



This Hyacinth Bean plant has beautiful violet colored blossoms. It is staked on an iron Christmas tree. Linda's gardens have many found architectural features.



The award-winning castle from a Grump Days Parade is a showpiece on the farm.

Readlyn Gardeners find a floral wonderland in the country

Moellers' floral wonderland in the country is a family affair. Travis comes up with the ideas, Kevin keeps the gardens looking good by professionally mowing the lawn with "Gump" or his Yazoo — depending on the area — and the rest is up to Linda.

In 2005, the yard was a former hog lot when Linda decided it needed flowers. The inspiration came from "Sister Friend Weekend" in Hampton with her sister; it included a garden tour. During the tour, the thought came to Linda, "I could do this," and the garden idea took root. After removing fences, Linda put the rototiller to work.

Once Linda sees an interesting plant or bush, she imagines the best spot for it. It appears from the many gardens and variety of plants, this happens often. Some of Linda's plants come from relatives and friends, and then they are forever referred to as Aunt Frieda's irises or Grandma Becker's hosta.

Linda shops for the garden decorations at garage sales and flea markets and also has neighbors and friends who kindly donate items. If she sees something she likes, she buys it, and then she creates a place for it.

You may have noticed in the pictures

that many of her gardens have names. She has fun keeping to the theme. All of the pictures, except the one with the scarecrow (at right), were taken before they decorated the gardens for fall.

Interested in seeing the fall additions? Just call Linda at 319-279-3980 to arrange a visit; she enjoys showing the gardens. It truly is a trip you will not regret.

Photos continued on Pages 6-7



Fall is starting to show up at the Moellers'.



Left to right: Linda Moeller leads Readlyn Gardeners Pat Wehr, Bonnie Wittenburg and Dorris Hagenow on a tour of her amazing gardens. Chinese grass, tough like bamboo, is in the background.



Readlyn Community Club board members, shown at left (top row: Michelle and Ed Harrington); bottom row, left to right, Tiffany Matthias, Bonnie Wittenburg, Kristie Boies, Dustin Palmer and John Galyean, hosted the first of monthly bingo games on Saturday, Sept. 12. The large screen TV makes it easy to follow the games.

Below: John Galyean and Kristie Boies assist MaryLou Billhorn (left) as she selects her bingo card packets.



TRICK-OR-TREAT
in Readlyn
Sunday, Oct. 25
4-6 PM

Let's play bingo!

Readlyn Community Club has obtained a gaming license so Readlyn residents no longer have to travel out of town to enjoy bingo. Join the fun the second Saturday of each month at Bents; early bingo begins at 6 p.m., regular bingo at 6:30 p.m. As you can see in the picture, the games are high tech plus follow the Iowa Gambling Code.

Bring your dauber, or purchase one at the door along with your bingo cards. You can buy a variety of cards including single sheets or packets. The payout for each game depends on the number of players. A major jackpot is awarded each evening.

Hope to see you at Bents October 10 when the next bingo is scheduled.

READLYN COMMUNITY CLUB BINGO
Second Saturday of Every Month
BENTS SMOKEHOUSE, READLYN
EARLY BIRD - 6:00 PM
REGULAR PLAY - 6:30 PM
Must be 18+ to enter
Cash Prizes
Cash Bar and Full Menu
COME GET YOUR GRUMP ON!

Fall Leaf Burning
October 1st - November 15th
No burning anything other than leaves
No burning if a burn ban is in effect
Don't burn on streets or sidewalks
Be considerate of your neighbors
Don't burn wet leaves
Keep a water hose or water close by
Readlyn

Grump's Grumblings

By Ed Traeger, 2026 Grump



For this Old Grump, September is a marking of time when Hawkeye friends and foes gather together in the EDZONE Tailgate to rekindle football season comradery. However, this year we have recognized how fragile and precious life can be.

As Grump, I want to extend our community's condolences to the Derek Phillips Iowa Hawkeye Marching Band family. I especially want to include his roots, which extend to our community in Readlyn.

I remember watching Derek's mother, Sarah Wehling Phillips, grow up in our community and her success at Wapsie Valley. I am sure Derek had many fond memories of visiting his grandparents',

Jim and Doris Wehling's, farm. The worldwide tributes to Derek have been amazing.

Last week, there was a gathering of past Grumps at Bents Event Center for a meal provided by Larry and Vicki Pavelec. The event was in recognition of the "Ed Traeger" name plate that was hung on the "Grump Wall of Fame" with the other 36 previously named Grumps. That was a proud moment for this year's 2026 Readlyn Grump. Thank you.

QUOTE of the Month

"You never know how strong you are, until being strong, is the only choice you have." - Bob Marley

Miss Readlyn Comments

By Ava Meyer



Hello, Readlyn!

Fall is finally here, and new beginnings are underway! XC is officially in full swing, with meets each week. I love my team! This is definitely a rebuilding year for XC, but our new coach, Jacob Gibbs, does a phenomenal job making running fun and exciting. It is my favorite time of year to run because of the colder weather and the beautiful trees changing. Thank you to all kids that run around Readlyn after school to give me some entertainment during my workouts!

If XC isn't enough, I also attend dance three days a week and it has also been so fun this year! I love meeting new people from other communities and getting to know people I don't see in school every day.

Homecoming was so fun this year! My favorite thing about Wapsie is how inclusive our high school is with the elementary students. Every year, we host a parade at the high school during school hours where the elementary students are able to see every single high school student in the parade. The floats are divided into law enforcement, local fire departments and EMTs, Homecoming Court, fall sports, clubs, and then grades, so the younger kids can see all students in the junior/senior high school has to offer! After, we have a school-wide pep rally where there are tons of activities to watch or even some lucky students get to participate in. Being able to see our whole school district come together in one gym is such a cool experience! I hope the little kids remember it as a highlight of their childhood. Congrat-

ulations to the football boys on their big win against North Cedar for the homecoming game! With the new field, fans, and school spirit, I am so happy I get to be a part of these homecoming traditions. Also congratulations to the volleyball team for beating Jesup at their homecoming game! If you haven't made it out to support our student athletes this year, you should highly consider!

