

## Lent begins with Ash Wednesday services

Today, Wednesday, February 14, Ash Wednesday begins the Easter Lenten Season with many churches in the area starting the first of a season of worship services.

In Clark, a community service will be held at St. Paul Lutheran Church at 6:00 p.m. for the Ash Wednesday service. A meal will be served from 5:00 to 5:45 p.m., prior to worship.

Saint Michael Catholic Church in Clark will hold their Mass with distribution of Ashes at 5:30 p.m. In Henry, at St. Henry's Catholic Church, the Ash Wednesday service will be at 4:00 p.m., and in Bryant at St. Mary Catholic Church, an Ash Wednesday service will begin

at 7:00 p.m.

Moving forward with the Clark Ecumenical Lenten series, the first Wednesday Lenten service will be held on Feb. 21 with a 6:00 p.m. service at the Plymouth UCC Church. A 5:00 to 5:45 p.m. meal will be served prior to worship.

A 6:00 p.m. worship for the remainder of Lenten season, along with a 5:00 to 5:45 p.m. meal being served prior to services, will be held with the dates and locations being: Feb. 28 at the United Methodist Church; March 6 at St. Paul Lutheran Church; March 13 at the Plymouth UCC Church and March 20 at the United Methodist Church.

## Odd winter temperatures keep the Clark Ice Skating Rink closed

By: Carolyn Olson

According to the City of Clark Finance Officer Alaina Wellnitz, the ice skating rink in Clark will not open this year due to the varying

temperatures. The rink is usually open before Christmas, but this year due to the temperatures rising and falling so rapidly, the ice skating rink will not open this year.

**The Clark County Courier office will be closed on Monday in observance of the holiday.**

If you have news stories, legals or advertising for next week's edition of the Clark County Courier, **please email us at [clarkcountycourier@gmail.com](mailto:clarkcountycourier@gmail.com) or call us at (605) 532-3654** by Friday of this week. Mailed items may not reach us in time for the next publication.

It's easier for us on Tuesday, if we can get the bulk of the work done by Friday night. News correspondents can send their info on Tuesday morning or call Tuesday morning.

**Thank you!**

## Raising, showing backyard chickens taught by Brianna Dale

By Tara Knutson

When Becki Dale brought home a dozen layer hens to her Wyoming farm one spring, she did not anticipate her then five-year-old daughter Brianna would fall in love with them the way she did.

"As a child, I showed cattle. I didn't foresee myself with a child showing cattle and chickens!" exclaims Becki. "Every day, Briana would feed, water and love on those chicks."

Brianna Dale states, "I feel like chickens get a bad reputation among the farm animals, but they are hardy sensitive creatures."

"I love these beautiful animals. Each chicken has their own personality," Brianna adds. "Sometimes, the roosters can be big bullies, but other birds are sweeter. They are so fun to cuddle. Over the years, I have been able to share my passion with my family, and I hope to share my passion with the youth of Clark County through my senior capstone project."

While visiting the Wyoming State Fair, a family acquaintance shared his chicken project with the Dale family. This chicken project struck up a new idea for the young Brianna. "I decided I really wanted to show a chicken in addition to our cattle."

After the Dale family moved from Wyoming to rural Clark County, Jay Foster of Garden City came to the Dale farm and taught Brianna the process of showing a chicken. This foundation was supplemented by additional research through various sources including books, videos and field experts and fellow chicken lovers.

"Mom and I spent lots of hours watching UTube videos. Showing a chicken is a lot different than showing any other animal. You have to give a presentation to the judge by showing the parts of the chicken to the judge. By showing each part of the chicken to the judge, you show how healthy your chicken is. In addition to displaying the parts, you need to know characteristics of the breed you have," explains Brianna.

Brianna has shown her chickens at Clark County Achievement Days and the South Dakota State Fair in 4-H and open class shows along with several regional type and national shows in Minnesota. "Minnesota has much more intense chicken competition than South Dakota."



**On Monday, Dale put an incubator and 36 fertilized chicken eggs in Mrs. Nesheim's second grade classroom at Clark Elementary School. The eggs will be in the incubator for 21 days. It's now the responsibility of the second grade students to check the temperatures of their classroom, the incubator, the humidity level of the incubator every day and add water if needed. Above, Dale is helping one of the students put an egg in the incubator.**

Photo by Carolyn Olson

"Taking care of chickens involves hard work, discipline and routine," according to Brianna. "The first part of my normal routine with my chickens includes getting up before school and going outside to check up on them. I check their feed and waters, cleaning out their waters if they need it. I let them out of their coop, since I close their door at night to repel predators and let them run outside in their outdoor pen. After school, I come home and immediately give fresh food and water to my chickens. When it becomes dark, my chickens come inside and put themselves to bed. I close their door, collect their eggs and turn

off their lights for the night."

Just as with any breeding program, Brianna has been able to identify areas to improve the health of her flock. She has mixed in birdseed into her layer feed mix, especially during the cold winter months.

