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SIoux CENTER NEWS

Wednesday, June 28, 2023

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Sioux Center native selected as new police chief

Koedam joined department in 2009

A new police chief will lead the Sioux Center Police Department. Veteran officer Josh Koedam was appointed to the role during Monday's Sioux Center City Council meeting. Koedam's official oath of office will take place during the council's next meeting Monday, July 10.



Koedam

ment to the law enforcement profession and a unique perspective of law enforcement in a town like Sioux Center," Mayor said mayor David Kraehling. "He is eager to invest in all of the officers in the department and to collaborate with other law enforcement agencies serving the area."

Koedam, 34, is a lifelong Sioux Center resident and will be leading the department he has served with since 2009.

"As chief, I see it as having the opportunity to lead by example with the Sioux Center Police Department," he

see CHIEF on page A2



Dean Gabhart has been a staple at Centre Mall in Sioux Center since its start in 1991. Friday will be his retirement after 32 years. Photo by Renee Wielenga

Man for the job

Centre Mall manager retires after 32 years

BY RENEE WIELENGA RWIELENGA@NWESTIOWA.COM

The year 1991 was big for Sioux Center.

As the community looked to its past to celebrate its centennial that summer, there also was a drive to look to the future with a new facility in the works downtown: Centre Mall.

When Dean Gabhart came in September 1991 to take on the mall manager role, the shopping center still had a dirt floor.

The 65-year-old has been a staple in Centre Mall since its start, but come June 30, he will take part in the next big change for the facility — his retirement

after 32 years.

"When I first came, the city was working with a consultant from Sioux Falls to do the leasing for the space in the mall. One said the city might go through a few managers before the city figures out what this position entails," he said. "That made me a little nervous, wondering if I got myself into a volatile situation, but that never happened."

Gabhart believes taking on the role of contacting and meeting with potential tenants began resulting in more success and solidifying his need at the mall.

"Part of that had to do with how the consultants were being paid, which was according to

see MALL on page A3



Spencer native Dean Gabhart started his role as Centre Mall manager in September 1991. File photo



A pair of Sioux Center families purchased the former Tropical Sno downtown run it as Frost Bites, an independent shaved ice shack that serves a variety of flavors and flavor combinations. Photo by Eric Sandbulte

Frost Bites dishes cold sweet treats

Two families take on summer business

BY ERIC SANDBULTE ESANDBULTE@NWESTIOWA.COM

Business has never been so cool for a pair of Sioux Center families serving frosty treats throughout the heat of summer.

Sioux Center parents Chad and Karla Hanson and Ted and Jackie Altena have taken on ownership of the former Tropical Sno, transforming it into Frost Bites, an independent shaved ice treat stand.

Frost Bites is open 3-10 p.m. Monday-Friday, with updates and notices for closures given on its Facebook page. It's located downtown at 348 N. Main Ave., just north of Taco John's.

The business will set up at the Sioux County Youth Fair, July 10-13. During that time, the downtown stand will be closed.

Available in three sizes — small, medium and large — the shaved ice comes in a vari-

ety of flavors, such as birthday cake, cherry, passion fruit, piña colada, cotton candy and more. They can combine flavors into other fun mixes, such as Sweet Mamajama (pink lemonade, peach and strawberry) and Rock 'n' Roll (blue raspberry, grape and blueberry), and add a vanilla cream topping for an extra 50 cents.

While enjoying a snow cone at Tropical Sno in 2021, Chad was struck by the line of customers and the setup of the business.

"I wondered, 'What is the business model here? How does this work?' I started to do some napkin math and pondered some what-ifs," Chad said. "My family is young enough that this could be neat moving ahead as a family venture for the summers to come. We all enjoy snow cones. And is this something we could and should take on?"

see FROST on page A2

URC growth leads to building proposal



The north corner wall and roof of Sioux Center United Reformed Church has been rebuilt to make room for the Highway 75 redesign project. Along with that, the church is working to remodel the rest of the building's front. Photo by Eric Sandbulte

Church to build new east of high school

BY ERIC SANDBULTE ESANDBULTE@NWESTIOWA.COM

Motorists passing by Sioux Center United Reformed Church along Highway 75 might have noticed the work to overhaul the church's facade, but it's potentially the start of much more work to aid its growing congregation.

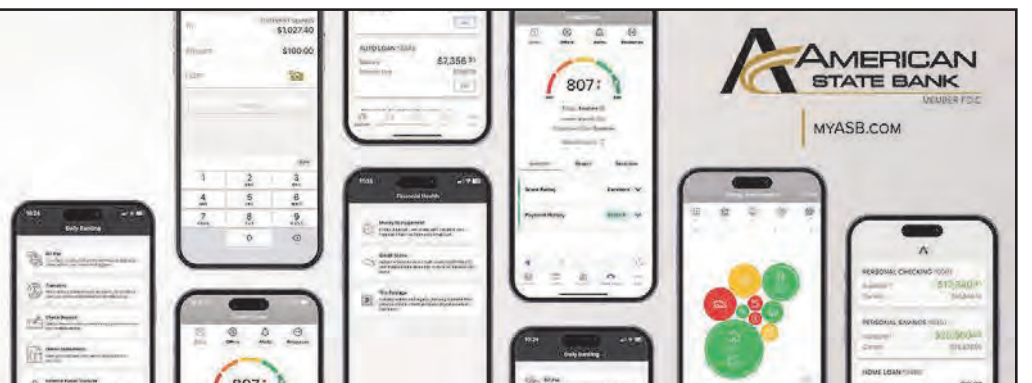
The church at 744 N. Main Ave. is in need of more space to accommodate the normal functions of church life, from worship to education to fellowship. For that, the church's new facility committee is in the process of developing preliminary designs and trying to get a

see URC on page A4

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News

# Family fun found at Frost Bites shaved ice stand

**FROST**

*Continued from page A1*

Each of the families has three children.

As it turned out, by the end of that year, the Tropical Sno stand was up for sale. By early 2022, around March, he reached out to the Altenas to see if they'd be interested in joining him and his family in purchasing the stand for their own independent snow cone business, rotating schedules between the families during the summer.

Jackie was initially shocked by the offer, but soon began to consider how her kids might benefit from the responsibility and still have some fun with it.

The families had intended to be fully operational last year, but they ran into some unexpected obstacles that turned the summer of 2022 into a trial run.

"I've been telling people there were hoops to jump through last year, and we couldn't get through those hoops in time to make it a

**AT A GLANCE:**

**Business:** Frost Bites  
**Owner:** Chad and Karla Hanson, Ted and Jackie Altena  
**Address:** 348 N. Main Ave.  
**Hours:** 3-10 p.m. Monday-Friday  
**Online:** On Facebook

worthwhile full opening here at the stand," Chad said. "When we revisited those hoops in the early part of this year, we were able to do the things we needed to do to get this open. That was a really exciting spot."

This year, they opened May 29, which was Memorial Day. It was a soft opening with the official advertised opening day May 30, ahead of Summer Celebration.

Although there were long waits as they got started, they've since improved their speed of service,



Along with Landon Frey, Micah Van Dong eats cotton candy shaved ice from Frost Bites on Thursday. Photo by Eric Sandbulte

Chad said.

"There's a lot of communication in a small space and coordinating stressful moments and learning from the highs and the lows and everything in between. When the

window closes and we're back here preparing snow cone after snow cone to get out the window, we're debriefing regularly as a family. OK, how did that go? What can we do better? What do we need to prepare

for?" Chad said. "Then during our downtime, it's a different sort of debriefing. What can we prep for, what do we need to restock, repour or reload or remake?"

"When it's not busy, they can relax outside with some of the outdoor games they have set up, such as the jumbo Jenga blocks or play some cornhole.

Jackie has seen her children benefit from their time at Frost Bites so far.

"They've learned a lot about business in general, about working with customers and relations, and working well with each other in here in the stand. It takes a lot of people to do this," she said.

As they continue to grow up and learn more about the business and how to manage it, they can begin to take on more responsibilities themselves.

But even now, they're each able to take on different roles and play their part, all while learning the value of a dollar earned.

# Sioux County District Court selects jury pool names

List of names is for the July court term

The Sioux County District Court has announced names of those selected for the jury pool for the July term of court. Names of those selected for the jury pool are listed below:

Jose Alfredo Adame Anzua, Bethany Joy Albrecht, Kent Allen Anderson, Cesar Juan Andres, Kael David Arends, Nicole Lynn Baart, Debra Kay Baker, Travis Jon Bloemendaal, Cassidy Lynn Bollinger, Sindy Lou Bonestroo, Gervin Peter Bonnama, Joya Elizabeth Breems,

Braeden Paul Brough, Bruce Alan Bultman, Samuel Jordan Callahan, Jordan Jonathan Christoffel, Jan Elizabeth Coe, Katherine Marie Crumrine, Peggy Ann De Haan, Susan Lynn De Haan, Gertrude De Jong, Bernard Alvin De Wit, Warren Lloyd Dekkers, Debra Jean Den Hartog, Glenda Grace DeVries, Mary Ellen Dolieslager, Kevin Douglas Driesen,

Hailemichael Joseph Duden, Dexter Dean Ellis, Shayla Marie Ewoldt, Dana Sue Fedders, Trisha Lee Finzen, Zachary Tait Garland, Daniel J. Gradert, Sheila

Ann Grady, Wendy Granillo Sotelo, Stuart Dean Gray, David Arthur Gregg, Jamin Alan Griffioen, Evan Christopher Gutzmer,

Danika Marie Harpenau, Michael Paul Harris, John Haveman, Marvin Hettinga, Brooke Linae Heusinkveld, Pamela Jo Hofmeyer, Keaton Lee Hoogendoorn, Andrew Jay Hoogeveen, Marla Kay Hooyer, Jeffrey Scott Hulley, Lisa Lee Johnson, Daniel Wesley Jongewaard, Heather Rae Kaskie, Jordan Wayne Kennedy,

Drew Alan Kersten, Joyce Lorraine Kieft, Trey Thomas Knight, Sung Jae Ko, Rose L.

