak Express

The Montgomery County Board of Supervisors has finalized compensation information for budget planning.

At the regular supervisors meeting Dec. 20, the supervisors discussed Montgomery County Compensation Board recommendations for FY 2023-24. The board issued a recommendation of a 15% raise for the sheriff's office, and a 12% raise for other elected officials.

"We need to give them some figures to work with for budgeting purposes, even if we choose not to use them based on the levies," said Supervisors

Chair Mark Peterson.

The recommendations from the board were accepted at the Dec. 13 supervisors meeting. While the recommendations were accepted, Supervisor Mike Olson said they could be reduced.

"We have to maintain equal percentages, so I would recommend a 7.5% increase for the sheriff's office and 6% for all other elected officials as a starting point, with the caveat that we don't know what all of our valuations are yet. I feel 15% and 12% is a bit much," Olson said.

The percentage was similar to a percentage approved last year, with 7.5% for the sheriff's office, 6% for the auditor, and 5% for all other officials.

Peterson questioned whether the amount would

be enough based on projected increase to cost of living expenses.

"From my understanding, the cost of living percentage increase is 8%, and so I'd rather be a little high rather than low. We can always reduce it later. I'm going to suggest a 10% increase for the sheriff's office and 8% for the other offices," stated Peterson.

Olson said his number was just a starting point, and they wouldn't have a definite number until they delved deeper into the budget. Olson said he wasn't opposed to Peterson's suggestion.

The supervisors chose to stick with Olson's suggestion, and approved setting a 7.5% wage increase for the sheriff's office and a 6% increase for all elected officials for budgeting purposes

only.

The supervisors also discussed and approved further board and committee assignments.

The supervisors approved the appointments of Don Karwal as Douglas Township Clerk and Cody Mauderly as Douglas Township Trustee. They also approved the appointment of Jerald Palmquist as Scott Township Clerk and Jim Herzberg as Scott Township Trustee, and appointed John Baker and Jerry Hansen to the Montgomery County Compensation Board.

The supervisors also approved a request from maintenance supervisor Dan Wright for a Boss TGS 600 tailgate spreader with a slide-in attachment for snow removal purposes, at a cost of \$2,472.

## Better Financial Living

### Setting yourself up for success in 2023

#### Dan Miller

CFP

The end of the year is fast approaching, which brings about a number of planning opportunities and issues to discuss. Potential areas to consider include tax planning, investment and retirement accounts, charitable giving, cash flow and savings, insurance, and estate planning.

Now is a great time to take a look at your whole financial picture, and see what opportunities and threats lie ahead for the next year.

What are your goals for the next year? Do you want to go on an exotic vacation? Buy a new house?

What things put you at risk in the next year? Will you potentially be in a higher tax bracket? Do you have a big expense coming up?

This time of year, it is important to consider these issues and many more as we head into the New Year.

#### Asset & Debt Issues: Questions to Consider

1. Do you have unrealized investment losses in your taxable accounts? It's been a tough year in the financial markets in 2022, so some folks could potentially have realized losses in their non-qualified portfolios which may allow them to utilize this opportunity.

If after consulting with your tax professional, you may want to consider realizing losses to offset any gains and write off \$3,000 against ordinary income.

2. Do you have investments in taxable accounts that are subject to end-of-year capital gain distributions? If so, talk to your tax professional to come up with strategies to minimize tax liability.

3. Are you 72 or older, or are you taking an RMD from an inherited IRA? If so, you may have a few things to consider:

- RMDs from multiple IRAs can generally be aggregated; however, RMDs from inherited IRAs cannot be aggregated with traditional IRAs.

- RMDs from employer retirement plans generally must be calculated and taken separately, with no aggregation allowed. However, 403(b) plans are an exception, and RMDs from multiple 403(b)s can be aggregated.

- Talk with your financial and tax professionals for guidance.

#### Tax Planning

1. Do you expect your income to increase in the future? If so, consider the following strategies to minimize your future tax liability:

- Consider Roth IRA and Roth 401(k) contri-



Miller

butions and Roth conversions.

- If offered by your employer plan, consider making after-tax 401(k) contributions.
- If you are age 59.5 or over, consider accelerating traditional IRA withdrawals to fill up lower tax brackets.

2. Do you expect your income to decrease in the future? If so, consider strategies to minimize your tax liability now, such as traditional IRA and 401(k) contributions instead of contributions to Roth accounts.

3. Do you have any capital losses for this year or carryforwards from prior years? If so, you may want to consider the following:

- There may be opportunities to take offsetting gains.

- You may be able to take the loss or use the carryforward to reduce your ordinary income by up to \$3,000.

- Speak with your tax professional.

4. Are you charitably inclined and want to reduce taxes? If so, consider these options:

- Explore tax-efficient funding strategies, such as gifting appreciated securities or making an ACD.

- If you expect to take the standard deduction (\$12,950 if single, \$25,99 if MFJ), consider bunching your charitable contributions every few years which may allow itemization in specific years.

