

HUMBOLDT NOW!



- ! Judy Konecne wears many hats
- ! A new vision for the farmers market
- ! What's new at River Valley Orchards
- ! A Cow for College - Book Review



Women's Health Night

50 2023

sponsored by: HCMH Foundation



Keynote Speaker
Carol TeBockhorst
Make-A-Wish Iowa

The greatest gift that someone can ask for is the gift of health itself.



Wed, May 10th
(Doors Open at 4PM)
4-6:30PM: Social Hour/Shopping
6:30-8PM: Healthcare Provider
Hot Topic Panel & Keynote



**River Valley
Orchards & Winery**
1645 220th St. Humboldt

Join us for a night of shopping, food, wine and learning at the Women's Health Night Out event on May 10th at River Valley Orchards!

This is a **FREE** event to attend with complimentary appetizers. Wine and beer will also be available for purchase.

If you would like to be a vendor please call 515-332-2492 or email christens@humboldthospital.org

WHAT'S INSIDE!



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On the cover:
Judy Konecne shown here with third grade students in music class on a recent day. Konecne is retiring at the end of the current school year.

— Photo by Phil Monson

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THE BOOKWORM



“A Cow for College”-James Kenyon

Review written by: Julie Larsen, Director Humboldt Public Library

“...the perfect tonic for those craving a connection to old-time rural culture. Farm chores are told in such detail that the reader will feel like they are working alongside young Jimmy as he milks the cows by hand, cleans the chicken house, or weeds the garden with his puppy by his side...Reality will bring laughs and tender moments as you work your way through this portrayal of a life well lived.”
Marcy Penner, Executive Director, Kansas Sampler Foundation.

A *Cow for College and Other Stories of 1950's Farm Life* written by James Kenyon is our **Humboldt Reads** Book Club choice for May. Join us at the library on Thursday, May 18 at 5:30 pm for a lively hour discussion of Jim's memoir. James Kenyon was born and raised on a third generation family grain and livestock farm near the town of Bogue, Kansas. He grew up, as many did in the 1950's, caring for cattle, pigs, chickens and horses. Jim's first-person stories are among his many fond memories of growing up on a farm in the 1950's.

The first story *A Cow for College* portrays how the Kenyon children tended to the cattle, chose their calf and, sadly, but part of life, lost a treasured heifer, *Old Girl*. Many of us can relate to a favorite dog we had when growing up, Tuffy has two treasured spots in the book's chapters. One being a cow dog and the other his many talents.

Kenyon shares his story about his red wagon, Rhode Island Reds and the fertilizer business, which intertwine, it was his last sentence, “Though the income and money raised was important for our family, these times of knocking on doors, looking at

people in the eyes and asking for their business was probably more valuable for my development than the monetary reward,” really sums up his entire collection of stories.

The stories are short, easy reads and it is hard to choose a favorite among them. His depictions of farm life bring vivid pictures to mind as you read through his delightful, honest collections of the day-to-day life experiences of farm life.

Farm life is very dear to my heart, and while I did not grow up in the 1950's, I did grow up on the family farm, settled by my great-grandfather, right here in Humboldt County. Many of Jim's stories are very relatable and had me dreaming of simpler times in life.

We have many patrons who enjoy the Humboldt Reads

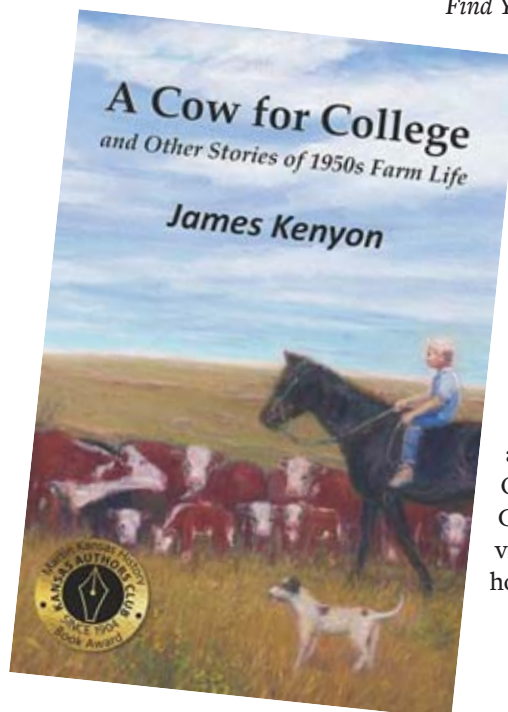
selections, stop by the library and check out a copy (we have several); you are welcome to join us for Book Club if it works with your schedule. There is no registration and you are not obligated to attend each event. For more information about Humboldt Reads you may call or stop in the library and we will be happy to answer your questions. You may also find the next Humboldt Reads book and date of the book discussion on our website and on our Facebook page. Don't let yourself be without a good book this summer. Humboldt Library has an abundant collection of summer reads to help you enjoy the beautiful weather.

Also in May:

Mark Your Calendars!
Registration for Summer Reading, *Find Your Voice*, begins Wednesday, May 24.

This program is during June and is for birth to adults. Adult Summer Reading is new this year. Adults have a chance to win a prize, too! Just stop at the Circulation Desk and pick up a Bingo sheet after May 24. Birth – Grade 5 register in the Children's Department, and Grade 6 and up, stop upstairs at the circulation desk for registration.

Prizes can be earned by all ages!! Fun programs to attend. Open up the world of possibilities! Go anywhere you want to go by visiting the library today and taking home a stack of books!



What's Happening

NOW!

