



The North Union FFA gave a power point presentation of their recent trip to Nashville where they attended the National FFA Convention.

North Union FFA speak about their National Trip

By Kim Meyer

Ten North Union High School FFA members, who traveled to Nashville for the annual National FFA Convention, gave a power point presentation to the school board on Monday, November 26th. Also present was their advisor Sarah Proctor.

The students described traveling with two other FFA chapters and making stops along the way learning about agriculture. They also spoke about the convention and what they learned.

At the end of the presentation, they thanked the school board for allowing them to attend the event.

The board approved an early graduation request for Grace Lappegard.

The SBRC application for open enrollment not included on the 2024-25 count in the amount of \$42,676.25 was approved.

Sue Brown was approved to represent the NU District as the Director District No. 1 of Prairie AEA Lakes Board of Directors.

Approved the resignation of Tricia Harmon as an elementary para educator. Approved the hiring of Jenessa Ehman as a elementary para educator.

Before the meeting closed Jen Von Bank and Gene Miller were thanked for their years of service on the school board.

The organization meeting of the new school board was called to order. Ethan Jensen, who replaces Miller, was sworn in. Brian Craig, who was a write in for Von Bank's seat, was

unable to attend the meeting and will be sworn in at the next meeting. Incumbent Art Pixler was also sworn in.

North Union superintendent Travis Schueller spoke to the new school board members about watching a session on open meeting laws. He stated that if any other members of the board would like to watch the session, to contact him.

Travis Nielsen was elected as new board president with Jason Pergande as vice president.

Due to conflicts on Monday night, the monthly meetings will now be held on first Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

There will be no December meeting.

Principal Zotz updates board on high school activities and achievements

By Kim Meyer

North Union High School Principal Robert Zotz highlighted high school events since the start of the year during the North Union School Board meeting.

Principal Zotz reported the fall extra curricular activities have seen much success. In football, the junior varsity team went 8-0, and the varsity team qualified for state playoffs losing in the second round.

In volleyball, team finished fourth in Top of Iowa Conference with Brylie Deim breaking the NU all time kills record.

Alexis Cummings finished 71st at the state cross country meet.

The new vocal teacher Natalie Keenan, along with her students, performed the musical Addams Family.

Cheer finished 12th in the Class 1A state competition.

He noted that canvas project that was started last year, which features the activities throughout the high school, will be updated each season.

Advisory Time which allows time to building relationships between teachers and students and students with other students have been very busy. In September, they did a freshmen welcome. In October, they built scarecrows that were placed along the building. In November, they put together Thanksgiving meal baskets and decorated doors for Christmas. Upcoming events in December will include decorating gingerbread houses, minute to win in

competitions and Christmas trivia.

Chris Stevens is the new Robotics Club Coach. He applied for a grant through NASA who offers grants. NASA selects a very limited number of high schools across the country that have demonstrated a strong potential to launch and sustain a successful Robotics program. North Union was awarded a \$6,300 grant to be used for the program.

Principal Zotz noted a grant for the FFA chapter what was used to build a chicken coop. The coop recently housed four chickens which have now gone onto a new home.

The North Union Athletic Booster Club is covering the expense to bring Ethan Miller, a Performance Coach, to the high school.

Miller will be on the high school campus six full days throughout the school year and will meet with the student-athletes in a variety of formats:

- 1 on 1 individual meetings
- Small group sessions
- Team or class presentations
- Practice support/observation
- Coaches meetings (head and assistant coaches)

The coaches will also be provided with a Google Drive of resources, mental training tools they can incorporate within the North Union programs. Students can also access Miller individually between his visits during appropriate hours of 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Ethan's curriculum focuses on the 10 essential performance skills, which include

- Elite Mindset
- Motivation and commitment
- Focus and awareness
- Self Control and discipline
- Process Over Outcome
- Mental imagery and meditation
- Routines and habits of excellence
- Time management and organization
- Leadership
- Culture

Principal Zotz, who is also a coach, is thrilled to have Ethan Miller come into the school to work with the students.

An achievement that Principal Zotz was excited to share Test Results. He stated that the high school was above state average in all ISASP areas. The scores are from the 2024-25 school year. The school received an overall performance of high performing.

The school ranked #48 out of 1276 schools in Iowa and #25 out of 352 high schools in Iowa.

In the last four years, three of those years, North Union has been classified as a High Performing School.

In ELA, NUHS scored 92.44 which was above the state average of 73.56 and in science NUHS scored 931.8 better than the state average of 67.14.

The state average for absenteeism is 15.81 with NUHS average of 9.88.

The five year graduation rate for North Union was 97.37 compared to the state average of 89.88.

Principal Zotz is pleased with the success of the students and the district will continue to strive for even more improvement.



The Swea City Public Library is the place to be for finding a good book to read but also to sit and color at the table. During Winter Wonderland, one young patron colors as Julie Maze has a conversation with her.

Let the Library know how they can better serve you

The Swea City Public Library invites community members to provide their thoughts and perspectives through a short survey.

This is your opportunity to share what you value most about your library experience, what could be improved, and what you would like to see in the future.

You can take the survey three different ways:

1. Scan the QR code, pictured below.
2. Go to the survey link on our website
3. Complete a printed copy from the library or city hall.



