

A Floyd County official newspaper serving the communities of Nora Springs, Rudd, Rockford and Rock Falls

Gemma the therapy dog supports students at RRMR

BY LIV DENNIS
Nora Springs Rockford Register

A friendly face, and a wagging tail, greets students at Rudd-Rockford-Marble Rock each day. Gemma, a cocker spaniel therapy dog, has become a familiar and comforting presence for students at the school, helping them navigate challenges and start their mornings with a smile.

Gemma works alongside Beth Gaubatz, a 7-12 special education teacher, who said the dog's intuitive personality makes her a natural fit for the school environment.

"She's really intuitive to kids' feelings and she does a wonderful job of calming them down," Gaubatz said. "Some kids read to her. Generally, she just hangs out and when somebody needs her then they come get her and she

does her job."

On a typical day, Gemma spends time with students in classrooms and common areas, offering quiet companionship. Gaubatz said Gemma has even learned to handle some responsibilities on her own. If she needs to go outside, she is trained to open the handicap-accessible door and let herself out.

Gaubatz believes therapy dogs play an important role in schools because of their ability to connect with students in a nonjudgmental way.

"They're trusting, they connect with kids and they just have a way of calming them down," she said. "If we're out in the hallway in the mornings, the kids will smile. It welcomes kids to school, too."

Gemma's impact is especially

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Gemma and student, Caleb, working together in the bus barn last year.



Gemma in the auditorium

Silos & Smokestacks grant awarded

BY JULIE SALISBURY
Nora Springs Rockford Register

The Floyd County Conservation Board/Fossil & Prairie Center has received a grant through Silo's & Smokestacks for a seasonal internship running from May 1 through August 31, 40 hours per week, Monday through Friday at a rate of \$14.00 per hour.

The internship is to support Rockford Brick & Tile Archives-to-Access, a project focused on cataloging and preserving the Rockford Brick & Tile Company collection and expanding public access to local industrial, agricultural, and fossil-related history. The intern will help move a large portion of the collection from storage into PastPerfect, a museum-quality collections management system with public ac-



FLOYD COUNTY CONSERVATION/FOSSIL & PRAIRIE CENTER

One of two kilns that are still in place at the Fossil & Prairie Center outside of Rockford.

cess functionality, strengthening interpretation at the Fossil & Prairie Center and supporting regional heritage tourism.

The Rockford Brick & Tile was in business from roughly 1910 to 1976 and brought countless jobs to Rockford. The company was a major producer of bricks and agricultural drain tile in Northeastern Iowa. Using local shale deposits, the company fueled agricultural expansion by producing drain tile crucial for the Iowa landscape, and its bricks built many local build-

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Grace Schmitt named 2026 Floyd County Beef Queen



ROCKFORD FFA

Rockford senior Grace Schmitt was crowned the 2026 Floyd County Beef Queen at the Floyd County Cattlemen's Banquet held on Saturday, March 21. Grace has always been very active in 4H and FFA, and is the current Rockford FFA President. Grace is the daughter of Robbie and Jennifer Schmitt of Rockford.

Rockford girls golf receives clubs from IGA

BY JULIE SALISBURY
Nora Springs Rockford Register

The Rockford girls golf team is the recipient of a set of golf clubs from the Iowa Golf Association. Coach Carmen Staudt was contacted by the IGA about their inaugural program of donating new or gently used golf clubs to schools who contacted the office to participate. The program was free to partici-

pate in and once Rockford was selected, representative Paige Hoffman made the trip to Rockford to present the golf clubs to the girls team. Accepting the clubs on the team's behalf was Student Body President Danika deBuhr, who is the only senior on the girls team this year. Coach Staudt commented, "I appreciate the donation as are team can always use equipment to grow our program."



RRMR GOLF

IGA representative Paige Hoffman and Danika deBuhr.

Board of Supervisors hear opioid awareness campaign presentation

BY VAN MITCHELL
Nora Springs Rockford Register

The Floyd County Board of Supervisors at their March 17 meeting heard a grant presentation from Duane Ollendick, Community Resource Officer with the Charles City Police Department about utilizing \$5,395.00 of Floyd County Opioid Settlement Funds for an opioid awareness campaign.

"I run a Drug Awareness Program (DAP) in our (Charles City) schools with the sixth graders," he said. "The program runs about eight weeks. I'm in the schools three times a week, and I try to break the classes down into groups of 30 to 40 students."

Ollendick told the Board that opioid use is one topic discussed in his DAP program.

"We know opioids are in most households because they're a

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CHARLES CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

Duane Ollendick serves as a Community Resource Officer with the Charles City Police Department.