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Sheldon Middle School sixth-graders dress up as historical figures for Night of Notables.

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The Sheldon

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Kassel pleads not guilty, trial date set

Faces first-degree murder for allegedly killing mom

By JEFF GRANT
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A 41-year-old Rock Rapids man has pleaded not guilty to the accusation of murdering his mother at her home in Sheldon on March 23.

Nathaniel Byron Kassel entered his plea of not guilty on Friday, April 14, in O'Brien County District Court in Primghar to the charge of first-degree murder of 62-year-old Jody Lynn Duskin.

The written plea was filed by his attorney, state public defender John Loos Jr. of Sioux Center.

Kassel also has been charged with

two counts of fifth-degree theft in connection with the incident.

Judge John Sandy on Monday set a jury trial for 9:30 a.m. Tuesday, June 20, with a pretrial conference scheduled for 9:30 a.m. Monday, May 15.

Iowa assistant attorney general Scott Brown is representing the prosecution on behalf of the state along with O'Brien County assistant attorney Rachael Becker.

According to criminal complaint See **PLEA** on page A3



Kassel



Scott Simonsen of Dubak Electric presents the plan for the company to renovate and expand the building at 300 16th St. in Sheldon to the Sheldon City Council on Wednesday, April 5. (Photo by Justin Rust)

Dubak Electrical sees spark in ZEISS facility

Wants to renovate, expand former lens factory spot

By JUSTIN RUST
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While eye lens manufacturer ZEISS may not have seen a use for its Sheldon facility anymore, an electrical company wants to make utilize the property at 300 16th St.

Scott Simonsen attended last Wednesday's Sheldon City Council meeting to propose a full five-year tax rebate for a new industrial development project at the former ZEISS building.

Simonsen, who lives in Sheldon, works for Dubak Electrical and the company is finalizing the details to purchase the ZEISS building. Once it owns the building, Dubak Electrical plans to remodel the about 4,300-square-foot structure and expand it.

Pending permit approvals, Dubak Electrical plans to start the project in May.

The council approved the tax increment financing application for Dubak Electrical, and a public hearing was set at 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 19, for the

See **DUBAK** on page A6

Feedback leads to change for rental rates' proposal

Payment still goes up for community center rooms

By JUSTIN RUST
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While the Sheldon Community Services Center will see an increase in rent for the rooms available to the public, it will not be as significant of a hike as originally proposed.

When the April 5 Sheldon City Council agenda was released, the rental rates were included as an actionable item.

However, a couple of councilmen

asked to review the rates, and it was moved to a discussion topic for the April 5 meeting.

"There's been some feedback that we've received from council members and the community since this was originally posted. There's since been a version two posted," said city manager Sam Kooiker. "Really, the issue is that we are having is mainly in the evenings and the weekends, it isn't during the day."

He said he and city clerk Angie

See **RATES** on page A6

By JUSTIN RUST
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FINAL COUNTDOWN

While higher temperatures and sunny skies are a sign summer vacation is near, past snow days cast a cloud over when the last day of classes would be for the Sheldon School District.

The number of days the district had to cancel school added up to 11, which pushed the final day of school to Tuesday, May 30, the day after Memorial Day.

After receiving some questions from students, parents and staff about potentially moving the

last day, superintendent Cory Myer brought the issue before the Sheldon School District Board of Education during its meeting last Wednesday.

Board member Steve Waldstein said having the final day of school after the three-day Memorial Day weekend break would be problematic for students and staff and made a motion to make the last day Friday, May 26.

The idea did face some opposition with fellow board member Jessica Brink, who voted against motion.

See **SCHOOL** on page A7

BOARD SETS LAST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR MAY 26

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