This is my third year as a preschool and kindergarten Sunday School teacher at St. Matthew's Church. The kids are so ambitious to learn and always lighten my Sunday morning. Fall means our famous fall dinner is coming your way! The St. Matthew's fall dinner is November 1, so come with an appetite! Whether you dine in or take yours to go, it's a meal you won't want to miss. I've helped every year since I can remember. You'll probably find me outside in the garage serving up to-go orders.

My calendar may be full, but I always make sure to spend time with family and friends when I can. Fall is my favorite time of year and I look forward to our yearly trip to Shihata's Orchard in Prairie du Chien with my family or boating on those crisp fall afternoons looking at all the colorful leaves. Speaking of pumpkins, if you're looking for amazing pumpkins locally grown you can find them soon at Robinson's house on Highway 3 or Hammond's house that is north on Reed Ave. They have such a wide variety you'll be sure to find that perfect pumpkin!

I hope you all have a great day and Go Warriors!

Pepper is back next Saturday!

Saturday, October 3 will be our first pepper tournament of the fall. It will be held at the Readlyn Public Library (use rear entrance) at 1:00 p.m. Entry fee is \$3.00. Bring a partner!

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Wapsie Valley Fall Sporting Events

Cross Country		October 26 1A Regional Semifinals Site TBD 7 pm
October 6 @ Dike New Hartford	4:15 pm	October 28 1A Regional Finals Site TBD 7 pm
October 8 @ New Hampton	4:15 pm	November 3-5 State Volleyball Coralville, Iowa TBD
October 15 Conference @Grundy Center 3 pm		
October 22 District Qualifying Meet TBD..	5 pm	
October 30 State Meet @ Fort Dodge	TBD	
JV/Varsity Volleyball		
October 3 Western Dubuque Tournament @ Epworth	9 am	
October 6 Varsity NICL Tournament Night 1 @ Dike	5 pm	
October 8 Varsity NICL Tournament Night 2 @ Dike	5 pm	
October 10 Hampton Dumont Tournament @ Hampton	9 am	
October 13 Grundy Center @ Home	5:30 pm JV	
October 15 Dike Janesville Sumner-Fred WV @ Dike	7 pm Varsity	
October 17 JV NICL Tournament @ Columbus Catholic	5 pm	
October 19 1A Regional 1st Round Site TBD	9 am	
October 21 1A Regionals Quarterfinals Site TBD	7 pm	
		October 1 JH Football @ Home 4:15 pm
		October 1 JH Volleyball @ Fredericksburg 4:15 pm
		October 6 JH Cross Country @ Dike 4:30 pm
		October 8 JH Volleyball @ Home 4:15 pm
		October 8 JH Football @ Fredericksburg 4:15 pm
		October 13 JH Volleyball @ Denver 4:15 pm
		October 15 JH Cross Country @ Grundy Center 3 pm
		October 15 JH Football @ Home 4:15 pm

Deadline for the Oct. 28 Chronicle is Thurs., Oct. 15 at 5 p.m.

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Check out Grump Wall of Fame

On Tuesday, September 8, Ed Traeger, the 37th Grump, pointed at his name added to the Grump Wall of Fame at Bents Smokehouse and Pub. The sign was provided by Tips Design Company. Sitting at the Grump table from left to right are 2016 Charlie Albright, 2018 Larry Ladage, 2021 Marlys Deterding, 2006 Roger Deterding. In the back row, left to right, are 2022 Larry Pavelec, 2026 Ed Traeger, 2017 Louie Hartman and 2023 Ron Hartman. The Grumps then enjoyed a nice meal and conversation at Bents Smokehouse and Pub. Readlyn Grumps not in the photo are 1999 Lavern Brase, 2009 Ron Leistikow, 2013 GaryLee Thurm, 2021 Larry Sauerbrei, 2023 Bonnie Wittenburg, and 2024 Mary Lou Ungs. Stop by Bents and see how many past Readlyn Grumps that you know. Photo by Kathy Traeger



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OCT. 13 AND 27
5-7 P.M. IN THE
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RSB
GRÜMPTOBERFEST

Readlyn Savings Bank

Invites YOU to our

20TH ANNUAL GRÜMPTOBERFEST

-  **OCTOBER 22ND, 2026**
4:30-8:30 P.M.
-  **Bent's Smokehouse & Pub**
-  **Free Meal (Take out Welcome)**
-  **Live Music, Raffle, & Prizes**
-  **Costume Contest 6:30 P.M.**
(All ages Welcome)

In Observance of
Columbus Day;
The Readlyn Savings
Bank will not be open on
Monday, October 12th,
2026!











Readlyn Community Library

WE PUT THE READ IN READLYN



Beth Kingdon, Director

Phone and Fax: 319-279-3432 Email: readlynlib@gmail.com Website: www.readlyn.lib.ia.us Text: 319-253-6802

Memorial Donations

In memory of Don Billhorn

Kevin and Cathy Kuhrt
Jim and Mary Jo Rathe
Ed and Sue Schumacher
The Billhorn Family

Book Donations

In Memory of Don Billhorn

*There's a Superhero in
Your Book* by Tom Fletcher
given by Marty and Kristi Marticoff

INTERESTED IN BOOK CLUB?

Our book club season got underway in September but we're always welcoming new members! If you're interested, contact the library and we'll add you to the mailing list for more information on upcoming meetings and titles. Not sure you can come each month or get all of the books read? That's ok! Come when you can and read what you can-- we're a laid back and 'no pressure' group. We read a wide variety of titles and typically meet the last Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm.



