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SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Dribbling all the way to the top

Rock Rapids native Talon Arends reflects on getting gold medal in basketball skills competition at Special Olympics state meet in Iowa City

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Talon Arends of Rock Rapids has been involved in Special Olympics and the Tidal Waves team run by fellow Rock Rapids native, Cindy Dagele, over five years, taking multiple medals in bowling during the fall as well as track and field in the summer.

But in early February of this year, Dagele received a notice from the state organization that basketball would now be offered in the winter Special Olympics and Arends was eager to give it a try.

"I was very excited," Arends said with a wide smile, even though the notice came in what father Ryan Arends felt was last minute.

"They didn't give us much warning this past year," Ryan said. "The expense was too much at first, but then the state paid for a lot of it and that helped."

What didn't help was, due to winter weather that month, Talon and the rest of his teammates did not get much practice time to hone their basketball skills. But that did not seem to matter as Talon took the court for the state-qualifier at Dordt University in Sioux Center the weekend of Feb. 11. The task Talon had to complete was to dribble in a circle for about 90 seconds with the judges counting all the dribbles. The participants with the most dribbles got the gold medal with the second and third places getting silver and bronze.

When all the competi-

Arends on Page 10 ►



PICTURED ABOVE: Rock Rapids native Talon Arends poses with his Tidal Waves jacket and his State Special Olympics gold medal. (Photo/Nathan Broek) **PICTURED RIGHT:** Talon Arends of Rock Rapids prepares to compete at the Special Olympics state qualifier in the basketball skills competition at Dordt University during the weekend of February 11. Arends was judged on the number of dribbles he was able to take within 90 seconds and within a circle. At the end of the competition he earned the gold medal and the right to compete at the state competition in Iowa City. (Photo/submitted)

NEW LOOK FOR THE LIBRARY

The George Public Library recently finished a renovation project started in December. A rock wall was taken out, front windows replaced, paneling removed and new carpet installed. The library will also be getting a new door. (Photo/Dominique Kooiker)

Staying relevant in the digital age

George library completes renovation, offers several programs

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With a wide range of information and entertainment available digitally, many people might wonder what their local library can offer to stay relevant. The George Public Library has found a way to stay relevant and thrive through its engagement with the public.

The George Public Library recently

completed a renovation project that started in December. During the renovation, the library moved into the north community room. The old rock wall was removed, the paneling was taken out, and the windows were replaced. New carpet was installed in the front of the building. The library will also be getting a new door.

"For now, we just did the front half because we needed to do insulation in

Library programs on Page 5 ►



SHAKING IT UP WITH A SOLO

The Central Lyon Roarin' Jazz Choir qualified for the Iowa Vocal Jazz Championships in Spirit Lake on Tuesday, March 28. Pictured are Aaron Springer, Drew Kupferschmid and Anna Warrtjes at the Shake the Lakes competition on February 17 in Spirit Lake. Warrtjes led the group with a solo in one of their pieces. (Photo/Submitted)

Jazzed to sing for the championship

CL jazz choir to compete at state

Dominique Kooiker
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For the past few years, Central Lyon has proudly sent its jazz choir to compete with the best of the best at the state championship. This year, the jazz choir once again qualified for this event.

On Tuesday, March 28, the Central Lyon Roarin' Jazz Choir will compete at the Iowa Vocal Jazz Championships in Spirit Lake. To qualify for the state championships, each school must submit an audition recording from one of its competitions to be reviewed by a panel of judges. The top-32 schools in the state were accepted into the championship and notified in early March.

"The jazz choir begins its season in the fall. They

work on music for the pops concert and our winter concert in addition to performing at our Veterans' Day program and singing Christmas carols at the nursing homes. We hit our jazz set pretty hard in December and January and have our first state contest early in February. From there we usually compete at the Shake the Lakes Competition in Spirit Lake and the Emmetsburg Extravaganza," said Ann Langholdt, Central Lyon choir director.

The jazz choir attended the State Jazz Choir Festival Feb. 7. This was not a competition but a contest in which each choir was rated by three judges in multiple categories such as tone quality, intonation, balance and blend, jazz interpretation and more. The choir received an overall Division 1 rating.

CL Jazz on Page 5 ►

NEWS BRIEFS

Mini-Grant Applications

The Lyon County Riverboat Foundation is currently accepting applications for the 2023 mini-grant program. Details and application can be found on the Foundation's website at www.lyoncountyriverboatfoundation.org. Applications are due March 29 and grants will be awarded on April 24.

Fish Fry

The Knights of Columbus will host a weekly all-you-can-eat fish fry through March. Serving will be from 5-7 p.m. The fish fry for Friday, March 24 will be drive thru at Holy Name Catholic Church in Rock Rapids.

Murray Trust Applications

Murray Trust applications are available in the Central Lyon High School guidance office. The deadline for applications to be received is April 17.

Farm and Home Show

The Farm and Home Show will be Tuesday, March 28 from 2-8 p.m. in the Forster Community Center. Booth reservations are being taken online at rockrapids.com.



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Severe Weather Awareness week March 27-31

Statewide tornado drill planned

Lyon County Emergency Management, the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, National Weather Service and Iowa Emergency Management Association have joined together to promote Severe Weather Awareness Week March 27-31.

Severe Weather Awareness Week is an opportunity to highlight the importance of being aware of, and prepared for, severe weather through a different focus each day:

• **Monday** – Severe thun-

derstorms

- **Tuesday** – Weather warnings
- **Wednesday** – Tornadoes
- **Thursday** – Family preparedness
- **Friday** – Flash floods

The annual statewide tornado drill will take place Wednesday, March 29, beginning at 10 a.m.

All Lyon County cities along with Lyon County Emergency Management will be testing tornado sirens Wednesday March 29, around 10:15 a.m. In the event of severe weather, the drill will be postponed to

March 30 at 10 a.m.

Businesses are invited to participate in the tornado drill to review their own emergency plans in the event of an actual tornado or severe weather.

Additional information about the tornado drill can be found on local National Weather Service websites.

For more information on severe weather preparedness, visit www.ready.iowa.gov.

(Information provided by Arden Kopischke, Lyon County Emergency Management coordinator.)