

TPD



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The Schatz Family by the sign at the entrance of their dairy farm.

Schatz Family Named "Farm Family of the Year"

RACHEL RILEY
TPD Editor

The Schatz family of Cresco of Schatz Dairy Farm has snagged the Kiwanis Farm Family of the Year award, and it's easy to see why. Aaron, Melissa, and their kids Nolan and Alanna run a bustling dairy farm that's not just about hard work—it's about family, community, and a whole lot of heart.

Their farm is no small operation. With about 250 cows, mainly Holsteins, and 1,600 acres of corn, soybeans, and hay, the Schatz crew keeps things humming year-round. They grow most of their own feed, but also sell some crops, teetering a balancing act to keep the farm running as smoothly as possible. Their cows live the good life in a comfy 200-cow freestyle barn, and every day they're milked in a busy double-eight parallel parlor that's been part of the farm since 2008.

Mornings start early in the Schatz household. Aaron and Nolan are up and outside at 4 a.m., mixing feed and scraping stalls, while Alanna feeds the calves at 6 a.m. Then Aaron and the kids head to Melissa's restaurant, Sue-Z-Q's, which she arrives at by 5 a.m. daily and they enjoy a hearty breakfast together. It's not just a meal; it's a community gathering spot where neighbors catch up and share stories. That's the Schatz way—work hard, but stay connected.

Aaron sums up work on the farm perfectly: "It's about

having a close-knit group to work with. You have your people and make your team." And that team extends beyond the farm gates also. Melissa is active on the local 4H committee, the farm assists with plots for FFA and plenty of meals have been donated over the years to the Crestwood wrestling crews.

The family doesn't just farm; they care for the land like it's part of their extended family. They use minimum tillage and cover crops to keep the soil happy and healthy, making sure their farm stays productive for generations. Their cows get the royal treatment too—sand bedding, regular hoof trims, a visit from the vet (Aaron's brother!) every two weeks and lots of TLC to keep them comfy and healthy.

Melissa's restaurant, Sue-Z-Q's, is another way the Schatz family ties into the community. It's a local hotspot where folks gather, laugh, and enjoy good food—fuel for the hard-working farm crew and their neighbors alike.

Aaron knows farming isn't always easy. The current low milk prices and tight margins make it a tough gig. But with their own acres for feed and a strong work ethic, the Schatz family keeps pushing forward. "I love the way of life," Aaron says. "It's a great place to raise and grow a family. Every day you get to see new life with the dairy calves being born, I wouldn't want to live any other way."

Nolan and Alanna are more than just helpers—they're the future of the farm. 11th grader Nolan loves driving tractors and helping to manage the crops, while Alanna, a 10th grader who's also a national cattle show competitor, adores caring for the baby calves. They're both active in 4H and FFA, and Alanna also wrestles—having gone to State this past season, proving the family's got plenty of energy to spare.

Melissa's journey from nursing to running a restaurant while supporting the farm shows the family's versatility and dedication. "When you see your kids have that driving passion too, it wants to make you keep going," she says.

The Schatz family isn't just resting on their laurels. They're hoping to install a new dry cow facility to keep



Hard working and family first seems to be the mantra for Aaron Schatz, who puts in long hours everyday on the family farm along with his family and other farm workers who have grown to be like family saying, "It's all about the people you surround yourself with".

Goings on!

- SUNDAYS:**
-BINGO AT THE CRESCO WILDLIFE CLUB. NOON
- MONDAYS:**
-AA MEETING, VFW HALL CRESCO 5PM
-BINGO AT FAMILY FUN & FITNESS, LIME SPRINGS 6:30PM
- TUESDAYS:**
-EUCHRE AT PUB NO. 7 TOURNAMENT STARTS AT 6:30
-500 AT KESSEL LODGE, 1PM
- WEDNESDAYS:**
-EUCHRE AT KESSEL LODGE, 1PM
-TRIVIA NIGHT AT PUB NO. 7, 6PM
- 3/19:** Plantpeddler Ribbon Cutting @ 5pm.
- 3/20:** Larry Reis Lecture on Fly Fishing, Cresco Library @ 10am
- 3/20:** HELLO SPRING!
- 3/21:** Youth Mentoring's Bowl-A-Thon at King Pin Entertainment, Decorah from 12-1:30pm
- 3/21:** Root River Jam, Cresco Theatre 7pm
- 3/22:** Cresco Boy Scout Troop #63 Spaghetti Luncheon, American Legion Cresco 11am-4pm
- 3/25:** Happy Birthday Norman Borlaug!
- 3/28:** Turkey River Pheasants Forever Banquet, Expo Center.
- 3/29:** Evans Senior Living Community Easter Egg Hunt! Ages 0-12, 2pm

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TEACHER PROFILE: JULIE CARTER / CRESTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

27 years and teacher of thousands. Get to know the English teacher who keeps coming back for the learning that goes both ways.



