

Storms pummel county

Continued from front page

Hail damage
The city of Mount Ayr escaped any hits from a tornado, but wasn't spared from large and destructive hail Friday evening.
Hail upwards of 3 1/2 inches in diameter severely damaged roofs, sidings windows and vehicles.
Fortunately, Glendenning Motors in Mount Ayr had enough room under-roof for their inventory. Residents' cars that were forced to remain outside during the storm sustained numerous dents and broken windows.
First thing Saturday morning, roofing contractors from around the state were in the city trying to sign up business.
[Area insurance agencies will be bringing in adjusters as soon as practical to begin the gigantic effort to basically re-roof the entire city.
As for city damage, City Administrator Brent Wise expects some roof damage, along with the broken globe lights that line the square.
"We don't know the full extent of it yet," stated Wise, "we did turn in a claim, and an insurance adjuster will be out to survey damage later this week."
Wise expects a one time deductible will pay for damage, and hopes to have information to share at the next city council meeting on Monday, May 6.
Ringgold County Emergency Management coordinator Melissa Stark, the Ringgold County Sheriff's Office, and emergency responders knew there was going to be severe storms coming in, but initial weather reports showed the system heading towards Taylor County.
An initial siren, alerting the northwest corner of Ringgold County, was sounded as part of the typical severe weather protocol.
Then the storm quickly shifted direction, and emergency teams were alerted that Mount Ayr was expected to take a direct hit.
"Roughly 60 seconds before the tornado hit the north side of Hwy 2, people could see the tornado from their homes," stated Stark.
A county-wide tornado warning was then issued and a second siren alerted residents in Mount Ayr of a tornado as more rotation was forming.

The path of the tornado then shifted away from Mount Ayr and hit the Winemiller's property just southeast of town.
The tornado continued across Hwy 2 past Rhonda Triggs property, through Poe Hollow Park, and continued northeast striking other property owners including John and Debbie Larsen, and Rex and Ann Walters near Beaconsfield.
The sirens were sounded a third time when emergency responders realized Tingley was being hit.
"The second cell came through 30 minutes later," said Stark, "Tingley lost power just after 7:00 p.m., so unfortunately their siren did not sound."
Stark is anticipating 8-10 total property losses in Tingley, but is still sorting through classifying residential structures from non-residential structures.
"There are 40-50 sites with damage," said Stark, "the Red Cross will be providing support for those severely impacted."
Over the weekend, the town of Tingley received two Red Cross deliveries of emergency food, water and other items.
Stark is still collecting reports, sorting through the worst of the damage, and getting aerial footage to help confirm all the tornado activity across the county.
The total tornado count, classification, wind speed and details of the tornadoes are expected to change as additional information is compiled and reviewed.
Residents are encouraged to report storm damage to Ringgold County Emergency Management. An online survey link is being shared to report damage to your property, roads, utilities or any other storm-related information. Residents can also send the damage location, homeowners name, and photos if possible by email to: mstark@ringgoldcounty.us
If you cannot email, please call to report: 641-464-3344.
Reports will be sent to Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management and made available to your local emergency manager to better understand the event that caused the damage.
Governor Kim Reynolds on Monday issued a disaster proclamation

for eight additional counties in response to severe weather that occurred on April 26.
The governor's proclamation allows state resources to be utilized to respond to and recover from the effects of this severe weather and activates the Iowa Individual Assistance Grant Program and Disaster Case Advocacy Program for the following counties: Clarke, Crawford, Harrison, Mills, Polk, Ringgold, Shelby, and Union. A disaster proclamation was previously issued for Pottawattamie County on April 26.
The Iowa Individual Assistance Grant Program provides grants of up to \$5,000 for households with incomes up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Grants are available for home or car repairs, replacement of clothing or food, and temporary housing expenses. Original receipts are required for those seeking reimbursement for actual expenses related to storm recovery.
The grant application and instructions are available on the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management website at homelandsecurity.iowa.gov/assistance. Potential applicants have 45 days from the date of the proclamation to submit a claim.
The Disaster Case Advocacy Program addresses serious needs related to disaster-related hardship, injury, or adverse conditions. Disaster case advocates work with clients to create a disaster recovery plan and provide guidance, advice, and referrals to obtain a service or resource. There are no income eligibility requirements for this program; it closes 180 days from the date of the governor's proclamation. For information on the Disaster Case Advocacy Program, contact your local community action agency or visit iowacomunityaction.org.
The proclamation also temporarily suspends regulatory provisions of the Iowa Code that pertain to procurement of goods and services, hours of service for disaster repair crews, and various requirements for the transportation of loads related to disaster repairs.

