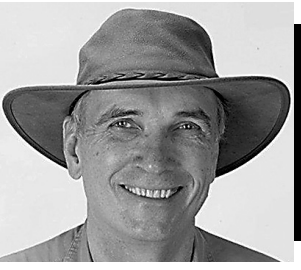

Ponderings from the BATT CAVE

By Al Batt - Writer, Speaker, Storyteller, Humorist

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Echoes from the Loafers' Club Meeting

I'm staying busy.

Oh, yeah? Doing what?

Trying to look busy.

Driving by Bruce's drive

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. Spring is when you can step outside, and char your rear end while freezing your nose at the same time. A silly old poem I learned in my boyhood is "Spring is sprung, the grass is riz. I wonder where the birdies is. They say the birdies on the wing, but that's absurd. I always thought the wing was on the bird."

Spring is when my entire world chirps. I saw the first returning robin of the spring. He was easy to see. He had his tongue stuck to a flagpole.

I was a couple of days younger than I am today when I grew weary in the afternoon. I was tired but wasn't sure why. Then I realized the cause. It was all the walking I've done, and I'm not even counting moonwalking. I'd walked and talked, and I walked the line, on sunshine, on the water, on by, the walk, on, on eggshells, tall, in Memphis, like a man, by myself, like an Egyptian, in your shoes, to New Orleans, on life, this way, it off, on the wild side, after midnight, the floor over you, the dog, and done some of it shuffling off to Buffalo while wearing boots that were made for walking—and other songs I've forgotten. Uffda! No wonder I was tired.

I've learned

All the good chemistry jokes argon.

I went to the Helium Museum. I can't speak highly enough about that place.

Twist ties change direction in mid-twist or mid-untwist.

I put a bow on my wife's old car and gave it to her for her birthday. She was surprised.

Bad jokes department

An opossum is an Irish possum.

Someone born in '33 was 45 in '78. That has got to be a record.

My father said, "When one door closes, another door opens." He was a wonderful man, but a terrible cabinetmaker.

How do you get red wine out of a carpet? You don't. You get red wine out of grapes.

Nature notes

The shadows were bending in the afternoon under the weight of the sun when I heard the dark-eyed juncos making toy ray gun sounds. Pew, pew, pew! The gray birds with white bellies and outer tail feathers are called snowbirds because they usher in the snow. The junco, looking like a gray bird that crash-landed in a can of white paint, is a common spring and fall migrant throughout Minnesota and Iowa, and a common winter visitor in all of Iowa and the southern part of Minnesota. A junco's eyes are dark, and the bill is a light pink. Females are a lighter gray. I see more of the darker-colored males than the females during the winter. Females are more common in the southern states, overwintering as far as northern Mexico. The males risk harsh winters in the north in order to get a head start on the spring journey back to their breeding territories in northeastern Minnesota and Canada. They are sometimes accompanied by American tree sparrows that appear to be wearing tie tacks without neckties. It's a good look and one I may emulate. This sparrow breeds across northern Canada and Alaska, and despite having "tree" in its name, it's a ground bird. It forages and nests on the ground.

A reader asked where goldfinches first show spring colors? That's a tough question about a wild canary that refuses to answer questions. You'd think the state bird of Iowa would be more forthcoming. This is a wild guess, but I am going to say Dublin, Georgia. Yeah, that's it, Dublin, Georgia. I'll bet yellow feathers abound there. Oh, wait a second. My sweet wife, The Queen B, just told me that this was a plumage question and not a geographical question. I told her I knew that. Please don't tell her anything different. It'll be our little secret. There are many colors on a bird's palette. The first signs of a male American goldfinch's molt into a breeding plumage show around the head. The pale edges of the wing feathers wear and fade, and the bill color begins changing to a pale orange. This progresses with more yellow and black feathers around the head and more yellow on the body. It creates expectations, and I welcome the sight of the tiny birds that have become flying dandelions.

Meeting adjourned

"The day the Lord created hope was probably the same day He created Spring."—Bernard Williams. Be kind.

MINUTES

ROCKFORD MUNICIPAL LIGHT PLANT REGULAR MEETING
LIGHT PLANT BUILDING
MARCH 11, 2026
7:00 PM

1. The Board of Trustees of the Rockford Municipal Light Plant met in regular session at the Plant Building on March 11, 2026. Chairman Miller opened the meeting at 7:00 P.M. Present were Trustees Daniel Miller, John Paulus and Scott Gruis and Employee Cory Murray.
2. Motion Miller, sec. Paulus to approve agenda as posted. Motion carried.
3. Motion Paulus, sec. Gruis to approve minutes of February 11, 2026 Board Meeting, Monthly Reports and Claims & Expenses as presented. Motion carried.
4. Motion Miller, sec. Gruis to approve ME-1 Report. Motion carried.
5. Motion Gruis, sec. Paulus to approve 2026-2027 Budget. Motion carried.
6. Motion Gruis, sec Miller to approve $250 donation to RSH After Prom. Motion carried.
7. Motion Miller, sec Paulus to approve $1000 donation to RRMR Summer Recreation. Motion carried.
8. Motion Miller, sec Gruis to approve $150 donation to the Spring Easter Egg Hunt. Motion carried.
9. Discussion was held on various projects.
10. Supervisor Murray reported on reading of meters, trimmed trees, locates, generate, cleaned out sheds, repaired lights, moved snow, and paperwork
11. Meeting Adjourned at 8:00 PM.

