

HUMBOLDT NOW!

Volume 16 • Issue 3 • March 2025

- ! **Mark Wenzel with Twin Rivers**
- ! ***Emily Willadsen, band teacher at HHS***
- ! **HCMH Ambulance expands services**

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DIABETES PREVENTION

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Diabetes Support Group



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Room from **11AM-12PM.**

Session Topics and Dates:

- **Wednesday, February 12th**
 - Preventing diabetes and disease progression.
- **Wednesday, May 14th**
 - Get more active!
- **Wednesday, August 13th**
 - Let's talk medication.
- **Wednesday, November 12th**
 - Skip the fad diets - let's focus on a maintainable lifestyle.

There is no cost to attend these sessions.



The overall focus of these sessions are to get facts and provide support for people living with Diabetes and trying to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes.

**Questions, contact
Jen DeWinter at
515-332-7643.**



WHAT'S INSIDE!



FEATURES

- 5 » Calendar
- 6 » The Bookworm
- 8 » Leading the Band with Emily Willadsen
- 10 » Tom Swearingen
- 12 » 'If not you, who?'
TR principal Mark Wenzel committed to helping students
- 16 » HCMH Ambulance expands services
- 22 » Karen's Quips!
- 24 » Phyllis Johnson



On the cover: Humboldt High School Concert and Marching Band director Emily Willadsen.

See more inside! —Kylie Portz

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What's Happening

NOW!

March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p>EVERY MONDAY Board of Supervisors - 8:30AM</p>					1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<p>Night of Jazz 7PM @ HHS Auditorium</p>	<p>Adams Post 119 meeting At VFW in Dakota City at 7PM Humboldt City Council - 5:30PM</p>		<p>ASH Wednesday</p>		<p>Humboldt Kindergarten Round up</p>	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
<p>DAYLIGHT Saving Time BEGINS</p>	<p>Soup & Song 7PM @ HHS Auditorium</p>	<p>Wildcat PTO Mease Library - 5:30PM</p>	<p>Dakota City City Council - 7PM</p>	<p>Kumla Supper & Auction Thor Lutheran Church 4:30-6:30pm</p>	<p>Twin Rivers Preschool Round up PI DAY March 14</p>	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
<p>Green Mile Humboldt REC 1-3PM</p>	<p>Humboldt Dance Team tryouts 4:30 - 730pm HS Gym St. Patrick's DAY Humboldt City Council - 5:30PM</p>		<p>Conservation Board - 5:30PM</p>	<p>Spring</p>	<p>No School</p>	<p>Humboldt Dance Team tryouts 4:30 - 730pm HS Gym</p>
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
		<p>April 1st 3rd Annual Women's Worship Night River Valley Winery 6-830 pm</p>	<p>Early Out</p>		<p>The weather is cold, double check the events for March, please scan this QR code to access the Humboldt Comm. School District's activities calendar!</p> 	
30	31					

To submit items for the Community Calendar please email faith@humboldtnews.com or call 515.332.2514

Community Calendar Sponsored by:



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‘One by One’ by Freida McFadden

Genre: Thriller

By LINDA CLASEN, Humboldt Library Assistant

Freida McFadden is a practicing physician in the Boston area specializing in brain injury, who has written many best-selling psychological thrillers and medical humor novels. She was born in New York City and attended Harvard University as an undergrad. She self-published her first book in 2013. Her 2022 book, “The Housemaid”, was an international bestseller. A movie adaptation of this book has yet to begin production—no release date yet as of late 2024.

She lives outside Boston with her husband, two children, and her black cat in a centuries-old three-story home overlooking the ocean.

“One By One”, published in 2020, is the first Freida McFadden book that I’ve read. I’m just getting started with this author. She has many books in the psychological mystery genre. I would list them here, but there are so many. Just google her and see for yourself. Some readers have called her the “new Colleen Hoover”. Colleen Hoover fans will probably agree.

The book is an easy read with fast-paced chapters and a plot that reveals more about the characters’ pasts as it progresses. “One By One” they will get what they deserve...

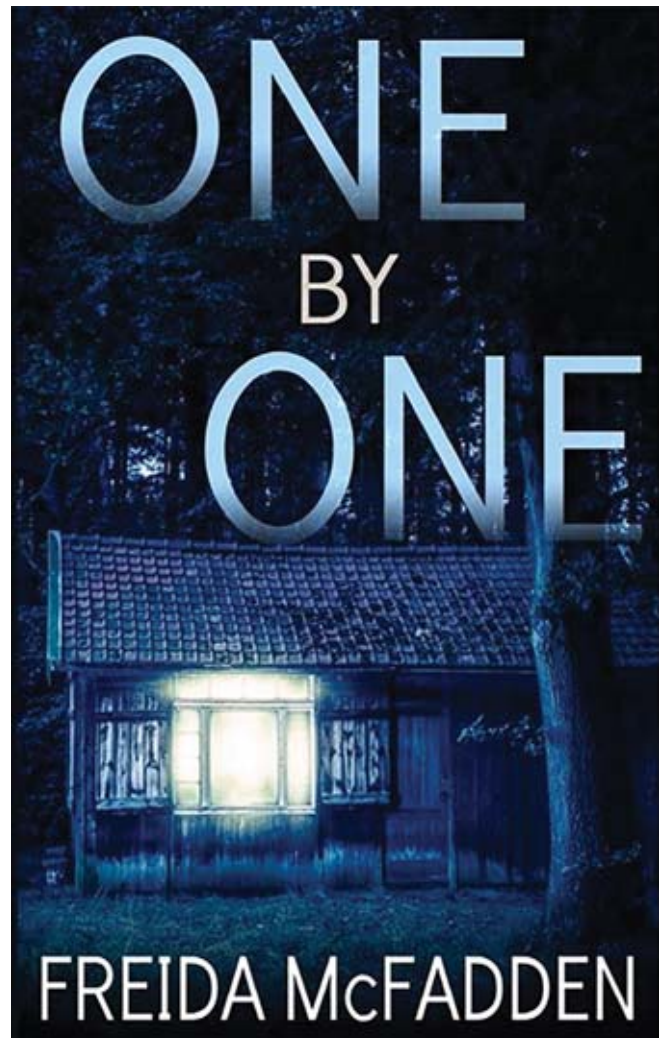
Clare Matchett was looking forward to a break from the stresses of work and raising her two children, Aiden and Emma. Her marriage is in shambles and she must make a choice, to get a divorce or try to repair her marriage to her husband, Noah. She is engaged in an affair with her husband’s best friend! She doesn’t think anyone knows, but the story will reveal who does and who doesn’t know about her affair.

