

The Paper

Our Town, Our Paper!



Laurens, Iowa



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January 3,
2024

Local News

Cy Visits L-M!

L-M students had an extra special visitor at school recently! Our Chargers got to meet Cy and take pictures with the mascot. Thank you to extension office for this wonderful opportunity!





At the Library
with Glenda Mulder
January 3, 2024

Happy New Year! Hope you had wonderful Holidays and had plenty to eat, drink and read! Library staff has had lots of fun. We've kind of been alternating who gets to take time off. I've had mine, it was great, but I am happy to be back to a regular schedule!

We are thinking about starting an informal game day/night at the Library during these long winter months. Possibly a come and go, bring your own, or play with ours, sort of thing. Please stop in and let us know if you are interested, and what your ideas are!

We have an informal group of creators that have been meeting weekly at the Library, and they would like to invite you to join them. So far they are knitting and crocheting, but any sort of handwork would fit right in. Stop by on Mondays to see what's going on. They meet at 11:30 a.m., except for the 4th Monday when they meet at 1:30 p.m.

New novels this week include; *Waters* by Bonnie Campbell, *Night Island* by Jayne Ann Krentz, *The Lost Van Gogh* by Jonathan Santlofer and *Upside Down* by Danielle Steel.

For our 201st Book Club Choice, we will be reading *Plainsong* by Kent Haruf. This book was also the selection for our very first Book Club, which met January 29, 2007. This novel is about life and changes in a small Colorado town. I remember enjoying it when we first read it, so am looking forward to reading it again!

Dates to Remember

January 4 & 18 @ 5:30 p.m. - Evening Tot Time

January 22 @ 7 p.m. - Book Club *Plainsong* by Kent Haruf

January 23 @ 6:30 p.m. - Cards with Brenda

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112 Walnut St.
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Phone:
(712) 841-2684

Fax:
(712) 841-4662

Website:
www.thepapernow.com

E-mail:
publisher@mylaurens.com

Publisher:
Rodney Johnson

Editor:
Amanda Tendal

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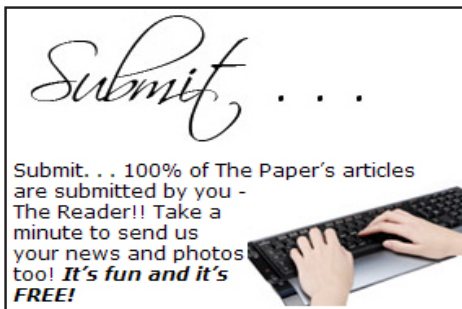
4-H Day at the Rialto

All 4-H and Clover Kids members in Pocahontas County are invited to attend the Sunday, January 7, 2:00 p.m. matinee at the Rialto in Pocahontas. 4-H and Clover Kids will receive free admission and snack trays due to the generous support of the Pocahontas County 4-H Endowment. All other family members are welcome to attend with your child, but non-4-H members will be responsible for their own admission fee.

The Giving Tree

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Giving Tree at the Festival of Trees. There were 56 items taken to the Laurens-Marathon School this past week. The kids will keep warm with sweatpants, hats and gloves.

Thank you!
The Festival of Trees Committee



Our Town Our Paper!

I-29 Moo University to Present "Inflation: How It Effects Your Bottom Line?" Webinar on January 24

The I-29 Moo University 2024 Dairy Webinar Series continues Wednesday, Jan. 24 from 12 noon to 1 p.m. CDT. The webinar will feature a discussion on how inflation effects your dairy's bottom line with Dr. Chad Hart.

Dr. Chad Hart is an Ag Economics professor at Iowa State University. He served as the U.S. Policy and Insurance Analyst with the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI) and a Scientist with CARD. For FAPRI, He was responsible for directing econometric and modeling efforts for the crop insurance component of the FAPRI modeling system. For CARD, he served in multiple roles, concluding as the head of the Bio renewables Policy Division and examined the interactions between the agricultural and energy sectors. He will discuss how inflation effects the commodity market, the value of the dollar in world trade, world and domestic consumption plus the cost of ag inputs.

There is no fee to participate in the webinar; however, registration is required at least one hour before the webinar. Register online at: <https://go.iastate.edu/INFLATION24>.

For more information, contact: in Iowa, Fred M. Hall, 712-737-4230; in Minnesota, Jim Salfer, 320-203-6093; or in South Dakota, Patricia Villamediana, 605-688-4116.

For Sale:

Spacious 2 bedroom unit, on one level, at Homestead Cooperative of Laurens. New flooring throughout done in 2019. Appliances are included and maintained by Homestead. 936 sq feet with big walk-in closet and lot of storage! Includes garage space. If interested please contact Homestead @ 712-841-2443.

This Week at Bethany Lutheran

Pastor David E. Klappenbach

Wednesday: January 3, 2024
4:00 PM ~ W/M Mtg.

Saturday: January 6, 2024
8:00 AM ~ Men's Group

Sunday: January 7, 2024
Baptism of Our Lord
9:15 AM ~ Adult SS
9:30 AM ~ Youth SS & Coffee
Fellowship
10:30 AM ~ Worship w/Communion
4:00 PM ~ Laurens Care Center
Service
5:00 PM ~ Youth Board Mtg. at FCC
5:00-6:30 PM ~ Youth Group at FCC

Monday: January 8, 2024
7:00 PM ~ Hand Bell Rehearsal

Tuesday: January 9, 2024
8:30 AM ~ Prayer Group
9:30 AM ~ Tuesday coffee at Bethany

Wednesday: January 10, 2024
7:00 PM ~ Council Mtg.

***Worship, Love,
Accept~ Together in
Christ's Name***



This Week at Laurens United Methodist Church

Pastor Deb Parkison

January 2nd and January 3rd:
Festival of Trees tear down from noon
to 6 p.m.

