



Serving Emmet County and the surrounding communities.



### Inside:

ELC releases high school and middle school honor rolls

Pages 2, 5



### Inside:

Teammates, coaches, family help Nitchals reach 1,000-point milestone

Page 1B

## Search warrants sweeping, far-ranging

By MICHAEL TIDEMANN

No stone was left unturned in a flurry of search warrants filed by Emmet County Sheriff Mike Martens to find evidence to support a multi-year investigation that led to February 2021 charges against five former City of Armstrong employees.

Two former city clerks, Mary Kate Staton and Tracie Lang, have both pleaded guilty to charges and provided statements to investigators, Staton to misdemeanor charges and Lang to felony charges. The remaining defendants include Police Chief Craig Merrill, who remains on unpaid suspension; former Mayor Greg Boom; and former Clerk Connie Thackery, all charged with felonies and serious misdemeanors. All three are scheduled for an 11 a.m. Feb.

25 conference hearing.

Charges against the defendants include:

■ Count 1 - ongoing criminal conduct, Class B felony. Boom, Merrill and Thackery.

■ Count 2 - theft in the first degree, Class C felony. Boom and Merrill.

■ Count 3 - fraudulent practice in the first degree, Class C felony. Boom.

■ Count 4 - felonious misconduct in office, Class D felony. Boom.

■ Count 5 - theft in the second degree, Class D felony. Boom.

■ Count 6 - theft in the second degree, Class D felony. Boom and Thackery.

■ Count 7 - theft in the third degree, aggravated misdemeanor. Boom and Thackery.

■ Count 8 - non-felonious misconduct in office, seri-

ous misdemeanor. Boom and Thackery.

■ Count 9 - non-felonious misconduct in office, serious misdemeanor. Boom.

■ Count 10 - non-felonious misconduct in office, serious misdemeanor. Boom.

■ Count 11 - tampering with records, aggravated misdemeanor. Boom.

■ Count 12 - assault with a dangerous weapon, aggravated misdemeanor. Merrill.

■ Count 13 - assault with a dangerous weapon, aggravated misdemeanor. Merrill.

■ Count 14 - non-felonious misconduct in office, serious misdemeanor. Merrill.

■ Count 15 - non-felonious misconduct in office, serious misdemeanor. Merrill.

A July 11, 2017, search warrant application sought data

Turn to **WARRANTS**, Page 3A



Mike Jensen (looking at camera) and brother Randy Jensen (Iowa t-shirt) were selected honorary captains for the University of Iowa at the Citrus Bowl this past Saturday in Orlando, Fla.

Photo submitted

## JENSEN BROTHERS SERVE AS HONORARY CAPTAINS AT CITRUS BOWL

### Lincoln Central alumni honored for military service

By DAVID SWARTZ  
MANAGING EDITOR

ORLANDO, Fla. — Two Emmet County natives were honored at the 2022 Citrus Bowl in Orlando, Fla., this past weekend.

Brothers Mike Jensen and Randy Jensen were named honorary captains for the University of Iowa Football Team and took part in the coin flip prior to the start of the Jan. 1 game with the University of Kentucky.

Both veterans, Mike joined the U.S. Army directly out of high school in 1986. Randy enlisted in the Army Reserves in 1990. Both graduated from Lincoln Central High School in Gruver — Mike in 1986 and Randy in 1988.

The two brothers were selected by the Citrus Bowl organizers — Florida Citrus Sports — to be honorary captains.

Mike lives in Orlando and one of the committee members knew him and that he was a veteran and from Iowa.

When asked to be an honorary captain, Mike suggested his brother Randy. The orga-

nizers decided that both brothers could serve as honorary captains.

“Mike and I just happened to be in the right spot,” said Randy.

The experience was one to remember.

“It was a great experience for me,” said Randy. “We got the red-carpet treatment.”

“It’s a good story — two farm boys from Iowa,” Mike said, adding that the crowd was about “75 percent” Iowa Hawkeye fans.

The two brothers joined the Hawkeye captains at the 50-yard line for the coin flip. The University of Kentucky also had an honorary captain, a Vietnam veteran.

Iowa Head Coach Kirk Ferentz stepped out, shook both their hands and thanked them for their service.

