

Ackley World Journal

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SHAWN DIGITY/ACKLEY WORLD JOURNAL

AVAS President Joan Frazier presented further details to the merger plan to the Ackley council last week.

Full steam ahead on EMS combo

Analysis of the AVAS-Eldora plan

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The Ackley-Eldora emergency medical service merger reached its next stepping stone on Wednesday, Jan. 11, when the city of Ackley met for its monthly meeting. Led by Ackley Volunteer Ambulance Service (AVAS) President Joan Frazier and Eldora EMS Director Maile Carter, negotiations between Eldora and Ackley had been approved, and new details were brought to Ackley's session.

According to the merger detail report, the benefits of the merger would include paramedic services, 24-hour coverage in each community, "better utilization of resources for both communities," greater stability within the service radius, and "CPR training, visiting schools, and continued standby at community and athletic events." The consolidation would create one entity that would be renamed and have a unified crew with one service director, with an expected start date of July 1, 2023.

As the new service grows, the AVAS will wither away, but there will remain a station in Ackley with one paramedic and two ambulances. However, many AVAS assets will eventually be transferred to the new EMS group. And at that point, the AVAS would simply allow grandfathered contracts to run out as they expire without renewal options. Also worth noting, each city would still retain its own EMS building, which will continue to be maintained and funded by their respective towns.

After three years, the new service's initial contract will be reviewed (June 30, 2026). Suppose the cities find out the merger didn't fulfill their expectations. In that case, the agreement shall become "null and void," and all previously merged assets will be re-transferred to their original entity. However, if the new service proves effective, there will be rolling reviews every three years onward.

While at the council meeting, Carter and Frazier wanted to establish a time for a joint meeting later this month involving each city's councils

and EMS departments, which was scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 25, at 6:30 p.m. at Eldora's EMS building (1208 15th Ave.).

The meeting would help discern whether the new EMS would operate with a governing or advisory board. "I want to make sure that both communities are represented well," Frazier expressed; she felt it fair to have representation from both cities for the new department.

It was recommended that the council form an advisory board instead of a governing board, though. The difference between an advisory and governing panel is that the latter committee would make the final calls versus the former, which could offer recommendations or perspectives without decision-making authority.

