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# Fairbank ISLANDER

SERVING FAIRBANK AND THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

JANUARY 3, 2024

Compiled by Fairbank Community Club ~ Designed and Printed by Oelwein Publishing Co.

VOLUME 5, NO. 1

## SANTA VISITS THE LIBRARY



Weston (10 months) and Sylvie (3 years old) tell Santa everything they want for Christmas. Their parents are Julie and Adam Costello. Find more photos on page 2.

## HOLIDAY LIGHTING CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The Fairbank Community Club again sponsored the Holiday Lighting Contest before Christmas. The 5 winners (in no particular order) were Richard and Sarah Seeman, Jillian Sinwell, Ross and Lisa Stottmeister, Bill and Joyce Cowell, Jillian Woods.

lar order) were Richard and Sarah Seeman, Jillian Sinwell, Ross and Lisa Stottmeister, Bill and Joyce Cowell, Jillian Woods.

Santa helps members of the Community Club go around and put up a sign in the winning yards.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



Ross & Lisa Stottmeister



Bill & Joyce Cowell



Jillian Sinwell

## Annual Fairbank Fireman's Winter Ball & Fundraiser

The annual Fairbank Fireman's winter ball/fundraiser will be held Saturday, January 20 at the Fairbank American Legion.

Admission is \$10 which includes your raffle ticket.

Doors open at 7 PM to enjoy the Dan Ladd comedy hypnosis show and music by Shawn Ster.

Dan Ladd: 8PM-9:30 PM, Shawn Ster: 9:30-Midnight.

Watch for the annual fundraiser and yearly newsletters, which will be mailed to all Fairbank residence along with raffle tickets. There are always a lot of nice items that are raffled off each year. Additional raffle tickets can be purchased at the door.

Bring a friend and have a great time while supporting your local volunteer Fairbank and EMS service! Even if you can't attend the dance, please consider sending in a donation when you receive your newsletter. This is the main fundraiser each year for our volunteer fire department, your donations pay for the many expenses involved with maintaining a fire department and EMS service to keep us all safe. Your donations are much appreciated.

# A note from the Mayor

Greetings, I hope you had a fantastic holiday season! Since being elected, I have been busy meeting with city employees, attorney and engineer in an effort to be as up to date on city business as possible. I want to update you on what I have learned concerning the Main Street Project. Most of the project is complete, but not entirely. Next spring will begin construction again with the portion of Grove Street between the fire station and the railroad crossing. There will again be detours, and likely one-way traffic. Also, the west side portion of Main Street and Walnut Street will be resurfaced and widened. The street markings will be re-painted as the current paint is only temporary. If you live on, or have a business on Main Street, DO NOT PUT SALT ON THE NEW SIDEWALKS, PARKING, OR THE ROAD! Contact City Hall if you need further information. Finally, I want to remind everyone that most of this project falls under the jurisdiction of the Iowa DOT. Although your comments are welcome, please be advised our city staff can only advise the DOT project manager and any changes are completely within their purview. That being said, if the state decides again to designate Highway 281 "CLOSED TO THROUGH TRAFFIC IN FAIRBANK" during construction, that is exactly what it means. If you are traveling to Dollar General, Poet, Oelwein, the high school, etc, you will need to follow the detour. If you travel "through" town and are not going to a location here, you can be cited. So please, for the sake of our side streets, please follow the detour if simple passing through. I want to again thank all of you for your kind words of encouragement and recommendations.



Jason Kayser

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# SANTA VISITS THE LIBRARY



Hadley Brown, age 8. Parents: Jessie & Chad Brown.



Brooklyn (8), Colin (9), & Reese (5). Parents : Matt & Michelle Laube.



Grayson (6) & Collins (4). Parents: Taylor & Kyle Odneal.

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Julian Woods

**WINNERS  
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

Winners were each given \$25 in Fairbank bucks which can be used at most of the local businesses.

Thank you to all who took time each year to put up their lights and decorations. Christmas spirit is alive and well in Fairbank.



Alisha Stottmeister, children Mila and Charlotte



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# "CHRISTMAS TREE IN THE PARLOR"

By **Betty Brandt Passick**  
bbpassick@comcast.net

I posted a photo of our family's Christmas tree from 1961 to friends on Facebook a few years ago. Since, an algorithm annually replicates the posting to my account inviting me to re-share it, should I care to do so.

Staring at the photo, I find myself gasping anew: A picture really does represent a thousand words.

Our family of nine arrived in Fairbank in the mid-1950s, so we had already celebrated many Christmases in the late-1800's two-story house east of the Baptist church. Likely I was the photographer. By then, a teenager, I had taken an interest in photography, recently mindful of our box camera's usefulness in recording historical moments in the life of our family.

At the time, I thought the photo was a good candidate for a Norman Rockwell painting like the ones that appeared on covers of Life magazine. It was a snapshot in time. The caption: "Christmas Tree in the Parlor."

Christmas was one of the few times of the year we siblings were allowed into the 'parlor'. Located just inside the front door of our home, its sole purpose was for social entertainment should a relative, neighbor, or our pastor stop by for a visit. An off-limits part of the house, I thought it always smelled stuffy. The room held our best furniture – including Mom's piano, which sat along the wall opposite the tree. She had learned to play by ear in her youth. Then



she taught herself to read notes. I thought she could probably teach herself anything.

The muted floral wallpaper, so reminiscent of the 1950s-60s, had been hung by Mom and Dad. They had also wallpapered the dining room. Years earlier, I watched them attempt to remove old wallpaper from the dining room walls. They found at least a dozen layers, too many to eas-

ily remove. Eventually I reconciled the flat roof above the dining room, which leaked like Niagara Falls during heavy rains, was the culprit. Water streaming down the walls quickly ruined the wallpaper. Every spring Dad carried a large bucket of tar to the rooftop to try to fix the leaks. Every spring the dining room walls were re-papered. I came to realize wallpapering and fixing leaks were among the joys of home ownership.

Strangely, the drapes in the parlor had a plastic feel to them. I didn't know drapes could be made out of anything but cloth. Mom, an excellent seamstress, had surely created the drapes on her Singer sewing machine. Many days I still find myself with questions for my deceased Mother, one of them: How did plastic drapes come to adorn the windows of our parlor?

To the right of the window on the wall hung a framed religious depiction, which likewise was a mystery to me. We were Missouri Synod Lutherans who attended St. John's church on the opposite end of Fourth Street. Every Saturday morning for two years, I had attended classes on the Bible and Martin Luther's small catechism in preparation for my confirmation. The picture in our parlor straightforwardly represented none of those teachings. Apparently, Mom came across the picture and found it meaningful, as I believe it remained on the parlor wall all the years I lived at home.