Many Voices Choir Announces 2025 Christmas Concert Series

The Many Voices Choir, Northwest Iowa's premier community chorale, is pleased to announce its annual Christmas concert series, "Peace Will Come." Under the direction of Timothy Schumacher, this year's program shares the Christmas story—from prophecy and nativity to worship and joyful praise.

The concert series will include performances on the following dates at these venues:

• Friday, December 5th, 7:30 pm: United Methodist Church in Spirit Lake

• Saturday, December 6th, 1:30 pm: St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Estherville

Cub Scouts Collecting Items for Valley Vue Residents

Join the Cub Scouts of Pack 159 in spreading holiday cheer to the residents of Valley Vue Care Center in Armstrong. The Scouts will be collecting items to create gift bags to give to the residents.

Suggested donations include:

Bank Plus to hold Christmas Open Houses and Donation Drives

The locations of Bank Plus will be holding Christmas Open Houses along with a Donation Drives to support their communities and will proudly match every donation made at each branch.

December 3 - Graettinger
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Local Food Pantry
Non-Perishable Food

December 4 - Ledyard
11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Kossuth County Care Team

Towels and Sheets

December 5 - Swea City
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
North Kossuth School District
Hygiene items, hats, gloves and canned items

December 17th - Estherville
10:00 a.m - 2:00 p.m.
Emmet County Food Pantry
ELC Food Shelf
Non-Perishable Food

Private Pesticide Continuing Instruction Courses Offered in Kossuth County

The Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Kossuth County office will be offering four opportunities to attend the Private Pesticide Applicator Continuing Instruction Course (P-CIC), led by Extension Field Agronomist, Gentry Sorenson.

Sessions in Kossuth County are scheduled for the following dates and times:

- Thursday, December 18th, 2025, 9:30 am: Iowa Lakes Community College, 2111 US-169, Algona
- Thursday, December 18th, 2025, 1:30 pm: Iowa Lakes Community College, 2111 US-169, Algona
- Thursday, January 15th, 2026, 9:30 am: Summit Center, 304 S Summit St., Bancroft

Admission to all concerts is free, a free-will donation will be accepted.

The theme of peace is woven throughout the concert. The opening anthem, "Advent Peace," blends Isaiah 26:3 and Lamentations 3:22-26 to reflect the longing for God's peace in the quiet nights before Christ's birth. Schumacher describes the selection—composed by Molly Ijames—as a stirring expression of Micah 5's promise: "This Child Shall Be Our Peace." The closing anthem, "Advent Lullaby," tenderly conveys the promise, "Emmanuel. God with you. There is no need to fear, I am love, I am here." The concert features Joan Gronstal on flute and Randy

Nelson on cello, with DJ Gommels accompanying the choir.

Founded in 1988, the Many Voices Choir includes 40–60 singers from more than 15 communities across northwest Iowa and southern Minnesota. Choir member Paul Peterson shares, "The Christmas concert offers a wonderful variety of musical styles that will be very enjoyable for everyone to hear."

For more information or media inquiries, contact Tim Schumacher at 712-209-0202 or visit the choir's website: <https://sites.google.com/view/nwiowamanyvoiceschoir/home>

- Slippers

Donations can be made at Swea City Dollar General or you may contact Melissa Walders to arrange pick up at 712-797-1795.

Column One Events

Bancroft Holiday Light Parade to be held on December 4

The annual Holiday Light Parade in Bancroft will be held on Thursday, December 4th starting at 5:30 p.m. Line up will be in front of Accura Healthcare starting at 5:00 p.m. if you would like to enter a float. This year's theme is "It's Beginning To Look A Lot Like Christmas".

The parade will start at Accura Healthcare and continue down Ramsey Street to Bancroft Tire.

If you would like to enter a float, please RSVP to Carole at bancroftiachamber@gmail.com or call 515-320-4294 to reserve your spot.

A tree lighting will also be held next to the Bancroft City Hall.

Hager Foods to hold Holiday Open House

Hager Foods in Banroft will be holding their Holiday Open House on Wednesday, December 3 from 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. They will have samples along with Santa as their special guest.

Bancroft Register to hold Christmas Open House

The Bancroft Register will be holding their Christmas Open House on Wednesday, December 3 from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. Subscription specials, refreshments and goodies will be served.

Cornerstone Health to hold Christmas Open House

Cornerstone Health, 103 West Ramsey St., Bancroft, will hold their Christmas Open House on Thursday, December 4 from 3:00 - 7:00 p.m. Wine, snacks, giveaways and specials will be offered throughout the event.

Christmas Open house to be held at Fidelity Bank and Trust

Fidelity Bank and Trust in Bancroft will be holding their Christmas Open House on Thursday, December 4 from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. Join them for snacks and refreshments.

Holiday Sip and Shop at S&B Farms Distillery

Stroll through 16 talented local vendors offering gifts decor, treats, and handmade treasures - while you enjoy seasonal holiday cocktails from the S& B Farms Distillery, Bancroft, Holiday Sip and Shop on Saturday, December 6 from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Cookie Walk to be held in Swea City

A cookie walk will be held on Sunday, December 7th from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Swea City Community Church. The cost is \$8.00 a dozen.

Swea City Library Hours

Monday: 10:00 - 5:30
Wednesday: 10:00 - 5:30
Friday 10:00 - 4:00

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