February Receipts: Electric Energy $87,348.30 Interest $1,695.74, Service Charges $302.17

Misc Revenue $3,864.86 Deposits $270.00.

Daniel Miller
Chairman, Board of Trustees
Scott Gruis
Secretary, Board of Trustees

CLAIMS REPORT

VENDOR REFERENCE	AMOUNT
Amazon Capital Services, Ink	68.99
Arnold Motor Supply, Truck Brake Light	4.07
Black Hills/Ia Gas Utility Co, G a s Energy	453.44
Blue Cross Blue Shield , Health Insurance	1,545.18
BW Gas & Convenience, Retail Gas	82.01
Central Iowa Distributing, Shop Supplies	296
Cintas Corporation, January Uniforms	315.6
City Of Rockford, Share Of Expenses	2,668.63
City Of Rockford,Wa/Se Utility	50.75
Family Community Credit Union, Transfer To Savings	2,500.00
Iowa Association Mun. Utlities, 2026-27 Electric Member Dues	2,659.00
Iowa Department Of Revenue, Sales Tax	1,581.28
Merritt Computer Service Inc, Anti-Virus/Cloud	17
Midwest Group Benefits, Inc,Hra	14
Municipal Energy Agency , Electric Energy	54,955.67
Nora Springs Rockford Register, Publishing	43.12
Nora Springs Rockford Register, Publishing	80.51
Omnitel Communications, P h o n e Service	141.64
Principal Life Insurance, Dental & Disb & Life Ins	295.71
Us Cellular, Plan	47.83
Accounts Payable Total	67,820.43
Payroll Checks	17,761.09
***** Report Total *****	85,581.52
General	4,229.43
Library Fund	2,395.38
Water	5,568.16
Sewer	5,568.12
Electric	67,820.43
Total Funds	85,581.52

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ANCIENT NEWS

Nora Springs Advertiser – March 20, 1926 – 100 years

The fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades entered the State Contest this fall. Friday afternoon the home contest was held. Donal McGuiness, Philip Bronson and Verna Haight were the last three standing. In a written test, Donald McGuiness won the championship of the grade school

Rockford Register – Mar. 21, 1951 – 75 years

Attorney B. C. Sullivan of Rockford was badly injured Friday morning in an automobile accident east of town near the George Trettin farm. Sullivan hit a car head-on as both drivers were blinded by the blizzard and they crashed with terrific impact. Sullivan received a broken pelvis, injured ribs, in addition to other bruises and cuts about the face and body.

Nora Springs Advertiser – March 25, 1976 – 50 years

Eight cars on the Saturday morning Milwaukee Freight tipped and spilled their cargo in a misshap west of Nora Springs. The accident, which occurred at 4:30 a.m. caused the loss of eight cars of grain and sugar. The cause of the accident is unknown.

Shell Rock Valley Times – March 22, 2001 – 25 years

AAU District tournaments were held at Wartburg College in Waverly and Justin Abell of RRMR placed first and Nathan McRoberts placed third. Justin and Nathan will wrestle State at Five Seasons in Cedar Rapids.

Nora Springs Rockford Register – March 25, 2011 – 15 years

The Marble Rock Fire Department held a mock disaster at the Marble Rock Community Center. This event was a good training session for all of those involved. Along with the Marble Rock Fire Department, there were members from Colwell and Charles City fire departments, Floyd County Fire and Rescue, NIACC EMT students and Mercy Air Med.

SHOWING UP

By Kurt Meyer

In January, a David Brooks column in the New York Times suggested that Americans are living through what he called "the Great Detachment." "We all need energy sources to power us through life, and love is the most powerful energy source known to humans. I've composed this little homage to love because Americans seem to be having less of it. You might call this the Great Detachment. … a systematic weakening of the loving bonds that hold society together — for community, for nation, for friends and on and on."

I found Brooks's theory provocative and asked numerous friends to share their reactions. This is the third (and last) column of their insightful, lightly edited responses.

"I won't argue the facts and figures Brooks cites. But he's overlooked some social dynamics of the past two decades, unintentionally or willfully, that cast a somewhat different light on the changing social landscape.