I am pleased each time I see the 1961 photo because

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

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# Amy Rechkemmer with VanDaele Insurance reaches Marketplace milestone with over 20 enrollments

December 2023 — Amy Rechkemmer has been recognized by the Health Insurance Marketplace® as a member of the 2024 Marketplace Circle of Champions for helping over 20 consumers gain qualified health coverage. This award from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) underscores Amy's success in actively assisting consumers during this Open Enrollment Period and demonstrates her expertise and dedication to helping consumers find health coverage. "We thank Amy Rechkemmer for her dedication to providing exceptional service and helping consumers access coverage," said Ellen Montz, Director of the Center for Consumer Information, and Insurance Oversight within CMS, which oversees the Marketplace. "Agents and brokers are important partners to CMS in our shared goal of helping expand access to coverage across the nation." This year's Open Enrollment Period for applying for Marketplace coverage runs from Nov. 1, 2023, to Jan. 15, 2024. Consumers who would like help enrolling or have questions about their coverage can contact Amy Rechkemmer with VanDaele Insurance at (319)635-2526.



# Helping farmers out of a bin(d): POET gives \$10K to Fairbank Fire for rescue trailer

OELWEIN DAILY REGISTER STAFF REPORT

FAIRBANK — The Fairbank Fire Department recognized and thanked local business POET Bioprocessing east of town for donating \$10,000 toward the fire department's Rural Rescue Response (R3) trailer project for grain bin rescues. "We can't thank (POET Bioprocessing) enough for their

financial support, and the continued support of the community members who work in the agriculture industry!" Fairbank Fire R3 Committee member Janice Martins stated.

Committee members Dick Chapman and Martins presented details of the rural rescue trailer project to employees of POET, which processes corn into ethanol and co-products. The R3 trailer, designed in

Minnesota, includes a grain vacuum, storage and lighting for grain bin rescues. Anyone interested in learning more about this project, for which the committee is fundraising, is welcomed to reach out to them.

Tax deductible donations can be sent to: Fairbank Fire and EMS Assoc. R3 project. P.O. Box 28, Fairbank, IA 50629.



FAIRBANK FIRE COURTESY  
Bryon Wilson, POET general manager, presents a check to Fairbank Fire Department Rural Rescue Response (R3) Committee members Dick Chapman and Janice Martins. These two members of the FFD presented details of the project to POET employees. To learn more, reach out to them.



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# What's Cook'in

*"Life is like a mirror;  
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## Scotcheroos

- 1 c. sugar
- 1 c. light corn syrup
- 1 c. peanut butter
- 6 c. rice krispies
- 1 c. semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 c. butterscotch chips



Prepare a buttered 9x13 inch pan. Combine sugar and syrup in a 3 qt. Sauce pan. Cook over moderate heat, stirring frequently, until mixture boils. Remove from heat. Stir in peanut butter. Mix well. Add rice krispies, stir until well blended. Press mixture into buttered pan. Melt chocolate and butterscotch morsels together over hot (but not boiling) water, stirring until well blended. Remove from heat. Spread evenly over rice krispies mixture. Cool until firm. Cut into bars.



## Cavatini

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 1/2 lb. pepperoni
- 1 can mushrooms, drained
- 1 - 32 oz. jar spaghetti sauce
- 1 1/2 c. cooked curly noodles
- 1 1/2 c. cooked rigatoni noodles
- 1/2 lb. grated mozzarella cheese

Brown the ground beef. Add garlic, onion and green pepper. Cover and cook until tender. Stir in pepperoni, mushrooms and spaghetti sauce. Combine noodles. Layer noodles, cheese and ground beef mixture alternately in greased 9x13 inch dish or pan. Bake at 375 degrees for 35-40 minutes. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

**We need recipes to publish. If you would like to share your favorite recipes, you can drop them off at the Fairbank Library or email them to: [Fairbankislander@gmail.com](mailto:Fairbankislander@gmail.com)**

# Church + Services



**United Methodist Church**  
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Fairbank, Iowa 50629  
319-635-2932  
Worship Service: 9:15 AM



**St. John Lutheran Church**  
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319-635-2181  
**Pastor Jacob Swenson**  
Sunday School: 9:00 AM  
Worship Service: 10:00 AM



**Immaculate Conception Catholic Church**  
302 W. Main Street  
Fairbank, Iowa  
319-635-2211  
**Father Ray Atwood**  
Sunday Mass: 8:30 AM  
Wednesday Mass: 8:30 AM  
1<sup>st</sup> Saturday Mass: 8:30 AM



**Lord of the Harvest**  
Prayer and Praise Center  
101 South 4th Street  
Fairbank, Iowa 50629  
**Rev. Scott Jans**  
Worship Service: 9:00 AM



**First Baptist Church**  
304 Grove Street  
Fairbank, Iowa 50629  
**Rev. Mike Anderson**  
Worship Service: 9:00 AM  
Sunday School: 10:00 AM

*If there are any changes or corrections, call Kathy Risse (319) 635-2122.*

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**CHRISTMAS  
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4**

it captured Mom's house plants. She had such a green thumb. Her special love was the care and feeding of African violets (which lined other western-facing windows). She also had the best gardens in town and in the summer sold hundreds of dollars' worth of produce. She seemed always watchful for ways to stretch her household budget. Dad worked several jobs to keep a roof over our heads and food on the table.

The centerpiece of the photo was, of course, our Christmas tree. Each year we siblings took turns decorating the tree, usually a Scotch pine. At first blush, the project seemed an honorable one, like being asked to flip a switch at a tree lighting ceremony in the center of town.

In reality, it was an arduous job. Tree-decorating was a prickly endeavor in and of itself, but the hardest part was controlling strings of lights that were wired in a series so if one screw-in bulb burned out, the whole strand went dark. It took hours to get enough strings lit and spaced evenly on the tree, top to bottom, requiring five to eight strands, depending on the size of the tree – only then to have an entire string of lights go dark... when the process began anew.

The bubble lights were my favorite to watch once they got warmed up and the liquid bubbles began to move up and down the vile.

Crisscrossing the tree with tinsel roping and red straw garland followed. Then, placement of ornate glass balls and bells and other shapes. Where these ornaments came from was another mystery...perhaps a few were German heirloom hand-me-downs, others Mom picked up at household sales. A few balls inevitably broke each season from small bodies bumping up against the tree.

The final decoration was the long strands of shiny tinsel, each of which, it was mandated, had to be hung vertically from the tree branches like an icicle. Two areas where the tree's decorator could be subject to exacting family scrutiny: lighted bulbs that were not disbursed uniformly on the tree, and poorly hung tinsel. Lighting was important, but tinsel made the tree sparkle.

