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Sioux City Journal

Founded in 1864

Monday, March 30, 2026

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Crews tend hotspots after huge grassfire

Full extent of damage not yet known; some buildings burned

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SIOUX CITY — Fire crews continued to work Sunday to extinguish hotspots in a huge grassfire that scorched parts of Woodbury County over the weekend.

The fire began near Bronson, in rural Woodbury County, on Saturday, said John Holmes, Woodbury County Emergency Management assistant coordinator. More than 50 organizations from three states responded to help, he said.

The Iowa State Patrol said in a social media post Sunday that an area roughly “7.1 miles in length and 1.5 miles in width at its broadest point” was burned. Aerial photos show a broad area darkened by

the flames.

In an email to The Journal, Holmes said he expects an estimate of how many acres were burned will be available Monday.

Officials on Saturday asked the public to avoid traveling “on gravel roads near Lawton, Bronson, and Merville” because of the risk of hindering first responders. U.S. Highway 20 was blocked late in the afternoon by emergency vehicles before reopening later in the evening.

One injury was reported in the fire, Holmes said, but he was uncertain of how badly the person was hurt. “Multiple residential structures and outbuildings” were burned in the fire, Woodbury County Emergency Management said in a press release.

The exact cause of the fire is not yet known, but it was spread rapidly by high winds and low relative humidity. The area was under a Red

Flag warning Saturday.

Conditions were ripe for grassfires. The National Weather Service in Sioux Falls warned in a social media post Saturday of the “EXTREME fire danger through the day.”

“We don’t see these conditions develop very often,” the National Weather Service wrote. “Fire spread will be rapid. DO NOT BURN! Report any wildfire immediately even if it is small.”

All of Northwest Iowa will be faced with a “very high” danger of grassfires on Monday, according to the National Weather Service.

A respite center for those affected by the fire has opened at Lofted Views Event Center, 2086 210th St., Bronson, Woodbury County Emergency Management said. A helpline is also available for those who need assistance or have questions about recovering from the damage, 712-222-4400.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY MELISSA JEAN VAKULSKAS

Multiple fire crews in Siouxland responded Saturday to a major grassfire in rural Woodbury County that managed to “jump” Highway 20.

HISTORY TAUGHT THROUGH LANDMARKS



CAITLIN YAMADA, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

Sioux City Public Museum’s Theresa Weaver and Miranda Valdovinos show off some of the models and posters created by area fourth graders as part of the Sioux City History Projects exhibit.

Fourth grade history project showcasing Sioux City landmarks and people

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SIOUX CITY — When she was a little girl, Miranda Valdovinos remembered her dad loved driving the family around town, pointing out all of his favorite Sioux City monuments.

“My dad came from Mexico, but he loves living here,” she explained. “Dad always stopped at the War Eagle Monument because it looked so inviting as well as the Sgt. Floyd Monument because it looked like a big pencil.”

Valdovinos, education coordinator for the Sioux City Public Museum, is quickly becoming a connoisseur of the community’s unique and varied landmarks.

Both she and education curator Theresa Weaver are in charge of the 35th annual Sioux City History Projects exhibit, now on view at the Sioux City Public Museum, 607 Fourth St.

After studying local history, more than 800 fourth grade students from 17 participating schools created models and posters representing the landmarks, events and people that were significant to them.

94 of these art pieces were selected to be showcased at the museum. They will be on display until May 9, when students will be honored at a reception. Until then, the

If you go

WHAT: 35th annual Sioux City History Projects, with models and posters depicting Sioux City landmarks by 95 fourth grade students

WHEN: Now through May 9

WHERE: Sioux City Public Museum, 607 Fourth St.

public is invited to vote for their favorite history project in the Visitor’s Choice Award category, with ballots being available at the museum’s front desk.

Many of this year’s projects depict best-known Sioux City landmarks like the Grandview Park Bandshell as well as Trinity Heights Queen of Piece. So were enduring sites like the War Eagle and Sgt. Floyd Monuments, which were favorites of Valdovinos’ dad.

“Even though kids do Sgt. Floyd and War Eagle every year, my dad will be pleased his picks are still popular,” Valdovinos said.

Weaver said she was surprised at how many students chose businesses as their landmark models.

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SIOUX CITY COUNCIL

Property tax levy hearing is Monday

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SIOUX CITY — The Sioux City Council will hold a hearing on the proposed property tax levy Monday.

The hearing, which is required by the Iowa Code, will be held in the fifth-floor Council Chambers at City Hall at 4 p.m.

“The property tax levy as published is \$61,624,023 total property tax with a levy of \$15.89798, which is a decrease of 4.06% over FY 2026,” the meeting notice stated.

The council will receive oral or written objections from residents or property owners. After all objections have been received and considered, the council may decrease, but not increase, the proposed property tax amount, according to the notice.

After the proposed property tax levy hearing, the council will publish notice and hold a hearing on the proposed city budget.

Pakistan says it will host talks, as Iran issues threat

MUNIR AHMED, SAM METZ AND SAMY MAGDY
Associated Press

ISLAMABAD — Pakistan announced Sunday that it will soon host talks between the U.S. and Iran, though there was no immediate word from Washington or Tehran, and it was unclear whether discussions on the monthlong war would be direct or indirect.

“Pakistan is very happy that both Iran and the U.S. have expressed their confidence in Pakistan to facilitate the talks. Pakistan will be honored to host and facilitate meaningful talks between the two sides in the coming days,” Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said after top diplomats from Turkey, Egypt and Saudi Arabia met in Islamabad.

Pakistan later said the diplomats had departed for their home countries. The talks were originally scheduled to continue Monday.

Pakistan’s foreign ministry did not answer questions, and Iran’s mission to the United Nations declined to comment.

Islamabad has emerged as a mediator, having relatively good ties with Washington and Tehran, after what Pakistani officials call weeks of quiet diplomacy.

Earlier, Iran’s parliament speaker, Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, dismissed the talks in Pakistan as a cover after some 2,500 U.S. Marines trained in amphibious landings arrived in the Middle East.

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