

A photograph of three children in a classroom. In the foreground, a young boy with blonde hair wearing a yellow t-shirt with a blue graphic is smiling. Behind him, another boy with short brown hair in a blue patterned shirt is also smiling. To the right, a girl with brown hair and purple-rimmed glasses, wearing a light purple shirt, is smiling. They are surrounded by colorful geometric toys like triangles and pyramids. The background shows a classroom with alphabet cards on the wall and various toys on shelves.

Guthrie Center **TIMES**

OCTOBER 2023

Mailed to all addresses in
Guthrie Center, Adair and Casey

THE DAYCARE DILEMMA

**MUCH-NEEDED OPTIONS
EXPANDING SOON
FOR PARENTS WITH
CHILDCARE NEEDS**

PAGE 6

**YARD OF THE MONTH
WINNERS JIM AND
CAROLYN GRIFFITH**

PAGE 14

**CAFÉ ON THE HILL OFFERS
HOMESTYLE COOKING,
SMALL-TOWN HOSPITALITY**

PAGE 18

**TEN SQUARED
GIVES 100%**

PAGE 24

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ON THE COVER: Children at Little Charger Early Learning Center. Submitted photo.



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GUTHRIE CENTER TIMES 

www.guthriecentertimes.com

BACK FOR ROUND 2

You are now reading our second issue of Guthrie Center Times, and I have learned through the years that it takes a few months for readers to get into the groove and understand how our style of publishing works.

Yes, you have been receiving, and will continue to receive, a free subscription to this publication mailed to your home each month.

Yes, every other resident and business in the communities of Guthrie Center, Adair and Casey are receiving a free subscription, too.

Yes, we will be publishing in full color on every page, giving you a publication we hope you will put on your coffee table and refer back to many times throughout the month.

Yes, we will continue to provide news and information that is relevant to the lifestyles of those who live in the coverage area.

And, yes, we are a locally owned com-

pany that is committed to serving local readers and advertisers for years to come.

DAYCARE DILEMMA

Residents of most every community today face the same challenges: jobs, housing and daycare. This month, we address the childcare needs for working parents and provide a glimpse into what the future will bring.

WHAT'S IN YOUR GARAGE?

I am a believer that you can learn a lot about a person by spending a few minutes in his or her garage. The vehicles. The tools. The games. The stuff. There are dozens of stories in everyone's garage, as we hope to show in future months. Know someone with a classic



Shane Goodman

or custom car or other unique items we should cover? Send me a note and let me know.

OBITUARIES

We realize that, as a monthly publication, we can't be very timely in publishing funeral announcements. That is tough enough to do with a weekly publication. Even so, we feel that publishing obituaries as a permanent record is an important duty, and we are honored to be able to do that to honor those who have passed and to help families with the grieving process. If you would like to have an obituary included in Guthrie Center Times, please let your funeral director know or contact me directly.

BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES, BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS AND MORE

We want to help you celebrate the milestones in your lives, and, as such,

we welcome and encourage you to send us information and photos that will help share these important events. There is no charge for these services.

BE SURE TO CHECK US OUT ONLINE

This issue of Guthrie Center Times and our full archives of past issues are available for free online at www.guthriecentertimes.com. Check out the website and share with others, too.

Have a great month, and thanks for reading. ■

Shane Goodman
Editor and Publisher
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THE DAYCARE DILEMMA

Much-needed options expanding soon for parents with childcare needs.

BY RICH WICKS

For Guthrie Center Times

Daycare for children younger than the age of 12 has been a challenge for working parents, and that challenge is increasing, especially in small town, rural America. In particular, Iowa leads the nation in the percentage of parents working outside the home, with three-fourths of households with children younger than age 6 having all parents at home in the labor force. But in many Iowa communities, daycare is unaffordable or nonexistent. This results in parents missing work and, in some cases, having to leave the workforce altogether.

The statistics are sobering. According to studies, over a six-month period, almost half of parents are absent at least once due to childcare issues, missing an average of 4.3 days. Also, 65% of parents are late to work or leave early because of childcare issues, averaging 7.5 times over a six-month span.

Childcare for working parents often becomes a financial balancing act, as parents consider whether a paycheck outweighs the cost of daycare. The average cost of full-time center-based infant or toddler care in Iowa is nearly \$10,000 a year for one child, which is higher than the cost of in-state public college tuition.

Another challenge is that states are expected to face a steep decline in federal childcare investment following the Sept. 30, 2023, expiration date of pandemic-era funding that has helped to stabilize the situation for the past two years. This is likely to lead to higher daycare prices and could result in the loss of up to three million available childcare spots nationwide.

A CHILDCARE DESERT

Laura Robson, president of the board of directors for Little Charger Early Learning Center in Guthrie Center, said, "Guthrie County is considered a daycare desert, and that means there are three times as many children as there are licensed or registered childcare slots available. Of course, that

might be a little misleading because we do know that there's some great in-home providers, and there's grandparents and neighbors helping care for those kids. But when you look at it from a high-level statistical standpoint, we are classified as a childcare desert, according to the State."

Robson said a local survey nearly two years ago found the local situation mirrors the statewide data.

"At that time, there were nearly 30 families who were looking for childcare, and over half the respondents said that the lack of childcare in the community has impacted their ability to work."

THE BIG PICTURE

Robson encourages the community to keep the "big picture" in mind about the impact on everyone when these younger families cannot feasibly get their needs met in the local community.

"The Little Charger Early Learning Center is the only licensed facility in the city of Guthrie Center," she said. "I think it needs to be recognized that we need all types of childcare. We need the licensed facilities. We need those in-home providers.

We need those grandparents. We need the neighbors. There's not just one thing that's going to solve this. We do need everybody playing as an active participant to make sure these children are being taken care of in a loving and safe environment."

Robson acknowledges the pros and cons of licensed centers and private providers, including Little Charger.

