

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
LOW 8 HIGH 27	LOW 9 HIGH 22	LOW 8 HIGH 26	LOW 18 HIGH 31	LOW 18 HIGH 29	LOW 13 HIGH 27	LOW 16 HIGH 37

# SIoux COUNTY

# CAPITAL-DEMOCRAT

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## HOPE HAVEN CONTINUES TO WORK ON *wheelchairs*

By SARAH WEBER  
Co-Editor

SIoux COUNTY — Hope Haven is seeking more volunteers to help with efforts to refurbish wheelchairs for kids. The need for wheelchairs around the world continues to grow, and Hope Haven seeks to meet the need.

The work of refurbishing wheelchairs began in 1994 with 15 wheelchairs that were fixed up and sent to the Dominican Republic. Since then, Hope Haven has refurbished over 137,000 wheelchairs that have been delivered to 109 different countries worldwide.

Marketing Manager Krystal Vander Pol shares some history. "Hope Haven has numerous partners from individuals to other nonprofits that collect old unused wheelchairs around the United States and Canada and ship them to Hope Haven in Sioux Falls where they are evaluated and then sent to one of our five volunteer refurbishing shops, located in Rock Valley, George, Volga, Edgerton, and Sioux Falls prison."

Once chairs arrive, "They are cleaned, fixed as needed, and boxed for distributing to another country."

Hope Haven Kids Chairs began in 1999 when four Dordt University students engineered a kid wheelchair design for Hope Haven. In 2001 Hope Haven began manufacturing kids chairs, in 12 and 14 inch styles. The chairs can be adjusted to allow for growth. The kids chairs are manufactured in multiple



locations consisting of Sioux Falls State prison, Fort Dodge First Presbyterian Church, Orange City volunteer shop, Brookings volunteer shop, Rock Valley volunteer shop and support from organizations and churches supplying parts and labor.

"The manufacturing process of the kids chair consists of cutting and bending aluminum steel, cutting and drilling plastic blocks, sewing seats and back rests, assembling chairs, and boxing for international distribution," Vander Pol said. Annually, the combined shops produce 2,500 adult and 2,500 kid wheelchairs.

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### Sports:

### NWC MEN'S BASKETBALL RETURNS TO ACTION

See page 5 for more details

## Resident creates a streak of moviegoing

By SARAH WEBER  
Co-Editor

ORANGE CITY — Orange City resident Matt Austin took on an unusual challenge in 2022 — to take advantage of the five-dollar movie night at Holland Plaza and to see a year's worth of movies.

Of the challenge, he shares, "I love movies, maybe too much." He says he is "taken with the ability of film to transport you to a creative new and different world from our own, to tell powerful stories, and walk a mile in somebody else's shoes. Films will evoke visceral emotions of any kind—sadness, laughter, anger, and fear and are all valid."

He made an "anti-New year's resolution" to watch 365 movies a year. "I completed that goal, mostly at home through streaming services," he said but included trips to Holland Plaza to catch new releases. His revised 2022 goal became weekly visits to the theater.

During the pandemic, he said, "Like many folks, I hunkered down and didn't visit too many places. But through 2021, I saw the consequence of that when local businesses began to close." Austin doesn't have a car, so he relies on local businesses within walking distance for entertainment.

In the fall of 2021, he returned to the theater. "It was something I really missed. I realized how much I appreciate Holland Plaza and how much it hurt them to close."

He visited the theater every Tuesday in 2022 for the five-dollar movie special, with two-dollar popcorn and two-dollar drinks. "This way, it made the project financially feasible."

Austin never skipped a Tuesday, walking or driving his electric scooter through some challenging weather.

"If it was raining or there was snow or ice on the ground, I walked. It is a 15-minute walk for me, but with Iowa winters, it was a challenge, but I have winter gear, so I layered up!" The most unpleasant times happened, "after winter storms, the state plows throw dirty snow from Highway 10 onto the sidewalk, and I would have to trudge through shin-deep snow to get to the theater."