Koele, Kelly Robert Konz, Joan Renae Kooima, Arla Jane Korver, Donald Lee Krull, Jeanene Ann Kuiper, Bibiana Lopez Duenas, Olivia Luna Gonzalez,

Tavian Jace Maassen, Dalia Victoria Martinez Garcia, Helen Jill Metselaar, Morgan Mary Miller, Cherlynn Rae Moore, Joshua Allen Mouw, Desiree Ann Ochoa Valiente, Mary Jill Oleson, Nicholas Lee Olson, Darwin Lee Oltmans, Jason Mark Pollema, Doris Marie Pottebaum, Mary Ann Pottebaum, Diane Marie Rainbolt, Travis Lee Reed, Glenn Lawrence Reichle,

Alice Henrietta Remmerde, Ximena Rosiles Gonzalez, Ella Maass Ruba, Mario Antonio Ruiz Stands, Alan William Ruskauuff, Sidney Lee Sandbulte, Christopher Michael Saras, Robert James Schelling, Lori Kay Scholten, Shannon Scott Schuller, Brett Matthew Segar, Jane Ann Skoglund, Ashley Lynn Strain,

Ian Curtis Sheeres Taylor, Kathryn Rose Taylor, Justin John Teslaa, Tomas Tomas Juan, Helen Louise Trei, Abbey Marie Underwood, Aaron Lee Van Belle, Carol Janice Van Den Berg, Larry Evan Van Ginkel, Kaitlyn

Marie Van Maanen, Shelli Joy Van Maanen, Rylee Beth Van Noort, Cindy Sue Van Regenmorter, Paige Nicole Van Schepen, David James Van Schouwen, Carl Duane Vande Kamp, Carolyn Joy Vander Schaaf, Pamela Gayle Vander Schaaf, Marcia Ann Vander Weide, Jeanette E. Vanoort,

Madison Sue Vis, Sharon Lee Vreugdenhil, Alicia Ann Wallace, Samuel Edward Wensink, Francis Wayne Westcott, Kari Jo Westra, Daniel Dean Wichers, Levi Sampath Wilson, Peyton Harley Work, Arnola Ruth Wynia.

# District approves school resource officer agreement

Koedam moves to police chief role

BY ERIC SANDBULTE  
 ESANDBULTE@NWESTIOWA.COM

Sioux Center schools will still be gaining a school resource officer starting in August but it will no longer be Sioux Center police officer Josh Koedam, who the city originally appointed to the

role in April.

Koedam was selected Monday as the city's new police chief and can no longer fill the SRO position.

"That's something we're working through as well," said city manager Scott Wynja during Monday's city council meeting. "We have some potential interest in that position."

Wynja said he, Koedam and city human resources manager Josh Mork will work toward filling that position once again.

The Sioux Center School District Board of Education took up the matter of the SRO during its June 19 meeting when it approved an operational sharing agreement and invoice for the role.

As the accompanying job description outlines, the SRO will be "a visible and positive figure" at the Sioux Center School District as well as at Sioux Center Christian School.

The officer will assist in development of plans and strategies to prevent or minimize dangerous situations that may occur on school

grounds, patrol the properties, monitor different activities, lead safety programs and enforce law infractions, disorder and truancy issues, among other duties.

The contract for the 2023-24 academic year puts the cost for the position at \$101,355 along with benefits, breaking it down to \$35 per hour and \$28,555 in insurance premiums.

The school district will be responsible for \$15,000 or 15 percent of the cost for the SRO, while the Christian school will be responsible for \$5,000 or 5 percent of the SRO costs.

Meanwhile, the city of Sioux Center would cover \$81,084 or 80 percent of the costs.

# New police chief's focus is to maintain Sioux Center's safety and security

**CHIEF**

*Continued from page A1*

said. "I look forward to working with our great crew of officers. Some I've worked with the majority of my career and we have a cohesiveness from shared experiences. We're hiring some great new guys as well. Our focus is to continue to keep Sioux Center safe and be a beacon of

safety and security of the community."

Koedam said one priority is continuing to move the department forward, with growth as a whole and as individual officers pursuing specialty areas. Another priority is police department involvement in the community with various opportunities and events. Koedam's community

perspective stems from his own life growing up in Sioux Center.

"I had so many positive experiences from childhood through today, and I want others to have the same opportunities I've had," he said. "My family lives here, and we have tons of family and friends with kids here, and I want them to have the

opportunity to grow up in a great community."

Koedam said key role models have shaped his passion to serve in law enforcement.

"Mike Halma, who served here, was my neighbor, and Steve Hilt with the Iowa State Patrol — seeing their career and the work they did really piqued my interest," Koedam said.

As a teen, Koedam job shadowed local officers, and at 18, took a position as a Sioux County jailer. He graduated from Dordt University with criminal justice and communication degrees. His junior year at Dordt, Koedam began working part time with the Sioux Center Police Department. His senior year, he was offered a full-time

position and he both worked and attended Dordt full time. He has served with the police department since. Koedam and his wife, Jess, a registered nurse at Promise Community Health Center in Sioux Center, live in Sioux Center with their two daughters. In his free time, Koedam enjoys hunting and outdoors activities with his family.

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News

# Ash trees removed from Children's Park, Open Space Park

## Emerald ash borer strikes city's trees

BY ERIC SANDBULTE  
ESANDBULTE@NWESTIOWA.COM

Children's Park in Sioux Center is looking a little bare this summer.

Closed Monday, June 19, and fully reopened by Saturday, June 24, the Sioux Center Parks Department oversaw the removal of 35 ash trees in the park that were dead or dying due to the emerald ash borer and were too far gone to save through other available treatments.

"Things won't look right for a while because people were so used to those beautiful trees in the park. It was unfortunate, but the emerald



Heavy equipment works on removing ash trees from Children's Park in Sioux Center on June 19. The park had 35 trees taken down because they were too damaged by the emerald ash borer to save, temporarily closing the park. Photo by Eric Sandbulte

ash borer is hitting Sioux Center really hard right now,"

Meeteren said.

He added that efforts are being made to save whatever

ash trees they can throughout the city, with more than 400 ash trees treated in two years.

However, due to the fast spread of the emerald ash borer throughout the city, another 34 ash trees have to be taken down around Open Space Park, the American State Bank Sports Complex and the Sioux County fairgrounds area.

"These trees, by the time we really knew this was in the area and started treating these trees in Children's Park and Open Space Park, they were too far gone to stick a bunch of money into treating them," Van Meeteren said. "We did treat these in Children's Park last fall just to see if we could get them back, and they came out of winter dead. The treatment we gave them wasn't really effective against the

number of emerald ash borers that were in the trees already. We gave it a try.

"We are trying our hardest to save the ones that are worth saving. The last thing I want to do is cut down trees for unnecessary reasons. If I can try to save a few trees and not have the expense of doing this, then I'm definitely going to do that."

Van Meeteren will consider a variety of different tree species with which to replace the removed ash trees, with the purchases spread out between this year and next year for budget purposes.

This year's new trees will likely be planted sometime this fall, when conditions are generally more favorable.

# Gabhart developed role of Centre Mall manager over 32 years

## MALL

Continued from page A1  
rents they generated," he said. "Being a city employee, my salary wasn't attached to that. I could talk more freely and openly about options without harming my income."

"I felt it also helped that I'm able to communicate with someone that isn't from here how much I love the community and enjoy being in it with some sincerity. That kind of connection is more attractive than working with an agent from another town who is trying to lease a building they don't have a stake in."

Before coming to Sioux Center, Gabhart had managed Southpark Mall in his hometown of Spencer for a year and a half.

He heard about the Centre Mall manager position through a call from an attorney working with someone attached to the Sioux Center mall project who encouraged him to check it out.

"I called over and found out the city had actually finished interviewing for the position but invited me to town," Gabhart said. "I thought I was coming for an interview, and it turned out I was attending a city council meeting. I sat and talked with them for about 40 minutes, then went back to Spencer. The city manager at the time called me that same afternoon and offered me the

position."

## 'New adventure'

He said he and his wife, Laurie, were interested in finding a new role away from their hometown.

"The Centre Mall manager position looked like an exciting new adventure," Gabhart said. "I didn't know much about the community, even growing up just an hour away, but I do remember driving into town, thinking Sioux Center looked like a bigger town than its population. It was very impressive."

"In 32 years, Sioux Center has been really good for my family, for our well-being."

The Gabharts had two sons and a daughter, adults now, who were part of the Sioux Center School District.

"The school system and just the way the town is set up for families is really good," Gabhart said. "Anytime we would think about moving or doing something different didn't happen often because I felt challenged here. I also felt there was some good to do here for the community through the shopping center."

His focus as mall manager has always been the customer experience.

"That's something I've tried to emphasize with the stores that we look at things from the customer's point of view, ask if the things we do

make sense for customers, if the things we do are convenient for customers and, on top of that we want to make sure people feel safe and comfortable here," Gabhart said. "We want the shopping center environment to reflect the character of Sioux Center — that it's bright, modern, friendly."

## 'Lots of hats to wear'

His mall manager role has continued to evolve since those first years taking over the consultants' work.

"There are a lot of hats to wear as the mall manager in terms of property management, marketing, safety and maintenance," he said. "Anything that has to do with Centre Mall comes to my desk. Any aspect. That's been what keeps it fresh for me."