"We're able to accept State pay, so, for some families who qualify for State-assisted childcare, we are able to accept that and work with the State to accept those types of payments."

She added that children who are in foster care and/or going through the adoption process have to be in a licensed childcare facility.

Even though construction of the new building is ongoing, the Little Charger Early Learning Center continues to fundraise to cover the cost of the building. A variety of grants, fundraisers and donations have helped get the ball rolling, but more is needed to cross the goal line. As part of that effort, a fundraiser event is scheduled Oct. 28. The event includes a catered meal by Café on the Hill, wine and beer by Twin Vines Winery, silent and live auctions, and dueling pianos music.



SPECIAL TO GUTHRIE CENTER TIMES

A duckling draws lots of attention at Little Charger Early Learning Center.

IN-HOME OPTIONS

Roxanne Kelly operates Roxy's Busy Bees, a private daycare in her home in Guthrie Center. She opened in January 2023 and has one employee who works for her, so staff backup is at a bare minimum.

"I've definitely had my ups and downs with everything, just trying to adjust with inflation on food and things," Kelly said. "Being a small, in-home daycare, I think that's where I struggle because I serve two snacks and lunch every day."

She says there is a continual challenge to make ends meet as a daycare provider.

"I love children. That's why I wanted to do it, and I don't regret it," she said. "But it's not something you can make a million dollars on."

Roxy's Busy Bees has a capacity of eight kids.

"Right now, I have six, and seven on Wednesdays," she said, adding that this is based on the regular schedule but that is seemingly always in flux as families' needs change based on work schedules, school schedules and children's care needs.

"I was at full capacity just a couple weeks ago, but a couple of the kids are a little bit older and mom and dad decided to let them come home," she said. "So it's kind of newer to where I don't have eight

right now."

Kelly said any openings are usually filled quickly.

Kelly said that, for private daycare providers, state regulations can be restricting at times. She told of her plans to install a playground.

"They kind of put a wrench in our plans to where we couldn't get a playground, because it was going to cost a lot of money for what the State wanted," she said.

Kelly sets different rates for regularly scheduled daycare versus unscheduled drop-ins.

"I have rates for infants, 1-year-olds, 2-year-olds, 3- and 4-year-olds, and then I have an after-school rate for school-aged kids," she said.

OPENING MAY OF 2024

Kimla Buttler is the director at Little Charger Early Learning Center, located at 207 Park St. in Guthrie Center. The building is located next to the site of the new center currently being built. Buttler has been the director for nearly a year and oversees six to eight employees to serve the 23 children currently on the schedule.

"Staffing can definitely be hard, especially in a small community," Buttler said. "We're really lucky right now to be pretty





SPECIAL TO GUTHRIE CENTER TIMES

Many hands to stir the bowl at Little Charger Early Learning Center.

well staffed, but I've definitely seen it go the other direction."

Regarding the unexpected changes that can happen with drop-ins or kids who don't show up, Buttler said daycare centers are constantly monitoring to assure the required worker-to-child ratios are being met.

As the sounds of construction equipment in the background verify, Buttler said the new center is in the process of being built. The expected opening date is May of 2024, and Buttler said things are on schedule so far. When finished, the center's capacity will increase from 30 to 80. Buttler added that anyone interested would be wise to get on the waiting list now, because it will be a gradual increase from 30 to 80 as kids and staff are added.

THE STRUGGLE FOR PARENTS

One local family's challenges in finding daycare to meet their needs is illustrative of the issues that often arise. Bill and Sarah Messinger and their son, Calhoun (now 4 years old), moved to the area when Calhoun was 2. They have used both private daycare providers and licensed daycare centers. Finding daycare that reliably fit their early-morning timelines was a major challenge.

"When we came here, our biggest struggle was finding daycare, because every-

one was full," Sarah said. "I mean, over full."

Because of that experience, Sarah said, "If someone tells me they're pregnant, I always say 'Congratulations... and find daycare.'"

She said she understands the difficulties in operating a daycare, be it a center or a private home, so she strives to help support local daycare options whenever possible.

Those looking for childcare information, resources and available providers can reference Iowa Child Care Resource and Referral as a first step. The website is iowaccrr.org.

THE BIG SCARE

Robson said that, with area schools experiencing declining enrollment, the availability of quality childcare can help keep families in the county.

"As we transition into more of two parents working outside of the home society, we have to look at what our community can do to support that, so that, as new generations come in, the towns and community hopefully can continue to grow and thrive," Robson said. "The big scare is, if we're not investing in these types of opportunities, younger families are not going to move to our communities, and they're not going to add to our tax base." ■

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Roger is retired and lives in rural Panora. He is self-taught and claims it is due to his childhood. As a young boy, his family was poor and didn't buy lots of toys. He learned to entertain himself making his own toys, carvings and drawings. At the age of 60, he started crafting as a hobby. He is known for his ducks, bears and owls.

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ELECTIONS

OCT. 23 DEADLINE TO REQUEST ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate is reminding eligible Iowans who would like to receive their ballot via mail to request their absentee ballots before the Oct 23 deadline. Written applications for mailed absentee ballots must be received by a voter's local County Auditor's Office no later than 5 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 23.

All registered voters are eligible to make written requests for absentee ballots. In order to receive an absentee ballot, registered voters must provide the following information on the request form:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Iowa residential address
- Voter Verification Number (ID number)
- Iowa Driver's License or Non-Operator ID Number OR
- Four-digit Voter PIN found on voter's Iowa Voter ID Card. Any voter can request an Iowa Voter ID Card by contacting their County Auditor's Office.
- Name or date of the election for which a voter is requesting the absentee ballot
- Signature and date the form was completed

All voters are also encouraged to provide a phone number and email address in the event their County Auditor needs to confirm any information on the request form.