May

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>EVERY MONDAY Board of Supervisors - 8:30AM</p>	<p>1</p> <p>5:00pm TR: B/V @Algona High School 7:00pm - 8:30pm Parade of Bands (Gd. 5-12) @Humboldt High School - HS Gym</p>	<p>2</p> <p>4:30pm Golf: G/JV/V @Humboldt Country Club 4:30pm Golf: B/JV/V @Webster City High 4:30pm Soccer: G/V @Humboldt High 5:00pm Soccer: B/V @Hampton-Dumont</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Storytime 10:30-11AM @Humboldt Public Library 7:00pm - 9:00pm Senior Awards Night @HHS Auditorium</p>	<p>4</p> <p>5pm TR: G/JV/V @Dodger Stadium TR: B/JV/V @Webster City High 5:30pm Soccer: B/V @Clear Lake</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Registration Closes for T-ball and Coach Pitch State Large Group Music Festival @ Spirit Lake 6:30pm - 8:30pm FFA Banquet @HHS Cafeteria</p>	<p>6</p> <p>8:30am G: B/JV/V @Carroll Country Club 6:00pm - 8:00pm Senior Music Banquet @HHS Cafeteria</p>
<p>7</p> <p>HUMBOLDT 5K COLOR FUN RUN & WALK MAY 7, 2023 HUMBOLDT HIGH SCHOOL</p>	<p>8</p> <p>10AM Golf: G/JV/V @Mason City Country 10AM Golf: B/JV/V @Spring Valley Golf 5pm Soccer: B/V @Humboldt High 5:30pm Soccer: G/JV/V @Cadet Field</p>	<p>9</p> <p>4:45pm Soccer: G/V @East Sac County High 6:15pm Soccer: B/V @East Sac County High</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Storytime 10:30-11AM @Humboldt Public Library 6:00pm - 8:00pm Rotary Top 20 Banquet @Zion Lutheran</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Humboldt Area Art Council Meeting 5:30PM @ the Art Center 4:00pm TR: G/V B/V 5:00pm Soccer: B/V @Humboldt High 5:30pm Soccer: G/V @Garner-Hayfield High</p>	<p>12</p> <p>10:00am Golf: G/JV/Varsity @Fort Dodge Country Club 5:00pm Soccer: G/V @Humboldt High School</p>	<p>13</p> <p>9:00am Golf: G/JV/V @Lake Creek Country Rec Department @ Farmers Market</p>
<p>14</p> <p>HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY</p>	<p>15</p> <p>5:30pm BB: JV 7:30pm BB: V @Humboldt High School Registration Closes for 3rd-6th Baseball & Softball Clinic</p>	<p>16</p> <p>7:00pm - 8:30pm Parade of Choirs @HHS Auditorium</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Seniors' Last Day</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Humboldt Reads/Book Club: Wed., May 18 - 5:30 @The Library -Reading: A Cow for College 9:45am - 11:00am Graduation Rehearsal @Humboldt High</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>
17-19 Rec Center Closed						
<p>21</p> <p>2-4 pm Graduation @Humboldt High School - HS Gym</p>	<p>22</p> <p>5:30pm SB: JV @Southeast Valley - Harcourt Softball Field 6:00pm - 8:00pm Pre-School Graduation @HHS Auditorium 7:00pm SB: V @Southeast Valley - Harcourt Softball Field</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Elementary Track Meet @Humboldt High 5:30pm BB: JV 7:30pm BB: V @East Sac County High</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Summer Reading Registration Begins Wed., May 24, Ages: Birth - Adult Last Day of School</p>	<p>25</p> <p>10:00am BB: 9th @Humboldt High</p>	<p>26</p> <p>5:30pm BB: JV 7:30pm BB: V 6:00pm SB: JV 7:30pm SB: V @Hampton-Dumont</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Humboldt Family Aquatic Center Opens</p>
<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>MEMORIAL DAY Rec Center Closed</p>	<p>30</p> <p>6:00pm SB: JV 7:30pm SB: V @Humboldt High School</p>	<p>31</p> <p>5:30pm BB: JV 6:00pm SB: JV 7:30pm BB/SB: V @Algona High School</p>			

To submit items for the Community Calendar please email faith@humboldtnews.com or call 515.332.2514

Community Calendar Sponsored by:



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Kids Works!

From students of
Taft Elementary



Ashlynn Schumann 2nd Grade - Alstott



Ava Boom 4th Grade - Hjelmeland



Avery Nielsen 4th Grade - Hjelmeland



Bennett Brodale 2nd Grade - Altman



Calvin Lindquest 2nd Grade - Altman



Collin Lesher 3rd Grade - Alstott



Emma Flatau 3rd Grade - Alstott



Gabe Scharlemann 2nd Grade - Altman



Harper Osborne 4th Grade - Hjelmeland



Heith Devers 4th Grade - Hjelmeland



Kendra Long 4th Grade - Hjelmeland



Josie Christopher 4th Grade - Hjelmeland



Jianna Alvarez 2nd Grade - Altman



Kole Goodell 3rd Grade - Case



Kiera Long 3rd Grade - Alstott

By Karen May

Karen's Quips!



I think we can say for sure that SPRING is here! And summer is just around the corner. If you don't believe it, watch the summer apparel that is being worn! I love watching people come and go - whether it's on main street, in a parking lot at the grocery store, or at a park. You can tell who is happy, who is in a hurry, or sometimes, someone who just doesn't care!

I have been home awhile now and glad to be back at church, attending my meetings (and doing my part) and visiting friends. As with anyone who is gone more than a week, there have been changes. That's part of life and we learn to accept them. I like to recall that old saying "Wherever you wander, wherever you roam, there is NO place like home!"

While gone, I couldn't wait to get my Humboldt newspaper - I do not like reading any news on the computer as my eyes are not good. I have macular degeneration so it is hard for me to focus on the print. After reading the "news," I passed on the paper to a former longtime Humboldt (Rainbow Drive) resident, Irene Schwint, who is a full-time resident in the same park!!! She is amazed at the "news" and recently read about the veterans project and she and her family will be making a donation soon!

I was cleaning out a closet preparing to come home and ran across about a dozen puzzles - from fairly easy 250-piece ones to the 1,000-piece ones. A great donation for a nearby school activity center - much better than throwing away!! If you have clothing or items not being used, think of where you could DONATE them and have someone else use the item before throwing it!!

