

HUMBOLDT INDEPENDENT



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TWO SECTIONS



Former Mayor Walter Jensen regains his seat

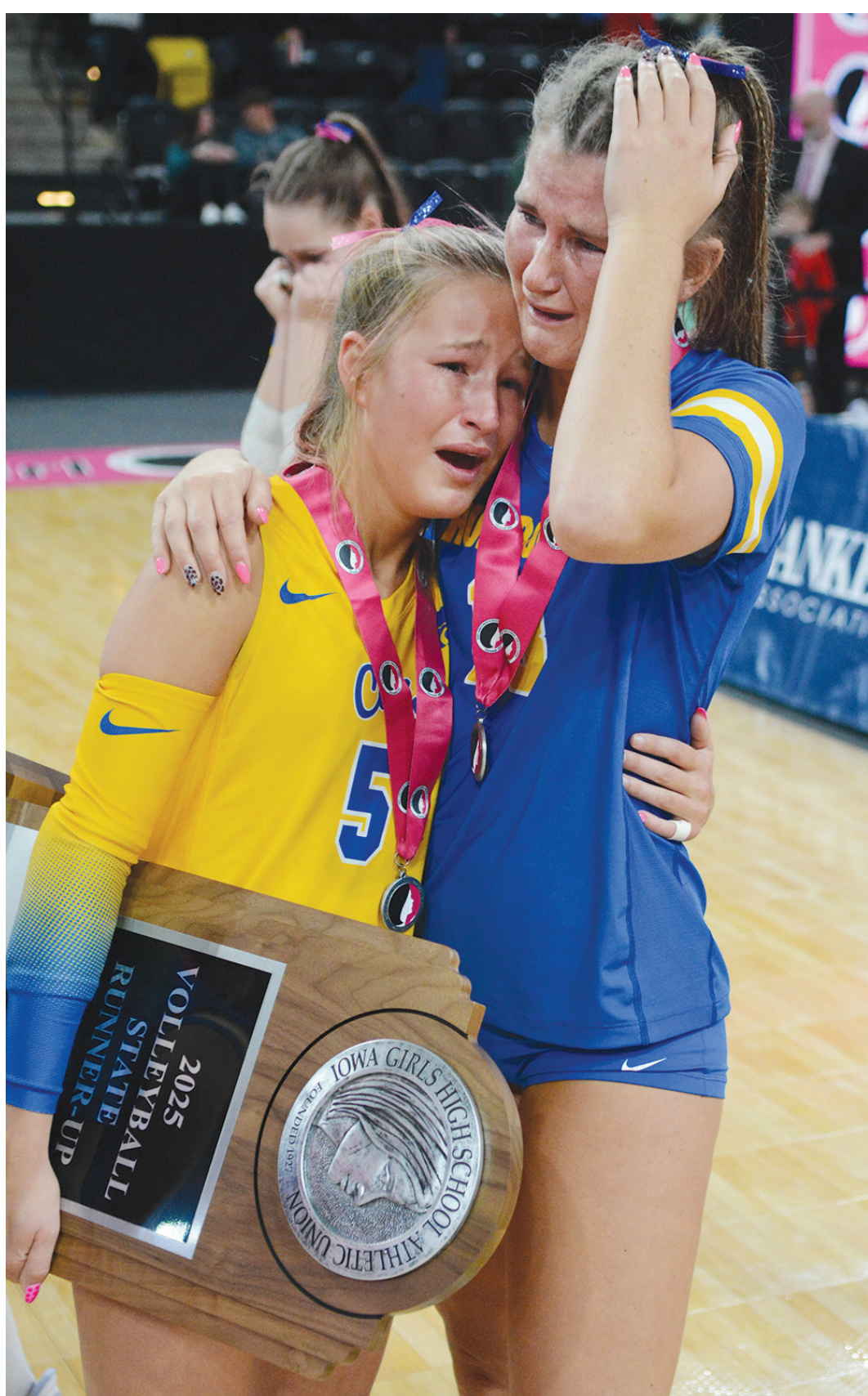
By APRIL KELLEY
The City of Humboldt will be getting a new mayor in January, according to the unofficial results from the election held Tuesday Nov. 4. Humboldt County auditor Trish Erickson released the unofficial election results ahead of the canvassing on Wednesday, Nov. 12. All election results are unofficial until certified by both the Humboldt County Supervisors and then the State of Iowa on Nov. 18. Humboldt city residents overwhelmingly voted for former Mayor Walter Jensen with 632 votes over current Mayor Daniel E. Scholl with 380 votes. Jensen served as the Mayor of Humboldt from Jan. 1, 2008 to Dec. 31, 2015 when Scholl took over the office. No candidates had officially thrown their hat in the ring for the Mayor's seat or the City Council at Large seats in Bradgate which required voters to write in their votes. The Mayor's race and the City Council at large seats both ended in tie votes which will be decided by a name draw on Wednesday, Nov. 12. Both Allan Brandhoj and Dan Wallace received five write-in votes each for Mayor. The City Council at Large seat garnered more attention with three seats available. Aaron Behnkendorf received eight votes securing one position, however a drawing will take place for the second seat between Mike Edler, Jennie (Weinert)Ford and Sandra Laubenthal, with each person tying for the second seat with four votes each. The last City Council at Large seat in Bradgate was won by Dale Haan who will fill the vacancy left by the death of