Coming to work each morning Gabhart often does not know how the day will go.

"For some that might drive them crazy, but I've enjoyed having to adapt to different conditions," he said.

One day, for example, Gabhart found out the entire mall would have to close due to the coronavirus pandemic in spring of 2020.

"I had to figure out how to communicate that and enforce that; that was a big challenge," he said.

The mall was completely closed to the public for

about five weeks.

"It was spooky walking through the hallways with everything dark and no one there but me," Gabhart said. "I was so impressed with how our merchants got to work and survived that with their hard work, creativity in figuring out different ways to deliver services to their customers."

He said almost all the stores are now performing at pre-2020 levels.

"I've enjoyed the challenges in my time, but what's kept me here and what I've enjoyed the most is seeing the customers and working with the merchants," Gabhart said. "I've gotten to know a number of store owners and managers over the years who are very dedicated to their customers. They're interested in providing what the community needs in terms of merchandise mix and value. They're very motivated to do more."

That's motivating to him as well. As he got closer to retirement, Gabhart started to look more seriously at updates within the mall. The seven-year plan has included remodeled bathrooms, new ceiling tile and LED lighting, new soft seating in the public hallways, new food court furniture that includes high-top tables and a charging station as well as revamping the look of the interior and exterior

columns.

"One of the goals of any shopping center is to increase the amount of time in the mall," Gabhart said. "The feeling is if people are there longer, they'll be more likely to buy something so anything we can do to create interest is something we try to provide, so it's been a long-term goal of mine to update the theater's storefront."

"People have opinions about the purple, but I really think when you walk in the main south door of mall, there's an immediate impact. I'm just amazed at how changing paint and light fixtures can make a big impact."

Gabhart selected each of the movie posters on the walls outside the theater, choosing movies with Iowa connections.

## 'Other tasks'

What most people don't know is that mall manager is just one of the three roles Gabhart does as part of his work with the city.

He and Center Mall marketing assistant Cathy Feenstra started the city's website in the late 1990s. They are two of four website managers today. Gabhart also is the grants administrator for the Sioux Center Community Foundation.

"In the early years we had a lot of turnover in the mall, but as the mall gained a more stable base of tenants, I start-

ed to look for other tasks I could do for the city, which started with the website," he said.

Gabhart also was the first city employee to request a personal desktop computer, noting that rent payments were paper filed when he began, and everything is via computer today.

He and his wife are looking forward to a new kind of summer as Laurie, too, is retiring this year from her longtime paraprofessional role with the school district.

"It's an odd feeling that retirement is just around the corner," Gabhart said. "I don't know what to compare it to. It's a big life transition. Professionals talk about big life transitions creating stress. I definitely feel some of that revolving around the unknown piece, but I'm also excited to travel."

They have a big trip planned for the fall. They also may travel to see their children; their son Jeff lives in Sioux Falls, SD, and their son Tim lives in Minneapolis. Their daughter, Katie, who has special needs, lives in Sioux Center.

"We had considered the possibility of moving but because Katie is so comfortable here and Sioux Center has meant a lot to us, we're going to stay at this time," Gabhart said. "We're looking forward to being a part of the community in retirement."

# For the Record

## WEATHER REPORT

| Date | High | Low | Prec. |
|------|------|-----|-------|
| 6-19 | 92   | 65  | 0     |
| 6-20 | 88   | 60  | 0     |
| 6-21 | 88   | 60  | 0     |
| 6-22 | 88   | 61  | 0     |
| 6-23 | 87   | 61  | 0     |
| 6-24 | 82   | 60  | .83   |
| 6-25 | 74   | 55  | 0     |

## WIC CLINICS FOR SIOUX CENTER

Mid-Sioux Opportunity WIC Clinics are held in person. Call 1-800-859-2025 to make an appointment.

The 2023 clinic dates are: June 20, July 18, Aug. 15, Sept. 19, Oct. 17, Nov. 21, Dec. 12.

## SHIIP INFO

Senior Health Insurance Information Program  
Questions about Medicare? Call SHIIP at 712-722-8309.

## DRIVER'S LICENSE

The Sioux County driver's license office is open 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at Centre Mall in Sioux Center. Questions? Call 712-722-2923. More services are provided at www.iowadot.gov.

## OVERNIGHT PARKING

No parking is allowed 2 a.m.-6 a.m. year round in Sioux Center.

## COURT REPORT

### Judgments filed in small claims:

Johnathan Chamblee, Sioux Center, defendant, in favor of DNF Associates, LLC, plaintiff, in the amount of \$1,237.46, plus interest and court costs.

Susan K. Andersen and Michael P. Andersen, Sioux Center, defendants, in favor

of Primebank, Le Mars, plaintiff, in the amount of \$4,316.35, plus interest and court costs.

Mark Pruismann, Sioux Center, defendant, in favor of Kent and Sylvia Pruismann LVG TR, Rock Valley, plaintiff, for possession of the subject property and for costs. The defendant shall vacate the property.

### New lawsuits filed:

Walmart Real Estate Business Trust and Walmart Inc., plaintiff, prays that the court set aside the decision of the Sioux County Board of Review, defendant, in determining the actual and assessed values and assessments of the real estate for the year 2023 and subsequent years; that the court determine the actual value and assessed value of the real estate for 2023 to be excessive and illegal, that the assessor and the defendant-appellee be ordered and directed by the court to assess the real

estate for 2023 and subsequent years in accordance with the decision of this court; that the county treasurer be ordered and directed not to spread of record and to collect any taxes for the year 2023 or subsequent years on the real estate pending the final determination of this appeal other than the collection of such taxes under protest; and that the court grant such other relief as may be just and equitable.

### Information was filed in District Court:

Patrick C. Bouillon, Sioux Center, operating a vehicle while intoxicated — first offense.

### Magistrate Court:

Yaire C. Hernandez, Sioux Center, following too close.

Efrain Ramos Chun, Sioux Center, no valid driver's license.

Hermenegildo Morales Lira, Sioux Center, no valid driver's license.

Joel Lopez Lopez, Sioux Center, no valid driver's license.

Jessica E. Vargas, Sioux Center, speeding.

Reece E. Meyerink, Sioux Center, failure to obey stop sign and yield right of way.

Juan C. Morales Ramos, Sioux Center, no valid driver's license.

Kirk E. Hulstein, Sioux Center, speeding.

Lois E. Wielenga, Sioux Center, speeding.

Timothy B. Van Donge, Sioux Center, driving while license denied, suspended or canceled.

Rafael Ortega Morgado, Sioux Center, driving while license denied, suspended or canceled.

Maria Y. Granillo Cespedes, Sioux Center, driving while license denied, suspended or canceled.

## SIOUX COUNTY SHERIFF ARRESTS

The Sioux County Sheriff's

Office made the following recent arrests:

■ Jennifer Rene Cowell, 36, Sioux Center, was arrested Thursday, June 22, for an out of county warrant.

■ Christian Rafael Topete-Curiel, 22, Hawarden, was arrested in Sioux Center Sunday, June 25, and charged with second offense operating a vehicle while intoxicated; permit operating vehicle with suspended registration; two counts driving under suspension; open container of driver over 21 years of age; dark window or windshield.

■ Santos Miguel Martin-Martin, 23, Sioux Center, was arrested Monday, June 26, and charged with failure to appear; first offense operating a vehicle while intoxicated; public intoxication; interference with official act.

An arrest is an accusation, and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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News

# Will Stuck takes his 'Make A Mess' show to library



Will Stuck introduces Addi Wynia to help him pick a story to tell the kids at the Sioux Center Public Library. Stuck performed his "Make A Mess" variety show on Thursday.



Will Stuck cracks jokes with a chicken puppet before Hazel Munneke plucks a feather to determine what song will be song. Stuck performed his "Make A Mess" variety show at the Sioux Center Public Library on Thursday. Photos by Eric Sandbulte



Children mimic the actions for a group song led by performer Will Stuck, who held his "Make A Mess" variety show at the Sioux Center Public Library on Thursday.



Will Stuck races to fill his tube before Jace Geleynse during a science demonstration during Stuck's "Make A Mess" show held at the Sioux Center Public Library on Thursday.

# Thrive Center starts Lego Club to help build social skills

## Summer club sessions beginning in July

BY ERIC SANDBULTE  
ESANDBULTE@NWESTIOWA.COM

When children gather at Dordt University's Thrive Center for Applied Behavior Analysis in July, they'll be building more than Lego sets — they'll be building communication skills.

This Lego Club is intended to help children in need of refining their social skills, though no diagnosed conditions are needed to join. Any child who would benefit from working on his or her communication can register through thrivecenter@dordt.edu and join.

This July will be the third time this Lego Club will be hosted by the Thrive Center, according to Thrive Center director Sarah Hawley, as it began last fall and made a return in the spring.

Children will be divided into two age groups: ages 5-9 and 10-14. The younger group will meet 9:30-10:30 a.m. and the older group at 10:45-11:45 a.m. July 11, 12, 18, 19, 25 and 26.

They will meet at the

Thrive Center, which is located west of Dordt at 601 Fourth Ave. NE.

It's free to participants thanks to a \$5,000 grant from the Sioux Center Community Foundation last year.

During the club meetings, the kids are divided into groups to work together to build a Lego set from the tubs of pieces kept at the Thrive Center. Each child is given a role on the team, such as the engineer, who is the only one allowed to look at the instructions. In that role, the engineer must tell the supplier what pieces are needed by describing them. The pieces are found by the supplier and passed on to the builder, who must communicate with the conductor to figure out how the pieces should be placed together.

