

# Happenings

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at the Perry Public Library Community Room on the 3rd Saturday of the month – Oct. 15, Nov. 19 and Dec. 17.

These Fall Markets will host a limited number of vendors per market, but are expected to have a wide variety of offerings, including seasonal produce, jams and jellies, fresh baked goods and hand-crafted items.

The October Fall Market vendors (subject to change) include: Daniel Wilson and Gretchen York | Wilson Farm Produce; Janice Patrick | Brintons Bakery - jams/jellies and baked goods; Ruth Cave - baked goods; Jessica Lavicky - baked goods; Missy, Esther and Jackie McCord - baked goods and handcrafted items; Fred and Pam Pruitt | Made By Us - windchimes; Mykela and Donna Beasley - handcrafted gifts and artwork; Carrie Cavanaugh | Barefoot Books. The Healthy Steps Produce Giveaway continues at the Fall Farmers Market with free winters squash while supplies last.

All alternative currency programs will be honored at the Fall Farmers Markets unless they have an expiration date.

## Vintage Craft: Rock Candy

11:30 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 15 at Carnegie Library Museum.

Hometown Heritage at the Carnegie Library Museum will hold a free vintage craft program featuring the making of Rock Candy on Saturday, Oct. 15. Everyone is invited to join Trista Cohea at the Carnegie Library Museum and participate in this family-friendly program. No registration is needed. For more information, call the Carnegie Library Museum at 515-465-7713.

## 1931 Dance

7-11 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 15 at Lake Robbins Ballroom.

The Friends of Lake Robbins will host a 1931 Dance on Saturday, Oct. 15 to raise funds for a new roof. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m. with free Charleston lessons at 6:30 p.m. The dance will be held from 7-11 p.m. with live music from Close

Enough. The event will also feature prizes for best dressed to the era and best dancer along with a bake sale and silent auction. Residents can bid on items online at lakerobbins.com or at the dance. The cost is a \$15 cover with food available for \$10 along with a full bar.

## Bouton's Haunted Church

7-10 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 15 at III State St., Bouton.

The Bouton Fire Department will host a haunted church from 7-10 p.m. every Saturday night in October. Admission is \$5 per person.

## Hats, Hats and More Hats

2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 16 at Carnegie Library Museum.

Vintage hats will be the focus of a Hometown Heritage at the Carnegie Library Museum program, on Sunday, Oct. 16. The featured hats are from the Forest Park Museum collection and they will be on exhibit at the Carnegie Library Museum from Oct. 1-31. Those attending the program on Oct. 16 who wear a hat will

receive a free cookie from a local baker. Everyone is invited to attend this free program and no registration is needed. For more information, call the Carnegie Library Museum at 515-465-3569.

## Woodward Social Center Luncheon

11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 17 at Woodward Social Center.

The Woodward Social Center's luncheon has been rescheduled for Monday, Oct. 17. The menu includes beef burgers, cheesy potatoes, baked beans, coleslaw and desserts. A free-will offering will be taken to support the Woodward Social Center.

## Trunk or Treat

6-7:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 20 at Dallas County Fairgrounds.

Dallas County Clover Kids and 4-H Clubs will be decorating their trucks and passing out candy at Truck or Treat on Thursday, Oct. 20. Come trick-or-treating to each trunk and see how they

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# Football

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The youth league restarted in 2019. In that first season, only 13 third graders and 14 fourth graders participated. There wasn't enough interest to form fifth and sixth grade teams. Three years later, more than 120 kids are participating from kindergarten through sixth grade. Former Perry High head coach Matt Hardy leads the youth program and coaches the middle school team. He said the league has already made an impact.

"We've had the best middle school numbers in over a decade," Hardy said. "I can't remember a time when I would have been coaching at the high school level that we would have started the middle school season with 70 kids. We almost didn't have enough equipment to start the season. ... We're definitely trending in the right direction."

