



Mike Bixler



Linda Beck



Warren Wethington

Bixler, Beck and Wethington to Face Off In June 2 Republican Primary

The primary election in Cedar county on Tuesday, June 2 will feature a three way race on the Republican ticket for two seats on county board of supervisors.

With incumbent Brad Gaul, a 16 year veteran of the board, not seeking reelection and incumbent Mike Bixler running for a second term, there are two other candidates who have taken out papers-Cedar County Sheriff Warren Wethington and Tipton Development Director Linda Beck.

Bixler, Wethington and Beck

will compete for the two seats on the board.

There are no Democrats running for supervisor.

Both Wethington and Beck said that they will be retiring from their full-time jobs this year.

It is still possible for other Republican and Democrat candidates to file papers for supervisor, but the deadline is Friday, March 20 at 5 p.m.

The general election will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 3.

Other members of the board of supervisors terms expire in

2028. They are Republicans Jon Bell, Jeff Kaufmann and Bruce Barnhart.

Candidates for other public office up for election in 2026 include County Attorney Adam Blank, Republican; Treasurer Sandy Delaney, Democrat; and Recorder Melissa Bahnsen, Republican.

The term for Auditor Nicolette Welch, Republican, ends in 2028.

Statements for the three candidates for supervisor, as of March 16, are included on P9.

Tipton and Bennett Enter Into Superintendent Sharing Agreement

Krista Clark, Reporter

The Tipton and the Bennett school districts, which have worked together for a number of years for students to come to Tipton after seventh grade, and within the past year have agreed to Tipton's maintenance director working one day a week in Bennett, have now taken the further step of agreeing to share the services of Tipton Superintendent Brandon Borseth, beginning July 1, 2026.

At both the Tipton and the Bennett school board meetings on March 9, the boards both okayed that for the next school year, and likely into the future. Tipton's superintendent will lead the Tipton school district and now also, the Bennett district.

The agreement, similar to the one entered into between Bennett and Tipton for sharing of the services of Tipton Maintenance Director Chris Sorgenfrey, provides that Borseth will spend 80% of his time during the next school year in Tipton and 20%, the equivalent of one day a week, serving as the superintendent in Bennett.

The decision to have Tipton and Bennett share a superintendent won't be a new experience for Borseth, which has shared its superintendent since 2019 with

the Calamus-Wheatland school district. A change in the direction that Calamus-Wheatland wanted to proceed in the future prompted the beginning of discussions, which have been going on for about a year, to have Bennett take the step to merge its superintendent duties with Tipton rather than the current arrangement.

"Our two school districts have a strong relationship," Borseth said, adding that he believes "this is the right step forward for both Tipton and Bennett." At the Tipton board meeting he described how several months ago board members and staff of both Tipton and Bennett met to discuss what possibly would be most beneficial for both school districts if the decision to share a superintendent was made.

This won't be the first time in Borseth's two years as the leader of the Tipton school district that he's taken on additional duties in his role as superintendent. For the past year, following the departure of Tipton's elementary principal, Borseth has served as both Tipton's superintendent and as the elementary principal. In assuming the elementary principal job along with his job as leader of the district, Borseth was given a \$25,000 stipend for his additional work at the elementa-

ry building, along with his regular \$135,000 salary, which was the same salary he'd received during his first year in Tipton. Other administrative staff members were also awarded smaller stipends to provide the superintendent with assistance in his role as elementary principal.

In becoming the superintendent in Bennett, along with his duties in Tipton, Borseth's role won't be the same as it's been this past year where he was essentially holding down two positions.

When the Tipton school board decides later this school year, in May or June, administrative salaries for Tipton, that will set the amount of Borseth's salary for the 2026-27 school year that Bennett will be responsible for. Again, Tipton will pay 80% of that salary and Bennett will pay 20%.

Borseth told the Tipton board that he's met with the staff at Bennett and that the Bennett school board is "100% behind the decision to share the superintendent's position."

Tipton's superintendent also noted to the Tipton board that because of the state of Iowa's encouragement of school districts to share personnel whenever it's feasible and beneficial to the

SUPERINTENDENT, P9

A "Chance Encounter" on Elevator H at UIHC

by Sandy Green

One never knows when the circumstances and the decisions of what looks like an ordinary day can turn out to have lifelong extraordinary consequences.