Clare and her husband, Noah, are joined on this trip to a vacation inn by friends Jack, Michelle, Lindsay, and Warner.

A week of hiking, fishing and hot tubs is just the ticket that they all need. The trip is filled with bickering (Clare and Noah), a make-out session (Lindsay and Warner), and cold indifference (Jack and Michelle).

Clare’s minivan holds six people—just perfect for the trip, but it breaks down on an isolated dirt road. The blame game begins! They have no cell phone reception, so the group has no choice but to hike the rest of the way to the inn. They are ill-prepared to navigate the woods, not having the proper clothing, tools or adequate amounts of food and water. Warner has a map so why can’t they find their destination? Does this place even exist? Several hours later, they are lost. Hopelessly lost!

As they travel deeper into the woods, the members of the party are mysteriously struck down. Is it a wild animal or



evil within their own group? Part of this book is told from an anonymous perspective, but we don’t find out who it is until the end of the story. Anonymous has had a difficult childhood and a violent past but has managed to keep it a secret for years. So many secrets, so many lies among this group of so-called friends. Who will be left alive at the end of the story? I’ll let you decide for yourself.

If you enjoy this book, more of Freida McFadden’s books are at our library just waiting for you. Good mysteries for chilly spring nights (or heaven forbid, a blizzard)! Hey, after all, it’s March!



Willadsen directs the high school band during class. Willadsen graduated from Iowa State University with a degree in Instrumental Music Education. Independent photo.

Leading the band with Emily Willadsen

By KYLIE PORTZ

Whether sitting on the edge of your seat at a basketball game or bundled up in your Wildcat gear at a football game, chances you’ve jammed to the school song with the Wildcat marching band. Led by director Emily Willadsen.

Born and raised in Jewell, music has always been a part of Willadsen’s life.

She said, “My grandpa was a band director, so music was always pretty important to our family. I have a younger brother, and he and I started taking piano lessons from the time we were in first grade.

In fifth grade, Willadsen started playing the flute, and a new world opened up.

She said, “Getting to play the flute was a little bit different than just playing piano. With the flute, I got to be in the band. I wasn’t just making music alone on the piano. I got to play with my friends.”

Willadsen expressed how grateful she was to her band directors in school who, “always made it pretty fun.”

For Willadsen, teaching runs in the family. Both of Willadsen’s parents are teachers and seeing the care they had for the students, and the role models she found in her band directors combined with her love of music led Willadsen to

choose to pursue music education.

She said, “I loved music, I loved helping people, everything just kind of came together and I decided that’s what I wanted to do too.”

After graduating from high school, Willadsen attended Iowa State University where she majored in Instrumental Music Education. There, she played in the marching band, the pep band, the wind ensemble, the flute ensemble and the jazz band.

She said, “The cool thing about being a band director and going to college is instead of going to chemistry class or biology, I get to go to trombone class and bassoon class. I play all the instruments, but now, do I play all the instruments? Well, not yet. But flute and piano are my two primary instruments and



Willadsen helps set the pit up before the halftime performance of the Wildcat Marching Band’s show “Time After Time”. Their show received division 1 at the IHSMA State Marching Band Competition and placed 2nd in the 3A division at Algona Band Days. Independent photo.

then I dabble in everything else. I think the phrase is ‘I play everything but the bagpipes.’”

She completed her student teaching assignments at Polk High School and Roland-Story Middle School before finding her first teaching job here in Humboldt.

She said, “I love Humboldt, everyone is so welcoming. It’s evident that all the teachers here really care about their kids. They want to see them to succeed.”

“I get to work with a fantastic team of other music directors, both Jared Knapp and Laura Paterson and Katie Redmond. It’s fantastic that we just really work well together, we all have a common goal to make our students sound good and have fun.”

She said, “It was a great first year. Everyone in the community is so supportive of music.”

“We have people come up when the pep band is playing and just say, ‘Wow, you guys sound really good’. At community pep band there are so many people who want to play, so many people come and attend our concerts, and will stay in the stands at football games to watch the marching band.”

“There’s just so much support and encouragement for the arts here. And our teachers care about our students so much. It’s a fun team to be a part of and the kids, of course, are great! They work so hard. They love music, they take care of each other. We’ve got some really good leaders in the band, and I rely on our student leadership team a lot.”

It was a great season for the Wildcat Marching Band this year, with the team receiving Division 1 at the IHSMA State Marching Band Competition and placing 2nd in the 3A division at Algona Band days.

Willadsen said, “We have really high expectations for ourselves, these kids have so much potential. I think a teacher’s job is to see the potential and encourage and inspire them to achieve great



Willadsen was inspired by her parents and former band directors to become a music teacher. Her main instruments are Flute and Piano. Independent photo.



Willadsen cheers on students from the band trailer at band camp. Willadsen studied at Iowa State University where she participated in marching band, pep band, wind ensemble, flute ensemble, and jazz band. Independent photo.

things.”

Each year, the marching band raises the bar. This year, the theme was “Time Out Of Time” with music by Cyndi Lauper and other great hits. Complete with a large spinning clock prop, where a trumpet soloist played while spinning upside down across the field.