The Jensens and the honorary captain from Kentucky were all recognized at the first television timeout to the stadium crowd.

“The crowd really notched it up for that,” said Randy.

Mike’s enlistment included



Mike Jensen and Randy Jensen, left, along with the honorary captain from Kentucky (center) were introduced to the Citrus Bowl crowd during the first TV timeout.

Photo submitted

being selected to be a West Point candidate, and he went to West Point prep school where he was a walk-on football player. He graduated from West Point in 1992. He served six years as an artillery officer and also was deployed to Haiti, serving a total of 12 years.

Randy, who currently lives in Cedar Falls, served in Desert Shield Storm soon after he enlisted. He also attended the University of Northern Iowa and was commissioned as a military police officer.

He spent the bulk of his 21-year career with the

4249th Military Police Detachment/415th MP Detachment of Pochontas and retired after a deployment to Afghanistan.

“They (Florida Citrus Sports) do a good job of honoring veterans,” said Mike. “It was a good experience.”



Randy Nissen of Estherville is leaving business possibilities open for his renovation of his building on Central Ave.

Photo by Amy H. Peterson

## Council explores code changes to help builders

By AMY H. PETERSON  
STAFF WRITER

At Monday’s Estherville city council meeting, the council set a public hearing to consider adjusting the city’s commercial structure code. The current code lists a number of prohibited materials for the exterior of commercial buildings. The city has approved variances from this code, including for the addition to the Woody’s Pizza Building and for the

new Scooter’s Coffee drive through.

The approved variances to city code allowed local builders to use modern materials on their buildings.

Laminated timber, modular bamboo, self-healing concrete, aerographite and translucent wood are among the 21st-century materials that have become popular in building materials. Randy Nissen of Estherville has put up wood frame and

trusses for a pitched roof and framed in the blue building at 1226 Central Ave. that was formerly a florist shop.

Nissen’s plans for the building are to reface it with local school colors: a black roof, red shakes, white trim, red lap siding and onyx board and batten on the bottom portion. Nissen told city code officer Greg Van Langen that after meeting with contractors and suppliers, he

Turn to **CITY**, Page 3A

## Supervisors breeze through long agenda

By MICHAEL TIDEMANN

The Emmet County Board of Supervisors hacked through a long agenda of mainly boilerplate items to finish the first meeting of the year within an hour Monday, Jan. 3. The meeting was held the first business day of the year, rather than the usual Tuesday.

The board reappointed Jeff Quastad chair and approved Supervisor Todd Glasnapp vice-chair, replacing Tim Schumacher who held that position over the previous year. Schumacher chaired the meeting since Quastad met with the board remotely.

The board approved Resolution 2022-01, adopting the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Matrix regulating animal confinement operations. Also approved was Resolution 2022-02 naming depositories for the Emmet County Treasurer. They also approved boards and committees with some minor changes.

The board approved the Estherville News, Armstrong Journal and Ringsted Dispatch as official newspapers. They also approved .50 per mile as mileage reimbursement for official business. The board also approved dates for paying claims and approved allocating the second half of the fiscal 2022 budget.

In other matters, the board approved Resolution 2022-03 authorizing the county engineer to administer Farm-to-Market and federal and state construction projects. They also approved Resolution 2022-04, naming the engineer as coordinator for Title VI Provisions of Civil Rights Act of 1964 for Secondary Roads.

In the road report, Emmet County Engineer Walter Davis-Oeth said relatively mild weather caused few winter maintenance issues. Crews were tree trimming, brush cutting and ditch clean-

ing. The board also discussed and signed a letter to Dist. 4 Senator Dennis Guth and Dist. 7 Rep. Henry Stone regarding the Summit and Navigator carbon dioxide pipelines crossing Emmet County. The letter cited “three irreconcilable issues that will have lasting effect and do irreparable damage to our county’s agricultural welfare and ownership rights.”

Drainage - “This proposed project will allow private investors to profit while limiting future improvements and productivity of the land. Additionally, it is inevitable that there will be damage to existing drainage tile and without appropriate legislation on the state and county levels, there is no protection for the private tile already installed.”