January 6th:
United Methodist Men meet @ 8 a.m.
at the United Methodist Church.

January 7th:
Sunday School resumes @ 9:15
Fellowship Coffee @ 9:30 a.m.
Worship service @ 10:30 a.m.
Youth Group from 5-7 p.m. here at
Laurens UMC



This Week at First Christian

Pastor Rev. Rita Cordell

Sunday, January 7
9:30 a.m. - Sunday School
10:30 a.m. - Worship



Resurrection of Our Lord Catholic Church

**Pocahontas, IA -- Pastor: Very
Rev. Craig Collison, VF**

MASS TIMES:
Daily Mass as scheduled in the
weekly bulletin
Saturday at 5:00 PM and Sunday at
10:30 AM
Confessions: Saturday 4:15 pm at
Resurrection

Services Held for Bob Bailey

Robert W. Bailey, age 83, of Laurens, passed away Monday, December 18, 2023, at the Longhouse-Northshire Nursing Home in Spencer, Iowa.



Robert Wayne

Bailey was born on February 18, 1940, on a farm near Laurens. He was the son of Kenneth and Maxine (Adair) Bailey. He graduated from the Laurens High School in 1958. On August 11, 1963, Robert was united in marriage to Judy Stover in Laurens, Iowa. The couple settled on a farm near Ware, where they farmed and raised their family. In the mid-1970s, they moved to the Bailey Farm near Laurens. Judy passed away in 1999 and Bob continued to live on the farm.

Bob was a member of the United Methodist Church and Grace Lodge #519. He enjoyed keeping a close eye on the corn and soybeans, attending the races in Knoxville and having coffee with friends.

Survivors include his children, Dave (Denise) Bailey of Laurens, Brian (Jana) Bailey of Knoxville, Dennis (Annie) Bailey of Waukee; grandchildren, Justin (Alyssa) Bailey, Cory Bailey, Brady (Madison) Bailey, Connor Bailey, Carter Bailey, Amber (Dylan) Fontenot, Kristal (Jeff) Luft and Brandon (Stephanie) Mayland; 11 great-grandchildren; siblings, Gary (Shoco) Bailey and Sharon (Doyle) Nehr.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Judy and a brother, Clifford Bailey.

Services Held for Gary Hopkins

Gary W. Hopkins, age 89, of Laurens, passed away on Tuesday, December 19, 2023, at PARC Hall in Emmetsburg, Iowa.



Gary William Hopkins was

born on July 21, 1934, near Laurens, Iowa. He was the son of Max and Wilma (Ferguson) Hopkins. Gary attended Laurens Schools, then began farming with his older brother, Richard. The Hopkins Brothers, as Gary and Richard were known in the community, took pride in being the first in the field, planting the straightest rows in the county and having the cleanest fields. They farmed and fed cattle together for over 60 years. On May 29, 1954, Gary was united in marriage to Joy Marjibeth "Marge" Rydstrom in Jackson, MN. The couple settled on the family farm where they raised their family.

Gary was a member of the Laurens United Methodist Church and the Masonic Lodge. He loved horses, rodeos and horse racing. He even had a racehorse of his own named Moon Chic. Gary enjoyed the time he spent on the farm and especially the time he spent with family and friends.

Survivors include his daughters, Pamela (Tim) O'Leary of Emmetsburg and Debra Opheim of Cylinder; sons, Robert (Angie) Hopkins of Homedale, Idaho and Mark (Debra) Hopkins of Tiffin; grandchildren, Jonathan O'Leary, Tiffany O'Leary, Angela Jensen, Nicholas Hopkins, Johnathon Hopkins and Christopher Hopkins; seven step-grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; sister, Jody (Jack) Bennett of Humboldt, and several nieces and nephews.

Gary was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Marge; son-in-law, Eugene Opheim; grandson, Austin Opheim; brother and sister-in-law, Richard and June Hopkins, and sister and brother-in-law, Donna and Kenny Cundiff.

Services Held for Marvin Ferguson

Marvin L. Ferguson, age 96, of Laurens, passed away Tuesday, December 19, 2023, at the Spencer Hospital in Spencer, Iowa.

Marvin Lee Ferguson was born on March 4, 1927, in Laurens, Iowa. He was the son of Melvin and Hazel (Joenks) Ferguson. Marvin attended country school, then attended the Laurens High School where he played football and graduated in 1944. On November 28, 1947, Marvin was united in marriage to Sally Schuller at the Little Brown Church in Nashua. The couple settled on the farm near Laurens where they farmed, fed cattle and raised their family. Marvin was the 4th generation farmer of the Ferguson Family. His family were the first settlers on farm ground north of Laurens in the year 1882.

Marvin was a member of First Christian Church, where he was very active having held many positions over the years. He was also a member of the Masonic Lodge, the Consistory of Sioux City and served on the Co-op Board of Directors. Marvin loved to farm, and at 93 years old he was still mowing all three of the farm sights. He also enjoyed hunting.

Survivors include his son, Craig (Terry) Ferguson of Laurens; daughter, Pam Ferguson of Ames; grandchildren, Brooke Ferguson of Dubuque and Chance (Brittni) Ferguson of Laurens; great-grandchildren, Denver, Aspen and Berklee Ferguson, and a sister, Darlene (Jerry) Parr of Denver, CO.

Marvin was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Sally; infant daughter, Carla; brother, Claire Ferguson and sisters, Mavis Ferguson and Phyllis Holben.



Services Held for Ron Hersom

Ronald D. Hersom, age 83, of Laurens, passed away Tuesday, December 19, 2023, at his home in Laurens, Iowa.