Willadsen said, “That was a highlight of the season, and I think it was a good motivation for those kids to rise to the occasion. They took it pretty seriously, but we had so much fun too.”

To create such an exciting half-time show, it takes a village to organize and make sure everything runs smoothly. Willadsen was sure to show her gratitude to the families and her colleagues who helped get “Time After Time” onto the field.

“We have a team. With a drill writer who figures out the forms for us, we have someone arrange the music for us, we have a color guard coach and choreographer, and Laura Patterson is our assistant director. So it’s not just me, It’s a big team of people who work together to make it possible.”

Outside of music and teaching, Willadsen is finding new things to try every day.

She said, “I’ve recently learned how to crochet, and I am a hug Iowa State Fan so watching the games, going to the games, cheering on the team but also cheering on the band.”

While she can’t attend every game in person, Willadsen still finds time to cheer on her team.

“This year, I played in the Iowa State Alumni Band for the homecoming football game and then was able to catch a men’s basketball game over the winter break.”

While she doesn’t have any pets, Willadsen has decided to take up a new hobby this year as her new year resolution.

She said, “My apartment complex doesn’t allow pets, but I have decided that for my New Year’s resolution, I’m gonna make a sourdough starter because I want to have something to take care of and to have to feed.”

Looking forward, Willadsen is excited to see what her students can achieve and thankful for all the support the music program receives.

She said, “It’s not just us as teachers who are building a program, it’s a whole community. It takes a village. So our music program and our music department are a reflection of our community, school, administrators, and parent support of the arts. We have a strong music program at Humboldt, and it wouldn’t be without their help.”



HUMBOLDT IN THE '50S AND '60S

BY TOM SWEARINGEN

Early winter mornings on an Iowa farm

In the first month of 2025, the winter vortex settled into much of the upper Midwest, flowing south. Ahhh...it brought back memories of my youth growing up in northern Iowa in the 50s and 60s. The weatherman didn't call storms and cold weather by any fancy names like Blair or Cora back then. We just called it freezing!

My family was heavily into farming. My grandfather and uncles all were Humboldt County farmers, thanks to my great-great grandfather's foresight. They grew mainly soybeans and corn on the four farms scattered in and around Rutland. The land was fertile and produced well. They also raised pigs, cattle and for a short time, sheep.

On those cold Saturday mornings in January and February, as a teenager growing up in town, I was usually snuggled in my upstairs bedroom after a long week of school. While perhaps dreaming of lying on a warm, sunny Florida beach, I would often be startled by my mother's early morning breakfast call (she was a morning person.)

She had offered my services to relatives out on the farm to help clean the hog house. I remember overcast and snowy mornings with temperatures close to 20 degrees below, with a torturous wind blowing in from the north. Begrudgingly, I would roll out of bed, eat my hot oatmeal and put on my long johns, parka, stocking cap (in the South we call it a toboggan), gloves, two pairs of socks, and heavy rubber boots with the old-fashioned buckles lining up the front.

Once on the farm, I could see steam rising from the barn

as we drove up to meet my uncles and cousin, they with shovels in hand, always willing to find an extra one for me. Our hog house had a runway through the middle and hog pens on either side, all the way down to the end of the building. Pigs needed their pens cleaned out from time to time; the old bed of crushed corn cobs shoveled out and the new brought in.

The hogs were let outside into a fenced area so that we could do our job unencumbered. With shovel in hand, we would first rid the pen of the manured, soaked cobs and shovel them into the manure spreader. A new layer of the bedding was laid down, and then the hogs would be brought back in, grunting into the building and out of the cold, nuzzling into their clean surroundings, ecstatic to be in clean environs once again.

Growing up, I had a myriad of sinus problems. I doubt cleaning the hog house benefited me in any way, but I do recall that when I couldn't smell much of anything, the one smell that would permeate my nostrils on those early Saturday mornings was the smell in that hog house.

Those long-ago days on the farm gave me an appreciation for the hard work farmers did, and continue to do so. For better or for worse, I also decided those many years ago that I would not be joining the farmers in my family when it came time for me to choose my own life's work. But hats off to our great Iowa farmers!

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An American white pelican was seen resting on the Des Moines River near the Sumner Avenue Bridge in January. American white pelicans migrate through Iowa in the spring and summer and can be seen in reservoirs and wetlands. Independent photo by Kylie Portz. To buy this image, or more from our gallery, visit www.humboldtnews.com

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Students flock around elementary principal Mark Wenzel during an activity on a recent day at Twin Rivers Elementary School in Bode.

‘If not you, who?’

TR principal Mark Wenzel committed to helping students

By PHIL MONSON

As Twin Rivers Elementary School Principal Mark Wenzel walked into the school gymnasium in Bode, students began to easily interact with the veteran educator, now in his seventh year as administrator.

Wenzel, who was a guidance counselor at Humboldt Middle School eight years prior to his arrival in Bode, has worn many hats in his career. He also teaches physical education at TR.

Wenzel is thankful for the opportunity to serve in his role at Bode.

“One of the things I like about Twin Rivers is the staff we have is excellent. Mr. Hasenkamp (Don, previous principal) did a good job of putting in the foundation before my arrival,” Wenzel said.

“When Mr. Hasenkamp was my mentor, he used to talk about how important it is to have a great staff and that is what we have here. When you are talking about these types of districts that are smaller, you have a lot of latitude to do hands-on learning and give the individualized attention,” Wenzel said.

“We go on field trips and give our kids hands-on experi-

ences. When you look at a small district like ours, it’s crazy to think about how many districts are out there where kids don’t get to travel. Students here get opportunities to go different places. It’s great this school can take kids on field trips and have different experiences that they maybe wouldn’t have if they didn’t attend here,” Wenzel said.

“STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) is something we also try to give kids the opportunity to learn and explore as a class,” Wenzel said. “With our MTSS (multi-tiered system of support), we’ve done a good job of dialing in our academic area of closing the gap with our students and creating resources for them to look at the individual child and make decisions based off of where they are at and how to move them.”