"City and school elected officials play



a critical role in our day-to-day lives, so it's vitally important for Iowans to make their voices heard in November's elections," said Secretary Pate. "The best way to make your voice heard is to vote, and to be successful in voting, Iowans should solidify their voting plans early. Whether voting at the polls on Election Day or casting a ballot early by absentee ballot in person or through the mail, Iowans can be assured their voice is heard."

Absentee ballot request forms are available for download directly from the Iowa Secretary of State website, Voter-Ready.Iowa.gov. Requests to receive a ballot by mail must be received by the County Auditor's office by Monday, Oct. 23, no later than 5 p.m. In-person absentee voting at the County Auditor's office is available through Nov. 6, the day before the election. ■

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Q: I HEARD THE COMMERCIAL BUILDING AT 310 STATE ST. IN GUTHRIE CENTER SOLD. WHAT'S GOING IN THAT SPOT?

A: We are told an offer has been accepted on the building, and the closing is expected to happen on Oct. 20. Daniel and Nicole Bean are purchasing the building from Troy and Dina Christensen and plan to open a storefront location for their business, Bean Armory, a one-stop shop for firearm sales, repairs, customization needs, and accessories.

Q: WHAT DO THE IMAGES PAINTED ON THE GUTHRIE COUNTY FREEDOM ROCK DEPICT?

A: According to the Guthrie County Arts Council, the front of the Guthrie County Freedom Rock is adorned by the Silver Star and the Bronze Star medals. The M-29 armored troop carrier on the left depicts Guthrie Center veteran Bob Morgan and crew as they drove to rescue five soldiers from a burning tank in Korea. The dragon teeth in the center represent soldiers

who battled through Germany's Siegfried Line, including Bob Shelley, Very Paullin, John Donahey and others. The European cemetery represents Guthrie County soldiers killed on foreign soil, including Loran Garnes, Kenneth Nickel, Gerald Grett, Daryl Reeves, James Herrick and dozens of others. Finally, the attack on the USS Hoel honors those sailors, including Guthrie Center's Marion Wilson, who died at sea protecting our nation. The back of the Guthrie County Freedom Rock, adorned by the Air Medal and Purple Heart, honors county airmen from World War II to present who went in harm's way over enemy territory fighting for our nation. Five medals representing the valor of Guthrie County veterans on the battlefield from World War I to present are prominently displayed on the Freedom Rock. They are the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart and the Air Medal. The Distinguished Flying Cross was earned by Menlo's Earl Kading as a gunner on a B-29 Superfortress on Aug. 6, 1945, the day of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. ■

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LOCAL FILM REVIEWS

DAVINCI, DANO, DOLPH, DENZEL'S SON AND MORE

BY MICHAEL C. WOODY
For Guthrie Center Times

If you dig deep enough, there were some interesting movies this month and more coming in October, November and December. It's another mixed bag, but here's what I've got for you this month.

"MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING 3"
(in theaters still, maybe)

I remember the original movie, but I am not sure if I caught the first sequel. It doesn't matter, as both films are re-capped before this one gets underway, which provides very helpful information. This movie is a fun little jaunt that gives us a glimpse into the big Greek family traveling to Greece for a wedding. Fun and mayhem follow. It is a better film than I expected and is, at times, charming and funny.

Grade: B+

"A HAUNTING IN VENICE"
(in theaters)



"My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3"

I am not a fan of these Agatha Christie movies. I always feel manipulated, and I honestly think that any one of these people could be the culprit. That being said, this one held my interest, though I really didn't care who committed the crime. Kenneth Branagh again plays the retired Hercule Poirot pulled back into the game. Tina Fey is also a nice addition to the cast.

Grade: B



"A Haunting in Venice"

"THE INVENTOR"
(probably headed for streaming)

This is an animated movie targeting kids about Leonardo DaVinci. I am not sure if the kids are going to choose this over the "Paw Patrol" movie (actually, I am sure that the pups would easily win that race), but it was well done, and maybe the older kids will appreciate it more.

Grade B-



"The Inventor"

"DUMB MONEY"
(in theaters)

This look at the GameStop stock trading fiasco is your find of the month. It is well written, very clever and the cast is fabulous. Paul Dano leads a cast that also includes Pete Davidson, Vincent D'Onofrio and Nick Offerman. It is a fascinating true story and an equally engaging movie.

Grade: A-

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GUTHRIE CENTER TIMES

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"Dumb Money"



"Expend4bles"



"The Creator"



"Flora and Son"

"EXPEND4BLES"

(in theaters)

Few people go to a movie with a "4" in the title with high expectations, and this one lives up to that reputation. Jason Statham, 50 Cent, Dolph Lundgren, Sylvester Stallone and Andy Garcia tarnish their careers with this unnecessary fourth chapter. No Oscar nominations are expected.

Grade: D

"THE CREATOR"

(in theaters)

This visually stunning sci-fi film stars

John David Washington (Denzel's son), who is in love with a woman in a future world only to have her taken from him. He spends the film looking for her while protecting a robotic young boy who might know more than he leads on. If the story was as great as the visuals, this might've been truly special. Unfortunately, the story falls way short.

Grade: B

"FLORA AND SON"

(Apple TV)

An interesting movie about a woman caring for her teenage son, who is pretty

much a delinquent. When he refuses to care about a guitar she buys him, she takes it up thanks to online lessons with a stranger, played by the always fun Joseph Gordon-Levitt. She is played by Eve Hewson, the daughter of U2 lead singer Bono. Charming at times, and raunchy at other times, "Flora and Son" is a mixed bag with some fun moments.

Grade: B

As the actor's strike lingers on, we will have to wait longer for some of this fall's big movies, but there are still some interesting films in the pipeline including

another sequel to "The Exorcist," this one with the original star, Ellen Burstyn.

Until then, pass the popcorn. ■

Michael C. Woody has been reviewing movies on radio and television since 1986 and can be heard talking movies every Wednesday afternoon at 2:30 p.m. on KXn0 106.3 with Keith Murphy and Andy Fales. You can also follow him on Twitter @MrMovieDSM. He and his wife, Susan, are residents of Guthrie County.