Safety - “While the merits of this projects are a topic addressed later, planning for response to an accidental discharge of the concentrated CO2 will require ad-

ditional training at great expense to our county.”

Infrastructure and future development - “These pipelines will further impede the installation and placement of the much-needed infrastructure, that of fiber optics, gas, and electric both in and out of the county.”

The letter further takes to task the issue of eminent domain to acquire land easements, the dangers of nitrous oxide which is 298 times more hazardous to the environment than CO2 and the demand of CO2 for corn production.

Emmet County Attorney Melanie Summers Bauler reviewed two Dolliver parcels with delinquent property taxes. The board approved sending a notice of expiration on right of redemption on properties at 6098 Railroad Street and 1095 School Street.

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**Good morning!**

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# ELC Middle School releases second quarter honor roll



The Estherville Lincoln Central Middle School released its second quarter honor roll for the 2021-22 school year. Students who earned a 4.00 grade-point average are indicated by an asterisk.

**A Honor Roll 2nd Qtr  
Fifth Grade**

- Luke Arends
- Jayda Baldelamar
- Tatum Bates
- \*Colin Clabaugh
- Carly Danner
- Ryan Fehlman
- Danica Fehr
- James Fowler
- Gracie Fuller
- Juan Gomez-Erickson
- Jocelyn Gonzalez
- Drake Griese
- Grace Harris
- Owen Helget
- Isaac Helmich
- Aaron Hernandez
- Trystan Inman
- Keaton Jeseritz
- Bentley Jewell
- Brayden Jewell
- \* Rueger Laidig
- \* Kendal Larsen
- Mia Olson
- Thor Olson

- \* Franklin Perdomo
- Angel Ponce Diaz
- Ayson Ponce-Santos
- Daniel Richard
- Lesvia Ruiz Pacheco
- Emery Sadler
- Drew Sheda
- \* Jasmine Smith
- Ella Soper
- \* Ashton Towell
- \* Diego Vasquez Ortiz
- Hudson Welch
- Sadee Wheatley
- KaMya White
- Jeremiah Wright

**Sixth Grade**

- Blaize Ahrens
- Kierson Blair
- \* Natalie Castro
- Reagan Clabaugh
- Shane Claussen
- Alexander Cole
- Nicholas Cole
- \* Cooper Deim
- Danica Dickson
- Ryleigh Fay
- Marcus Finn
- Madison Fothergill
- Grady Frideres
- Amy Gomez-Ramirez
- Elisha Hovinga
- \* Krayton Kalous
- Tate Lair

- Aleyah Madsen
- Sophya Mattox
- Demauria McMurrin
- Samson Mittrucker
- Reagan Nelson
- Andrew Norgaard
- Taylor Nowlin
- \* Brynlee Peta
- Samuel Popken-Webb
- \* Jocelyn Richard
- \* William Rosfjord
- Jazmin Sanchez
- \* Kyleigh Schneider
- Garrett Smith
- Jayke Stokes
- \* Jackson Struve
- Kate Van Cleave
- Beckam Welch
- Gracie White

**Seventh Grade**

- Blake Arends
- Amarissa Arizmendi
- Amari Armstrong
- Arianna Beekman
- Kacie Brechwald
- Cooper Brosh
- Gavin Burt
- Maci Carlin
- Matthew DeWitt
- Paislee Egel
- Yuselmi Gomez Cuxum
- Bonita Jordan
- Dalton Lutat

- Wyatt Martin
- Grace Nath
- Aila Nowlin
- Pierre Pelts
- Moriah Reineke
- Brianna Silva
- Lyndsay Towell
- Yanelis Vasquez Ortiz
- Jaleel Velasquez

**Eighth Grade**

- Addyson Blair
- Landon Breaman
- \* Morgan Clabaugh
- Noah Danner
- Zoey DeRuyter
- Ezra Drahot
- Emily Eveleth
- Evan Gosch
- Evan Griffith
- Cassandra Harvey
- Addison Hatland
- Loki Hatland
- \* Gavin Heifner
- Caden Hoffman
- Jasmine Hurst
- Braxton Johnson
- \* Makenna Kremer
- Remmington Laidig
- Conner Matheson
- \* Braylen Milstead
- Brody Olson
- Kylie Olson
- Fernanda Padilla

