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REMEMBERING HISTORY

Descendant of town's namesake
returns for a visit

FROM PAGE TO SCREEN

Estherville native's book turned
into a movie

SHOPPING SPREE TIME

Area retailers prepare for
holiday season

PLAN FOR THE HOLIDAYS

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ESTHERVILLE NEWS

DECEMBER 2022



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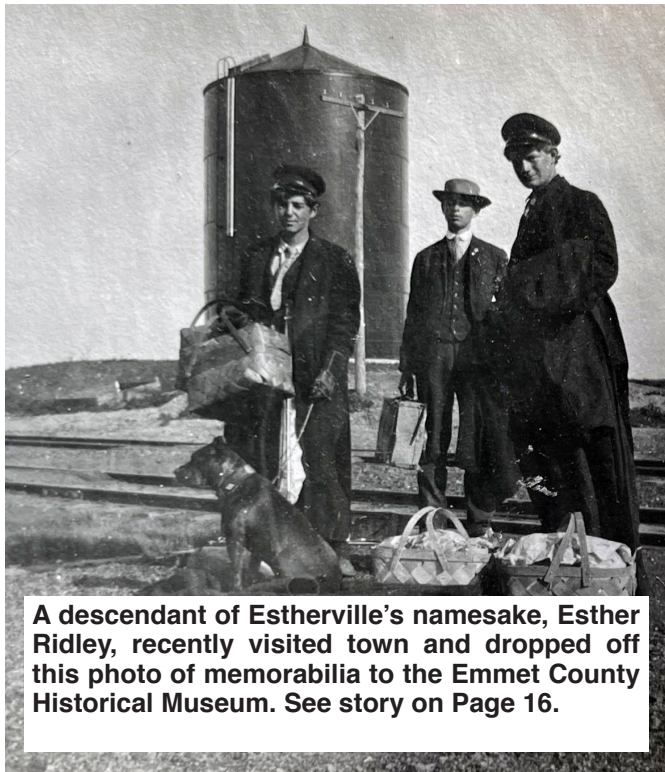
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SHOP ESTHERVILLE

Stop in at your Estherville Ace Hardware Store and get help with all your Christmas gift and decorating needs.

Cover



A descendant of Estherville's namesake, Esther Ridley, recently visited town and dropped off this photo of memorabilia to the Emmet County Historical Museum. See story on Page 16.

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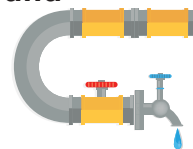
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WHEELS AND PAGES KEEP ON TURNING

Author Amy Daws found inspiration in the waiting room of a tire shop; she wrote a story about it — that story is being made into a movie coming to a screen near you

By **AMY H. PETERSON**
STAFF WRITER

Amy (Danielson) Daws, an Estherville native now living in Sioux Falls, said quitting her day job to become a full-time author was a dream come true, but then things fell a little, well, flat.

“Just when I thought

I had the world by the balls, I hit the dreaded writer’s block,” Daws said.

As an independent author, household errands fell to her and one was taking the vehicle to the tire shop. “Then one day, I took my car in for new tires at the tire shop and magically blasted out like 5,000 words in their

fabulous waiting room. It was incredible; complimentary coffee that was actually delicious, comfortable seating, free cookies, friendly staff. I had found my mother ship!” Daws said.

Never tiring of writing in the shop, Daws took her friend’s car in, and her sister’s.

“So what if the oil

change took 40 minutes and I was there for six hours? My author community was cheering me on. One even wrote a fan fiction piece about me, complete with its very own cover!” Daws said. That story is “Complimentary Coffee,” A Love Story by Kayti McGee.

As Daws got her

writing mojo back, things became wilder. Some friends sent a fake invoice to her house for excessive consumption of complimentary drinks and snacks. Then best-selling author Jana Aston had pizza delivered to Daws at the tire shop, causing eyebrows to raise as if they were on a hydraulic lift.

Then, the whole situation deflated as Daws was out of sisters, friends, and casual acquaintances who both needed an oil change or tires and would give Daws their car keys.

However, after speaking to a friendly tire shop employee, Daws received a message from the store's general manager, Gary.

