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Calmar Courier

Community News. Community Service.

Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2023 | Volume 45, Issue 2

Official Paper of Calmar, Fort Atkinson, Waucoma, Winneshiek County & South Winneshiek and Turkey Valley Community Schools

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Grant funding is being sought to add an electric vehicle charging station to Calmar. One of the potential sites is Calmar's north lot downtown. If plans go ahead, the unit might look like this one (below) at the Fayette County Courthouse with parking reserved for only electric vehicles in the designated spot. Photos by Michael Hohenbrink

Power Up

Calmar Council Okays Charging Station Effort

By Michael Hohenbrink
Editor

An electric charging station could be coming to Calmar and other locations around Winneshiek County.

Council heard details from Economic Development Director Don Wurtzel about an effort by the Winneshiek Energy District to seek six to seven charging stations around the area, including one in Calmar.

Grant funding is being sought for the effort.

Calmar would have minimal monetary outlay for the idea. "And the expense will be the installation cost," said Wurtzel.

He was uncertain what the installation cost would end up being for sure.

Tentatively, Wurtzel suggested a location in the parking lot north of the railroad tracks, across from the depot.

Council Member Linus Sabelka suggested the north parking lot downtown as an option, one that would have greater visibility.

The plan for now is for one charging spot with the possibility to go to two down the road.

According to Wurtzel, the charging station would be a service to visitors, perhaps inducing them to spend money in town while they charge.

Users would pay a fee via an app for the service, with the city able to add on a fee to cover its costs.

Wurtzel was reluctant to have the city accept a credit card, given the percentage fee charged with credit card transac-



tions. Having those charging make use of an app leaves the city out of it for any credit card costs involved.

For Council Member Jeanie Kirkeberg, an issue was the rating of the charging station down to -30 for it to work.

In the last two weeks alone, Calmar has gone below that temperature, not a deal breaker but a point worth noting.

Wurtzel said NICC is looking to add a charging station as well on campus, and PIVO might see one additionally.

Council also heard a coffee shop might be in the works down the road in the downtown area in property in the 100 block of North Maryville.

Members of council voiced approval to support the effort with tax abatement assistance.

The coffee shop would tentatively go in former massage therapy space on the west side of the street.

Lagoon Project Sees Success

By Michael Hohenbrink
Editor

Alliant Energy has been on site for Fort Atkinson's lagoon project installing access while the physical building is almost finished.

Fort Atkinson City Council members heard an update during the Jan. 4 council meeting on the project including news that all of the cells have passed a test for leakage.

Tom Madden with SEH briefed council on status for the work, as council looks ahead to completion.

Coming in the next few days, a control panel should arrive, but Madded did not know status for a needed generator.

Meanwhile, council also heard about the well project with Shawver set to arrive in the middle of February.

Additionally, good news was heard from the fire depart-

ment. The truck has officially arrived and is operational, though some items will need to be installed.

That leaves the city discussing possible use for the old truck or even a sale.

The fire department also heard that the city will sponsor its efforts to secure a community foundation grant for a generator for the fire department building.

Officers were approved by council for the department including Chief Ronald Franzen, First Assistant Chief Keith Herold, Second Assistant Chief Jay Schwamman, Treasurer Jim Schmitt and Secretary Chelsey Brummond.

Franzen was officially recognized for his 49 years of service.

Council also voted to support a grant application for cabinets in the Fort Atkinson Museum.

Winter Weather Continues



Winter weather is continuing to make roadways treacherous. The Fayette County Sheriff's office took a 911 report of a one-vehicle accident north of West Union on Highway 150 Jan. 4 at 5:45 a.m. Once deputies arrived they found that a 2005 Chevy Trailblazer driven by Patrick M. Rothmeyer, 46, of Fort Atkinson was southbound when he lost control on the icy roadway and entered the west ditch and rolled his vehicle. Rothmeyer was not injured in the accident. The Sheriff's office was assisted by the West Union Fire Department and the Iowa State Patrol. The accident remains under investigation.

