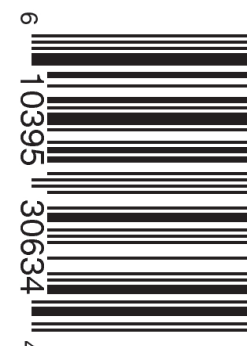


# HUMBOLDT INDEPENDENT



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TWO SECTIONS

## Supervisors discuss defunct pipeline in Humboldt County

By APRIL KELLEY  
An abandoned anhydrous pipeline that runs through Humboldt County became the unexpected conversation at Monday's Humboldt County Supervisors meeting on March 31.

Humboldt County Emergency Management Coordinator Kyle Bissell asked the Supervisors if they had spoken to ONEOK.

ONEOK had contacted Bissell to inquire regarding emergency responders along the defunct pipeline who might be available to assist in an emergency.

However, ONEOK had not conveyed its intended use of the pipeline. Bissell reminded the group in attendance that the pipeline had not been used for several years at least.

"I have more questions than I have answers, but I wanted to talk to you sooner rather than later," Bissell said.

He also stated that during a cursory look into the pipeline, he had discovered nine accidents along the pipeline while it was in use although he was not sure when or exactly what they were.

Bissell included a packet of information which also contained maps showing the pipelines that cross Iowa along with the now abandoned pipeline.

Bissell will check into the pipeline further and see what they want and then report back to the supervisors.

### National Child Abuse Prevention

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Angela Weslink, parent coordinator with the Connections Program with Building Families, attended the meeting to request that the Supervisors proclaim April, National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

The proclamation states "The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors do hereby proclaim April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Organizers urge all citizens to recognize this month by building a narrative of hope for children and families through collaboration and the creation of an ecosystem of primary prevention that does not currently exist in this country."

Weslink requested that the courthouse turn the outside lights blue to remind people it is Child Abuse Prevention

Month.

Loney said that she believed that the courthouse was not able to do that but thought the banks and the hospital would participate.

The supervisors approved the proclamation and told those in attendance, that the best way to fight against abuse is; 'If you see something say something'.

### Secondary Roads

A public hearing was held regarding the 2026 Secondary Road Budget and Construction Program. The plan maps out a five-year plan on bridge and road upgrades and construction for the next five years.

The plan calls for 12 projects in 2026 with five bridge/box culverts currently under contract with three that will possibly be completed by the end of this fiscal year of 2024/2025. The remaining two that were just awarded last week will probably not be completed until September, putting them in the next fiscal year of 2025/2026.

Seven other projects will be completed in the following year including several paving projects and some safety curves that have had agreements signed for as well as a few other structures.

The Supervisors had a few questions regarding the five-year plan.

"We classify some of the structures as a bridge but some are structures that go under a gravel road that if they go under a gravel road we could move that up, right?" Supervisor Bruce Reimers questioned.

"Even if it isn't on the five-year program, we can do emergency repair. We would obviously start by closing the road and getting a survey done," Loots said.

He went on to explain that the biggest hurdle they encounter with road repair and construction is completing the environmental survey.

"The good thing is there aren't too many places in the county that there is only one way out if a bridge failed," Loots said.

"Humboldt County is blessed with a road almost every mile. Out-of-distance travel would be minimized if we ended up losing a structure," Loots said.

"Every bridge we got gets

inspected every two years. The really bad ones get inspected every year. The ones that are in really good shape that are brand new get inspected every 10 years. I would like to say we would see it coming before they failed," Loots concluded.

The five-year plan and next year's budget were presented for public input, however no opposition was voiced for either and the plan and budget were approved by the supervisors.

Loots also presented bids for two new mower tractors. The ones being replaced are 2007 models and require expensive repairs.

Requests were sent for quotes from K.C. Nielsen, Humboldt and Ziegler Cat in Fort Dodge.

K.C. Nielsen sent back quotes on several mowers while Ziegler sent back just one.

Loots will narrow down the decision based on the ability of the machine to hold up to the wear and tear placed on it during the mowing season.

"I'm leaning toward the Diamond Mowers just because of the back slopes because there is no way to turn off the back mower," Loots said.

### Proposed FY26 Tax Levy

A public hearing was held regarding the proposed FY26 Tax Levy for Humboldt County.

The meeting is set to coincide with a mailing that was sent out on or before March 15 to Humboldt County landowners regarding their tax valuations.

House File 718 passed in 2023 requires Iowa Counties to - Reduce the General Basic levy rate to \$3.50 per 1,000 (dollars) of assessed value over a 5-year period, in which we are in the 2nd year of this process.

- Reduce the Rural Basic levy rate to \$3.95 per 1,000 dollars of assessed value over a 5-year period

- Limits the taxable growth to a yearly 3 percent.

- Requires the County to send statements to all landowners with Humboldt County.

Humboldt County Auditor Trish Erickson reminded homeowners that they may have received more than one statement if they own multiple

SEE PIPELINE, 2A



This brother sister duo was all smiles on one of the warmer days last week as they enjoyed the playground at Dakota City Memorial Campground. Pictured here are 4-year-old Hadleigh and 3-year-old Lincoln Steward. Independent photo by Kylie Portz. To buy this photo or more from our gallery, visit [www.humboldtnews.com](http://www.humboldtnews.com).



The cast of Humboldt High School's "Peter Pan", pose on the set of the ship. The play opens April 4 at 7 p.m. at the R. Wesley Carlson Auditorium. A second showing will be held on April 5 at 7 p.m. Tickets are available at Humboldt High School. Independent photo by Kylie Portz. To buy this photo and more from our gallery, visit our website at [www.humboldtnews.com](http://www.humboldtnews.com).