"...please reach out next time you come in; I would love to meet you. Also, you are completely welcome to spend as much time in the store as you want. I heard about some crazy note written on our letterhead and I can assure you it wasn't from me."

Pothole, uh, crisis averted. Daws became the tire shop's first ever Writer-in-Residence.

The situation blew up on BuzzFeed, and a Fox television station in Arizona interviewed Daws on the air. "It was real trippy," Daws said.

Daws' agent asked her why she wasn't writing a romantic comedy about her experience. Premise: a romance author con-

Daws said the romance sub-genre of her books is somewhere between a Hallmark movie or Nicholas Sparks novel and those with more subversive content like 50 Shades of Grey. It isn't erotica, which focuses on the intimacy; in a Daws novel, the characters explore life together. There are spicy scenes, however.

suming free coffee and a hot mechanic? That's when the rubber hit the road; the story flowed out of Daws in 13 days.

Here's the blurb: "When romance writer Kate Smith suddenly suffers writer's block as she begins the latest installment of her hit international series 'Bed n Breakfast,' she'll do almost anything to regain her inspiration. Like sneaking into the Tire Depot waiting room because your words flow right there like complimentary coffee: smooth, sweet, and really hot. So she takes the ingenuity to go unnoticed until the sophisticated and charming mechanic, Miles Hudson, notices the peculiar ginger in and out of the exclusive employee entrance. But she's too intriguing to tell. Putting his idea to the test for his new book seems to be a better option."



The splash of writing and publishing the book happened in 2018.

In 2023, the story will be released as a movie. The story includes a meet-cute in the tire shop. A meet-cute is shorthand for two romantic partners meeting and getting together in an adorable way. Passionflix, a streaming service for romance movies, is turning it into a rom-com, a romantic

comedy, but with some spice.

Daws said the romance sub-genre of her books is somewhere between a Hallmark movie or Nicholas Sparks novel and those with more subversive content like 50 Shades of Grey. It isn't erotica, which focuses on the intimacy; in a Daws novel, the characters explore life together. There are spicy scenes, however.

"I don't let my grandma read my books, and I don't want her to watch the movie," Daws said.

Passionflix celebrated its fifth anniversary in September 2022.

Daws said every story in every genre has a love story in it.

"I think about those action-packed movies supposedly geared toward men, but every one

has a love story in it," Daws said.

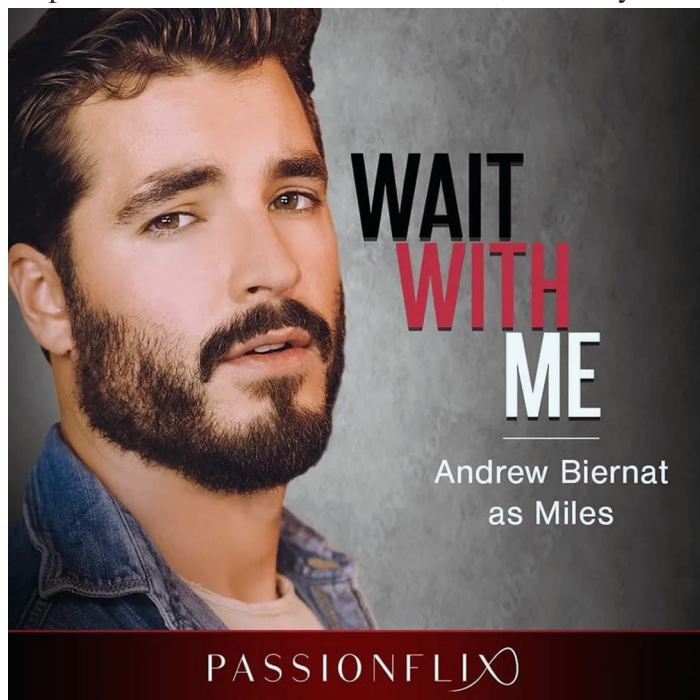
Daws spent two weeks in Atlanta last month for auditions and filming. The total process for making the film was three weeks. Daws said it is somewhat of a low-budget production, but that has more to do with filming most of the movie on the Passionflix soundstage and the efficiency of their operations.

"The romance genre is huge. Romances are the highest-selling books," Daws said.

