

Dave LaBelle

Dyersville Commercial Best Photographer Entry





Delhi American Legion dance still going strong

BY DAVE LABELLE
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Marian Peters began attending dances when she was just 14. Now at 79, she is still on the dance floor when she is not working behind the scenes as president of American Legion Ladies Auxiliary Post 160 in Delhi.

Peters is one of the driving forces keeping the Delhi American Legion dance thriving, scheduling and booking dances for the past 10 years.

"We didn't have dances for years, and then about 10 years ago we started up again," she said. Peters remembers when the building was abandoned and in terrible disrepair. But thanks to a lot of helpers, they put in new furnaces, a new roof, and a new dance floor, to name a few of the improvements.

"Dances like this are a thing of the past," she said. "Look around, you don't see any young people."

Peters added that there was a time most small towns, Manchester, Cascade and Worthington, where she is from, held Sunday dances.

"Now we are the only one in the area, and people come from all over, Iowa City, Cedar Rapids and Dubuque."

Jan. 15 the past came alive in the present as one of Iowa's oldest bands, "Sounds of Nashville," with 80-year-old Jim Klein, 81-year-old Gene Hansel and Bob Richards, the youngster at 67, played the entire four-hour session.

Many singles get together after their spouses have passed to dance and socialize with old friends. Veryl Kelley, 82, said he and his dancing partner, Susie Ballentine, 79, had both lost their spouses. Birthday boy, Don Porter, 87, moving across the dance floor with his partner Dotti Cleghorn, 95, said they love dancing and often go to Branson, Mo., to listen to music and dance.

Bob Lee, 84, who lost his wife, Grace, three years ago, found a regular dancing partner in Marge Bergfeld, 85. Bergfeld's husband died 37 years earlier. The pair never miss a dance, often traveling considerable distances, sometimes several times weekly. Though the two often go together to dances, Bob said, "I dance with all the gals."

But there were also married couples, like Bill and Marlene Feltes, together for 62 years. The couple never seemed to miss a song. Bill, 83, and Marlene, 85, said "We met 65 years ago at a dance and we have been dancing ever since."

On Jan. 15, Peters said there were 64 who paid the \$10 at the door, a larger than normal crowd. And as a birthday gesture, Bob Lee, who turned 84 a few days earlier — wrote a \$100 check to buy sandwiches for all who wanted them.

The Delhi dance, with Sounds of Nashville, booked for each session, is scheduled one Sunday monthly, from 1-5 p.m. The next dance will be Feb. 12.

As one longtime organizer said, "this is a dying thing. Many couples get together after their spouses have passed. It is a social thing. But there are those who have been married six and seven decades that still come together."

Since most patrons are in their 70s or 80s, she fears these types of dances are a dying thing, a nostalgic part of the past for many.



Dave LaBelle • Staff Photos
Marge Bergfeld, 85 and Bob Lee, 84, never miss a dance, often traveling considerable distances, sometimes several times weekly.



Merle and Sharon Wiskus, Epworth, are center stage on the dance floor while Sounds of Nashville play during the monthly dance at Delhi's American Legion.



Dotti Cleghorn, 95, dances with birthday-boy Don Porter, 87, during the monthly dance at Delhi's American Legion with live country music from The Sounds of Nashville. To their left is Veryl Kelley, 82, and Susie Ballentine, 79, and right is Sharon and Dennis Reth.



Bill, 83, and Marlene, 85, Feltes said they met at a dance 65 years ago and have been dancing ever since. Unlike most of the couples, Bill said he only dances with his wife of 62 years.



Sounds of Nashville band members: from left, Jim Klein, Bob Richards and Gene Hansel test their equipment prior to playing at Delhi's American Legion, Jan 16, 2023. The three-piece band is one of the oldest in Iowa. Klein, 80, and Hansel, 81, have been playing together since 1971.



Like most at the monthly dance at Delhi's American Legion with live music from the three-piece band Sounds of Nashville, Barb Sauser is having a good time.



Dyersville Commercial



JECKLIN MEDALS PAGE 1B

DYERSVILLECOMMERCIAL.COM • YOUR NEIGHBOR SINCE 1873 • WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2023 • \$1.25

An Amish Farewell

Community gathers to mourn, make sense of tragedy

BY ERIN LABELLE
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Close to 1,000 gathered in a former chicken house at the Borntrreger farm in Delhi Jan. 31 to remember Ervin Borntrreger, 22, his son Marlin Borntrreger, 1, and his nieces, Emma Borntrreger, 4, and Rebecca Borntrreger, 2. The four lost their lives in a Grundy County van rollover accident Jan. 27 while traveling to Missouri with an Amish group during a snowstorm.

The tragedy has left the Delhi Amish and non-Amish communities in a state of shock, drawing them closer together to grieve and support the three families most affected.

Ervin Borntrreger was well-loved and many speak of his work ethic and kindness. He had opened a window business and taken over the family farm after his father lost his battle with cancer a few years back, according to an Amish source.

He'd stabilized the farm again and both his small family and business were thriving. As the youngest sibling in his family, he'd done a good job rising to the occasion of being the man on the farm and home to both his young family and his mother, Edna.

