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A Special Supplement to the  
**ESTHERVILLE NEWS**

**JUNE 2022**



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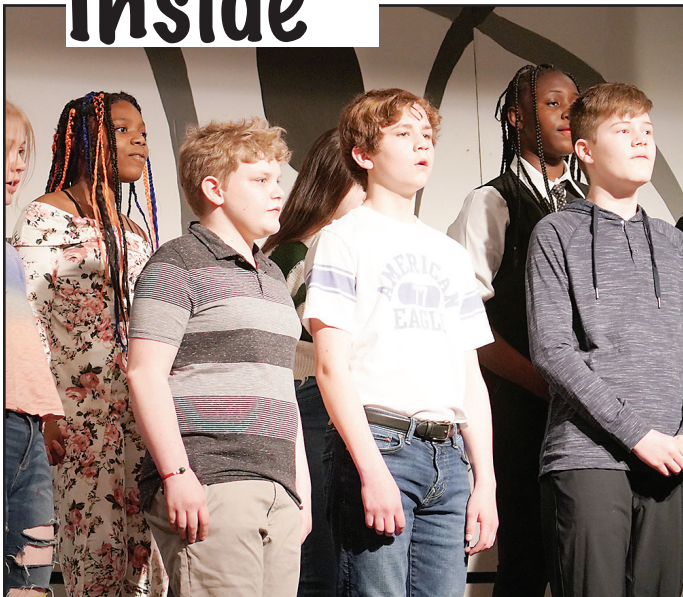


# Opening Shot

In early May, workers poured cement for the supports of the new ninja park located at the site of the former Estherville swimming pool on West South First Street. The park is expected to open this summer

*Photo by David Swartz*

# Inside



**On the cover:** Finding a concert to attend during April and May was easy to do. Check on some concert scenes on pages 16-17. Pictured on the cover are, front from left, Logan Schroeder, Braylen Milstead, Caden Hoffman; visible in back are Neveah Peaches and Josephine Kapinga.

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DeeDee (Coltvet) Hoffman poses with her Hall of Fame Trophy from Augsburg College.

# A Gruver Rockette to remember

DeeDee Coltvet scored 3,036 points during her six-on-six basketball career

By DAVID SWARTZ

[DSWARTZ@ESTHERVILLENEWS.NET](mailto:DSWARTZ@ESTHERVILLENEWS.NET)

**C**ordelia Coltvet, known for most of her life as DeeDee, was one of the most prolific scorers to come from Emmet County.

If you haven't heard the name, it's because time has passed.

Playing for the Gruver Rockettes from 1957 to 1960, DeeDee was a player that fans came to see during the six-on-six basketball era in Iowa.

"The first year I was at Gruver I was lucky enough to play a lot of varsity, setting a 35-point average which increased to 40 points my junior year," DeeDee said.

By the time she graduated, she had scored 3,036 points

with 1,159 coming in her senior season. While Gruver never made it to the state tournament, DeeDee received All-State honors for her efforts and remains on the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union 6-on-6 record book.

DeeDee came to Emmet County to a country home near Estherville and Gruver the summer prior to her sophomore year of high school in 1957. Her father, the Rev. Benjamin Coltvet, received a call to be the pastor at Immanuel Lutheran Church south of Gruver.

"Together with siblings, we went to school in Gruver," DeeDee said. "Our family subscribed to the Estherville Newspaper and it is from that publication that I have newspaper clippings of our



DeeDee played three years for the Gruver Rockettes while scoring 3,036 points during her high school basketball career.

# GIRLS' BASKETBALL



FIRST ROW: Julie Nichols, Ruth Ann Landmesser, Sharon Andrews, Marilyn Hartman, Laurie McKean, Ellen Foster, JoAnn Bryant, Cordelia Coltvet, Jane Ramsey, Phyllis Origer, JoAnn Ramsey, Juanita Holl. SECOND ROW: Coach, Mr. Gerald Fain; Manager, Beverly Klingbeil.

basketball games. It is from the scrapbook which I kept that I have taken facts and info regarding basketball.”

DeeDee played three years for the Gruver Rockettes. After high school, she continued her education at Augsburg College in Minneapolis.

“I did not accept any college basketball scholarships,” DeeDee said. “I did play at Augsburg College and was inducted into their Hall of Fame. I also was invited by Kansas City Good Girls to play with their team at nationals three different years while in college: South Bend, Ind. (1960) Waterbury, Conn. (1961) and New York (1963) I was elected to the First Team All America all 3 years. At the conclusion of college and upon entering dental school (University of Minnesota) the tennis shoes were permanently retired.”