Pumpkin Exploration!

Youth program
Wed, Oct. 7
3:30 pm
Please join us!



HOURS

Mon - 10am - 7pm
Tue - 10am - 5pm
Wed - 10am - 5pm
Thurs - 10am - 7pm
Fri - 10am-5pm
Sat - 9am - 12pm
Sun - Closed

THE BREMER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT HAS DISCONTINUED THE FOOT CLINICS. PLEASE CONTACT THEM FOR ALTERNATIVE PROVIDERS IF YOU NEED THIS CARE.

THE MOST POPULAR BOOKS AT THE LIBRARY THIS SEASON

Whistler - Ann Patchett (F)
Getting Away with Murder - Shari Lapena (F)
The Divorce - Freida McFadden (F)
A Dark Path: Kate Burkholder Short Stories - Linda Castillo (F)
The Calamity Club - Kathryn Stockett (F)
Pine Creek Courtship - Amity Hope (LP F)
Rocket Puppies - William Joyce (E)
Meet Me in Paris - Kristin Harmel (F)
The House with Nobody In It - Jon Klaasen (BB)
Coffee Shop at Home - Katerina Diaz (NF)
Yesteryear - Caro Claire Burke (F)

The library has an opening for a Trustee. If you're interested in serving on the library board and live within the city limits of Readlyn, contact the library for more information! The Board of Trustees typically meets one evening each month.



Readlyn Class of 1958 — On September 10, ten members of the Class of 1958 of Readlyn High School, five spouses, and guest met for lunch at Bents in Readlyn. Eight classmates did not attend and 13 are no longer with us. It is planned to have the next reunion in 2027 with Ron Leistikow and Ron Schweer on the committee. Pictured are, front row, left to right: Carol (Hadley) Klemp, Shirley (Oltrogge) Warnke, Lois (Lau) Meyer, Alice (Salsbury) Sanderson; back row: Ron Schweer, Delbert Oltrogge, Judy (Kuethe) Henn, Carol (Lobeck) Strottmann, Gloria (Everding) Schildroth, Ron Leistikow.

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Senior Citizens discuss many events going on in Readlyn

August 19, 2026 at 11:30 a.m. 18 Readlyn Senior Citizens met at the Bents Event Center in Readlyn, IA for their meeting, a meal and bingo. Ron Leistikow led us in prayer and called the meeting to order.

Birthdays celebrated for the month of August were Lois Thacher, Larry Pavelec, Judy Henn, Judy Leistikow and Charlie Albrecht. We all sang "Happy Birthday" to Lois, Larry, Judy Henn, Judy Leistikow and Charlie.

An anniversary celebrated for the month of August was for Charlie and Wilda Albrecht. The couple celebrated 63 years and 2 weeks together as of our meeting date. Congratulations. We all sang "Happy Anniversary" to them.

Secretary's Report: The secretary's report was read by Lois Thacher from the notes of July 15, 2026. There was one correction on the bingo winners from last month. Instead of Vicki Pavelec winning a bingo it should have stated Tarese Schumacher.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Charlie Albrecht stated that the balance in the account after a deposit and expenses was \$184.00. Larry Ladage made a motion to approve the secretary and treasurer reports. Wilda Albrecht seconded it. Motion carried.

It was brought up that MaryLou Billhorn won the Volunteer of the Year award for Readlyn. Congratulations and well-deserved, MaryLou.

OLD BUSINESS: A Women's Gathering that was held at St. Matthew Church at 2:00 p.m. on August 16 was a huge success as over 50 women attended the gathering.

ering.

NEW BUSINESS: On Saturday, September 12, 2026 at 6:00 p.m., bingo will start up at Bents Event Center. The event is being sponsored by the Readlyn Community Club.

The Poor Farm Foundation is holding a pie/History Day on Sunday, September 13, 2026 from noon to 2 p.m. The menu includes homemade pies by the slice or you can purchase a whole one, hot dogs, chips, lemonade or coffee and ice cream. The meal deal price with ice cream will be \$8.00.

The Wapsie Valley Education Foundation's Fundraiser will be at Bents Event Center on Saturday, September 26, 2026. Instead of their traditional sit-down dinner and auction, this year's event features a dueling pianos fundraiser with live entertainment from the Twin Ticklers Dueling Pianos. Tickets can be purchased and tables reserved on the Wapsie Valley Education Foundation Facebook page.

Judy Leistikow made a motion to adjourn and Wilda Albrecht seconded it. Motion carried and meeting adjourned.

The group played bingo and the bingo winners were as follows:

Doris Hagenow, Wilda Albrecht, Luann Happel, Shirley Kuker, Marlys Deterding and MaryLou Billhorn. Congratulations to all that played and won!

The next meeting will be at Bents Event Center in Readlyn Iowa at 11:30 on September 16, 2026. We will be playing bingo. Come join the fun!

Lois Thacher, Secretary

Deadline for the Oct. 28 Readlyn Chronicle is Thursday, Oct. 15 at 5 PM

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 OCTOBER 15-DECEMBER 7**

Review or change your plan during that time!

“We do not offer every plan available in your area. Currently we represent 0-9 organizations which offer 0-52 products in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE to get information on all of your options.”

continued from Page 1



Million bells are in the John Deere insecticide container.



Jerry the Worm (no snakes allowed)
guards this swamp area.



The swamp where Paulie the Frog hangs out.



A cozy walkway leads to the gardens.



Linda likes to decorate everything, even the old pump house with a two-row planter.



Gnome Village is in a feeder trunk that Kevin made. The grandkids like to decorate it. Arborvitae in the bunk were seeded by the trees behind it.



Established after the fence was removed, the area was covered with feed sacks and mulch to kill the grass and then developed. The pergola was added for a sitting area.



