

# Ackley World Journal

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Ella McGrath's dream of getting into Cornell University may be delayed, but the battle isn't over for this 2023 AGWSR graduate. She will be attending Colorado State for the first year of her post-high school education, but her goal remains the same – Ivy League.

## Don't stop believing

### A dream of Ivy League

BECKY SCHIPPER  
EDITOR

Ella McGrath is going places. Those who know her have always recognized that. In just over a month, she'll graduate from AGWSR and leave her small-town girl persona behind. Ella has held lofty personal goals since a very young age. Those goals, admittedly and quite publicly, have included her dream of attending an Ivy League school.

In recent months, Ella pulled her courage together and applied to Cornell University where she hoped to pursue a degree in horticulture. Cornell is the only Ivy League school with a horticulture program.

"So I thought 'What the heck! I did my research and applied for 'early decision' meaning that I signed a contract and had I been accepted, it was binding, and I would be going to Cornell upon acceptance,'" Ella explained.

Despite her hopes, Ella wasn't immediately accepted to Cornell, though she did receive a deferred early decision, meaning the school would re-evaluate her application with their regular decision applicants in late March.

Her hopes of getting in were not daunted, rather she looks upon the decision as a means to continue to grow.

"Getting deferred is better news than getting rejected because it means they haven't said 'No' to you completely - yet!" Ella explained.

Two weeks ago, she did receive that rejection, but happily it came with her selection for a transfer option. Ella will attend another institution and at the end of her first year there, she can apply again at Cornell, using the transfer option provided to her. It still doesn't mean that she'll get in, but it does provide her with a better chance.

"There are 500 of us in this transfer option group, which when you

realize that 79,000 apply to get into Cornell, means I'm close," Ella said. "I'm very close!"

She knows she has the potential and understands that she needs to get some research under her belt in the coming year at Colorado State where she's been accepted in the Honors Program. The good news is that the program there offers just what she needs to get into Cornell in the following year.

"It will help me get a good start and get more on my palette to convince them," Ella said.

Ella hopes her experience will help others take a chance on themselves and attempt admission at Ivy League schools. The institutions, she says, are not only for the 4.0 GPA students who are involved in everything.

"That's not true at all," Ella said. "The average student getting into Ivy League schools has a GPA of 3.5, what really matters is your essays. The essays are huge. You have to have an awesome essay – almost an unspoken 'magic'. Ivy League schools aren't looking for people who are really smart – they have 79,000 other smart kids making application. They are looking for those who fit the school's perception of what their students want to be like."

Simply put, she encourages others to apply for the school of their dreams. There's absolutely no reason not to.

"If you want to do it, you might as well try," she began. "Because the worst they can say is 'No'. I'm not out of the race yet."

Applying to Cornell was a huge amount of work, though she says that to be with other people who are as driven as she is will be the prize. The application process included seven letters of recommendation, a counselor evaluation, five – five-hundred-word essays, an academic resume, and a complete common application.

Ella knew very well  
**ELLA > PAGE 2**



BECKY SCHIPPER/ACKLEY WORLD JOURNAL

Carrie Callaway Morton, Eldora council member, has worked behind the scenes for months on the proposed merger. She spoke at the Ackley council meeting in an attempt to persuade those members opposed to change their minds. Her plea fell on deaf ears, with a three-to-two vote against it.

## IT'S A NO-GO

### Ackley Council votes against proceeding with emergency services merger

BECKY SCHIPPER  
EDITOR

The Ackley City Council voted three to two against continuing on a path to merge the Ackley Volunteer Ambulance Service with the Eldora EMS service during their meeting held last Wednesday evening. Voting against were Mike Abbas, Chuy Flores and Joe Wessels. The decision effectively leaves the service in limbo and without funding after July 1 of this year as none past that date was included in the upcoming budget.

The original vote to proceed was given in February, with councilman Joe Wessels challenging that decision during the March meeting. As a result, the matter was placed on the council's April agenda.