## Q&A with DeeDee

Q: What drew you to basketball?

A: In the days I was in junior high and high school there were no other sports to play such as volleyball, soccer, tennis or track. Because of this I played basketball summer and winter. I loved it! I liked it even more when I was on a team which began in junior high, (6th grade). Mr. Sanford Sampson was our teacher and coach for all three grades. He determined what we did each day. Often he put scholastics on hold and the entire room of about 30 of us went down to the gym.

The boys were supposed to be studying while sitting on the bleachers and the girls were practicing and vice versa. We had a very good girls team winning all but two games in three seasons. That kind of success carried over into high school with lots of enthusiasm.

Q: Do you remember any friendship you created?

A: Yes, one began in those

successful junior high days, “Sandy (Sime) Sauer. She was 2 inches taller than I was at 5’11”. She was a fine post basketball player, but she and her family moved to Cedar Valley before her freshman year. Their school was much larger and they had a reputation for good basketball teams. While I was in H.S. they didn’t win state, but I remember visiting with her in the hall at the state tourney. We still keep in touch---mainly at Christmas. Other friends were Karen (Drew) Rauscher, Ellen (Foster) Bader, and Esther Theiss (deceased).

Q: Do you remember any special times other than on the basketball court, but related to basketball?

A: I remember a trip to New York which wasn’t to play basketball but is related. While in dental school I got a letter inviting me to appear on the game show “To Tell the Truth” which was taped in New York. After satisfactory answers to my questions I made arrangements to go

there. ABC paid my fare, hotel and meals. There were two girls I met the first day who were my impostors. When the curtain went up we in turn, said “I am Cordelia Coltvet”. Of the two impostors one got 2 votes and I got 2 as “the real C.C” The third girl got no votes, probably because, when asked how big the basketball was she made a stab at it in inches. The follow-up question was asking the size of the basketball hoop which she made smaller than

the basketball! Oh dear! That eliminated her. All I ever had to say was the truth or, in some cases, “I don’t know” which was the truth. I got \$25 for each wrong vote for a total of \$50.

Q: Can you reminisce about a moment that wasn’t on the basketball court?

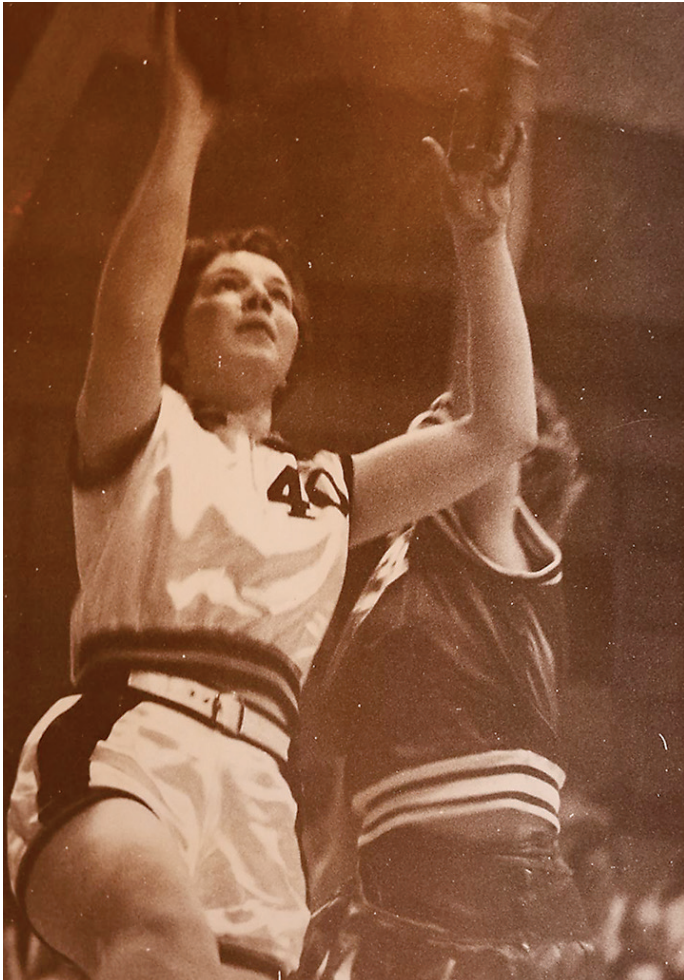
A: Yes, I remember being at a youth rally that wasn’t in our town. Off in the distance a few girls were huddled together whispering. Finally one of the girls came over to

## ABOUT CORDELIA (DEEDEE) COLTVET HOFFMANN

**NAME:** Cordelia Coltvet (birth name)  
DeeDee Coltvet (soon after and up through college)  
Cordelia Hoffmann (married in 1967)  
Dr.”C” (as a dentist to distinguish from husband,  
Kenneth Hoffmann (Dr. Ken).