When he first opened his

business, Borntrreger worked with the Delhi United Methodist Church, teaming with men from the church to install windows. The Rev. Keith Pitts describes him as "very humble, quiet, hard-working, a loving husband and father, polite and a genuinely nice guy. He was mature for his age." Pitts visited the farm one week before the accident to purchase eggs from Borntrreger's wife, Edna, and spent time with Ervin and his son Marlin. "I cherish the short friendship he and I had."

The farm was full of visitors Jan. 30-31 for the wake and funeral. Women filled the kitchen preparing meals for the families and for the after-funeral lunch. Non-Amish neighbors dropped off food, the most the community has ever received from "the English," according to an Amish source. Another Amish woman pointed out we all feel the same way when something like this happens because we're all human.

The funeral began at 9 a.m. with many arriving much earlier. Frozen roads and frigid temperatures didn't faze the local community or those who traveled from across Iowa and from other states. The chicken

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Five Amish buggies, part of a caravan across the frozen countryside amid sub-zero morning temperatures, Jan. 31, on their way to the cemetery west of Buck Creek, eight miles from the Borntrreger residence in Delhi.

Dave LaBelle • Staff Photos



After putting the horses away, a group of men and boys make their way to the converted chicken house for the funeral of Ervin J. Borntrreger, 22, his son, Marlin E. Borntrreger, 1, Emma M. Borntrreger, 4, and Rebecca M. Borntrreger, 2. The four were killed when the van they riding in rolled over.

Chamber names Steger Construction business of the year



Paul Steger, vice president of Steger Construction, Inc., left, received the award for Business of the Year from Dyersville Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Karla Thompson.

BY MIKE PUTZ
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Steger Construction was named the 2022 Business of the Year at the Dyersville Area Chamber of Commerce's annual meeting, Feb. 1, at Dyersville Commercial Club Park.

Other businesses up for the award were Chad's Pizza, Ideal Decorating, J & R Fashions and Kluesner Construction.

Over the years, Steger Construction has received special recognition from the Iowa Department of Transportation, as well as from concrete associations. The company has been involved in many area projects, including the Highway 20 interchange, the roundabout, the ethanol plant, the biodiesel plant in Farley, the West Industrial Park, area

city ballparks and the MLB field at the Field of Dreams.

The company specializes in heavy earth moving and grading. It has constructed highways, done commercial construction, as well as constructed golf courses, ball diamonds and landfills, along with working with several municipalities.

The company began in 1973 and currently employs 25.

Vice President Paul Steger said he was honored to accept the award on behalf of the company.

"It's pretty exciting to win this, especially when I look around at the company we are in tonight. It feels really special," he said.

Steger has been a partner in Steger Construction for 13 years. Company President,

Jesse Steger, is his father.

"This being a family business means a lot," he said.

Steger said the company is working on Project Heaven at the Field of Dreams. "It's nice to work close to home on a project of that size," he said.

Steger said it's important for local businesses to support the chamber of commerce.

"For myself, the chamber is a valuable resource to get to know other business members in the community. The chamber is out there to help support us. They have been great with recruiting and helping us find employees. They do a great job of helping everyone's business be known in the area."



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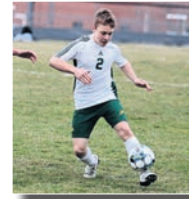
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BLAZERS TOP COUGARS PAGE 1B

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Dave LaBelle • Staff Photo

From darkness comes light

The Rev. Chris Podhajsky lights the Easter candle held by Deacon James Steger to open Easter Vigil at St. Francis Xavier, April 8.

Council split on rezoning issue

Property owner protests proposal

BY DYLAN KURT
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After hearing arguments from both sides of the issue, the Dyersville City Council was split in its decision to rezone a lot located on the bank of the North Fork of the Maquoketa River and just across the street from Dyersville's popular Legacy Square Park.

The property, found at 214 1st Street SW, is owned by John Rankins, who expressed frustration with the city during a public hearing on the rezoning proposal.

Rankins said he had intentions of putting a retail business in the existing building, which was previously a veterinary clinic, but that's when he was made aware that the property is zoned A-1 agriculture. In order to open his desired business, he would need it to be zoned C-1 commercial. Rankins said he recognized it was his fault for not researching the property's zoning designation previously but

has so far been dissatisfied with the city's response when trying to find a remedy.

"I just don't know why I can't do something with my own property," he told the council.

Rankins petitioned the city to rezone the property to C-1; however, the Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Commission only gave a favorable report to the proposal if conditions were attached to the C-1 designation — namely that it could only be used for offices and could not have a drive-through, which would not allow Rankins to utilize the building for retail.

If it remains A-1, his limited options include introducing another vet clinic.

This is the second time P&Z has given this recommendation — Rankins has previously gone through the same process with the same result, which drove him to eventually withdraw his rezoning application in January to start the process over.

City Administrator Mick Michel, who is charged with enforcing the city's zoning ordinances, said P&Z saw the C-1 conditional as a compromise, given that the comprehensive plan sees the property as future green space

while the downtown plan shows the building remaining intact.

"I don't see that as an issue — I really don't," Michel said of the P&Z recommendation of office space. "Retail would be a little bit of an issue because of the amount of space and the amount of off-street parking that is available to it."

Michel said to generate off-street parking would be cumbersome because the property is located within the floodplain.

Michel also noted that both the comprehensive and downtown plan went through an extensive public input process and were vetted by third-party consultants.