Julie Carter, Crestwood High School Language Arts Teacher is marking her 27th year at CHS. She always wanted to teach and tells her students that she learns from them just like she hopes they learn from her.

RACHEL RILEY
TPD Editor

CRESCO - At Crestwood High School, a veteran English/Language Arts teacher is marking her 27th year on the CHS staff and her 32nd year in education overall. She currently teaches English 10, American Literature, and Foundations of Writing—a dual-credit prerequisite for NICC's Composition I—and is also certified in American History. "I ask my students to do their best," she says. "Everyone's best can look different from day to day, but do the best (you) can for that day—but that also includes the action of 'doing.' Don't refuse to do the work because it might not be interesting, or it might seem hard. We can do hard things—it's the only way we can truly learn."

A Cresco native and Crestwood alum, she earned her AA at NIACC and completed her teaching degree at UNI. Teaching runs deep at home, too: her husband, Kevin, teaches elementary special education in Decorah, and their lives "revolve around school for the entire school year." They have three adult children—Kristina, who lives in Minnesota and works for Kwik Trip; Chance, a NIACC graduate and Corrections Officer with the Cerro Gordo County Sheriff's Office; and Connor, currently at NIACC studying to become a music teacher—as well as a 3-year-old granddaughter. After a tough day,

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Calvin Trepp H.I.S.

Cadet Refresh Station Raises Nearly \$1,000 for Local Organizations

HOLLY O'BRIEN
Howard-Winneshiek CSD
Work-Based Learning Coordinator

Crestwood Middle School 7th grade Cadet Pathways Quarter 3 students recently wrapped up their community service project by creating and running the Cadet Refresh Station, a student-led dirty soda bar that brought excitement to the school while raising money for two local community organizations.

The project began with students brainstorming ideas for a service project they could fully plan and lead themselves. After pitching several ideas and discussing what would be both fun and meaningful, the class voted on their winning concept, a refresh station featuring specialty drinks for students and staff.

Once the idea was selected, students immediately began organizing the event. They collaborated to develop a drink menu, create marketing materials, and plan how the event would run from start to finish.

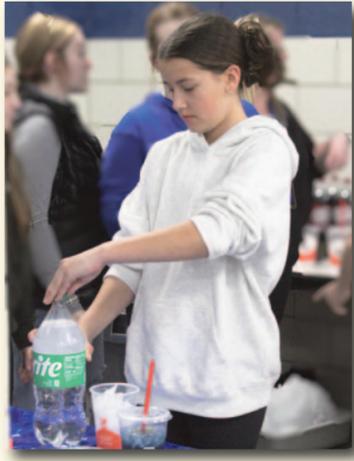
"Our class came up with the idea together, and it was really cool to see it actually happen," one student shared. "Everyone had a part in making it work."

The refresh station featured four student-created drinks: The Jimmy G, The Vanilla Dream, The Cadet, and The Mainstream. Students thoughtfully designed the drinks so several ingredients overlapped, helping keep costs down while still offering fun options.

Students also reached out to local businesses for support. Kwik Star and Casey's generously donated drink cups, each providing half of the cups needed for the event. Their support helped keep project costs low.

Before the project launched, students presented their proposal to Middle School Principal Mr. Wedemeier and High School Principal Mr. Bentley to receive approval to host the event during lunch periods.

To promote the event, students designed flyers and created an online ordering option for staff across the Howard-Winneshiek Community School District. The response from staff was overwhelming, with more than 75 drink orders placed by staff members alone. Students prepared each order and personally delivered drinks throughout the buildings.



7th grader Evie Reis makes drinks to order during the fundraiser.

PATHWAYS Q3 - PAGE 3



7th graders from Cadet Pathways Q3 class sold dirty sodas with proceeds benefitting the Kiwanis Club and the American Legions Post 135.

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