By working in those roles, they learn to work together by giving commands, giving descriptions, listening and clarifying with each other what's needed, all in a way that's fun and approachable for them.

"It doesn't feel quite as dry as it might be if we were like, 'Here's how to have a conver-

## THRIVE CENTER

Launched by Dordt University in 2021, the Thrive Center for Applied Behavior Analysis provides behavior therapy and skills acquisition for children throughout N'West Iowa, emphasizing collaboration with schools, families and agencies to achieve the best outcomes for its clients.

"We work with a lot of kids with a lot of different needs," said Thrive Center director Sarah Hawley. "Our hope is that every kid feels loved and cared for and respected while here so that they can grow in a nurturing environment."

sation,' or whatever," Hawley said. "And then, while everyone's building their Legos, they're talking about their day and about what they've been doing. They build these friendships. And when their team gets done, there's excitement that they've finished their task for the day."

It's been popular enough that some of the children re-enrolled from the fall sessions to the spring sessions.

"We know they're making progress; we're seeing them change while they're here," Hawley said.

They combined some sets they already had on hand

with sets they purchased at Walmart. When buying new sets, they wanted to have ones that appealed to the kids' tastes, such as Minecraft themed ones, and were small enough that the sets could be finished after a few of the meetings.

"It can be frustrating if Lego club is done and you're never going to finish this thing you've been working on. Anyone would be frustrated by that and when they are done, they are so proud of themselves," Hawley said.

The effectiveness of this club in fostering better communication and social skills is



Thrive Center senior behavior technician Tayler De Ruyter watches her 5-year-old daughter Bryar piece together a scene in Lego at the Thrive Center on Monday. De Ruyter is organizing the Lego Club offered by the Thrive Center in July. Photo by Eric Sandbulte

no surprise to Hawley, who had overseen another version of this club when she worked at the Sioux Center Christian School. But outside of that, there wasn't anywhere else in town where more children could benefit from this sort of program. Then the opportunity to start one came

through the Sioux Center Community Foundation grant.

"We thought this would be the perfect opportunity to offer something local so that families looking for this sort of thing didn't have to drive to Sioux City or Sioux Falls," Hawley said.

# Highway 75 expansion leads to new front at United Reformed

## URC

Continued from page A1

more accurate estimate of the potential building cost, with an initial estimate of \$4.5 million.

## New location

One of the early challenges for the new building campaign was finding potential sites in Sioux Center.

"We started initial planning and drove around Sioux Center and identified 13 different possible places that just maybe a church could go there someday," said Alex Van Voorst, Sioux Center URC deacon and new facilities committee member. "After getting 12 noes ... there was one yes, we'd love to talk to you. After quite a bit of talking and prayerful consideration, the family decided to gift it to us."

That gift was four acres of land from Arlene Altena of Mission Hill, SD. The papers were signed in March on that piece of land, which is located in the field directly east of the Sioux Center High School.

Van Voorst said the church is grateful for the generosity seen in such a gift. The location is perfect for the church's needs and its large number of Dordt students who like

## DONATIONS

Sioux Center United Reformed Church is accepting donations for its building campaign to construct a new church. Anyone interested in donating can e-mail building-fund@siouxcenterurc.org for more information.

walking to the Sunday services. With this new location, there won't be much of a change in distance for them.

Sioux Center URC elder Andrew Geleynse said the new facility committee should be done with its assessments in six months and then more details can be presented to the congregation. There is no way to know how soon groundbreaking can occur on the project, as the project will have to reach a funding threshold of 65 percent before it can begin.

Regardless of what the final facility plans approved by the congregation will look like, the congregation remains committed to keeping its

focus on its true purpose, Geleynse said.

"It needs to be a place where the Gospel continues to be preached and that we can rejoice together in the goodness of our God," he said. "Our focus when we design this building is not going to be about how big or how nice of a building we can build, but it needs to meet the purposes of what a church needs to be. No. 1, that's taking care of its flock, and then how can we be an outward presence within our community locally and abroad. Those are the driving forces behind the basis for why we're doing what we're doing."

## The need

With about 250-300 people worshipping there on Sundays, the sanctuary space has grown to the point that it crowds out fellowship space for people to socialize after the services.

"It's a blessing. We're growing spiritually, we're growing numerically and now we're busting at the seams and figuring out where the Lord is leading us next," said Pastor Jon Bushnell of Sioux Center URC.

With 63 percent of its worship-

pers under the age of 16, they've begun creating and repurposing spaces to hold Sunday School with the children. Sioux Center URC has four purpose-built classrooms; in addition, they now use five cubicles, the pastor's study and the kitchen to hold classes.

Other spaces have been outgrown. With many Dordt University students attending worship during the school year, the church has had families prepare and serve meals for them, eating together in a time of fellowship. But the kitchen is small and not well set up for such events.

The building's mechanical room also serves as a storage room and the space where the deacons count money after the service.

With all that in mind, about two years ago the church began talks about what to do. While remodeling and expanding the current building was considered, even the empty space to its south wouldn't be enough to handle an addition to the building and an expansion of the parking lot.

The need for more parking was also sharpened by the Highway 75 redesign taking away some of its parking spaces.

## Building update

As part of the highway work, the Iowa Department of Transportation wanted the church to remodel its facade, as the north wall and roof extended too close to the road.

"Our wing wall was too close, so they're knocking it down," Van Voorst said. "They purchased 183 square feet from us and took the wall down. The roof of the building is going to get shorter, but it won't mess with any of our interior space. Through negotiation with them, the DOT is funding our face-lift out there."

That gave the church an opportunity as they consider a new building to freshen up the front of the building so that it might be more appealing for commercial use when they're ready to sell it.

New panels will be added to the exterior, which will feature new lighting that will illuminate a message on the panels that will echo Jesus' words in John 14:6. Across three sections will appear the words, "The Way," "The Truth" and "The Life," a useful reminder for passing motorists and the congregation as it looks forward to its future.



## Church Listing

### SIoux CENTER

**Amistad Cristiana** (Christian Fellowship), 130 Third St. NW. Pastor Eddy Olguin. Worship / servicio de adoración, 3:30 p.m. Sunday/Domingo.

**Bethel Christian Reformed Church**, 341 S. Main Ave. Pastor John Lee. Worship 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Sunday.

**Bridge of Hope Christian Reformed Church**. Worship 9:30 a.m. at Sioux Center Intermediate School Gym, 550 Ninth St. NE.

**Centerpoint Church**, 160 10th St. SE. Lead pastor Jamie Dykstra; Sioux Center campus pastor Chris Godfredsen. Sioux Center campus worship 9:30 a.m. Sunday.

**Central Reformed Church**, 113 N. Main Ave. Pastor Jesse Henkle. Worship 9:30 a.m. Sunday.

**Christ Community Church**, 945 Seventh Ave. SE. Pastors Mark Johnson, Brandon Thiel and Carlos Perez. English worship 9:30 a.m. Sunday. Spanish worship

3 p.m. Sunday.

**Christ the King Catholic Church**, 501 Second Ave. SW. Father Mauro Sanchez. English mass 5 p.m. Saturday and 8 a.m. Thursday; Spanish mass 1 p.m. Sunday and 7:30 p.m. Tuesday.

**Church of Christ**, 950 N. Main Ave. Preacher Dustin Bolks. Worship 10:30 a.m. Sunday.

**Covenant Christian Reformed Church**, 106 Second St. NE. Pastor Joel Kok. Worship 10 a.m. Sunday, formation gathering 6 p.m. Sunday.

**Faith Christian Reformed Church**, 801 Ninth St. SE. Pastor Bob Pollema. Worship 9:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Sunday.

**First Christian Reformed Church**, 321 Second St. SE. Pastor Kurt Monroe. Worship 9:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Sunday.

**Good Shepherd Church**, 397 10th St. SE (Kinsey Elementary). Pastor Travis Else. Worship 10 a.m. Sunday.

**House of Missions & Equipping (HOME)**, 101 19th St. SW. Prayer room

open 6 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday-Saturday. Ignite service 5 p.m. Sunday.

**Hope Lutheran Church**, 7 16th St. SE. Interim Pastor Jay Denne. Worship 9:15 a.m. Sunday.

**Iglesia Cristiana Pentecostes Jesucristo El Buen Pastor** (Pentecostal Church Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd), 168 Third St. SW. Pastors Rodrigo and Karina Gonzalez. Worship 3 p.m. Sunday, 6 p.m. Saturday and 7 p.m. Thursday.

**Maria Magdalena Reformed Church (bilingual services)**, 305 N. Main Ave. Jason Lief and Martha Draayer. Sunday: 12:30 p.m. Worship.

**Netherlands Reformed Congregation**, 435 Main Ave. Pastor Herman Hofman. Services 9:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. Sunday.

**Nueva Jerusalem (New Jerusalem)**, 7 16th St. SE (Hope Lutheran Church). Pastor Victor Cavazos. Worship/servicio de adoración, 2 p.m. Sunday/Domingo

**New Life Church**, 232 16th St. SE. Pastors Bobby Van Otterloo and Dan Kruse. Worship 9:30 a.m. Sunday.

**United Reformed Church**, 744 N. Main Ave. Pastor Jon Bushnell. Worship 9:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Sunday.

### RURAL AREA

**Carmel Reformed Church**, 2801 360th St. Worship 9:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Sunday.

**Lebanon Christian Reformed Church**, 2142 380th St. Pastor Bob Drenton. Worship 9:45 a.m. Sunday.

**Middleburg Free Grace Reformed Church**, 3630 370th St. Pastor Mark Schwarz. Worship 9:30 a.m. Sunday.

**Peace Lutheran Church**, LCMC, 2512 380th St. Pastor Bill Loeffke. Worship 10:15 a.m. Sunday.

**Whispers of Love, Hope & Joy Shop Church**, 3395 400th St. (Sandy Hollow lodge) Pastor Debra Rensink. Worship 10 a.m. first and third Sunday of the month.