Reicks View Sees Latest Area Fire

By Michael Hohenbrink
Editor

Reicks View Farms had a hog confinement facility fire Sunday, the latest in a string of fires across the region.

Recent weeks have seen a number of fires as record cold and the holiday season have both added to fire risks.

Among fires was a blaze at FBH, the former M&M in Waucoma as well as fires in Fort Atkinson and the Ossian area.

The weekend drew continued activity with a home fire breaking out Sunday in Oelwein in the morning and then in the afternoon in the 20000 block of Q Avenue with Hawkeye FD requesting mutual aid from West Union, Fayette and Sumner after the initial call shortly before 1:15 p.m. Sunday.

Fayette and Sumner were eventually released before arriv-

See FIRE: Page 2



We Three Kings

Trinity Catholic School students learned the traditional Epiphany Blessing recently with third and fourth graders learning how to invoke the household blessing. Commemorating the Three Wisemen Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar, the Epiphany custom is used to bless above the doorway every Jan. 6. Pictured (front row) are: Lucas Gebel, Lincoln Lukes, Kinzey Vsetecka, and Kinley Dietzenbach and back row: Landon Hackman, Josie Stika, Bailee Heinrich, Isabel Shindelar and Keedyn Reicks. Photo courtesy Trinity Catholic School

Cash Bail Set After Multiple Assaults Against Staff

Attacks on Nurse, Jail Staff Documented With Defendant Requesting Public Defender

By Michael Hohenbrink
Editor

An Ossian woman originally arrested for disorderly conduct has managed to run up a couple assault charges, beginning with an assault on persons in serious occupations for attacking a female jailer and most recently for an incident at Winneshiek Medical Center and then again at the Winneshiek County Jail.

Now, a hearing has been set with the woman seeking a public defender to represent her.

Alisha Colsch, 26, was arrested Dec. 29 on a simple misdemeanor charge after several calls came in at the Winneshiek County Sheriff's Office regarding a woman acting strangely as she tried to get into businesses throughout the day after hours.

According to Deputy Mak Kriener, he and two other deputies responded to her apartment and witnessed her standing out on a public sidewalk as she was yelling at a patron of a bar.

After Kriener witnessed her take off running at the victim and acting aggressively, the victim retreated back into the business to get away from Colsch, who followed the victim inside.

Deputies physically restrained Colsch and had to take her into custody at 9:47 p.m. to protect the victim.

From there, Colsch's troubles began to multiply, with an incident the next morning as Jailer Kari Albert worked to clean up breakfast for inmates.

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Alisha Colsch

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News Briefs

Caregiver Support Meeting Scheduled

Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging (NEI3A) is hosting monthly in-person support group meetings the third Monday of each month from 10 to 11 a.m. in the Conference Room of the Spectrum Network building, located at 607 Washington St., in Decorah.

For more information, call Kelly Kuennen, Family Caregiver Specialist at NEI3A, at 563-277-6024.

NEIRHTF Accepting Applications

The Northeast Iowa Regional Housing Trust Fund (NEIRHTF) is accepting applications for first time homebuyer down payment assistance and housing rehabilitation/improvement projects. Applicants must be low-moderate-income first-time homebuyers, homeowners, landlord/for-profit organizations, or non-profit organizations to promote and create affordable housing activities.

All applicants must be in one of the following counties of Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette, Howard and Winneshiek. Eligible projects include rehabilitation and repair of existing housing, including, but not limited to: roofs, windows, siding, plumbing, electrical, energy efficiency, lead paint issues, and handicap accessibility.

For more information on the NEIRHTF call 563-382-6171 or email at lquam@uerpc.org

Snowshoe Activity Slated at Lake Meyer

A public snowshoe program is set from 10 a.m. to noon Monday, Jan. 16 at Lake Meyer Park and Campground. The program is free and open to all.

All equipment will be provided and no prior experience is necessary. Staff will provide basic instruction and assistance. Registration is not required.

WMC Welcomes First Baby of 2023

Blakeley Irene Phillips was the first baby born in the New Year at Winneshiek Medical Center. She was born Jan. 3, 2023 at 10:02 a.m., weighing five pounds, 10 ounces and measuring 18.25 inches.