While the city's future ambitions show it as greenspace, Rankins said he has no intention of tearing it down — if that's going to happen, the city needs to purchase it.

"If the city really wants it, buy it — I'm willing to sell it," Rankins said.

However, Rankin told the council he was informed that the city also does not have intentions to purchase the property at this

REZONING ~ turn to page 6A

Hinson touts federal dollars for NECAS during visit

Funds will be used to purchase new training equipment

BY DYLAN KURT
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Farming can be described as the practice of hitting small targets — whether it's trying to make money in a business where standard practice is buying at retail prices and selling at wholesale or having an entire fiscal year determined by a few days of good or bad weather, the margin for error is small.

Currently, farmers are working long hours, doing everything they can to capitalize on this short window of nice weather to apply anhydrous to their fields, which carries some inherent risks.

"You'll see people out in the middle of the night this week with anhydrous," Dan Neenan,

director of the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety (NECAS), said. "And, of course, the longer you work, the more punchy you get and you make mistakes — this is a very dangerous product to do that with."

Anhydrous literally means "without water," and once exposed to the human body, it will desperately seek out moisture as quickly as possible, with the first areas impacted being the eyes, nose, mouth, sweat glands and genitalia.

Eye-related anhydrous burns are very painful, he said, and given the chemical can literally weld contact lenses to the eye, he suggests wearing glasses on application days. Neenan also noted that vision recovery is not common in these types of injuries. "It's limited at best," he said.

Treatment for an anhydrous burn is the same whether it's occurring in the field or at a

HINSON ~ turn to page 6A



Dylan Kurt • Staff Photo

Dan Neenan, director of the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety, left, hosts U.S. Rep. Ashley Hinson at the NICC Peosta campus April 10 to discuss the impact funds recently secured by Hinson will have on the program.



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A firefighter's farewell



Led by the last of many firetrucks, the hearse carrying the body of George "Junior" Simon passes beneath a large United States Flag while two Dyersville firefighters salute the procession en route to St. Joseph Cemetery following the Funeral Mass.



An overflowing crowd fills St. Joseph Catholic Church during the funeral mass for George "Junior" Simon, April 18. *Dave LaBelle • Staff Photos*



Carrying the flag-draped casket of George "Junior" Simon, a beloved father, grandfather and friend, into St. Joseph Catholic Church for his funeral mass are from left front to back: Caitlin Richter, Alex Kramer, Allison Oberbroeckling and Craig Steffen; right front to back: Ashley Kramer, Hannah Fangman, Benjamin "B.J." Coyle and Michael Coyle.



Firefighters respectfully watch the casket of George "Junior" Simon being carried into St. Joseph Catholic Church for his funeral mass. Simon served on the Farley Fire Department for 47 years.



Saying farewell to a beloved man, George "Junior" Simon.



Members of the Farley American Legion Post #656 fire a 21-gun salute for George "Junior" Simon as he is buried with full military honors at St. Joseph Cemetery.

Amy Steffen, followed by her husband, Lee Steffen, carries a red rose from the casket of her father, George "Junior" Simon, after concluding rites at St. Joseph Cemetery.



A friend says farewell to George "Junior" Simon with a touch of his casket while Farley volunteer firefighter Ted Bergfeld moves forward at the close of the burial service.



Hopkinton celebrates 'Civil War Days'



Dave LaBelle • Staff Photos

Confederate soldiers march into battle against Union troops during a battle, June 4.



Members of Scott's Tennessee Battery fire a canon blast toward Union enemy troops during a Civil War battle.



Nurse Courtney Ewald and Medic T.J. Howard, assist a wounded Union soldier during battle.



Members of the 1st Nebraska Volunteer Regiment, Company A, emerge from tents to finish breakfast and morning chores on the grounds of the historic Lenox College campus in Hopkinton, honoring Delaware County's role in the Civil War.



Josh Ewald, 12, is a cadet and runner for Union forces.



Rich Hunt, 71, is a colonel in 24th Iowa Volunteer Regiment of Civil War Reenactors.



Mercy Lanhan, 1st Nebraska, walks among the throng of tents.



Cornelies Eiben, 10, watches canons being unloaded, June 3 on the historic Lenox College campus in Hopkinton. Eiben said he is not a reenactor yet, but he hopes to someday.



News Briefs

DUBUQUE COUNTY WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO USING COMPANY CREDIT CARD

A Dubuque County woman has pleaded guilty to making unauthorized transactions with company credit cards.

Kassandra R. Prier, 29, of Dyersville, recently pleaded guilty in Iowa District Court of Dubuque County to a charge of unauthorized use of a credit card less than \$1,500. She was initially charged with unauthorized use of a credit card exceeding \$1,500 but pleaded to the amended charge.

If a plea deal is accepted, charges of first-degree theft, unauthorized use of a credit card exceeding \$10,000 and second-degree theft would be dismissed.

Plea documents state that attorneys will recommend a deferred judgment, two years of probation and \$500 in restitution paid to ServPro of Dubuque. With a deferred judgment, if probation and payment obligations are successfully completed, the record of the case is expunged.

Court documents state that Dubuque County Sheriff's deputies responded Dec. 2, 2021, to ServPro of Dubuque for a report of an internal theft.