MEYER to page 6

PUBLIC NOTICE

2025 WATER QUALITY REPORT FOR ROCKFORD WATER SUPPLY

This report contains important information regarding the water quality in our water system. The source of our water is groundwater. Our water quality testing shows the following results:

CONTAMINANT	MCL - (MCLG)	Compliance		Date	Violation	Source
		Type	Value & (Range)		Yes/No	
Total Trihalomethanes (ppb) [TTHM]	80 (N/A)	LRAA	5.00 (5 - 5)	09/30/2025	No	By-products of drinking water chlorination
Copper (ppm)	AL=1.3 (1.3)	90th	0.32 (ND - 0.47)	2023	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives
Lead (ppb)	AL=15 (0)	90th	3.00 (ND - 17) 1 sample(s) exceeded AL	2023	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits
950 - DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM						
Chlorine (ppm)	MRDL=4.0 (MRDLG=4.0)	RAA	1.7 (0.25 - 3.6)	12/31/2025	No	Water additive used to control microbes
01 - S/EP WELL 1 (1914) TREATED - WEST BY RIVER						
Combined-Radium (pCi/L)	5 (0)	SGL	1.1	06/12/2023	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	4 (4)	SGL	0.56	01/12/2021	No	Water additive which promotes strong teeth; erosion of natural deposits; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Barium (ppm)	2 (2)	SGL	0.19	01/12/2021	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits
Sodium (ppm)	N/A (N/A)	SGL	7.024	01/08/2024	No	Erosion of natural deposits; added to water during treatment process
Di (2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (ppb)	6 (0)	SGL	.60	05/13/2024	No	Discharge from rubber and chemical factories
02 - S/EP WELL 2 (1978) TREATED - EAST BY TOWER						
Barium (ppm)	2 (2)	SGL	0.21	01/12/2021	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	4 (4)	SGL	0.58	01/12/2021	No	Water additive which promotes strong teeth; erosion of natural deposits; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Sodium (ppm)	N/A (N/A)	SGL	130	01/08/2024	No	Erosion of natural deposits; added to water during treatment process
Nitrate [as N] (ppm)	10 (10)	SGL	0.2630 (ND-0.2630)	2025	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits

Note: Contaminants with dates indicate results from the most recent testing done in accordance with regulations.

DEFINITIONS

- Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) - The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
- Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) -- The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.
- ppb -- parts per billion.
- ppm -- parts per million.
- pCi/L - picocuries per liter
- N/A- Not applicable
- ND -- Not detected
- RAA - Running Annual Average
- Treatment Technique (TT) - A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
- Action Level (AL)-The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
- Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG) - The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.
- Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL) - The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.
- SGL - Single Sample Result
- RTCR - Revised Total Coliform Rule
- NTU - Nephelometric Turbidity Units

GENERAL INFORMATION

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water posed a health risk. More information about contaminants or potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Lead can cause serious health effects in people of all ages, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and parts used in service lines and in home plumbing. Our water supply is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes but cannot control the variety of materials used in the plumbing in your home. Because lead levels may vary over time, lead exposure is possible even when your tap sampling results do not detect lead at one point in time. You can help protect yourself and your family by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Using a filter, certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead, is effective in reducing lead exposures. Follow the instructions provided with the filter to ensure the filter is used properly. Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Boiling water does not remove lead from water. Before using tap water for drinking, cooking, or making baby formulas, flush your pipes for several minutes.

You can do this by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes. If you have a lead service line or galvanized requiring replacement service line, you may need to flush your pipes for a longer period. If you are concerned about lead in your water and wish to have your water tested, contact ROCKFORD WATER SUPPLY at 641-756-3644. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at https://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

Lead tap sampling data can be found in the Iowa Drinking Water Data Portal: https://programs.iowadnr.gov/iowadrinkingwater

Our water supply has completed a service line inventory. Please contact us for information regarding the inventory and how you can access the results.

ADDITIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION

Infants and young children are typically more vulnerable to lead in drinking water than the general population. It is possible that lead levels at your home may be higher than at other homes in the community as a result of materials used in your home's plumbing. If you are concerned about elevated lead levels in your home's water, you may wish to have your water tested and flush your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using tap water. Additional information is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

This water supply obtains its water from the limestone and dolomite of the Devonian aquifer. The Devonian aquifer was determined to be highly susceptible to contamination because the characteristics of the aquifer and overlying materials provide little protection from contamination at the land surface. The Devonian wells will be highly susceptible to surface contaminants such as leaking underground storage tanks, contaminant spills, and excess fertilizer application. A detailed evaluation of your source water was completed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and is available from the Water Operator at 641-756-3644.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions regarding this information or how you can get involved in decisions regarding the water system, please contact ROCKFORD WATER SUPPLY at 641-756-3644.

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