- Ciji Paul
- \* Hanna Paulson
- Ella Regelstad
- James Richard
- Breyden Rodriguez
- Alicia Sanchez
- Karlie Schroeder
- Sophia Schumacher
- Suri Shatto
- Aiden Thelen
- Layton Yager

**B Honor Roll 2nd Qtr.  
Fifth Grade**

- Cooper Brandt
- Haylee Daniels
- Julio Diaz-Ruiz
- Armando Hernandez
- Samuel Hernandez
- Mildred Juarez-Ramirez
- Jorga Peterson
- Symon Reitz
- Tomasa Ruiz Us
- \* Sixth Grade
- Jose Aguilar Gonzalez
- Laken Ball
- Karli Bingen
- Bridget Christiansen
- Kyle Danner
- Jose Escobedo Pimentel
- Avery Hamm
- Macy Harris
- Aiden Hatland

- Evelin Juarez-Ramirez
- Jacob Juhl
- Ian Obernolte
- Wyatt Petersen
- Kellan Rasmussen
- Damian Rodriguez
- Maria Ruiz-Cardenas
- Adilee Simon

**Seventh Grade**

- Kiera Carrison
- Gustavo Chitic Aguilar
- Jesus Diaz Barajas
- Ezekiel Funston
- Lana Hammond
- Lilly Hecht
- Addison Hooge
- Abigail Isidro Marquisha
- Carson Knode
- Ashley Lopez Chavez
- Aubree Peta
- Carson Quastad

**Eighth Grade**

- Gustavo Barajas
- Clayton Burton
- Yuri De La Rosa
- Emelia Duitsman
- Boston Harris
- Lexi Juergens
- Mason Lair
- Jayden Pollock
- Levi Popken-Webb
- Easton Wedebrand

## SALUTE TO SERVICE

# HOMETOWN Heroes

## Outstanding Officers

### Members of the Estherville Police Department are:

- |                          |                                |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Chief Brent Shatto       | Officer Nick Helmick           |
| Captain Nate Dunlavy     | Officer Jacob Hinrickson       |
| Sgt. Matt Reineke        | Part Time Officer Kyle Staples |
| K-9 Officer Pepper       | Not pictured:                  |
| Sgt. Cory Danner         | Officer Reno Doty              |
| Officer Tyler Van Roekel | Part Time Officer Fagre        |
| Officer Ryan Arends      | Officer Matt Adams             |
| Officer Andrew Clayton   |                                |

Thanks to the brave police officers who serve and protect our community!



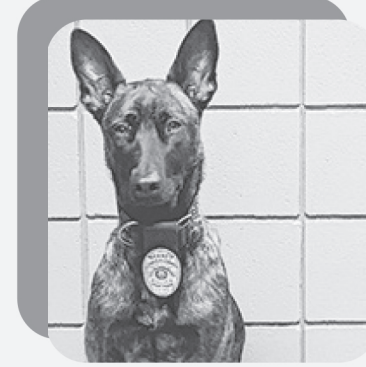
**Chief Brent Shatto**



**Captain Nate Dunlavy**



**Sgt. Matt Reineke**



**K-9 Officer Pepper**



**Sgt. Cory Danner**



**Officer Tyler Van Roekel**



**Officer Ryan Arends**



**Officer Andrew Clayton**



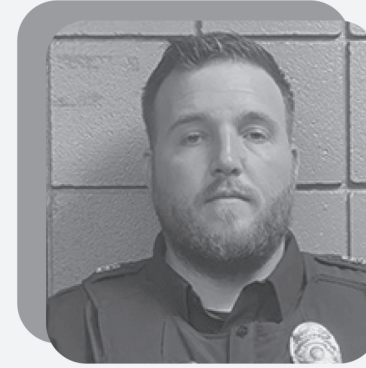
**Officer Matt Adams**



**Officer Nick Helmick**



**Officer Jacob Hinrickson**



**Part Time Officer Kyle Staples**

Sunday, Jan. 9 is Law Enforcement Appreciation Day, a citizen-led movement of recognition for law enforcement professionals. In 2015, Law Enforcement Appreciation Day was founded in an effort to highlight the support and appreciation the general public holds for law enforcement officers. The driving force behind its creation was the recent negative attention many officers have faced in the media. By founding the national day of recognition, the founders hoped to generate awareness of the dangers they face every day on the job while protecting the communities in which they live and work.