And now I want you to think about a "REMEMBER WHEN" remark that some of us were talking about on a warm day while drinking our lemonade. REMEMBER when we ALL drank water from the same cup outside the cistern pump when we were little? REMEMBER when it was hot in our bedrooms upstairs so we came down and slept on the linoleum floors of the lower level? REMEMBER when there wasn't indoor plumbing and we had to use that horrid two-

hole "bathroom" outside - in ALL kinds of weather? These are fun "games" to play or make a program out of - IF YOU ARE OLD ENOUGH!!!

I am looking forward to going to the grocery store and having the clerk call me by name; I look forward to going to the post office and not waiting a half hour in line; I look forward going to church and recognizing most of the people around me; I look forward to having coffee with friends I haven't seen for awhile - and hearing of their experiences in the past few months; I look forward to going to meetings and becoming a "contributing" member again; and the list goes on! I just want to say it's always wonderful to be able to go somewhere, BUT it is even a better feeling to return!

The swimming pool will be crowded with the young and the old(er); what a wonderful addition this makes for our community! The ball diamonds will be full of young people playing ball of various types; the river will find many people walking the trails, having picnics, or just looking to see if progress will be made with improvement to the area. Vacation Bible School will be held at various churches. Who says there is nothing to do in our community? WAKE UP!!!! - we are alive and well - As my grandma used to say "IF YOU CAN'T SAY SOMETHING GOOD, don't say it at all!"

Happy summer to all. Thanks for reading and for the letters and notes you send. They are MUCH appreciated!





Pet of the Month!



Owner: Brook Hjelmeland,
Gedar Falls

Spot



Owner: John Hendricks, Pioneer

Toby



Owner: Emily Hendricks,
Humboldt

Kurt



Owners: Kyle and Maggie
Heckman, Bakersfield, CA

Tuf



Owners: Joe & Kim Vitzthum,
Dakota City

Rocky



Owner: Irene Hjelmeland,
Humboldt

Copper

Announcement: Due to the high volume of POTM submissions (yay!) if you do not see your pet, please wait till next month!

To submit a photo of your pet, email info@humboldtnews.com

Please include pet's name, owner's name and hometown.



POTM sponsored by:



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SERVING THE HUMBOLDT AREA, OUR ADVANCED FACILITY ACCOMMODATES SMALL & LARGE ANIMALS.



Judy Konecne is shown here teaching music to students at Taft Elementary School in Humboldt.

By PHIL MONSON

Judy Konecne gleefully greeted her third grade students as they strode into her music room on a recent March morning.

The students directed their attention on the veteran teacher as she began the day's lesson.

Konecne, who divides her day teaching music at Taft Elementary School in Humboldt in the mornings and at Twin Rivers Elementary School in the afternoons, is set to retire at the end of the current school year.

Konecne displayed the enthusiasm and energy required to teach young students. Nonetheless, she feels it's time to move on.

"I made up my mind last spring that I would retire after this year. I'm ready to retire. The kids are going to be in good hands. I am going to miss their smiling faces, but I love to go for walks and so I'll see them from time to time. I'll be involved in the church and I'll attend school activities," Konecne said.

"In life you are always teaching. I've always been teaching. Whether I was teaching people about insurance, or teaching people about getting the books right through a clerical job," Konecne said.

"I've got plenty to do to keep me busy. When I leave school in the afternoon, I have to get home, let the dog out one more time, grab my horn and head up to Estherville. There's a group of us who

play up there in the Northwest Iowa Band and Jazz Band," Konecne said. "I play in the Karl King Band in Fort Dodge. I also play with the Humboldt Big Band and we have our sax quartet. I'm involved with the music at church."

"Really, I'm going to be involved with music, I just won't be teaching it every day. My granddaughter Peyton is in the Jazz Band and she's in the sixth grade chorus. She plays trumpet and is involved in choir. I don't see that changing. She'll also be involved in soccer and softball, so I'll be busy and on the road quite a bit," Konecne said.

"My daughter, Maggie, teaches at New Hampton High School and is doing school plays and musicals over there. She has already asked me to get involved with the costumes, sets and other things for her over there," Konecne said.

Konecne, the former Judy Raeber, a 1974 graduate of Harlan High School, attended Morningside College in Sioux City, where she graduated with a bachelor's degree in music education in 1978.

"When I got to my junior year in college, I thought maybe I should have gotten into English. My mother was an English teacher. But then I thought I would give music a try for five years and if I didn't like it, I would do something else," Konecne said.

"My first teaching job was at East Greene in Grand Junction. The district then was Grand Junction, Dana and Rippey. I lived in Rippey and my landlady was 92-years-old. I lived in the upstairs of an old house. It was interesting," Konecne said.

"My second year there I raised my own rent. I told her I was using enough electricity that I should be paying her more. My base salary was \$9,400 a year. I thought I was making really good money," Konecne said. "And I think I got an extra \$200 for doing summer band."

"I taught middle school grades 4-8 band and vocal," Konecne said.

"In December of 1977 I started playing with an old-time polka band named Jolly Home Brewers. It was based out of Harlan. Al Dearchs, who worked for Russ



Judy Konecne shown here with third grade students in music class on a recent day. Konecne is retiring at the end of the current school year.

Meyer Construction and Jim Gronbach Construction for many years, played an accordion in the band,” Konecne said. “I was playing clarinet and saxophone.”

“In 1979, Steve’s brother, Curt was going to marry a lady named Sherry Nagle. Sherry’s sister, Kathy, played tuba in the band. They decided I needed a date for the wedding. They set me up with Steve,” Konecne said.

“Steve was from southwest Iowa but he was living up here at the time and working at Crest Pak, now Liguria Foods. Steve’s parents moved to the Renwick area his junior year in high school so he graduated from Boone Valley of Renwick in 1975,” Konecne said.