Ronald Dean Hersom was born on March 23, 1940, in Spencer, Iowa. He was the son of C.I. and Vivian (Swanson) Hersom. Ron graduated from the Laurens High School in 1958. On May 31, 1959, Ron married Marilyn Ball in Laurens. He later continued his education at Iowa State University where he earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in 1962. He began his career in Omaha at Haskins and Sells CPA Firm, then in 1964 he returned to Laurens to work with his father in the family business, Hersom Construction. They built over 200 churches in over 6 states over the years. Ron also owned Kawel Track and Tennis Co. where they built hundreds of tracks and tennis courts. On September 30, 1983, Ron was united in marriage to Janice Moen Mason in Las Vegas, Nevada. The couple continued to live in Laurens. Ron and Jan retired in 2005.

Ron was a member of Bethany Lutheran Church, Bethany Church Council, the Laurens Country Club, the Laurens Skyways and the American Sports Builders Association. He served on the Laurens School Board, as President on the Laurens Care Center Board and was a founding member of the Laurens Development Corporation. Ron was an avid Cyclone fan and enjoyed golfing, playing cards, raising flowers, watching western movies and listening to country music. He spent most of his life in Laurens. He had a selfless love for the community, donated time, talents, knowledge, materials and equipment to many community endeavors. He loved the time he spent with his grandkids and family, including countless games, concerts and programs that their grandkids participated in.

Survivors include his wife, Jan of Laurens; his children, Steve (Ann) Hersom of Berthoud, CO, Susan (Mark) Parker of New Hartford, Rick (Cindy) Mason of Omaha, NE, Shannon (Sonja) Hersom of Ankeny, Rory (Janelle) Mason of Nevada and Sharon Foss of Winona, MN; 15 grandchildren, Calvin, Carl, Maddie, Carson, Elli, Serena, Jillian, Elijah, Kathryn, Cooper, Dylan, Paul, Broc, Cole and Magan, and 2 great-grandchildren, Parker and Harvey.

Ron was preceded in death by his parents; his brother, Arnold Hersom and his sister, Eileen Triggs.



Updated Iowa Phosphorus Index Calculator Available

Calculator assesses the risk of phosphorus delivery to surface waters

A newer version of Iowa Phosphorus Index (P-Index) calculator is now available for use by interested stakeholders. The P-Index calculator tool has been developed to assess the potential for phosphorus moving from individual fields based on selected soil and field characteristics and management practices. The tool is available online at no cost.

“The P-Index is much more comprehensive than relying solely on soil test phosphorus (STP) because it integrates many soil and field characteristics that influence potential phosphorus movement to surface waters,” explained Kapil Arora, field agriculture engineer with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

The updated version of Iowa Phosphorus Index Calculator incorporates the newer soils and their related characteristics. These updates have already been incorporated into the Soil Survey Geographic Database (SSURGO) which is used in Revised Universal Soil Loss (RUSLE2) calculations. Conservation planners, landowners/land users, Technical Service Providers (TSPs), manure management plan writers and planners and others who evaluate the current risk from phosphorus reaching surface water from a specific site need to use the updated information for risk calculations.

“This will better help stakeholders to determine factors which dominate the risk due to phosphorus transport to surface waters,” added Arora.

Iowa Technical Note Number 25, which provides in-depth information for Iowa Phosphorus Index, has also been updated. Users of P-Index calculator are advised to use this updated document for their reference.

Both Iowa Technical Note Number 25 and Iowa Phosphorus Index Calculator are available online through USDA-NRCS or through Iowa Manure Management Action Group at no cost for download. Please visit IMMAG website (RUSLE2 Resources) or USDA-NRCS electronic field operations technical guide for Iowa (eFOTG) website to access these updated files.

For further questions or additional information, please contact Kapil Arora with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach or Chandra Shaw with USDA-NRCS.

Cybersecurity on the Farm Conference to Address Internet Security

The first of its kind Cybersecurity on the Farm Conference, offered by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, will be held at the Iowa State University Alumni Center in Ames on Jan. 11, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

In an era where technology is reshaping every industry, farming stands at the crossroads of innovation and tradition. This one-day conference is designed to address the unique intersection of today’s agriculture and cybersecurity.

For farmers, this workshop offers insights into the ever-evolving world of digital lending in farming and the shift toward online agricultural marketplaces. There will be critical discussions on the potential cyber threats that emerge when working in the agricultural sector. By the end of the day, farmers will be better equipped to navigate farming on the internet while keeping a keen eye on safety and security.

“As a farmer I’m used to risk from the markets and the weather, but it has been very eye-opening to learn how vulnerable my farm and family can be to cybersecurity risks,” said Alexis Stevens, farm management specialist with ISU Extension and Outreach. “Conferences like this one are helping me implement strategies to avoid cyberattacks so I can have peace of mind.”

Through panel discussions with industry experts and a resource fair with trusted service providers, this conference is designed to support farmers as they work to create a seamless integration of cybersecurity into existing systems.

“Bad actors are increasingly targeting agriculture and farmers, and as a farmer, you need to know what the threats are, how you can be prepared and where you can turn for help. This is exactly what our panelists will be discussing,” said Doug Jacobson, university professor of electrical and computer engineering and director of the Center for Cybersecurity Innovation & Outreach.

The resource fair will be available during the lunch hour and throughout the day. The resource fair features experts and service providers at the juncture of farming and cyber tech.

Participants will be part of a transformative dialogue. As farming goes digital, it’s important to ensure that it is secure. Registration is available through Jan. 10, and the cost is \$40. Refreshments and lunch are included. Register online at <https://go.iastate.edu/BPGFN4>.

This conference is being offered by the ISU Extension and Outreach Farm Management Team and the Center for Cybersecurity Innovation and Outreach.