During the April meeting, a motion by Abbas to rescind the February vote, provided an opportunity for those in attendance to again discuss the proposal. That discussion began with Carrie Callaway Mor-

**“My question, to those of you opposed to this is truly, why?”**

Carrie Callaway Morton  
City of Eldora Council Member and EMS Service Committee Member

ton addressing the Ackley council members. Morton sits on the Eldora council and has been part of a committee working out financial details as well as working with the two service directors – Joan Frazier and Maile Carter. She also sits on a committee of representatives from both communities which had hopped to set a timeline and manner to proceed.

"My question, to those of you opposed to this is truly, why?" Callaway Morton asked.

At the current time, dual paging – meaning crews from both communities – are being paged out for calls in Ackley. Eldora is covering Ackley's needs, most often during daytime hours when the AVAS typically has just one crew member in town. Without the agreement towards the proposed merger, Callaway Morton explained that there is no guarantee of a response from Eldora if that crew is already responding to a call.

Callaway Morton noted that

several EMS providers on the Ackley team are making moves to be employed by the Eldora service. A number of those applicants may have made their decision hopeful of the merger, others see it as a way to stay in the field of emergency response and remain committed to their community.

The proposal would also, Callaway Morton explained, allow Ackley to have a voice in their service through an advisory board which would include crew and community members from both cities. The board would meet monthly and provide semi-annual reports to both councils to monitor progress.

"To me, that gives you some assurances that dual paging doesn't," Callaway Morton said.

While the agreement would have transferred Ackley equipment to the new entity for \$1 – Greenbelt EMS, the rigs would have remained in Ackley with the new entity being charged with insurance, liability and maintenance expenses.

"As far as I know, in your upcoming budget, you have no money to do that. Those trucks are required to be inspected. They require a level of care, and you don't have it," Callaway Morton. She further

**NO VOTE > PAGE 2**

## 120th Annual Sauerkraut Days just around the corner

BECKY SCHIPPER  
EDITOR

Fun for all and all for fun! Sauerkraut Days 2023 is just around the corner. Dates for the event will be Thursday through Sunday, June 8-11. Each day is packed full of fun for the entire family – from familiar activities to new and exciting plans, the event promises to be more fun that you can ever remember!

Members of the Sauerkraut Days Committee work throughout the year to keep Sauerkraut Days exciting, and this year will be no different. Some activities are still being planned, but here's what is known now:

On Thursday, June 8, activities resemble years' past with Chalk the Walk, the Chamber Food Stand, the opening of the midway, the annual Kiddie Parade – themed "Kraut Days Carnival", and fun in Victory Park, including Darrell, the Balloon Guy. The Doo-Wops – performing the best of the 1950's and 1960's will take the stage downtown.

On Friday, June 9, plan to take part in performances by the Ackley German Band while enjoying free kraut and wieners in Victory Park. There will be axe throwing, the Chamber Food Stand, and the crowning of Lit-

tle Miss and Mr. Ackley, along with Miss Ackley coronation. Entertainment in the park will continue with MOJO DJ spinning tunes.

Saturday's fun begins early in Victory Park with the Spelling Bee, opening of the Kraut Pub, a petting zoo, kids' pedal tractor pull, and some new fun – carnival games of the past. A cribbage tournament and bingo are also on the schedule for the day. There will also be the popular golf cart decorating contest, the grand parade and more entertainment in Victory Park.

In the evening, Standing Hampton – classic rock of the 1970s and 1980s, will perform on the stage.

All good things must come to an end with the 2023 Sauerkraut Days celebration ending on Sunday, June 11 with the popular car and tractor show and Mexican breakfast held in and around Victory Park.

This year marks the 120th annual Sauerkraut Days, so keep your eye open for surprise special events planned by the committee and Ackley Chamber of Commerce.

Volunteers for the Chamber food stand are needed. Anyone with an interest in helping out may contact Jess Schipper at 319-239-5815. ●

## Trees, please

### Volunteers needed

The Ackley Tree Board will be focusing their spring efforts on replanting trees in the Ackley City Park. Members of the organization applied for, and received funding to plant from six to 10 trees in the park, replacing those which will soon be cut down.

