



**Tower training**  
Orange City and Alton volunteer firefighters trained on Monday evening, June 26, in the mobile training tower in the parking area of the fire station in Orange City. Besides accessing and egressing practice, firefighters worked in smoke and with the standpipe in the tower, also working with radio communications. The tower is made available through the Fire Service Training Bureau, a division of the Iowa State Fire Marshal, Iowa Department of Public Safety. (Photos by Doug Calsbeek)



## NIGHTS AT THE MUSEUM FEATURES GUEST SPEAKERS

By JIM SCHAAP  
Dutch American Heritage Museum

Old Jane Ripley grew so tired of her nightly dreams that she finally decided to act. Ever since they'd set up the homestead, she and her husband had worked themselves half to death to prove up their claim. No matter, she says, she's going home to visit her family. It's been a dream for way too long.

The idea of her taking a vacation on her own is plum crazy, her husband tells her. Leave the homestead and take a train all the way to New York state? —all by your lonesome? He won't hear of it, he says. He can't imagine such a blame foolish thing.

And so begins "Mrs. Ripley's Trip," a comic short story by Hamlin Garland, whose tales of rural America, mid-19th century, are classics. "Mrs. Ripley's Trip" is a hoot—part Garrison Keillor, part cartoon, one story a collection titled Main-Traveled Roads, by Garland, who, as a boy in the 1860s, lived just outside of Osage.

Not long ago, on a trip to the other side of the state, Jim Schaap, a DAHM board member, stopped in Osage, where a museum docent told him he could drive by the old Garland homestead. It was still there. When he did, he got interested, once again, in Hamlin Garland.

When he read "Mrs. Ripley's Trip" and finally stopped giggling, he figured the story would make a rollicking good readers theater piece: a gutsy old woman wanting to visit home a half a continent away, a plan her old grouch of a husband simply won't abide.

When the Dutch American Heritage Museum discussed the whole crazy project, they thought enlisting Jeff and Karen Barker to read the main characters would make an unforgettable evening's entertainment. They asked, the Barkers said yes, and you can smile your way through Garland's story for yourself at the DAHM, Tuesday, July 11, and 6:30.

The Barkers require no Orange City introduction. Karen Bohm Barker and Jeff Barker, Emeritus Professors of Theatre, taught at Northwestern for over 30 years, impacting countless students. In their retirement, they are building a home—Barnbury—on Karen's family farm in Illinois. Jeff is writing a book on parables, and, among other ventures, they teach a Doctor of Ministry cohort at Western Theological Seminary.

It's wonderful to have them back for this "world premiere" performance—a classic old short story redone as readers theater and performed by masters of stage craft. Ought to be fun.

Tuesday, July 11, at 6:30, at the Dutch American Heritage Museum, located at 120 3rd St SW in Orange City.

## MOC-FLOYD VALLEY HOSTS PLAYMAKERS CAMP

ORANGE CITY — The third annual Playmakers camp took place on Saturday, June 24, at the Juffer Fieldhouse on the campus of Northwestern College. The camp is specifically designed for students and adults with disabilities from various communities in Northwest Iowa. Participants will enjoy a morning of learning skills, drills, and competing in different games with one another. After enjoying games and competition in the morning, lunch was shared together, along with a tasty treat from Iowa State Bank ice cream truck. The event is similar to a "Special Olympics" event.

The camp was organized by MOC-Floyd Valley – in coordination with the leadership of the Playmakers organization— <https://www.theplaymakers.org/>.

Members of the MOC-Floyd Valley Football team, along with players and coaches from

several other area high schools, are helping provide volunteers for the day—along with several members from our communities. There are currently 60 plus participants registered for the event – along with an additional 30 plus volunteers. Participants traveled as far as 60 miles away to enjoy a morning of fun! Each participant was paired up with a peer mentor that joined them for the activities of the morning.

"Our hope is to provide a great morning promoting fun, inclusivity, character, relationships, and community," said Grant Hegstad, Assistant Principal for MOC-Floyd Valley.

The camp is free to all participants in thanks to the generosity of Orange City Area Health System, Sioux Center Health, Hydraulic Solutions, LLC (Sheldon), Baker Financial Services (Orange City), Iowa State Bank, Northwestern Bank, Premier Communications, and American State Bank.



Photos by Doug Calsbeek

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