Contact Madeline Schultz for more information at: schultz@iastate.edu or 515-294-0588.

Yard and Garden: Selecting and Caring for Poinsettia

Poinsettias require special care to reach their full potential

One of the best parts of the holiday season is adding colorful seasonal plants to the home. That includes the poinsettia. However, poinsettias do require special care to reach their full potential. Horticulture specialists with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach offer tips and tricks to keeping your poinsettia healthy and beautiful through the new year.

What should I look for when buying a poinsettia? Poinsettias are available in a wide range of colors. Red is the most popular color, though poinsettias are also available in burgundy, pink, salmon, white, cream and gold. There are also bicolored, marbled and speckled poinsettias. The colorful part of the poinsettia, commonly referred to as the plant's flowers, are actually modified leaves or bracts. The true flowers are yellow to green, button-like growths located in the center of the bracts.

When selecting a poinsettia, choose a well-shaped plant with dark green foliage and well-colored bracts. The true flowers should be shedding little or no pollen. Avoid poinsettias with wilted foliage, broken stems or few leaves.

How do I care for a poinsettia? Place the poinsettia in a plant sleeve or carefully wrap it before transporting the plant home. Exposing the plant to freezing temperatures, even for a few minutes, may cause its bracts and leaves to blacken and drop. As soon as you get home, unwrap the poinsettia and place it near a sunny

window or other well-lit location. To avoid cold injury, don't let the plant touch the cold windowpane and keep the poinsettia away from cold drafts or heat sources.

Poinsettias prefer temperatures between 60 and 70°F.

Water needs can be determined with your finger. Check the potting soil frequently, and when the soil's surface becomes dry to the touch, water the plant until water begins to flow out the bottom of the pot.

When given good care, a poinsettia should remain attractive for several weeks, well after the Christmas and New Year's Day holidays.

How often should I water my poinsettia? The key to watering a poinsettia is frequently checking the moisture content of the potting soil. When the soil surface becomes dry to the touch, water the plant until water begins to flow out the bottom of the pot. Discard excess water. The pots of most poinsettias are set inside decorative pot covers. When watering these plants, carefully remove the poinsettia from the pot covering, water the plant in the sink, then drop the poinsettia back into its pot cover. Both over- and under-watering cause problems for poinsettias. Over-watering will cause the lower leaves to turn yellow and drop. Over-watered plants may also develop root rot and die. Dry plants will wilt and drop leaves prematurely.

What should I do with my poinsettia after the holidays? If given good care in the home, poinsettias should remain attractive for two to three months. Dispose of the poinsettia when you tire of it, or when it becomes unattractive.

For those home gardeners who enjoy a challenge, it is possible to get the poinsettia to bloom again next season. Cut the stems back to within 4 to 6 inches of the soil in March. The poinsettia may also be repotted at this time. When new growth appears, place the poinsettia in a sunny window. Continue to water the plant when the soil surface becomes dry to

the touch. Fertilize every two weeks with a dilute fertilizer solution.

In late May, move the poinsettia outdoors. Harden or acclimate the plant to the outdoors by placing it in a shady, protected area for two or three days, then gradually expose it to longer periods of direct sun. The poinsettia should be properly hardened in seven to 10 days. Once hardened, dig a hole in an area that receives six to eight hours of sunlight and set the pot into the ground. To obtain a compact, bushy plant, pinch or cut off the shoot tips once or twice from late June to mid-August. Continue to water and fertilize the plant outdoors.

The poinsettia should be brought indoors in mid-September. Place the plant in a bright, sunny window. The poinsettia is a short-day plant. Short-day plants grow vegetatively during the long days of summer and produce flowers when days become shorter in fall. To get the poinsettia to flower for Christmas, the plant must receive complete darkness from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. daily from early October until the bracts develop good color, usually early December. Protect the plant from light by placing it in a closet or by covering it with a box. During the remainder of the day, the poinsettia should be in a sunny window.

Is the poinsettia poisonous? The poinsettia has long been regarded as poisonous. However, research conducted at various institutions has shown that poinsettia is not poisonous. While the poinsettia is not poisonous, it is not intended for human or animal consumption. Individuals are still advised to keep the poinsettia out of the reach of small children and pets.

One potential health problem associated with the poinsettia is dermatitis or an irritation to the skin. When a poinsettia stem is cut or broken, milky sap oozes from the wound. Some individuals may develop a skin irritation if the milky sap comes in contact with their skin.

Confinement Site Manure Applicator Workshops Scheduled for 2024

Confinement site manure applicators and anyone interested in learning about manure issues should plan to attend a two-hour workshop offered by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach in January or February. These workshops are offered in cooperation with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Registration is required. No walk-ins are allowed. There is no fee to attend, but applicators will need to pay certification fees and send the forms in to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to complete certification requirements.

“Iowa law requires confinement site manure applicators to attend two hours of continuing education each year of their three-year certification period or take and pass an exam once every three years,” said Dan Andersen, associate professor of agricultural and biosystems engineering and extension agriculture engineering specialist at Iowa State University, and coordinator of the manure applicator certification program.

A total of 58 locations will participate in the confinement site manure applicator workshops. In addition, a series of five dry/solid manure applicator certification meetings will be held in February. These

meetings are tailored toward dry/solid manure for either Commercial or Confinement Site manure applicators. ISU Extension and Outreach county offices have a complete list of workshop dates and locations, or view a list on the Iowa Manure Management Action Group website.

The workshops serve as initial certification for those applicators who are not currently certified, recertification for those renewing licenses and continuing education for those applicators in the second or third year of their license.