“I’m just proud of the staff and the school board. The board has been great when it comes to being forward-thinking. Nobody wants to get stagnant and you always want to find ways to be better,” Wenzel said. “Whether that is with safety and security. We now have a secure entrance into our schools with cameras all around.”

“Everyone is collectively working hard to make decisions that are best for kids,” Wenzel said.

Wenzel, a native of Jackson, MN, before arriving in Humboldt, served three years as a guidance counselor and football coach at West Bend-Mallard. He also served three years as athletic director at Pomeroy-Palmer.

"I worked at Forest Ridge for two years before that. And prior to that, I was in Minnesota. The years are adding up now," Wenzel said with a laugh and his wide smile.

Wenzel says the challenges facing rural Iowa schools are obvious.

"You are always focusing on trying to maintain your enrollment. We've done a fairly good job of that, but you would like to see a growth in your enrollment. With any situation there's good and bad on both," Wenzel said.

"You want enough opportunities for kids to meet new peers and hang out with people beyond their class. With smaller class sizes we try to do some stuff with Humboldt so our students get to interact with new students. It's also a transitional piece for when they advance to middle school in Humboldt," Wenzel said.

"Our fifth graders do more with Humboldt than our younger grades but we still try to provide opportunities for them to grow with educational pieces to explore and hang out with other kids," Wenzel said.

What motivates Wenzel each day?

"As a guidance counselor, a lot of the time your phone rings because you need help. As a principal you get some of those phone calls but sometimes as a principal, not all decisions are popular decisions. You want to make sure you are making decisions for the right reasons," Wenzel said. "Not everybody sees the big picture all the time. That's not saying people cannot understand it, it's just you don't know the chair you sit in unless you have been there."

"That being said, I come to work every day saying I'm going to do the best I can with what is in front of me today. And when the day is over, I'm going to let it go. And on my drive home, I say I'm going to do the best I can by my own kids today, then we're going to bed. The next day it's wake up and repeat," Wenzel said.

"If you hear the staff, they will tell you each kid is unique and they are fun and all kids have a light. When I think of a student, I ask myself 'what is their skillset and how will it contribute to them later and how do we build on that?'" Wenzel said.

"But there's also some accountability. Any time you are interacting with kids and all these kids come from different family cultures. You have to take everyone's family cultures and assimilate it to a school culture. That can be challenging at times but we try to keep the conversation and line of communication open as much as we can," Wenzel said.

Wenzel says schools in recent years are doing more to connect with students.

"You have to be good at communication. There was a time when I needed to improve on my communication. Having Allyson Thompson here as our school secretary helps out a ton. She's my right hand when it comes to communication. Also, we have family conferences with parents prior to the start of the new school year so we can hear what their thoughts are and maintain that communication," Wenzel



Mark Wenzel, principal at Twin Rivers Elementary School in Bode, interacts with a student in the school gymnasium.

said.

"We host two fun nights where we get parents involved. One that has been really popular is a pumpkin carving event in the fall. We feel like if we are feeding them and the mess is at school instead of their house, it's a benefit for them and it is well-attended," Wenzel said.

"We have an outdoor games event at the end of the year to get together again. It is well-attended by parents and kids and gives us a chance to be visible and a little looser, other than just an academic environment," Wenzel said.

"In a small school like ours, we all mentor each other. It's not a hard hand in how we solve problems. It is solution-based. I teach physical education so I see every student here weekly," Wenzel said. "There are students I connect with."

"Each kid should have an adult that they can connect with well. Sometimes that's me and sometimes it's their home-room teacher. Sometimes it's the counselor and sometimes it's Allyson. It takes a village to raise kids and run a school. All kids should have somebody that they can connect with. We should identify who those people are and make sure students can connect with them," Wenzel said.

"And the facilities at the school here have improved immensely over the years and that's because we have a supportive superintendent, school board and community. Shout-out to the people who have helped us continue to improve our building and facilities for students," Wenzel said.

Wenzel, who is single, has two sons who attend school in Algona where he resides. Thaddeous, is 13 years old and is in seventh grade. Malachi is 11 years old and in fifth grade.

“Divorce is tough and so you don’t want to upset the apple cart of where your kids are. I would have had no problem bringing them to Bode school with me,” Wenzel said.

What about the future of education?

“I try to not think too much of what is going to happen down the road because decisions are going to be made that I have no control of. I can only control what is in front of me,” Wenzel said.

“I think Artificial Intelligence (AI) has arrived and it’s something we can’t be afraid of. We’re helping our teachers become more familiar with AI so that when you can understand the tool and how it can be used and also how to vet it,” Wenzel said. “I don’t think you are going to be able to escape AI so it will be important for us to create people who are going to be workers in our school and society...there will be some level of managing AI and how to use it in a productive way,” Wenzel said.

“There are pieces of AI that are very scary, but we have to learn so we can help our kids avoid the traps that come along, too, because our kids are more advanced than adults, a lot of times. We have to go where the kids are hanging out so we can help them make decisions for the future,” Wenzel said.

“When I think of the future, I think about the possibilities and the direction of the workforce. What is the future of how we are going to help these kids become employable and good people?” Wenzel said.

Wenzel is very candid when talking about students and the struggles they and their families face and trying to meet their needs.

“It’s gotten harder overall in the profession. I have more conversations with teachers and professionals and it seems like they are trying harder to keep up with the changes. Since the COVID-19 pandemic five years ago, it has been harder to put the wheels back on and create routines that are effective,” Wenzel said.

“For a while it was hard to find teachers for the profession itself. We used to have applicants at will. Now there’s less applicants for teaching positions. It seems to be picking up a little, but teachers aren’t sure on the direction of education. But I always say, ‘if not you, who?’ If it’s not the very best who are teaching our kids, then who is next up to do the job with the level of expertise needed and not be overwhelmed,” Wenzel said.