Some suggested ways to celebrate include saying "thank you" to officers as you encounter them, or wearing blue in support. Sharing a positive story or interaction with an officer is another way those who support their community officers show appreciation. The Estherville News will honor the Emmet County Sheriff's Department in the Jan. 13th edition. Thanks to all who serve and protect.

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Puzzles/Advice



to your good health WITH Dr. Keith Roach

Less Mercury in Flu Shot Than in Can of Tuna

DEAR DR. ROACH: How much mercury is safe? -- A.C.

ANSWER: The chemical element mercury exists in three forms: elemental mercury, which is the kind in thermometers; inorganic mercury, especially mercuric chloride; and organic mercury, including methyl and ethyl mercury.

Elemental mercury is dangerous primarily when it is inhaled, which occurs mainly in occupational settings. Accidental swallowing of the small amount of mercury in a thermometer has very low toxicity, but I still don't recommend it.

Inorganic mercury is seldom a problem, as it is almost never used these days in the U.S. and Canada. Most products containing this form of mercury have been banned.

Methyl mercury is the major concern for consumers, as this is found in fish. It accumulates in the environment, and tends to be worst in larger fish, which eat the smaller fish and over their lifetime accumulate the methyl mercury.

The Environmental Protection Agency warns an average-size person not to exceed 70 mcg per day of methyl mercury: Below this dose, toxicity is unlikely. This translates to two to three servings of fish per week, but no more than one serving of highest-risk fish for methyl mercury per week.

High-risk sources include most tuna, halibut and snapper. Ethyl mercury is significantly less toxic than methyl mercury, as it is removed from the body more quickly.

There is no EPA recommendation for ethyl mercury levels. Ethyl mercury has been used as a preservative

in vaccines, but it has been removed from all childhood and most adult vaccines. It is still used in some flu vaccines -- the ones in multidose vials: Single-use vials do not need a preservative.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have been experiencing spells of dizziness (not spinning), along with tiredness and feeling out of breath. I take tamoxifen to prevent breast cancer. When I started, my red blood cell count was normal at 3.95, but now it is low at 3.61. Could tamoxifen be causing the dizziness? -- J.Z.

ANSWER: Tamoxifen has both estrogen-like and anti-estrogen effects, and has been shown to reduce risk of breast cancer in high-risk women. However, it has many potential side effects, including hot flashes, blood clots, endometrial disease and coronary artery disease risk.

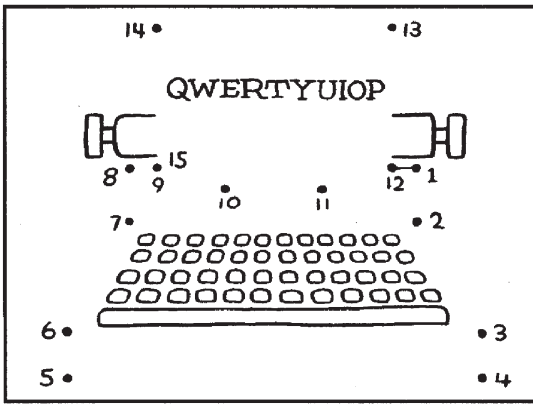
Two less-common side effects are dizziness and anemia. Dizziness can mean vertigo (often described as spinning), but also lightheadedness, which is what I think you mean.

I suspect your case is due to the tamoxifen relaxing your blood vessels (called vasodilation), which leads to flushing and low blood pressure. However, about 5% of women taking tamoxifen will have anemia. (A low red blood cell count is a sign of anemia, although it is more common to follow hemoglobin level or hematocrit percentage.)

The combination of vasodilation and anemia could certainly cause dizziness. If continuing the tamoxifen is important to you in preventing breast cancer, you could try increasing your salt and water intake. Discuss this with your doctor ahead of time to be sure your blood pressure can handle that.