Due to uniform certification deadlines, applicators are encouraged to attend workshops prior to March 1 to avoid being assessed a late fee of \$12.50 for those who are re-certifying. Those unable to attend one of the workshops need to schedule time with their ISU Extension and Outreach county office to watch the training video. Due to scheduling conflicts, extension offices will no longer accept walk-in appointments to watch these videos but do offer scheduled dates and times to provide this training.

If you can't attend training during one of the scheduled reshow dates at your county extension office, you will be charged a \$10 fee to view the training at your convenience. If attending the workshops or watching the two-hour training video is not convenient, confinement site manure applicators may contact their local Department of Natural Resources field office to schedule an

appointment to take the certification exam to meet certification requirements.

Applicators also have another option, online certification, in which an applicator can take their training online at the DNR MAC eLearning site. The applicator will need to sign in and get an A&A account.

Contact your ISU Extension and Outreach county office for more information about the Manure Applicator Certification Program.

2024 Pocahontas County 4-H Scholarships

All senior 4-H members in Pocahontas County are urged to apply for the 2024 4-H Scholarships that are available online at www.extension.iastate.edu/pocahontas, or you may pick up a paper copy at the ISU Extension and Outreach Office Pocahontas County. Due to the generous support of the Pocahontas County 4-H Endowment, up to 10 \$1000 scholarships will be awarded. There are also \$500 scholarships available, but you will not receive both the \$500 and \$1000.

Applications must be received in the ISU Extension and Outreach Pocahontas County Office, 305 N Main, Pocahontas, IA 50574, no later than 4:30 on February 1, 2024. If you need assistance with your scholarship application, please contact the office at 712-335-3103 or lzeman@iastate.edu.

Advice for Applying Beef Cattle Manure During Winter

Tips for navigating winter manure application for beef operations

As winter approaches, the challenges associated with the application of cattle manure become more pronounced. Adopting best practices that maximize nutrient utilization and safeguard our water resources is crucial. Daniel Andersen, associate professor of agricultural and biosystems engineering and extension ag engineering specialist at Iowa State University, offers some critical considerations for beef manure application in the winter.

Compliance with regulations.

"Familiarize yourself with and adhere to local regulations governing winter manure application," he said. "Iowa prohibits liquid manure application from confinement operations with more than 500 animal units on snow-covered ground from Dec. 21 to April 1 and frozen ground from Feb. 1 to April 1."

While solid manure application is not prohibited by Iowa law, careful consideration should be given to minimizing negative impacts on water quality as the state's waters are protected.

"For a cattle operation, this means that how the law impacts you is dependent on your operation and the manure management system you use. The law doesn't prohibit manure application if you work with solid manure, like a bedded pack," Andersen said. "However, all manure applications must prevent water quality violations. Applying from a deep pit or other liquid

or slurry manure system will be restricted if you use a deep pit or other liquid or slurry manure system."

If your facility has an NPDES permit or an NRCS Comprehensive nutrient management plan, be sure to check restrictions specific to your operation in these documents. Typically, both will prohibit winter manure application for all types of manure, both solid and liquid.

The "winter manure application" rules have two parts: a date and condition. Both components must be true for liquid and slurry manure application to be prohibited. So, while the calendar date of Dec. 21 is quickly approaching, it is unlikely that the ground will be snow-covered (defined as 1 inch of snow or 0.5 inches of ice on the soil surface). As a result, liquid manure application would still be allowed until snow cover occurs.

Understanding snow conditions.

Applying manure directly onto snow-covered fields poses a significant risk of nutrient runoff when the snow melts, especially if melt will occur quickly. Instead, wait to apply until after snowmelt or choose alternative manure management strategies. Applying manure on frozen ground is also discouraged, as the frozen surface inhibits absorption, increasing runoff potential.

"Timing is key; apply manure when limited snow is present and quick melts aren't expected," he said. "Slow melting encourages water infiltration and absorption of manure nutrients into the soil."

If applying solid manure when snow is present is necessary, choose fields with lesser snow accumulation that are relatively flat. Increase buffer or setback distances around field edges to reduce the risk of nutrient transport from the field.

Thoughtful land use choices.

Assessing land use choices is pivotal in winter manure management. Avoid applying manure on steep slopes or areas prone to poor drainage, as these increase the likelihood of runoff. Choose fields

with good water-holding capacity to minimize the risk of nutrient loss.

Additionally, consider the implementation of cover crops, which capture excess nutrients and protect the soil from erosion during winter months," Andersen said. "Residue cover offers these main benefits – it helps hold the soil in place, slows down runoff, reduces erosion, and acts as a filter to help hold dislodged soil and manure particles."

However, residue can also capture snowfall and hold it in the field. While it takes approximately 10" of snow to make an inch of water, ice-crusting soil water intake is often slow.

Protecting water quality. Prioritize water quality by maintaining setback distances from water bodies and sensitive areas. Implementing vegetative buffers helps prevent nutrient runoff into waterways. Incorporating manure into the soil soon after application is another effective strategy, reducing the risk of surface runoff and enhancing crop nutrient absorption. Where possible, maintain grass or cover crop buffers downslope of manure-applied areas to slow any runoff and ensure solids in the water settle out before trickling away. Leave a setback area around field borders to reduce the risk of manure nutrients leaving the field.

In conclusion, adopting these best practices for manure application in the winter will enhance nutrient management and contribute to protecting our water resources. While research has consistently shown greater potential risk of nutrient loss from winter manure application, research studies demonstrate loss is often related to quick snow melt or rainfall on frozen soils. Given current Iowa conditions, with no snowpack and low chances of rainfall, the late risk of nutrient loss is lessened this year. Stay informed of the forecast and be proactive to changing weather conditions.

Farm Financial Planning Program Offers Personalized Insight for Producers

As farmers review their farm financial situation this winter, a handy resource is available from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

The Farm Financial Planning Program, <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/farmanalysis/> offers in-person experts who can offer one-on-one financial counseling, a computerized analysis of the farm business and referral to other extension programs or outside services.