## HCMH welcomes Senator Grassley

Senator Grassley tours Humboldt County Memorial Hospital to discuss rural hospitals

By APRIL KELLEY

Humboldt County Memorial Hospital (HCMH) CEO Michelle Sleiter spoke about Senator Grassley's visit to the hospital during their recent board meeting on Tuesday, March 25. Sleiter told the board that due to protests at his previous stop in Franklin County at a public meeting at the courthouse there, it was decided to change his appearance at the hospital slightly.

His visit to the hospital in Humboldt however, had been an invite-only visit.

"I got a call from their whole secret service team on the way here saying they were concerned as they were talking about bringing everyone (the protestors) to Humboldt," Sleiter said.

Because of the threat of the protests, they rerouted the Senator to Independent Living so that it would be easier to get in and out.

"As you know, he is under full police detail so the Secret Service was very heightened.

We did end up having four or five protestors that did maintain their respective space and stayed off the property," Sleiter said.

She is looking to update their policy on protesting and have something in place in the next several months.

### Hospice

Rural Liaison James Roetman reported that the Paula J. Baber Hospice House in Fort Dodge had closed due to financial losses.

"They received a lot of negative attention for closing that. The good news is they have identified three or four other options for families in the Fort Dodge area related to inpatient hospice care," Roetman said.

Humboldt does have its own hospice room at the hospital available for families in need of it.

### Insurance Renewal

HCMH CEO Michelle Sleiter

SEE HCMH, 2A

## HHS to Present 'Peter Pan' April 4-5

The Humboldt High School theatre department will present its spring play "Peter Pan" on April 4th and 5th at 7 p.m. in the R. Wesley Carlson Auditorium.

The production is adapted by Craig Sodaro and based on the novel by J.M. Barrie. The play captures the whimsy and magic of the popular children's novel and follows the Darling children as they set off on an adventure to Neverland with the mischievous Peter Pan and his loyal friend Tinkerbell.

The show is led by Alyssa Kinder as Peter Pan, Morgan Mayall as Wendy Darling, Adelyn Vinsand as Tinkerbell, Juan Camarena as Captain Hook, Trinity Manz as Tiger Lily, John Blanchard as John Darling and Mia Sorensen as Micheal Darling. It is directed

by Emily Wiebke, with Assistant Director Kennedy Halstrud and Production Assistant Hayden Hansen.

### Cast List

#### The Darling Family

- Wendy Darling - Morgan Mayall

- John Darling - John Blanchard

- Micheal Darling - Mia Sorensen

- Mrs. Darling - Amber Sampson

- Mr. Darling - Joey Mahan

- Liza - Ariaahna Cowell

- Nana - Weston Vik

#### The Lost Boys

- Peter Pan - Alyssa Kinder

- Tinkerbell - Adelyn Vinsand

SEE PETER PAN, 3A

## HHS students compete in state speech contest

By KATE SIEVERS

Emily Wiebke, speech coordinator and coach at the Humboldt High School, is excited for the upcoming seasons and proud of how far her students have come this past season.

She shared her thoughts after the Humboldt High School Speech Team recently had several state titles, individual and group. State group competition was Feb. 8 in Spencer while individual was March 15 in Cedar Falls.

Large group speech involves multiple events that have two to eight students. Musical Theatre and the Improv groups were participants

in the state competition.

Musical Theatre consisted of Morgan Mayall, Juan Camarena, Joel Thurm, Adelyn Vinsand, Kate Sievers, Keegan Fiengo, Mia Sorensen and Sterling Scranton. They sang and acted out a Hamilton classic, "Who Lives Who Dies Who Tells Your Story". The improv group consisted of Aubry Fisher, Macey Rodgers, and Alyssa Kinder.

Juan Camarena expressed his experience in group speech and compared it to his other seasons.

"It was a good group of individuals that me and Morgan got to put together and

spend time choreographing. I thought it was one of my best speech groups, with a different variety of people," Camarena said. "We had better preparation and spent a lot more time perfecting our performance this year, which led to us going to state."

"State was a really cool experience because we've never done it with such a big group. Although we didn't get the outcome we wanted, we had a memorable time," Camarena said.

Individual speech had five out of 12 advance to state. Each individual can choose what event they want to

compete in. Participants consisted of Jacob Hunter, Mia Sorensen, Ian Olmos, Sophia Boeck and Aubry Fisher. Aubry Fisher states that starting speech as a freshman helped her make more friends and overcome a common fear of public speaking.

"It was a great experience, I'm glad I did it. Mia Sorensen definitely influenced my decision on what to try out for. I tried to go out for reading events and events I could catch on to quickly," Fisher said. "Everyone should join speech!"

Wiebke said the new members have great potential.

"We had new people that have never participated before, so it really was a good season. Everyone did very well, we had events that got a mixed II at state. Which means they got I and II for ratings in between the three judges, resulting in a pretty good season," Wiebe said.

Future goals for Wiebke and the speech group as a whole is to have more people join the program.

Wiebke emphasizes, "There are so many people you wouldn't expect, but are great at speech. You never know who is going to be good."



These Humboldt High School students competed well at the state large group speech competition back in February at Spencer. Pictured above, front row (l-r): Adelyn Vinsand, Kate Sievers, Morgan Mayall and Mia Sorensen. Back row: Joel Thurm, Sterling Scranton, Juan Camarena and Keegan Fiengo. Submitted photo.