The Pig Garden



There are glimmers of light throughout Linda's gardens, creating a special ambience. Evenings are gentle and peaceful.



This pear tree, formerly part of an orchard, is the oldest tree on the whole farm. The marigolds are easy to take care of.



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The cabin was purposefully designed to fit the gardens.



The decorative entry to the Moeller home



Areas (above and at right) were designed so that Travis could ride his scooter through them.



The larch tree



The Butterfly Garden



UNI Garden - purple and gold



The Ladies' Room



Grandma Lilies are featured on the low wall, with a collection of old bowling balls that once formed a pyramid in the garden.

Notice of Change in Control of a Bank Holding Company

The Mark J. Sexton 2026 Grantor Trust, Mark J. Sexton trustee and trust advisor, all of Saint Paul, Minnesota; the Andrew G. Sexton 2026 Grantor Trust, Andrew G. Sexton trustee and trust advisor, all of Cedar Falls, Iowa; and the Jennifer Sexton Walther 2026 Grantor Trust, Jennifer Sexton Walther trustee and trust advisor, all of Saint Paul, Minnesota, intend to apply to the Federal Reserve Board for permission to join the Sexton Family Control Group, a group acting in concert, and thereby control of Readlyn Bancshares, Inc., Saint Paul, Minnesota. Readlyn Bancshares, Inc. controls Nashua Bancshares, Inc., Saint Paul, Minnesota, which controls First State Bank, Nashua, Iowa; Britt Bancshares, Inc., Saint Paul, Minnesota, which controls Nashua Bancshares, Inc. and First State Bank, Britt, Iowa; and Readlyn Savings Bank, Readlyn, Iowa. The Federal Reserve considers a num-

ber of factors in deciding whether to approve the notice.

You are invited to submit comments in writing on this notice to Christopher Koopmans, Senior Vice President Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, 230 South LaSalle Street, Chicago, IL 60604. The comment period will not end before October 18, 2026 and may be somewhat longer. The Board's procedures for processing applications may be found at 12 C.F.R. Part 262.25. To obtain a copy of the Federal Reserve Board's procedures, or if you need more information about how to submit your comments on the notice, contact Suchi Saxena, Community Affairs Officer and Vice President, Community Development, at (312) 322-4357; to request a copy of the notice, contact Christopher Koopmans at (312) 322-8119. The Federal Reserve will consider your comments on the notice if they are received in writing by the Reserve Bank on or before the last day of the comment period.

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Mark Your Calendar for these Upcoming Events!

Oktoberfest at the **POOR FARM** **October 22 - 6:30 p.m.**

Enjoy an authentic German meal with entertainment by Gary Froiland playing Blue Grass. Tickets are \$20/each. Contact Ron Leistikow or Charlie Albrecht to reserve.

Fall Dinner
at Zion Lutheran Church
240 Elmer Ave - Readlyn

Menu:
Beef Brisket
Cheesy Potatoes
Homegrown Corn
Coleslaw
Pistachio Fluff
Rolls and Butter
Pies and Desserts
Coffee/Water/Milk
(these images are done in only)

Quilt Raffle! **Free Will Offering**

Sunday, October 25th
11am - 1pm
Dine in & Drive Thru

Supplement by Thirtenth Action Team

St. Matthew Lutheran Church
Readlyn, Iowa

Fall Dinner
Sunday, November 1, 2026
3:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Dine-in and Carryouts Available

Roast Beef	Sauerkraut
Turkey	Orange Fluff Salad
Mashed Potatoes & Gravy	Cranberry Salad
Stuffing	Rolls
Sweet Corn	Pies & Bars

Adults \$15
Ages 5-10 \$10
Ages 4 & under FREE

WAPSIE VALLEY FCCLA & AMERICAN RED CROSS
FALL BLOOD DRIVE
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH, 2026
1:00PM - 6:00PM
MULTIPURPOSE ROOM
WAPSIE VALLEY JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL

You're Invited!
Join us for Worship and Fellowship
The Readlyn Area Lutheran Parish would love to welcome your family to join us for Sunday worship service! Come as you are, bring the children, and discover a caring church community where every family and every child is valued. Join us to learn about God, grow in faith, and build friendships!

Sunday Worship Services:

- 8:00 a.m. at Zion Lutheran Church
- 240 Elmer Avenue in Readlyn
- 10:00 a.m. at St. Matthew Lutheran Church
- 2649 230th Street in Readlyn

Everyone is Welcome!

Wapsie Valley Jr. Sr. High School

VETERANS DAY ASSEMBLY
HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

All veterans and their families are invited to join us at the Wapsie Valley High School Gymnasium on November 11 2026 @ 12:35pm. Veterans and their families are invited to lunch beginning at 11:30am. Our Wapsie Honor Society Members will greet you at the main door.

NEWS
BREAKING NEWS
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COMMUNITY LUTHERAN SCHOOL

NEW HIRE

CAROLYN WHITE

5th-6th Homeroom
3rd-8th Science Teacher



Carolyn and her husband John farm near Plainfield. They like to say they raise cows, kids, chaos, and corn! They have five children and two granddaughters. Mrs. White has a pet pig named PigPig. She loves cats, her cattle dog Kora, and birds of all kinds. In her spare time she loves to cook Mexican food, read, and art journal.



COMMUNITY LUTHERAN SCHOOL

NEW HIRE

MAGGIE YOUNG

4 Year Old Year
Paraeducator
Daycare



Hi! I'm Maggie. I live just outside of Sumner with my partner, Kevin, and our daughter, Molly. I grew up in Iowa and attended high school in Ames before spending my early adult years living in Nevada. While there, I worked as a firefighter and Advanced EMT with Nevada Fire and EMS. I also spent a decade working in pharmaceuticals and plasma-derived therapy, experiences that taught me the importance of compassion, patience, teamwork, and caring for others. Throughout my life, I've always had a passion for helping children learn, grow, and become the very best versions of themselves. I'm excited to bring that passion into the classroom and to have the opportunity to work with our 4-year-old preschoolers. I'm looking forward to getting to know each child, supporting their individual needs, and helping make their preschool experience fun, positive, and memorable. I'm so excited for this new chapter and feel very fortunate to be a part of their early learning journey!