Farm Financial Planning is for anyone who wants to understand a complete picture of their farm financial situation. It helps take the guesswork out of whether a change would increase profitability and improve cash flow.

Using FINPACK software, <https://finpack.umn.edu/>, the analysis may provide a more in-depth evaluation of the farm business, which many lenders are requiring before they will extend further credit.

Eight associates make up the Farm Financial Program team with ISU Extension and Outreach.

Leslie Miller became an associate in 2021, after retiring from a career in the ag lending industry that dates back to the 1980s.

She relies on her experience in the industry to help farmers analyze their situation and pursue their goals.

“What I enjoy most is helping people reach goals that they want to reach so they can have a successful farming operation,” she said. “I like helping them to accomplish their goals and work through their problems.”

The service is free for the client, and the financial associate can become as involved as the client wishes.

The associate offers a big picture look at the farm, and it's up to the farmer to make specific changes and to contact the specialists who can help. While working with financial associates is important, it's equally important to follow up with the specialists the associate recommends.

Miller said farm profitability is an ongoing concern, as crop prices continue to drop and land prices continue to increase. She is also helping farmers with the tough times in the swine industry.

She helps producers look closely at their cash flow projections and scrutinize the different options for going forward. Sometimes it's transitioning to another owner or operator, or identifying an opportunity to expand.

“We run multiple alternatives and compare them side-by-side,” she said. “A borrower can look at those numbers and see what the impact of different decisions might be. Our goal is to consider the ‘what ifs’ for each decision.”

Farmers can locate a Farm Financial Planning Program associate in their area by contacting their ISU Extension and Outreach county office or by visiting the Farm Financial Planning Program associate site., www.extension.iastate.edu/farmanalysis/associatelist.html

Dry Manure Applicator Certification Workshops Offered by Extension

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, in cooperation with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, will offer manure applicator certification workshops for dry/solid manure operators on five different dates and locations in February. These workshops meet manure applicator certification requirements for confinement site and commercial manure applicators who primarily apply dry or solid manure.

“The information in this workshop will benefit not only those needing certification but anyone using dry or solid sources of manure as a nutrient resource,” said Dan Andersen, associate professor of agricultural and biosystems engineering and extension agriculture engineering specialist at Iowa State and coordinator of the manure applicator certification program.

The workshops are free to attend and open to all. Applicators will be required to submit certification forms and fees to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to meet manure applicator certification requirements.

Pre-registration is required. No walk-ins are allowed. Register for one of the workshops by calling the number on the selected site. All workshops begin at 1 p.m.

- Feb. 9, Hamilton County, Kamrar Lions Community Building, Kamrar. Call 515-832-9597.
- Feb. 12, Washington County, ISU Extension and Outreach office, Washington. Call 319-653-4811.
- Feb. 13, Adair County, Greenfield City Hall, Greenfield. Call 641-743-8412.
- Feb. 21, Sioux County, ISU Extension and Outreach office, Orange City. Call 712-737-4230.
- Feb. 22, Buena Vista County, ISU Extension and Outreach office, AEA Office, Storm Lake. Call 712-732-5056.

December 18, 2023

The Utility Board of Trustees of Laurens, Iowa met in regular session at the Municipal Building, 272 N. Third Street, Laurens, Iowa, at 3:00 p.m. on the above date. Present were Trustees Jerry Runneberg and Ben Storms. Also present were General Manager Chad Cleveland and Kelly Horsman.

Motion by Trustee Storms and seconded by Trustee Runneberg to approve the December 18, 2023 regular meeting agenda. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Runneberg and seconded by Trustee Storms to approve the minutes of the November 28, 2023 Board meeting. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Storms and seconded by Trustee Runneberg to approve the summary of receipts for November 2023 in the amount of \$371,079.91 and the list of expenses for November 2023 in the amount of \$796,481.06. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Summary of Receipts

A/R- Electric	\$ 245,320.25
A/R- Communications	\$ 60,947.42
Merchandise/Services- Electric	\$ 875.00
Merchandise/Services- Communications	\$ 72.00
Carrier Access Fees- Communications	\$ 1,331.39
Deposits- Electric	\$ 765.00
Deposits- Communications	\$ 252.00
Marathon Energy Sales- Electric	\$ 13,734.57
Attachment H Revenues- Electric	\$ 34,226.80
Renewable Energy Credits Sale- Electric	\$ 13,431.73
Lifeline Broadband Reimbursement- Communications	\$ 19.00
Lifeline Voice Reimbursement- Communications	\$ 11.00
Miscellaneous- Communications	\$ 63.75
Office Phones- Electric	\$ 30.00
Total Cash Receipts	\$ 371,079.91

Electric Receipts	\$ 308,383.35
Communications Receipts	\$ 62,696.56
Total Cash Receipts	\$ 371,079.91

List of Expenses

A&M Laundry	Dust Mops & Mats	\$ 89.28
AFLAC	Employee Contributions	\$ 449.76
Aureon	CALEA/SS7/Transport	\$ 566.18
Aveis	Group Vision Insurance	\$ 113.21
Bailey, David	Safety Footwear/Co. Clothing	\$ 229.99
Bally Sports North	Programming Fees	\$ 1,102.95
Big 10 Network	Programming Fees	\$ 422.37
Border States Electric	Ground Rods/Supplies	\$ 1,573.24
Calix Inc.	Operations Cloud/Implementation	\$ 2,628.99
CDS Global	Credit Card Processing Fees	\$ 45.00
Cleveland, Chad	Meeting Expenses	\$ 416.58
CMBA Architects	Storage Building Project	\$ 728.53
Community First Broadcasting	L-M School Sponsor	\$ 52.50

