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DICKINSON COUNTY NEWS

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Anglers at the ready for annual Walleye Weekend



Seth Boyes
News Editor

It wasn't too long ago that those hoping to hook a fish in the Iowa Great Lakes had to come prepared with an ice auger but, with some early summer-like temperatures this season, the surface of the local lakes thawed rapidly ahead of the 41st annual Walleye Weekend fishing tournament.

Each year, 10 specially tagged walleye are released into the local chain of lakes to mingle with all the panfish, bass and other prospective catches. Anglers entered in the upcoming tournament could win up to \$41,000 if they catch one of the tagged walleye and confirm its serial number at a participating business.

The tournament begins at 12:01 a.m. Saturday and ends at noon Sunday — participants can pay a

■ Walleye Weekend Preview
continued on 2A

WHERE TO LOOK:

The 10 tagged walleye will have been released by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources ahead of the tournament in locations on Big Spirit Lake, East Lake Okoboji and West Lake Okoboji, but chamber officials said they can also be caught in Little Spirit Lake, Upper Gar Lake, Lower Gar Lake or Minnewashta. Only fish caught in the contest area will be accepted and eligible for prizes at weigh-in stations.

WHERE TO WEIGH:

Official weigh-in stations for the 2023 Walleye Weekend tournament include:

Kabele's Trading Post — 504 Hill Ave. in Spirit Lake
Oak Hill Outdoor/The Hook Up — 2188 Highway 86 in Milford
Stan's Bait & Tackle — 2306 Okoboji Ave. in Milford

All fish must be alive and caught during tournament hours to qualify. All weigh stations have computerized scales certified by the state of Iowa. Individuals may weigh fish once per day but are limited to one winning weigh-in per heaviest fish category.

INGRAHAM PLEADS GUILTY TO FELONY ENTICEMENT

Seth Boyes
News Editor
news@dickinsoncountynews.com

A Spirit Lake man pleaded guilty to enticement of a minor Monday morning and was sentenced during the same court hearing. The Class D felony will require 48-year-old Christopher Craig Ingraham to register as a sex offender, submit to DNA profiling and be subject to two years of probation in addition to a five-year no contact order with the teenage victim.

Ingraham, the former chief nursing officer at Lakes Regional Healthcare in Spirit Lake, was charged after attempting to obtain explicit images from a then 14-year-old between February and March of 2020. Ingraham was accused of sending the girl several electronic messages and touching the teen's waist while she was visiting Ingraham's stepdaughter. The victim — now 17 years old — made a statement Monday ahead of Ingraham's sentencing.

"He definitely was trying to get me to do something sexual with him," the victim said, citing one such explicit request. "Of course, I said no. I did not like him saying inappropriate things. It was clear to him I didn't like how he was making me feel. I feel as if these messages are enough to show his intentions on wanting to make something physical. He was clearly wanting me to reciprocate his intentions, whether it be over the phone or in person."

Ingraham turned himself in to authorities in July of 2022.

"Since that time, I've been in counseling," Ingraham told the court Monday. "I've been seeing somebody to work on my

■ Ingraham Sentencing
continued on 3A



(Bottom) Christopher Ingraham, former chief nursing officer at Lakes Regional Healthcare, entered the courtroom Monday morning and pleaded guilty to the felony charge of enticing a minor. (Top) A small group of protestors gathered outside the courthouse ahead of Ingraham's sentencing on Monday in support of the victim, whom they felt was being threatened and silenced after an initial plea deal in the case. That plea deal was rejected by the court, and Ingraham pleaded guilty Monday to the original felony charge of enticing a minor. (Photos by Seth Boyes)

'Challenge by choice'



A group of 51 Spirit Lake sixth-grade students dashed off the starting line during last week's triathlon, which organizers hope will become an annual event. (Photo by Seth Boyes)

SLMS debuts its sixth-grade triathlon

Seth Boyes
News Editor

There was no podium. There were no medals. But that wasn't why dozens of Spirit Lake's sixth-grade students were running, pedaling and paddling their way through the school's debut triathlon last week. Rather, Spirit Lake Health and

Physical Education teacher Tim O'Hagan had offered each student the opportunity to find their strengths and areas for improvement as they prepared for the optional event, which he hopes will become a yearly happening.

A total of 51 sixth-grade students headed to the high school track the afternoon of April 26 to begin the first leg of the race. Students first ran 1 mile, then cycled

■ SLMS Triathlon
continued on 2A

Trio of area fire departments contain grass fire near Dickinson County line



Superior Fire Chief Kevin Swalve walked along 340th Avenue as multiple crews contained a grass fire. Swalve estimated the blaze consumed between 70 and 80 acres. (Photo by Seth Boyes)

Seth Boyes
News Editor

An Emmet county landowner's controlled burn got out of hand last week and was blown across the county line, igniting a swath of conservation land in Dickinson County northeast of Superior. No injuries or damage were reported, but Superior Fire Chief Kevin Swalve estimated the blaze consumed between 70 and 80 acres.

"It was spreading quite rapidly," Swalve said. "It's not far enough into the summer yet, so we don't have the green growth in the grasslands to slow stuff down for us. So people need to be pretty diligent about thinking about what the weather's doing when they start controlled burns."

■ Grass Fire
continued on 2A