Snapshots of History

meavitt@gmail.com



Bird's-eye view of Knowlton.

BY MIKE AVITT
This is a great view of Knowlton as seen between the years 1905-1915.
The view is looking southeast and shows all three of Knowlton's brick buildings.
The photo appears to have been taken from the upstairs window of the two-story, wood-frame high school which was built in 1894.
What we know as Ringgold County Road J-23 was Knowlton's Main Street when this picture was taken.
Let's see if I can find some previously unpublished information on Knowlton.
It's fairly well known Everett Yaryan is Ringgold County's only baseball player to make it to the major leagues, but Knowlton had many baseball stars and a great team for three decades.
C. C. Ives was a star player and he and Yaryan would sometimes be "hired" to play for other teams in a "must win" situation. Ives played for Maryville, Mo. and Creston on certain occasions.
There was much gambling on amateur baseball and grudge matches were common. Let's say Creston was playing their arch rival from Greenfield. Since Knowlton never

played Greenfield, the Greenfield boys wouldn't know Ives was a "ringer" hired for that one game.
Lefty Geist, Peanut Cowell, and Homer Holland were other Ringgold County ballplayers who hired themselves out.
Ebon McAninch began teaching at Knowlton in 1914 and he started the girls' basketball program. Interestingly, he was offered the principal position for the 1915-16 school year but he turned it down.
He returned to Knowlton after one year at Beaconsfield and would later marry one of his star players from the 1914-15 squad, Bertha Overholser.
In 1916, Zulah Larson was the only graduate from Knowlton High School. It was announced in the summer of 1919 Knowlton would no longer offer grades 11 and 12 to the students.
In May 1921, the Knowlton Odd Fellows Lodge merged with that of Diagonal. Also in 1921, the Chicago Great Western Railway moved the section crew from Knowlton to Diagonal, the post office closed, and the depot shut down.
Game over.
But Knowlton got off to a fast start having the coal shoots on a mainline rail-

road in 1887.
Freight service began in January 1888. The depot was completed in December 1887 and Knowlton had a doctor, a newspaper, and a preacher by 1889. By 1890, Knowlton had two churches and a post office.
From what I can determine, William Sherrill and J. F. McGinty co-founded Knowlton in 1887.
Sherrill sought business ventures elsewhere after a few years but McGinty had business dealings until it was clear the town could not be saved. McGinty was very active in fraternal organizations such as the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.
Leander Elmer "Gan" Yaryan closed his store in May 1932; it was the last business in Knowlton. The town still had a school but it was lower grades only.
Knowlton forfeited its incorporated status in 1926.
The bridge over the railroad tracks was built in 1940 and the old high school was razed in 1941. It was replaced with a new rural school as there were still many homes in the vicinity.
That school was purchased by the Mount Ayr School system in 1956.

Residents escape injury

Continued from front page

house south of Tingley, reporting everything went east.
In Tingley Jerry and JoAnn Clark lost their home.
"Our double wide mobile home is now split in two, and it moved three feet to the east," said Clark, "our new garage was only held together by the spray foam insulation."
Their work shed was upside down, their travel trailer ended up in a tree and their new RV was picked up and came to rest on its side.
"I heard a terrible noise, the power was out, and I was stuck in my chair," said Kevin Kiburz, "I probably would have been with the Lord if we had been hit."
"We didn't have power for two days, it was back on Sunday after we got home from church," said Kiburz.
While he and his wife Anna Catherine did not have tornado damage at their house, they spent the weekend helping his cousin, Judy Kiburz, clean up damage at her home.
The tornado demolished the garage, and took off the back part of the roof, blew out all the windows, and sent insulation everywhere.
"The inside of the house looks like a bomb went off," said Kevin.
Judy sheltered in the bathroom during the storm, and was not in-