**PLAYING YEARS AT GRUVER:** 1957-1960

**OCCUPATION:** We (Cordelia and Ken) practiced dentistry in the same office for over 40 years. Now retired.



me and asked, "Are you really DeeDee Coltvet?" I answered "Yes." "Oh" she seemed surprised. "You aren't as mean as they say you are!" She was referring to the basketball court I suppose and yes, I was competitive but I think there is a difference between being "mean" and being "competitive." If there was a loose ball in my court I thought it belonged to me. I remember throwing myself flat out to get a loose ball instead of running there. Yes, I did get the ball but also got black eyes, a cut on the bridge of nose and bleeding on the crest of both hips. Some friends took me to the Estherville ER after the game; I was checked out, had some bandages and still got to go home with friend, Karen, for a sleepover we had planned for earlier in the week.

Q: How was the transition

from six-player basketball to that of college ball (Augsburg)?

A: It was actually quite smooth for me. We didn't play with the intensity of Iowa high school ball so it was rather like physical education or intramural. It was a real surprise when the college contacted me years later to come to Minneapolis and be inducted into their first women's Hall of Fame. College ball (five person, full court) was much more tame than what even the high school girls play now. I admire the present day athletes.

Q: Tell me briefly about your family. Did any of your children/grandchildren excel in sports?

A: Our only daughter was more interested in music and academics. She is now a writer, speaker and Biblical counselor. The three boys all

**From DeeDee's scrapbooks**

*"In her junior year she hit 61 points against a fine Graettinger team. What the record book doesn't show is that Graettinger was putting all three of their guards on her that night. Three against one and she still got 61 recalled Coach Fain. "That is the greatest single effort I have ever seen."*

—Dick Dietl, Sentinel Sports Reporter

*"Figures will describe the number of points the blonde junior pushed through the hoop, but adjectives will not describe the manner in which she played. The high-scoring Miss would start from the center line and in 2 dribbles be in for a layup; she would be guarded by the entire Pirette back-court and hit jump shots over their outstretched arms."*

—Duane Pitcher, Daily News Reporter/Staff Writer

*"Gruver vs Armstrong:...Rockettes came back in the second half to romp away to a 90-56 victory with Coltvet scoring 72 points, eight more than her previous single game high of 64. She counted 29 field goals 43 attempts and hit 14 of 17 gift shots."*

—Hoyt Luthly, Daily News Sports



DeeDee and Dr. Ken Hoffman at the Augsburg College Athletic Hall of Fame induction.



DeeDee, left, goes up for a shot during her playing days for the Gruver Rockettes.

played the sports: basketball, football and track. We are a 3A school so the competition is pretty stiff. All three were varsity players. Now the eldest is a dentist here in Powell, the second is a physician in Willmar, MN. and the youngest is an optometrist in Sheridan, WY. Their father, Ken, and I are retired dentists after having practiced dentistry together for more than 45 years.

Q: What are some of the difference in the game as you played it in 1960 and now?

A: During the time I played it was a six player half court game. On the court were 3 forwards and 3 guards, each playing only on her half court. The exception was the tip off to begin the game when one player from each team met at the center circle for a jump ball. There were many more jump balls to follow as all tie balls were jumped in the free-throw circle by the two who

played. Now these tie balls are given to a team on a rotating basis. Players were allowed 2 dribbles after which, when picked up, she would have to shoot or pass the ball. Officials would run the ball up the court to the opposing team following a basket (not taken out under the basket as is done now.)

#### Final thought

“I played basketball with gusto, but I had lots of help, primarily from our coach, Mr. Gerald Fain and also from the players on Gruver’s team. To these I give credit. The primary credit is to God who was my strength, inspiration, good health, and internal cheer leader. I know I couldn’t have been a good basketball player without Him. I still walk with Him even as I stumble up the steps in the bleachers to watch the local teams play basketball,” Dee said.

