

Protecting our communities from severe weather

Beginning on March 24th, we observed Severe Weather Awareness Week in Iowa. Every year, this week serves as an important reminder of the precautions that we should all take to keep ourselves and our families safe. Stocking up on bottled water, keeping flashlights and batteries in accessible areas, and having an emergency plan are just a few examples of common safety measures. Prioritizing safety plans and procedures today will help mitigate the impacts of tomorrow's severe weather challenges that we will undoubtedly face.



U.S. Representative
Randy Feenstra

From tornadoes and floods to high winds and blizzards, Iowans know severe weather. Last summer alone, our communities in Western Iowa were hit by catastrophic floods and destructive tornadoes that devastated homes, businesses, hospitals, farms, schools, and other structures. Iowans are resilient, but the rebuilding process is time-consuming and expensive. It's why I'm working to implement proactive and cost-effective strategies that help protect our communities, homes, farmland, and infrastructure from flooding.

While we need rapid emergency response to floods, we also need to take proactive measures to protect farmland and our rural communities from devastation and equip our producers with the tools that they need to safeguard their land from excessive water damage. From 1980 to 2024, there have been more than 8 flooding events in Iowa with losses exceeding \$1 billion and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration estimates that the total costs of these events reach anywhere between \$20 billion and \$50 billion. Iowa agriculture alone sees crop losses, on average, of \$230 million a year due to flooding.

The Flooding Prevention, Assessment, and Restoration Act – which I introduced at the beginning of March – would improve the Emergency Watershed Protection program so that the USDA has greater flexibility to repair aging flood infrastructure, help cover the costs of needed improvements, and support farmers and rural landowners with protecting their land from flooding. By acting before floods strike, we can keep our farmland in production, save money in the long run, and help our rural communities mitigate and respond to flooding.

I was also recently recognized as a Federal Champion by the American Flood Coalition – an organization that works at the local, state, and

federal levels to encourage meaningful flood resiliency and response efforts – for my work to give our families and communities the tools and resources that they need to not only recover from disasters but also invest in safeguards that protect our land and property. Born and raised in rural Iowa, I will continue to support policies that help our communities prepare for and respond to flooding and other destructive storms.

Alongside this legislation to invest in flood mitigation efforts and help protect Iowa farmland and rural communities from flooding, I additionally led two pieces of legislation to improve our nation's weather radar and communications networks. On the one hand, my National Weather Service Communications Improvement Act would modernize the National Weather Service's (NWS) outdated communications network – NWS Chat – which disseminates critical, time-sensitive information to broadcasters, emergency managers, and the general public during severe weather events. On the other hand, my Weather Innovation for the Next Generation Act would require NWS to coordinate with the Assistant Administrator for Oceanic and Atmospheric Research and establish an R&D program to improve weather radar detection and prediction capabilities when physical structures like wind turbines obstruct radar line of sight. These two bills will help deliver accurate forecasts and quick warnings for Iowans all while protecting our families, supporting our farmers, safeguarding property, and saving lives.

As a father of four and a former storm watcher during my time as City Administrator in my hometown of Hull, keeping our families safe is personal and important to me. By helping our farmers protect their farmland from the devastating consequences of flooding and ensuring that our communities receive timely and accu-

rate weather information from trusted sources, we can stay safe, appropriately prepare for severe weather, and respond to Mother Nature's unpredictable actions.



The Evans Edition

by Senator Lynn Evans

The eleventh week of the session was heavy with debate as we prepare to go into our second legislative deadline. One of the bills debated this week, which I had the privilege of floor managing, was House File 782, the Governor's proposal on cell phones in schools. It passed in the Senate 49-0. The bill requires that, starting with the 2025-26 school year, each school board must adopt policies regarding student use of personal electronic devices during school hours that restrict student use of such devices during classroom instructional time. The policies must do the following:

- Identify policies and information related to various educational devices and technologies that will be available to students for instructional purposes
- Identify the methods for a student's parent or guardian to communicate with them during school hours or while in a school-sponsored activity
- Identify the methods that a student's parent or guardian may use to communicate with

them during an emergency

- Include protocols that the school will use to securely store a student's personal electronic device when such device is in the school's possession

- Specify the discipline associated with a student's violation of the policies, including discipline associated with a student's use of a personal electronic device during classroom instruction or during an assessment

- Establish a process for a student's parent or guardian to petition the school to allow the student to maintain access to their personal electronic device during part of the school day during instructional time if the parent or guardian can establish a legitimate reason related to the student's physical or mental health for the student to maintain access to the device

- Allow a student who has an IEP or 504 plan to maintain access to their personal electronic device during instructional time if the IEP or 504 plan requires access

"Personal electronic device"

Learn to hunt program opens registration for field to fork deer hunting program

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is offering a six-month workshop to teach skills needed to hunt, field dress and cook white-tailed deer to individuals who have little to no archery hunting experience.

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This workshop consists of summer long archery practices, fall workshops and hunting opportunities throughout Iowa's archery season. All sessions are led by instructors that possess the experience to teach skills necessary to become efficient archers and bowhunters.

"For those interested in the challenge of bow hunting as a means of sourcing their own meat, this program provides the opportunity to learn the skills and knowledge it takes to do it all yourself," said Jamie Cook, hunter education coordinator with the Iowa DNR.

