



The alley behind the new Community Resource Center in downtown Guttenberg was paved with asphalt last week by River City Paving. Residents interested in having their alley paved must meet the criteria as outlined in the accompanying story by Public Works Director Dan Pierce. (Press photo by Austin Greve)

## How to have your alley paved

(Continued from Page 1) years. (Example: for a 50-foot frontage, total cost to the property owner would be a one-time payment of around \$1000, usually less (or just over \$100/yr for 10 years). This is the cheapest and easiest option.

**Option 2:** If one or more property owners are not able to pay for their portion of the alley, other interested property owners can choose to pay for that portion(s) in order to still get the job completed. One property owner can fully pay for another property or it can be split among other property owners. This is a great alternative to still get the job done with added cost to those who can afford to help others out.

**Option 3:** The City can choose to get an alley paved as an assessment project for adjacent property owners. This process may include engineering and assessment costs on top of the contractor costs which can significantly raise the total project cost by 20% or more. If 75% of property owners are interested in

paving their alley, but not interested in paying for those not interested, the City can choose to go this route.

The maintenance of a gravel alley, especially alleys prone to ponding and high traffic, is a significant cost to the City and taxpayers. Adding gravel is not always the best solution and many times just moves potholes and ponding areas to new locations. Grading is the best course of action, but can only be done when conditions permit, neither when it is too wet or too dry, and the public works crew is not always available at that perfect time due to other tasks and priorities.

If any property owner is interested in getting this process started, go to City Hall and ask for the form to begin gathering signatures from all property owners on the block. If you need help explaining options or calculating costs, please reach out to City Hall at 563-252-1161 and we will be happy to help out with the process!

## Donate Life Month: Donor mom advocates for organ, eye and tissue donation

(Continued from Page 1) agree,” Troester said.

Now, with Jarren as her inspiration, Troester advocates throughout the year—and particularly during Donate Life Month in April—for organ, eye and tissue donation. She’s also a member of Team Iowa, a collective of donor families, living donors and transplant recipients, and regularly participates in Iowa Donor Network events.

“I think the support from everybody, you get to hear all the stories. For me, it’s part of the healing process,” she said. “For a parent, losing a child is the worst tragedy. But it helps so much in the healing, knowing you helped another family.”

According to Troester, spring, with April as Donate Life Month, is like “a kick off to another year. There’s events going on all month long for April.” Then, a fundraiser called the Give Life 5K is held annually the first Saturday in May, at Raccoon River Park in West Des Moines. An event at the Field of Dreams in Dyersville will pit Team Iowa against Team Michigan.

The Transplant Games of America are held bi-yearly, and Troester went to her first in 2022, in San Diego. “We would really love to get more people to join us on Team Iowa to participate,” Troester said. “Some people think, when they hear games, ‘Oh, we’re not physically fit to be participating in games,’ but everyone is a living donor or recipient. It’s more for fun, healing, connecting with people, sharing our stories. You don’t have to be an all star athlete.”

Troester said her involvement blossomed after 2010, when she first heard

from Crystal, one of two recipients of Jarren’s corneas. (The other, a man, accepted a letter from the family, but never reached out.) Troester responded to Crystal’s thank you note, and the two became friends on Facebook. In 2013, Troester learned Crystal planned to skydive for her 30th birthday, a long-time goal made possible by the donation.

“She could not do that because of her eye issues. But when she received J’s cornea and her eye was healed, she was able to do that,” Troester said.

When Crystal invited her to attend, Troester was unsure, since they’d never met in person. She eventually reconsidered and worked with Crystal’s stepmom on a surprise. Crystal jumped out of the plane, only to find Jarren’s family on the landing pad. It was all documented in a video and even a TV news story.

Today, Troester considers Crystal “like a family member.” They’ve celebrated holidays and other birthdays together and, in 2014, the two became the first donor family and recipient to speak together in Iowa City at an annual memorial.

Troester has spoken multiple times since—alone and with others.

“It is very emotional. My first couple public speaking, I was a train wreck. I cried through most of them,” she said. “I have a handful now behind me that I made it through speaking and sharing stories.”

As a donor mom and recipient aunt—her now teenage nephew, Dylan Troester, received a kidney in 2009—Troester wants to

do more to raise awareness and educate people.

There’s certainly a need. Over 104,000 people are waiting for an organ or tissue, noted Troester. A new person is added to the national organ transplant list every eight minutes, and an average of 13 people die each day waiting. Luckily, an average of 115 transplants occur daily in the United States and, in 2024, the country saw the most organ transplants ever.

Last year alone, there were 16,988 deceased donors in the U.S. and 7,030 living donors (kidney or liver). In Iowa, there were 130 organ donors a year ago and 387 organs transplanted, along with 1,118 tissue donors and 2,451 tissues recovered.

Statistics Troester cited said one deceased donor can save up to eight lives and enhance between 50 and 300 lives through tissue donation.