“The band was playing at the DMT Ballroom north of Rolfe the weekend before the wedding. We met in 1979 and in November of 1980 we were married,” Konecne said.

“In 1980, I didn’t renew my contract at Grand Junction so I began teaching at Palmer, which I did for two years. After we got married we moved to Gilmore City so we were halfway in between where we both worked,” Konecne said.

“At the time Steve was also attending Iowa Central Community College in Fort Dodge, studying industrial electronics. I decided to go to Iowa Central and earn my clerical certificate,” Konecne said.

“I began working at the Fort Dodge Messenger, where I worked for 10 years. My son, Ben, was born in 1985 and my daughter, Maggie, was born in 1987. It came to a point where I decided I didn’t want to be driving to Fort Dodge all the time with the kids about to be soon going to school, so I applied at State Farm Insurance in Humboldt working for Arlee Waring. I was with State Farm

for 14 years,” Konecne said.

“When Arlee retired, I wasn’t sure what was going to happen, but I ended up working at the new office for two years. I had also begun getting involved leading the Humboldt High School plays and musicals,” Konecne said.

“I then began working for West Fork Services, which I was employed for a year and one-half. During that time I also wrote the weekly Cook of the Week feature for the Humboldt Independent Newspaper. I did that for three years,” Konecne said.

“In 2015 when Lucinda Boyd switched from music to the TLC position at the school, they asked if I wanted to apply because I had done enough substituting for her that I was familiar with her position,” Konecne said.

“One day I was informed that Denise Foth, the music instructor at Twin



The Smartboard is a classroom tool Judy Konecne has loved using during her time teaching elementary music and Humboldt and Twin Rivers.

Rivers, was going to retire and they asked me if I would go up to Bode and teach part-time. Between Humboldt and Twin Rivers I was teaching full-time, mostly vocal music but I was teaching instrumental for fifth grade at TR,” Konecne said. “I’ve been doing it for eight years. I teach in Bode in the afternoons.”

“I’ve been teaching general music at the elementary level all these years,” Konecne said.

After being away from full-time teaching for many years, Konecne said the transition was challenging but rewarding.

“When I got back to teaching full-time, it was interesting. My grown daughter is now teaching and there’s nothing like calling her up and asking her ‘what do they mean by this?’ All the new acronyms being used in education now days, I hadn’t seen that before,” Konecne said. “1982 was the last year I had taught full-time.”

“When I came back I remember asking Rachele Mau, an elementary teacher, and my daughter, all these questions because technology had come so far,” Konecne said. “I used to write in a little book all of my lesson plans.”

The Smartboard, basically a large

computer screen, was a new tool but something Konecne has really embraced.

“I love using the Smartboard. While I was a substitute teacher, they introduced the Smartboard into the classroom. When they offered a class to attend to learn how to use the Smartboard, I went to it,” Konecne said.

“For somebody like me, who graduated in 1974, if you told me then I would basically have a computer in my hands, which is my cell phone today...the computers they had at Iowa State back in the early 1970s took up a whole room,” Konecne said.

“Also, if somebody told me I would be using YouTube as much as I do now, I would have told you that you are crazy,” Konecne said.

“In March, Aaron Copeland was our Composer of the Month for our classroom. Because of the technology we have, I have a video I can show to my class that has young people in an orchestra with the famous Leonard Bernstein with Aaron Copeland directing,” Konecne said.

“To be able to do that is just amazing. I would have loved to have been able to do that when I was a young kid,” Konecne said. “To be able to introduce all of these pieces to the kids is amazing.

It’s like a whole new world for me. I tell the kids they are lucky they have these history lessons at their disposal.”

“I use a curriculum with my fourth graders that’s really exciting to have. There’s nothing like having a test where you can see what the students are doing right and wrong. When you see the student figure it out and the look on their faces, it is so exciting for me to see that,” Konecne said.

“Whenever a student gets an answer right, they are so excited about that and I love seeing that,” Konecne said.

Konecne’s husband, Steve, passed away in December of 2020. They have two grown children in Ben and Maggie. Ben lives in Humboldt and has two children, Peyton, 12, and Liam, who is five months. Maggie teaches grades 11-12 English at New Hampton.

With retirement around the corner, Konecne is looking forward to doing many of her favorite things.

“I’m looking forward to getting back to sewing. I knit and crochet. I will also practice my musical instruments. That will be fun for a change. I have a dog to take care of. I have a bunch of painting to do inside my home,” Konecne said.

She also has relatives in the Britt and Clear Lake area as her father originally grew up in Kanawha. Her mother grew up in southwest Iowa and moved to Des Moines, where she graduated from Des Moines East High. She had worked for a time at WHO Radio in Des Moines.

“She became an English teacher and got a job at Kanawha. Her first year teaching was the year my father graduated from Kanawha. They got married in July of 1942. He ended up in the Army with Cliff Lewellyn of Humboldt. Over the years they were good friends with Cliff and his wife,” Konecne said.

“Mother’s family had a farm near Harlan, so our family moved there in 1962,” Konecne said.