“I always try to encourage any staff, here and in other districts. I tell them you are a very good teacher and you bring to kids sincerity, authenticity and a true care for the people in the profession you have around you. You are the very best for these kids. If we get rid of that population of teachers, who is next in line and what will that do for the growth of our kids?” Wenzel said.

“Education is very hard but it’s also very rewarding and you don’t always see the fruits of your labor until the end,” Wenzel said.

“Humboldt and Twin Rivers have done a good job of offering the increased need for mental health services. All kids go through experiences that require support. Teaching kids to move into a survivor mindset. You don’t want kids to become a victim of any circumstance,” Wenzel said. “You want them to be forward-thinking. It really is about making the best decisions when you can when you are being called.”

Wenzel says educators don’t always realize normal and sometimes difficult, everyday occurrences might be making a lifelong impact on a student.

“What I have found now that I am older is situations that have the greatest impacts on people’s lives are usually the ones that are harder. As a teacher you don’t always realize the impact you had on that student during that moment of struggle until later,” Wenzel said. “The things that happen in those moments of support are life-changing for others. We can all reflect on the life-changing moments for us growing up.”

“Sometimes you are aware of those moments, but more often than not, kids will come back to me, expressing the things I did for them or somebody else did that changed their life. They seem like routine moments, but for that student it can be a life-changing moment,” Wenzel said.



Mark Wenzel is in his seventh year as principal at Twin Rivers Elementary School in Bode. NOW! photos by Phil Monson.

HUMBOLDT MUSIC DEPARTMENT

DOWNBEAT



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Pictured in front of the newly purchased ambulance to be used with the transfer service are (from left) Daniel Essing, EMT; Victor Bycroft, Chief Nursing Officer; Jordan Erie, EMS Service Director; Sheanelle Rose, Paramedic; Michelle Sleiter, HCMH CEO. The ambulance also sports the new logo HCMH has chosen.

HCMH Ambulance expands services

By APRIL KELLEY

Beginning Feb. 1, people all over Iowa will be seeing more Humboldt County Memorial Hospital (HCMH) Ambulances on the road due to a new service being offered by HCMH.

Over the last year, HCMH has been working to partner with UnityPoint Health-Trinity Regional Medical Center (TRMC) in Fort Dodge to provide all of their ambulance transfer services.

“Fort Dodge Trinity gave up their ambulance services several years ago and Fort Dodge Fire began providing that service,” HCMH CEO Michelle Sleiter said.

With the increase in volume of 911 calls that Fort Dodge receives, Trinity was struggling to transport patients from Fort Dodge to area hospitals.

“Fort Dodge is a higher acuity hospital so we transfer patients there who need services we don’t have. In the same case, they transfer to Des Moines, Iowa City and other locations for an increase in other services,” Sleiter said.

EMS Service Director Jordan Erie who is also one of the full-time paramedics on staff, began to create a plan to take over the transfer duties for the area.

“It took some time to evaluate the situation, paying close attention to what was going on in Humboldt first. Humboldt had to come first,” Erie said.

“We had to think, financially, how does this look while still ensuring that there would be zero impact to our own ambulance services and patients?” Sleiter said.

Over time, Erie had built the ambulance service in Hum-

boldt to include seven full-time paramedics on staff, something that is very unusual even for larger hospitals. With seven full-time paramedics in the hospital, at least one is always on duty.

“Prior to Jordan coming onboard and bringing these paramedics onboard, it was getting harder and harder for our EMT’s and drivers to be available. It was all just voluntary. They were on call and that was it,” Sleiter said.

Chief Nursing Officer Victor Bycroft said, “One of the beauties is when we set this up we worked with our Emergency Department Director (Alan Weiss). We wanted these paramedics to be able to work at the top of their license.”

“Paramedics are a different breed, in a good way. It’s that fight or flight. In healthcare, we need people to fight and these guys are the first ones at the bedside to save lives and they aren’t scared of it,” Sleiter said.

“They are working full scope of practice whether they are in the field or whether they are in the hospital, they are able to do exactly the same things,” Bycroft added.

“If inpatient care needs help with an IV, we help them. If Radiology needs help getting someone on or off a table we help with that. We are that floating person,” Erie said.

“We said ‘everything they can do in the field independently we are going to let them do here.’ That has been a huge assistance to our ER,” Sleiter said.

Having the medics in the hospital also means that when someone in Humboldt County calls 911, an ambulance with a qualified paramedic is on its way in minutes, which can make a huge difference in the outcome of someone’s life.

“When folks call in Humboldt County, they know someone is going to show up and they will be there fast,” Bycroft added.

Sleiter admitted, however, that having full-time paramedics on the staff meant that the ambulance service ran at a loss, but it was a concession they were willing to make for the service provided. Bringing the transfer service onboard was one way to defray those costs for the hospital.

Erie, who had come from working in Fort Dodge before taking his position in Humboldt, felt there were ways the Humboldt Ambulance Service could assist in the transfer services in Fort Dodge while still maintaining the high quality of care in Humboldt.

Bycroft had also been talking to other directors during conferences and meetings who were struggling with patient transfers.

“The struggle is not only finding somewhere to take a patient but how to transport them. A nurse can spend five hours trying to get it all set up and that is time they could be spending with a patient,” Bycroft said.

Even with such a successful ambulance service, Erie found himself having to create an entirely new department to meet the needs of transporting patients from UnityPoint Health -Trinity Regional Medical Center.

The new service had to be separate from the ambulance service provided in Humboldt.

“Every person in Humboldt County, when they call 911, they receive service. That is our mission, our first commitment and that wasn’t going to change,” Sleiter said.

That meant that the new service had to have its own paramedics and nurses willing to be on-call.

A new ambulance garage was constructed in the summer of 2021, giving the Humboldt Ambulance Service a home of their own and allowing for an increased size in the fleet with three drive-through ambulance bays as well as storage. While it would make a good base of operations, some addi-

tions would need to be made to make the new service run smoothly.