The business owner told authorities that Prier, who managed the company's finances, was out on maternity leave when discrepancies were discovered related to her company credit cards.

According to documents, Prier made 222 unauthorized transactions with company credit cards from June 11, 2020, to Oct. 13, 2021: \$11,292.08 on a credit card belonging to ServPro of Dubuque and \$1,992.16 on a credit card belonging to MB Mold and Air Quality. Prier's sentencing hearing is set for July 11.

DOCUMENTS: DELHI BOATS OWNER FACES THREE MORE THEFT CHARGES

A Delhi man has been arrested again for theft in relation to his business activities, according to court documents.

Jeremy D. Klima, 37, of Delhi, was previously arrested on two separate occasions, one on charges of two counts of first-degree theft and the other for another count of theft first-degree.

According to court documents, in November 2022, Klima entered into a purchase agreement where a \$25,000 down payment was made for a new boat. Authorities say Klima accepted the payment but failed to purchase the ordered boat from the manufacturer. Documents state the victim never received the boat or reimbursement from the down payment.

Authorities say Klima also entered into an agreement to sell another man's floating docks, with the understanding the victim would receive the proceeds from the sale. The victim also entered into a purchase agreement with Klima to install new docks.

Documents state Klima took the dock system and the victim never received any of the proceeds. The docks, valued at \$20,000, are now missing, authorities say.

Additionally, in January 2021, Klima entered into a purchase agreement for a boat trailer valued at \$3,800. Klima accepted the full payment, but never delivered the trailer, documents state.

Klima was arrested on a warrant June 14 and is facing two charges of theft first-degree and one count of theft second-degree.

TEEN INJURED IN ROLLOVER CRASH

Authorities said one person was injured in a one-vehicle rollover crash June 12 in Dubuque County.

Payton M. Portzen, 16, of Peosta, was transported by private vehicle to MercyOne Dubuque Medical Center for treatment of her injuries, according to the Dubuque County Sheriff's Department.

A report states that Portzen was driving north on New Melleray Road at 9:08 a.m. June 12 when the vehicle left the roadway, entered a ditch and rolled over in a corn field.

Police Report

The Delaware County Sheriff's Office reported:

• Thomas Junior Sullivan, 54, Greeley, arrested for OWI second offense, June 10.

What I See



After a long day at work as a mechanic, Neil Lawver, 35, plays catch with his daughter, Clara, 8, to try and help her make better throws. *Dave LaBelle • Staff Photos*

Being a father, a dad

BY DAVE LABELLE
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There is a lot written about the impact mothers have on shaping the kind of people their children will become, but without loving, sacrificial fathers, many young men have difficulty giving or accepting love. In celebration of Father's Day, I share with you a glimpse of two fathers with very different lives — a young father from Rickardsville and a seasoned dad from Fillmore.

Thirty-five-year-old Neil Lawver, of Rickardsville, drives home after a full day at his mechanic job in North Buena Vista, cooks dinner for his three children, and then makes time to play catch with his 8-year-old daughter so she can improve her throwing before her next softball game. Lawver's wife Alyssa, who works in early childhood education in Dubuque, said her husband does most of the cooking and helps Clara with her homework when he is not doing his city council work or shuttling kids to ballgames. The Lawvers have three children, Clara, 8, Damon, 6, and William, 3. Between work, cooking, city council and



"I love you dad," Jake Wagner said before leaning into his father and kissing him on the neck after the pair went out to check on their garden. *Dave LaBelle • Staff Photo*

shuttling kids back and forth between swimming lessons and ball games, Lawver is matter-of-fact about his busy schedule.

"He even took their son, Damon, hunting with a muzzle-load gun. They didn't shoot anything, he just wanted to introduce him to the outdoors," his wife said of her "responsible" husband.

Nick Wagner, 78, of Fillmore, does just about everything with his son, Jake, including planting a garden, going to ballgames or

Special Olympics practices and events, even teaching him to ride an ATV. Jake, 38, born with Downs Syndrome, is the Wagner's youngest child and he and dad are inseparable.

"I love my dad," Jake assures, hugging and kissing his father on the neck.

"The doctors said we don't know if he will talk. We don't know if he will walk. We don't know if he will do anything," Nick Wagner shared. "You just take

one day at a time. That was probably the best advice because every day it got better. Every day was better and better."

Nick Wagner said, after Jake was born, he and his wife, Betty, got the family together and said, "he is going to need us all to love him, to take care of him. We're all in it together. Believe me, these kids are all in it together."

"Jake has done so much to weld the family together. He's so sociable. He loves people. And people love him."

"I taught him how to ride a four-wheeler, and that made a big difference. Letting him do something on his own. We went out in the ball diamond and we probably spent three hours out there. Stop. Start. Stop. He really wanted to learn. Now he rides it all the time and has been doing it for 15 years. He must have grown six inches when he was told he could do it by himself."

"He's a very loving son. And he knows when you need a hug, too. He's the best boy a father could have."

This is an occasional feature through the eyes of photographer Dave LaBelle.



From a heifer to cow

A mother cow keeps an eye on Dave Rolfe's, of Earlville, as he comes to check the sex of the newborn. The calf, born just a few hours earlier, was a bull.

Dave LaBelle • Staff Photo



What I See

Tearful times at the fair

BY DAVE LABELLE
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After decades of photographing fairs and young people showing their animals, I had never witnessed an auction or the gut-wrenching goodbyes that followed.