Sue Wald. The remaining Mayoral and City Council votes held few surprises. The City of Bode re-elected Mayor Carol Miller with 82 votes while challenger Lisa Vohs received 10. Bode City Council at Large seat was filled by Jesse Tepner with 54 votes and Ryan McCarty with 51 over Robert McKenna with 46 votes and Kimberly Polston with 11. Dakota City Mayor Sean Phillips retains his seat with 88 votes, running unopposed this year. Dakota City Council seats also went to incumbents Tim Myers with 97 votes and Mychal Edler with 73. Both candidates were also running unopposed. Hardy's Mayor, Kathy Petersen received 12 votes to retain her seat, while Ronald Cerwick with 12 votes and Teri Cerwick with 11 votes won out over Douglas Lippolt with three votes. Humboldt had two seats on their City Council open with only incumbent Kirk Whitteley running for reelection. Write-in candidate Ann Phillips will fill the position vacated by Jeff Harklau who was appointed in 2022 to fill out the term vacated by the death of Mike Worthington. Humboldt Park Board Commissioners Jerod Hatcher and Ross Sleiter remain on the board with 880 and 726 votes, respectively. Livermore's Mayor Billie Scott received 78 votes, winning him the unopposed position. The Livermore City Council race was a bit more heated with Cailyn Sawyer, 72 votes; Benjamin N. Stalzer, 67 votes and Jason McKibban, 67 votes nar-

rowly edging out Paul Brown with 53 votes. Ottosen's Mayor, Monte Newton retained his seat with 12 votes while Taylor Bennett with 14 votes, Veronica Fowler with 13 votes and Jason Fowler with 12 votes will serve on the Ottosen City Council. Renwick's Mayor, Taylor Kunert won re-election with 35 votes. Kunert was running unopposed. Renwick's City Council will include Dylan Nelson with 39 votes, Courtney Palmer with 34 votes and Gary Loftus with 23 votes filling the three empty seats. The fourth candidate, Hal Skiye received 12 votes. Rutland Mayor, Susan M. Tille won her town election with 13 votes. Rutland was the only town with a write-in vote for mayor. City council for Rutland candidates Jerry Dahl, 13 votes and Ted Malo, 12 votes will retain their seats for the next term. Thor's Mayor, Emory Wayne White won his next term as Mayor with 16 votes. Terry Bender and Mike Toilion both had 13 votes and Maxine Lamaak had 12 votes to win their spot on the Thor City Council.

Border Cities
Several towns have voters in two different counties including Gilmore City (Humboldt and Pocahontas Counties) and Lu Verne (Humboldt and Kosuth Counties) The winner for those counties will be declared after the official certification on Wednesday, Nov. 19. In Gilmore City, incumbent Mayor Landon Bailey easily won re-election from Humboldt County voters with 36

SEE ELECTION,3A



Humboldt High School senior class volleyball players Claire Dieleman (left) and Mia Schluter tearfully embrace after their team lost in the championship match at the state tournament in Coralville on Nov. 6. It was the best finish in school history and only the second time for the program to reach state. Independent photo by Phil Monson. To buy this photo and more, visit our photo gallery at www.humboldtnews.com.

Battling food insecurity in Humboldt County

By APRIL KELLEY
Food insecurity. Those two words have been thrown around frequently these days, but what exactly is it and what can we do about it? The simplest definition is "the condition of not having access to sufficient food or food of an adequate quality, to meet ones basic needs." In America, we rarely see pictures of people starving as is evident in other countries which lulls the average person into the sense that there isn't an issue. A USDA study in 2022 found that 12.8 percent or 17 million households were food insecure. What makes it alarming is that the number rose dramatically from just 10.2 percent (13.5 million households) in 2021. Numbers for the years since are still being analyzed but experts agree, the number is not trending down and with the recent government shutdown, food insecurity was thrown into the spotlight once again. As Humboldt County Food Pantry Board (HCFP) mem-

ber Phil Mayo recently said, "Food insecurity is too often an invisible need in a community as it rarely shows up as people openly asking for food." "Instead, food insecurity shows up in many ways we may not immediately recognize as the consequences of hunger," Mayo continued, "especially child hunger: behavioral problems and petty crime, adverse public health outcomes, and lower educational outcomes. Keeping a community fed keeps a community healthy and vibrant in myriad ways." Alissa O'Connor, Executive Director of the Partnership for Economic Growth, recommends that anyone who needs food visit their local food pantry in the Upper Des Moines (UDMO) Office building located at 419 Surface Avenue in Humboldt. Pantry hours are Monday - Thursday 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Humboldt High School also has the F.U.E.L. pro-