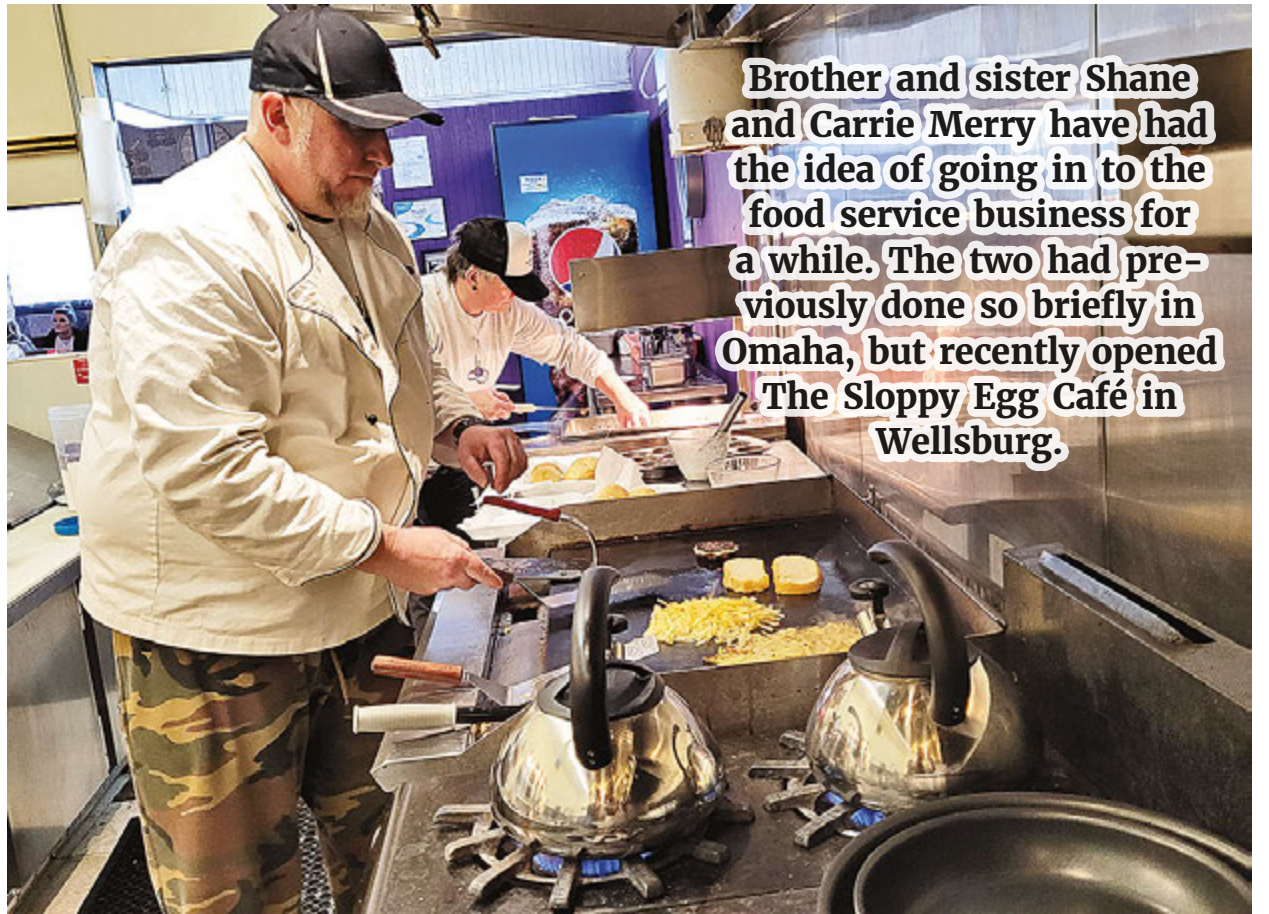
According to the report, a seven-member board of trustees representing the new EMS would ideally feature the new service director, a crew member that resides in the AGWSR school district, one that lives in the Eldora school district, and four total elected community members (two from Ackley, two from Eldora).

However, Carter and Frazier added that the choice between a governing or advisory board did not require a solution during Wednesday night's meeting, and no decision was made on that concept.

Frazier explained that the AVAS numbers have dwindled over the years, explaining that she now only has five certified EMTs. An optimal crew would feature 18-20 hands on deck. On Carter's end, she currently has a team of nine paramedics, five EMTs, and another five in EMT classes (four Eldora, one Ackley); Carter added that she's looking at a total roster of 23 crew members.

Mayor Mike Nuss opened the floor to council concerns on the merger, with brief debates for and against a consolidation move. With that, some council members felt it was a do-or-die option: either continue seeing the service fade away or try a new option that could bolster emergency medical services for years to come. While councilman Chuy Flores expressed his perspective with some skepticism, adding it was a "shot in the dark," councilwoman and Mayor Pro Tempore Judy

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Brother and sister Shane and Carrie Merry have had the idea of going in to the food service business for a while. The two had previously done so briefly in Omaha, but recently opened The Sloppy Egg Café in Wellsburg.

It's Always SUNNY in Wellsburg

Sloppy Egg Café opens in Wellsburg

STORY AND PHOTO BY COREY MEINTS
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It's been said that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. For siblings Shane and Carrie Merry it's the only meal that's important.

The Merrys opened The Sloppy Egg Café in a familiar restaurant location. The site at 520 N. Adams in Wellsburg had been the long-time home to The Towne House Supper Club. More recently it had been another restaurant until its closing.

The two, with eight years between them in age, had limited experience in the restaurant business. Carrie spent most of her career in finance while Shane has done several different things after serving in the military. Most recently he has owned a moving business. He still plans to keep that, but will be doling those jobs out to his crew while he serves as the Sloppy Egg Café cook. He did have some cooking experience in high school, cooking at the Janesville Cafe.

It was through one of Carrie's financial dealings that the two re-

ally started considering going into the food service business. She acquired a sports bar in Omaha, Neb. and asked Shane to be her cook. From that came an idea to open up a food truck with one staple being the main course - a sloppy egg sandwich.

Carrie said the sandwich had glowingly been endorsed by her friends who she would serve at home following a night out.