Added last, the angel at the top of the tree announcing the coming birth of Christ.

Still, the job wasn't done until the needles and short strands of tinsel had been vacuumed from the floor beneath the tree, which reliably would strangle the hose of our Hoover. It was never fun fighting with the Hoover.

Each Christmas I thought the tree looked more beautiful than the previous year's – more so, when I squinted my eyes and all the lights and colors morphed into one red-green-blue haze.

In retrospect, the tree branches in

the photo appear skimpier than the vision stored in the recesses of my mind. Today, the whole of it seems more like a Charlie Brown Christmas tree. Beauty really is in the eye of the beholder.

A few wrapped presents found their way under the tree in the days leading up to Christmas. We siblings learned early in life – as did all children of large families – about the harsh economic realities of Christmas. "Money doesn't grow on trees," Mom said.

That didn't stop me from secretly yearning to find a poodle skirt or angora hair sweater under the tree. I imagined my older brothers dreamed of getting an accessory for a pedal bike or the newest board game; younger brothers, a Lone Ranger cowboy outfit complete with vest, chaps, a hat, holster and pistol or a train set.

This particular photo from years gone by is also a wonderful reminder that two years earlier our family had received the best gift we could have ever hoped for. Mom had given birth to our baby brother. There was nothing better than having a baby or toddler in one's home at Christmas.

On Christmas Eve we attended church at St. John's. The sanctuary was filled to standing-room-only. Our family of ten filled an entire pew. Paternal grandparents, Grandpa Richard and Grandma Hilda, along with Uncle Richard, dad's brother, who had never married, reliably attended the Devine Service, as well.

Admittedly, my mind strayed during sermons, though perhaps never more than on Christmas Eve. At the end of the service, awaiting us at the rear of the sanctuary were ushers who would hand out small, brown-paper bags of candy and fruit. For a kid growing up in a large family in the 1960s, getting my own treat bag was a big deal. Our large family made out like bandits. Christmas still evokes certain aromas...the smell of peanuts in the shell, ribbon candy, chocolate nuggets, the citrus of an orange, the sweetness of a Red Delicious apple.

Often, we walked home from church, snow falling on our coats, hair, and eyelashes...the sound of bells ringing from St. John's tower in the background. Grandma and Grandpa and Uncle Richard, driving, would soon join us there for an evening of oyster stew, ham sandwiches, a keg of herring, homemade sugar cookies and divinity candy, red punch – and for the adults, Schnapps and a variety of other liquors.

Amid the festivities, the house would suddenly begin to shake, and conversations ceased. Forty yards south of our home, the Chicago Great Western train tracks split our half-block property in half. The rattling and deafening noise came from another train passing by. Day and

night the trains never ceased, even on holidays.

Santa visited our home as we slept. Early Christmas Day morning we arose to find a single gift for each of us under the tree. Wrapping paper, ribbons and bows, and crouched bodies soon canvassed the floor. Someone would switch on our black and white TV to a program delivering live scenes of Christmas celebrations from around the world. The remainder of the day we ate a homecooked meal of a turkey and all the fixins, and played board games, cards, and caroms – along with a snowball fight in the yard or sledding.

My last gift from Santa, as I recall, was a sewing basket. Mom was teaching me to sew. She had already taught me needlepoint. Thereafter, my Christmas gifts were practical in nature. Girls were raised to primarily be mothers and homemakers, after all.

So, disappointment overshadows many Christmas memories from long ago – though that's when I learned the important lesson of focusing on gift giving, more than on receiving. Mom and Dad did the best they could at providing for our every need. Sears or Penney's lay-away-plans had become available, and Mom used them on occasion – like when my brothers all needed a new pair of jeans to start school in the fall. Living within ones means was another lesson I've taken to heart since I was a young girl.

Stories extend well beyond the edges of every 4" x 4" photo.

The year 1961 was filled with tension and excitement in equal measure. John F. Kennedy had become the 35th president of the United States. Alan Shepard piloted the Freedom 7 capsule to become the first American in space. American involvement in the Vietnam War began officially, as helicopters and four-hundred U.S. personnel land in Saigon. The Cold War between the U.S., the U.S.S.R, and Cuba escalated day by day, heralded by our new president. I wondered many times if our country was headed for war.

A more private story had happened within our family a year earlier was when Grandpa Erwin, Mom's father, died in a shadowy train accident. His passing was my first experience with losing a family member. We never spoke of Grandpa's death within our family. Life just went on.

Other events too had unfolded in our home, such that at times I felt my life was unraveling.

Within days after Christmas, depending on how fast the needles were dropping, the tree was taken down. Whoever had the task of undecorating the tree was reminded to save as much of the tinsel as possible for reuse next year.

"Waste not, want not" was an idiom repeated in our home. If a person never wasted things, he or she would always have what was needed.



Our town has definitely picked up from the end of November into December. The town is all decorated for Christmas. Music is filling the town getting everyone in the Christmas mood. At the high-school winter sports have started competing. School gets out the 20th and I am so excited to go on Christmas Break and spend time with friends and family. I hope everyone has a merry Christmas and a happy new year!



From Ava



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Charlie Klenzman

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# Development Corp. gifted for decor, will share with Fairbank city

By MIRA SCHMITT-CASH  
news@oelweindailyregister.com

FAIRBANK — An anonymous donation to the Fairbank Development Corp. of \$15,000 for Christmas décor will be shared with Fairbank City Council, the council heard Monday.

“I think we’d still let the city pick what we wanted to,” Councilman and Development Corp. member Andrew Williams said. The Development Corp. has some funds, he said, “to give to the city to use towards those decorations... \$15,000.”

“That’s very generous of whomever,” Councilwoman Tammy Erickson said.

“We have no idea,” Williams said. “No, no handwritten note. A letter came with the check to the Development Corp., this person wanted to make an anonymous donation to the Development Corp. and they wanted it to go towards Christmas decorations.”

“Merry Christmas,” Mayor Bill Cowell said.

“We like that,” Councilman Ron Woods (Development Corp.) added.

The council plan remains to wait until after Christmas to select decorations.

Williams again complimented Brian Delagardelle and fellow city workers on the lights they put up along Main Street and learned the lights may not stay on long past Christmas owing to frequent issues.

“Every day there’s another light out,” Delagardelle replied, at the Dec. 11 meeting.

“Do you think it’ll last?” Williams asked.

“Fifteen more days?”

“Dec. 26, they’re coming down?”

“They’re not going to get turned back on again,” Delagardelle said.