Not until recently. During the Delaware County Fair, I photographed 4-H and FFA students, high-school age and younger, washing, caring for and showing their animals. I watched proud parents, siblings and friends line fences and fill stands to support presenters marching their living projects around show rings or on show tables. Young people wore their best, poised faces for discerning judges and, for the most part, emotions were subtle and constrained.

But on auction day — when the reality of separation from the animal they had cared for, and maybe loved, struck them, emotions could no longer be held in check. Watching the calf, goat, sheep or pig carried away by strangers and put in a truck with other animals (usually to a slaughterhouse) was more difficult than some anticipated. My own eyes filled and



Cruz Sheppard, 14, kisses his goat, Casper, goodbye and whispers “I love you” after the Meat Goat Sale, July 15. In the background is his younger brother, Cash Sheppard, who also said goodbye to his goat, River.

my heart ached as I witnessed several tearful goodbyes.

My eyes also watered when I watched a young man showing a steer for the first time, start crying when he won his division.

But I also watched presenters hurry to hide their tears as if showing their emotions was a weakness. I fear we as a society

are embarrassed, perhaps even taught, that revealing our true emotions is wrong, especially when we are hurt or saddened.

I vividly remember the day of my mother’s funeral, even though her body had not been found after the flood that washed away our home. I was 17 and couldn’t contain my tears. My uncle, a deputy sheriff

at the time, placed a firm hand on my shoulder and said, “You need to be a man and stop crying.” For years I hated him for that moment.

Like many of that era, my father never hugged me or said he loved me until he was past 40, and that was not until I initiated it. I determined early to be the opposite — I would tell people I loved them and not be afraid to show or share my emotions, especially when accompanied by tears.

I am not embarrassed or ashamed to say my eyes fill often and tears leak down my bearded face at painful injustices when I see others hurting, or at profound truths and lovely sights.

What kind of a society is it that is afraid or embarrassed to show their emotions? Even “religious” people forget the two most powerful words in the Bible: “Jesus wept.”

Bless you, people, young and old, who are not ashamed to cry when you are happy or hurting.

Tears are good, healing gifts. They show we care.

This is an occasional feature through the eyes of photographer Dave LaBelle.



Holly Gudenkauf embraces Addison Schulte after each said goodbye to their lambs sold at auction.



Vera Loecke, 13, is overcome with emotion as she walks her Market Beef Steer in the ring during the auction.



With friends on either side, Karly Kerch says goodbye to her lamb Earl following the 4-H & FFA Livestock Auction, July 15. Left is Dolidh Moffitt, right is MacKayla Weber.



Alivia Schulte comforts her little sister Sofia after she said goodbye to her steer.



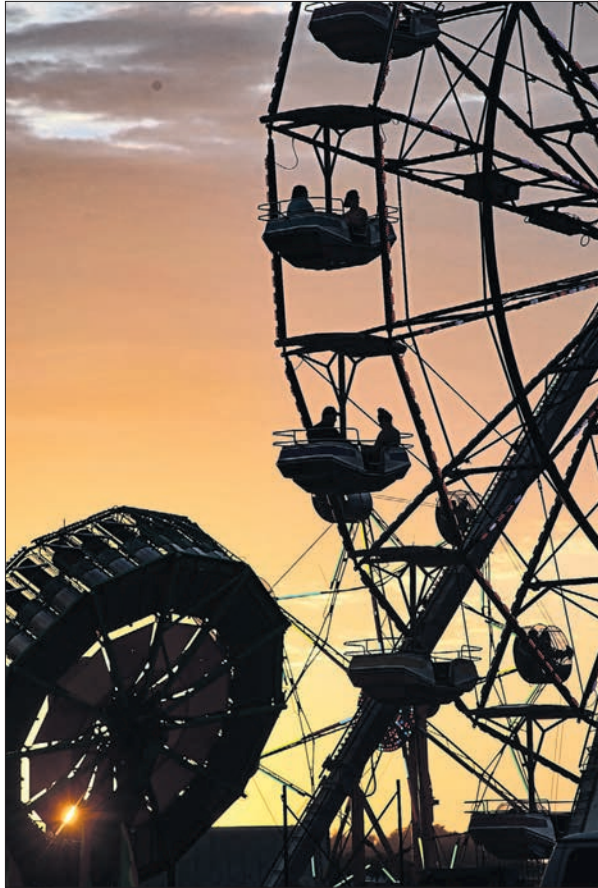
Leading Jerry, the tears start after 9-year-old Treyton Overmann, of Petersburg, realizes he has won Champion Market Dairy Beef during his first time showing. “I didn’t think this was ever going to happen,” said Overmann.



Aubrey Steger is comforted by her father Josh Steger after watching her steer sold and led away during the Market Beef Sale.