## Obituary

### Michael Floen

*April 14, 1943—June 22, 2023*

Michael F. Floen, 80, Sioux Center, died June 22, 2023, at Crown Pointe Care Center in Sioux Center.

The Floen family will be

hosting a Celebration of Life service at a later date. Arrangements are under the direction of Memorial Funeral Home in Sioux Center.

## Anniversary



Sylvia and Rodney, 1958



Sylvia and Rodney, 2023

### Hulstiens to observe 65th anniversary

Happy 65th anniversary to Rodney and Sylvia Hulstein of Sioux Center. They were married on Sylvia's birthday — June 27, 1958, and Rodney's birthday came soon after on June 30.

Rod and Sylvia lived in Sioux Center all their married life. They have four chil-

dren: Sharla Hulstein of Denison, Murray and Fonda Hulstein, Jeff and Vonda Vander Berg and Greg and Janell Pennings, all of Sioux Center.

Please join their children in helping them celebrate with a card shower. Send cards to: 2225 Riviera Rd., Apt. 102, Sioux Center, IA 51250.

## Briefly

### Sioux Center Arts picnic on June 29

The first Sioux Center Arts Picnic of the summer is 6-9 p.m. Thursday, June 29, at Children's Park in Sioux Center. There will be live jazz concert, food trucks, swing dancing, face painting and a kids' market. Come enjoy your park, your community, good food and great live music. The Prairie Wind Jazz Band will begin playing at 7 p.m.

### July 4 fireworks in Sioux Center

Sioux Center's fireworks display is at 10 p.m. Tuesday, July 4, near the Mouw Motor and Ver Hoef Automotive parking lots. Park on the west lots and bring chairs or blanket to the east side. Patriotic music on KSOU FM 93.9.

### July 6 blood drive slated at Centre Mall

LifeServe Blood Center of Sioux City will hold a blood drive 1-6 p.m. Thursday, July 6, at Centre Mall in Sioux Center. Appointments are required by visiting lifeservebloodcenter.org or calling 1-800-287-4903.

### Domino workshop slated on July 6

The Domino Masters, Alex and Derek Koops, will have an interactive Domino work-

shop for third- through seventh-graders 1-2:30 p.m. Thursday, July 6, at the Sioux Center Public Library. This is an opportunity to learn techniques and tricks of the trade to make their builds bigger and better.

### Summer Concert at Oak Grove July 8

Sioux County Conservation will host the Singer Family Band for Summer Concert in the Park 6-9 p.m. Saturday, July 8, at Oak Grove Park River near Hawarden. The band is from Merrill and perform country, 50s and 60s rock and older country. (Jim is originally from Hawarden and played with the Chaparrals.)

### Rods 'N' Rides to Inspiration Hills

Motorcyclists, classic car owners and fellow worshippers are invited to participate in Rods 'N' Rides outdoor worship service Sunday, July 9. The group will leave Centre Mall in Sioux Center at 9:30 a.m. for the 10:30 a.m. service at Inspiration Hills sponsored by Rock Rapids First Reformed Church. If possible take lawn chairs. Lunch suggestion: Canton Pizza Ranch.

### Sioux Center library Bilingual Storytime

The Sioux Center Public Library will host a Bilingual Storytime series 6:30-7:30 p.m. Mondays, July 10, 17, 24. This program is fun for both English and Spanish-speaking families. Parents and children will learn and play together; sharing some rhymes, books and activities that incorporate Spanish language learning. To register visit [www.siuoxcenterlibrary.org](http://www.siuoxcenterlibrary.org).

### VanDeBerg Farm Storytime on July 11

Storytime will be held at 10 a.m. Tuesday, July 11. Parents and children will be traveling to the VanDeBerg Farm, 1346 7th St. NE, Sioux Center, and learning about farm animals. Visit [www.siuoxcenterlibrary.org](http://www.siuoxcenterlibrary.org) for more information.

### Youth quiz bowl at Sioux County fair

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach will host a quiz bowl for youth in fourth through 12th grades at the Sioux County Youth Fair, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Tuesday, July 11. Participants will be challenged on their beef and swine knowledge of animal breeds, meat cuts, feedstuffs and livestock equipment. 4-H or FFA membership is not required. Register at [form.jotform.com/4Hregion1/county-fair-quiz-](http://form.jotform.com/4Hregion1/county-fair-quiz-)

bowls or outside the 4-H office on the first day of the fair. For more information, contact Cheryl Heronemus, ISU Extension regional director, at 712-240-2472 or [hero@iastate.edu](mailto:hero@iastate.edu).

### Sioux Center library hosts kids' games

Kids in TK through third grade are invited to Kids' Games & Activity night 6:30-7:30 p.m. Tuesday, July 11 at the Sioux Center Public Library. There's a variety of activities for free play as well as an outdoor featured activity for the evening. Register kids at [www.siuoxcenterlibrary.org](http://www.siuoxcenterlibrary.org).

### Virtual series on Parkinson's disease

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach will host a virtual educational series "A Journey Through Parkinson's Disease," on Zoom 10-11 a.m. Thursdays, July 13, July 20 and July 27. The programs will include interactive lessons, discussions, and activities about Parkinson's disease, its effects and possible treatments. There is a no fee to participate thanks to sponsorship from Iowa State's Department of Kinesiology and Human Sciences Extension and Outreach. To register, visit [www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/parkinsons](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/parkinsons).

## Business News

Greg Van Dyke, director of admissions at Dordt University in Sioux Center, received the Annual Service Award for Outstanding Achievement from the North American Coalition for Christian Admissions Professionals during the organization's

annual conference at Charleston Southern University in South Carolina in May. He has worked at Dordt for more than 18 years. Van Dyke holds a degree in secondary education from Dordt and has helped to recruit countless students to Dordt.

## Names in the News

Rachel Leusink of Sioux Center was named to the spring dean's list at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls for achieving a 3.5 or higher grade-point average.

Dalton Schreiner of Sioux Center graduated in May from the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls with a bachelor of arts in public administration.

Wendy Ruiz of Sioux Center was named to the spring president's list at Western Iowa Tech Community College in Sioux City for achieving a 4.0 grade-

point average. Willeam Cam of Sioux Center was named to the spring dean's list for achieving a 3.5-3.99 GPA.

Patricia King, formerly of Sioux Center, received a Navy promotion from ensign to lieutenant junior grade and assigned to the Medical Service Corps in Denver, CO.

Ellie Hurst of Sioux Center was named to the spring dean's list at University of Nebraska-Lincoln in Lincoln, NE, for achieving a 3.5 or higher grade-point average.

■ The Sioux Center News welcomes the submission of materials for its family pages.

If you have questions, call 712-722-0741 or e-mail [editor@siouxcenternews.com](mailto:editor@siouxcenternews.com)

## Law & Order

### Man jailed for OWI after going in ditch

A 33-year-old Sioux Center man was arrested about 9:50 p.m. Saturday, June 17, on charges of first-offense operating while under the influence and possession of an open container as a driver.

The arrest of Patrick Clifford Bouillon stemmed from reports of a 2005 Dodge Ram pickup stuck in the ditch near 13th Avenue and 20th Street Southeast in Sioux Center, according to the Sioux Center Police Department.

Bouillon was found in the driver's seat with the vehicle running in the east ditch.

Marks on the roadway showed he was traveling south on 13th Avenue when he crossed over into the oncoming lane and went into the ditch. He pulled back out into the oncoming lane before entering the ditch again and getting stuck.

Bouillon had bloodshot/watery eyes, impaired balance and the odor of an alcoholic beverage.

He admitted to consuming a few drinks, and an open container of alcohol was found lying on the front passenger floorboard, according to the incident report.

### Two hurt in accident northwest of Sibley

Two people were injured in a two-vehicle accident about 4:25 p.m. Sunday, June 18, on Highway 9 near the Highway 60 expressway interchange northeast of Sibley.

James Tyler Morgan, 25, of Belleville, MI, was driving west on Highway 9 when he attempted to pass numerous west-facing vehicles waiting to turn south onto the Highway 60 expressway, according to the Osceola County Sheriff's Office.

Morgan's 2022 Chevrolet Silverado pickup struck a 2014 GMC Acadia driven by 54-year-old Angela Irene Rodenburgh of Sioux Center midway through her turn south.

The two drivers were transported by the Osceola County Ambulance to Osceola Regional Health Center in Sibley.

Morgan was cited for unsafe passing; reckless driving; passing too near a bridge, intersection or railroad; passing contrary to a highway sign or marking; and failure to reduce speed to a reasonable and proper rate.

The two vehicles were

totaled.

### Driver cited after two-vehicle crash

A two-vehicle collision occurred about 6:25 p.m. Tuesday, June 20, in the South Ridge Travel Plaza parking lot in Sioux Center.

Carmelo Bravo Perez, 22, Sioux Center, driving a 2008 GMC Acadia, was in a parking spot and began backing out when he struck a 2013 Ford Edge, driven by Mary Dell Brommer, 73, Sioux Center, who was driving through the parking lot.

No injuries were reported. The Ford sustained about \$2,000 in damage. The GMC sustained about \$250 in damage.

Bravo Perez was cited by the Sioux Center Police Department for driving while license denied, suspended, canceled or revoked.

### Jeeps hits Christian school building

No injuries were reported, but a 2016 Jeep Cherokee was totaled when it ran into the side of Sioux Center Christian School about 10:50 a.m. Wednesday, June 21.