COMMUNITY LUTHERAN SCHOOL

NEW HIRE

BRODY BLAYLOCK

Intern



Hello!
My name is Brody Blaylock and I am from Readlyn, Iowa. I grew up here and attended Wapsie Valley High School. I then attended the University of Northern Iowa and received a Bachelor's degree in General Studies. I am currently pursuing my Director of Church Ministries-certificate at Concordia University Wisconsin! I love to be outdoors hunting, fishing, and golfing in my free time.

Community Lutheran School Welcomes New Staff and Kicks Off a Joyful New Year

Community Lutheran School is excited to begin another Christ-centered year of learning, growth, and community. The 2026-2027 school year is off to a fantastic start, filled with energy, smiling students, and classrooms ready for new adventures. CLS is blessed to welcome three new

members to our staff this year:

Carolyn White – Science Teacher & 5th-6th Grade Homeroom

Maggie Young – Four-Year-Old Pre-school Paraeducator & Daycare

Brody Blaylock – Intern

Each brings unique gifts, enthusiasm,

and a heart for serving our students. We are grateful for the talents they add to our ministry and look forward to the impact they will make throughout the year.

As we settle into routines, launch new projects, and watch students dive into learning, the halls of CLS are already buzzing

with excitement. From preschool curiosity to middle-school leadership, our school is filled with joy, purpose, and God's blessings.

Here's to a wonderful year ahead — one filled with growth, laughter, faith, and the strong sense of community that makes CLS such a special place.





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New Teachers at Wapsie Valley

Hello! I'm Amber Whitney, the new high school science teacher at Wapsie Valley Jr./Sr. High. I've been teaching science for nine years and am excited to join the Wapsie Valley community.

My husband and I have lived in the area for about 10 years. We have two children, a 5-year-old son and a 1½-year-old daughter.



Amber Whitney

My favorite courses to teach are anatomy and physiology and forensic science. Outside of the classroom, I enjoy camping and going on bike rides with my family, as well as listening to true crime podcasts, gardening, reading, and crafting.

I'm excited for the opportunity to become a part of the Wapsie Valley family, get to know my students and colleagues, and become more involved in the community.

I am Jenni Cunningham and I am so excited to join the team as a new 3rd-grade teacher at Fairbank Elementary. I look forward to meeting all of the students, families, and staff members!



Jenni Cunningham

To share a bit about my background, I graduated from Central College with a degree in Elementary Education. This will be my 12th year teaching, and I have previously taught TK, kindergarten, and 2nd grade. I am committed to creating a classroom that is student-centered, data-driven, and promotes a sense of belonging for everyone.

On a personal note, my husband and I recently moved to the area. We have four children, a daughter-in-law, a soon-to-be son-in-law, and two goldendoodles who are a huge part of our family. I am thrilled to begin this school year with you all!

My name is Maggie Thielen, and I graduated from Iowa Falls Alden High School in 2017. I got my bachelor's in Elementary Education from the University of Northern Iowa in 2022. I'm currently finishing my Master's in Special Education from Buena Vista University.



Maggie Thielen

I taught for my first 4 years down in Waterloo, and this year I am very excited to be teaching K-12 Special Education at Wapsie Valley.

Hi everyone! My name is Daniel Davis, and I'm excited to be your new vocal music director for Wapsie Valley.



Daniel Davis

I am originally from Altoona, Iowa, and attended Ankeny High School, Luther College, and Wartburg College. I'm ready to meet these fantastic, passionate students and build a close, strong community. So excited to get started! Go Warriors!

My name is Jacob Gibbs. I am from New Hartford and graduated from Dike-New Hartford High School. I'll be the new 7-12 Social Studies teacher for the 26-27 school year! I also get the pleasure of coaching boys and girls Cross Country this fall.



Jacob Gibbs

In my free time I love to watch football and basketball and will normally be found somewhere with my fiance or friends. I am so excited to become a part of this community, Go Warriors!

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NEWS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

"WAPSIE VALLEY IS A FAMILY WHO ENGAGES, INSPIRES, AND EMPOWERS LIFELONG LEARNERS"

Welcome to the 2026-27 school year! It is an honor to begin this year as Superintendent of the Wapsie Valley Community School District. I have been fortunate to build meaningful relationships with our students, staff, families, and community members. My wife, Beth, and our children, Bailey, Clare, and Ray, are proud to call Wapsie Valley home and grateful to be part of the Warrior family.

As Superintendent, I am committed to remaining visible, approachable, and engaged. By working together, communicating openly, and keeping students at the center of every decision, we will continue building upon Wapsie Valley's proud traditions while embracing growth and new opportunities.

Building for Our Future

Our students and staff will return to several exciting facility improvements throughout the district.

The new playground at Fairbank Elementary will provide students with a safe, engaging, and updated space to play, explore, and build relationships. This project was made possible through the generosity, hard work, and support of our staff, families, volunteers, donors, and community partners.

The Stadium Project represents a significant investment in our students, school, and community. The new turf field and track will provide an outstanding environment for athletics, activities,

physical education, and community events for many years to come. We are grateful to everyone whose contributions and commitment helped make this vision a reality.

At the Jr./Sr. High School, new HVAC units and related classroom improvements will provide a more comfortable and efficient learning environment. These upgrades reflect our continued commitment to maintaining facilities that are safe, welcoming, and prepared to support future generations of Warriors.