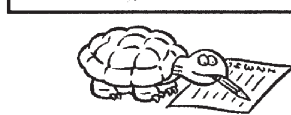
Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

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USING ANY OF THE ABOVE 10 letters from the top row of a standard typewriter, see if you can create a 10-letter word.

A RHYMING RIDDLE! "What's in the church But not the steeple? The parson has it, But not the people."

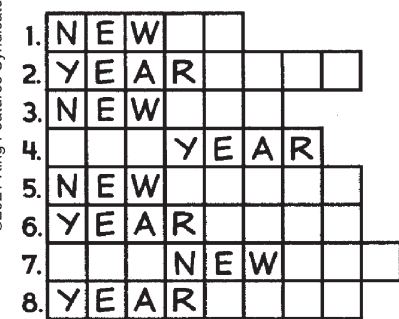


DOUBLE TROUBLE! Below are six partially spelled words. Four letters are missing from each.

- 1) Spanish dance. 2) Scottish shrub. 3) Slow mover. 4) Sincere remorse. 5) It's worn in winter. 6) A long highway.



by Charles Barry Townsend



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Let's ring in the new year with a dictionary quiz! To the left is a list of eight words, each of which contains either the word "new" or the word "year."

- 1. Staircase support. 2. Record of events. 3. He knew his apples. 4. July 2, 1999, for example. 5. Current-events movie. 6. Certain racehorse. 7. Abstract. 8. A longing.

Illustrated by David Coulson

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Weekly SUDOKU by Linda Thistle. 9x9 grid with numbers. Difficulty: Moderate to Challenging.

Answer can be found in the B Section of this edition

Horoscope section with ARIES, TAURUS, GEMINI, CAPRICORN, AQUARIUS, CANCER, LEO, VIRGO, LIBRA, SCORPIO horoscopes.

King Crossword

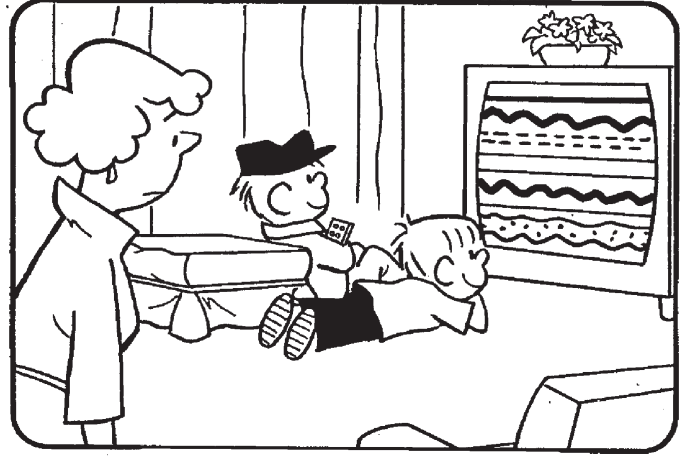
King Crossword puzzle grid with ACROSS and DOWN clues.

Answer can be found in the B Section of this edition

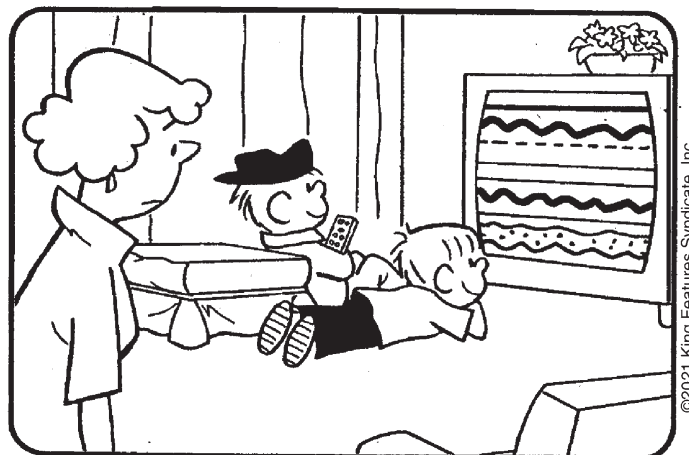


"It's the new flat-screen crystal ball."