According to the transfer agreement, the service personnel have a 60-minute response time to get to the hospital and get their patients loaded. To facilitate that, HCMH made an agreement with Trinity to leave an ambulance at the hospital in Fort Dodge.

This concession also increases the radius of eligible employees. Erie is open to working with medics and RNs who can work only a few days a month because he knows the people who man the ambulances require a certain level of training.

“These patients are usually pretty sick who are transported out. It takes a higher level of expertise like a paramedic or a registered nurse in the back of that ambulance,” Sleiter said.

“We will have at least 10 paramedics and nurses taking call on a regular rotation with others serving on a PRN (as needed) level. This job requires a very high skill level.” Erie added.

“We are still actively onboarding but Jordan has been very successful in recruiting. We will end up with about 60 to 70 working on the team between full-time and PRN,” Sleiter said.

For the most part, the transfers will be one-way transfers. The patient will recover in the hospital they are taken to and be discharged to home or another place to recover.

However, the transfer service can take patients to another hospital to have tests run that are not offered in Fort Dodge, returning them to Trinity afterwards to finish their treatment and recovery there.

“We are anticipating an average of one and a half to two transfers a day but we know it will be up during certain times of the year like now,” Sleiter said.

Not only does the service require more employees, it requires more equipment.



HCMH finished their new ambulance garage in the summer of 2021 in response to the COVID pandemic. The garage was used as a drive-through location for testing as well as a dedicated spot for the ambulance service



The interior of the new ambulance purchased by Humboldt County Memorial Hospital for use with the new transfer service in conjunction with UnityPoint Health-Trinity Regional Medical Center. Humboldt County Memorial Hospital has contracted with Trinity to provide the transfer service. Humboldt Independent photo by April Kelley. To buy this photo and more from our gallery visit our website at www.humboldtnews.com.



“We were lucky run across an ambulance that was for sale at a great price and was just what we needed. It was in very good shape, low miles with a power cot in the back end,” Sleiter said.

They had purchased the ambulance and recently had it wrapped with the redesigned logo for the HCMH Ambulance service. This means that there will be five ambulances with four remaining in Humboldt and one in Fort Dodge.

Two new ambulances have been ordered to replace aging ones in the fleet.

“It takes 18 months to two years to get an ambulance. There are ones we could get faster, but we are very specific about what we want so it takes longer,” Sleiter said.

After that, they will plan to rotate the ambulances in the service so that one is replaced yearly.

HCMH has been slowly working through the kinks of the transfer service during the month of January, seeing where they need to make changes and preparing for the Feb 1 start date.

“It’s really gone pretty smoothly. I think this is going to

HCMH has chosen to rebrand its ambulances to better align with their services. The ambulances will be transporting patients throughout Iowa and the new logo is eye-catching and helps to set HCMH ambulances apart.

be a great thing for Humboldt and a really good partnership with Fort Dodge,” Erie said.

And with that statement, the call came over the radio, another call out for the Humboldt County Memorial Hospital Ambulance Service.

Anyone interested in joining the Humboldt County Memorial EMS team can view their current job openings online at www.humboldthospital.org.



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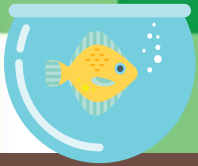
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Out & About

Gilmore City Literacy Day January 3

Photos by Kylie Portz





Pet of the month!



Owner: Cooper, Sawyer, and Monroe Legvold, Humboldt

Chips



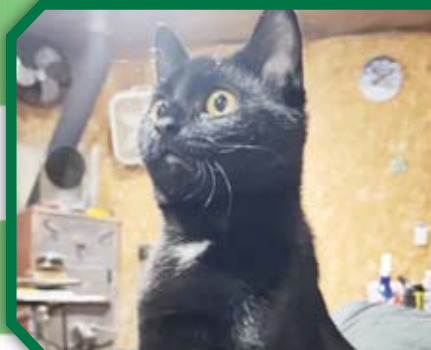
Owner: Rick Koob, Humboldt

Charlie Brown



Owner: Rick, Dawn, Jacob, and Noah, Humboldt

Daisy



Owner: Will Eckberg, Humboldt

Lydia



Owner: Rick, Dawn, Jacob, and Noah, Humboldt

Rosco



Owners: Bob & Bernie Eckberg, Dakota City

Wilma

To submit a photo of your pet, email info@humboldtnews.com

Please include pet's name, owner's name and hometown.



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As I write this column, I am still in my Florida home, counting days until I return “home.” I have missed my regular outings and meetings with friends, neighbors and family members. It’s always fun to go but even more fun to return. I have missed you. I am counting on spring time weather when I arrive home!

The hurricane season is over and most of the damage in our park has been done. One side of the park (about 400 units) suffered mostly wind damage while the other side was water-related. I don’t know which was worse. But we are getting back to normal. There is a small block-sized pond on one side of the park and it flooded over the roads on all sides, into homes, etc. creating lots of damage.

The other side of the park was hit by winds and awnings, roofs and carports were damaged or destroyed. Most of us carried some type of insurance, but we soon learned that you did NOT mention water or flooding or the insurance companies declined to submit a claim. I also learned that I could not visit with the agent about a claim, I had to talk to the company. Waste of time!

I hesitate to suggest the number of air conditioning units that had to be replaced! glad it is over, live and learn. I have been here over 35 years and never seen anything like this. And all those horror stories you have read about FEMA are probably true. The government was not helpful.

Are you getting some catalogs for spring items? Gardens, sporting goods, clothing for the next season? I am anxious for green grass, budding leaves and springtime rains. Unfortunately, there are many trees that are dying due to disease and our farm groves or beautiful parks will be showing the damage. Mother Nature takes care of lots, but this is a problem that will have long lasting effects. The Emerald Ash Borer is a naughty word.

