

# From the Front Page

## Tornado hits south Bellevue

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width was about 100 yards.

Jackson County Emergency Management and Bellevue Police Department officials reported three injuries from the intense storm, as well as one rescue on the Mississippi River. The victims of the storm, three of which were transported to the hospital, were staying at Moon River Cabins, as well as Riverview RV Park and Vacation Rentals which are adjacent to each other along the river, according to the Bellevue Police Department.

One person was rescued from the river after high wind blew the tiny home she was staying in into the river. Riverview Vacation Rentals owner Dan Blitgen may have saved her life by rescuing the woman himself.

"I couldn't find a rope, so I found a 50-foot water hose and tied one end around me and had a guy on shore hold the other end," Blitgen told local media outlets. "Then I swam out and got her floating on a pillow and helped get her back to shore."

Brian Dahms who was also on the scene, praised Blitgen for his quick actions.

"When the tornado hit Friday we realized that tiny home that got thrown in the river had two people and a dog in it. The dog and one girl got out, but the other girl was stuck with an injury to her arm," said Dahms. "I called 911 and we looked for a rope or whatever we could find to help. Before rescuers got there, Dan was in river and got everyone to safety. Dan is a hometown hero."

Officials said the sudden hail storm also destroyed several trees, cabins and campers. Look for more updates on the storm in future issues of the Herald-Leader.



**DAMAGE TO MOON RIVER CABINS** is shown here just after the storm passed through Bellevue last Friday night. (photo courtesy of M.L. Beauchamp)

## Jackson County approves five-year road plan

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Jim Schroeder Construction of Bellevue. These will be two bridges in Van Buren Township and one in Otter Creek Township.

Meanwhile, the supervisors approved a new policy for permits required when a private entrance onto a county road is installed or modified. Kinney explained that the owner of a driveway wider than 50 feet will be required to document the specific need for the wider driveway.

The board also set a public hearing date of April 4 at 9 a.m. for the opening of bridge material bidding documents. Kinney is preparing to construct six new bridges

in the county this summer.

Also, Kinney reminded the public that it is illegal for private citizens to work inside the right of way on county roads without a permit. The comment was prompted by Supervisor Nin Flagel, who asked him if there was something the county could do about "farmers going out and trying to fix roads but making them worse." Flagel said she is not interested in costing the county more money if the county needs to repair damage done by amateurs.

In other county business:

- Auditor Alisa Smith asked to set April 11, 2023, at 10 a.m. for a public hearing on the proposed budget for the 2024 fiscal year. She

reminded the public that this levy can be lowered at the hearing, but it will not be possible to raise the levy requested.

Deputy Auditor Shelley Hoyer said the proposed levy is a 3.53% increase in the general and supplemental levies. She said the proposal is an 8.1% increase in the rural basic levy, which has not been raised in nine years.

Hoyer says this would amount to an additional almost 44.41 cents per \$1,000 of taxable valuation

on property. For example, for property valued at \$100,000, the property owner would pay an additional \$44.41 in property taxes. Annual taxes on property valued at \$300,000 would increase by about \$133.22.

"A large part of the increase is due to insurance and salaries," Hoyer said.

Steines said the increase is "directly related to the change in legislation on the rollback and also because we put an extra \$350,000 into repair and restructuring

our rural roads."

Steines and fellow supervisor Don Schwenker said they heard no comments about the tax rate thus far.

Flagel said she has received comments from people who told her, "Do what you have to do to get our roads in order."

- Jackson County Assessor Larry "Buck" Koos attended the supervisor meeting to remind the public that new assessment notices will be mailed out soon and that some property

valuations are going up.

- The supervisors approved two re-zoning requests presented by Jackson County Zoning Administrator Lori Roling. Both already had been approved unanimously by the Jackson County Zoning Commission in February.

Terri McCaulley has a parcel on Highway 64 west of Sabula which she requested be changed to commercial zoning. There were no comments made on the request.

## Tete des Morts Creek

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reduction. As a result of these efforts, brown trout are successfully reproducing in the stream and smallmouth bass populations are supporting recreational fishing. Aquatic animals and insects are also increasing, reflecting a decrease in pollution.

"There are some types of fish in here that we don't see widespread and certainly not self-sustaining," said DNR fisheries biologist Dan Kirby. "A lot of these fish are indicators of clear water because they're sight feeders."

Tete des Morts Creek was removed from the impaired waters list in 2022. Turner credited landowners for remaining dedicated to conservation practices even after the project, and the grants, concluded.

"Landowners have kept up the momentum of putting in conservation practices that will help water quality," Turner said. "This has created a legacy that has continued through the years and the landowners take pride."

More information on the project and the full success story can be found at [epa.gov](http://epa.gov).

**City of Bellevue**

### TREE PLANTING for Residents in the City of Bellevue

- Help is available for recommendations on what types of trees to plant by the City's Tree Board.
- Recommended planting in the Spring (March-May) or Fall (September-October).
- Planting a tree in the boulevard area: regulations are in place, a list of specific trees is available, and a permit application is required (no fee).
- Tree Planting Rebate for energy efficiency is available through the Bellevue Municipal Utilities, rules apply, and a form/approval is required before a tree is planted.
- Living Memorial/Tree Donation: contact the Clerk's Office on availability for City Parks.
- Do not forget to call 811 before you dig!
- Contact the Clerk's Office (563-872-4456) for more information.