Romance readers are passionate about the characters and stories they read, Daws said. Passionflix does its best to honor the storyline from the book.

Daws discovered this summer a whole other part of the independent romance author business she enjoys – attending conferences. Passionflix is a sponsor of PassionCon, a convention of romance writers, publishers and fans. Attendees of the event held annually in Los Angeles are called Passionistas. Among the events held in May was a pajama party for attendees to watch a few, featured Passionflix movies. The party was hosted by Passionflix founder Tosca Musk, sister to Tesla and Twitter mogul Elon Musk.

Musk told reporters in June, "Most of the time people look down at romance—there is



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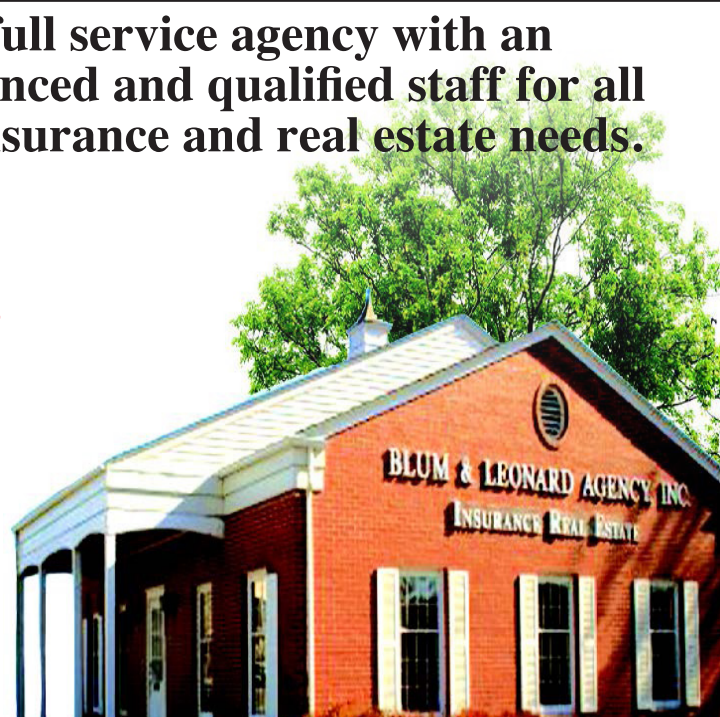
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apparently something radical in having female desire as a main theme—and they don't think romance is intellectual enough. I think that is wrong. Romance is about validating emotions. It's about removing shame from sexuality. It's about uplifting stories."

Daws said, "Romance gets a bad rap. What I love about books, and what my audience loves about books is that love story."

As she packed for Atlanta to be part of the process of her book transferring to screen, Daws said, "I look forward to watching this process unfold."

Daws said she is excited by and grateful for the

experience.

"I honestly still can't believe this is happening. Hearing real actors recite my written words in auditions was crazy-intimidating and my imposter syndrome is flaring up, but I'll mask it with humor like a professional," Daws said.

Madison Lawlor plays Kate and Andrew Biernat plays Miles in the movie. Lawlor was born in Rapid City, South Dakota and has starred in "An American Girl Story: Maryellen 1955-Extraordinary Christmas," "Holiday (2018)," "Daddy Issues," "Follow your Heart," and "Juniper." Biernat is a romance movie regular who has



also played in "Aileen Wuronos: American Boogeywoman," "Cereal Killer," "NCIS: Los Angeles," and in the soap opera, "The Bold

and the Beautiful."

Wait with Me is directed by Colleen Davie Janes with cinematography by Richard Crudo.

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Dan and Sandy Breyfogle at Brey's on Seventh are ready for the holidays.

SHOP ESTHERVILLE

Brey's brings beauty to holiday homes

Brey's on Seventh is ready for the holidays and open for Winter Nights, Holiday Lights

By AMY H. PETERSON
STAFF WRITER

Dan and Sandy Breyfogle were setting up for the holidays when the Estherville News caught up with them on a recent morning. Brey's

on Seventh carries such a variety of enjoyable and beautiful items, Sandy said, "People come in on a night like [the Winter Nights, Holiday Lights event Dec. 1] and they say, 'I had no idea you car-

ried this,' or 'I would never have guessed there was so much stuff here.'"