"It came because I made it for my friends after the bar I had would close," Carrie said. "They would come to my house and would talk about it. They would rave about it. We'd be whooping it up in downtown Omaha and one of my friends would say, 'your house for breakfast?' So, I started making these sandwiches. It got to a point where I wouldn't even be out with her and she'd call and tell me she's bringing 10 people over for sloppy egg sandwiches. My friends would call me the next day and tell me I saved their lives with it. That sandwich has been with me for over 20 years. I have perfected it over the years."

Carrie moved back home to Cedar Falls in 2018 and continued in finance as Shane, who has lived in Wellsburg for 12 years, continued to operate Merry Moving.

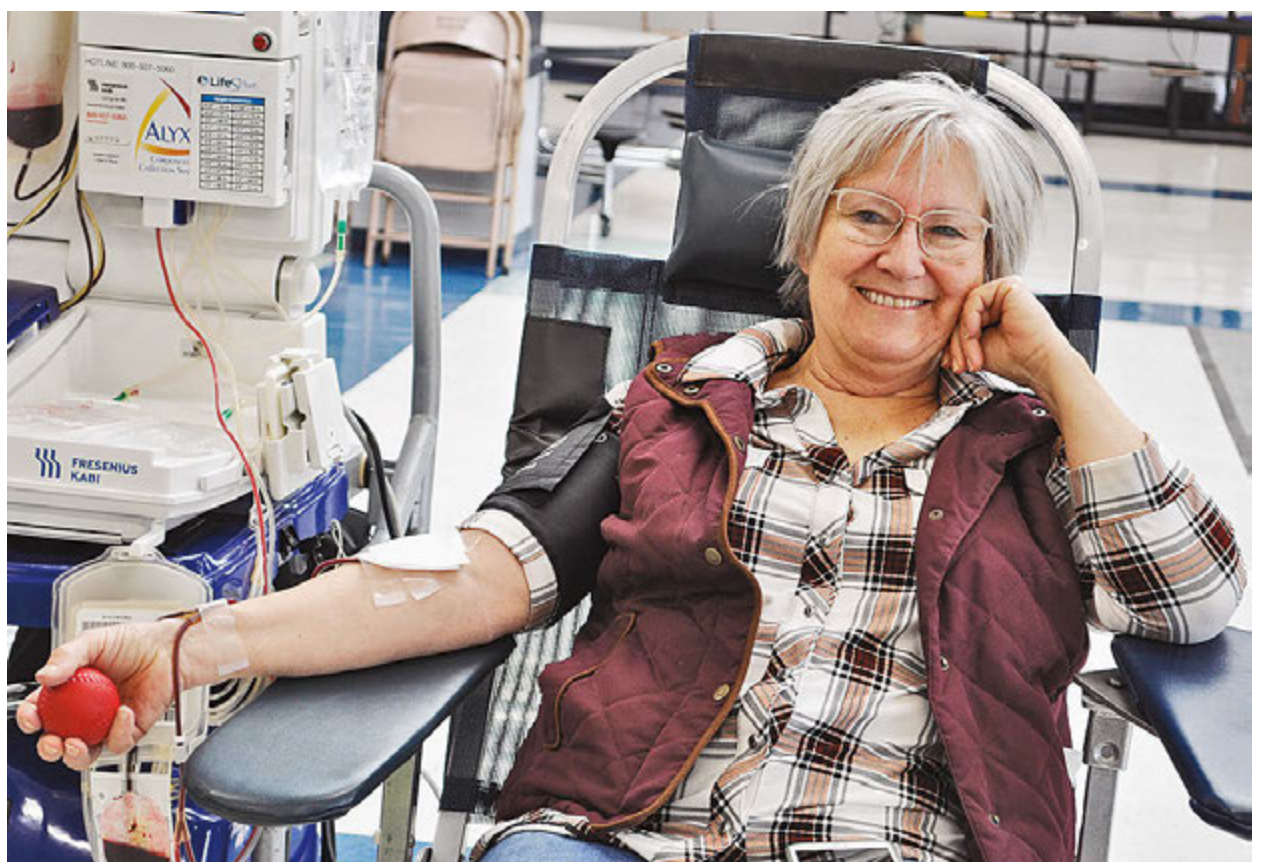
"At the end of the day, I just want to work with my brother," Carrie said. "I had a house in Carter Lake and Shane and I were sitting there one 4th of July and he asked me if I ever thought about owning another restaurant. I said I would, but I wouldn't do anything as big as we had in Omaha. I would do a smaller place."