Participants will spend the summer months becoming proficient archers with compound

is specified to include but not be limited to electronic communication equipment, mobile phones, smart phones, video game devices, and portable media players. The State Board of Education is given authority to adopt rules to implement. The bill requires the director of the Dept. of Education to develop and distribute model policies by May 1, 2025, that, if adopted by a public, charter, or accredited nonpublic school, would satisfy requirements for policies governing student use of personal electronic devices. A school board may adopt policies limiting student use of personal electronic devices during school hours that are more stringent than the model policies developed by the DE director. The bill requires the Dept. of Education (DE) and the Dept. of Public Safety (DPS) to consult on revisions that school districts need to make (and that accredited nonpublic schools may make) to high quality emergency operation plans to take into account the provisions of required cellphone policies. The DE and DPS are also required to provide support and guidance to school districts on how to revise their high-quality emergency operations plans so that they are consistent with the provisions of the required cellphone policies. The agencies must provide similar support to accredited nonpublic schools that elect to adopt student cellphone policies. By July 1, 2025, each school district must revise their high-quality emergency operation plan so that it is consistent with required cellphone policies.

For the 91st General Assembly, I will serve as the chair of the Education Committee, the vice chair of the Government Oversight Committee, the vice chair of the Ethics Committee, and the vice chair of the Education Appropriations Subcommittee. I will also serve on the Judiciary and Natural Resources committees.

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To host two free training events featuring Jeanette Yoffe, M.A., M.F.T.

Seasons Center for Behavioral Health is excited to host Healing Connections: Understanding The Unique Needs of Foster, Adoptive & Kinship Children with Jeanette Yoffe, M.A., M.F.T. Jeanette will host one training for professionals who work with foster/adoptive/kinship families and one training for parents and caregivers of foster/adoptive/kinship children.

Jeanette earned a Master's in Clinical Psychology specializing in adoption and foster care. She works with children, teens, and adults with serious psychological problems secondary to histories of abuse, neglect, adoption, and/or multiple foster care placements. She has specialized for the past 20 years in the treatment of children and teens who manifest serious deficits in their emotional, cognitive, and behavioral development. She is also an adopted person who was raised in foster care for 6 years.

The in-person training will take place on Thursday, April 10, 2025, from 1:00 – 4:30 PM, at Hope Church in Spencer. Jeanette will discuss adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), how early trauma shapes the brain and nervous system, and the core principals of trauma-informed care including the unique emotional and developmental needs of foster and adoptive children. She will also provide insight into how professionals and/or caregivers can foster trust, stability, and healing. Substance abuse (SA/

SUD), nursing, foster/adoptive and social work CEUs will be available.

A second event, specifically for parents and caregivers, will be held virtually, via Zoom, on Thursday, April 24, 2025 from 6:30 – 8:00 PM. Jeanette will help parents, caregivers, and families understand and address the emotional and behavioral needs of children who have experienced early separation trauma and loss. Foster/adoptive CEUs will be available.

"Jeanette has done remarkable work in the areas of childhood trauma and working with children in out-of-home placement settings, and we are excited to bring her to the area to provide such a unique training," says Sarah Wurm, VP of Program Development & Specialized Services at Seasons Center. "We need to continue to raise awareness and better understand the long-term impacts of childhood trauma. This training, in recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month, will provide valuable information on ACEs in children, strategies for working with children who have experienced trauma, as well as the lived experience perspective which is so important to this work."

For more details, or to register for either event, please visit our website at seasonscenter.org/events or our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/SeasonsCenterForBehavioralHealth

be invited to register for the course. The course cost is \$200. Applications will be accepted through June 1, or until registration is filled. Space is limited so those interested are encouraged to apply online right away. For more information and to begin the application process visit: 2025 Field to Fork Application: <https://forms.gle/9NR1q78vnuq5BfTA>

The program is provided through a partnership with the Iowa Hunter Ed Instructor Association, Raised at Full Draw, the Iowa Bowhunters Association, Johnson, Linn and Story County Conservation, and other

er various local partners and archery retailers. It is part of a national effort to recruit, retain and reactivate hunters due to the overall decline in hunting and outdoor recreation.

Media Contact: Jamie Cook, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515.350.8091

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NOTICE

The Harrison Township Trustees are accepting bids for two separate contracts for lawn mowing.

1. Harrison Township Cemetery for the 2025 season.
2. May City Park per mowing.

Submit written bids by April 11, 2025

To: Harrison Township Trustees
2151 White Ave., Ocheyedon, IA 51354

Trustees may accept or reject any or all bids.



The Osceola County Conservation Board has sites available for Seasonal Camping at Willow Creek County Park. Drawing will be held on April 4, 2025. Season will run from May 15, 2025 through October 15, 2025.

For more information or to enter the lottery, please contact the Willow Creek Nature Center at 712-758-3709.



Ocheyedon
Methodist Church
In person worship service.
Ocheyedon 9:30 a.m.

Sunday School

Begins at 9:15 a.m. with the children join us in worship about 10 a.m. Preschool through 6th grade

We will continue to live stream our 9:30 a.m. church service on our Facebook page, Ocheyedon Methodist Church (GMC). You can watch it live or it will be posted after the service is done.

THE OCHEYEDAN MELVIN Press-News

THE PRESS-NEWS (USPS 402680) is published weekly by The Press, Inc., 859 Main Street, Ocheyedon, Iowa 51354-0456. Periodicals postage paid at Ocheyedon, Iowa. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE PRESS-NEWS, P. O. Box 456, Ocheyedon, IA 51354-0456.

THE OCHEYEDAN PRESS-MELVIN NEWS
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Ocheyedon, IA 51354-0456

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Phone: 712/758-3140

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

In Osceola, one year \$27.75; Other Iowa and Minnesota counties, one year \$30.75; Outside above areas, one year \$36.75; Single copy 75¢

Official legal paper for Osceola county, the cities of Ocheyedon and Melvin and Sibley-Ocheyedon Community School, Member of Iowa Newspaper Association, National Newspaper Association and American Newspaper Representatives.

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