

# The Mapleton PRESS

Serving the communities of the Maple Valley-Anthon Oto, Charter Oak-Ute, & Schleswig Community School Districts



Thursday, February 2, 2023

Mapleton, Iowa 51034 | USPS 328-640

Volume 149, Number 5

www.mapletonpress.com

\$1.00

## Area superintendents react to Students First Act

On Tuesday, Jan. 24, Gov. Kim Reynolds signed the Students First Act into law at the Iowa State Capitol building in Des Moines.

The bill had passed the Iowa House the day before with a 55-45 vote, and the Iowa Senate passed the bill that Tuesday morning in a 31-18 vote.

The main argument for the bill has been to support the idea of school choice, which has become a central focus of Reynolds' tenure as governor in recent years. The newly signed bill will use taxpayer dollars and public funding to create education savings accounts (ESAs) for students and families that choose to attend private schools.

"For the first time, we will fund students not systems," Reynolds posted on Twitter. "Parents, not the government, can now choose the education setting best suited to their child regardless of their income or zip code. Iowa has affirmed that educational freedom belongs to all!"

MVAO Superintendent Jeff Thelander said he believes that parents will discuss all of the options available to them.

"That is where we have the opportunity to continually demonstrate to parents the strength and value of an education at MVAO," he said.

Thelander said in the very short term, and in district's planning for

the 2023-2024 school year budget, there is not much impact.

"Our budget for next year is driven by last fall's student enrollment, which was certified in October and so we know exactly where our enrollment and the budget to support that enrollment will be for next year," he said.

After next year, this legislation certainly could impact the district.

"As a rural school projecting declining resident student enrollment over the next several years, this legislation challenges us to continually focus on being the best and most viable option for our students," Thelander said. "That is what we can control."

He added they have seen aca-

ademic growth this past year on their ISASP tests, have a strong offering of activities and leadership opportunities for the students, and a cohesive, caring staff.

"We are also investing in broader ways to connect our students' educations with real-world work and service opportunities," Thelander said. "We must continue to leverage our strengths, our vision, and our goals for the benefit of our students and for the long-term viability of our school district and the communities we serve."

Charter Oak-Ute Superintendent, Adam Eggeling, said overall the effect on COU district could be minimal. If families chose to send their children to a nearby

parochial school in Denison (Zion or St. Rose) or Danbury, it would require students being transported by their parents at least 15-20 minutes both ways.

Once fully implemented in its fourth year, the measure is projected to cost \$344.9 million, and the funds for each ESA are projected to be just under \$7,600 per student, which can be used for "tuition, fees, and other qualified education expenses." The following description of the bill's implementation is quoted verbatim from a press release sent out by the Governor's Office.

"During the 2023-2024 school year, the implementation of the Students First Act continues on Page 6

## Monona County Cattlemen host annual banquet

The Monona County Cattlemen's Association held their annual meeting and banquet on January 21, at Ute Town and Country in Ute. Darren Goslar of Goslar Funeral Home & Monuments began the evening with invocation followed by a steak dinner catered by Staleys' Food Service.

President Dave Jensen started the meeting by asking for nominations of any new directors, Vice President Bob Otto made a motion of Colin Mordhorst to be a director of the Southeast Region, Keith Zediker second, all in favor.

President Dave Jensen recognized the Monona County Cattlemen's Board of Directors, cattlemen directors from surrounding counties, the Monona County Elected officials, Monona County Fair Board members and Monona County Fair Queen. He also recognized this year's scholarship award that was given to Paige Wooster.

The guest speaker for the banquet was Senator Joni Ernst, she addressed concerns of the farmers and cattlemen in regards to drought situations and the



The family of Brady Hanson presented a special award for his years of contributions as a member to the association. Pictured are Brad Hanson, Vice President Bob Otto, Cathy Hanson, and Beau Hanson.

impact it has had on crops and pastures in our area.

There were three special awards presented by Vice President Bob Otto and this year's recipients were Tiefenthaler Quality Meats from Holstein, for their years of support to

our association. The family of Brady Hanson for his years of contributions as a member to the association and to Monona County Cattlemen's Association past president, Ron Hausman, for his dedication and hard work.

Comedian/Ventriloquist Kevin Horner was this year's entertainment who once again provided much laughter with his human "puppet" skit and Aunt Millie and her "Dating Game."

Annual Banquet continues on Page 6



MVAOCOU senior Emily Kovarna, junior Paige Schmidt, junior Jasmine Schaffer were selected for the NWIBA High School Honor Band.

## Four band students selected for NWIBA Honor Band

One MVAO Middle School and three MVAOCOU High School musicians auditioned for the 2022-23 Northwest Iowa Bandmasters Association Honor Bands (NWIBA). All four students who auditioned from MVAOCOU were selected to the honor bands.

Eighth grade flutist Claire Smallwood was selected to the NWIBA Middle School

Honor Band. Claire auditioned successfully at the NWIBA honor band auditions held at Storm Lake Middle School on October 15. Honor band rehearsals and a concert were held on the campus of Dordt University in Sioux Center on November 5.

Honor Band continues on Page 6

Inside the...

## MONONA COUNTY COURTHOUSE

### Zoning/Environmental Health

610 Iowa Avenue, Onawa, Iowa 51040 (Second Floor of Courthouse)  
Office - 712-433-3400 · Cell - 712-431-6879  
Hours: Monday-Friday - 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The goal of the Zoning/Environmental Health is to protect the environment for future generations of Monona County to enjoy!

Sandy Bubke, Monona County Administrator Zoning/Environmental Health, has been with Monona County for 19 years (4 years part-time with Public Health, 15 years as the Zoning/Environmental Health Administrator).

#### The Main Duties of Zoning/Environmental Health:

- Water testing on private water wells
- Issue permits and inspect new septic systems
- Issue private well construction permits,
- Hand out education materials and Radon test kits
- Issue zoning construction permits
- Enforce the zoning regulations for the Unincorporated areas of the county
- Floodplain manager
- Investigate nuisance complaints
- Secretary for the Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustments
- Work with disaster - emergency preparedness when necessary

Services Zoning/Environmental Health provide for the public:

Monona County has Grants-To-Counties funds for free private well water testing, well/cistern plugging and well rehab. Water testing is done Monday-Wednesday from 8-10 a.m. Water testing hours are flexible to meet a homeowner's schedule if necessary.

They also have radon kits available for \$7 each.

Bubke works with the residents of Monona County and helps educate them on staying healthy by having their private wells tested every year, having their homes tested for Radon and having working-up to code septic systems.

"The zoning side is making sure that we are following the zoning regulations and floodplain rules to help keep the county "organized," she says

She enjoys working with the members of the Zoning Commission, Board of Adjustments and the Board of Health.

"They are volunteers that normally don't get attention for what they do for the county and making sure that I am doing my job in keeping the county safe and healthy," Bubke said. "Some days are normal and then



Sandy Bubke, CEHT, HHS  
Monona County Administrator  
Zoning/Environmental Health  
mocoenvr@mononacounty.org

others something new happens that needs attention - there is nothing ordinary about this job!"

Bubke notes she enjoys learning new things with her job, going to conferences, and being a part of the Iowa Environmental Health Association (IEHA).

This year, she was appointed as the IEHA representative to the ISAC board of directors.

"I am excited to start a new role in my job and hope to bring first-hand information back to Monona County on what is happening around the state and what is happening with the legislative priorities at the statehouse."

Inside the Monona County Courthouse is a special feature to help readers understand what goes on in each office at courthouse.