This winter I lost a long-time friend, formerly of Humboldt, who moved to Florida after her retirement in 2001. I refer to Irene Schwint, who spent many years living in Rainbow Drive. She worked with me at Park Physicians and retired from the Humboldt Police Dept as dispatcher in 2001, then moved to Florida. She was born in the Rockwell City

area and returned to Iowa this summer when her family farm was recognized as a Century Farm at the Iowa State Fair. We continued our friendship from a distance, and played cards and enjoyed our time together in Florida. A celebration of life will be held at Union Cemetery this summer when her family will gather from Florida, South Dakota and Iowa. Hope to see you there.

While in Florida, (and others who go elsewhere), I look forward to the news – especially hometown news. I don’t know lots of people, but I enjoy hearing of what’s going on. I am amazed to hear of the lack of newspapers! Our community here in Florida lost their paper several years ago. The city of Tampa has a newspaper just a few days a week. I do not quite understand how an area gets the “news” distributed? Not radio anymore, and television coverage is limited. I know advertising is expensive and it takes the advertising to pay for the space for news, but? Humboldt and Fort Dodge are so fortunate to have wonderful coverage. I am an avid reader of local items - news, sports, obituaries, etc. THANKS for the good job you do!

Weather is always a source of communication. Lots of friends I know start out their letters with, “how has your weather been this month? Week?” Most of us that write letters do it to family and friends that live some distance away. Even when I call someone on the phone or write an e-mail, I usually want to know what’s going on there. I enjoy watching weather forecasts on the evening news to see what, where and when.

I am throwing out a request to residents of the area for an upcoming event. I refer to the Memorial Day Service which should be held annually in our community. I got involved last year with amazing results and an outstanding turnout with lots of help. At the time, I said I would not be in charge again, and I meant it. For many reasons, I am throwing out a request for a person or group to take over now that we know it can be done without a whole lot of work.

Last year the assistant police chief volunteered to be in charge and he and his family did a wonderful job with several volunteers (I won’t name them for fear of leaving someone

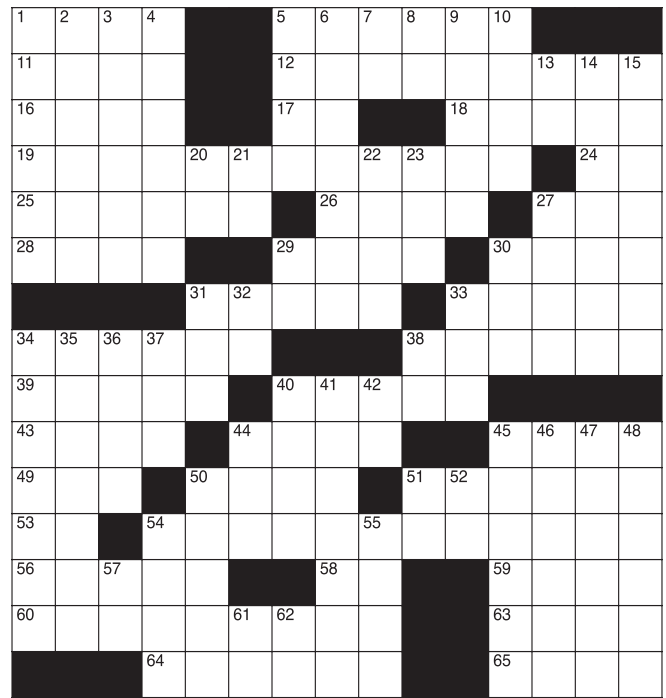
out). He is no longer employed by the city, however, others who helped included a couple of pastors, local volunteers from service organizations and just ordinary people. The day started with a brief rain, but turned out extremely well attended and appreciated.

There is adequate time for a committee to be formed and a program planned. Please consider donating some time honoring our servicemen. I will not be in charge but I am willing to discuss information or planning. Will someone please step forward? Thanks in advance. Remember, nothing ventured, nothing gained. You don't have to do it all, just volunteer to help. Thanks in advance.

I am looking forward to returning home. I have enjoyed my friends of up to 35 years at Hunters Run apartments. I have really enjoyed being with my granddaughter and great granddaughters. They are growing up fast.

I have had a wonderful winter full of activities, renewing friendships and making new friends. But the time has come to return home home. Remember that old saying, "wherever you wander, wherever you roam, stay happy and healthy and be glad to come home!"

Think spring. It always comes - sometimes early and sometimes later, but so looked forward to AND enjoyed!



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Database management system
- 5. Medical procedures
- 11. ___ Clapton, musician
- 12. Defender
- 16. Exert oneself
- 17. Indicates position
- 18. Quay
- 19. Atrocities
- 24. A way to address an adult man
- 25. Ends
- 26. Unable
- 27. Taxi
- 28. Gratuities
- 29. A famous train station
- 30. Japanese persimmon
- 31. Sours
- 33. Beneficiary
- 34. Baseball official
- 38. Confused situation
- 39. Unworldly
- 40. Yemen capital
- 43. Type of soil
- 44. Beloved beverage ___-Cola
- 45. Lying down
- 49. ___ Angeles
- 50. Fail to amuse
- 51. Collapsible shelter
- 53. Commercial
- 54. Taste property
- 56. Lordship's jurisdictions
- 58. It cools your home
- 59. Dismounted
- 60. Charge in a court of law
- 63. One less than one
- 64. Spoke
- 65. Famed garden

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Show a picture of
- 2. Small sultanate
- 3. Unfortunate incident
- 4. A way to ski
- 5. Abba ___, Israeli politician
- 6. Observed
- 7. "Westworld" actor Harris
- 8. Westgoing to me
- 9. Shoelace tube
- 10. Takes to civil court
- 13. Early multimedia
- 14. Produces anew
- 15. Horse races
- 20. Of I
- 21. Equally
- 22. Changes color
- 23. A place to stay
- 27. Town in Galilee
- 29. Mathematical figure
- 30. Klingon character
- 31. They ___
- 32. Atomic #58
- 33. Showed up extinct

- 34. Loosen grip
- 35. Unpleasant smell
- 36. Innermost membranes enveloping the brain
- 37. Esteemed college "league"
- 38. Partner to Pa
- 40. Small American rail
- 41. A salt or ester of acetic acid
- 42. Sodium
- 44. Military figure (abbr.)
- 45. Lighted
- 46. Paid to get out of jail
- 47. All of something
- 48. Ohio city
- 50. More abject
- 51. A radio band
- 52. Scientific development (abbr.)
- 54. Monetary unit
- 55. Scored perfectly
- 57. A punch to end a fight
- 61. The Golden State (abbr.)
- 62. The Beehive State (abbr.)