*Should anyone wish to contact Dee, you may reach her samhoff2@yahoo.com.*



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## *Living out 'One School. One Heart. One Legacy.'*

By TARA PAUL

ESTHERVILLE LINCOLN CENTRAL SUPERINTENDENT

In Estherville Lincoln Central, we have adopted the brand statement of “One School. One Heart. One Legacy.” This idea reflects our approach to fostering a welcoming, positive, and productive educational community.

Our whole school community, from students and families to staff, administrators, and board members, works together to achieve our common goals, strives to nurture a supportive culture that centers around students, and guides young people as they set out to make a difference in the world.

All of us within the ELC community bring these tenets to bear in creating a learning environment that helps our students learn, grow, and succeed. We see our brand statement brought to life every day in countless ways.

Tara Ries, Estherville Lincoln Central Community School District second grade teacher, witnessed our brand in action at Demoney elementary in March, which was Reading Month.

“Our reading teachers have put in the work to make the month fun, engaging, and special,” she said. “They have involved every student with dress-up days, a reader’s theater presentation, an author’s visit, and voting on favorite books. It was such a good experience for the kids.”

ELC High School business teacher Michelle Frideres says she sees the brand displayed in her high school students, who have begun work on the food truck projects that will take them through the remainder of the Spring semester.

“I have such a dynamic group of students in my marketing class,” she said. “With every project we

do, they grow and become better versed in marketing. I have a variety of learning styles in this class, but they are all able to hold in-depth, real-time conversations together.”

Matt Schroeder, High School Ag instructor, recently experienced the brand statement in action when a group of more than 10 high school students cooked and served breakfast to staff members as a demonstration of their appreciation. He also mentioned the development of the Friends of Estherville FFA, a group of community members who have banded together in support of the high school’s FFA chapter.

In a demonstration of how ELC’s mission encourages relationships between schools and across age groups, Teagan Alger attested to a strong feeling of pride, unity, and support in the middle school when the high school girls were competing in the state basketball tournament.



Kirsten Curry noticed this as well, with crowds of community members, staff members, and students growing with each tournament game.

“For every game, the athletic department had to add more and more charter buses for students to ride to the games,” she said.

For the teachers, administrators, and students at ELC, “One School. One Heart. One Legacy.” is more than just a saying. It sums up the commitment we put toward creating a supportive, student-centered environment for our entire educational community.



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# Lucky Leanne

Distinguished faculty member at Drake says singing career has made her luckiest person in world

By Amy H. Peterson

[APETERSON@ESTHERVILLENEWS.NET](mailto:APETERSON@ESTHERVILLENEWS.NET)

**L**eanne Freeman Miller said the best part of growing up as a music kid in Estherville was learning music from great teachers. After Estherville High School, Leanne attended Iowa Lakes Community College and went on for a Master's degree in vocal performance. With a half-century teaching at Drake University in Des Moines, Leanne said she's thrilled to give back to students in her vocal studio and opera classes.

Leanne Freeman Miller with her former student, operating tenor Eric Ferring, who performed as lead tenor with the Metropolitan Opera in New York City earlier this year.

*Photo courtesy of Leanne Freeman Miller*

Leanne directs the Drake Opera. From it she has sprung many students into professional music careers, including operatic tenor Eric Ferring, who sang Tamino, the lead in Mozart's "The Magic Flute" at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City earlier this year. The student is not yet 30. Taking the lead prior to age 30 is unusual because it takes the human voice that long to fully develop its range, depth and abilities. "I work with many very talented younger students, but for those under age 30 it's not very common to be a lead vocalist in the opera. He's won many competitions, too." Ferring will spend the next year at the Paris Opera.

Leanne will take her teaching on the road as she teaches up and coming opera students from all over the world in Italy this summer.

Reached last week while planting flowers, Leanne said she's grateful for so much in her life, including the award of Distinguished Professor awarded to three Drake faculty members this year.

"I'm so very honored," Leanne said.

The Ellis and Nelle Levitt Distinguished Professorship recognizes "full professors who have demonstrated teaching effectiveness... professional contributions through scholarly activity... leadership, consulting activities, and contributions to the mission of the department, college and university."

Is a career in music performance possible?

"It can be," Leanne said.