Sixty-eight-year-old

Leanne Carol Bonnecroy of Orange City told authorities she had parked the Jeep in a parking space, facing east, on the west side of the school when she realized the vehicle was still running, according to the Sioux Center Police Department.

Bonnecroy got back into the Jeep to turn it off and accidentally placed the vehicle into drive and accelerated.

The Jeep jumped the curb and struck the side mirror of a 2004 Ford F-250 pickup that was parked for tree removal.

The Jeep then continued east, striking landscape rocks and a flagpole before running into the school.

The school building, landscape and flagpole received an estimated \$1,000 damage.

The pickup received an estimated \$250 damage.

### No injuries reported in two-vehicle crash

A truck backed up while in a turn lane and struck another vehicle about 11 a.m. Wednesday, June 21, on Highway 75 North in Sioux Center.

Andrew Edward Hamilton, 31, Carroll, driving a 2015 Ford F550 flatbed truck, was facing northbound

in the turning lane on Highway 75 when he backed the truck up to tell another motorist they had dropped a hose. While backing up the truck he struck a 2016 Subaru Outback, driven by Barbara Kay Schaap, 74, Alton, causing slight damage to the front of the vehicle, according to the Sioux Center Police Department.

### Distracted driving caused two-car crash

Distracted driving caused a two-vehicle collision about 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 21, on Highway 75 North near the Third Street Northeast intersection in Sioux Center.

Travis Michael Kolbeck, 46, Sheldon, driving a 2006 Chevrolet Cobalt and a 2014 Toyota RAV4, driven by Faith Marie Goldie Van Holland, 21, Sioux Falls, SD, were both traveling southbound on Highway 75. Van Holland was stopped in traffic due to a red traffic signal when Kolbeck collided with Van Holland. Kolbeck admitted that it was his fault for the

accident because he was looking at a building on the east side of Highway 75.

No injuries were reported. The Chevrolet sustained about \$5,000 in damage. The Toyota sustained about \$1,200 in damage.

Kolbeck was cited by the Sioux Center Police Department for failure to stop in assured clear distance.

### One hurt when SUV strikes pickup in Hull

One person received minor injuries when an SUV rear-ended a pickup about 9 a.m. Thursday June 22, at the intersection of Highway 18 and Hayes Avenue in Hull.

Twenty-one-year-old Hugo Armando Ramirez-Martin of Sioux Center was driving west on the highway when his 2013 Nissan Pathfinder struck a 2016 Chevrolet Silverado pickup driven by 60-year-old Arlis Pettersen of Doon, who had slowed to turn left onto Hayes Avenue, according to the Sioux County Sheriff's Office.

Ramirez-Martin reported minor injuries but declined further medical attention.

Ramirez-Martin was cited for following too close.

Each vehicle received an estimated \$10,000 damage.



# Opinion

## Health center is a regional hub



Thumbs-up to Promise Community Health Center in Sioux Center, which hopes to break ground in August on a \$3.6 million expansion on the east side of its existing structure at 33 Fourth St. N, said Promise CEO Emily Tuschen at the monthly Sioux Center Chamber of Commerce lunch June 14 at the Sioux Center Public Library.

Building plans call for constructing a 10,000 square foot, two-story addition, each story of which is 5,000 square feet, on a gravel portion of property owned by Promise that currently serves as staff parking.

“Within a portion of our existing structure we have a mixture of patient care and offices,” Tuschen said. “We would like that to be only patient care areas. With the addition, the offices would be moved to the second story of the addition, allowing us to renovate the existing structure to create more patient rooms.

“The first floor will have mental health services including a play therapy area, which we don’t currently have.”

Tuschen also said there will be space for the vision department.

The addition will have space for the vision care services and another entrance option for specific services.

Construction is slated to be a nine-month process that will begin with the expansion and then work can begin on renovating parts of the exciting building.

“We have been working diligently to get funding in place,” Tuschen said, noting Promise has locked in a grant from Health Resources and Service Administration, the government agency that oversees Promise, as well as a United States Department of Agriculture grant. Promise has also secured two zero-percent interest loans and is working with some community business partners.

“We’re certainly aware that by the time this project is done we might have already outgrown it,” Tuschen said. “It’s nice when you do an expansion project to be able to have room to grow. Yet, when this is complete, we’ll be landlocked in that location.

“As a health center we’re unique in that we’re also called to go to patients, so in our strategic planning meetings, we’re looking at where our patients are coming from and where we may need to start an outreach program.”

Promise had 23,012 visits in 2022 serving 6,704 patients compared to a decade ago in which it had 8,293 visits in 2013, serving 2,420 patients.



Thumbs-up to American State Bank’s week of celebrating its 50 years of business in Sioux Center.

During the June 15 Chamber Coffee event, new American State Bank president Eric Vande Hoef and CEO Brandon Woudstra gave their thanks to the bank’s employees and customers.

“We’ve been blessed to be in the community we’re in. We’re in a progressive community, and we get a chance to serve in this progressive community,” Vande Hoef said. “To our customer base, we want to say thank you. Thank you for those opportunities to serve.”

“We’re focused on our dedication to our customers. That’s something we feel and appreciate every day, the dedication of our employees to our customers and to each other,” Woudstra said. “That’s fun to see, and I hope that continues for the next 50 years.”

Thursday’s event was the official 50-year mark as American State Bank first opened for business June 15, 1973. Five employees worked out of a trailer initially, which featured three teller windows, a drive-up window on its east end and two large fireproof vaults.

In the 1980s, American State Bank moved into a permanent structure built at American State Bank’s present location and add a trust division, with one employee. Another building to its north was built and opened in October 1998 to address a need for more space for the additional staff and services.

The bank has continued to grow. When the bank moved its charter from Hospers to Sioux Center, it was the fifth largest bank in Sioux County. Now, it’s the largest in terms of local deposits, with more than \$1 billion in assets.



## Toads, smartphones and caring for creation

In early spring as I was down on my knees, cleaning out last year’s leaves and dead stalks from my asparagus patch and a toad suddenly jumped out at me. It made me gasp. When I looked more closely, I saw that the toad was actually two toads, a smaller one riding on the back of the other.

“Ah,” I thought, “this big old daddy toad is carrying an injured toad on his back.” How sweet! I wondered if this was typical and so I did what we all do when we want to know something. I pulled out my phone and Googled “toad.” And then, because I did not see anything about toads riding on the backs of other toads, I Googled “toads mating.”

Voilà! Up popped a picture of my toads: a larger toad with a smaller toad on her back. Yes, HER back. The smaller toad was a male. My concern in this column is not sex education, so I won’t go into the details here, but it’s quite interesting. You can Google it yourself.

I do, however, want to note something we all know: That part of creation we call the natural world is amazingly interesting and complex, and the opportunity to be close enough to the earth and its creatures to see something extraordinary is a marvelous privilege.

Owning that marvelously complex device we call a smartphone is also a privilege. Even though our phones lack

### OUR VOICES

DAVID SCHELHAAS



the “aliveness” that makes toads and birds and flowers and countless other creatures so awe-inspiring, smartphones bring an astounding amount of information to our fingertips, and they do it in a few seconds. The smartphone and many other technologies can also be seen as gifts of our creator God. Life without technology would be terribly difficult.

So, let’s talk about this toad and this smartphone as symbols in the context of the biblical mandate to care for the creation. The “Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystems” tells us that “One million species face extinction without radical corrective changes in human behavior.”

What that means, essentially, is that we must consume less and treat the earth more carefully. Buy less stuff, travel fewer miles by car and plane, live in slightly cooler homes in winter and warmer in summer. And reduce our use of pesticides and herbicides.

In Genesis 2:15 God told humans to “tend and care” for His creation. That

creation includes the Kihansi (golden) toad, the Boreal toad and the Panamanian golden frog. These creatures are on the brink of extinction. In Western Minnesota where I grew up and saw toads in abundance in my yard and around our house’s foundation, the Great Plains toads are much less abundant and seem almost to disappear in times of drought.

For scientists, toads and frogs function as the proverbial canaries in the coal mine. When they are in trouble, trouble is closing in on the rest of us as well.

Final Note: I wrote most of this piece three or four years ago, but for some reason I did nothing with it. Since then I have not seen a toad — single or double-deck — in the places where I used to spy toads. You can say, “Big deal! Who needs toads anyway?” But St. Paul tells us in Romans 8 that the “creation waits with eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.” What will these children of God be doing? Bringing restoration to a creation that languishes “in bondage to decay.”

Perhaps you are one of those children.

*David Schelhaas taught high school English for 23 years and English at Dordt University for 20 years. He is retired and lives in Sioux Center with his wife, Jeri.*

## Sioux Center’s library stacks up to others

Many people view the library and their services as “materials” only. In a world where we see the increase of individuals reading books and watching TV/movies on their phones or devices, it’s easy to think that libraries will not survive. However, I can tell you with 100 percent certainty that not only is the Sioux Center Public Library surviving, we are thriving.

My name is Heidi Ouwinga, and I am the assistant director at the Sioux Center library. I can’t tell you how many times I am asked if the library is still being used. I actually have to control my facial expressions when asked this because I know that they have not recently been into our library! I’m confident that if you ask any of our regular patrons they will also tell you the same thing — the Sioux Center library is busier than ever!

On a regular summer day, if you come into the library the chances are good that there will be at least six kids sitting at the computers gaming together; young moms and dads with their children either playing with our activity kits, on the iPads or reading books together; the study room will be in use by either tutors, private meetings or business people; and teens will be visiting on the couch in the young adult area.

A common expression we hear is that the Sioux Center library is no longer a quiet place to go to! We know that this is not always being said as a positive comment, but we do take it as a compliment because we know that people are viewing the library as a safe place to go to, a place where people are valued and services are readily available.

