

FUN NIGHT FUNDRAISER for the LAKE & NATURE CENTER

Tama Co. Conservation bringing back the fun Annual fundraiser to return following pandemic hiatus

RUBY F. MCALLISTER | rbodeker@northtamatelegraph.com

With the restoration of Otter Creek Lake nearly complete and the pandemic receding into the background of life, Tama Co. Conservation is ready to bring back the fun with its annual Fun Night Fundraiser.

This year's Fun Night is set for Saturday, April 1, at Otter Creek Lake & Park Nature Center located north of Toledo at 2283 Park Road. Doors will open at 4:30 p.m. with dinner commencing at 5:30 p.m.

As in the past, there will be a catered meal, silent auction, guest speaker, and plenty of family fun with all proceeds benefiting both environmental education programming and improvement projects at the nature center. A bake sale will also take place alongside the silent auction.

New this year, there will be carnival games with prizes set up in the basement of the nature center for kids including ring toss, Plinko, bags, and more. Kids can also view live animal displays, learn more about the science behind aquaponics, and view different taxidermy displays of Iowa's natural critters. The upstairs diorama room will also be set up for kids.

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PHOTO BY MICHAEL D. DAVIS

At Oak Park in Tama, the City Council approved the investment of almost \$10,000 to repair and preserve this decades-old bandstand.

Bandages for the Bandstand

Tama council OKs repairs for historic structure

BY MICHAEL D. DAVIS

At Monday's Tama City Council meeting, Oak Park on McClellan was discussed. The old bandstand that has stood for decades in the park is in desperate need of repair.

Among other impairments, the roof sustained damage from a falling branch. Depending on where you are standing in/around the bandstand, you can look through a hole in the ceiling and see birds flying overhead. The council carried out a motion for repairs in the sum of \$9,634.26. The bandstand was rebuilt once before in 2002 with the sponsorship of many downtown businesses, to which the building still holds their names.

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WEEKEND FORECAST:

Saturday: PARTLY SUNNY
High: 38 / Low: 21



Sunday: MOSTLY SUNNY
High: 39 / Low: 29

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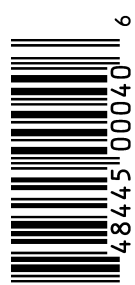
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STC School Board discusses hiring SRO



PHOTO BY VANESSA ROUDABUSH

South Tama Community School District and the School Board had a discussion on hiring a full-time SRO during Monday's meeting.

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During Monday night's meeting, the South Tama County Board of Education discussed hiring a full-time School Resource Officer, with Superintendent John Cain and Toledo Chief of Police Dan Quigley presenting a rough draft of policies pertaining to a possible SRO at the schools.

School Resource Officers — also known as SROs — are sworn law enforcement officers responsible for safety and crime prevention inside schools in an effort to create a safer environment for faculty and students.

"We've talked about this for some time. Chief Quigley has been able to present me with some school calls since September 2017 and collected community data. The city of Tama and Toledo has been contacted 732 times during that five-year span," Cain said.

Those calls have included traffic collisions and violations within the vicinity and inside the school parking lots, calls pertaining to school events, student violations of laws, and other such incidents.

STC has a School Safety Committee in place and established a mental health care program to help assist students in need, but as Board members discussed, they don't feel that it has been effective enough.

"Chief Quigley has been a part of our school safety committee. He's been a part of the process from the get-go. We'll continue to meet as a school and city team as we move for-

ward. Our [school district] has systems and structures in place, and the SRO will fit right in. Our administration is already used to one-on-ones [with officers]," Cain said.

After identifying the need for an SRO at all three of the STC schools, Cain and Quigley have worked alongside the School Safety Committee to define the SROs' role in the schools.

"The Safety Committee wants to ensure the SRO roles are clear from day one. So when the SRO steps into the building and understands their role and responsibility," Cain continued.

Quigley went on to expound a bit on what exactly an SRO's job would look like.

"An SRO isn't a chaperone in school. They're there to build relationships and enforce policies," he said. "Law enforcement and the school administration need to figure out what the practices will be [for SROs]."

Building relationships between the school district and local law enforcement was paramount for both Quigley and Cain.

"Helping build relationships [between] faculty, students, and with the officers will be positive. Building those relationships will hopefully, ultimately, curb some negative behaviors and activities," Quigley said.

"We want to build a climate and culture where that SRO identifies students in need, works with their situation, and implements a good communication plan," Cain added.

The board, along with Quigley

and Cain, extensively discussed the hiring process for an SRO at STC.

"The biggest hurdle now with the SRO position is the hiring process," said Quigley.

Cain said the district would have a few different departments to potentially draw from.

"We'll continue to look at the hiring process. Ultimately, we want to get the best person [for the job]. The Tama and Toledo [Police Departments] have expressed interest, and we've also involved the Meskwaki [Police] in some of these discussions. We're leaning towards one officer from either department for the position of SRO, and, at this point, we're open to any officers," he said. "But we want a candidate with some experience, and we want to hire the best fit for our community."

Chief Quigley did stress some cons to hiring an SRO to the School Board.

"There will be growing pains. It will be something new and need a probationary period. As a South Tama graduate, when I was in high school, I'd see part-time SROs, fire, and EMS services in a certain capacity [at the school]. Although, prior to the Columbine shooting [in 1999], I don't know if they had SRO training yet. But, in recent years, SRO training has been pushing forward," he said.

Other board members addressed concerns about SROs targeting students, defining the 'bad kids' and

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Racing towards graduation

STC seniors Roman Hill and Nolan Salas sign with MCC eSports

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On Wednesday, March 1, South Tama County High School Seniors Roman Hill and Nolan Salas signed with Marshalltown Community College for the opportunity to play eSports at the next level.

"We're hoping that even more than one [of our] players will earn a scholarship. Of course, it all depends on how they do in the fall with MCC. Their coaches are going to hold tryouts. We're pretty confident we should get at least one scholarship winner, but more importantly than that, it's a neat feeling to see these kids succeed and move on with something in their future, like eSports, to help them out," said Coach Mike Carnahan.

Both Hill and Salas



PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE SOUTH TAMA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

STC Seniors Roman Hill (left) and Nolan Salas (right) signed with MCC for the potential to earn an eSports scholarship this fall.

want to try out for MCC's Mario Kart eSports team, along with Hill's passion for Overwatch 2 and Salas' need to smash in Smash Bros.

"Smash Bros. is definitely the game that I wanted to join eSports for. That's the one I'm good at," said Salas.

Both STC seniors will

be competing for an eSports scholarship to MCC.

"The scholarship isn't guaranteed...yet," said Hill. "I plan on going there for two years for my general credit classes before going to Iowa State for possibly agricultural engineering. Haven't fully committed to it yet."

As for Salas' college

plan, he wishes to pursue a degree in theater at the University of Northern Iowa after two years at MCC.

"I performed at the Gallagher Bluedorn [Arts Center] at UNI. It was fantastic. That's where it started, where I found theater as my true passion. The

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