SEE FOOD,2A

Boil order for Hardy issued

The City of Hardy has issued a boil order effective Nov. 10 through Nov. 17. Residents are advised to boil water for at least one minute before consuming. Bottled water should be used for the feeding of infants and small children. Bottled water will be made available at the old fire station in Hardy. The City will inform citizens when they will be able to pick up water for their consumption.



Nicole Niemeyer, left was recently appointed to the office of Humboldt County Recorder. The current Humboldt County Recorder, Diane Amundson, seated, tendered her resignation effective Dec. 31 at a recent Supervisors meeting in October. Niemeyer will fill the position until the next election when she will need to run for office. See this and other photos at www.humboldtnews.com. Humboldt Independent photo by April Kelley.

Niemeyer to assume Humboldt County Recorder position Jan. 1

By APRIL KELLEY
The Humboldt County Supervisors made the first of two appointments that had been opened due to vacancies announced earlier this year during their regular meeting on Monday, Nov. 10. Diane Amundson announced her plans in October to retire Dec. 31. At that time, she recommended that Nicole Niemeyer be appointed to fill out the rest of her term. Niemeyer will transition into the position of recorder over the next several weeks assuming the position in full on Jan 1. Amundson has agreed to stay on through January in the deputy position to help with the transition. Amundson told the supervisors that Niemeyer has been an excellent deputy since she was hired. "Nicole is amazing with computers and we are in the customer service business, really and I tell you, she's amazing," Amundson said. Amundson's position will be up for re-election in Nov. 2026 at which time Niemeyer will run for the seat.

Veterans' meal
Dave Lee with the Humboldt County veterans and the VFW announced they will have a program at 11 a.m. at on the

grounds in front of the courthouse. Lee informed the supervisors that they will have a short program followed by area children singing patriotic songs and a 21-gun salute. There will also be a supper for area veterans and their guests on Friday, Nov. 14, beginning with a social hour at 5:30 p.m. and followed by supper at 6:30 p.m. The meal is free for all veterans and guests.

TIF comments
A River Oaks resident voiced his concerns regarding creating a TIF district to capture the added tax value of possible wind farms. Fritz said "I know TIF is a useful economic development tool for cities and counties, but I would question what economic development projects the county would have down in that quadrant of the county to make use of the TIF (dollars)." Fritz further encouraged the supervisors to study counties surrounding Humboldt that had looked into TIF districts and why they had or had not decided to create one. "I would encourage you to be mindful of the taxpayer because the TIF is taking money from your general fund

and you were making comments about how tight thing are," Fritz said. Supervisor Chair Rick Pedersen thanked Fritz for his comment and stated they are just starting to look into the different possibilities. "We have to put all sides together to try to figure out what's straddling the fence and make decisions," Supervisor Bruce Reimers said.

Secondary Roads
Humboldt County Engineer Ben Loots submitted several vouchers for approval as well as an application to work in the right-of-way to the Supervisors. The first voucher was for Project Bros(88) for a bridge replacement on Iowa Avenue. The project has been completed, however this voucher is only a partial payment of \$130,028.74 to Peterson Contractors Inc. (PCI) out of \$134,050.25. Loots told the Supervisors that they still need to receive several certifications regarding the pipe before the remainder can be paid. Loots presented a change order for project STBG-SWAP-7637(601)—FG-46 to PCI and Blacktop Service Co. The change order is to cover the cost

of bringing in a milling machine to core out the area to a consistent depth in an area 24' by 106' that is being patched. The project is paid for by City to Farm funds and is therefore only administered by the Supervisors. After approval of the change order, the Supervisors approved the payment of \$23,705.83, which covers the entire payment for the patch except for retainage. The last thing Loots had for the Supervisors was an application to work in the right-of-way by D&M Drainage and Excavation who are repairing tile in the field on Texas Avenue in Lake Township. They expect to be hooking into a county main in the ditch during their repair work.

Elderbridge Agency on Aging
Stacia Timmer attended the Board of Supervisors' meeting by zoom due to recent snow and weather conditions. Timmer gave the annual report on the services provided by Elderbridge Agency on Aging, along with the financial expenditure for those services. "Our mission is to advocate for older

SEE SUPERVISORS,3A