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OBITUARIES

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RODOLPH H. COMPTON

1924-2023

Rodolph H. Compton, known as Dolph to his friends and family, passed away peacefully on Saturday, Sept. 2, 2023, at the New Homestead in his hometown of Guthrie Center. He was born on July 15,

1924. Dolph lived a long and fulfilling life, touching the hearts of many with his friendly, faith-filled and generous nature.

Dolph was born and raised in Guthrie Center, where he spent his entire life, forming deep roots in the community. Dolph attended Guthrie Center High School prior to his enlistment into the U.S. Navy in June of 1944. Dolph was honorably discharged from the U.S. Navy in November of 1952. Upon his return from service, Dolph continued to contribute to his community as a devoted and hardworking farmer until his retirement.

In 1950, Dolph married the love of his life, Flora Belle Nagel, and together they brought onto this earth three wonderful children: Christie, Michael and Kenneth. Dolph and Flora Belle's love story spanned more than 22 years until

Flora Belle's untimely death in March of 1972.

A man of many interests, Dolph enjoyed gardening, hunting and fishing with his grandchildren. Dolph's love for the outdoors was evident in his commitment to conservation and responsible stewardship of the land. In his later years, Dolph found solace in the tranquility of nature, frequently taking long walks through the fields and woods that surrounded his home.

Dolph was a man of strong faith, and throughout his life, he generously shared his blessings with others. He was a member of his local church and participated in numerous charitable activities within the community. Dolph's kindness and compassion were evident in the countless acts of service he performed for those in need, always putting others before himself.

self.

In his golden years, Dolph met Claire Beaudry whom he married in 2005. They had a wonderful time spending winters in Arizona and exploring the southwestern U.S. Sadly, Claire passed away in 2008, leaving a void in his heart that he carried with him until the end.

Dolph's legacy will live on through his children, Christie, Michael and Kenneth, who will always remember their father as a loving and devoted parent. They will cherish the memories for their time together. Dolph was a shining example of a life well-lived, and his spirit will continue to inspire and guide his family and friends.

The Compton family would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to the staff of the Hospice of the Midwest, The New Homestead, and the Guthrie County

Hospital for their compassionate care during Dolph's final days. They are also grateful for the outpouring of love and support from friends and neighbors during this difficult time.

Survivors include his children, Kenneth (Cheryl) Compton of Peoria, Arizona; Michael (Rita) Compton of Jefferson; and Christie (Tim) Flickinger of Des Moines; grandchildren, Wyatt (Stacey) Compton, Lindsay (Jason) Lewis, Zachary (Maria) Flickinger, Anna Flickinger, James Flickinger, and Chris (Kelli) Compton; great-grandchildren, Genevra and Haxton Compton, and Charolette and Isabella Compton; and Dolph's sisters, Marian Smith of Little Rock, Arkansas, and JoAnn Lydon of Greenfield. Dolph was preceded in death by his parents; first wife, Flora Belle; second wife, Claire; and siblings, Ted, Perry, Steve,

Viola and Ann.

As we mourn the loss of Dolph Compton, we also celebrate his incredible life and the many ways in which he touched our hearts. May he rest in peace, reunited with his beloved Flora Belle, knowing that he leaves behind a legacy of love, faith and generosity that will endure for generations to come.

Funeral services were 10:30 a.m., Friday, Oct. 6, 2023, at the Twigg Funeral Home, Guthrie Center. Burial was in Union Cemetery, Guthrie Center with military rites conducted by the Omar B. Shearer VFW Post No. 124, Guthrie Center.

The family requests that donations be made in Dolph's memory to the Omar B. Shearer VFW Post No. 124, Guthrie Center, an organization in which Dolph was a lifetime member. ■



CONNIE KAY PALMER

1937-2023

Connie Kay Palmer, 85, passed away on Sept. 27, 2023, at her home.

She was born the daughter of C. Darwin and Dorothy L. (Fouch) Grow on Dec. 8, 1937, in Boone County.

She graduated from Rippey Consolidated with the Class of 1955. She and Keith Monthei married on Aug. 7, 1955, and made their home in the Monteith area. She was a homemaker and a caring mother to their four boys: Mike, Tony, Rich and Dale.

Connie had a career with the Guthrie County Courthouse from September 1975 through December 1999 with her last position as the Gen-

eral Relief Director and Director of Veterans Affairs for Guthrie County.

On Feb. 27, 1983, Connie married Rev. Jerry D. Palmer in Guthrie Center. Every Sunday until Jerry's retirement in 2000, Connie stood by Rev. Jerry's side and greeted everyone at the First Christian Church where he was the minister. In retirement, they moved to Coon Rapids and quickly became active in the community. Throughout their marriage, they enjoyed camping, traveling, family gatherings and cheering for the Iowa Hawkeyes.

Connie never knew a stranger and enjoyed visiting with everyone who was

fortunate enough to have known her. In her free time, she made the most delicious cookies, read numerous books and watched televised sports. She will be remembered and will live on through the hearts and lives she touched in her lifetime. She was loved by many, and family was everything to her. She was a member of the First United Methodist Church in Coon Rapids.

Those left to cherish her memory include her brother, Fred (Jacquie) Grow; her children, Mike (Nancy) Monthei of Minnetonka, Minnesota; Tony (Kathy) Monthei of Panora; Dale (Nancy) Monthei of Johnston; Rich

Monthei of Guthrie Center; and stepchildren, Tim Palmer of Carroll; Mark (Deb) Palmer of Columbia, Missouri; Sue (Walt) Palmer of St. Louis, Missouri; and Sharon Palmer of St. Louis, Missouri.

She was the grandmother to Brett, Amber, Lisa (Jeff), Mandy (Ryan), Ryan (Erin), Derek (Hyunji), Wade, Taylor, Kolton, Emma (Tyler) and Nolan; great-grandmother to: Tyler, Tiffany, Olivia, Grace, Anna, Troy, Will, Owen, Claire and Sophie; and aunt to her nieces and nephews.