Part of my job at the library includes applying for grants. I recently wrote a grant for the library that would award us \$25,000, if chosen. Now this particular grant may be a stretch to receive as only one library is going to be awarded

### OUR VOICES

HEIDI OUWINGA



for it. However, that being said, as I am writing it and reviewing the yearly stats at the library, I can’t help but feel a huge sense of pride for all our library offers to the community, as well as how valued we feel from not only our users/patrons, but from all the local organizations and businesses that support us, as well our city council. I think it is important to share some of these stats with the community so that they can also see the value that the library brings to Sioux Center.

If you drove past the library on June 5, you would have seen a parking lot packed with vehicles, people standing in line during the morning at the Rooted Coffee Truck and again in the evening at the Chix Chicken and Waffles Food Truck. June 5 was the opening day of the Summer Reading Program. During this day we signed up 855 people for the summer reading program, we checked out 1,503 books, 155 people attended live bingo, Rooted Coffee Truck served 143 drinks and Chix Chicken and Waffles served 200 meals! It was an amazing and successful first day and we thank everyone who came to help us celebrate.

The state library recently shared the results of last fiscal year’s annual survey. Before I share these stats, I want to explain for clarification purposes that all the libraries in the state are broken up by the size of their community and given a letter categorizing them. The Sioux Center library falls under the E-sized library category, which is for communities with the population size of 5,000-9,999. The next size up would be F-sized libraries for populations of 10,000-24,999.

Now, down to the statistics: The Sioux Center library has a total collection of 209,405 physical and downloadable items. This is considerably higher than the average of 179,362 for other libraries our size. However, it is our circulation numbers where we really stand out. Sioux Center had a total of 232,856 items circulated (checked out) during our last fiscal year. The average for E-sized libraries is 63,749! We are even considerably higher than the average for the next population group of F-sized libraries, which is only 139,332. That group includes cities like Fort Dodge, Spencer and Le Mars! Our programming also continues that trend. Last year we held 580 programs (average is 341) and had 11,206 attendees (average 6,132). These are just a few of the stats that show how our library is reaching out to the public. If anyone would like to see more stats, stop by and visit me at the library. I love to share statistics and I love to meet new people, so would be happy to visit with you about them!

In conclusion, I just want to reiterate our thanks to the community and our patrons for finding the value in our library so we can continue to thrive and bring services that are important to you. To quote the library’s strategic plan, the Sioux Center library continues and will keep striving to “Grow Bright in the CENTER of our community!” I wish everyone a happy summer break and if you haven’t been to the library recently, I encourage you to stop in. Come and see what the fuss is all about!

*Heidi Ouwinga is the assistant director at the Sioux Center Public Library. Her primary duties include marketing and communications, office management and billing. She lives in Sioux Center with her husband, Jay, and three kids. In her spare time she loves to read (of course!), go on walks, and spend time with her family playing basketball or lawn games.*

## SIoux CENTER NEWS

In Its 131st Year

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SIoux CENTER NEWS

# SPORTS



Football players from Sioux Center and Boyden-Hull/Rock Valley along with employees of Snap Fitness and ProActive Physical Therapy helped five current and former NFL players lead children at the Day With The Pros camp at the Sioux Center football field on Monday, June 19. The event featured several strength and conditioning drills, not all of them related to football. Photos by Scott Byers

## Sioux Center pros run camp

Children excited to work with NFL players

BY SCOTT BYERS  
SBYERS@NWESTIOWA.COM

Football is not the first thing you think of on a day when temperatures on the field turf hit 95 degrees, but when you have the rare opportunity to meet some of the guys you have only seen on television, it's a great day to hit the field.

The Day With The Pros camp hosted by Sioux Center's Snap Fitness and ProActive Physical Therapy drew 471 participants along with hundreds of parents and community members that were spectators at the event on Monday, June 19, in Sioux Center.

The main attraction at the event was the presence of Los Angeles Rams linebacker Christian Rozeboom, Tampa Bay Buccaneers tight end Ko Kieft, Miami Dolphins linebacker Andrew Van Ginkel, Jacksonville Jaguars guard Brandon Scherff and former Miami Dolphins defensive end Vern Den Herder, who was on the only undefeated team in the Super Bowl era of the

National Football League.

Rozeboom, Kieft and Den Herder are all Sioux Center High School graduates.

The players were joined by employees of Snap Fitness and ProActive along with high school players from Sioux Center and Boyden-Hull/Rock Valley in leading the camp. There were two sessions, one for grades 3-5 and another for grades 6-8.

"It's cool. It's something different. It's a neat thing the community has been able to put on," said Brett Van Riessen of Sioux Center, who watched his 10-year-old daughter, Quin, participate. "It's really cool for a small community to have this many pro athletes. It's usually kind of unheard of around here. It's good they are willing to put this on, and you can see how many kids and families wanted to be a part of it. It's a neat deal."

Van Riessen said while he was never a football player, the camp would have appealed to him as a youth.

"It would have been amazing. It's unheard of. We never had anything like this growing up," he said. "Not that I played football, but it still would have been fun to

participate in. These kids look up to those pros and want to be a part of it and that's why they are here."

Kieft said he remembers a similar feeling when he was young.

"LeVar Woods and Kyle Vanden Bosch used to have a camp in Larchwood at the West Lyon High School," Kieft said of the two former NFL players. "I used to look forward to it so much. It was just really cool. To come back to Sioux Center and do this, now that I've been there and done that, it's kind of a full-circle moment."

"It's fun man," Kieft continued. "It brings you back to when you were their age. It's super fun just kind of looking up to the older players and older guys. That makes it fun to come and give back in that sense."

That sense of awe remains with Rozeboom, who said he has met Den Herder a few times but is still taken aback by being on the same billing as the legend.

"On my way here, I was talking to my wife and I was telling her how I got a picture signed by Vern Den Herder when I was probably

see **PROS** on page A10



Tampa Bay Buccaneers tight end Ko Kieft observes children going through drills on Monday, June 19, at the Day With the Pros camp in Sioux Center. Kieft is a Sioux Center graduate and played college football at the University of Minnesota before being drafted into the NFL.

## Warriors riding roller coaster late in regular season

Team begins tourney action at MOC-FV

BY CHARLIE HILDEBRAND  
CHILDEBRAND@NWESTIOWA.COM

Sioux Center split its last four softball games and aims to finish the regular season on a high note this week.

The Warriors are 14-8 overall and tied for third in the Siouxland Conference with an 8-4 mark. They play at Sheldon today (Wednesday, June 28), host MOC-Floyd Valley on Thursday and end the regular season with a home game against Boy-

den-Hull/Rock Valley on Friday — all league contests.

Sioux Center opens the Class 3A Region 1 tournament at MOC-Floyd Valley on July 6, in Orange City.

The Warriors hosted Spirit Lake for Senior Night on Tuesday, June 27, after the press deadline.

### UC 1, SC 0

Sioux Center played tough defense but struggled putting offense together in a 1-0 loss to Unity Christian on Tuesday, June 20, in Sioux Center.

see **GIRLS** on page A10



Sioux Center sophomore Kinley Kamerman makes a throw to first in a contest with West Lyon last Wednesday in Larchwood. The Warriors lost 11-1. Photo by Scott Byers

## Baseball aims for strong finish before postseason play

Group looks to stop losing skid at three

BY CHARLIE HILDEBRAND  
CHILDEBRAND@NWESTIOWA.COM

Sioux Center started last week on a high note in baseball but has lost its last three games against tough competition heading into the final stretch of the regular season.

The Warriors are 9-10 overall and 7-5 in the Siouxland Conference. They play at Sheldon today (Wednesday, June 28), play at Okoboji on Thursday and host Boyden-Hull/Rock Valley on Friday, all league games. The

Warriors end the regular season with a road game on Monday at MOC-Floyd Valley.

Sioux Center hosted Spirit Lake on Tuesday, June 27, after the press deadline.

### SC 4, UC 2

Sioux Center settled in after a slow start and rode the arm of Carson Bruhn to a 4-2 win over Unity Christian in a nonconference baseball game on Tuesday, June 20, in Sioux Center.

"Carson pitched really well," said Warriors' coach see **BOYS** on page A11



Aidan De Jager, a senior at Sioux Center, slides back to first in a tilt last Wednesday with West Lyon in Larchwood. The Warriors lost the game 7-1. Photo by Scott Byers

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Sports

# Round-trippers get Warriors back into swing of it

## GIRLS

*Continued from page A9*

"We put the ball in play quite a bit. We had hard hits," said Warriors' coach Kari Schmalbeck. "Their right fielder made some great plays, their shortstop too. When we did hit it hard, it was right at someone. That's softball sometimes."

Sioux Center avoided giving up any runs in the first inning. Unity Christian had runners on second and third with one out, but Tatum Schmalbeck struck out the next two batters to get out of the frame.

In the top of the fourth inning, the Knights reached first on an error with one out and stole second. Again, Tatum Schmalbeck struck out the next two batters to end the frame unscathed.

The Warriors had their own opportunity for runs in the bottom of the fourth with runners on second and third. They ended the frame without any runs after a popout and groundout.

Sioux Center dodged another bullet in the fifth. The visitors had runners on second and third again with one out. Tatum Schmalbeck induced a pair of groundouts to get of the inning again without allowing any runs.

The Warriors couldn't say the same in the sixth though. After a single and two fielder's choices put runners on first and second, Unity Christian hit an RBI single to take a 1-0 lead.

Sioux Center's Maci Schmalbeck hit a leadoff single in the bottom of the seventh. She moved to second on a groundout but couldn't advance any further.