The closest he came to skipping a week was April 12. "A tornado warning made its way through Orange City early in the evening. I was dedicated to my quest but not to the point of compromising my safety." Thankfully, the storm cleared out, and he could attend the late showing of *Ambulance*, a film that ended up as one of his favorites of the year.

"I went into that film with low expectations, but I needed something to see on that stormy evening, and I had seen everything else that was playing that night, so I went for it. And it turned out to be in my top ten favorite films of the year! It's reminiscent of other greats this year, like *Elvis* and *Batman*."

His favorite theater film of the year was *Top Gun: Maverick*. "Try as you might, you won't get that experience at home. The rumble of the bass, the echoing surround sound of the F-18 fighter jets taking off from an aircraft carrier, and the stunning visuals must be viewed on the biggest screen possible. And unlike most of the other times I visited Holland Plaza, the theater was packed to near sold-out levels. I was struck by the idea that, as divided as America is today in so many ways, for a couple of hours, none of that matters, as we share a thrilling cinematic experience together in community with one another."

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Matt Austin

## SERVICE STATIONED IN ALASKA

By SHARON VERMEER  
Correspondent

PEOPLE  
OF  
Sioux  
County

ORANGE CITY — When Stacy Jasper was a junior in high school, he made a big decision. "I didn't have a CLUE what I wanted to do!" he laughed. "I really loved math and computers, and I thought maybe I'd be a CPA, but I didn't want to go to school right away. My dad was a medic in the Army during the Korean Conflict but stayed stateside. I thought that might be a good option. So I drove up to Spencer one day to the Army recruiter and signed on the dotted line to join the Delayed Entry program. Then I came home and told my parents (Clarence and Betty Jasper) and my girlfriend. My dad said, 'You did WHAT!?!', and my mom was speechless. Once my dad processed it, he thought it would be good for me." Telling his girlfriend Teresa (Mel and Linda Mellema) went better than he thought: she was ok with it. With the Delayed Entry program, Jasper could graduate from high school before basic training. Two of his classmates joined after graduating, but he was the only one who joined in this manner.

Two weeks after graduation, Jasper shipped out to Fort Sill, Okla., to be trained in Field Artillery. Because of his love of math and computers, his advanced training kept him there for 14 weeks. "I was called to be in the Fire Direction Center (FDC)," he explained. "My job was to do all the computations for the big guns. I was in a battery of six Howitzer 105 mm. guns. A forward observer radioed me where the target was by grids on a map. We would shoot the first gun, then readjust as necessary. Once it hit the target, we shoot all six guns at the target, one at a time. Typically, the forward observers were only 100-200 yards away from the target. That's really close! They were pretty careful to give me the right coordinates!"

Sept. 18, 1986, was not only his birthday but the day Jasper graduated from advanced training. He was given five days of leave. He rushed home and married Teresa on the 19th. "In the



Stacy Jasper

final weeks of training, they ask you to name your top three choices for where you want to be stationed," he smiled. "I put down Oklahoma, Hawaii, and somewhere else southern. When I opened my orders, they said Anchorage, Alaska. All I could think of was igloos and Eskimos." Teresa was shocked, and her parents were even more shocked: Jasper was taking their baby girl 3,500 miles away!

The last week of September, they arrived in Anchorage. "When we got off the plane, there was snow on the ground, but I thought how beautiful it was!" he remembered. "The first ten days we had to spend in a motel until we found an apartment off base. We ended up staying there for a year before we could get on-base housing. But that first night: we both wept. We were both so young, and it was our first time this far away from home. I kept thinking, what did I get myself into? We had no family and no friends around us. It was just us. It was very scary. In hindsight, it was the best time for us to grow in a relationship with each other because we had to depend on just ourselves. It forced us to lean on each other." But being so far from home was tough on a lot of couples. "There were eight guys in the FDC. When we started, six were married. When we left, we were the only ones married. I think there were too many opportunities for infidelity, and being

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