Living the Warrior Values

Our Warrior Values, grounded in the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and the Warrior Way, provide a shared foundation for students and staff. These habits encourage every Warrior to take responsibility, establish meaningful goals, listen to others, work collaboratively, and continue growing. They represent more than words on a page, they reflect how we learn, lead, serve, and support one another.

Thank you to our staff, families, students, School Board, volunteers, and community partners for everything you do for Wapsie Valley. I am excited about the opportunities ahead and confident that, by working together, we will make this an exceptional year for every student.

Be a Warrior. Make a Difference. Our best is yet to come!

Superintendent T.J. Murphy



Wapsie Valley Homecoming Candidates: Front row (left to right): Addilyn Fuller, Allie Happel, Abby Mann, Bella Farley and Taylor Schneider; back row: Bryar Bellis, Cooper Adair, Caleb Hogan, Landen Moulds and Lane Shores.

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Amy (51 years old)

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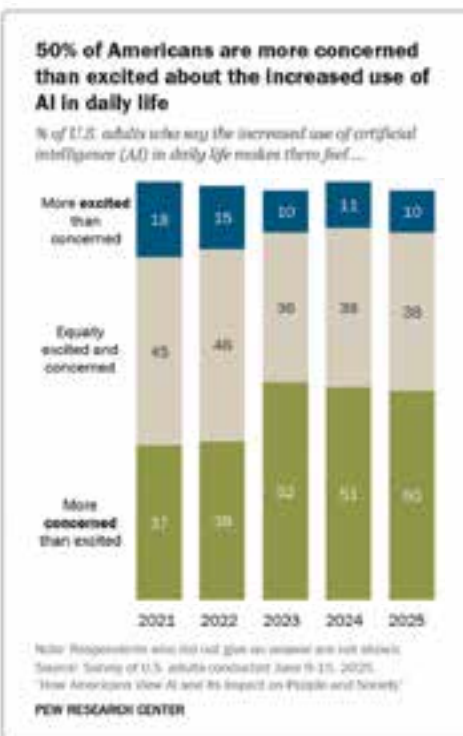
Artificial Intelligence & Consumer Sentiment:

I recently, accidentally, stumbled over a very interesting social experiment involving consumer sentiment towards the use of AI. When I began writing these articles, I simply used my professional headshot alongside my article content. Soon, I began adding themes that were very obviously edited / AI Generated such as dressing my headshot photo to look like a football player, or a weightlifter, or a chef... (if you want to look for yourself, all of my articles are archived on my website: PrimeFinancialCedarRapids.com)

More recently, the photos I used were less cartoonish and more “real-life”, although they were still AI generated. When I went from cartoonish / silly to more life-like, I started to get a lot of questions about whether I write my own content or whether I use AI to write my articles.

Short answer: I always write my own articles.

Long answer: I have used AI to polish up some thoughts but I have never felt the tone of AI really sounds like me. So I decided early on it was easier to spit from my brain and be genuine than it was to be polished but fake... I only implement AI for my headshot alterations to make silly poses and themes, which is actually very fun! The kids even help me make some of my final decisions sometimes!



What I learned: Nobody questioned the use of AI when it was blatantly obvious that the photo was silly or meant to look altered. (i.e. my robot headshot above). Only when pictures began to look like they were replacing the “real Ashlea” did people speak up and give me a hard time about falling into the lazy trap of AI-generated content... And actually, I agree 100%... so much of what is AI generated is lazy, wrong, or just plain slop. If you’ve played around with AI tools at all, you realize very quickly it absolutely has benefits, but it is nowhere near having the common sense of a human being.

This realization made me pause on how this sentiment towards AI has had such drastic impacts on the stock market. Many large companies that make up our most trusted market indices are hinged on the success of the future of AI and it is hard to tell if we are in the beginning, middle, or end stages of the “AI future”. Just a few years ago, we were only beginning to understand the concept of AI when ChatGPT was launched in 2022. Since then, there are many tools like Claude, Gemini, and Grok, that give anyone with an internet connection the ability to create their own summations of its use.

On a larger scale, corporations are exploring its use to enhance efficiencies and expedite production and profit. With the demand comes the need for energy, and with the need for energy comes a lot of infrastructure, and whenever there is a need for infrastructure, there is pushback on where that is going to go and who it is going to impact.

And that brings us to today.

There are data centers popping up in every corner of the world, public earnings reports coming out showing that AI use can absolutely have positive profit impacts, and two sides to every coin for those

who approve or disapprove of the concept of change. In the fall of 2025, an article published by PEWresearch.org found that 50% of Americans are more concerned than they are excited about the use of AI and its potential impact. This concern percentage was up from 2021, when concern was only marked at 37%.

So, as I write this, I believe the future and potential of AI is bright, but I tend to agree with this: It’s only bright in the right time and place and with the right forms of infrastructure and energy sources to support it. From the day the first wheel was carved from stone back in our cave-man era, there have been constant improvements to the tools we use to optimize humankind’s experiences. It will be interesting to see how the demand and concern for AI continue to dance with each other. Consumer sentiment has the power to move markets, so you better believe we will have our very close eyes on it all.

In the meantime, I believe the general public still craves authenticity and genuine effort. Human ingenuity and human connection are still where all the best ideas and concepts are found. Human connection is where I thrive as a financial advisor (and writer of past, present, and future articles). That’s a promise!

Ashlea (Kleitsch) Jones

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The Poor Farm is one of the locations in the Bremer County Passport to the Past program. Ron Leistikow (at right) was delighted to show these visitors around the rural location. Mary Gunther, left, and Jo Daniels were given a tour of the Poor Farm and added a stamp to their Bremer County Passport. There are three Readlyn locations included in the Passport program: the library, the museum and the Freedom Rock. The program concludes the end of October.



