

Lake Mills Graphic



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LAKE MILLS, IOWA 50450

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4, 2025

\$1.25



Area briefs

“Healthy Iowa Kids” Summer Food Program

The Lake Mills Food Bank will be participating in the State’s “Healthy Iowa Kids” summer food program.

ELIGIBILITY: Households meeting the guidelines for the State of Iowa Free and Reduced meals or the income requirements of the Lake Mills Food Shelf.

TIME: Every Monday from 2-5 p.m. (starting June 16)

LOCATION: South entrance of Salem Lutheran Church.

Regular Food Shelf items are available each Monday from 2-5 p.m. Residents of the Lake Mills School District and who meet income guidelines are eligible for these items.

Weather

THURSDAY			
Mostly Cloudy	75°	56°	
FRIDAY			
PM Showers, 30%	69°	52°	
SATURDAY			
Partly Cloudy	74°	56°	
SUNDAY			
Partly Cloudy	72°	52°	
MONDAY			
Partly Cloudy	66°	51°	
TUESDAY			
Mostly Sunny	75°	56°	
WEDNESDAY			
Partly Cloudy	83°	61°	

Official temperatures and precipitation as recorded by the Lake Mills Power Plant are as follows:

Date	Hi	Low	Prec.
May 27	63°	54°	.03"
May 28	62°	53°	.09"
May 29	67°	48°	—
May 30	76°	55°	.02"
May 31	83°	53°	—
June 1	80°	52°	—
June 2	88°	56°	—

Markets

Prices reported as of Tuesday morning. Prices subject to change.

Five Star	2024	2025
Corn	\$ 4.51	\$4.17
Soybeans	\$11.33	\$9.89

Viterra		
Corn	\$ 4.33	\$4.18
Soybeans	\$11.20	\$9.85

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Mason Gaetzke (front center) is pictured with Boy Scout Troop 143 and their leaders that attended his Eagle Scout Ceremony, May 11.

Mason Gaetzke achieves Eagle Scout rank—Honoring the departed through church kiosk project

BY MARISSA GASPER
LAKE MILLS GRAPHIC

Mason Gaetzke, a local young man and member of Boy Scout Troop 143, has officially earned the rank of Eagle Scout—the highest honor in Scouting, achieved by only a small percentage of Scouts nationwide. In order to earn this achievement, Gaetzke completed a service project that now stands at the heart of the Elk Creek Church Cemetery: a permanent, weather-resistant kiosk that includes a detailed cemetery map and a full registry of the departed buried there.

Machine, which is based out of Joice, and Sign Pro, which is based out of Ames.” Gaetzke worked alongside his Uncle Ross to pour the concrete base. He collaborated with Bodenham Machine to construct the kiosk frame, and contracted Sign Pro of Ames to design and produce the plot map and registry signage. The result is a permanent installation that serves both practical and commemorative purposes—adding a feature that is both informative and honorary.

Gaetzke said one of the most valuable lessons he learned throughout the process



The Gaetzke family is pictured in front of the Elk Creek Church cemetery kiosk (L-R): Elizabeth, Kathy, Mason, Ryan and Chace.

Photos courtesy of Lory Groe

The kiosk, mounted on a circular concrete pad, allows visitors to easily locate burial plots by name and number.

“My project benefitted the friends and families who have loved ones buried in the Elk Creek Church cemetery, because it made it more convenient for them to be able to look at the registry of names and find the plot number they were looking for, instead of going up and down the rows looking for a specific grave,” Gaetzke explained.

The project was inspired by a conversation with Pastor Linda Johnson-Prestholt, who mentioned that the Elk Creek Cemetery Board had long discussed the idea of adding a plot directory. As a member of the church himself, Gaetzke saw a meaningful opportunity and, to bring the idea to life, Gaetzke presented a proposal to the cemetery board, outlining the purpose, benefits, funding plan, and construction timeline. After securing their approval, he successfully applied for a \$9,500 grant from the Worth County Development Authority (WCDA) to cover materials and fabrication.

In fact, the project required coordination with several businesses and organizations.

“I had to get the approval of the Elk Creek Church cemetery board to start the process, undergo the process of writing a grant to fund my project, and build everything with the help of my uncle, Ross Gaetzke, John Bodenham or Bodenham

was the importance of patience.

“The process from start to finish took almost a year,” he said. “Completing an Eagle Scout project is a slow and steady race, but the outcome is worth it.”

Beyond the project, earning the Eagle rank required Gaetzke to complete seven ranks and numerous merit badges in areas such as first aid, citizenship, and personal management. He also underwent several board reviews to demonstrate his knowledge and growth.

Mason’s official Eagle Scout Ceremony was held May 11, 2025, appropriately at Elk Creek Church, surrounded by family, friends, fellow Scouts, and supporters who helped along the way.

“After my ceremony, I felt accomplished . . . relieved from all of the hard work . . . and optimistic and excited for the next chapter of my life.”

Gaetzke credits his parents, Scout leaders, and peers for helping him stay motivated, especially during the more difficult parts of the journey.

To younger Scouts, he offers this advice: “Stay positive and patient. You may get stuck, but if you keep going and believe in the process, you’ll get there. The way of an Eagle isn’t a sprint—it’s a marathon.”

The kiosk now stands as a lasting contribution to the Elk Creek Church community—and a symbol of one young man’s determination, service, and leadership.



D.A.R.E. essay winners Katelyn Petersburg and Ella Sletten with Officer Michael Olson.

LMCS holds D.A.R.E. graduation

LMCS held their annual D.A.R.E. graduation program last Tuesday afternoon, May 27, in the auditorium. Officer Michael Olson is the D.A.R.E. instructor for the fifth grade students. Essay winners, Katelyn Petersburg and Ella Sletten, read their winning essays and received prizes.



LMCDC holds ribbon cutting for new coffeehouse owners

The Lake Mills Chamber Development Corporation held a ribbon cutting this past Saturday morning, May 31, for new owners of Swallow Coffeeshouse, Jena Hill and Molly Payne. The coffeeshouse also held a Grand Opening, offering live music, prize drawings, and samples.



Photo courtesy of Lory Groe

Golf season comes to an end at State

The golf season came to an end with the state tournaments being held last week.

Austin Stene was the only individual boy who participated in the tournament. He placed 12th with a score of 77—36 the first round and 41 the second round. He scored one birdie, 10 pars, and eight bogeys.

The girls golf team qualified for the state tournament for the first time since 1997. They finished in ninth place

with a score of 404 in the first round and 388 in the second round, for a total of 792.

There were 77 individual state qualifiers. Reagan Ham and Claire Levine qualified as individuals for the Bulldogs.

Reagan finished 19th with a score of 89 the first round and 88 the second round for a total of 177. Claire finished 29th, with a score of 97 the first round and 85 the second, for a total of 182.