Blakely Phillips

Blakeley is the daughter of Brittany and Wyatt Phillips, of New Hampton, and joins big sisters Kalison and Skylar.

Kirkwood Announces Dean's List

Kirkwood Community College has released its Dean's List for the fall 2022 semester.

These students have achieved a 3.3 grade point average or higher after completing 12 or more credit hours at the college.

Area students included:
 Peyton Smith, of Castalia
 Trysten Finholt, of Decorah
 Cambree Kruse, of Fort Atkinson
 Carson Brincks, of Ossian
 Trey Kriener, of Ossian
 Adrianna Zweibohmer, of Ossian

UW Announces Dean's List

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has recognized students named to the dean's list for the fall semester of the 2021-2022 academic year.

Students named included:
 Joseph Courtney, of Decorah



Grabbing A Bite

The 60th Annual Holy Name Sausage and Pancake Supper took place in Chihak Hall in Spillville Sunday. Matthew Donovan, Hayden Andera, Evan Taylor, Derick Sabelka, John Donovan and Nolan Sabelka are pictured at this year's event. Photo courtesy Paul Wermers



Jacqlyn Schmitt

Schmitt Named Finalist

Jacqlyn Schmitt, of Fort Atkinson, the daughter of Katie and Joe Schmitt School, and a student at Turkey Valley, is a finalist in The Iowa State Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division "Know Your Constitution" Project. Eighty-six finalists were selected from the more than 500 students across the State of Iowa who participated in the "Know Your Constitution" Project. These finalists will be honored at an Awards Luncheon in Des Moines on January 20, 2023.

From the finalists, five students and their teachers will be chosen by a random drawing to receive scholarship grants and honoraria in recognition of their efforts.

The "Know Your Constitution" Project is designed to enrich students' understanding and appreciation of the Constitution. The students participating in the project were required to familiarize themselves with Constitution related issues. A quiz was completed by each participating student. An essay question accompanied the quiz. This year's essay topic involved Constitutional questions concerning student free speech off campus and subsequent school suspension. The question is modelled after recent cases before the United States Supreme Court. "Best Essay" finalists will be posted to the ISBA website, with an overall winner announced during the Awards program.

Sheriffs' Reports

Winneshiek County Sheriff's Office Dec. 30

At approximately 3:20 p.m. a search warrant was executed at 120 7th St. N in Maynard. During a search of the residence, an investigation determined that an infant also lives at the address. Karylann Renee Lewin, 20, of Maynard and Jaron Opria Evans, 37 of Maynard, were both arrested and charged with Possession of Methamphetamine 1st offense, Child endangerment, and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Dec. 31

At approximately 12:14 a.m., Tonya Mogren, 44, of Le Roy Minnesota, was arrested for operating while under the influence and serious misdemeanor unlawful possession of prescription drugs.

At approximately 2:38 a.m., Ethan Grant Guyer Jr, 57, of Elgin, was arrested and charged with Domestic Abuse Assault. Guyer was transported to Fayette County Jail.

Jan. 1

At approximately 1:37 a.m., Lonnie Vernon Davis Jr, 41, of Muscatine, was arrested and charged with Operating while Intoxicated 1st Offense, Disorderly conduct, and Failure to maintain control.

ROADS FROM PAGE 1

ing on scene.

It was the second straight weekend of fire fighting for Hawkeye with other area departments seeing varying levels of activity.

Up north, the Protivin area has seen a quiet spell, but staff there recognize that could change at a moment's notice.

"We have not seen an uptick in calls related to that nature in our area," said Protivin Fire Chief Brad Moudry. "But the potential always arises especially when the temperatures are extremely cold with people trying to keep waterlines thawed and other spaces warmed up."

That heating element seems a common aspect in many fires, for example with Sunday morning's home fire in Oelwein as a resident noticed smoke coming out of the chimney and the walls felt hot to the touch.

A furnace issue was involved in the blaze, according to Fayette County Dispatch.