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S	A	D	E	O	N	S	T	I	R	S		
					M	E	N	K	H	A	N	
					S	O	D	S	L	I	T	E
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The Relay Race

By Phyllis Johnson

Molly shifted her shoulders a bit at waking and turned her head to see her sleeping sister lying next to her. She had just awakened herself and lay there trying to sort out what had happened. Her thoughts went back to the previous day, when things had taken a wrong turn, and her close relationship with her sister became threatened.

As she looked at the blond head on the pillow just inches away, listening to the deep breathing, her heart was sad. It seemed to skip a beat, and a lump formed in her throat. They had not spoken since the previous afternoon when they returned from the district track meet. Now how could everything become the way it should be between twins? She wondered what today would bring.

Molly and Megan were both athletes. They were so alike in many ways. Almost identical in looks and actions, both good students and with the same temperament. But their choice in participating in sports was not the same.

Megan liked tennis and golf, Molly preferred basketball and volleyball. However, track was different. They both like to run, were competitive, and this sport had them playing together. The fact that their dad was a high school basketball coach was a big help in shaping their athletic abilities. Everything always worked out fine, until yesterday.

It was the 200M relay race in an important tournament. Four girls formed the relay team, and they were skilled in handing the baton to the teammate close behind. Megan and Molly were numbers three and four in their group. Girl number four is usually the fastest in the group, trying to give the team a boost if they are behind or to give them a deeper edge if they are ahead. Competition was strong. The opposing team was close behind them. As Molly handed the baton to her sister, it slipped. Megan had not fully grasped the baton when Molly let it go, and the baton fell to the ground. No time to pick it up and go on. Besides, it went across the line. How could this happen? The team had done this a hundred times before, and it always worked out fine. But now, of course, the race was over for them. They watched with shock as the other teams flew by. Gradually, they slowed to a stop, all of them in disbelief.

At the sidelines now, Molly and Megan began to assess the situation. Neither felt she was to blame. Molly let go too soon! Megan hadn't grasped the baton soon enough. Those thoughts became words that the girls exchanged in angry voices as they returned home. Worse, of course, was the

fact that they let their team down. They continued to blame the other.

It was a quiet night while they ate their evening meal. The girls stopped with the sharp words, because Mom and Dad insisted. No other words were spoken. Mom and Dad tried to initiate a conversation, but neither of the girls responded. Molly faked a headache and went to bed early, Megan said she wouldn't be able to sleep. Bed for her would have to wait.

Dad sat down beside her on the couch. He put his arm around her. It was easy talking to Dad. He knew of the emotions when a team gets beat, but he also knew the feelings of the athletes that are so disappointed when their team loses. This was different though, when the athletes are his daughters and he was hurting for them. With experienced words, Dad began to talk with Megan about what happened. He told her that other things could have caused the baton to drop. Maybe there was moisture on the baton from sweaty hands, making it slippery. Maybe it was grasped too far to the end by the second girl. Maybe, maybe, maybe! But Dad had made his point. Megan began to feel better, and with Dad's comforting words, she began to stop the blame she heaped on her sister. She thought it might have been her fault too. She was confused but she knew that her dad was right, and she had to talk with her sister. Later, slipping into bed, she found Molly asleep and decided to let things go until morning. Finally, she fell asleep too.

Now, it was morning, and she lay still in the bed, watching her sister still asleep. Thoughts and words of the night before flooded her mind. She felt remorse for the sharp words she had yelled. She thought of all the races they had won, and the times of cheering each other on, when they had won their respective endeavors. She knew neither of them was more to blame for the baton drop than the other one. It had been easier to not blame herself.

Tears formed and ran down her cheeks. As she wiped them away, her arm fell across her sleeping sister. Megan moved a bit and turned around. Opening her eyes she saw her sister's tears and a shy smile that formed on Molly's lips. It took a minute for her to assess the situation, but the thoughts came back quickly. She could tell by Molly's face what she was thinking. Megan put her arm across her sister's shoulder too. They both began to cry. In a few minutes, the sobbing stopped, and words came tumbling out. Both were quick to apologize for last night's behavior and the

blame they put on each other. After a few more embraces, they began the morning ritual of getting ready for another day.

Breakfast was a contrast compared to the meal of last night. There were no cross words, or expressions of blame. While their mother was making some toast, the girls had time to think. They began to talk about how fortunate they were, to be together in their sporting events, to be sisters,

to share their lives. They weighed that against the events of the previous night. It was a happy pair who went back to school that morning. Forgiveness shown on each of their faces, and they were ready to start the day. Their dad witnessing the events winked at their mom. No more words had to be spoken. Calm had settled as they went to get on the bus and start another day.



This Downy Woodpecker was spotted in late January looking for bugs in a tall tree. Independent photo by Kylie Portz. To see this image, or more from our gallery, visit www.humboldtnews.com.

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The fourth graders at Taft Elementary have enjoyed several indoor recesses this month due to the below zero wind chills. This has been a good opportunity to connect with new friends and find students that share similar interests. It's always nice to put together a puzzle, share a game of chess or play a card or board game in the warmth of the building. We are thankful for our friends and classmates and the relationships we are building!

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