The Breyfogles plan their own night this month where guests can come in to sample local wines and



look around. Brey's on Seventh carries numerous items from local authors, creators, artisans and musicians.

"All of this is weather permitting, of course," Dan said.

Brey's on Seventh is located in the former radio shop that was owned and operated by Dan's father. The address is 18 N 7th Street, Estherville, Iowa.

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SHOP ESTHERVILLE

Sleep, dine and wine at Little Swan Lake Winery

By AMY H. PETERSON
STAFF WRITER

Diane Benjamin of Little Swan Lake Winery says a winery getaway is its own experience. Located just six miles west of Estherville (a mile and a half north of Superior), the winery is celebrating its 20th year in business. The addition of the bed & breakfast in 2011 means overnights, weekends and longer stays are possible. From tastings in the remodeled 1920s barn to overnight stays, gourmet cheeses and buffalo meat, Benjamin said the winery is its own experience to relax and enjoy the beauty of the lake.

Diane Benjamin said husband Scott Benjamin is working on new wines currently, which should be available in the next few years depending upon how well they age.

The event room hosts live music year-round. After the New Year's Eve party, January and February schedules include Sunday performances. Until then Saturdays and Sundays have performers booked and menus planned for an afternoon or evening of fun.

The Benjamins were once music teachers; their standards for performers coming in are high. The first weekend of November featured a jazz combo for Sunday evening. Diane said they try to bring in a variety and there are several area regular groups who cycle in and out through the year.

The bed & breakfast was built into a renovated grain elevator. Two rooms and a suite accommodate couples, singles, or a small group. A tour of the bed & breakfast rooms revealed the Swan Room, with an en suite whirlpool hot tub, the Buffalo Room, with a deep soaking tub, and the

Lake Suite, with two bedrooms, a bathroom, wet bar/kitchen area and a common room with refrigerator, microwave and dining table. There's also a common area near Swan and Buffalo with a tv, refrigerator, seating area, and books and games.

The rooms are decorated in rustic style. Benjamin said the suite has been used for girls' weekends, a getaway for two couples, or family birthday or anniversary weekends, while the rooms are reserved for couples as well. A balcony overlooks Little Swan Lake and allows guests to watch the bison walking around in the prairie.

"Guests receive a complimentary bottle of wine each evening, and we serve a three-course breakfast each morning," Benjamin said.



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ELC SPOTLIGHT



ELC FOURTH GRADERS PARTICIPATE IN BRIGHT BRIGADE PROJECT

Mrs. McKenzie Peta's fourth grade class at Demoney Elementary School is participating in the BRIGHT Brigade.

BRIGHT stands for benevolent, radiant, inclusive, genuine, helpful, and tactful. The acronym represents the culture of the group, as fourth graders are learning what these

words mean and working to be role models who exemplify these traits.

The main objective of the BRIGHT Brigade project is to spread kindness, positivity, and smiles throughout Demoney Elementary. Fourth graders are achieving this goal through morning greetings, notes of positivity, and pinning a cheerful

message using clothespins. They're also working on social skills to directly relate to social-emotional wellbeing.

Mrs. Peta and her fourth graders are the first class to participate in the project at Demoney Elementary.

"I am so excited about this new focus for my class," said Mrs. Peta.

"Introducing the power of positivity at a young age is important, as it shows students the impact of kindness. I think that emphasizing the culture we want to see before they get a little bit older will set our fourth graders up for success."

The BRIGHT Brigade students will also be in charge of the sunshine

"Introducing the power of positivity at a young age is important, as it shows students the impact of kindness."-MCKENZIE PETA

cart, which is full of small gifts to pass on to teachers throughout the school. So far, the students have decided to fill the cart with Takis, Kinder Joys, Gushers, and Zebra Cakes. After learning about the importance of listening to others, the class reached out to teaching staff and asked about their preferences via survey. The survey responses represented the desire for chocolates, nuts, chips, soft drinks, and water.

Mrs. Peta and her class want the cart to be as inclusive as possible, which is why they want to know what others would like to see in the cart.