jured.
"There were volunteers that came from all over," Kevin said, "they brought large equipment to help clean up and get trees cut down."
At the Rex Walters farm just south of Beaconsfield, Walter's daughter Carol Ann Weeda said her parents were able to get into their basement before the tornado struck their farm. She said their weather alert alarm went off as they were exiting the basement after the storm had passed.
A barn, trailer, outbuildings and trees all suffered destruction or damage.
She reminisced about the barn that was destroyed.
"A lot of memories with that building. We put a lot of hogs through it," said Weeda.
Kim Scharfenkamp was looking to the west from the south door of her house along 169 Hwy, five miles south of Mount Ayr, around 7:20 p.m. on Friday, April 26 when she captured photos of a tornado near Hwy. 169.
"I noticed a second multiple funnel to my south with debris swirling," Scharfenkamp stated, "I assume the debris came from the farm directly south of us across the bridge on 169. This farm is missing a building and roof is partially gone."
She went to the basement at that time. When she came out afterwards, she saw the tornado to the northeast of them.

Scharfenkamp captured pictures of the debris directly to her south after seeing the funnels.
Doris Walters told Scharfenkamp the tornado on the west crossed the Hwy just south of her. Doris is less than a mile to the north of Scharfenkamp.
Ladies affiliated with the Redding church said the tornado divided into three separate ones.
Scharfenkamp has posted photos on her facebook page in the order she saw them.
She also reached out to one of the storm chasers Monday to ask about the multi vortexes.
According to Hunter Hurley, storm spotters believe the first born tornado was a multi-vortex and transitioned into a cone before a meso-hand off occurred and spawned another multiple vortex tornado.
"At one point we believe to of had 3-5 vortices on the ground simultaneously," Hurley stated in a message to Scharfenkamp.
Melvin Gray, a 90-something resident who lives in his house just south of Mount Ayr, sat on his porch as silos and buildings across the road were destroyed or damaged.
"I figured I would just sit here. I've lived this long and if the good Lord wanted me now he could have me," said Gray.
Gray and his house survived intact.

Hospital board updates

Continued from page 8

get.
She emphasized the importance of the "not to exceed number" set and outlined a summary of RCH debt obligation which includes all bonds and the requirement to maintain a 60 day base and a 1.25 debt service coverage percent.
Christensen also discussed the new Iowa Medicaid Direct Payment Program (DPP).
Medicaid is currently a joint funding program, with federally matched dollars that the state funds. All hospitals in Iowa are now contributing to this fund including RCH and with the exception of the University of Iowa Hospitals, who have their own funding program. Funds are distributed on a quarterly basis. The first quarter distribution was received in March. This is a new program which is intended to impact cash flow.
The base of the budget being proposed for county tax budget came up with

an increase.
New to the budget year is the Medicaid provider tax which will match a couple million dollars. Cash flow, 1.9 EBIDA is projecting just under \$2M cash generated in this next year.
Capital expenditures show \$500,000 for routine expenditures, \$760,000 for next year are the annual amounts through the great western bonds RCH is currently capped at. Christensen explained these capped amounts can be changed.
As far as available cash budgeted for 2024-2025, \$2.7M net cash is projected for 2024.
RCH books are currently sitting with about 100 days cash on hand. The projected amount should bring up those days to 135-138 total days cash on hand for 2025 and an anticipated 170 in 2026. If the direct payment program were to stop it would impact the length of time to get cash on hand to the number required or preferred.
Regarding the county

tax levy, valuations for Ringgold county property only went up about \$1M between 2024 and 2025.
The budget proposes a 3.69 tax levy, which is basically no change from the previous year. The total asking is about \$1.5M.
Christensen concluded the budget looked like "a good foundation for strategic planning" and suggested approving the county budget. A motion and second were both made and the budget was approved.
Debbie Miner gave the monthly report discussing the cyber breach from February 29 to March 25 which hampered the ability for providers to key info into the actual payment portal to receive payment.
This was fixed by March 25 for all payers except title XVIV traditional and Missouri Title XVIV. It is expected all money that was held up due to the cyber issues will be recouped by the end of May.
Nikki Gilbertson rounded out the meeting intro-

Continued on page 15