### KEEPING HEALTH PLAN

In action items, the council voted unanimously to keep eligible city employees on the same preferred pro-



MIRA SCHMITT-CASH | Oelwein Daily Register

Mayor Bill Cowell, at left, administers the oath of office to officials elected in November, from second left, Councilmen Andrew Williams and Ron Woods, and Mayor-elect Jason Kayser, at the Fairbank Council meeting on Dec. 11.

vider organization health insurance plan with VanDaele Insurance LLC of Fairbank, with the point of service network plan as the secondary option, after discussion.

On health insurance rates for city employees with their current Wellmark high-deductible PPO, the premium increase amounted to just \$2 a month, said presenter Amy Rechkemmer with VanDaele Insurance. She priced at least two other carriers and other Wellmark Blue brand plans.

City workers replied to a staff preference question. Brian Delagardelle said he was happy with where he was, and Nick Kuker agreed.

City staff was on the preferred provider organization (PPO) plan, which has the best options to see a doctor outside the preferred network, Rechkemmer indicated.

A point of service network would still allow doctor

visits out of network, but at a higher cost share than with the current PPO. Rechkemmer termed point of service a hybrid between a PPO, and an HMO.

“With an HMO, you have no out-of-network coverage unless it’s an emergency. The point of service gives you that option at a higher cost share,” Rechkemmer said.

In other action, the council approved liquor license renewals for the Fairbank American Legion and Fairbank Food Center (liquor and beer).

In other action, the council postponed the second meeting which would have fallen Dec. 25 unless an emergency comes up.

In earlier discussion, Matt Mahoney with Butler REC informed the council of an upcoming opportunity to learn more about a program that could enhance the electrical system in town, by tuning into a webinar.



## Service added at Woods Funeral Home

Woods Funeral Home are proud to announce that they are now offering monument services. As the year has flown by and comes to a close we encourage anyone to reach out if a monument is on the “want to take care of list”. Price increases from the shipping side of monuments is set to take place as the new year rolls around. If this is something you wish to get checked off the list, please reach out to Carson either by phone: (319) 939-8331 or messengering our Facebook page for any information or setting up a time to meet!

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# Light display to music a bright spot in Fairbank

By MIRA SCHMITT-CASH  
news@oelweindailyregister.com

FAIRBANK — Ryan and Debra DeGroot of Fairbank have been putting up a holiday light display for 25 years.

They've been at their current house at 806 Christians Trail for 12 years and started the lights project when they lived near the fire department.

"We started out with C9 size lightbulbs and one deer and sleigh, which are still on display," Ryan said.

"For me, the inspiration was the house in Vinton — technically Mt. Auburn, ... a long time ago," Ryan said.

The Mt. Auburn acreage residents, name unknown, lined Christmas-themed wooden cutouts at the roadside lot line. The trees behind them were filled with Christmas lights while holiday background music resounded.

The DeGroots added music to their display and timed the lights to it at the current house a decade ago. Today various storybook characters, an angel, gifts, several more tree structures and a border of candles join the deer and sleigh.

Their Christians Trail Christmas display is lit from 5-10 p.m. each night, until Jan. 1 or so. It's simple enough to roll down the window to hear the music the lights are timed to, given how nice the weather has been. A sign tells the frequency to which viewers can tune their car radio to amplify the songs.

"I always leave it up until Christmas and usually try to leave it up to New Year's," Ryan said, the exception being if a bad storm is coming.

They go all out decorating for Halloween, as well.

The display is assembled in stages, with Ryan putting the lights on the house before Halloween. It takes him three to four days to put up all the Christmas decorations.

"It doesn't seem like a whole lot until you're doing it," he said.

"At Halloween, the kids will say 'ooh, we liked (the display),' when they come to the door for candy," Debra said.



Ryan and Debra DeGroot of Fairbank have been putting up a holiday light display for 25 years, 12 of those at their current address along Christians Trail in Fairbank.

MIRA SCHMITT-CASH | Oelwein Daily Register

Ryan says other locals will stop him at work on the edge of town and compliment his home light display.

To a reporter's prying, the monthly utility bill tends to increase by "at least \$100" at the light show time of year. Others, too, have suggested a donation box; rather, DeGroot proposed light show admirers could pay it forward.

"If you like the display, you can donate straight to the His Hands Food Pantry in Oran," Ryan DeGroot said.

#### ABOUT HIS HANDS PANTRY

His Hands Food Pantry is a nonprofit organization serving eight communities, basically in the school districts of Wapsie Valley (Fairbank, Oran, Readlyn), West Central (Maynard, Randalia and Westgate), Denver and Tripoli, according to Board Chairman John Rich.

In-kind donations can be dropped off when the pantry is open to customers, Tuesday nights from 5-8 and Friday mornings from 9-noon, Rich said. His Hands Food Pantry is located at 5002 Main St., Oran, 50664, in the former Oran Bank building. Check donations can be mailed there.

For in-kind donors, Rich said in addition to staples like canned goods, they can



Ryan DeGroot of Fairbank says it takes him three to four days — in addition to lighting the house — to put up the current display to music along Christians Trail in Fairbank.

use produce, personal hygiene items, and fun dessert mixes kids can help make.

"We are always in need of personal hygiene things. It's not something Northeast Iowa Food Bank provides, so we have to purchase those separately," Rich said.

"The last few deliveries, fresh produce has been harder to come by. People will use apples, oranges, potatoes, even beets

and squash," he said. "People love beets and squash and they know how to use them."

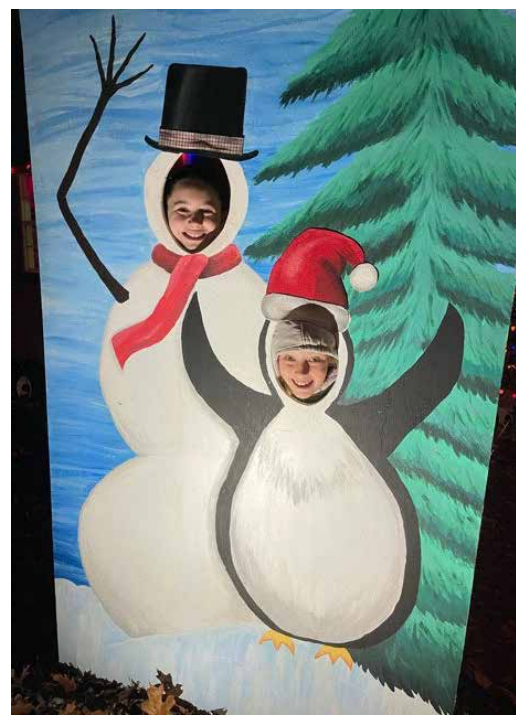
Donors can request a letter receipt for tax purposes, which will have the pantry's nonprofit number on it.