Connie was preceded in death by her parents and her husband, Rev. Jerry D.

Palmer.

The family would like to express their gratitude to the many people who cared for Connie during the most recent years.

Visitation was held from 5-7 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 1, 2023, at Twigg Funeral Home, 506 Prairie St., Guthrie Center. Funeral services were at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, Oct. 2, 2023, also at Twigg Funeral Home, and concluded with burial at the Union Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be directed to the family in memory of Connie.

Condolences may be expressed at www.twiggfuneralhome.com. ■



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50 YEARS AGO



From the Guthrie Center Times, Oct. 24, 1973

POSTER WINNERS: Fire Chief Don Walters presents cash prizes to winners of the local fire prevention poster contest that was conducted two weeks ago in conjunction with Fire Prevention Week. The contest was open to the third, fourth, fifth and sixth grades. From left are Joni Christensen (third), Julie Tharp (fourth), Todd Done (fifth) and Bill Tharp (sixth).

40 YEARS AGO



From the Guthrie Center Times, Oct. 19, 1983

GUTHRIE CENTER'S NEW DENTIST: Dr. Mary Johnson began her dental practice at 214 State St. in Guthrie Center Monday morning. Mary and Wayne Johnson now live in Guthrie Center.

30 YEARS AGO



From the Guthrie Center Times, Oct. 20, 1993

CHANGING OF THE GUARD: In January, Tracy Knobbe of Guthrie Center, middle, was crowned Guthrie County Pork Queen at the annual Pork Producers' banquet and dance. She succeeded Sheila Schreck of Guthrie Center, left. Heidi Steensen of Guthrie Center, right, was named Pork Princess.

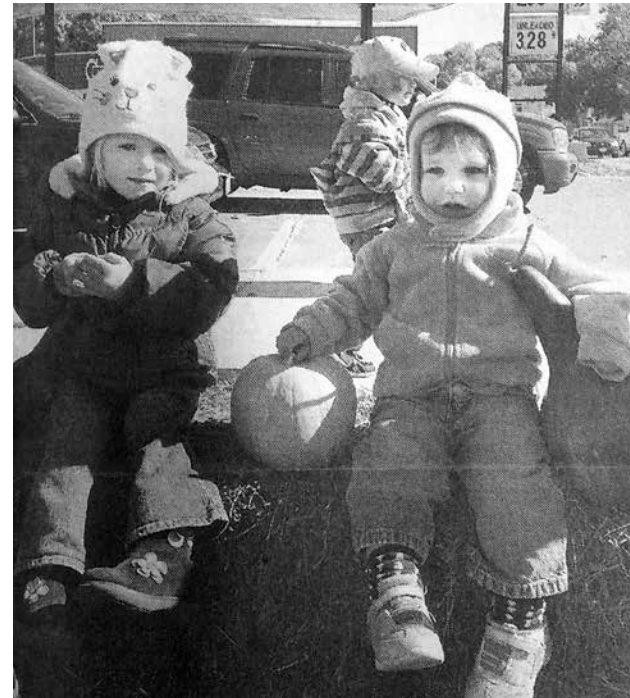
20 YEARS AGO



From the Guthrie Center Times, Oct. 22, 2003

FAMILY GET TOGETHER: Alvaro Urdenola is pictured with a portion of his "family" while he was a foreign exchange student from Columbia in 1971-72. While here, he lived part of the time with the Floyd Krakau family, two of whom were just youngsters at the time. From left: Tonya Krakau Messner, Ruby Krakau, host, and Teresa Krakau Kent.

10 YEARS AGO



From the Guthrie Center Times, Oct. 20, 2013

FESTIVAL FRIENDS: Enjoying Saturday's Chamber of Commerce Fall Festival in downtown Guthrie Center were, left to right, Tessa Slaybaugh and Tatum Harwood.

5 YEARS AGO



From the Guthrie County Times Vedette, Oct. 4, 2018

ACGC BANDS MARCH IN CARROLL'S BAND DAY: ACGC High School places second overall in Class 2A at the 61st Annual Band Day competition held Sept. 29 in Carroll. Kyra Babcock is the director, and the band placed second to powerhouse Roland-Story — which also won the Overall Best Band Award. Bands are judged on showmanship, marching precision and music presentation. Noah Neslen was named Best Drum Major. ■



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SPECIAL TO GUTHRIE CENTER TIMES

Jim and Carolyn Griffith, 807 Prairie St. in Guthrie Center, are the winners of \$100 in chamber bucks from the Guthrie Center Lions Club and the Guthrie Center Chamber of Commerce for the Yard of the Month contest for September. These two organizations have teamed up to award citizens who maintain and take pride in their yard with this monthly contest that runs through October. ■



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THE MONTH IN PHOTOS AT ACGC



KEVIN FISTER | SPECIAL TO GUTHRIE CENTER TIMES

CLEAN SWEEP FOR ACGC: Senior Andrew Mahaffey (25) took first place and Gavin Sloss (33) was second at their own invite Sept. 21. The Chargers finished with a total of six runners in the top 10.



KEVIN FISTER | SPECIAL TO GUTHRIE CENTER TIMES

CHARGER GIRLS WIN OWN INVITATIONAL: ACGC's Ava Campbell placed third at the ACGC invite Sept. 21. The Chargers finished with four runners in the top 11.



MARK RENO | SPECIAL TO GUTHRIE CENTER TIMES

CHARGERS TOP RIVERSIDE TO STAY UNBEATEN: Junior fullback Mike Fuller tramples over the Riverside defense on Sept. 22, scoring twice in the game and rushing for 64 yards on 17 carries.