Twenty years ago, Yolanda Frudden at the age of 52, and Kathy Williams, (then Duttlinger) at the age of 50, were both at work at The University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City, the same as both of them had been doing for years. They were not close friends; they were casual acquaintances. Both of their jobs, Frudden's as a Lab Assistant delivering specimens, and Williams as a Greenhouse Caretaker keeping the plants alive and well, took them to all parts of

the large hospital. At the time, both women lived in Iowa City, where Yolanda and her family still reside, but Kathy and her husband have lived in the Tipton area for about two years.

The two employees would see each other in passing and speak, but that was about the extent of their interactions; that is until an October day in 2005. Yolanda had one hour left on her shift. She was on the elevator and she was in tears. A year of trying to get to the bottom of her headaches and high blood pressure concerns had come to a head.

Her nephrologist, Dr. Lawrence Karniski, had told her that she had probably been ill with a kidney condition for 10 years, but she didn't realize it. She had

continued to perform her job at UIHC as well as working with her brother at a job she considered a hobby: operating the Yolanda's BBQ food stand that served at Iowa Hawk-I games and local events.

On this fall day at the end of her shift, she was scheduled to undergo fistula surgery to have a port put in her arm to prepare her to begin kidney dialysis. At this point her kidney function was about 40%.

Yolanda was beside herself, as she had recently returned from her country of origin, the Philippines, in hopes that one of her brothers would be able to be a kidney donor for her. For a number of reasons, that option was not going to happen. About this time, Kathy got on the elevator. Seeing Yolanda's distress, she asked her what was the matter.

Yolanda explained the details of what she was going through. She also told her that she thought she had another donor, but that person took advantage of her situation and did not follow through with testing that was set up at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., nor follow through with the donation of a kidney.

Kathy's heart immediately went out to Yolanda. After hearing the situation, she asked her, "What's your blood type?" Kathy told her they were the same blood type and that she would give her one of her kidneys. She gave Yolanda her phone number. Yolanda took the number but never called as she didn't believe that this co-worker was serious.

Two days later Kathy called Yolanda and convinced her she was serious, so the two set up a time to meet in person. Even with details starting to come together, the future kidney transplant recipient did not rush to take up Kathy's offer

SEE UIHC, P9



Tipton's new elementary principal, Dawn Kruse, is shown here with her family. Left to right they are Andy Kruse, Dawn's husband, and the couple's three children: Kai, Aeda and Oakley.

Dawn Kruse Selected as Tipton's New Elementary School Principal

Krista Clark, Reporter

After nearly a year during which Tipton school superintendent Brandon Borseth has acted as both the district's superintendent and the elementary principal, a new leader for Tipton's elementary school has been chosen.

At the Tipton school board's Monday, March 9 meeting, Tipton native Dawn Kruse, who currently is employed as an assistant principal in the West Liberty school district, was selected as the school's new elementary leader. Kruse was one of 25 applicants for the position, which Superintendent Borseth said was about twice the number of applicants he'd expected for the administration position.

"I am honored to be selected to serve as the next elementary principal in Tipton," Kruse said.

A 2002 graduate of Tipton high school, who graduated from the University of Northern Iowa in 2006, Kruse has worked in the field of education for the past 19 years. She also holds a M.A. degree from Capella University,

where she also received a special-ist degree in educational administration.

The school board voted 4-0 in selecting Kruse as the new principal, with board member Dionne Daedlow, who is Kruse's sister, abstaining from the vote. Kruse's salary in her new position is \$100,000.

Dawn Kruse began her teaching career in the Albert Lea, Minn., school district, where she taught high school social studies, from 2007 through 2014. Following that she served as a K-12 curriculum specialist for the Davenport school district from 2014 to 2017. In August 2017 she became a school improvement

consultant for the Grant Wood Area Education Association and continued in that role until 2022, when she began work in the West Liberty school district. In West Liberty she has served as the school assistant elementary/early learning center principal and also as the pre-K-12 district special education director for the past four years.

"When the Tipton elementary job opened, I was excited for the potential opportunity to serve the district where I grew up, the community where I currently live and where my children attend school. Many positive things are happening with the Tipton District and

SEE KRUSE, P9



Yolanda Frudden, left, and Kathleen Williams are shown in a nearby restaurant in the summer of 2025. They meet periodically to celebrate the anniversary of their kidney transplant surgeries in January 2006. Contributed Photo

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Papers May Be Delayed

Some subscribers to The Tipton Conservative may be receiving this issue late due to blizzard conditions in Iowa and Wisconsin. Operations at the Madison, Wis. facility where the paper is printed were impacted by the storm that hit the Midwest on Sunday and Monday, March 14 and 15.

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