For more info, call the His Hands Food Pantry main line at 319-638-4357.

## 4-H - ATOM BOMBERS

In the place of our December 4-H club meeting a Christmas party with bowling was held at Thunder Lanes in Sumner on December 10th. A fun time was had by those members who were able to attend. A visit to the Christmas lights in the park was a great way to end the evening.

Next meeting will be January 14.



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HOSTED BY FF COMMITTEE

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# LABORSHED STUDY TO BE CONDUCTED IN BUCHANAN COUNTY

The Buchanan County Economic Development Commission (BCEDC) is partnering with Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) and Iowa Economic Development Authority to complete a Laborshed employment study for the Buchanan County area. This study will geographically define which communities contribute to Buchanan County's workforce, regardless of political boundaries. This defined area is called a Laborshed area and is based upon commuting patterns.

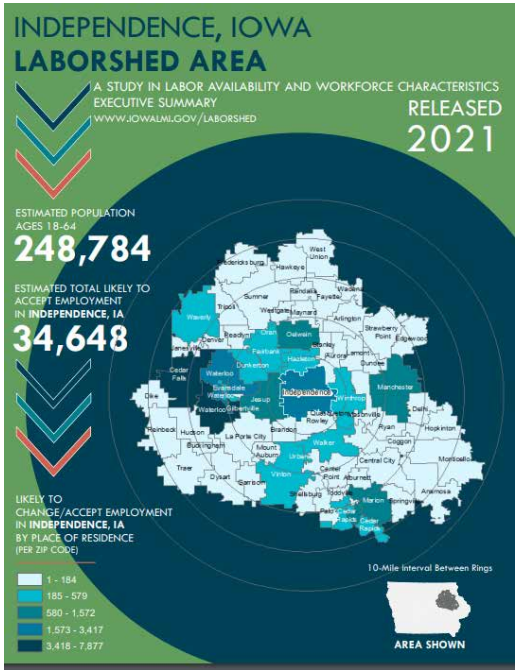
The purpose of this Laborshed study is to measure the availability and characteristics of Buchanan County area workers. Laborshed studies are useful tools for economic development teams and existing or prospective employers to understand the local labor market, make informed expansion and site selection decisions, and maintain/recruit a high quality workforce.

For the success of this study, we are sending letters to randomly selected households asking residents to take a confidential online survey. Survey questions will cover topics such as: employment status, current and desired wages, current and desired benefits, education level, and type of occupation, among other things. However, Iowa Workforce Development will not be asking survey takers identifiable information such as: name, social security number, or date of birth. Participation in this workforce study is greatly appreciated regardless of employment status whether you are currently employed, unemployed, a homemaker, retired, etc. Your input is highly valued.

Following the conclusion of the online surveying efforts IWD will conduct telephone surveying in the area through a third-party vendor. The survey call originates out of Missouri and the incoming number will have the 573 area code. The same survey questions asked in the online survey will be asked of those who participate in the survey on the phone and again, no identifying information will be collected. All the survey answers collected will be combined and reported together. Individual answers are completely confidential.

Every year Iowa Workforce Development conducts Laborshed studies across the State. The results of each analysis are publicly available online at [www.iowalmi.gov/laborshed](http://www.iowalmi.gov/laborshed). If you have any questions about the Laborshed project, please contact Bridget Weddle at 515-281-7525 or Lisa Kremer, Executive Director of BCEDC at 319-334-7497.

Thank you for your support and participation.






**January 17, 2024 @ 11:30 AM**

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Format: MS Word

3 Age Categories:  
Adults — 19 years and older  
Youth — 12 to 18 years  
Children — under 12 years

Judging: by Committee  
Winners/Stories (each category): Published in *Fairbank Islander*.

Submissions: [bbpassick@comcast.net](mailto:bbpassick@comcast.net)

- CONTEST STAGES:
- 1) Submission: **Jan. 1, 2024**
  - 2) Deadline: **March 15, 2024**
  - 3) Judging
  - 4) Winners Announced

Deadline for February 2024 publication is January 25th.  
Please contact Melaine Buzynski at 319-404-7116  
Or email [fairbankislander@gmail.com](mailto:fairbankislander@gmail.com)  
Please send us your celebrations.  
Celebrations are free to submit.

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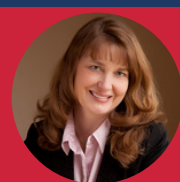
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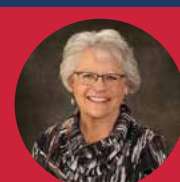
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# SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

## Wapsie Valley CSD Regular School Board Mtg November 20, 2023

Pledge of Allegiance  
1. President Wolfe called the Regular Meeting of the board to order at 6:30 PM  
A. Directors: Auel, Sauerbrei, Wolfe, and Van Daele. Aiello (excused) Declare a quorum.  
B. Administration: Supt. Hoover, Board Sec. Arndt & Principals: Murphy, Myers, & Forsyth  
C. Others: Vaughn Gross, Readlyn elementary students, Tony Russell, Bill Soesbe, Brian Stark, Lynn Van Daele, and virtual participants.  
2. Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Auel to approve the agenda moving of Spotlight in Education prior to public comment as presented Motion carried 4-0  
3. Spotlight in Education-Readlyn students presented their portfolios which teaches the students organization, goal setting, grit, coachability, celebrations, and many other valuable life skills  
Public comment - Vaughn Gross discussed robotics, course description handbook & past students that come back to mentor. Tom Russell would like to start a trap shooting club for 7-12 grade students and use the WV logo. This club will be very organized and controlled.  
4. Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Auel to approve

the consent items including the bills being reviewed by Brent Sauerbrei with OE FYI - Duane Wilcox requests to open enroll his 10th-grade daughter to Waverly, & Joshua Tucker request to open enroll his 5th-grade son to Waterloo after moving into the Wapsie District. Motion carried 4-0  
5. Board-The WVEF auction on Friday night had good participation.  
Superintendent-Hoover: Report included Enrollment, Iowa School Performance Profile, Thank you to WVEF dinner and auction, & Activities. Bills Soesbe discussed Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) process overview. District: Report includes Leader In Me updates, WVEF banquet, Professional Development, & Veteran's Day Program  
District/Principals: report includes Parent/Teacher conferences, Run Hide Fight presentation, Leader In Me, Professional Development, 1-1 meetings with teacher/elementary principal meetings, Field Trips, Career Fair, Blood Drive, Infinite Campus Scheduler Training, & Activity updates.  
6. Personnel - Resignations - Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Auel to approve the resignation of Lyn Howerzyl-Elementary Music Teacher, & Gina Wiersma-Instructional Coach-Early Retirement and thank them for their service to Wapsie Valley. Motion carried 4-0