HOCUS-FOCUS BY HENRY BOLTIKOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Plant is missing. 2. Remote is bigger. 3. Cap is reversed. 4. Belt is missing. 5. Screen is different. 6. Sleeve is shorter.

CryptoQuip puzzle: This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. Clue: K equals R. QAA LFW KWQJT-LV-JKPME

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**WANTED TO BUY**

Vintage signs: Seed corn, pop, gas, oil, farm, machinery, automotive, neon.

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General Merchandise: post cards, fishing tackle, hunting and jack knives, shotgun & rifle shell boxes, tractor company advertising, license plate toppers and silver and gold coins.

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The family of Dale Fisher would like to thank everyone for their expressions of sympathy, shared memories, stories, prayers, cards, and flowers. Thank you Kirk and the Henry Olson Funeral Home for your help with our final goodbye. Thank you to the VFW for the delicious lunch. The memorial monies will go to the VFW and American Legion.  
**Thank you all and God bless you.**  
Cindy, Cory and family, Travis and family

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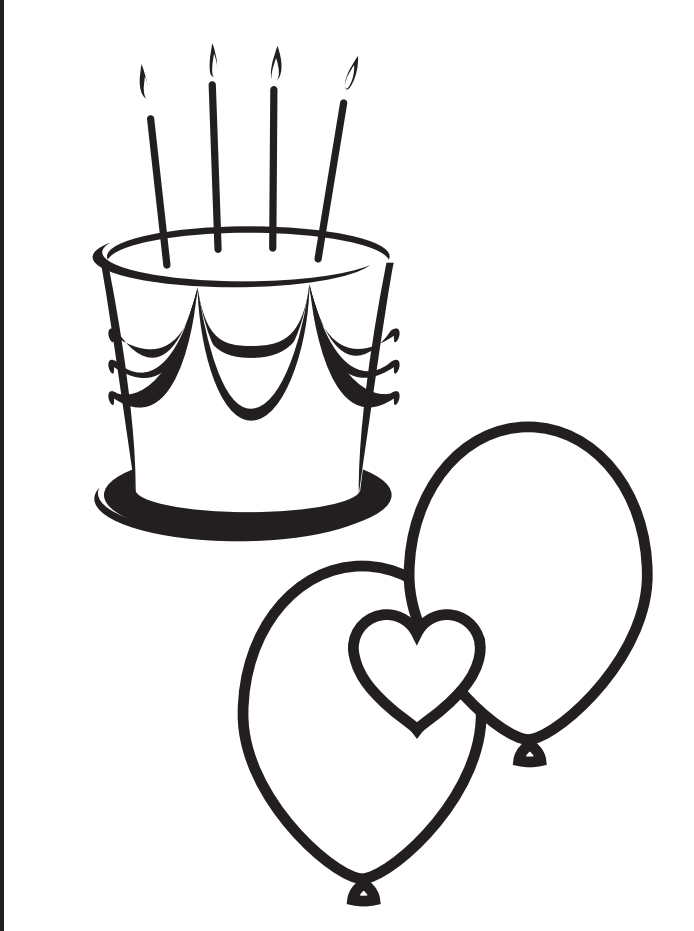
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# Bringing memories to life

*John Rudd of Outlet Store demonstrates new kiosk to print phone and tablet pictures*

By AMY H. PETERSON  
STAFF WRITER

John Rudd of the Outlet Store recently showed the Estherville Rotary club the store's addition of the photo printing kiosk. The device allows the Outlet Store to print 4x6, 5x7 and 8x10 photos in-house from images that customers upload online.

A link on the Estherville Outlet website (www.esthervilleoutlet.com) allows customers to preview the pictures from their phone or device, select the pictures they wish to print, choose a size, and preview the image to make sure making an 8x10 won't cut off Grandma.

"Phones are very high resolution now," Rudd said. He advised those taking family photos have the courage to step back to create space around the people in it.

"One of the sidelines of this whole thing was that our old computers were supposed to be compatible. However, when we got everything installed, we found out they were proprietary and only worked with Mitsubishi kiosks. So I had my old kiosk and put it in the basement. I had five cases of media that I tried to sell on eBay and had no takers," Rudd said.