While Drake University's music department draws many students from Iowa and the surrounding states, the department has students from around the world, many who learn from Leanne in Italy.

"We have a bass/baritone from England, a mezzo-soprano from California, and a soprano from Israel," Leanne said.

Iowa kids can achieve their dreams, too, Leanne said.

"There are good schools, good music programs in this state that prepare students well for college



and beyond. Students should be proud to be from Iowa," Leanne said.

There are also career paths beyond performance, including music education and music business.

"There's a lot more to music than meets the eye," Leanne said.

Another point of gratitude for Leanne is in the fabulous opportunities she has enjoyed. She has traveled to China five times, and taken Drake students there for an exchange between Drake and a university in Beijing.

"It's been so wonderful and eye opening. It's been great to work with Chinese singers and faculty. It's so competitive there! 1,000 singers compete for 20 spots in the program. So many of them have such unbelievable voices. The talent is incredible!" Leanne said.

The language barrier is real for singers from China who hope to perform western operas.

"They learn English in school, but then they have to learn German, French, Italian. It's a real challenge," Leanne said.

In Chinese schools, singers are coached on technique and methods of singing, but are not always encouraged to be creative.

"They loved the acting, making

choices, trying new things," Leanne said.

The singers who are interested in attending graduate school in the U.S. come to Drake for their senior year, and Leanne helps them apply and audition for graduate music programs around the nation.

"The Chinese students are very disciplined and work very hard. There's so many looking for the opportunity, and so few get to do this," Leanne said.





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Leanne is a daughter of Dallas Freeman, who was an English instructor at Iowa Lakes Community College.

“He and Ken Vandersloot always put on the Iowa Lakes musicals,” Leanne said.

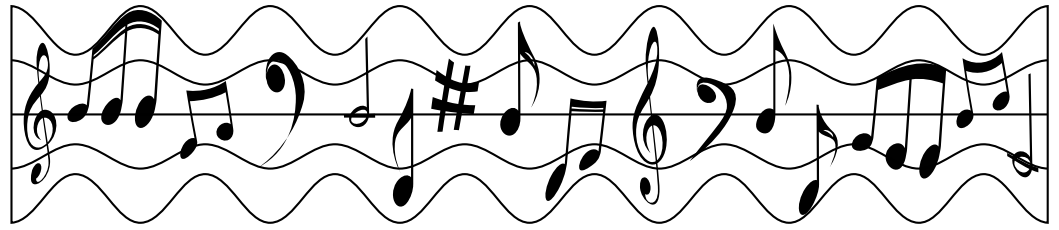
Performing in “Gypsy” at Roosevelt theater, directed by her father, with her mother also in the show was the first performance in which Leanne remembers signing on stage.

“I was always in choir. I played the flute, took piano lessons, was always making music,” Leanne said.

Paul Clague, Dorothy Green, and Don Brown were three of the teachers Leanne remembered as musical influences. “Estherville has had excellent teachers over the years. Not in a million years did I think I would be doing this,” Leanne said.

Dallas also directed Leanne in the Presbyterian church choir.

“Congregations are so forgiving and supportive. It was a great place to cut my teeth,” Leanne said.



In college, Leanne dabbled in more practical fields, but her love of music and a blind faith inspired her to follow her heart into doing what she does best.

For current students discerning whether they should fall back to a practical career or go for what they love to do, Leanne said, “Life is not a dress rehearsal. I’d encourage you to do what you love.”

Leanne is not seeing an end to teaching, singing, and inspiring.

“I have no idea when or if I will retire,” Leanne said.

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# A Music Medley



From the Many Voices Choir and Northwest Iowa Community bands, to Iowa Lakes Community College at the Estherville Lincoln Central Schools, a concert was easy to find in April in May.



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# Parting SHOT

Photo by David Swartz



Iowa DOT workers patched up Highway 9/Central Avenue at the end of April into the beginning of May

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No matter what kind of careers our students pursue, our teachers and staff members are standing by to help them achieve their dreams. Our student-centered community remains a supportive environment for every possible path.

As the end of the school year quickly approaches, we would like to thank the entire Estherville community for their support. We are fortunate to live and work in a community that believes schools thrive when a community thrives, and vice versa.

All of that is reflected in our motto of, "One School. One Heart. One Legacy" as we work **together** to ensure an **inclusive environment** in which our students can achieve great things here and around the world... making **our entire community proud**.

**One School. One Heart. One Legacy.**