SPECIAL TO GUTHRIE CENTER TIMES

CHARGERS MARCHING BAND WINS FIRST PLACE IN CLASS 2A AT CRESTON'S ANNUAL BALLOON DAYS PARADE COMPETITION: Row one (ground): Montana Douglas, Mackenzie Erickson, Andrew Mahaffey, Shyann Young, Allison Drake, Sofia Brown, Emma Brown, Tessa Sheeder and Emmarae Ellis. Row two: Tripp Mendoza, Nora Langgaard, Caydence Boals, Liv Mahaffey, Rohnin Grasty, Isabelle Rouse, Chelsea Kopaska and Harlie Hunt. Row three (standing): Bee Oldes, Laurin Davis, Tanner Downing, Gavin Sloss, Owen Dinkla, Jacob Risinger, Blakely Buttler, Gracie Hodges, Allie DeWitt, Austin Barron and Wendell Hunt.



HALL KLINGENBURG | SPECIAL TO GUTHRIE CENTER TIMES

ACGC HOMECOMING QUEEN AND KING: ACGC seniors Kelsey Carlson and Payton Jacobe celebrate after learning they were named the 2023-24 Homecoming Queen and King Sept. 22 during ACGC's homecoming game against Riverside in Guthrie Center.

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MARK RENO | SPECIAL TO GUTHRIE CENTER TIMES

DISTRICT CHAMPS: Charger running back Anthony Solorzano leaps over an IKM-Manning defender in a Sept. 25 win, 35-31.



ERIC COOP | SPECIAL TO GUTHRIE CENTER TIMES

ACGC HOMECOMING COURT: The 2023 ACGC High School Homecoming Court is, front row: Hayden Coffman, Jenna Rowley, Kelsey Carlson, Emerson Van Meter and Megan Kirkham. Back row: Tegan Slaybaugh, Anthony Solorzano, Payton Jacobe, Nate Chance and Lance Bunde.



MARK RENO | SPECIAL TO GUTHRIE CENTER TIMES

ACGC HOMECOMING: The ACGC Homecoming Parade was held Friday, Sept. 22.



MARK RENO | SPECIAL TO GUTHRIE CENTER TIMES

ACGC HOMECOMING: ACGC iron man volleyball and powderpuff football were played Wednesday, Sept. 20.

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CAFÉ ON THE HILL OFFERS HOMESTYLE COOKING, SMALL-TOWN HOSPITALITY

The Messingers' restaurant is a family business.

BY RICH WICKS

For Guthrie Center Times

Running a small-town restaurant is a risky business, as national statistics show a large percentage will close within the first year. So, when Bill and Sarah Messinger bought Guthrie Center's Café on the Hill in the midst of the COVID pandemic, they were definitely going out on a limb. But their recipe of homestyle food and good service in a comfortable setting has worked well.

"We bought it three years ago in April," Sarah said. "April of 2021 during COVID, so that was kind of scary. I started helping the previous owner when she said that she wanted to sell. It was hard to get financing during COVID."

The Messingers didn't own the business before COVID, so they were not eligible for the COVID relief business funding that many longtime business owners were able to access.

Working at the Café for the previous owner was helpful, Sarah explained. She said, as an out-of-towner, it gave her time to learn the restaurant's routines, menu and customer preferences.

After the Messingers took over, they immediately faced a challenge because of so-

cial distancing and fewer events.

"So, we did what we could," Sarah said. "We did a lot of to-gos that first year, like for Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, Mothers' Day. You did what you could to make some money. And it was what people needed. They wanted to still have special dinners, even if it was just for a few people, or they wanted to deliver to people so they still had a Christmas meal or whatever."

Catering continues to be a significant portion of the Café's business.

"I would say it's 25% catering and 75% restaurant," Sarah estimated. The Café generally closes in the early afternoon, so the dining room is available for bookings for groups that wish to come in for catered food.

Catering has been a learning curve for the Messingers. Sarah said she's been asked to cater a number of events, and she enjoys the unique challenge of each event, even when pushed beyond her comfort zone. She said an upcoming wedding with 600 guests is a good example.

"If somebody needs a place to go for a family after visitation or something, I'm more than happy to open up for that group," she said. "So that's been kind of fun too, to get to know people. I'm not from here, so it's fun to meet people."

Sarah is originally from Greenfield, and Bill is from Menlo.

"This community has been so supportive of us," Sarah said. "They have just treated us amazing. It's overwhelming how much support we've gotten."

Sarah said she has been pleased to see regular customers from Panora and Lake Panorama, as well as Guthrie Center. The Café is located at 2003 State St., on the eastern edge of Guthrie Center, so Panora and the lake are just a few miles away.

Sarah said she asks her staff to treat everyone the way they'd prefer to be treated. Since staff never know what a customer may be dealing with on a particular day, a friendly server, a pleasant conversation and some comfort food can often be a bright spot in a customer's day.

Sarah said she believes in putting thought into the foods she serves. For example, the Café will cater the upcoming Oct. 28 Speakeasy fundraiser for the Little Charger Early Learning Center.

"For that, we googled a bunch of information about food from the 1920s. It's go-



PHOTOS BY RICH WICKS | GUTHRIE CENTER TIMES

Julie Fredregil, Charlotte Easter, Kayla Ciesielski and Sarah Messinger

ing to be fun, with different ways of preparing the potatoes and carrots and things." She said there will also be some culinary surprises that evening.

Since the Messingers are relatively new to the area, Sarah isn't fully aware of the history of the Café on the Hill, but she has learned some through the grapevine.

"The building was built to be a hatchery and was a hatchery for a while." Later, it was a TV repair shop which, oddly enough, served ice cream.

"One of my customers that I've become really good friends with used to work at the gas station next door, and he would serve ice cream on the weekends out the front window for the guy that had the TV repair here."

The building later became a drive-in restaurant and has had many different owners over the years.

Sarah and Bill have dealt with the many challenges of running a small business, including putting in long hours at times. She said they are continually balancing the catering and dine-in demands and are dealing with staff shortages as they occur. Sarah also indicated that the Café's hours and

menu will continue to evolve to meet the customer demand. Currently, the hours are 6:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and closed on Tuesdays. On Fridays, the Café stays open through the evening.