Contracts: Moved by Auel, Seconded by Sauerbrei to approve a contract to Malena Rumelhart - Elementary Music Teacher-BA/0 - \$25,059 + \$2,867 = \$27,926 - 95 days effective January 3, 2023 as presented. Motion carried 4-0  
7. New Business-Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Auel to approve Notice of Public Hearing-December 18, 2023 and Letting of bids for Wapsie Valley CSD Softball Field Light project. Motion carried 4-0  
Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Auel to approve sharing girls wrestling with Sumner-Fredericksburg for the 23-24 school year as presented. Motion carried 4-0  
Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Auel to approve sharing Boys Soccer with Waverly for the 23-24 school year as presented. Motion carried 4-0  
Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Auel to approve the SBRC request for Modified Supplemental Amount Open Enrollment Out not in Fall 2022 (\$54,395) as presented. Motion carried 4-0  
Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Auel to approve the SBRC request for Modified Supplemental Amount for ELL Beyond 5 Years (\$6,422) as presented. Motion carried 4-0  
Moved by Auel, Seconded by Sauerbrei to approve the SBRC Special Education Administrative Costs (\$5,929.83) associated with the LIED Center Consor-

tium Program for the 24-25 school year as presented. Motion carried 4-0  
Moved by Auel, Seconded by Sauerbrei to approve the 23-24 Dance agreement with Oelwein as presented. Motion carried 4-0  
Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Van Daele to approve the 23-24 Course Description Handbook as presented. Motion carried 4-0  
Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Auel to approve the use of the WV logo by the Trap Shooting Team/Club as presented. Motion carried 4-0  
Moved by Auel, Seconded by Van Daele to approve increasing reimbursement of DOT physicals Board Policy 403.01 from \$100 to a maximum of \$130 as presented. Motion carried 4-0  
Moved by Sauerbrei, Seconded by Auel to approve Board Policy 505.08-Parent & Family Engagement Districtwide Policy, 505.08R1-Parent & Family Engagement Building Level Regulation with updated language as presented. Motion carried 4-0  
9. Board Talking Points-Proposals for track & other infrastructure for all buildings will be ready in January. Discussed lunch outsourcing  
10. Moved by Van Daele, Seconded by Sauerbrei to adjourn at 7:44 PM. Motion carried 4-0 Respectfully, Kim Arndt

# CITY COUNCIL MEETING

## REGULAR MEETING

The Fairbank City Council met in a budget workshop at 4:30 pm and then regular session following at 6:00 pm on Monday December 11, 2023. Members present: R. Woods, Williams, Erickson, and T. Woods. Absent: Coffin. Also, present at City Hall: Heather Prendergast, City Attorney; Brian Delagardelle, Water/Wastewater Operator; Nick Kuker, Public Works; Dakota Drish, Police Chief; Michelle Laube, Deputy Clerk; and Brittany Fuller, City Clerk.  
During the budget workshop, the council started the FY2025 budget process by having some discussions with a few of the department heads including the following departments: Library, Fire, Police, Pool, Streets, Parks, and Administration. They all had submitted their preliminary numbers and the council discussed with them all aspects of the proposed budget numbers and reviewed the previous year's information.  
Mayor Cowell called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Williams/T. Woods to approve the agenda. Ayes: Four. Nays: None.  
There were no public comments during the public comment section.  
Williams/Erickson to approve the minutes of the November 27th Regular Meeting. Ayes: Four. Nays: None.  
Erickson/T. Woods to approve the Treasurer's Report. Ayes: Four. Nays: None. Receipts for the month of November were: General, \$24,576.90; Special Revenue, \$27,023.12; TIF, \$5,275.352; Capital Projects, \$34.69; Permanent Funds, \$22.00; Proprietary, \$173,711.83; and Transfers In, \$57,055.00. Disbursements for the month of November were: General, \$33,929.94; Special Revenue, \$15,505.27; Proprietary, \$127,771.74; Capital, \$19,071.25; and Transfers Out, \$57,055.00. Balance on hand at close of business on November 30, 2023, was \$5,337,200.09.  
Matthew Mahoney with Butler County REC was present to give an update to the council. He wanted to thank the city for their business and mentioned he appreciated the relationship he has developed with everyone. Councilman Coffin arrived at 6:03 pm. Matthew stated that there will be a minimal increase this next year due to increases in the demand costs. He also mentioned that there is an Iowa Grid Resilience Fund that could help provide some upgrades to the electrical system. The city employees will attend the webinar and see if this would be beneficial to submit a grant application.  
Amy Rechkemmer with VanDaele Insurance, LLC was present to talk to the council about employee health insurance that will be renewing February 1, 2023. The renewal for the current plan option with Wellmark showed an increase of 0.07%. There was an increase in the out-of-pocket max for both single and family plans. Amy explained that there could be two plans chosen by the council since there were more than two employees being covered.  
Williams/T. Woods to approve the renewal option through Wellmark for the employees' health insurance along with another Wellmark plan as a second option for employees. Ayes: Five. Nays: None.  
T. Woods/Erickson to table any changes to the personnel policy regarding section 2.7 Health Insurance Benefit until the next meeting. Ayes: Five. Nays: None.  
T. Woods/Williams to approve the liquor license renewal for the Fairbank American Legion. Ayes: Five. Nays: None.  
Coffin/Erickson to approve the liquor license for the Fairbank Food Center. Ayes: Five. Nays: None.  
There was an anonymous donation of \$15,000.00 made to the Fairbank