The Quigley family has been running a Kid Tractor Pedal Pulling business for more than two decades. At this year's state pull event, I had the privilege of witnessing an impressive performance by a young participant from Readlyn. Tayla Powell, who qualified at the Bremer County Fair, was a first-time contender at the state level. Tayla stood out as she pedaled down the track with remarkable determination, achieving a full pull on her initial run. While Tayla didn't replicate her success on her next attempt, her enthusiastic participation was truly praiseworthy. It was heartening to see a local Readlyn family actively involved in the event, contributing to the community spirit of the occasion.
Submitted by Marge Quigley

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Readlyn City Council - Sept. 14, 2026

The Readlyn Finance Board met in open session at 5:45 PM on Monday, September 14, 2026, to review bills. Keith Brunscheon and Rocco Imbrogno were present. Joseph Jones was absent.

The Readlyn City Council met in open session at 6:00 PM on Monday, September 14, 2026, for the regular meeting. Meeting was called to order by Mayor Wedemeier. The following council members were present: Nicole Barnes, Keith Brunscheon, Jason Franck and Rocco Imbrogno. Absent: Joseph Jones. Others in attendance included: Barney Wiersma, Austin Matthias, Steve Aiello and Kris McGrane.

Motion by Brunscheon and seconded by Barnes to approve consent agenda items, which included the regular council meeting minutes from 8/10/2026, the claims list from 8/11/2026 to 9/14/2026, the August 2026 reports (Budget, Treasurer's and Financial) and the Fiscal Year 2026 Outstanding Obligations Report. All said aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Barnes and seconded by Brunscheon to approve the agenda. All said aye. Motion carried.

Mayor advised that city employees and he have had multiple meetings with electric companies to work on quicker response times and electrical needs. We have been working with RTC Communications on additional funding for the Readlyn Emergency Services Building. Streets were painted and he has reached out to the county on some road repairs. There is a Readlyn Economic Development group and he has been working on getting the group active again.

Motion by Imbrogno and seconded by Barnes to approve receiving reports from the mayor, city clerk, police, public works, parks, and the library. All said aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Barnes and seconded by Brunscheon to approve the third and final reading of Ordinance 367, an Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances of the city of Readlyn, Iowa, by amending provisions to collection fees of water and increasing the minimum rate from \$13.50 to \$20.00 per month and from \$3.50 per additional 1,000 gallons to \$7.50 per additional 1,000 gallons as well as implementing a 3% annual increase on both rates each year for the next 5 years. Roll call, all ayes, motion carried.

Motion by Barnes and seconded by Imbrogno to approve the 2026 storm water project as presented (near Elmer Avenue, 5th Street Place and 5th Street)

at a quoted price of \$30,750.00 by Denver Underground. Roll call, all said aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Brunscheon and seconded by Imbrogno to approve Resolution 2026-17, approving the electric vendor agreement between the city of Readlyn and Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation to administer the Fiscal Year 2027 Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. Roll call, all ayes, motion carried.

Motion by Barnes and seconded by Franck to approve the Request for Qualifications for Construction Manager at Risk and authorize to solicit Statements of Qualifications for the Emergency Services Building project, due by 10AM on October 20, 2026. Roll call, all said aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Brunscheon and seconded by Franck to approve authorizing the mayor and/or city clerk to sign the listed and necessary USDA forms and agreements, as presented, to take steps in applying for a Revolving Loan Fund with RTC Communications for the Emergency Services Building. Roll call, all said aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Barnes and seconded by Imbrogno to approve accepting the \$60,000 of grant funds from the Black Hawk County Gaming Association for the new Emergency Services Building. Roll call, all said aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Franck and seconded by Barnes to approve city clerk attending the TIF Administration Workshop. All said aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Franck and seconded by Barnes to approve setting a date of Sunday, October 25, 2026, from 4pm to 6pm, for citywide trick or treating. All said aye. Motion carried.

Motion by Franck and seconded by Imbrogno to approve fall leaf burning in city limits from October 1, 2026, to November 15, 2026. All said aye. Motion carried.

Mayor advised we are still waiting for additional information before discussing and taking action on soliciting sealed bids for the sale of the city of Readlyn dump truck. No action was taken.

Motion by Franck and seconded by Imbrogno to adjourn. All said aye. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:14PM.

Dan Wedemeier, Mayor

ATTEST: Kris McGrane, City Clerk

Wapsie Valley School Board - Aug. 17, 2026

Wapsie Valley CSD Regular School Board Meeting August 17, 2026

Pledge of Allegiance

1. President Aiello called the Regular Meeting of the board to order at 6:00 PM

A. Directors: Aiello, Auel, Broten Jr., Jr. & Kaufman. Wolfe (excused). Declared a quorum

B. Administration-Supt. Murphy, Principals Youngblut, Myers, Forsyth, SBO Arndt, Board Secretary Sullivan

C. Others Present: Ryan Cunningham, David Dobson, Tina Kaufman, Jenni Gross, Hailey Broten Jr., and virtual participants

2. Communications & Consideration of Additional Items for the Agenda-amending Agenda adding I. Approval of Rural Associate

3. Moved by Auel, Seconded by Kaufman to approve the amended agenda adding New Business letter I-Approval of Rural Associate as presented. Motion carried 4-0

4. Future Frontiers-Ryan Cunningham, Summer-Fred Superintendent, presented information on their Charter School. They would like WV to partner with them. 60% of the program is work-based learning and 40% online. This is open to students in 9th-12th grade that have already gone to online schooling. WV would receive \$1,000 per student that chose to participate.

5. Martin Gardner Architecture HVAC Proposal-David Dobson and Josh from KCL Engineering (virtual) presented HVAC services to support the installation of 9 RTU units, 2 of which are already designed. He will supply Murphy with an estimated project completion amount that will be shared with the board.