Five trees, some ash, others which are diseased or dying, will be removed from the park. The funding for the new trees has been provided through Black Hills Energy.

Volunteers are needed for the replanting project which will take place on April 22, Earth Day, beginning at 9 a.m. Anyone wishing to assist in the replanting project should contact Doug Boheman, Judy Crawford, John Muller, Brian Wade, or Teri Elmore.

The Ackley Tree Board plans to do a residential tree planting event in the fall. ●





**NO VOTE > CONT'D**

explained that if the agreement didn't work out, the same equipment would be transferred back to Ackley for the same \$1.

Wessels was concerned that Ackley had been promised that a crew would be in town, and that the option had somehow disappeared. Calloway Morton explained that it had not disappeared but would be delayed because billing for EMS services is approximately 150 days behind, noting that it takes the money that the community of Eldora cannot be expected to pay out in advance.

She further explained that the board reports will track financials, keeping both communities 'in the loop' as to when the crew might happen, suggesting that it could take place during the second year. Meanwhile two paramedics from Eldora would spend at least two days a week in Ackley to aid in providing services to the community during daytime hours.

Despite her best efforts, and those of residents like Ann Schriever, the vote to proceed with the merger failed.

Abbas explained his reasoning on Thursday, noting that while he understood that 24/7 coverage in Ackley is of utmost importance to residents, without a timeline of when a crew would again offer that coverage was concerning.

"I realize that this is about financials and that a specific date cannot be provided due to a lag between billing for services and receiving payment," Abbas began. "My concern is there doesn't seem to be a solid indication of when the new service would be established in Ackley - staying in Ack-

ley and responding from Ackley. Whether that's a dollar amount or a date, or what that threshold might be - I feel we need a better sense on when that would actually take place."

While it was explained that an advisory board - established with crew members and community members from both cities, would meet monthly on the newly formed service and monitor those financials, Abbas is concerned that it could be quite some time before Ackley residents could have the 24/7 service they want.

"Right now, AVAS cannot provide the community with daytime coverage," Abbas said. "Eldora is being dual-paged and covering those calls. And we appreciate that. I'm concerned that financials could delay this full merger far beyond the hopes of doing so within the second year."

Mayor Mike Nuss charged his three councilmen with bringing back viable options for the AVAS to the next meeting.

Later in the evening, during mayoral and council comments, councilperson Judy Crawford reiterated that challenge noting, "I'm disappointed. I'm waiting for three alternatives," she said.

In an interview following the meeting, Crawford urged residents to reach out to the three councilmen who voted against proceeding in the matter.

"This is such a disservice to our community," she said. "It's a disservice to those who gave their hard-earned resources to be able to call for help when they need it. What is being missed is that this is still a moving document, it can be tweaked. Call these council representatives and ask them why they voted against it." ●

**ELLA > CONT'D**

young that she wanted to do something big with her education. Her natural aptitude for school led her to pursue what she calls 'a smart career'. She'd always been encouraged and told that she could reach her goals. In the beginning - late elementary school, she thought she wanted to be an engineer.

"I did some classes and knew that wasn't what I wanted to do - engineering has its own skillset, and it wasn't my skillset," she said. "Then I took a horticulture class and realized I love learning about plants. And so that became my goal."

On a mission trip, she experienced helping others and realized that whatever her career was, it needed to include assisting others in their lives. The combination of her realizations resulted in her decision to help others through plant research, hence her pursuit of a career in horticulture.

She plans to hold a double major by the time her education is complete - the first in horticulture science, the second in chemistry. She knows that there's a wide variety of ways to use both in third world countries.

"I want to do research on primary crops in developing countries," Ella said. "You can help a lot of people because you help



PHOTO SUBMITTED

**Ella McGrath has high hopes which include attending Cornell University. While that has been put on hold, Ella will continue to pursue her passions at Colorado State, at least for a year.**

them help themselves build up their communities and their families."