Fair survives extreme temps, strong storms



The silhouettes of fairgoers and the shapes of various rides stand out against a colorful summer night sky. *Dave LaBelle • Staff Photo*



The 2023 Alt Dairy Princess, Libby Hageman, shoots a selfie of her friends, 2023 Dubuque County Dairy Princess Haley Kluesner, 2023 Dubuque County Fair Queen Kayla Donovan and 2023 Dubuque County Fair Princess Leah Schwenker. *Dave LaBelle • Staff Photo*



In spite of sweltering temperatures, Kazmira Stark, left, and Madison Fox enjoy the Sizzler ride. *Dave LaBelle • Staff Photo*



Jax Noonan shows Janet at the Dubuque County Fair in Dubuque, July 25. Noonan won in his category during the Commercial Lamb Show. *Greg Cooper • Contributed Photo*



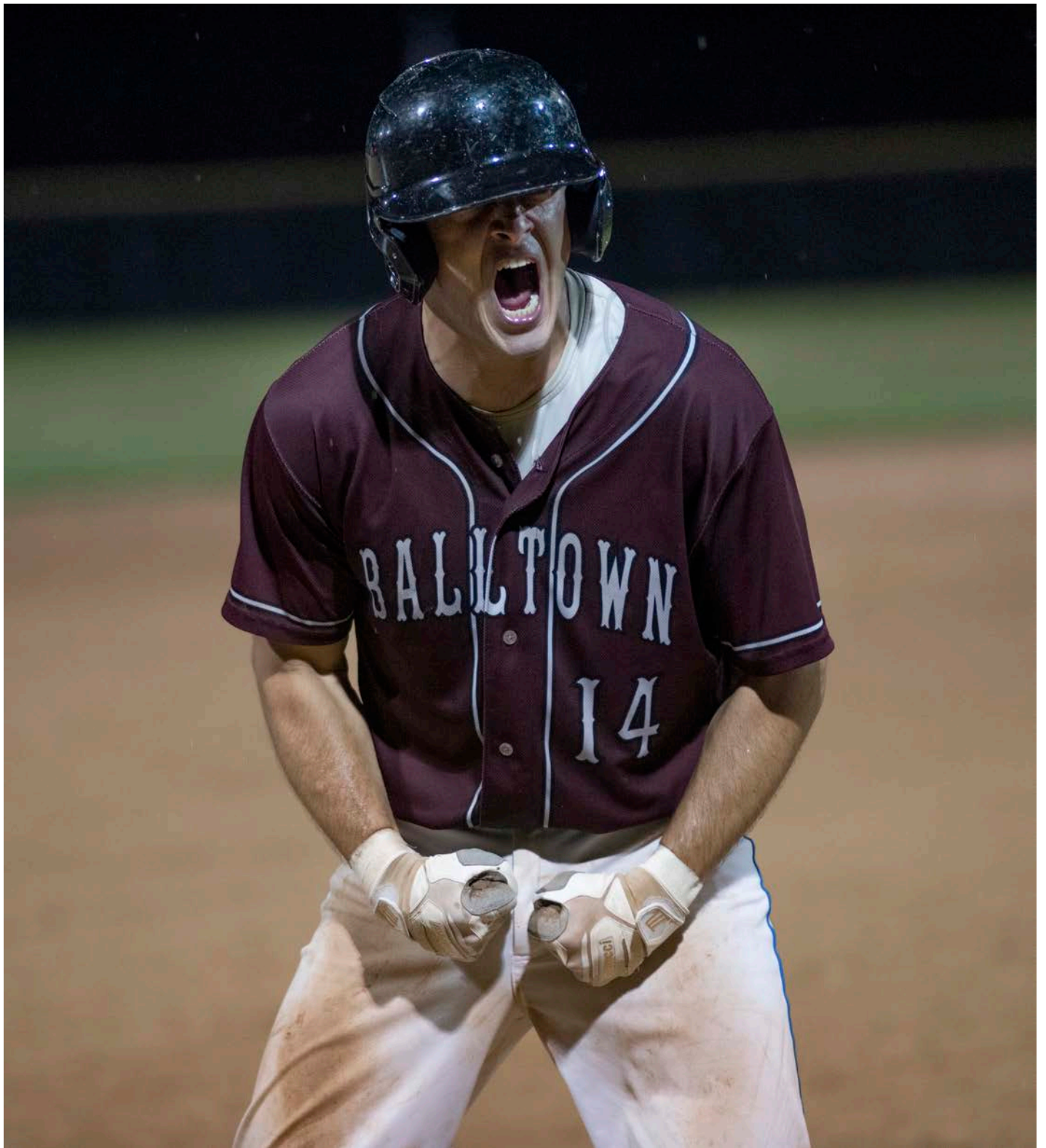
Noah Gaul keeps control of his Holstein Heifer Calf while keeping his eyes on the judge during the showing at the Dubuque County Fair July 25. *Dave LaBelle • Staff Photo*



The 2024 Dubuque County Fair Royalty: from left, Queen Candidate Leah Schwenker, 2024 Queen Kylie Nauman, 2024 Princess Rachel March, Queen Candidate Kaylie Brehm and 2023 Queen Kayla Donovan. *Dave LaBelle • Staff Photo*



Carson Rauen, of the Farley 4-H Friends, shows his calf during the dairy exhibition. *Dave LaBelle • Staff Photo*



Sports

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2023

DYERSVILLECOMMERCIAL.COM

SECTION B

Balltown claims Dyersville Tournament title

BY BEC WILLENBORG
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It took eight innings for those potent Balltown bats to come alive in the championship game of the Dyersville Semi-Pro Baseball Tournament, Aug. 11. But when they did, they claimed the title of the tourney, topping the Dubuque Packers, 4-2.