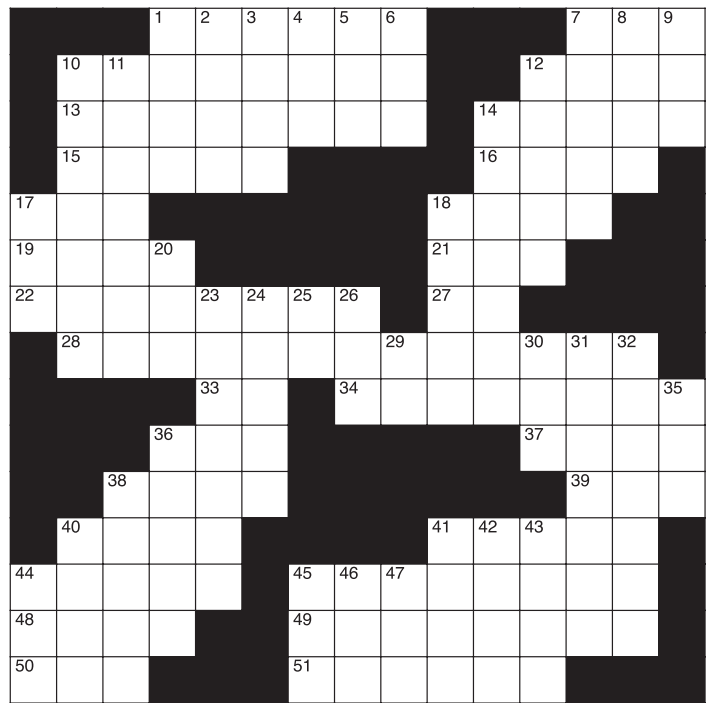
“If somebody told me I would end up in north central Iowa near my Dad’s old stomping grounds, I would have said you are crazy. But here I’ve been living here for 42 years now,” Konecne said.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Wear away by friction
7. Insecticide
10. Elicited a secret vote
12. Beef
13. Disagreement
14. ___ Crawford, supermodel
15. Jeweled headdress
16. Digits
17. Trillion hertz
18. Snap up
19. Classical portico
21. Residue after burning
22. Large integers
27. Free agent
28. Where ballplayers work
33. Blood type
34. Scottish city
36. Google certification (abbr.)
37. Serbian monetary unit
38. Make a sudden surprise attack on
39. Wood or metal bolt
40. Relaxing attire
41. Famed neurologist
44. Dullish brown fabrics
45. Member of ancient Jewish sect
48. Griffith, Rooney
49. Lawmakers
50. Government lawyers
51. The arch of the foot

CLUES DOWN

12. South Korean idol singer
14. Pirate
17. Pituitary hormone (abbr.)
18. Mistake
20. Promotions
23. Prepares
24. Partner to flowed
25. State lawyer
26. Patti Hearst's captors
29. Pound
30. Electronic data processing
31. Sports player
32. Treats with contempt
35. Apprehend
36. Excessively talkative
38. Highways
40. Ribosomal ribonucleic acid
41. College organization for males
42. Any customary observance or practice
43. Employee stock ownership plan
44. Male parent
45. The 23rd letter of the Greek alphabet
46. Female bird
47. Autonomic nervous system

CLUES DOWN

1. Nonflowering aquatic plant
2. Britpop rockers
3. National capital
4. Consumed
5. The habitat of wild animals
6. Sun up in New York
7. Cygnus star
8. Male parents
9. Talk to you (abbr.)
10. A place to clean oneself
11. Southwestern US state

APRIL'S ANSWERS

T	R	A	N	C	E	S			E	E	R	I	E					
R	E	M	O	R	S	E			K	N	A	V	E					
A	P	P	R	O	P	R	I	A	T	E	D	F	O	R				
C	E	E				E	B	B	E	D	F	R	I					
E	A	R				N	I	L	E	E	R	I	E					
S	T	E	R	I	L	I	Z	E		C	R	E	E	S				
						A	K	I	T	A	B	A	R	E	S	T		
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A	C	C	E	N	T					M	A	N	E	T				
C	O	O	R	S						P	A	N	O	R	A	M	A	S
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M	O	N	A	D						S	I	N	C	E	R	E		
E	D	U	C	E						S	L	E	D	D	E	D		

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Historically Speaking!

by Carolyn Saul Logan

Taft's Last Chapter

Fifth in a Series

The closing of Humboldt College in 1881 marked the end of 56-year-old Stephen Taft's efforts in higher education. Shortly before Humboldt College closed its doors, Taft took on the job of faculty president.

In his biography, Taft's son Fred comments that his father "spent little time in an advance analysis of what was to be done and how he was to do it." Seemingly "it never occurred to Taft that conditions and requirements had changed in the forty years since he had taught school and the result was the end of Humboldt College because of insurmountable obstacles," one of which was Taft himself.

Taft then turned to commercial pursuits. He set himself up as a land agent, opening his real estate office

in L. Winne's store and advertising that "No man is better acquainted with the lands of the county." There is a certain irony in this considering that critics accused Taft of profiting by selling land to Humboldt College at too high a price.

Taft also took up stock raising. With his son William, he developed a large herd of pure-blood Poland China swine. In 1893, "a very profitable results seemed certain . . . when out of a clear sky the scourge of cholera brought this to almost a disastrous end." An article in the Humboldt County Republican reported on a final public sale of Taft's hogs. "The disease that caused them to postpone their sale was not cholera but catarrhal fever. Taft & Co. wish it distinctly understood by the public that they will never offer anything for sale unless it is all right

