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# SIOUX CENTER NEWS

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The jagged stump of a mature tree by the driveway of Tim and Alyson Bents' Fourth Avenue Southeast home shows the power of Monday night's storm, which saw wind speeds of 99 miles per hour. Photos by Eric Sandbulte

## What a storm!



This tree, uprooted from the Monday night storm, leans against a Dordt University dormitory building along Seventh Street Northeast.

### Storm cleanup starts in Sioux Center

BY ERIC SANDBULTE  
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Trees and power lines in Sioux Center and throughout the region were ripped down from high-speed winds that struck during Monday night's derecho and thunderstorms.

With so many properties cleaning up branches of every imaginable size early Tuesday morning, the city of Sioux Center established multiple branch collection sites in town, including the parking lot of Heritage Village at 701 Second Ave. S.W., the gravel area behind Tower Fields at the end of Fifth Street

See **STORM** on page A4

## CO-OP settles into downtown spot

Architecture firm builds schools and more

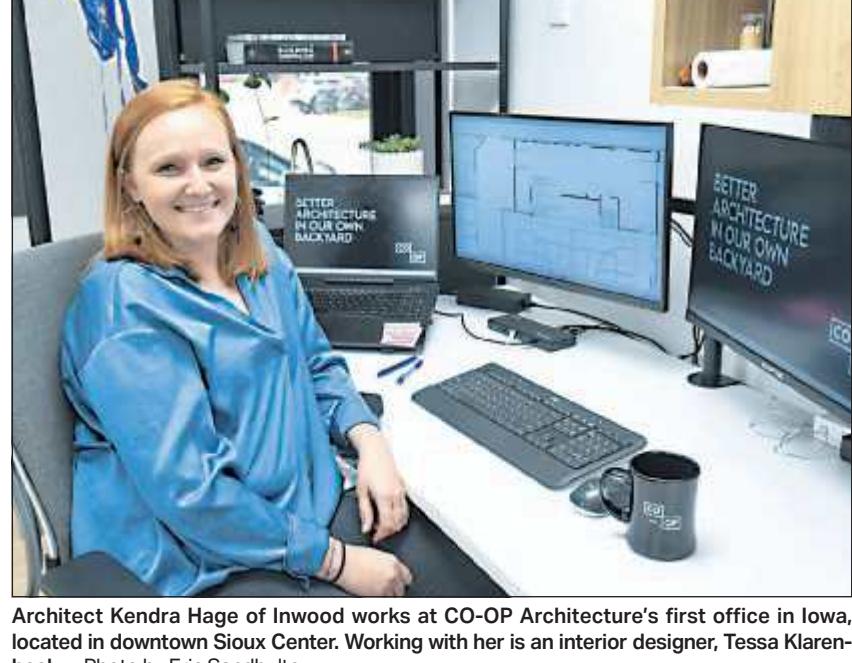
BY ERIC SANDBULTE  
[ESANDBULTE@NWESTIOWA.COM](mailto:ESANDBULTE@NWESTIOWA.COM)

Sioux Center recently welcomed a new business to its downtown, with the leaders of CO-OP Architecture choosing to make this its first office in Iowa.

Tim Hurlbert and Kyle Raph are the ones responsible for starting the South Dakota-based business in 2012, with the company now numbering more than 30 employees, according to its website. Its name is a tribute to the cooperative spirit of the Midwest and is not associated with Farmers Coop Society.

Hurlbert and Raph started with an office in Sioux Falls and then added another in Aberdeen. Later, CO-OP went on to open a third office in Rapid City.

See **CO-OP** on page A8



Architect Kendra Hage of Inwood works at CO-OP Architecture's first office in Iowa, located in downtown Sioux Center. Working with her is an interior designer, Tessa Klarenbeek. Photo by Eric Sandbulte

## Dordt purchases the Pencil Box

Business owners ready for retirement

BY ERIC SANDBULTE  
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The Pencil Box is entering a new chapter following its June 13 purchase by Dordt University.

Dordt University Print and Mail Center director James Rylaarsdam said it made sense to buyout the for paper, office products and furniture supplier since there were already so many parallels between what it and his department do, but the main factor behind the purchase was the additional sales it would bring to Dordt, including paper sales.

Most of the Print and Mail Center's business is internal to Dordt, but it has seen increasing demand from

external clients.

"We wouldn't be able to do all the things we do for Dordt if we didn't have this external business. But we're also the only ones in Sioux Center; nobody can do what we do and we're faster than if you're getting it from out of town," Rylaarsdam said. "We're looking to grow and be an asset to the community as well as to Dordt. If we weren't doing it together, then they wouldn't have somebody in town who could do it and Dordt wouldn't have all the capabilities it has."

Gaining the Pencil Box and its clients helps that growth while keeping a local business up and running in a new capacity.

"We really don't have

See **PENCIL** on page A3



Dordt University Print and Mail Center director James Rylaarsdam and print shop operator Melissa Nielson review an order. The Print Center has purchased the Pencil Box, a longtime Sioux Center paper, office products and furniture supplier. Photo by Eric Sandbulte

## School district keeps PPEL rate same for November vote

Levy pays for tech, buses and more

BY ERIC SANDBULTE  
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Election season might seem far away, but Sioux Center School District Board of Education is getting ready for Election Day, Nov. 4.

During the July 21 meeting the school board determined it would ask voters to consider renewing the district's existing physical plant and equipment levy rate, the first time the public will have considered the issue in the last eight years. This vote would keep the PPEL at its current rate of \$1.03 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation if approved.

Iowa school districts can bring PPEL up for a vote at the time of their choosing within a 10-year period.

School board member Nate

Bullock said the decision to renew the levy at the same rate was one determined after lengthy examination of district finances by the district business manager Jeana Van Voorst, superintendent Gary McElroy and other members of finance committee.

"We use PPEL to purchase a lot of our electronics, computers and school buses and things of that nature," Bullock said. "We're seeing rising costs, but Jeana and the team have done a really good job of controlling our finances to be able to not have to raise it, being mindful of our constituents' money."

Although PPEL dollars are most commonly used for technology and vehicles, its funds can also go toward such things as the

See **PPEL** on page A7

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