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SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1886



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## Benton County Conservation Thrilled With Continued Support!

By BENTON COUNTY CONSERVATION

VINTON — In the ongoing efforts to raise money to acquire the Wildcat Addition, Benton County Conservation has received another commitment as part of the Meyers' Family Conservation Fund.

Benton County Conservation is more than halfway toward their fundraising goal for the Wildcat Bluff Expansion which will more than double the size of the existing park. Recently they received a special challenge opportunity for this project from the Meyers' Family Conservation Fund and continued



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY BENTON COUNTY CONSERVATION

**John Beerbower of Alexandria, VA, was already a donor to BCC, but has utilized the Myers' Family Conservation Fund challenge grant and donated again!**

supporter of Benton County Conservation is utilizing the opportunity to double his impact.

SEE: Benton County on Page 6

## Regrets, But No Reinstatement

By AMY STOURAC  
NEWS@VINTONNEWSPAPERS.COM

VINTON — During the Board of Supervisors meeting held on Tuesday, Jan. 23, the attached statement was read by Supervisor Chairman Rick Primmer. In the letter, the supervisors expressed regret for the "confusion in the community" which "sent mixed signals about the dedication and service of the members of the Board of Health." The letter was signed by all three supervisors, Tracy Seeman, Gary Bierschenk, and Rick Primmer. There was no further discussion about the Board of Health vacancy in Benton County.

The BOS has still not offered a reason for the BOH termination. Although the letter expressed

regret that the number "initially reported was not correct," there has still been no explanation or reason offered for the termination.

Former BOH member, Maggie Mangold said that the statement "came out of the former BOH and the supervisors engaging in official mediation." Mangold then added, "They made it clear to the mediator that they will not reappoint us. As part of this mediation, we had to drop our lawsuit and right to a hearing."

Although they will not be reinstated, Mangold said that the terminated BOH members will be awarded with a plaque at the next BOS meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 30.

### Public Statement The Board of Supervisors of Benton County, Iowa

The minutes of the 10-24-2023 meeting of the Benton County Board of Supervisors states "we wish to clarify previous actions related to the board of health to clarify that the primary reason for the action was to reverse the 130% increase in the budget implemented by the Benton County board of health and accordingly, we would ask the county attorney to release a statement."

In order to provide the public accurate information about the work of the department of health, we wish to make the following statement:

The Board of Health proposed a new structure for the department that the Board of Supervisors rejected. On the rejection of the Board of Health's proposed restructuring, the Board of Health informed the Board of Supervisors that best practice to comply with state law, would require the county to hire a second employee in order to ensure 24/7 coverage. The Board of Health clarified that it would have to come back at the time for budget amendments and would have to ask for more money to cover the cost of the second employee.

Unfortunately, the number we initially reported was not correct and most of the budget increase was covered by state grants. The actual additional cost to the taxpayers of Benton County was appreciably less than the numbers provided to us. The process that resulted in the termination of the board of health caused confusion in the community and sent mixed signals about the dedication and service of the members of the board of health. We regret that.

Due to the Board of Health's assertion that the process we took leading to their termination failed to comply with the letter and spirit of Iowa Code chapter 21, we pledge to implement appropriate processes and annual training to ensure that all meetings are conducted in accordance with Iowa Code Chapter 21.

We wish to thank the members of the board of health for their dedication, service, and their work which made a difference in the county. Each of the members volunteered many hours of their personal time, all for the people of Benton County.

Board of Supervisors of Benton County, Iowa  
Tracy Seeman  
Gary Bierschenk  
Rick Primmer

## Winter Weather Impacts Local Blood Supply

By AMY STOURAC  
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VINTON — Next week's Blood Drive, hosted by Virginia Gay Hospital and the Vinton Community, could be vital for replenishing the supply of blood in our area. Unpredictable winter weather can have a significant effect on the supply of donated blood, due to canceled blood drives.

A recent press release from LifeServe Blood Center announced the need for blood donors and explained the supply problem. "Last week alone, LifeServe had to cancel multiple mobile

SEE: Blood Supply on Page 6



**Virginia Gay Hospital and Vinton Community Blood Drive**

Clinic Conference Room

Tuesday, January 30

11:45 am - 3:30 pm

502 N 9th Ave Vinton, IA 52349



SCAN ME

APPOINTMENTS ARE ENCOURAGED

Text: LIFESERVE to 999-777 | Call: 800.287.4903 | Visit: lifeservebloodcenter.org



## Let's Be Frank About The Cedar Valley Whalers



PHOTO BY AMY STOURAC

Pictured L-R: Steve Schott, Phil Thomas, Todd Frank, Darryl Hokanson, and Patty O'Connor.

By AMY STOURAC  
NEWS@VINTONNEWSPAPERS.COM

GARRISON — The intimate setting matched the intimate music coming from the stage at Farmers Mercantile Hall in Garrison on Sunday. The cold weather may have kept the numbers of the crowd down, but it had no impact on the talent from the stage. In fact,

the small attentive crowd added to the intimacy of the scene. On the lineup for the show were the Cedar Valley Whalers and local favorite Todd Frank. The first set started with a solo act by Frank. His deep voice coupled with his song selection warmed the audience

up, in the heart, at least. His cover songs included classics from favorites like John Prine, Bob Dylan, and my personal favorite of his covers, "Sloop John B," by the Beach Boys. Frank also shared some of his original pieces, like Youngville Cafe, and Take a Walk

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