Calhoun, the Messingers' 4-year-old son, is also involved in the daily routines at the Café when he's available and often hands out mints on Friday evenings. Sarah said she's happy to see him developing people skills and learning firsthand that working as a family pays off in numerous ways.

Although many of the menu items are traditional foods, the Café offers modern options as well, including Flavor Burst, a soft-serve ice cream machine that imparts a ribbon of flavor around the outside of the ice cream as it goes into the cone. Flavors available include green apple, strawberry, Blue Goo (cotton candy), black raspberry, cool lemon, mocha cappuccino, butter pecan and banana ripple. Sarah said the Flavor Burst cones have been a hit with customers of all ages, not just kids.

One of Sarah's favorite things about running the Café is that it has become more than just a place to eat. In Guthrie Center, the Café is one of the main meeting spots,



The hot beef plate is a popular menu item.





Bill, Calhoun and Sarah Messinger

with a mix of regular customers and visitors who find it a welcoming and filling place to meet. Sarah said she's met hunters from 15 or more states who have eaten at the Café before or after their hunts. Sarah also enjoys the camaraderie of the regular customers, noting that, if a particular regular doesn't show up when expected, others will ask around and check in on the missing person.

When asked what the Café specializes in, Sarah didn't name off any particular menu item but rather said the focus is on homemade food, most of which is made from scratch. The menu includes a number of traditional meat-and-potatoes "comfort foods." One of the most popular items, Sarah pointed out, is the hot beef plate. She has promised that, as long as the hot beef continues to be a good seller, it will stay on the menu year-round. Sarah also shared that, with winter approaching, she'll begin offering more homemade soups and stews.

"It's homestyle every day, a special of some sort," she said. "Taco salads always on Mondays, fried chicken on Wednesdays. This week, we'll make pulled pork, scalloped potatoes and ham. My clientele is probably 80% retired, so that's what they want."

Looking to the future, Sarah said the

family's plans for the Café include a possible expansion to allow for more catering and to offer a party room.

"We have a lot of people that need a meeting place in town and a meal, and it's hard because there's just not many options for that," she said.

If you are looking for a place with homestyle food and small-town hospitality, you can't do better than the Café on the Hill. Even if it's your first visit, you'll be welcomed warmly — and you won't leave hungry. ■



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CITY GOVERNMENT NEWS

CITY COUNCIL REVIEWS NO PARKING ZONES, SPEED LIMITS AND CONCERNS ABOUT WORKERS' COMP PHYSICALS

BY RICH WICKS
For Guthrie Center Times

The two recent meetings of the Guthrie Center city council (on Sept. 25 and Oct. 9) addressed traffic and other issues. On Sept. 25, the council discussed a proposal to make a portion of North Eighth Street into a no parking zone. Council members stated that residents in the area appear to have plenty of off-street parking, so no significant hardships were expected if the area is changed to no parking. The council also heard a summary of the Region XII housing program that could help promote improvements to existing homes in the community. The Oct. 9 meeting was highlighted

by a discussion about a suggestion from Guthrie County Deputy Sheriff Kent Gries to consider lowering the speed limits on School Street and a portion of Bluff Street. After discussion, the council chose to take no action at this time.

The council also heard concerns from Guthrie Center Fire Chief Cory Campbell about complaints from some of his crew about the requirement for physical exams to continue workers' comp coverage. He said it is a burden for some of the firefighters who may choose to leave the crew if the requirement remains long-term. The city will look to find another workers' comp insurer that doesn't require a physical exam. ■

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Brandt Gebel is our Financial Advisor with 6 years of experience in the financial sector. Brandt grew up in Charles City, Iowa, graduated from Loras College located in Dubuque, Iowa and is currently a licensed Series 7, and 66 professional. Brandt is responsible for advising, planning, and investing for Guthrie County State Bank Investment Center clients.

Brandt is passionate about what he does which includes helping people meet their goals financially, so they have more time to meet their personal and professional goals. In his free time Brandt enjoys playing golf, boating at the family cabin in the summer, riding his bike, and cheering for the Iowa State Cyclones, Green Bay Packers, and New York Yankees.



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TEN SQUARED GIVES 100%

Barry Monaghan shares details on the creation of the group and how it helps local nonprofit organizations.

BY RICH WICKS

For Guthrie Center Times

What is Ten Squared? The short answer is one hundred. The longer answer follows.

Ten Squared is the name of two groups in Guthrie County that have made local charitable giving simple and fun. Barry Monaghan serves as the head of the local men's Ten Squared group, and he agreed to share a little about the group and his involvement. Look for a similar story on the women's group in weeks ahead.

Monaghan, who works at Guthrie County State Bank, said, "Back in 2016, I had seen a report on a TV station in Des Moines that there was a group of 100-plus men that had

been organized in Des Moines, and they had purchased football equipment for Des Moines North High School. It kind of intrigued me."

Monaghan wasn't sure he could find 100 or more to join in one town, so he expanded it to membership from throughout the county.

"I picked out 10 men in the county that I knew fairly well and asked them if they would each invite 10 men, and that's kind of how we got started," Monaghan said. "We had an informational meeting and looked at the format of how we wanted to do it. I have no idea where this concept began, but the following summer we were in the Cayman Islands, and there was a 100-plus men's group in the Cayman Islands."

Regarding the local group's boundaries, Monaghan said, "We made a determination that our geographical locale would be based on the school districts, rather than just on



Barry Monaghan

the borders of Guthrie County. For example, Panorama has Linden as part of their school district, and that streams over into Dallas County."

The group initially discussed whether or not to allow women in the group, but the members chose not to.

"So later on," Monaghan said, "I did a radio interview shortly after we got started, and I kind of threw a challenge out to the women in Guthrie County, and that came together. So now we have a men's group and a women's group."