Tatum Schmalbeck pitched a complete game for the Warriors and allowed one run on four hits in the loss. She walked two batters, hit one and struck out nine.

"Unity did a good job of taking her deep into counts and fouled off a lot of pitches," coach Schmalbeck said. "They made her work. She did a good job striking bats

out."

### West Lyon 11, SC 1

West Lyon answered an early blow by Sioux Center and the Warriors never recovered in an 11-1 loss in five innings to the Class 3A ninth-ranked Wildcats in a conference game last Wednesday in Larchwood.

The Warriors seemed to be in a good spot early when Tatum Schmalbeck led off the top of the first inning with a solo homer.

"She was looking to swing at a good pitch," coach Schmalbeck said. "That's her mentality. This was dead center. We started with some fireworks, then that was about it. It quickly died out."

West Lyon countered with a leadoff homer of its own in the bottom of the first and added five more runs on top of that to go in front 6-1.

"We just got off to a slow start. We were not sharp," coach Schmalbeck said. "It was a combination of giving up too many hits and errors to give them extra batters."

The Wildcats added four runs in the fourth and another in the fifth to end the game.

Tatum Schmalbeck pitched one inning for the Warriors and allowed three earned runs on three hits with two walks in the loss. Makenna Walhof pitched the final four frames and gave up five runs on eight hits. She struck out two batters.

Adison Brantsen and Maci Schmalbeck had the only other hits for Sioux Center.

"West Lyon did a really good job of putting the ball in play," coach Schmalbeck said. "They hit the ball really well and we did not. That was the difference in the game."

### SC 15, Okoboji 0

Sioux Center ended its offensive funk on Thursday, slugging away to a 15-0 win in three innings over Okoboji during a Siouxland game in Milford.

"Offensively, it was probably the best we've played in a



Sioux Center sophomore Alvia Johnston hustles toward first base as West Lyon senior Randi Childress fields her bunt last Wednesday in Larchwood. Photo by Scott Byers

while," coach Schmalbeck said. "It was nice after the night before to come back and mentally assure them they have the physical abilities to hit the ball."

The Warriors scored more runs in the first inning than they had the previous two games. Tatum Schmalbeck hit another leadoff solo homer. Adison Brantsen tripled on the next at-bat and scored on a single from Margo Schuiteman to make it 2-0.

Sioux Center plated seven runs in the second frame. Tatum Schmalbeck walked with the bases loaded. Brantsen hit a two-run single and Schuiteman had a sacrifice fly to stretch the advantage to 6-0. Maci Schmalbeck hit an RBI single and Jordan DeWeerd smacked a two-run single to increase the advantage to 9-0.

The Warriors plated six more runs in the third. Tatum Schmalbeck hit a two-run homer. Schuiteman and Aislin Massen hit RBI singles. The visitors scored two more runs on an error.

Tatum Schmalbeck pitched all three innings and didn't allow any hits. She walked

one and struck out five of the 11 batters she faced.

"We were sharper on the mound. We had three balls hit all night, but great defense behind Tatum. Kinley Kameron and Maci Schmalbeck had great defensive plays. Other than that, Tatum just took care of them."

Offensively, Tatum Schmalbeck finished 2-for-2 and hit her fifth home run in the last five games.

"She's just got a great approach at the plate," coach Schmalbeck said. "She's just feeling mentally strong when she's up there and is swinging at good pitches."

Brantsen went 3-for-3 from the plate for the Warriors with two triples. Alvia Johnston and Schuiteman were 2-for-2. DeWeerd and Walhof went 2-for-3.

"Adison Brantsen hit the ball well too. It was a great confidence booster for her," coach Schmalbeck said. "Jordan and Alvia and Margo hit well. Top to bottom the girls hit the ball really well."

### SC 6, SC Heelan 4

Sioux Center let Sioux City Heelan creep back into the

| 2023 SUBSTATE SOFTBALL                                                                       |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| CLASS 3A REGION 1                                                                            |  |
| <b>Estherville Lincoln Central</b><br>Thur., July 6 at 7 p.m. at Estherville Lincoln Central |  |
| <b>Sheldon</b>                                                                               |  |
| <b>Spirit Lake</b><br>Thur., July 6 at 7 p.m. at Spirit Lake                                 |  |
| <b>Unity Christian</b>                                                                       |  |
| <b>West Lyon</b><br>Thur., July 6 at 7 p.m. at Larchwood                                     |  |
| <b>Okoboji</b>                                                                               |  |
| <b>MOC-Floyd Valley</b><br>Thur., July 6 at 7 p.m. at MOC-Floyd Valley                       |  |
| <b>Sioux Center</b>                                                                          |  |

game on Friday but Tatum Schmalbeck hit a walk-off home run to give the Warriors a 6-4 victory over the Crusaders in the nonconference contest in Sioux Center.

"That's something that everyone dreams of doing," said Tatum Schmalbeck.

"Honestly, when I got into the box, I was just hoping for a base hit, line drive. I just think about the fundamentals of my swing. I was just hoping to hit it somewhere in the green or in the gap, but to go over the fence was really awesome."

Sioux Center notched four runs in the first inning. Tatum Schmalbeck scored on an error. Brantsen reached on an error and was driven in by Maci Schmalbeck. Walhof scored on an error and DeWeerd drove in a run.

"We jumped on them early with those four runs," coach Schmalbeck said. "We had a couple of errors to let them back in, but I felt like we stayed settled overall. We played well defensively to get out of some big innings."

Heelan notched two runs in the fourth and two in the fifth to even the contest at 4.

The Crusaders had runners on second and third with not outs in the sixth, but Tatum Schmalbeck struck out two

batters sandwiched around a popout to get out of the inning unscathed.

"They stayed very calm when the pressure arose," coach Schmalbeck said. "They stayed relaxed. It was nice to see them fight that way."

In the bottom of the seventh, Johnston reached base to open the frame. On the next at-bat, Tatum Schmalbeck hit a two-run blast to end the contest.

"Credit to Alivia Johnston for getting on with a nice single up the middle," coach Schmalbeck said. "Tatum came up next. I was asking her after the game what she was telling herself. She said to stay balanced."

Tatum Schmalbeck pitched a complete game and allowed three earned runs on seven hits to get the win. She walked one batter and struck out eight.

Offensively, Tatum Schmalbeck went 3-for-4 from the plate for the Warriors. Walhof was 2-for-3. Brantsen doubled.

"Offensively, Tatum had a great night," coach Schmalbeck said. "Makenna had two great hits. Adison Brantsen had a really good contact hit. It's nice to see people getting big hits in big games."

# Area children embrace chance to meet players

## PROS

*Continued from page A9*

about these kids' age and how cool I thought that was," Rozeboom said. "Now, it's my name getting signed next to him. It's a pretty cool deal."

Den Herder was impressed by the efforts of the kids. They went through drills that included agility tests, sprints, hitting blocking dummies, pushing sleds and a relay race carrying weights.

"It's very inspiring actually. To have these kids out here to do the work that they are having to do on a hot day like this," Den Herder said. "It's nice to see their interest."

The camp wasn't specifically a football event, though some of the drills were similar to ones used in practices.

"We wanted it to be a little bit of football and a little bit of exercise and fitness in general. The kinds of things we do at Snap," said Carter Jacobson of Snap Fitness. "Everyone seemed to have a good time. It seemed like it might have been a little bit harder than some of them



Two groups of campers attempt to pull fire trucks in the parking lot of the football field in Sioux Center during the Day With The Pros on Monday, June 19. Five current and former National Football League players helped with the event. Photo by Scott Byers

anticipated, but the kids got through it."

Rozeboom said he had gotten a few interesting questions from the campers.

"Probably the most common one is, 'Where do I go next?' But one kid was asking where the NFL players were because he couldn't find any," he said. "I told him where

Scherff was. He's the biggest one, so he can pick him out a little easier than the other guys."

Kieft said the time is limited as far as how much the pros can impart on the kids, but fun was the main objective of the day.

"I just want the kids that sign up in our group to have a

fun experience and maintain that love for the game, a love for whatever they are doing," he said. "Because if you have that then you will be able to go places if you truly love and enjoy what you are doing."

Rozeboom said the friends you have when you are young will always matter in your life.

"When I was that age, it's just about having fun with your buddies. Treating them right goes a long way," he said. "This is more to have fun and be out with your buddies in the summer. You just keep doing it, keep having fun for as long as you can. I'm doing the same thing, still playing football. It's just a little different stage now."

The grand finale of the event saw campers pulling fire trucks in the parking lot.

"That was Brandon's idea," Jacobson said. "Snap had did something like this six or seven years ago and had a fire truck pull. He really wanted to make that happen again and the Sioux Center fire department was willing and ready."

Jacobson said the best part about the whole day was the \$11,000 raised for Hope Food Pantry in Sioux Center.

"To have all these kids and all these people out here having a good time and to be able to give back to the community in that way, that's a good day," he said.

## Briefly

### Douma accepts new Job in Minnesota

Ross Douma, the director of athletics at Dordt University, announced last week that he accepted a new job.

Douma will be the new president at Avail Academy, a K-12 school with locations in the Minneapolis metro area.

A fall timeline for the transition is being developed for Dordt, Douma and Avail.

Douma took over as the director of athletics for the Defenders in 2017 and was awarded the Athletic Director of the Year by the Great Plains Athletic Conference following the 2021-22 school year.

From 2013-17, Douma was the associate athletic director. He also coached men's basketball for the Defenders from 2009-18 and compiled a record of 180-94 over that time frame. Douma was the GPAC Coach of the Year in 2012 and 14. He was also an NAIA Coach of the Year finalist in 2014.

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