Extension Calendar

Fayette County Extension Calendar of Events

- Tuesday, Jan. 10:**
1 p.m. Fayette County Master Gardeners and Friends meeting, Fayette Co. Extension Office
- Thursday, Jan. 12:**
7:30 p.m. Youth Development Committee meeting, Fayette Co. Extension Office
- Tuesday, Jan. 17:**
4 p.m. Oelwein Cool Clovers 4-H meeting
7:30 p.m. Fayette County Extension Council Organizational Meeting, Fayette Co. Extension Office

Postville Will See Special Election

By Michael Hohenbrink
 Editor

It will be an interesting 2023 for residents with a special election among highlights.

According to Auditor Denise Beyer, a special election is coming March 7 for the City of Postville for a hotel/motel tax issue.

That was among the organizational details to which the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors turned attention during the first meeting of 2023.

In addition to an update on the upcoming special election, supervisors were asked to consider pay for election workers.

Alternate workers for Election Day will receive \$50 on call pay as they are available to step up in a pinch for the day while the county's Health Care Facility team that goes around to visit senior care centers will receive pay of \$10 per hour plus mileage.

Absentee board members will see \$10 per hour with \$11 per hour for the chairman with a minimum pay guarantee of two hours of pay.

Also on the organizational front, supervisors gave approval to some mechanical details.

Meetings of the supervisors will remain at 9:30 a.m. Mondays for the Allamakee County Board of Supervisors.

An idea floated had been to move meetings over to Tuesday, but the board opted to stay with the existing schedule.

Meanwhile, mileage reimbursement is staying the same at 50 cents per mile after supervisors voted not to recompense this at a higher rate.

Gas prices have been volatile, seeing a slight downturn late in 2022 but seeing a return upward in recent weeks, average around \$3.09 per gallon for the region.



A major donation by the Lynch Family Foundation has been completed.

Lynch Makes Donations

Lynch Family Companies and the Lynch Family Foundation completed their final pork donation of the year on Friday, December 30, by awarding nearly 10,000 pounds of pork to food banks in Northeast Iowa. The final meal contribution brings their total pork donations to 100,000 pounds for 2022, meeting the goal they set last January to help address food insecurity in their communities.

"It's no secret that rising food costs throughout the year and other inflation-related struggles are making food insecurity a more prominent issue in our communities," said Gary Lynch, chairman of Lynch Family Companies. "We also know that pork provides a nutritious, protein-rich meal, so we have been committed to doing our part to assist local food banks and pantries with ensuring Northeast Iowa families have food on the table."

Lynch Family Foundation, the nonprofit division of Lynch Family Companies, was created in 1996 with a focus on giving back to the communities where their employees live and work. Since its inception, the Foundation has distributed over \$6 million in charitable support to nonprofit organizations focused on veterans and military service members, food insecurity, and other local impactful causes. In 2022, the Foundation provided pork to Iowa food banks in Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, Waterloo, and Sioux City. Their most recent donation came in October with a 40,000-pound pork contribution to the Northeast Iowa Food Bank.

HEARING FROM PAGE 1

According to Deputy Hageman, Colsch was out of control and refused to give a utensil back to the jailer, a security risk that an inmate could use as a weapon.

Albert entered Colsch's cell and worked to reason with Colsch, who proceeded to hit Albert with the back of her hand, leaving a visible red mark that Hageman witnessed.

That elevated a simple misdemeanor charge into a brand new serious misdemeanor charge as jailers are classified similar to law enforcement, probation officers and others against whom physical violence carries additional weight.

Two further serious misdemeanor charges followed after Colsch was taken to WMC Jan. 3 on a court-ordered hold. According to a separate incident report, this time Colsch was pacing around outside of her room in the ER. Hospital staff were able to get her to go back into her room, where she began ripping up court documents, knocked over a computer causing hundreds of dollars in damage and once again struck a staffer, this time a nurse, according to Hageman.

Later in the day, Colsch allegedly slapped Head Jailer Jeanne Sebastian in front of two witnesses, including another jailer and with another jailer witnessing the incident from eh control room.

Bond has been set at \$2,000 cash with a hearing set for Jan. 16 at 1:30 p.m.

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