The Demoney Elementary fourth grader BRIGHT Brigade would like to thank the ELC Foundation for the generous donation and for filling up the sunshine cart for the first time. The BRIGHT Brigade participants are hoping to form additional community partnerships with area businesses and community members who would like to contribute monetary gifts or snacks on a monthly basis for the sunshine cart. If you have an interest in partnering individual or through your organization please contact Mrs. Peta at Demoney Elementary 712-362-2181.



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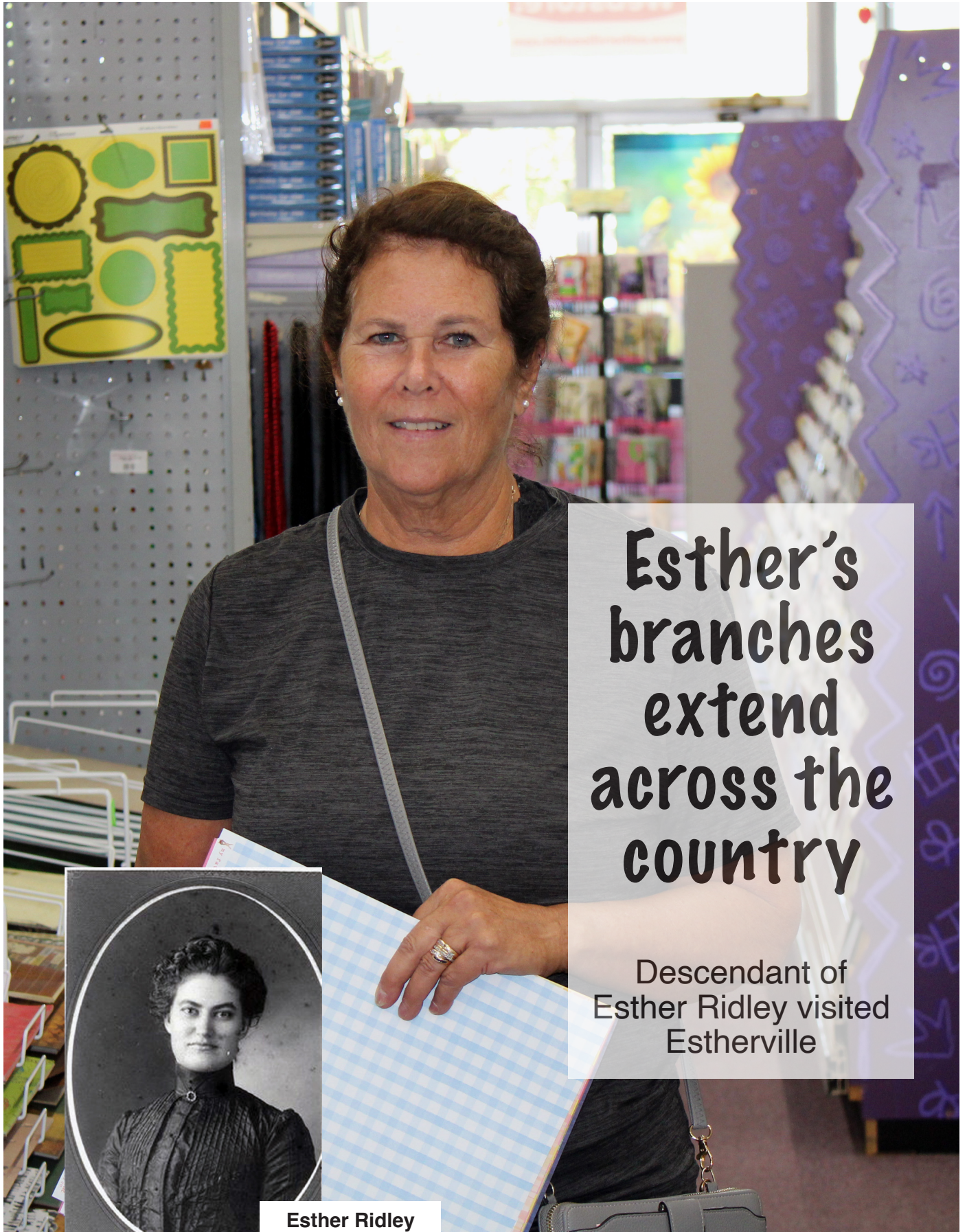
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Esther's branches extend across the country