Development Corporation to help the city pay for the Christmas lights for Main Street. Decorations will be reviewed after the new year and planned to be purchased in January to hopefully get the best price option available. Williams/T. Woods to approve not having a second meeting in December due to the Holidays. That would change if something came up where a meeting is needed. Ayes: Five. Nays: None.  
T. Woods/Erickson to set the next budget workshop for Monday, January 8, 2024, at 5:00 pm. Ayes: Five. Nays: None.  
Williams/T. Woods to approve the payment of bills. Ayes: Five. Nays: None.  
ALLIED GLASS, Supplies \$ 815.00  
AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES, Supplies \$ 40.26  
ARNOLD MOTOR SUPPLY, Supplies \$ 155.45  
AVALON TIRE & SERVICE CENTER, Services \$ 50.95  
BLACK HAWK WASTE DISPOSAL, Services \$ 5,830.68  
BOUND TREE MEDICAL, LLC., Ambulance Supplies \$ 1,658.62  
BUCHANAN COUNTY, Dispatch Fees \$ 7,640.50  
BUTLER COUNTY REC, Electric \$ 46,174.04  
BUTLER COUNTY REC, Services \$ 1,210.00  
CAMPBELL SUPPLY-WATERLOO, Supplies \$ 71.47  
CASEY'S GENERAL STORE, Gas \$ 855.07  
CLAYTON ENERGY CORPORATION, Natural Gas \$ 4,426.96  
CLAYTON ENERGY CORPORATION, Reservation \$ 12,494.54  
COMMUNITY BANK OF OELWEIN, Interest \$ 1,191.25  
D & D TIRE INC., Services \$ 385.00  
DANKO EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT, Supplies \$ 95.00  
BEN DELAGARDELLE, Cell Phone Reimbursement \$ 75.00  
BRIAN DELAGARDELLE, Cell Phone Reimbursement \$ 75.00  
DON'S TRUCK SALES, Services \$ 1,058.78  
DAKOTA DRISH, Reimburse Supplies \$ 74.00  
ECHO GROUP, INC., Supplies \$ 45.16  
FAIRBANK FIREMEN'S FUND, Reimburse Annual Dues \$ 629.00  
FAIRBANK POSTMASTER, Utility Bills Postage Dec. 23 \$ 193.80  
CITY OF FAIRBANK, Electric & Gas \$ 5,008.81  
CITY OF FAIRBANK, Utility Deposits Applied \$ 600.00  
FAYETTE COUNTY AUDITOR, Election Fees \$ 508.18  
FEHR GRAHAM, Engineering Fees \$ 4,244.50  
GORDON FLESCH COMPANY INC, Supplies \$ 156.83  
GRAINGER, INC., Supplies \$ 92.94  
GROEBNER & ASSOCIATES, Supplies \$ 374.86  
IAMU, Services \$ 1,120.00  
IOWA FINANCE AUTHORITY, Interest \$ 16,054.00  
IOWA LEAGUE OF CITIES, Training \$ 60.00  
IOWA ONE CALL, Locates \$ 33.50  
IOWA REGIONAL UTILITIES ASSOC., Water \$ 7,583.62  
IOWA SURVEILLANCE TEAM, Services & Supplies \$ 614.99  
IPERS, Benefits \$ 5,320.78  
JETCO, INC., Equipment & Services \$ 3,096.08  
JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL, Supplies \$ 86.95  
KIRKWOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE, Training \$ 108.00  
KLUESNER CONSTRUCTION, INC., Services \$ 2,119.50  
NICK KUKER, Cell Phone Reimbursement \$ 75.00  
LITTLE WAPSIE COMMUNICATIONS, Static IP Addresses \$ 20.00  
MAURER TREE SERVICE, Services \$ 1,300.00  
MERCYONE WATERLOO MEDICAL, Mutual Aid \$ 160.00

MICROBAC LABORATORIES, INC., Testing \$ 403.00  
RON MILLER, Mileage \$ 294.75  
MODERN BUILDING PRODUCTS, Supplies \$ 996.98  
NSB/HSA - H S A Contributions \$ 625.00  
NSB/HSA- H S A Payroll Deductions \$ 445.00  
OELWEIN PUBLISHING, Publishings \$ 204.88  
PREMIER TECHNOLOGY, Services \$ 115.00  
QUICK MED CLAIMS, Ambulance Billing \$ 255.27  
RANDY'S LAWN CARE & SNOW, Services \$ 875.00  
SECTOR, LLC, Annual Fees \$ 1,562.88  
NE SECURITY BANK, Payroll Processing Fee 11/1/2023 \$ 10.00  
NE SECURITY BANK, Payroll Processing Fee 11/15/2023 \$ 8.61  
NE SECURITY BANK, Void Check Charge \$ 25.00  
NE SECURITY BANK, Utility ACH Service Charge \$ 10.00  
STOREY KENWORTHY/MATT PARROTT, Supplies \$ 28.28  
SUN LIFE ASSURANCE COMP, Life Policies \$ 82.70  
THE GREEN EARTH DEICER CO, Supplies \$ 1,830.84  
TREASURER-STATE OF IOWA, Nov 23 Sales Tax \$ 2,113.48  
TREASURER STATE OF IOWA, Nov 23 WT Excise Tax \$ 2,483.24  
U. S. TREASURY, 941 Taxes \$ 7,557.71  
USA BLUEBOOK, Supplies \$ 477.56  
UTILITY EQUIPMENT CO., Supplies \$ 72.94  
VAN METER INC., Supplies \$ 231.18  
VERIZON WIRELESS, Cell Phones \$ 179.10  
VISA, Microsoft Emails/Avaya Phone System \$ 453.40  
WELLMARK, December Premium \$ 3,976.87  
ROXANNE WENNER, Services \$ 120.00  
WINDSTREAM ENTERPRISE, GS Alarm Phone Line \$ 68.01  
ZOLL MEDICAL CORPORATION, Equipment \$ 1,029.00  
CORY ZWIEFELHOFER, Utility Deposit Refund \$ 200.00  
The Library Board Approved the Following Bills on December 7, 2023:  
AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES, Supplies \$ 122.13  
ANGELA BERG, Mileage & Reimbursement \$ 101.77  
BAKER & TAYLOR INC., Books \$ 716.80  
CITY OF FAIRBANK, Electric & Gas \$ 142.26  
OVERDRIVE, INC., E-Books \$ 500.00  
NE SECURITY BANK, Payroll Processing Fee 11/15/2023 \$ 1.39  
VISA, Microsoft Emails/Avaya Phone System \$ 53.18  
ROXANNE WENNER, Services \$ 160.00  
Police Chief Drish was present and mentioned Officer Mitch Frank's recent work with the school and that he was proud of what he was doing there. He also wanted to let the council know that he reminded the officers to stop by the businesses in town to introduce themselves and socialize. Brian talked about the issues they were having with the Christmas lights and stated that since the DOT had left town it had seemed quieter. Along with the day-to-day needs they had been working on snow fences, changing out lights, and cleaning up the shop.  
Mayor Cowell administered the oath of office to the following newly elected officials who will take office on January 2, 2024: Jason Kayser as Mayor and Ron Woods and Andrew Williams as Council Members.  
T. Woods/Erickson to adjourn at 6:33 pm. Ayes: Five. Nays: None.  
Bill Cowell, Mayor  
Brittany Fuller, City Clerk