Kyle Baxter, one of the coaches of the fifth grade team, said he thinks kids in the revitalized youth league are on a good path and unbothered by the high school team's troubles.

"Everybody's talking bad about Perry, and these kids aren't going to let everybody talk bad about Perry," Baxter said.

His son on the fifth grade team, Charlie Baxter, said he hopes to see his teams continue to grow so "if we get more injuries, we can still play." Charlie added that the news of the Bluejays' season ending is only a motivator to work harder to play for Perry when he's older.

Kaleb Olejniczak, a wrestler at the University of Northern Iowa and Perry's starting quarterback in 2018, said he's encouraged about the state of Perry football when he sees the success of the youth program.

"We have a lot of momentum with the seventh and eighth graders getting some wins," Olejniczak said. "So that is very exciting for the community and myself included."

Olejniczak's mother, Tiffany, serves on the youth football board with her husband, Jason.

"We have a very strong K-6 program in place, and we have two very full middle school teams," Tiffany Olejniczak said. "They've really bought into the skill development, and we think that's going to ultimately be reflected once kids get to the high school level."

## Playing a junior varsity schedule is an option

Even with the youth program expanding and the middle school team seeing success, it will be several years before the high school team, typically made up of juniors and seniors, sees the full benefits of a well-supported farm system.

In the meantime, parents and fans have called for Perry to drop to a lower classification, hoping to help level the playing field and increase safety against teams with comparable roster sizes.

Steve Heck said many parents think the team should be allowed to drop from 4A to a lower level.

The Iowa High School Athletic Association's class assignments are based on schools' enrollments as opposed to, say, the number of participating players in a school's football program.

IHSAA communications director Chris Cuellar said the association has no mechanism to allow a school to drop classification based on participation numbers.

"That doesn't mean it can't or won't be discussed by our board or the football advisory committee, but there isn't a process for it right now," Cuellar added.

However, the association allows another alternative.

The varsity program could submit a request to play at the junior varsity level, a route that Hardy had explored during his time as head coach at Perry.

In 2003, Eldora-New Providence won the Class 1A state title, and four years later the school petitioned the state to play a sub-varsity schedule.

The high school association is also assigning schools to new districts in 2023, so Perry will at least get a change of scenery.

Intention forms for football redistricting are due in December.

New districts will be announced in February or March. Cuellar added that game cancellations and forfeits do not factor in the new schedule, but teams are asked to consider the state of their program when submitting their intention forms.

The Perry football program is not the only one in Iowa looking at its immediate future. Cuellar said Rockford, Meskwaki Settlement and Calamus-Wheatland all canceled their seasons before the 2022-23 school year. Shenandoah played five games before canceling the

rest of its season, and West Fork is now playing week to week. Of that group, Perry is the only school designated above Class 2A status.

## One school's decision affects other programs

The games that the Bluejays have forfeited for the year have put their opponents in a bind.

"From our perspective at Boone, it is disheartening, as it will take an opportunity to compete away from our team and student-athletes," said Boone Athletic and Activities Director Brett Collins on Friday. "We are still looking to connect with Perry in the form of a lower-level, sub-varsity game. However, this will not help our upperclassmen, who have sacrificed and battled all season long."

Collins added that Perry's situation is unenviable for any school district.

Each faces unique challenges and is trying "to make decisions based on the best interest" of their school and programs, he said.

Perry Chief Editor Allison Ullmann contributed to this story.



**BEN LITTON**  
DALLAS COUNTY RECORDER

**HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE.**  
As an Abstractor, Ben has worked with the Recorders offices across Iowa—and the country—for 12+ years.

**KNOWLEDGE.**  
Through that experience, Ben has gained vast knowledge of the documents and processes that will be his responsibility as Dallas County Recorder.


**COMMITMENT.**  
Ben has great respect for the documents entrusted to the Dallas County Recorder's office and is committed to protecting and maintaining the integrity of the those pieces of history.

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