But before that place came about, Carrie had another idea.

"I wanted to have a food truck and sit outside the bars and serve the sloppy egg sandwich," Carrie said. "Then he (Shane) came up to me last June with this. I came to look at it and thought why not give it a whirl. You have to build your dream, right?"

The brother and sister held a soft opening ahead of the new year. They served dozens of breakfasts, which range from the classic two-egg (sloppy, un-sloppy or omelet) with choice of meat (ham, bacon or sausage) and potato (hash-browns or diced) with homemade bread or pancakes meal to traditional French toast. There are also a stuffed pancake, waffle, non-stuffed waffle, breakfast quesadilla, or sloppy egg sandwich options. Homemade cinnamon puffs

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BRITTANY SHAFFER/ACKLEY WORLD JOURNAL

Life Saver

Becky Jansonius squeezes a red stress ball to help get blood flowing to aid in her blood donation. Becky made her blood donation during the LifeServe blood drive held at the AGWSR commons last Wednesday. The drive took the place of those in the Ackley community which had been sponsored by the now disbanded Ackley Rotary club.



Community Calendar

Thursday, Jan. 19
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, 19939 County Highway D20, Iowa Falls.

Friday, Jan. 20
Ackley Garbage and Recycling pick-up.

Monday, Jan. 23
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.

Tuesday, Jan. 24
Butler County Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., Butler County courthouse, Allison.

Wednesday, Jan. 25
Hardin County Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., Hardin County courthouse, Eldora.

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. ●

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Play Cards

The Wellsburg Public Library is hosting a card playing event on Friday, Jan. 20 at 1 p.m. Residents are invited to accompany family and friends for a fun event.

Hamburger Fry

The Ackley Sons of the American Legion will host a hamburger fry on Saturday, Jan. 21 from 4:30 to 8 p.m. or until food is gone.

Aplington Fundraiser

At Home Aplington will host a fundraiser for the Aplington Pool Project on Sunday, Feb. 8 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Aplington Recreation Complex.

Parking

Ackley residents are reminded that during a

winter weather emergency, parking on the streets is not allowed so that streets department staff may clear the streets more efficiently.

Residents are asked to keep fire hydrants cleared in case access is needed.

Game Feed

Ackley Police Chief Gerry Frick will host a wild game feed on Saturday, March 4 at the Ackley American Legion. The event will support local participants in the Special Olympics.

Frick will provide game for those who wish to make a dish. Those already committed to taking part in providing dishes include recipes which will use raccoon, deer, squirrel, and pheasant.

If you would like to make a dish, please contact Chief Frick through the Ackley City Hall at 641-847-3332 at your earliest convenience. ●

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are also served daily.

Plans are already underway to start serving more traditional lunch fare such as hamburgers. Carrie said she also wants to see pop-up dinner specials as early as Valentine's Day. Brunches and dinners will be held twice a month. But the only thing to remain constant on the menu will be breakfast.

"I don't want to stop doing breakfasts," Carrie said. "I wanted to do only breakfast, but we thought we'd throw in some lunches - something simple - and dinners."

Everything, from the cinnamon puff pastries to the hashbrowns is fresh with that homemade twist. That's something Shane, who has never gone to culinary school, said he prides himself on, going so far as to detail those hashbrowns.

"Just cooking at home I have a passion for it," Shane said. "Because of that, why take shortcuts? Like with the hashbrowns. They take the longest so I get them on the griddle right a way because they're fresh. So

many places use frozen. I've been shredding potatoes at home for years and they're so much better."

Shane said he sees it on television shows when chefs go into restaurants has influenced him.

"Watching guys like Gordon Ramsey and Guy Fieri go in and people are doing everything from scratch," Shane said. "They're in there doing that. If I'm going to do it, that's how I'm going to do it. We make our own breads, our own jams, pastries, hashbrowns. Everything is as fresh as it can be. Why cheat? Premade food at some places is good, but that's not how I want to do it."