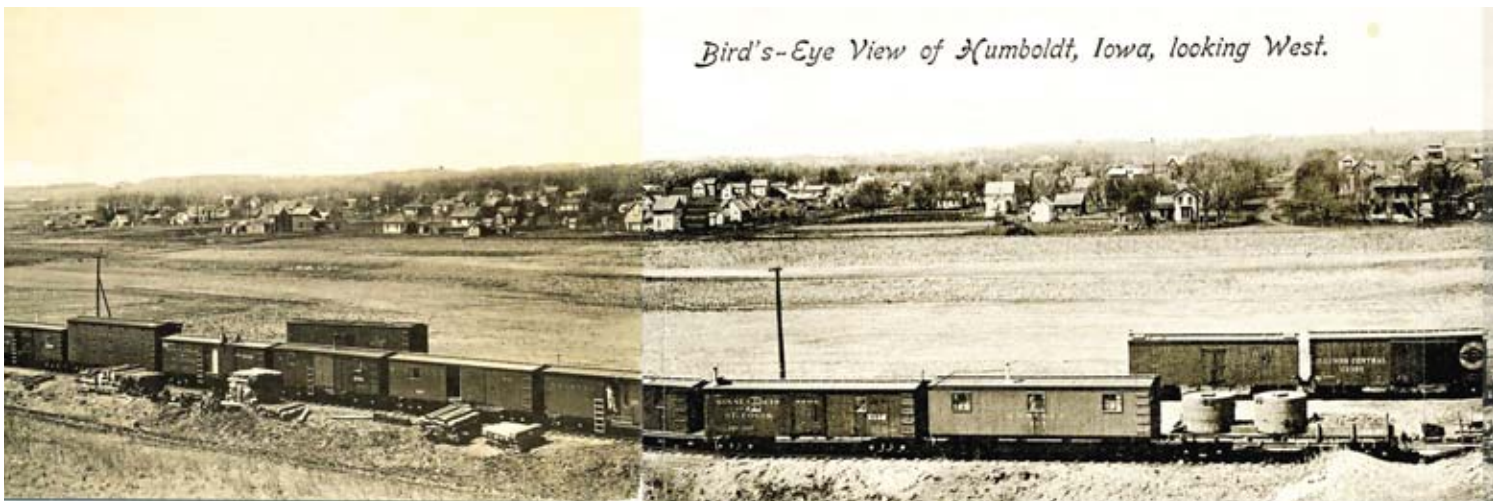
and in perfect health." Furthermore, their "pigs having passed through the disease are the safest to buy." The sale was a huge success.

In an 1892 venture and at the age of sixty-seven, Taft "permitted himself to be nominated by the Prohibition party for Secretary of State." This gave him a voice in regard to the issues of "the destruction wrought by the liquor traffic" as well as the right of women to vote. He did not win the election.

So, what next? Taft's holographic will tells us he left Humboldt, Iowa for several reasons: "he was financially dead and buried," "on the advice of a physician," "with borrowed money" to name a few. It was also "with the support of my son Fred."

Fred Taft had gone to California

Bird's-Eye View of Humboldt, Iowa, looking West.





in 1893, where he established a law firm in Santa Monica and later became a judge. Through his efforts, in 1897 the Pacific Land Company hired his father, who had experience building up a town, to take charge of establishing one on land that they owned. That town became Sawtelle, California, now part of Los Angeles. Stephen H. Taft not only got the town going in a few years, he practiced horticulture and set up Sawtelle's first nursery in 1901. According to a Sawtelle website, he "discovered" the Kadota fig by cultivating a cutting from a tree imported from Europe to California in 1887. He died at the age of ninety-two when he fell from a tree, he was trimming for one of his tenants. He is buried in Union Cemetery here in Humboldt.

So, who was this man Taft? A search through the many articles about and by Taft reveals that some people thought he was a crook and others greatly admired him. He was

a man of high aspirations; a man who early in life resolved "to make the world better for my living in it." He applied his religious and political beliefs to this purpose when he established Humboldt: a town whose early church was without factions, with good schools, an abundance of trees, free from the sale of intoxicants, and with a college of university importance. Also, it was to have a saw and grist mill. He made a stab at all of these, succeeded with some, failed with others.

One reason for failure was that Taft spent little time analyzing how to implement his ideas. Another reason was Taft never seemed to have left the East where people of similar ideals and policies and religion lived. In his biography, six pages of small print are dedicated to a letter he wrote to Julia Ward Howe from California. (Howe was an abolitionist and wrote "The Battle Hymn of the Republic.") Taft

tells about meeting John Brown, the symbol of the aggressive Northern antislavery movement, saying, "It was my great privilege to take his hand and look into his fathomless eyes." He offered to send Howe a copy of his essay on John Brown and then goes on to write about the other important people he met on his many trips to the East. "My life has been greatly enriched by association with noble men and women," and those were the people he went to for support for the College. Those were the people he looked to for recognition. And they were the ones who dropped him when difficulties developed.

Taft was never able to totally create the town he longed for and the people of Humboldt were never entirely happy with Taft. Knowing more about Stephen H. Taft may help us better understand our town and how it became what it is. In the end, it is up to us as to decide what Humboldt will become.





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<small>DATE:</small>	<small>THEME:</small>
May 13	OPENING MARKET! Mother's Day
May 27	School's Out
June 10	Father's Day
June 24	theme TBD
July 8	theme TBD
July 22	Kids' Arts Fest
July 29	BONUS MARKET! @ Humboldt Co. Fair
August 12	theme TBD
August 26	Back to School
September 9	Apple / Honey Harvest
September 23 ..	Peace Creek Animal Rescue / Moffitt Animal Shelter Fundraiser
October 7	LAST MARKET! Harvest Fest

plans/activities are subject to change

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A New Vision for the

By APRIL KELLEY



FARMERS market

For hundreds of years, farmer's markets were the primary means for urban dwellers to get fresh produce, meat and dairy. With the advent of supermarkets, farmer's markets began to disappear from the landscape. Thankfully, today, farmer's markets have returned as a vital part of many communities.

While supermarkets do carry fresh produce and other items, many shoppers feel that the quality of the items grown by their neighbors are far superior and would prefer to purchase those when in season.

Sammi Pals, Kelsey Flot and Anna Gibson wanted to be sure that the residents of Humboldt County had the option to purchase those items as well as many other things at the Humboldt Farmer's Market.

Gibson had helped at the end of the last season of the market and knew that she wanted to take on the challenge of running it this year. Knowing the amount of work and planning that goes into the farmer's market, Gibson enlisted the aid of Pals and Flot.

"A lot happened over the last several years. We had parts of Sumner Avenue that were closed and then COVID. It meant that the farmer's market had to adjust as well," stated Gibson.

That is when Gibson, Pals and Flot came up with the idea to revamp the farmer's market to update the event.

"We think of it as bringing the community together. We came up

with the slogan of 'Harvesting Humboldt's Best,'" Pals stated.

