

Local People. Local Stories.

PCM EXPLORER

PRAIRIE CITY



Morgan and Melody Burkman, owners of Coffee and Carnations, in their new shop on the northwest corner of the Prairie City's downtown. Jamee A. Pierson/PCM Explorer

Hot and fresh

Coffee and Carnations adds several amenities to downtown Prairie City

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Tucked on the northwest corner of the Prairie City downtown, Coffee and Carnations is a cute-as-a-button shop with treats to please anyone. The dream of mother-daughter duo Melody and Morgan Burtman, the new eatery and floral boutique at 100 E. Jefferson St. is already a hit in the community. "We've received a lot of support locally. Saturdays, especially, we usually have a line clear to the door," Melody said. The idea to open her own shop came while Morgan was

working in the Hy-Vee floral department. Always wanting to work outside the large chain store, Morgan got her chance in her grandfather's former medical clinic building. "My dad, Dr. Ingle, and my youngest son, along with many other people, were working on it everyday while we are at work. They were in here redoing the whole thing," Melody said. "It has just been kind-of a menagerie of all of our ideas. It was completely gutted." The transformation has been remarkable. No longer does the building have the cold, sterile feel of a medical facility, the

walls are warm with the original brick and comfy couches and even a table with swings fill the space. "It has been weird, the whole process. Our mission is 'God first' and we found this saying when we were first getting the ideas. When we were starting, we found this little embroidered frame that said 'God first.' It has been weird that, with that theme ... it is just little things that have worked out," Melody said. "We think something is going to be a disaster then something else is put in

COFFEE • 4B

PCM

Color outside the lines

PCM Elementaries PTO holds Color Fun Run Sept. 30 in Prairie City



More than 200 people took their turns getting covered in color during the PCM Elementaries PTO Color Fun Run Sept. 30 in Prairie City. Jamee A. Pierson/PCM Explorer

MONROE

A welcome donation

Fareway Grocery donates retired shelving to PCM Food Pantry

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A group working to do good, the PCM Food Pantry recently received a much needed donation of shelves for the growing amenity. Fareway Grocery gave shelves that now line the walls, holding food and goods for those who need them most. "We decided to make a move to a bigger facility and we had more room. It started out I had Gary (Worrall) help set the items and he



Fareway Grocery Vice President Gary Worrall, left, and PCM Food Pantry volunteer Gary Munson, right, work to put shelving together donated by Fareway at the Monroe pantry location. Jamee A. Pierson/PCM Explorer

DONATION • 4B

MONROE

Enter if you dare

The Gathering Place's Haunted Park Saturday in Monroe

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The leaves are changing color and the air is becoming crisp, fall is here and it's time to celebrate. The new Monroe senior and community center, the Gathering Place, is hosting a Haunted Park fundraising event from 4 to 6 p.m. Saturday on the Monroe square.

In partnership with the Monroe Kiwanis and Monroe Public Library, an evening of spooky fun is in store. "We would like to have carved or decorated pumpkins brought for the pumpkin decorating contest," organizer Natalie Pendroy said. "If you dare, you can

HAUNTED PARK • 2



Carved and decorated pumpkins are welcome at the Gathering Place's Haunted Park event from 4 to 6 p.m. Saturday on the Monroe square. Jamee A. Pierson/PCM Explorer

JASPER COUNTY

Candidates in Jasper County say refusing to debate robs voters

Conflicts behind the scenes may prevent would-be representatives from getting voices heard

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Editor's note: This is part two in a two-part series on the debate conflict within Jasper County.

DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES EXPLAIN THEIR SIDE

Newton News reached out to every candidate running for supervisor and the statehouse this election. The only candidates who did not provide responses were: supervisor Denny Carpenter, Republican House candidate Barb Kniff McCulla and Democratic House candidate Mike Overman.

Erick Zehr, the Democratic candidate running for Iowa House District 38, said he will happily participate in the League of Women Voters debate. He praised the organization for its "long-standing history of nonpartisanship" and for providing Jasper County with educational debates for many years.

"If you are running for public office, asking for people to put their faith and trust in you, you owe it to them to be as transparent and forthcoming as possible," Zehr said. "Forums and debates are a great way for people to ask direct questions of the candidates, and hopefully get straight answers." Zehr is concerned about the prospect of not having any debates and hav-

ing people not know where candidates stand on issues. Although he has never debated before, Zehr said his nervousness in participating is outweighed by the responsibility he feels for the voters and distinguishing himself on critical issues.

However, when asked if he would have participated in the joint forum held by both parties, Zehr said he found it silly to reinvent the wheel when Jasper County already has a "respected, nonpartisan option." He also so no valid reason to cut them out and again praised the past League of Women Voters debates.

"That being said, I think Democrats are on the right side of the most pressing issues and I am eager to highlight that, so if an alternative debate would be the only option, so be it," Zehr said.

Democratic supervisor candidate Pam Olson said she originally replied yes to the invitation from the League of Women Voters but is now unsure if the forum is still one with only one side seemingly replying yes. Olson also believes the League of Women Voters would provide an even playing field for all candidates.

"I feel that not having both parties there would be a disservice to the voters. They would only get to hear one side of an issue," Olson said. "But with that said if others

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