The big question is, sloppy or unsloppy?

"Sloppy is you get them all messy - sunny side up, over easy, over medium," Carrie said. "Then unsloppy is scrambled, over hard or just dead."

The Sloppy Egg Café is open everyday from 6 a.m. to 1 p.m. but is closed on Mondays. On days with lunch (watch the Facebook page) it will be open until 3 p.m. Brunches and dinners will be determined. ●

Filtering out future footprint

AGWSR Board discusses growth with firm

BY COREY MEINTS
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Meeting for the first time in the new School Board office at the Ackley center, the AGWSR School Board discussed possible further changes to the building at Monday's meeting. While no decisions were made, the topic covered most of the time.

The new office is in a recently completed addition to the west side of the high school building. To the east sits an elementary that was the most recent construction project which was done about seven years ago.

Erik Smith, AGWSR Superintendent, said the board met with a representative from SitelogIQ - a Minneapolis-based company specializing in energy services and facility solutions. The discussion was more about the process of any future growth as opposed to planning for actual construction.

"We are looking at our options for different architectural and engineering teams," Smith said. "We have done some building projects,

so we're just looking at our options to take a look at other design teams to help us move forward if there is to be another project."

Smith said SitelogIQ handles all aspects of a construction project from designing and engineering to managing construction and handling public relations.

"Our hope is, as we move forward with our next projects, maybe using a company like this to better engage the community and keep the public informed," Smith said.

Smith added that there are no immediate plans in the wake of the recent office addition and locker room remodeling projects.

"We have, at times, discussed some individual projects that we want moving forward but a lot of the conversation was about engaging the community and deciding what we want or need next," Smith said.

The most recent project brought administration into one area. Smith said his office, the business manager's office, district secretary's office, activities director's office, high school principal and secretary's offices, counselor's office, nurse's office, teacher work room, and new boardroom were the main additions. With the locker room renovations, the project cost \$2.2 mil-

lion. He noted that that was paid for through S.A.V.E. funding which did not affect taxes.

The project also allowed for moving staff around to create more useful work areas.

"We had people in different places, so what we're really doing is making more room for our people who are working every day with kids and with other teachers to have space to call their home and not be doubled-up or meeting in a backroom closet so to speak," Smith said. "This has really opened up quite a bit of space for us to do that."

In other business, the AGWSR School Board:

- Approved the district's request for Dropout Prevention Supplemental Aide in the amount of just over \$195,000 to help students at risk of dropping out or who are behind on credits.

- Accepted the resignations of Kylee Crouse as high school special education associate, Kristen Klein as high school associate, and Jo Prusha as school counselor in Wellsburg.

- Approved Isabella Winters as childcare worker at the Cougar's Den, James Abbas as junior high wrestling coach, and Codie Duhn as eighth grade play director. ●

BRITTANY SHAFFER
/ACKLEY WORLD JOURNAL

Sewer Work

McDowell and Sons Contractors of Iowa Falls arrived to work on a water main line on Mitchell St. in Ackley last week. The damage was likely caused by the shifting ground caused by the extreme temperature swings of the previous weeks.



The FUN-drive Continues

Four ways to support shelter construction

BECKY SCHIPPER
EDITOR

Nearly 10 months ago the Prairie Bridges Park board announced their intention to construct a shelter house which will become a hub of new opportunities for the park. To date, donations and grants for the project have surpassed \$87,000. That total includes funds raised through the 2022 Barlow Challenge, a grant from the Ackley Community Foundation, and a grant from Target. Funds from Park Fest 2022 were also added to the construction coffers.

FUNDraising continues with four events planned - one each month, from now through April. All events will be held at the Ackley Recreation Club with doors opening at 7 p.m. Single tickets for each show are \$40, or \$100 for three events.

On Friday, Jan. 27, ventriloquist Marc Rubben will perform a unique monologue including audience participation and his very colorful cast of characters including Hippy - a tattoo clad redneck, and a Jamaican Rasta-mon - a fortune telling Swami, and others.