Community State Bank	Service Charges	\$	103.11
Consortia Consulting	Consulting Contract	\$	1,345.00
Department of Energy	WAPA Power Bill	\$	29,647.89
DGR Engineering	Cash Flow Analysis	\$	917.00
Display Systems International	Programming Fees	\$	165.76
Echo Group	Communications Supplies	\$	84.80
Employee Benefit Systems	Self-Funding- Administration	\$	120.00
Employee Benefit Systems	Self-Funding- Claims	\$	189.61
Fiserv	Credit Card Processing	\$	70.40
GFC Leasing	Canon Copier Lease	\$	76.82
Grainger	Bollard Covers	\$	375.24
Granger Motors, Inc.	2023 Ford F-250 XL	\$	58,099.10
Gray Media Group	Programming Fees	\$	800.00
Hearst Television	Programming Fees	\$	1,470.00
ICMA RC	Employee Contributions	\$	1,000.00
Internal Revenue Service	Payroll Taxes	\$	9,949.42
Interstate TRS Fund	TRS Fund Assessment	\$	228.48
Iowa Department of Revenue	Sales Tax	\$	5,810.03
Iowa Department of Revenue	State Withholding	\$	1,387.18
Iowa One Call	Locates	\$	31.70
Iowa Public Employees Retirement System	IPERS Contributions	\$	6,277.17
Iowa Utilities Board	IUB/OCA Assessment	\$	1,204.00
Laurens, City of	Utility Billing	\$	90,029.72
Laurens Food Pride	Cleaning/Office Supplies	\$	238.14
Laurens Municipal Power & Communications	Communications Bill	\$	360.61
Laurens Municipal Utilities	Utility Bill	\$	119.66
Laurens Plumbing	Light Bulbs/Supplies	\$	367.56
Laurens Sun	Publications/Advertising	\$	310.49
Long Lines	Communication Services	\$	10,142.67
Lumen Access Billing	Transport Fees	\$	95.33
Lumen Lexcis	Directory Listings	\$	36.45
Merchant Bankcard	Credit Card Processing	\$	1,100.33
Mid-America Communications II	Fiber Installs/CO Services	\$	910.48
MidAmerican Energy	Neal 4 Operations	\$	53,000.00
National Content & Technology Cooperative	Programming/TiVo/ACA	\$	18,933.06
Nexstar Broadcasting	Programming Fees	\$	1,507.21
NIMECA	Power Bill	\$	6,228.07
Office Elements	Office Supplies	\$	12.90
Payroll	Salaried, Hourly & Overtime	\$	26,870.73
PLIC-SBD Grand Island	Life/Disability Insurance	\$	773.88
Pop Media	Programming Fees	\$	37.23
Postmaster	Postage	\$	1,061.52
Pro Cooperative	Fuel/Diesel/Tires	\$	2,207.34
R&D Industries	Network Support	\$	350.00
RSM US LLP	Network Support	\$	2,100.00
Schultz, Ethan	Safety Footwear	\$	200.00
Scott's Lawn Service	Vegetation Control	\$	60.00
Secure Shred Solutions	Paper Shredding	\$	26.00
Spencer Municipal Utilities	Fiber Lease	\$	450.00
UMB Bank	Bond Payment	\$	436,812.50
US Card Systems	Credit Card Terminal Lease	\$	29.95
Verizon	Wireless Phone Service	\$	207.20

Visa	Hulu/Shelving/Tools	\$ 491.95
Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield	Group Health Insurance	\$ 12,506.18
Zcorum	Truvision Fees	\$ 261.08
Ziegler, Inc.	Generator Maintenance	\$ 871.53
	Total Expenses	\$ 796,481.06

Electric Expenses	\$ 734,549.56
Communications Expenses	\$ 61,931.50
Total Expenses	\$ 796,481.06

Trustees reviewed the Utility Funds Report and Investments. No income statement or balance sheet were available for November 2023 due to conversion to new accounting software. No specific action was taken.

Motion by Trustee Storms and seconded by Trustee Runneberg to approve the proposed list of accounts to be written off. The total amount for the Electric Utility to be written off is \$5,539.33. The total amount for the Communications Utility to be written off is \$996.14. The write-off recoveries for 2023 were \$2,218.87 for the Electric Utility and \$968.54 for the Communications Utility. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Storms and seconded by Trustee Runneberg to approve the proposed list of Carrier Access Billing accounts (CABs) to be written off. The total amount of CABs to be written off is \$600.40. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Runneberg and seconded by Trustee Storms to approve the Letter of Engagement from T.P. Anderson & Company to audit our financial for the calendar year ending December 31, 2023. The cost for auditing services will not exceed \$18,000.00. Ayes: All. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Motion by Trustee Runneberg and seconded by Trustee Storms to approve the following Mission Statement and Values for LMPC:

Our Mission

- Provide reliable, safe, and affordable Electric, Internet, Telephone, and Cable TV services.
- Support and enhance the quality of life of our community and employees.
- Treat everyone the way we would want to be treated.

Values

- Honesty, Integrity, and Respect – Treat everyone the way we would want to be treated.
- Excellence – Committed to providing safe, reliable, and affordable services.
- Community Minded – Strive to improve the quality of life and vitality of our community.

The Board reviewed the 2023 Annual Report for the City Council.

At 5:00 p.m. the Board of Trustees took a break to attend the City Council meeting and present the 2023 Annual Report.

At 5:30 p.m. the Board of Trustees resumed their regular board meeting.