## REGULAR MEETING

The Fairbank City Council met in regular session on Monday November 27, 2023. Mayor Bill Cowell called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance. Members present: Williams, Erickson, T. Woods, and Coffin. Absent: R. Woods. Also, present at City Hall: Heather Prendergast, City Attorney; Dakota Drish, Police Chief; Brian Delagardelle, Water/Wastewater Operator; and Brittany Fuller, City Clerk.  
Williams/Erickson to approve the agenda. Ayes: Four. Nays: None.  
There were no comments during the public comment section.  
T. Woods/Erickson to approve the minutes of the November 13th Regular Meeting. Ayes: Four. Nays: None.  
Nita Nuhij and Ben Rushiti were present to gauge the council's interest in them looking into building a flood wall to protect Costa's Sports Bar and Grill. The flood


wall would need to be placed on city property. Attorney Prendergast stated that there would be ways that it could be done but before any agreements are drafted research needed to be done on their end. She suggested plans, maps, and research with the DNR and engineers before any type of decision could be made. Nita wanted to know if they were even interested before moving forward. Williams/Erickson to be open to exploring the potential and investigate all of the legal and engineering on this potential project. Ayes: Four. Nays: None.  
The council received the health insurance options and the topic will be on the next agenda for discussion and approval.  
Snow clean-up helpers were discussed. Chance Beierschmitt, Cody Kleitsch, Bryce Kleitsch, Neil Beck, Jordan Cowell, Chris Woods, and Collin Woods all said if available at the time of snow fall would be interested in

helping. Williams/Coffin to allow the listed people above to help with snow clean-up when needed at \$20 an hour with a guarantee of 2 paid hours if called out to help. Ayes: Four. Nays: None.  
Mayor Cowell stated that he still needed to meet with Councilwoman Erickson about a possible seasonal summer position. It will be discussed at the next meeting.  
Mayor Cowell commented that the Main Street Christmas decorations looked very good and that he thought public works did a really good job working with the old lights. Four lights will have to remain unplugged this season and hopefully by next year there will be new decorations.  
T. Woods/Erickson to set the first budget workshop for Monday December 11th at 4:30 pm. Ayes: Four. Nays: None.  
A decision on whether there will be a 2nd meeting in

December will be discussed at the 1st meeting in December.  
Police Chief Drish gave the council an update on what the department had been up to. He did want to remind everyone that there is no parking on the streets during snow clean-up operations. Brian ran through a few more things with the DOT and wanted to remind everyone that the project is not complete and that they will be back in the spring. Public Works were also getting ready to install a new electric and gas service. Brian said the new blower worked fantastic during the last snow fall.  
Williams/Coffin to adjourn at 6:23 pm. Ayes: Four. Nays: None.  
Bill Cowell, Mayor  
Brittany Fuller, City Clerk



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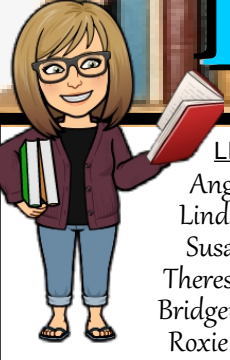


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Beni Rushiti  
Nita Nuhiji

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# Fairbank Public Library



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Angela Berg, Director  
Linda Letson, Librarian  
Susan Frost, Librarian  
Therese Steggall, Librarian  
Bridget Seemann, Librarian  
Roxie Wenner, Custodian

212 E. Main Street, P.O. Box 426, Fairbank, IA 50629

Phone: 319-635-2487 Fax: 319-635-2487

Email: [library@fairbank-ia.org](mailto:library@fairbank-ia.org) Website: [Fairbank-ia.org](http://Fairbank-ia.org)

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Monday 1-5 pm  
Tuesday 1-5 pm;  
Wednesday 9 -11 am  
1-5 pm  
Thursday 1-6 pm  
Friday 1-5 pm  
Saturday 9-12



## STORY HOUR

Wednesday Mornings starting at 10:00 a.m. on the following dates!

January 3<sup>rd</sup>      January 10<sup>th</sup>  
January 17<sup>th</sup>     January 24<sup>th</sup>  
January 31<sup>st</sup>    February 7<sup>th</sup>  
February 14<sup>th</sup>



Naturalist, Michael Maas from Fontana, came to the Library on Wednesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> and presented on "Birds".



They also got to make bird feeders to take home.



## In Loving Memory

**Jerry Still**

The Emperor's Egg

..... from Deb & Glen Snyder

**Kevin Fink**

The Secret

.....from Gary Fink

**John Riordan**

Little Red

.....from Adam, Julie, Sylvia & Weston Costello

The Never-Ending Sweater

.....from Randy, Jodi & Carson Woods

Thank You

## Fontana Visits the Library...

Wed. Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup> at 1:00pm  
Wed. Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm  
Wed. Mar. 6<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm



Making Wreaths at Story Hour on Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup>.

## Ipad Time

on Thursday, Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> on winter break from school!



## Book Club

Met on Tuesday, Dec. 12th to discuss

Snowed In For Christmas

By Sarah Morgan



They will meet next on Tuesday, Jan. 9<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm and will be discussing the book

Trust

By Hernan Diaz



If you would like to join Book Club, please contact the library so we can get a book for you: (319) 635-2487 or: [library@fairbank-ia.org](mailto:library@fairbank-ia.org)

We had over 80 attend to visit Santa, it was a great turnout!

Special Thank-You to the Fairbank Community Club for partnering with us to provide Good Bags to all who attended!



We wrapped up on our Gift Basket Fundraiser, raising **\$1,890!**

Huge Thank You from the Library Board and Staff for all the support! All funds raised will go to help support our Library!

YOU'RE MORE THAN KIND!  
**THANKS**  
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# PARKVIEW ASSISTANT LIVING ENJOYING CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION



Santa and Lenora Ott



Santa and Dora Collins



Santa and Evie Brickman



Santa and Janice Steinbronn

*Keep Christmas in your heart open all year long. Happy New Year – Fairbank Islander*

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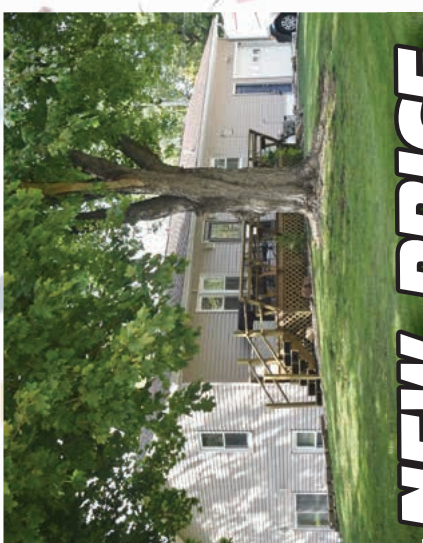
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