The pandemic supply chain issues saved the day, Rudd said.

"When I started this a year and a half ago, I didn't think getting rid of the extra media would ever happen, but in reality, the pandemic saved me," Rudd said.

It happened because the kiosk company had to maneuver its process due to a lack of materials.

"In August and September, we could hardly get any media. The company sent a file, I put them on a thumb drive and took them downstairs to the kiosk, and I went through four-and-a-half cases of my old media.

The only downside was it took about an extra hour, and my wife didn't want to deal with it so I did it myself on days I was there," Rudd said.

Rudd's print operation offers canvas prints, ornaments, and other materials through third parties. One of their partners offers photobooks, passport photos, wall decor, collages, and other options.

The partner offers 281 designs of Christmas cards that range in space from one picture up to eight pictures on a photo card.

Rudd said one older woman came in to look at Christmas cards and confessed, "It hasn't been a good year. I haven't had a good year. I lost my husband and another family member."

Rudd emailed the company and created a card with eight pictures and added descriptions to explain the reason she chose each picture. It took the place of an unnaturally cheerful note or long letter.

Analysts at IBISWorld state the pandemic also increased demand for photo keepsakes, making people nostalgic for past travels and special occasions.

App and website-based services like The Outlet Store's will grow in popularity as people socially distance and limit their time in retail outlets.

Rotarian Nancy Anderson said she used the kiosk so much, she might be in trouble one day. "It's a great service, and a wonderful capability to have for scrapbookers, too," Anderson said.

Customers prepay for orders over \$10 to avoid someone placing a large order then never picking up their prints. Prints can be done in an hour, generally, and are available for 24 hours afterward, Rudd said.

To learn more about photo printing in Estherville, contact Rudd at the Outlet Store.



John Rudd of the Outlet Store shows the quality prints he develops for customers from their computers, mobile phones and tablets.

Photo by Amy H. Peterson

## Naig reminds farmers and landowners to apply for cover-crop insurance discounts by January 14

*Participating farmers qualify for a \$5 per acre discount on spring crop insurance premiums*

DES MOINES. — Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig reminds farmers and landowners who plant cover crops to apply for the state's cover-crop insurance discount program by Jan. 14, 2022. Applicants may be eligible for a \$5 per acre discount on their spring crop insurance premiums. Farmers can sign up now for the cover crop insurance premium reduction program at [apply.cleanwateriowa.org](http://apply.cleanwateriowa.org). To qualify, the cover crop acres cannot be enrolled in other state or federal cost share programs.

"Farmers and landowners across the state are recognizing the benefits of planting fall cover crops to improve the health of their fields and water quality in their communities and downstream," said Secretary Naig. "I encourage everyone who planted fall cover crops to take advantage of this opportunity to save some money on spring crop insurance premiums."

Cover crops, like rye and oats, prevent soil erosion and lock in nutrients, especially during extreme weather events. Cover crops are proven to reduce nitrogen loads by 28-31 percent and phosphorous loads by 29 percent, which helps improve water quality. They also offer weed control and livestock grazing benefits for producers.

Secretary Naig encourages farmers and landowners to speak with their agronomist or seed representative about cover crop varieties as they're finalizing their spring planting decisions.

### Program Details

This is the fifth year the crop insurance discount program is being administered by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and the USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA). Interest in the program continues to grow and new farmers and fields join each year. To date, more than 1,700 farmers have enrolled more than 700,000 acres of cover crops in the program. Other states have started offering similar programs modeled after the one in Iowa, including Illinois and Indiana.

Some insurance policies may be excluded, like Whole-Farm Revenue Protection, or those covered through written agreements. Participants must follow all existing farming practices required by their policy and work with their insurance agencies to maintain eligibility.

Farmers should visit their local USDA service center to learn about other cost share funding available to support the implementation of conservation practices.

###

### About the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

Led by Secretary Mike Naig, the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship serves the rural and urban residents that call Iowa home. Through its 14 diverse bureaus, the Department ensures animal health, food safety and consumer protection. It also promotes conservation efforts to preserve our land and enhance water quality for the next generation. Learn more at [iowaagriculture.gov](http://iowaagriculture.gov).

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