5. Will you be receiving any significant windfalls that could impact your tax liability such as an inheritance, stock options, or bonus? If so, you may need to review your tax withholdings to determine if estimated payments will be required.

6. Do you own a business? If so, consider the following:

- If you own a pass-through business, consider the QBI Deduction eligibility rules.

- Consider the use of a Roth vs. traditional retirement plan and its potential impact on taxable income and Qualified Business Income.

- If you have business expenses, consider if it makes sense to defer or accelerate the costs to reduce overall tax liability.

- Many retirement plans must be opened before year-end (if you follow a calendar tax year).

7. Have there been any changes to your marital status? If there is a change, consider how your tax liability may be impacted based on your marital status as of December 31st.

#### Cash Flow

1. Are you able to save more? If possible, going into 2023 you may want to consider:

- If you have an HSA, you may be able to contribute \$3,650 (\$7,300 for a family) and an additional \$1,000 if you are age 55 and over.

- If you have an employer retirement plan, such as a 401(k), you may be able to save more but must consult with the plan provider as the rules vary as to when you can make changes.

- The maximum salary deferral contribution to an employer plan is \$22,500, plus the catch-up contribution if age 50 or over is \$7,500 per year.

#### Insurance Planning

1. Will you have a balance in your FSA before the end of the year? If so, consider the following options your employer may offer:

- Some companies allow up to \$570 of unused FSA funds to be rolled over into the following year.

- Some companies offer a grace period up until March 15 to spend the unused FSA funds.

- Many companies offer you 90 days to submit receipts from the previous year.

- If you have a Dependent Care FSA, check the deadlines for unused funds as well.

Did you meet your health insurance plan's annual deductible? If so, consider incurring any additional medical expenses before the end of the year, after which point your annual deductible will

reset.

#### Estate Planning

1. Have there been any changes to your family, heirs, or have you bought/sold any assets this year? If so, consider reviewing your estate plan.

2. Are there any gifts that still need to be made this year? If so, gifts up to the annual exclusion amount of \$16,000 (per year, per donee) are gift tax-free.

#### In Conclusion

No one wants to look back and say, "I wish I would've taken advantage of that." In order to not have regrets, timely planning is necessary. Don't miss out on some of the end-of-year planning opportunities that are available to you now. Talk to your financial professionals and CPAs in your network about how to set yourself up for success next year.

*Dan Miller, Kaleb Robuck, and Marcus Taylor are investment adviser representatives of, and securities and advisory services are offered through, USA Financial Securities Corp. Member FINRA/SIPC. A Registered Investment Advisor located at 6020 E Fulton St., Ada, MI 49301. Miller Financial Group and Milestone Financial Group, Inc. are not affiliated with USA Financial Securities Corp.*



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## PEER SUPPORT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

address things, and they're able to address them with someone they know," Bruce stated.

Ultimately, Bruce stressed the importance of the program, since at no point do the emergency responders put the closed sign on the door.

"Sometimes, you're hopping from call to call, and people don't get a break. Now we can make sure that people are taken care of, and we have a program that will make sense and work for what we need it to, and embracing change," Bruce said. "Like it or not, eventually it will catch up with you, and we don't need people harming themselves or getting involved in alcohol for self-medication. The firehouse is a family, and we want to make sure everyone is taken care of. It's a tool in the toolbox, and it's there when we need it."

Bruce added it was a special feeling to be able to spearhead a program like this on the local level.

"We are the only fire-based career department in the area, until you get to Council Bluffs. We have the opportunities that

volunteer departments don't have the time to put in, and it's another resource that the volunteer departments can rely on."

Red Oak Police Chief Justin Rhamy also spoke about the program, and stressed the importance of peer support for the first responders.

"The first responders' mental health is a vital piece of the foundation that a first responder is built on. If mental health starts to fail them, it's going to be a trickle effect and everything will eventually crumble. First responders' suicide rates are amongst the highest," said Rhamy.

Rhamy added there were many added benefits to having a program like this aiding the Red Oak Police Department.

"It gives our officers the ability and access to a team member that one may feel comfortable with to talk one-on-one. It also gives them the ability to rapidly assemble a group setting without having to wait several days in the event of a large incident that could tragically affect multiple responders," Rhamy advised.

"Probably the biggest one of them all is that the first responders, whether police, deputy, firemen or EMS providers know that we as a city and county, we care about them and want them to know we support them, that every single one of them know that their mental wellbeing and health is a priority."

Montgomery County Sheriff Jon Spunaugle also spoke about the benefits the new peer support program will provide for the sheriff's office.

"It can be for anything within the department. It can provide support for people having a bad day, or health problems, and just allows us to keep an eye out for each other. I think it's going to be a really good deal for us," Spunaugle commented.

In addition to Crouse, Levi Kinnison is the Red Oak Fire Department's other peer representative. For the Red Oak Police Department, the representative is Amber Jennings. The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office representative is Keith Wiederien.