6. Public Forum-None

7. Moved by Kaufman, Seconded by Broten Jr., to approve the FY27-FY28 Tentative Agreement as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

8. Consent Items-Kaufman inquired about the financials of the Senior Moms account. Moved by Auel, Seconded by Kaufman to approve the consent items including the bills being reviewed by Angie Auel and the open enrollments as follows-Chastity Jensen requests to open enroll her kindergarten son to WV from Oelwein effective the 26-27 school year, Alaina Damm requests to open enroll her 12th grade daughter to Oelwein Online effective the 26-27 school year as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

9. Board -The Board wishes to thank Kim Arndt for her years of service as the SBO. Broten Jr., spoke about board invitation to the ribbon cutting ceremony on September 4th, prior to the first home football game in the new facility.

Superintendent Murphy's report includes Legislative Updates on student behavior/classroom removal, Facilities & Grounds Updates, Summer cleaning, Class Composite Wall Display Option, and District Updates.

District & PK Principals-Learning opportunities by district BLT, Welcome of new staff and staff changing positions, Back to School Night, and Media Night.

10. Personnel-Resignations-Moved by Auel, Seconded by Kaufman to approve the resignation of Kate Nitz and Jenni Gross as Co-Prom Sponsors and thank them for their service to the students as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

Contracts-Moved by Broten Jr., Seconded by Kaufman to approve the contracts as presented: Danny Adams-\$1,154.50-Co-Student Council-Base 1/Year 1 & \$2,277.00-JH Cross Country-Base 2/Year 7; Zane Sittig-\$1,154.50-Co-Student Council-Base 1/

Year 4 & \$1,658.00-3 Strength & Conditioning-Base 1/Year 2 & \$3,487.00-Assistant Football-Base 3/Year 14; Jennifer Merdinger-\$856.00-JH Student Council-Base 2/Year 6; Daniel Davis-\$3,375.00-7-12 Vocal Sponsor-Base 1/Year 0 & \$1,776.00-Musical Director-Base 1/Year 0; Kim Weepie-\$1,776.00-Musical Director-Base 1/Year 4 & \$3,552.00-Speech-Base 1/Year 3; Jaylyn Gibbs-\$3,624.00-HS Marching Band-Base 1/Year 1; Jeni Nuss-\$1,421.00-Yearbook-Base 1/Year 1; Katelyn Cusick-\$888.00-Silver Chord-Base 1/Year 2 & \$2,416.00-Assistant Cross Country-Base 1/Year 1; Katelyn Nitz-\$1,033.00-National Honor Society-Base 2/Year 6; Marlene Franzen-\$3,553.00-Robotics-Base 1/Year 0; Jenni Gross-\$1,776.00-Football Cheer Coach-Base 1/Year 2; Duane Foster-\$1,706.33-3 Strength & Conditioning-Base 2/Year 6 & \$5,119.00-Head Football-Base 2/Year 6; Gunner Rodgers-\$1,658.00-3 Strength & Conditioning-Base 1/Year 2 & \$2,309.00-JH Football-Base 1/Year 2; Jacob Gibbs-\$3,553.00-Head Cross Country-Base 1/Year 0; JD Stover-\$3,197.00-Assistant Football-Base 1/Year 2; Cody Jones-\$3,632.00-Assistant Football-Base 4/Year 17; Brady Weepie-\$3,197.00 Assistant Football-Base 1/Year 1; Dan Nuss-\$2,309.00-JH Football-Base 1/Year 0; Austin Shepherd-\$3,698.00-Head Volleyball-Base 2/Year 6; Peyton Parker \$2,416.00-Assistant Volleyball-Base 1/Year 3; Heather Robinson-\$2,567.00-JH Volleyball-Base 4/Year 17; Liz Bergman-\$2,277.00-JH Volleyball-Base 2/Year 8. Motion carried 4-0.

11. New Business-Moved by Kaufman, Seconded by Auel to table the Emergency Operations Manual for 26-27 as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

Moved by Auel, Seconded by Kaufman to approve the 26-27 School Calendar end of year date change as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

Moved by Kaufman, Seconded by Broten Jr., to approve the purchase of a wall mounted display for class composites as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

Moved by Kaufman, Seconded by Auel to approve the Oelwein Online Agreement for 26-27 as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

Moved by Kaufman, Seconded by Broten Jr., to approve AH Photography for the Activities Photography Agreement as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

Moved by Auel, Seconded by Kaufman to approve NICC Concurrent Enrollment Contract for 26-27 as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

Moved by Kaufman, Seconded by Auel to approve the WV TAG Handbook as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

Moved by Auel, Seconded by Kaufman to approve the Football/Track Project Subcommittee to accept the shed quote from Framing Iowa Quote (\$62,250.00) as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

Moved by Broten Jr., Seconded by Auel to approve the hiring of a Rural Associate for the 26-27 school year as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

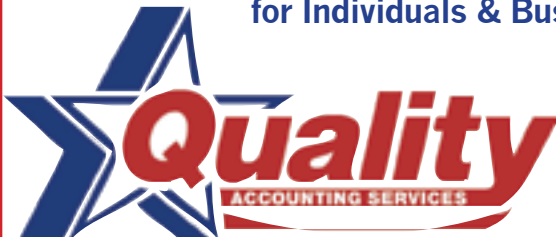
12. Board Talking Points-The trees on the Fairbank Elementary site need to be cut into smaller pieces to be picked up by the city. The rock will be moved to location with landscaping and foundation support. Surfacing will start on Wednesday on the new track. It will need to be off limits to allow it to fully seal. Seating in the end zone will be addressed to also allow time for the track to cure.

13. Moved by Kaufman, Seconded by Auel to adjourn at 8:06 PM. Motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully, Tara Sullivan

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