She credits AGWSR's Mr. Finger and Mr. Abbas with her career inspiration.

"Mr. Finger is engaging and fun, and his chemistry class is why I want to major in chemistry in college," Ella explained. "If you don't have a good teacher, then you aren't going to like the class. And I loved Mr. Abbas' horticulture class."

Her amazing grandmother, Carol Chapman, of New Hartford, has played a huge role in that community's city gardens. While Ella didn't work a lot with her grandmother,

it did impact her decision to pursue horticulture.

She encourages others to try different things throughout their high school career - there's no better place or time in your life.

"Follow your dreams. Think big, go out-of-state to college before something attaches you here," Ella said. "A lot of people are scared of rejection. But rejection is going to happen in your life, and it's an essential part of success."

In so far as her Cornell application, and what she might have changed in her young life thus far, she admits that she discovered too late that she

needed to show Cornell her passion.

"You can't just tell them your passion, you have to have begun to experience it," Ella said. "Try things, do all that interest you, then choose one or two to be passionate about instead of being mediocre at seven!"

Ella's wisdom goes far beyond her years. She knows that Ivy League isn't for everyone.

"In the end, a degree is a degree. I won't get a better degree by attending Cornell, but what I will receive are the connections and a head start on the rest of my life and what I want to do," she finished. ●

**Community Calendar**

**Thursday, April 20**  
Seniors in Motion, Ackley Civic Center Building, 8:15 to 9 a.m. age 55 and over exercise group.  
Grief Share, 4 to 6 p.m. at the Iowa Falls Evangelical Free Church, Iowa Falls.  
**Monday, April 24**  
Franklin County Board of Supervisors, 8:30 a.m., Franklin County courthouse, Hampton.

Grundy County Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., Grundy County courthouse, Grundy Center.  
Seniors in Motion, Ackley Civic Center Building, 8:15 to 9 a.m. age 55 and over exercise group.  
Storytime, 10 a.m., Ackley Public Library, Ackley  
National Library week open house, 3 to 6 p.m., Ackley Public Library, Ackley  
**Tuesday, April 25**  
Butler County Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., Butler County courthouse, Allison.

Adult Coloring group, 1 p.m., Ackley Public Library, Ackley. Wednesday, April 26  
Hardin County Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., Hardin County courthouse, Eldora.  
After School Friends, 2:15 p.m., Ackley Public Library, Ackley.

If you would like your groups' events included in the calendar, please contact the Ackley World Journal at 641-847-2592, or email ackleywj@iafalls.com. ●

**Household hazardous waste drop-off event planned**

The City of Ackley will again partner with the Hardin County Solid Waste Disposal Commission and Metro Waste Authority to bring residents the opportunity to properly dispose

of household hazardous wastes. The event is scheduled to coincide with city-wide cleanup and has been scheduled for Saturday, May 13 at the Ackley Fire Station from 9 to 11 a.m.

Drop-off of the following items is free for Ackley residents - aerosol cleaners and paint, ammonia-based cleaners, antifreeze, rechargeable batteries, fertilizers, fluorescent light bulbs, gasoline/kerosene, lead-based paint, oil, stains and varnishes, metal polishes, rust removers, thermometers and thermostats, pesticides, petroleum adhesives, used oil filters and sharps or needles (must be contained).

Items that will not be accepted include ammunition, asbestos, electronics, explosives, fire extinguishers, latex paint, medications, propane tanks or cylinders, and radioactive materials.

If you have questions about a particular item not listed, please call 641-939-5808 or 515-333-4432. ●



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**Ice cream social**

The Hardin County child Abuse Prevention Coalition, in partnership with Hardin County Community Partnerships for Protecting Children, helped raise awareness during Child Abuse Prevention Month during an ice cream social held at the Ackley Sky Kone last Wednesday evening. Along with the Ackley Volunteer Ambulance Service, the Ackley Fire Department, Ackley Police Department and Hardin County Sheriff and deputies, HCCAPC provided opportunities for children to mingle and have fun with those who are among the trusted adults that they should turn to in such instances.

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