The basic design of the meetings is that each member pitches in \$100 at each meeting, and members are welcome to nominate a nonprofit in the area. The members who nominated the three finalists are allowed up to five minutes to explain why their nominated organization should receive the funds. No audio-visual equipment or handouts are allowed. After three pitches have been made (one for each of the three nominated finalists, which are randomly drawn from among all causes nominated by members for that particular meeting), the members vote on which cause they prefer. The cause that gets the most votes receives all of the money raised via member contributions.

"The whole idea is for people within the organization to nominate nonprofits, charities, whatever. It can't be anything national," Monaghan said. "The money all has to be spent in Guthrie County. It can't be political."

The Guthrie County Ten Squared Men's group holds three meetings per year. Monaghan said the meetings are usually in or around April, July and November. He also stressed that there is no overhead, so 100% of the dues goes to the winning cause.

The group initially was formed with a goal

of 100 members, but Monaghan said, "I just try to constantly encourage people to bring a friend, because the only qualification is that you pay \$100 each time. And you don't have to live in Guthrie County. We have several people who don't, but they have ties to Guthrie County."

The local group has grown to roughly 200 members, which means the winning cause now receives nearly \$20,000. Monaghan explained that the group strives to never split the gift among multiple recipients, so that the check will make a truly significant impact.

Regarding the layout of an average meeting, Monaghan said he or a member provide a keg of beer, and members spend the first 30 minutes socializing. Immediately after that, the group hears a brief (five minutes or less) appeal from whoever nominated each of the three cause finalists, followed by a brief opportunity for members to ask questions about each cause. Then, votes are cast and counted.

Because Monaghan is a banker, he says he is in an ideal position to handle the financial dealing of the Ten Squared group. He said some members pay their \$100 dues via check, some by cash, and some through Venmo or other electronic means. He uses an oversized novelty "check" for publicity purposes and sends the funds to the recipient organization as they are received from members.

Monaghan said he likes the simplicity of Ten Squared.

"It's just a group of men coming together to make significant donations to help local charitable groups, without red tape or cumbersome rules."

Based on the growth of the group, others feel the same. ■

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COUNTY GOVERNMENT NEWS

GUTHRIE COUNTY SUPERVISORS SPAR OVER BUDGET COMMENTS TO DEPARTMENT HEADS

Health Services Director updates the board on dog bites, bats in homes, and vaccines available for COVID and flu season.

BY RICH WICKS
For Guthrie Center Times

The Guthrie County Board of Supervisors regularly meets every Tuesday. The board dealt with various issues over the past month. Below is a summary of those meetings.

On Sept. 19, the supervisors heard that the Bays Branch shooting range was closed due to State issues. On Sept. 26, Supervisor Mike Dickson and Board Chair Brian Johnson sparred over comments made to department heads by Johnson, warning of possible budgetary belt-tightening. Dickson objected to these statements being made without board agreement, and Johnson said he was simply

stating his personal opinion to department heads but apologized for any misunderstandings that resulted.

On Oct. 3, the supervisors heard about challenges involved in efforts to standardize or consolidate the keycard entry system for all entrances to the courthouse. Expected costs and options will be investigated. The board also heard a request from Guthrie County Deputy Sheriff Jesse Swensen to increase pay for jailers, as they are dealing with increased workload due to housing inmates from other counties. After discussion, a \$1.20 hourly increase was approved, by a 3-2 vote with Johnson, Maggie Armstrong, Steve Smith voting in favor and Dickson and JD Kuster voting against.

On Oct. 10, Guthrie County Health Services Director Jotham Arber updated the board on health department issues, including a suggestion to adopt a vicious dog ordinance to deal with dog bite incidents. Arber also shared information on bats in homes, and he summarized vaccines are available for COVID and flu season. ■



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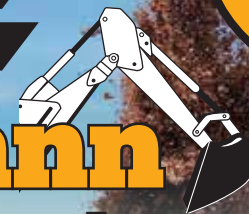
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RECIPE

ENTERTAIN IN STYLE WITH BEEF AND BLUE CHEESE-STUFFED MUSHROOMS

BY JOLENE GOODMAN
For Guthrie Center Times

With the holiday season quickly approaching, you may be searching for delicious hors d'oeuvres to make your guests feel right at home. I am sharing a wonderful recipe from Family Features that will help you beef up the menu with a tasty appetizer that's as easy to make as it is to enjoy. This recipe will pleasantly surprise even those who are not mushroom fans, as my husband will attest to.

Loaded with savory flavor and perfect for feeding a crowd, these beef and blue cheese-stuffed mushrooms from Beef Loving Texans offer a simple yet mouthwatering way to entertain in style. Just prepare button mushrooms by removing the stems, then fill the caps with a ground beef-based mixture of minced mushroom stems, blue cheese, breadcrumbs, green onions and steak seasoning for a party-worthy platter.

Visit BeefLovingTexans.com to find more recipes. ■

Jolene Goodman is the advertising director for Lake Panorama Times and vice president of Big Green Umbrella Media.



Jolene Goodman

BEEF AND BLUE CHEESE-STUFFED MUSHROOMS

Recipe courtesy of Beef Loving Texans
Total time: 50 minutes
Servings: 40

- 2 packages (8 ounces each) button mushrooms
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 pound ground beef
- 1/3 cup blue cheese
- 1/4 cup whole-wheat breadcrumbs
- 3 tablespoons green onions
- 1/2 teaspoon steak seasoning blend
- chives (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 375 F. Remove stems from mushrooms; reserve. Season mushroom caps with salt; set aside. Mince stems to yield 1/2 cup; discard remaining stems.
Combine ground beef, minced stems, blue



cheese, breadcrumbs, green onions and steak seasoning. Spoon beef mixture evenly into mushrooms.

Place stuffed mushrooms on rack in broiler pan. Bake 15-20 minutes. Sprinkle with chives, if desired. ■

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