In that frame, Taiga Soto led off with a double to left. Kyle Behnke hit the first pitch to right and Jimmy McDermott tripled to deep center to plate both of them. He came in with the next batter, a deep ball to left from Luke Pothoff. With just nine throws, Dubuque's Jacob Kirman's no hitter disappeared and the Balltown nine led, 3-2.

Balltown added an insurance run in the ninth. When Luke Sigwarth doubled to left, he plated two batters later on Jake Brosius' sac fly to short.

The game turned from a pitcher's duel to that bat-heavy eight. Kirman held the Balltown crew to a single hit in the first seven frames, a harmless roller down the third base line from Jake Wille in the first inning. Kirman's teammate Tucker Mai stroked a long ball over the right field fence in the bottom of the first for a 1-0 lead off Balltown's Charlie Jaeger. He allowed a second run in the second, when Kirman lofted a single to left, Ben Hefel followed to right and Kirman plated on Chris Tomkins' single to left, 2-0.

That's how it stayed, when Jaeger found his range, ending with 13 strikeouts on the night and holding the Dubuque crew hitless for the rest of it. Andrew Redmond relieved him in the ninth and notched two whiffs of his own for the save.

Kirman ended with the loss and nine strikeouts, allowing just one hit until the eighth, when he gave up four. He threw 97 pitches in this game after going for 144 Tuesday night in their win over Farley. Jaeger, the son of Dennis Jaeger who threw for Beckman during his high school days, threw 125 for the win. He allowed just four hits, all in the first two frames.

In the consolation game, Peosta took a scary 6-5 win in five innings from the Whitehawks after leading 6-1 in the fifth. The Whitehawks put Luke Kehrl on via hit-by-pitch and, after Cam Krapfl struck out for the second out, Cole Klostermann hit a fly to right that dropped safely between three players. That put two on for "Hammerin' Hank" Henry Labelle, who stroked his magic one more time



Balltown's Jimmy McDermott expresses his joy after lining a triple in the eighth inning to tie the game against the Dubuque Packers in the Dyersville Whitehawks Tournament, Aug. 11.

over the right field fence to make it 6-4. It was the fourth long ball he hit in the tourney, the third with two players on base. Matthew Florence followed LaBelle and hit his own homer over right to make it 6-5. They saw Parker McHone hit-by-pitch on the next at bat but Peosta's Garrett Baumhover managed to strike out Isaac Fettkether to end the threat and preserve the win. The game was called early due to the Queen's Pageant.

Peosta had scored in the first when Matt Stephan hit a grounder to short center and plated on Nolan Baumhover's single past third. Dyersville knotted it at 1-1 in the bottom of that frame, when Kehrl walked, Owen Huehnergarth was hit-by-pitch and Klostermann walked, filling the bags. Kehrl scored off LaBelle's sacrifice fly.

Peosta built their lead in the top of the fifth. Stephan led off with a shot to center and stole second on a passed ball. He scored when Garrett Baumhover singled to center. Quinn Baumhover walked but Garrett scored on a passed ball during his at-bat, 3-1.

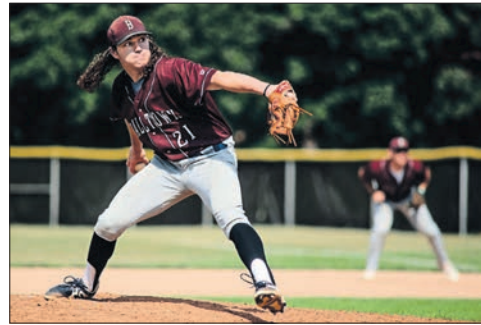
Nolan Baumhover doubled to center to plate Quinn and it was 4-1. Logan Brosius was hit-by-pitch and scored when J.D. Siegert doubled to left. The final run came in after a walk loaded the bags and Brandon Lehman was hit-by-pitch, 6-1.

Bernard's Queen candidate Claudia Noonan, won the title. Dyersville's Jordan Thier was runner-up, Worthington's Leah Thier second runner-up and Epworth's Maddy Maahs third.

Player awards went to Jaeger, MVP (2-0, 0.99ERA, no hitter and win in the final); Most strikeouts — Jaeger (24/15 innings); Most Hustle — Kirman; Most RBIs — LaBelle (11); Most Home Runs — LaBelle (four); Sportsmanship — LaBelle; Most Hits — Gavin Gunn (8-for-15, .533); Manager of the Tournament — Joey Sigwarth, Balltown.

Semifinals

Balltown used a seven-run fourth inning to kill the Whitehawks' chance of making the final game of the Dyersville Baseball Tournament, Aug. 10. They eventually won 13-5 to advance



MVP Charlie Jaeger fires a pitch during the championship game.

to the final game against the Dubuque Packers, winners over Peosta in the late semifinal game.

In the deciding inning, Balltown opened with a hit to center from McDermott. An out and a walk later, he plated off Ryan Brosius' single to left, breaking a 3-3 tie. A Whitehawk error allowed Sigwarth to reach and reload the bags. A Wille single over first scored both Jack Walsh and Brosius, 6-3. Then Jake Brosius drilled a towering homer over right to plate himself, Sigwarth and Wille and make it 9-3. Another single chased Whitehawk starter Cam Krapfl for Nick Offerman, who gave up a walk to Kyle Behnke and a sac fly to McDermott for a 10-3 mark. He got the final batter to fly out.