Descendant of
Esther Ridley visited
Estherville

Esther Ridley

Memorabilia to go to Emmet County Historical Museum

By AMY H. PETERSON
STAFF WRITER

Esther Ridley was a founder of Estherville, the first woman to settle here. She braved the winds, weather and loneliness and is buried at Oak Hill Cemetery. Candy Harris of Medford, Oregon was looking through family records one day earlier this year. She said as a bonus baby of her family, all of her grandparents were already gone by the time she was born.

"I didn't really know that much about the older branches of my family," Harris said.

An old family Bible led her to find out that there was a town named after her great-grandmother, Esther. With an RV journey to Florida in the works, Harris knew a trip to Estherville was a must.

This fall, Harris saw her great-great grandmother's headstone for the very first time. Candy, her husband, and another couple traveled in two RVs from Oregon via Estherville on their way to their



destination in Florida. Candy said it was exciting to see the information about her famous ancestor, Estherville's namesake. Candy left behind numerous items of memorabilia related to Esther, including Esther's teaching certificates, postcards and photographs from Estherville and from trips to Spencer, Carroll, Sioux Falls, Huron, and to San Francisco,

California.

Harris said, "I'm grateful to see Estherville, to make the connections to my family, and for how kind everyone here was." Harris and her traveling crew camped in their RVs at Little Swan Lake Winery. The memorabilia will go to the Emmet County Historical Museum.



This Estherville Enterprise newspaper published Wednesday, April 10, 1912 features the obit of one of the town's early settlers, Almira Ridley.

SHOP ESTHERVILLE

Kadillac Collectibles carries the gift that's hard to find

Dana Moeding of Kadillac Collectibles helps gift-givers find special memories and future treasures

By **AMY H. PETERSON**
STAFF WRITER

Shoppers looking for the one perfect gift for a loved one could look at Kadillac Collectibles. Dana Moeding has spent nearly 25 years searching for what's hard to find, and stocking his downtown Estherville store with his discover-

ies from NASCAR miniatures to Hot Wheels to precision tractors to pedal toys, model cars and more. Moeding's experience allows him to use precision mathematics to land a winning bid on auction sites for a product he can sell locally at the right price.

Moeding also has gifts for the sports fans





hoping for just the right things. From signed helmets to mini-helmet replicas to framed photos to jerseys.

Moeding buys from individuals, through buy/sell/trade pages on social media, through newspaper ads and from

toy shows. Moeding moved his store from the mini-mall to the corner of 7th and Central Ave. earlier this year, and

said the move has been life-changing. Moeding is also a dealer for his son's custom milling items.

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Katie Kardell explains the process of making corn into whiskey while her mom, Micki Erickson, left, helps distribute samples.

Distilling fun and family memories

Century Farms Distillery's magic turns corn into whiskey

By **AMY H. PETERSON**
STAFF WRITER

Not long ago, Estherville native Katie Kardell brought some whiskey samples to a meeting of the Estherville Rotary. Kardell brought mixes of blackberry lemonade and something that tastes like an Old Fashioned for locals to try. Drawing on her teaching background,

Kardell gave a lesson in distilling. Kardell is marketing director of Century Farms Distillery in Spencer.

In addition to purchasing finished whiskey, local growers can be part of a process of making a unique batch of corn whiskey.

"The farmer brings in 45 bushels of corn. We do a tour of our facility. We walk through all of the different

parts and pieces, and welcome them to be part of the Century Farms family. After they leave, we record our process of turning corn into whiskey," Kardell said.

It can be a fun, family event. "Families come in and have a bottling party. When families come in they bottled and labeled and just had a good time hanging out for a while, and they can do 20 bottles or

they can do 100 bottles. A lot of times they say they're going to be there for an hour and then they stick around for two hours because they're having so much fun. We really like to get families involved in the whole process," Kardell said.

Everything happens on site and no one else touches the corn.

"We grind the corn, and it's about 20 feet from my desk so

I put headphones on to make sure I can still hear at the end of the day,” Kardell said.