General Manager's Update:

- Provided an update on information received at the December 12, 2023 NIMECA Board meeting.
- Proposed upgrading the lighting system on our 400-foot Communications tower. The Board recommended getting competitive quotes on this for the next meeting if possible.
- Informed the Board that due to the increasing cost of our interconnection circuit with Lumen, Consortia Consulting is working on moving this circuit from Spencer to Long Lines. The reason for the transition is the cost of the circuit.

There being no further business, the Chairman Pro Tem declared the meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Ben Storms

Chairman Pro Tem, Board of Trustees

ATTEST: Chad Cleveland
Secretary, Board of Trustees

City Council Minutes

December 18th, 2023

The Laurens City Council met in regular session at the Municipal Building at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, December 18th, 2023. Mayor Rod Johnson called the meeting to order. Present were Council members Hannah Zylstra, John Jamison, Loren Booth, Aaron Christenson, Jean Swanson, Deputy City Clerk Joan Hoben, Public Works Director Julian Johnsen. City Manager Hilary Reed was absent.

Jamison moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes from the December 4th, 2023, meeting, and the list of claims. Zylstra seconded. All ayes: motion carried.

CLAIMS 12/18/23

ACCO	CHEMICALS	3,201.10
AFLAC	GROUP INSURANCE	204.38
BADGER METER	HOSTING SERV.	48.72
BAKER & TAYLOR	BOOKS	364.94
BARCO MUNICIPAL PRODUCTS	GREEN MARKING PAINT	328.70
BOLTON & MENK	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	612.50
CENGAGE	LARGE PRINT BOOKS	72.72
CONNECTIONS, INC.	GROUP INSURANCE	40.68
GREAT AMERICA FINACIAL SERVICE	COPIER LEASE	79.00
DEL'S GARDEN CENTER	TREES	47.94
IRS	FED/FICA TAX	6,041.13
ISU TREASURER'S OFFICE	RURAL HOUSING ASSESSMENT	5,000.00
JAMES LITWILLER	UNDERCOAT PAINT	32.04
JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL	FLOOR DRY	266.49
LAURENS FOOD PRIDE	SUPPLIES/MATERIALS	182.18
LAURENS HOUSE OF PRINT	COPY PAPER	55.00
LMPC	MONTHLY PHONE FEES	143.96
LMU	MONTHLY UTILITIES	477.16
LAURENS PLUMBING SERVICE	REPLACE LIGHT	215.98
LAURENS SUN	LEGALS	340.68
OFFICE ELEMENTS	COPY PAPER	58.75
POCAHONTAS CO. SOLID WASTE	MONTHLY LANDFILL FEES	6,322.10
PRINCIPAL LIFE GROUP	MONTHLY LIFE INSURANCE	871.65
PRO COOP	MONTHLY FUEL	2,257.80
R&D INDUSTRIES, INC.	TECH SUPPORT	697.00
RB LUMBER COMPANY	2X4X8 BOARD	6.75
RECREATION SUPPLY COMPANY	POOL SUPPLIES	5,818.65
RSM US LLP	IT SERVICES	1,011.30
SANDE CONSTRUCTION	PAY REQUEST #3	199,250.00
SHAMROCK RECYCLE, INC.	CURBSIDE RECYCLING	1,895.20
UNITYPOINT HEALTH WORK	HEARING TEST	217.71
VERIZON WIRELESS	MONTHLY CELL PHONES	409.36
VISUAL EDGE, IT	MONTHLY COPIES	76.85
WELLMARK	JAN MONTHLY HEALTH INSURANCE	9,992.05
WEX BANKS	MONTHLY POLICE FUEL	836.06
	TOTAL	<u>247,476.53</u>

PAYROLL

12/11/2023

001	GENERAL	7,130.79
210	ROAD USE TAX	1,521.22
600	WATER	3,073.33
610	SEWER	2,708.10
670	GARBAGE	3,482.69

	TOTAL	<u>17,916.13</u>
	PAYROLL TOTAL	<u>17,916.13</u>
	PAID TOTAL	<u>265,392.66</u>
001	GENERAL	13,560.76
110	ROAD USE TAX	3,743.60
112	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	6,032.58
174	POOL RESTRICTED	205,068.65
176	HOMETOWN PRIDE COMMITTEE	5,000.00
600	WATER	9900.24
610	SEWER	6940.1
670	GARBAGE	<u>15,146.73</u>
	TOTAL BY FUND	<u>265,392.66</u>

Tony Abbott has purchased the property at 204 S. 3rd St. It is currently zoned as C-1, and he is requesting a rezoning to R-1. Booth moved to approve sending the request to the Planning & Zoning Commission. Swanson seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

Chad Cleveland and the LMPC board of trustees presented LMPC's annual report. Mr. Cleveland also asked the council to approve the 20223 write offs. Zylstra so moved. Jamison seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

LMPC Board of Trustees also requested Resolution 23-23 Board Compensation to be approved. Booth so moved. Christeson seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Zylstra, Jamison, Booth, Christenson, Swanson. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Mr. Fisher nor Chief Aschenbrenner were present for the nuisance hearing continuation, however, the council was satisfied with the Sheriff's report of the call with the posting of the abatement. Booth moved to continue with the abatement charges. Zylstra seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

An update from Pat Sullivan regarding the Proposed Community Center was given.

Discussion was held on a Code Enforcer. We will see if he can attend a meeting in January for more information.

Jamison moved to approve Resolution 24-23 – Unpaid Nuisance Fees. Zylstra seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Zylstra, Jamison, Booth, Christenson, Swanson. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Zylstra moved to changing the date of the next council meeting to Tuesday, January 2nd at 5:00 p.m. due to the New Year Holiday. Christenson seconded.

Zylstra moved to adjourn at 5:52 p.m. Jamison seconded. All ayes; motion carried.

Rod Johnson, Mayor

Joan Hoben, Deputy City Clerk