

SUN COURIER

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PHOTO BY RUBY F. MCALLISTER

Tama County Board of Conservation acting chair Steve Kenkel, second from right, listens during the Wednesday, May 7 regular meeting held in Otter Creek Nature Center as board member Chris Behrens (off frame) addresses public comments regarding programming. Also pictured, board members Danielle Dunning (far left) and Jim Allen (obscured), Director Curtis Behrens (center), and Naturalist Angela Tague (far right).

‘I suspect it’s going to be different’
Alleged inconsistent communication, missed visits by naturalist top public comments during Conservation meeting

RUBY F. MCALLISTER | rbodeker@northtamatelegraph.com

OTTER CREEK LAKE — Tama County’s new naturalist and an alleged lack of programming dominated public comment during the Wednesday, May 7 meeting of the Board of Conservation.

“On March 24, I contacted the nature center and spoke to [Director Curtis Behrens]. He informed me that the new naturalist had been hired and started work that day. I asked if our regularly scheduled program would occur on the fourth Wednesday, which was two days later. Curtis stated that she would have a week of training so she would not be able to attend that date, but that he would have her reach out to me regarding a program on the fourth Wednesday in April,” Lacy Starits, owner and director of Miss Lacy’s Preschool in Toledo, said as part of her public comments which kicked off the May regular meeting. “On April 4, I reached out again ... I left a

CONSERVATION | P5



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From cicada seminars to foot care clinics, author talks to iJAG internships, it’s been an amazing year at the Garwin Public Library! Director Dani Dunning (top left photo, center back) pictured with GMG students on Hat Day during Read Across America Week (March 2-6, 2025).

Garwin Public Library’s Amazing Year

DANIELLE DUNNING | SPECIAL TO THE SUN COURIER

GARWIN – Since the last library update over in Garwin, countless amazing happenings have taken place and it’s all thanks to the efforts of the Garwin Public Library staff, Garwin Library Foundation, and collaborations within the community. Many memories have been made, even more books have been checked out, and let us not fail to mention multiple levels of learning have been unlocked!

LIBRARY | P7

WEEKEND FORECAST:

Saturday: CHANCE OF RAIN High: 66 / Low: 48

Sunday: CHANCE OF RAIN High: 68 / Low: 52

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Congratulations, Class of 2025!

Gladbrook-Reinbeck, GMG high schools hold Sunday afternoon commencement exercises



PHOTO BY LAURA BRU/THE PIE LADY

Green Mountain-Garwin High School Class of 2025 graduates toss their caps in the air in celebration following commencement exercises in Garwin on Sunday, May 18. This year’s class included 36 graduates.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

GMG High School Class of 2025 graduates pose for a group photograph at the elementary school in Green Mountain during a visit with students on Friday, May 16.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CORISSA SNIDER

The Gladbrook-Reinbeck High School Class of 2025. This year’s class included 37 (official) graduates including Vanessa Arvizu-Ersland (front left), Nattalee Brinkman (front row, fourth from left), and Akeelah Blakely (second row, fourth from left) who together comprised the top-10% of the class.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CORISSA SNIDER

G-R Class of 2025 Vice President Vanessa Arvizu-Ersland speaks during commencement exercises held in the high school gym in Reinbeck on May 18. Class President Aliyah Clark (not pictured) also spoke during the ceremony.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CORISSA SNIDER

G-R graduate Jaden Hansen, right, gives her mom a hug after presenting her with a class flower during commencement exercises Sunday afternoon in Reinbeck. Tulips were given by every graduate to the mother/grandmother/guardian/sister of their choice.