The corn shoots across and is dropped into the mashing bay and is mixed.

“This is important because some people say, ‘Oh, I really like bourbon, but I don’t like whiskey. What you’re saying is you like bourbon, but maybe you don’t like rye – whiskey is this big umbrella,” Kardell said.

After the corn goes through the mashing bay, it’s assembled into a recipe that’s not unlike making banana bread, Kardell said.

“Once it has gone through the mashing and all the liquid is extracted, we have a farmer who comes and picks up all of our distillers grain. He has happy cows right here in the area because we don’t have anywhere to store any of that grain. Then it goes into fermentation,” Kardell said.

Century Farms distillery is nearly the only one in the area

that’s known to make corn into whiskey, and Kardell said the distiller is confident in this knowledge because most other distilleries make large batches.

“Every facility is running big stills that are making batches at least 10 barrels or more. Ours was designed to do just 45 bushels, which makes three barrels,” Kardell said. There are currently 27 distilleries in the state of Iowa.

The distilled liquid goes into a square tank that spins around quickly so the distiller can guarantee the corn whiskey in it is both small batch and single barrel.

“You will know exactly where it came from and exactly where it’s been. So from that fermenting bay, we move to distillation process. The process is the same scientific way they’ve been doing it forever,” Kardell said, noting the only difference is the copper pipes pull out all of

“People are finding, though, that if you like bourbon, you’ll like corn whiskey a lot, too.”

—Katie Kardell

the sulfates so the whiskey is smoother.

Workers also clean the tanks and pipes to remove sediment between runs of whiskey or vodka.

The finished corn whiskey that’s 125 proof is rapid aged in about three months over oak chips and with a carbon treatment on it. Rapid aging helped the distillery become solvent at its start because the slow aging process creates an unprofitable time of waiting.

“You have to get through those first four years before you really are putting enough product out,” Kardell said.

The 125 proof – nicknamed Moonshine – is meant to be a

cocktail mixer. Kardell said it will stand up against anything paired with it.

“People are finding, though, that if you like bourbon, you’ll like corn whiskey a lot, too,” Kardell said.

The corn comes from counties throughout the area – the samples Kardell brought to Estherville were from Cerro Gordo, Marshall, Clay, and Pocahontas counties.

Personal family corn whiskey is one gift; a private label is another. Whether for business, family, a special occasion, or anything else, Century Farms Distillery will prepare a special run and special label.

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Duane Schnell shows a dining room display.

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Jensen Stores provides big-ticket gifts with a big bow

Memorable meals and cushioned bottoms are two experiences available at Jensen Stores

Jensen Stores will celebrate 100 years in business in 2023, and Duane Schnell has been there for roughly half that time. For 45 years, Schnell said he has seen trends come and go, and the tried and true here to stay. Living rooms are still centered around the big comfy couch with today's

sofas offering durability, reclining seats, and more power.

"USB ports and power connections are integral to sectionals and sofas now, and everything operates by power," Schnell said. Jensen Stores displayed large, neutral groupings with sturdy coffee tables and fall décor. Jensen Stores

carries a full line of motion and stationary furniture from Flexsteel, La-Z-Boy Comfort Studio, and several other brands.

Dining sets are also sturdy and adaptable to casual or a family's more dressy gatherings with just a change of tablescapes. Mission style, farmhouse style,

and neutrals with fine woodwork finishes adjust to fit a large or small number of guests for Thanksgiving and more. Amish style is also available at the store in both dining room and bedroom furniture.

Jensen Stores is located at 1331 Central Ave. in Estherville. Call 712-362-2697



Upcoming Events December

EVENTS

1 – Winter Nights, Holiday Lights, Tuba Christmas, United Methodist Men pancake supper

2-3 Madrigal Dinner, Iowa Lakes Community College

4 Holiday Concert Iowa Lakes

4 Many Voices Choir

4 Peterson Point fundraising concert, Ingham Lake Bible Camp

10 Christmas at the Farm, Peterson Point Farmstead

11 Iowa Lakes Ring in the Season Holiday Concert

11 Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe – St. Patrick's

12 ELC Holiday Band Concert – First and Second grades at Demoney Elementary, Middle School and High School bands and choirs at Janice K. Lund Performing Arts Center

24 Christmas Eve

25 Merry Christmas

27 Estherville News Office closed

31 New Year's Eve Party – Little Swan Lake Winery

January

EVENTS

1 Happy New Year

19-20 Iowa Lakes Jazz Competition

26-27 Iowa Lakes Show and Jazz Choir Festival

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Did you know?

