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Coffee worth talking about

SheepGate Coffee Co. now open in downtown Colfax



Jamee A. Pierson/Jasper County Tribune

SheepGate Coffee Co. is packed with customers on its opening day Feb. 9. The new coffee shop will be open 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday at its 15 E. Howard St. location.

Jamee A. Pierson
Editor

SheepGate Coffee Co. is open for business in downtown Colfax. The quaint coffee shop at 15 E. Howard St. is a much anticipated addition to the community.

“We bought it before COVID, being a nonprofit, it was just kind

of put on the backburner not knowing what finances would do,” SheepGate Vice President Michael Hunsberger said. “We eventually started in on it and had some code things we had to do, and once we got those worked out things started rolling fast.”

Painted in bright white with prints covering the wall facing the

coffee bar, the space is welcoming to those looking for a cup of coffee or sandwich for lunch. It will even be serving a special SheepGate blend from roaster Windmill, along with the full array of blends from the coffee company.

To start, it will be open from

COFFEE — See Page 2

Supervisors approve federal aid for F-48 W resurfacing

County engineer estimates project to be let by July, or November at the latest

Christopher Braunschweig
Staff Writer

Federal aid funds will be used for the resurfacing of a roughly 5.8-mile stretch of Highway F-48 West in Jasper County.

The Jasper County Board of Supervisors approved the federal aid agreement in a 2-0 vote during the Feb. 7 meeting. County engineer Michael Frietsch said the agreement is another step that needs completed in order to get the project let by July 2023 and to be completed in spring 2024.

“If we do let it by July they could potentially do a little prep work in summer if they wanted to before harvest season as well,” Frietsch said, noting one challenge he is he facing is trying to get federal aid to be in the right fiscal year. Typically, a new fiscal year for the county starts in July.

If the issue persists, Frietsch said the letting could be pushed to November 2023, which he said would not hurt the county.

In 2022, Frietsch estimated the project would cost more than \$4 million. About \$2.9 million of the total costs will consist of farm-to-market

RESURFACING — See Page 3

Colfax-Mingo dance team hits the floor

The gym was rocking Sunday during the dance team’s Winter Show



Jamee A. Pierson/Jasper County Tribune

VOLUNTEERS KNOW THERE’S A PROBLEM

Small town EMS agencies say county’s ALS program has its benefits, but others worry it might not be the best solution

Christopher Braunschweig
Staff Writer

Editor’s note: The following story is the second in a multi-part series about Jasper County’s efforts to improve emergency care for rural residents and assist the volunteer teams struggling to keep crews full and find new members, many of which may not have the means or time to be certified for paramedic-level care.

Justine Wyma cares for her community in every way possible. When she is not tending to children’s health needs in the classrooms or teaching nursing courses at DMACC, she is responding to ambulance calls in her own community of Sully, a small town populated by less than 900 people.

Prior to working in the schools, Wyma worked in critical care units and intensive care units. And for the past 23 years she has volunteered her time and expertise to the Sully Rural Fire Department and Ambulance. Wyma has been the ambulance director in Sully for about 20 years.

Out of the 20 or so volunteers in Sully Rural Fire Department and Ambulance, Wyma is one of the few certified to provide paramedic-level care. She has a Master of Science in Nursing and is a

registered nurse and certified legal nurse consultant, which more than qualifies her to provide medical assistance.

However, being one of the only paramedics in town to respond to calls has proven difficult for Wyma. If she is able to be on scene during a critical emergency, the Sully EMS crews can function as a semi-advanced life support service, Wyma said. But transportation services are limited.

Patients can be transported to a local hospital in Newton, Grinnell or Pella, but if someone needs to go to Des Moines it can be challenging as it would likely put Sully out of service for up to three hours.

Which is partly why Wyma has embraced the ALS program from the Jasper County Sheriff’s Office.

In fall 2022, crews had to report to a big fire south of Lynnville and required the help of six other departments. Wyma and another staff member were the only two people left in town to cover an ambulance call near Kellogg at the same time as the fire. But Kellogg’s fire crew was already helping as mutual aid.

“Luckyly (Jasper County) had their fly car out and were able to help us,” Wyma said, noting one of the two reserve deputy paramedics was able to assist in that scenario, which she was grateful for.

Other departments are seeing the benefits of the county’s program, too, specifically

when it comes to filling in service gaps and providing a higher level of care when needed.

Brock Hansen, the chief of Baxter Rural Fire Department, said the county’s program is a “very welcomed” resource for its rescue unit. Baxter and other communities have had issues in the past covering calls. There are times when the town of more than 970 people needs the reserve deputy paramedics.

“Other times we don’t need ‘em,” Hansen said. “I think it’s a good, flexible fit for both departments. We work well with each other and complement each other.”

Wyma, too, said the ALS program is an excellent

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