The trio see the farmer's market as more of an event where families can come and find not only fresh produce and farm items, but also crafts, baked goods and small business items.

The farmer's market will once again be held on the 600 block of Sumner Avenue on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of every month from 8 a.m. to noon.

"We knew we would get a little push back about not having it every week but we feel this gives vendors a chance to replenish their items as well as making sure that they have a chance to attend other events if they wish," stated Flot.

There will be a theme for each Saturday with four of the days being what the team likes to term 'kid centered'.

"We are planning a school's out day with chalk graffiti, bubble stations,



Sammi Pals, Kelsey Flot and Anna Gibson, co-chairs of the Humboldt Farmer's Market invite your families to join theirs this summer at the Farmer's Market on Sumner Avenue. Sammi is pictured with her family.

balloon animals and a take home craft for the kids. We are also planning a touch a truck event with trucks, farm equipment and emergency services vehicles. Then we have teamed up with the arts council for a kids art fest with the final kid friendly day being back to school," Pals stated.

Several of the weeks have yet to be assigned a theme but the first event is

set for May 13 with a Mother's Day theme.

"We are going to have a station where kids can pot a plant for mom and another where they can make a card for her," stated Flot.

There will also be a bonus market to be held at the Humboldt County Fair on July 29th.

The Humboldt Farmer's Market is in the process of seeking sponsors and volunteers before the opening day in May.

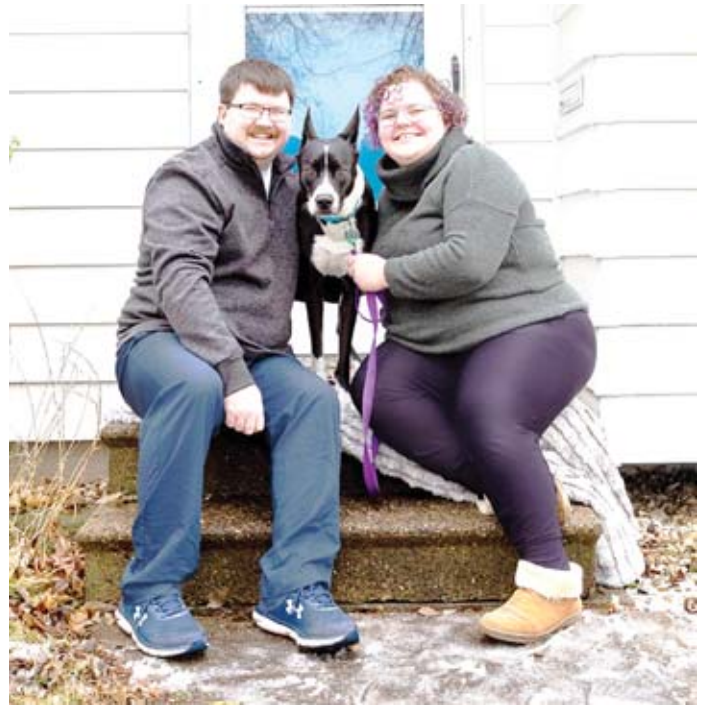
"There is always a lot of work to do. We can use help setting up booths, directing foot traffic, helping with activities and lots of things we probably haven't even thought of yet," stated Gibson.

To volunteer or become a sponsor, contact the organizers at humboldtfarmersmarket@gmail.com. They can also be found on facebook at Humboldt IA Farmers Market or check out their website at humboldtiowa.wixsite.com/farmersmarket.

Those interested in having a booth at the event are asked to submit their request to the email address above. Booths are just \$5 per day or a vendor can purchase a spot for the entire season for a discounted price.

"We are just excited about this new season and watching the market grow. We may be a small town but we have a big vision for what the farmer's market can be," stated Pals.

Looking at the schedule of events planned so far, it really does look like the new Humboldt Farmer's Market will truly be "Harvesting Humboldt's Best".



Anna Gibson and family.



Kelsey Flot and family.

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Like a grapevine, River Valley Orchards, Winery and Distillery is branching out

By **KENT THOMPSON**

While some people were kicking back and tuning out during the 2020 pandemic year, Brian Gibson of River Valley Orchards, Winery & Distillery got busy.

Gibson found the secret to producing highly demanded local wines, made nearly exclusively from fruit grown on the farm, four miles west of Humboldt on Highway 3. But he wanted to do more.

“I always wanted to distill spirits. COVID gave me an opportunity and it almost became a necessity,” Gibson explained.

“We were closed for nearly a year-and-a-half but that gave us time to do some experimenting and find that we could make some distilled spirits.

“At that time, you couldn’t open a winery and operate a bar. We were also losing parties to other venues because we couldn’t offer mixed drinks. We needed to do something and that (creating a distillery) seemed like the logical next step,” Gibson said.

“It took just shy of a year to get all the licenses and meet the state and federal requirements to become a distillery. Now, we are just one of two wineries/distilleries in the state,” Gibson said.

“Actually, I wanted to start a brewery but there were too many regulations. It just made it impractical,” the local fruit grower and winemaker said.

“While we wanted to do it, starting a distillery was really a luxury given the time and space it takes. And while we were doing that, we can’t bottle wine. We had to take the distiller out to put the primary fermenter and other winemaking equipment in,” Gibson said.

Now, River Valley Orchards can offer what Gibson calls “ish” drinks. We can’t sell distilled spirits by the bottle, but we can offer flights and those are very popular with our customers,” Gibson said.

“We had to start with the TTB (Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau). There were three different offices in three states, one in Ohio, one in (Washington) D.C., and another. The whiskey industry is one of the most regulated industries in the country. Lots of questions and not just about the product and the process. They wanted to know what the doors are made of and how they are locked,” Gibson said.

“I do have to say, the Iowa Alcoholic Beverages Division has been very good to work with,” Gibson said.

“All of our spirit products are homegrown with our own fruit. Our vodka-ish product is out of the Aronia chokeberry, our bourbon-ish drink is out of the grapes. We don’t do a corn mash but it’s basically the same fermentation process with a different recipe,” Gibson said.