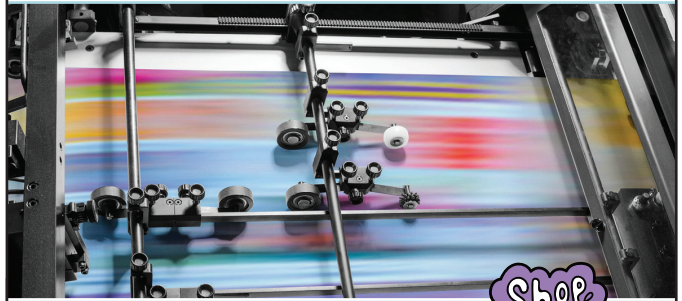
The Halfa Presbyterian Church was organized Oct. 30, 1901 and in 1902 they built a church. A minister from Eagle Grove would come up on the train in the morning, hold an early afternoon service and then in late afternoon, ride the train back to Eagle Grove.

When automobiles arrived and it became easier to travel, attendance began to drop as Armstrong and Ringsted each had a Presbyterian Church. In the 1920s and 1930s, the minister from Gruver served three churches with early morning services at Gruver and Maple Hill and at Halfa in the evening. The Halfa church closed in the late 1940s and Maple Hill was closed in the early 1950s.

Halfa had a consolidated school which was built in 1916 at a cost of \$25,000. It was a brick building with grades 1-12 and even boasted a high school basketball team.

—Emmet County Ghost Towns and Other Towns

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Parting SHOT

Photo by David Swartz



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By registering for fiber, you are only indicating that you want fiber brought to your home or business – there are no other commitments! Once fiber construction is complete, you will have the option to sign up for Internet, voice and digital TV services from Estherville Communications or stay with your current provider. Of course, we hope you'll choose us!

THE PLAN

The fiber optic process will happen in four phases:

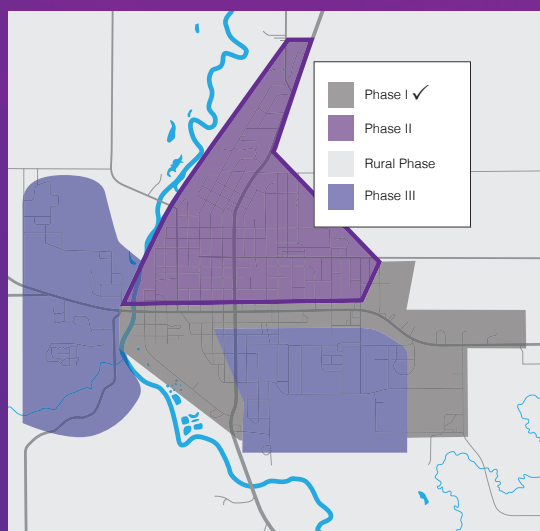


Phase I: Business Corridor – construction is complete

Phase II: North of Hwy 9 & East of Des Moines River – Spring 2023
GRUVER COMING SOON!

Rural Phase: Entire Estherville Exchange – Summer/Fall 2023

Phase III: Remainder of the Estherville Community – Fall 2023, Spring 2024



Call or visit us online to register for fiber today! **Once the ground freezes, our construction season will end for the winter** – don't miss your chance to get fiber!



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Lincoln Central**
Community School District

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IN SEPTEMBER, THE VOTED
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BALLOT FOR ESTHERVILLE
LINCOLN CENTRAL WAS
APPROVED BY OUR COMMUNITY.

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TO OUR COMMUNITY FOR YOUR
ONGOING SUPPORT OF OUR
SCHOOLS AND THE STUDENTS WE
SERVE. ON BEHALF OF OUR
STAFF, STUDENTS, AND FAMILIES,
WE WANT TO ONCE AGAIN SAY...

*Thank
You*

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