LaBelle tagged a solo homer in the bottom of the sixth, 10-4. But the Balltown crew was not done. They plated three more runs in the seventh, getting hits from Wille, Jake Brosius and Soto, for the final 13-4.

Balltown had started the game up 3-0 in the first. The Whitehawks got one back in that frame, when Joel Vaske walked, stole second and third and scored on Huehnergarth's single to right. But an inning-ending double play stopped that rally.

In the bottom of the third, Dylan Recker beat the throw to first to open. Vaske was hit-by-pitch, and Recker scored off Huehnergarth's double down the right field line. Vaske came in on Klostermann's ground out to short, making it 3-3. But then the fourth inning came along.

Krapfl took the loss, allowing nine runs on nine hits, passing five, fanning one. Tyson Tucker got the win, whiffing 10, allowing five runs on six hits, walking five.

Quarterfinals

With a one-hit gem from pitcher Nate Offerman, the Whitehawks qualified for the semifinal round of the Dyersville Baseball Tournament in a 2-0 win over Monticello Aug. 7 at Jenk Field.

Offermann added win No. 11 to his summer season and his 10-0 mark for the Class 2A champion Blazers, fanning five and walking only one. A stellar infield defense backed him up, with his Beckman assistant coach Nick Schmidt at short, teammates Recker at third and Jake Schmidt at second and alum Krapfl at first handling the bulk of the game. Only one fly ball made it to the outfield, that to leftfielder Nick Offerman in the top of the sixth. Offerman also tracked down a grounder that drilled along the baseline into left in the last frame.

The Whitehawks scored the only two runs they needed in the bottom of the second. Klostermann led off with a ground out to short. LaBelle tagged a short ball to center that Monticello first baseman Tanner Felton couldn't corral. He plated on a sharp double to right from Nick Offerman, who came in when Krapfl drilled a hard-to-handle ball to second that rolled into the outfield. Recker was stranded when Nick Schmidt tagged a long fly ball to right that was caught for the final out.

From then on, it was the Whitehawk infield that played perfect ball. Any shots the Monticello hitters could tag were snagged by one of the Schmidts, Recker or Krapfl and Nate Offerman struck out at least one batter per frame.

Six Whitehawks got hits: Nick Schmidt, Luke Schieltz, Klostermann, LaBelle, Nick Offerman and Recker.



Western Dubuque's Tyler Skrtich chips to the green during the Mississippi Valley Conference Super Meet, at Thunder Hills Country Club, Aug. 10.

Bobcats host MVC Super Meet

BY DON ZIESER
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If the season opening Mississippi Valley Conference Super Meet is any indication of what lies ahead, it's going to be quite a season of Class 4A golf.

Wahlert Catholic topped a fast field, at Thunder Hills Country Club, Aug. 10, firing a team score of 300 to nip Cedar Rapids Xavier with 301.

Iowa City Liberty and Iowa City, City High both finished at 310, Cedar Rapids Kennedy — led by defending 4A state champion and meet medalist Reed Hall's 69 — was fifth at 313, Cedar Rapids

Prairie and Linn-Mar finished at 315 and Cedar Falls, last year's 4A team state champion, finished at 316.

Host Western Dubuque was ninth at 318, followed by Dubuque Senior with 325, Cedar Rapids Washington 338, Iowa City West 340, Waterloo West 349 and Hempstead 379.

Heading into the year with a veteran team and lofty expectations, it wasn't exactly the start to the season the Bobcats were looking for, but coach Ben Wilson has confidence in his team.

"We were hoping to play better, especially since we were at home," said Wilson. "We will be fine mov-

ing forward."

Individually, City High's Jack Rogers was right behind Hall at 70, Vaughn Tyler, of Liberty, was third at 71 and Logan Otting, of Xavier, fourth at 72. Wahlert's Ben Dolter and Jonah Oberfoell were in at 74 along with Preston Haefner, of Washington, and Wahlert's Charlie Becker was one of four players finishing at 75.

Jackson Skrtich led Western Dubuque with a round of 77, and Brock Wilson finished at 79. Tyler Skrtich and Brayden Webber finished with scores of 81, Henry Gilbertson carded an 82 and Jackson Webber shot 86.





Bentley Spears, 3, from Sterling, Ill., looks up a row of toy tractors during the toy show.



Vendor Robert Heath, of Janesville, Wis., expounds on the highlights of his custom 530 Case toy tractor to a potential buyer. Heath sold the tractor for \$220.



A buyer checks out a toy tractor at one of the many vendor stations at Beckman Catholic High School.

National Farm Toy Show draws big crowd



Crowds pack Beckman Catholic's lunchroom during the 45th annual National Farm Toy Show, Nov 5.

Dave LaBelle • Staff Photos



Animated auctioneers Dan Muirhead, left, and Tom Cornwell, of Cornwell, Inc., follow several bidders during the live auction at the toy show.



People from all across the country participate in the live auction during the 45th Annual National Farm Toy Show.



After the long trip from New York, Conner Wills, 12, sleeps while his father and friend participate in the live auction.



Waves of people move through rows of vendors in the gymnasium at Total Fitness Rec Center.