There are 21 wines licensed for sale at River Valley.



River Valley Orchards, Winery and Distillery is indeed a family affair, as Brian (left), grandson Jason (center) and son Corey (right) all work at the local business. NOW! photos by Kent Thompson.

Run through the still with a restriction valve, the distilled spirit is 178 proof. It is sold at 70-80 percent in the mixes.

Humble start

Brian and wife Nicole purchased the 12-acre farm in 1998 and have incrementally developed an orchard and then a winery and now a distillery.

“The winery started in 2008. Trent Wright was a good friend of mine and we had all of these red raspberries on the farm. I asked, ‘what am I going to do with all of these. He said, ‘make wine.’

“I got to know Ken Groninga, a retired veterinarian who started a winery in Eagle City in the Iowa River Greenbelt. He had a great recipe for making wine from red raspberries. Then he sent me some white and red grapes that he had success with and everything just grew from there. We had a little tasting room and opened for business,” Gibson said.

Since that time, the business has steadily grown. That was until 2020, when the pandemic put a hold on everything.

“We were having wine and food tastings for brides and then crickets. No one wanted to have a wedding with only 8-10 people there. We were very lucky. I’d say all but one or two rescheduled their wedding events,” Gibson said.

“We have always had things going on during the weekends and we’ve just expanded on that over time,” he said.

The locale is open from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sundays. Sundays feature live music from 1-3 p.m. in the West Wing. The Orchard Hall comfortably seats 300 and is a great venue for large parties and more private intimate gatherings.

“We have live music every Sunday and we probably rotate about a dozen different performers or small groups. It can

become crowded, so the sooner you arrive the better the table. If you have a larger group it is good to call ahead,” Gibson said.

Food offerings never disappoint. There is stone-fired pizza and there is cheese bread, garlic bread and Charcuterie Boards. Sometimes the cook makes ribeye or brisket sandwiches.

River Valley has about 21 licensed wines and make 18 of them. Of the Orchard wines, Heritage is the wine named



Aronia berries are used in both vodka and sweet red wine made at the River Valley Orchards, Winery and Distillery.

after the red raspberries mentioned earlier. It has an aroma that appeals to both the sweet and dry wine connoisseur. Harvest Reserve is a combination of three different plum varieties. The Vineyard Reserve is a dry white wine that uses an Edelweiss grape and is popular.

The orchard also sells Crapp wines. Those are the varieties with the late Paul and Sandra Wright on the bottle. “They were great family friends and we buy concentrated juice from California that we bottle for the Crapp wines. “It tastes like chicken and smells like feet,” Gibson joked.

The orchard also produces Beez Yak Mead, a traditional honey fermented with wine from bees about eight miles south of the River Valley Orchards.

Busy all the time

The orchard features more than 3,000 trees about 500-600 grape vines.

Because grapes ripen at different times, there is always crops to harvest it seems.

“We check the sugar levels and the amount of acid tells us when to pick. So, the dry weather we have experienced the past few years has been great for grapes,” Gibson said.

On April 12, Brian was very excited after planting over 200 raspberry bushes.

“We fill the fermenters with grapes we need to and freeze the rest. We don’t use the huge stainless-steel silos you see at some wineries,” Gibson said.

“We produce anywhere from 6,000-10,000 bottles of wine a year,” he said.

For the distilled spirits it’s just getting going and since there are no bottle sales, it’s a little tough to tell. “If we sell 200 gallons it would be good but it could be more. People love the flights, but every millimeter has to be accounted for, so the proofing and temperatures and all the recording has to be exact,” Gibson said.

“It’s an immaculate conglomeration of BS,” he laughed.

The winery is not just for weddings and anniversary parties. There are corporate team building events, business retreats and customer appreciation events during the week. In addition to graduation and birthday parties, the venue has a lot of Christmas parties as well.

Brian’s son Corey is the kitchen manager and he and Brian share in the cooking duties.

“There are things that are his specialties and things I like to dabble in. All of it is made from scratch,” Brian Gibson said.

“He’s the grill master and has a prime rib that rivals another popular restaurant in the area,” Gibson said.

People also enjoy the pasta and taco bars at the winery.

“We have a phenomenal crew right now and we try to compensate people fairly. We are always hiring, so someone who enjoys pleasing the customer should give us a holler,” he said.

“I started doing this because I wanted to be my own boss, and that’s what I love about it, that and interacting with people.

“You never get bored. When it’s nice outside I can weed,

fertilize, plant grapes, harvest grapes or fruit and prune trees. When it’s raining, I can make wine, label wine, clean – there’s just always something to do,” Gibson said.

“Getting the chance to work with my family is the best,” Gibson said, while watching son Corey and grandson Jason kick a soccer ball around the front of the bar.

It’s easy to see that he takes pride in what he does and enjoys the heck out of it.



Many weddings at the business are of the outdoor variety and there are several locations for a scenic special day. Here Corey and Jason Gibson relax under a pine tree.



Left: On a recent warm and blustery morning, the Gibsons planted 200 yellow raspberry plants that will be ready for picking in the fall.



Each grape vine can produce about 50 pounds of fruit so they needed to be secured to stay straight.

River Valley Orchards Winery & Distillery



An outside patio and West Wing tasting and entertainment venue are more recent additions to the business.



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Out & About



Kiwanis Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 8, 2023

Photos by Kent Thompson



Seven-year-old Ashlynn Schumann (left) and 4-year-old Jordynn Trevis (right), meet the friendly Easter Bunny.



Children grabbed pieces of candy. Many of them had tags for prizes.



Caelynn and Cylee Hartmann of Humboldt pose with the guest of honor at the Kiwanis Easter Egg Hunt.



Cora Lee Hardmann, 5-1/2, of Humboldt, gets an affectionate pat from the Easter Bunny.

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