“I think people don’t realize how much could be given, even through live donation. You can donate one of your kidneys and you can donate part of your liver, too,” Troester explained. “If you’ve never had to deal with a family member in need, or a close friend, you don’t know the importance of that. So we try to stress that.”

Troester is open to speaking at community events or health care facilities, and can bring in other speakers through the Iowa Donor Network. She can also be a one-on-one resource for families. It’s something she said there wasn’t a lot of in the area when Jarren passed.

“That’s probably why it took me so long from the time of Jarren’s accident



As a donor mom and recipient aunt—her now teenage nephew, Dylan Troester, received a kidney in 2009—Misty Troester works to raise awareness and educate people. “If you’ve never had to deal with a family member in need, or a close friend, you don’t know the importance. So we try to stress that,” she said. (Submitted photo)

in 2005 until connecting with Crystal, because, back in 2005, you didn’t hear a lot about it in our area,” she said. “I really think our area needs more. Families need that support.”

“I just really wanna bring more awareness to everybody in northeast Iowa and southwest Wisconsin, since we’re so close,” Troester continued. If anything, make sure “that little heart is checked on your driver’s license to be an organ donor. Every person counts.”

Learn more at [www.iowadonornetwork.org](http://www.iowadonornetwork.org), or contact Troester directly at (563) 880-3057.

## Clayton Ridge won’t hold school on Mondays starting next year

There won’t be any cases of the Mondays at Clayton Ridge schools after the Board of Directors voted to make those days off from school at their April 23 meeting.

The board approved a four-day school week during their April 10 meeting. The schedule change is expected for the 2025-26 school year.

“We were able to approve it a couple of weeks ago, and now we’re back to consider whether it will be Monday or Friday as the day off,” said Clayton Ridge Superintendent Shane Wahls.

Wahls provided data comparing the two scenarios, including statistical information from the district; surveys from parents, students and faculty; and athletics and activities schedules.

“I think, on a personal level, the most meaningful piece of data that we have right now is our surveys,” said Wahls. “Now, 65 percent—nearly two out of three parents—were in favor of going to the four-day week. It’s the same percent-

age in favor of Mondays. I think that’s very telling.”

According to Wahls, the 65 percent of parents that favor Mondays as a day off are not exclusively parents that wanted a four-day school week.

“Some of that 65 percent that says Monday are people that don’t want to do this, but if they have to, they prefer Monday,” he said.

The district surveyed students in grades 8-11, and 61 percent wanted Mondays off.

Faculty surveyed favored Fridays (58 percent).

According to Wahls, of everyone who took the survey, 60 percent favored Mondays.

For attendance, the students and faculty had similar numbers for Mondays and Fridays. The elementary school averaged 20 students absent on Mondays and 21 on Fridays. The middle school and high school averaged 17 on Mondays and 18 on Fridays. Twelve percent of faculty absences occurred on Mondays, and 10 percent happened on Fridays.

There were wider disparities in office referrals; however, in aggregate, the district still had similar results between the two days. At the elementary school, 18 percent of office referrals happened on Mondays, and 20 percent took place on Fridays.

The middle school had a much higher rate of referrals on Fridays (31 percent) than on Mondays (18 percent), but the high school had the opposite ratio, with 28 percent of referrals occurring on Mondays and 20 percent on Fridays.

Student attendance and discipline reports used data from the current school year.

Wahls added that taking Mondays off would have less impact on athletic programs than Fridays.

“If we’re trying to give families a three-day weekend, then Monday is a better choice when you look at it that way because we’re not in gyms in the morning. We’re not going to do strength and conditioning in the morning. It’s going to be a normal practice time

on Monday afternoon,” he said.

He also noted that the dentist offices in town are closed on Fridays.

“When thinking about appointments and when people can make those, if Fridays are the day off, that makes it difficult,” he said. School budget

The board also approved the district’s budget for next year during the meeting.

A budget hearing took place on April 23 prior to the school board’s meeting. A separate budget hearing was held on March 26.


The presented budget included approximately \$35 million, with a property tax levy of \$4.6 million. The mill rate is approximately 11.52 per \$1,000 of taxable property.

“Remember, this is all budget planning and projecting for next year,” said Wahls. “We typically amend it almost every year.”


The budget summary is available on the school’s website at <https://www.claytonridgeschools.com/category/school-board-meeting-minutes>.

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10 Schiller St.  
P.O. BOX 937  
GUTTENBERG, IOWA 52052-0937  
563-252-2421  
[www.guttenbergpress.com](http://www.guttenbergpress.com)  
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Subscription rates: 4-county area including Clayton, Delaware, Dubuque and Allamakee counties in Iowa, 1 year \$48.00, Out of 4-county area 1 year \$60.00, Online 1 year \$35.00; Single Copy \$1.25 at Press Office and vendors; \$3 by mail.