Performing on Friday, Feb. 17,

will be multi-instrumentalists Mike Lauer and Greg Byers with a fun and fast-paced performance of dueling strings in a mishmash of favorite hits from radio, TV, and movies, coupled with family friendly humor.

The third performance will be held on Friday, March 17, when stand-up comedian, Tim Harmston will bring his show to Ackley. Harmston has appeared on the Late Show with David Letterman, Last Comic Standing and Comedy Central, to name a few.

"All the shows are meant to entertain with crowd engagement," explains Jess Schipper, park board member.

The fun-drive continues in April with the Prairie Bridges Park and Pony Express Dance scheduled for April 27. Admission for the dance is just \$5. The Boys, who perform today's country and the best of the past, along with an arsenal of original songs, will perform. Proceeds from the dance event will be split between the park (shelter construction) and Pony Express which supports Easterseals Camp Sunnyside for children and adults with and without disabilities.

Both silent and live auctions are also planned, with a 50/50 raffle scheduled as well.

The shelter, a 50- by 70-foot structure, will be constructed be-

ginning this spring in the Back Forty portion of the park. The financial goal for the construction is estimated at \$275,000 for the building which will include a covered patio, a fully-equipped kitchen, and expanded restroom facilities.

"What has made the park successful over the past 30 years is the community's involvement - whether through monetary donations, donations of labor, right down to walkers who pick up trash while enjoying the great outdoors," Fistler said. "Each and every volunteer and donation has helped the park grow to what it is today, just like each and every donation - big or small, will help with this project."

Over the past year the park board has continued to improve the local asset with tree plantings, replacement of three bridges and the main dock as well as adding a second fishing doc. Playground equipment has also been updated.

Fistler explains that the shelter house will open opportunities for the park to be a destination for both public and private events.

Tickets for the fundraisers may be purchased from any Prairie Bridges Park Board member - Mike Fistler, Jess Schipper, Kevin Neuberger, Paul Williams, Bo Schipper, Jeff Hesnard, Steve Scallon, and Teresa Krull. ●

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Crawford rebutted that it didn't "burn any bridges" either. As Ackley weighed the options, councilmember Joe Wessels exclaimed that he was 100 percent in favor of the move, largely to preserve what's left of a disappearing service in the community.

"I don't think it's a good idea to do this. I think we can make it work with what we got." Flores said. He didn't want to risk being in a worse spot than they currently were. While there are no guarantees it'll work, Crawford mentioned, it wasn't so much a move that everyone wanted as it was one out of necessity. "It's not a matter of what we want; it's a matter of what's

available," she stated. "We don't know unless we try," added Wessels. "For God's sake, we gotta do something."

In other Ackley City Council business:

Firewall: The city was informed that its current firewall, SonicWall, would no longer be supported with updates. With no further patches, City Clerk Malena Dennis explained that a power outage or even an electrical flicker could render the firewall useless now. Council members agreed it was vital to have that protection, so Ackley will work a new defense into the budget for the next fiscal year.

GO bond: Nuss ex-

plained that an awarding of the 2020A general obligation bond was meant for ambulance upgrades, but the council was curious if that bond funding could be used for EMS facility upgrades instead. An attorney stated that it shouldn't require a public hearing if they wanted amended language for that bond.

Advanced life back-up change: The mayor recently sent out signed letters to Eldora City Administrator Aaron Budweg and Sheriff Dave McDaniel, notifying them that Ackley would be changing their primary advanced life support provider to Eldora's EMS. The council approved the change that will go into effect on Feb. 1.

Levies: A public hearing was scheduled for Jan. 31, at 6 p.m. in the Ackley council chambers revolving around city levies and the current property valuations. In essence, Ackley is getting less money, according to Dennis, with a \$12,000 difference in the general fund compared to 2022. Part of this is driven by some reclassifications of commercial, industrial, residential, and multi-residential properties as they phased out certain portions of those rollbacks. This caused a bigger hit in Franklin County, where much of Ackley's industrial and commercial lies. "Our budget will be tighter this year, and we will be struggling," Dennis stated. ●

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SHOWING JANUARY 20 - 26
Whitney Houston: I Wanna Dance with Somebody
RATED PG-13
TUES. - FRI. 7 p.m.
SAT. & SUN. 3 & 7 p.m.
To Be Announced

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