Dale has several pens of chickens on her farm, differentiated by purpose. For example, she has approximately 20 birds in her layer pen and her show birds in a separate coop. She names some of her birds based on their personality traits. The birds that are a favorite of hers include Sara, Aiden and Penelope. Those that are not on the top of her favorite list

include names like Chicken Nugget.

Now, as a senior at the Clark High School and a senior leader amongst Clark County 4-H and with her years of personal and show experience with chickens, Brianna has identified a need area in the program.

"The poultry show at Achievement Days doesn't contain bird projects from very many other families. I bring 20 birds, my brother brings some show birds, and a few other families bring in theirs. I'm worried about the sustainability of the show unless we can get additional 4-H members interested in the poultry show," Dale emphasized.

This realization has proven to be the groundwork for her senior capstone project. Brianna developed a class and project to introduce more individuals, specifically children, to chicken raising, care and showing. Dale's course covers these topics, along with teaching on different varieties of birds.

Brianna's senior project is in conjunction with Clark County Extension Agent Kim McGraw and the Clark Elementary School. "Fertilized eggs will be placed in an incubator for several weeks, so the school kids can learn about the hatching process. They will learn that the eggs need a warm moist environment the second week of their incubation period. They will also see that the eggs are rotated and why. The whole incubation period is a 21-day process from beginning to end. Those kids that want to show a chicken in 4-H will be given a bird to take home for a project of their own."

The future for Dale includes plans to remain active in the care of animals. She wants to try showing a new breed of chicken in her last year of 4-H this summer: the Buff Orpington, which is a dual-purpose breed of chicken with a pretty orange color plumage.

After high school, Brianna is heading to Casper College in Casper, Wyoming to study Wildlife and Fisheries. "I've always had a calling to go back to Wyoming. I love the landscape with the mountains, and I love animals, so the school is perfect for me. I'm going to miss my chickens so much though," she sums.

Becki Dale mentions with a laugh, "We are going to have to downsize the flock after she leaves for college."

## Featured Series · Small town newspaper women: Billi Aughenbaugh of the Kingsbury Journal

By Dillon Dwyer

(Editor's Note - In the age of social media and instant information, newspaper businesses experience an ever-increasing array of challenges as they seek to remain viable while providing services to their communities. Over the course of a few decades, many newspaper businesses have closed, combined or transformed in the face of lost advertising and staffing shortages. At their core, newspapers serve to provide information to communities. They promote businesses and events. They provide coverage of local meetings and activities. They preserve records for posterity.

The following article is one of three in a series highlighting the efforts of young women and the rural communities they serve through their dedication to ensuring that newspapers remain viable in rural areas and continue providing essential services to community members. Of the Minnesota Newspaper Association's 212 registered newspapers, 98 have women editors, and 81 have women publishers. In South Dakota, out of 106 registered newspapers, 62 have women editors, and around 26 have women publishers independently identified on the South Dakota Newspaper Association website.

The first article in the series features the story of Billi Aughenbaugh of the Kingsbury Journal and the group of volunteers who resurrected their weekly newspaper after it closed for six weeks. The second article covers the experience of Karli Paulson of the Clark County Courier, a young woman who decided to take control of the fate of her hometown newspaper. The third article details the journey of Clarissa Blake of the Ortonville Independent and The Northern Star, as she works to preserve her family's business and uphold the standards set by her parents' and grandparents'

engagement in the community.)

Billi Aughenbaugh, 28, owns a small marketing business called Socially Untapped and has two children (ages three and two) with her husband, Matt. The family lives in DeSmet, South Dakota, about eight miles from where Aughenbaugh grew up in Lake Preston, South Dakota. The neighboring towns are the primary coverage areas for the Kingsbury Journal, a weekly newspaper for which Aughenbaugh serves as a content editor, pagination manager and advertising salesperson.

Graduating from South Dakota State University, Aughenbaugh majored in Entrepreneurial Studies and minored in Marketing. She entered the newspaper industry fresh out of college as an advertising salesperson for the Mitchell Daily Republic, a position she held for nine months before establishing her own marketing business and moving back to the DeSmet and Lake Preston area. Aughenbaugh then found her way into the work she currently does for the Kingsbury Journal through her involvement with the two communities and their efforts to fill the hole left by the sudden closure of the De Smet News and Lake Preston Times in 2020.

"The newspapers shut down," Aughenbaugh recalled. "All of a sudden, on April 1, 2020, the paper came out, and the headline across the top read, 'This Is It,' and then the article explained that the owner, Dale Blegen, was shutting down the



**Billi Aughenbaugh, shown in the photo above with her infant daughter Ronni, is the content editor, pagination and advertising salesperson for the Kingsbury Journal. Aughenbaugh spearheads much of the weekly planning and organization that goes into creating the newspaper.**

Submitted photo

business after attempting to sell it without any luck. I got the e-edition that afternoon and was shocked."

With only six weeks to reestablish a newspaper again before losing the legal newspaper status held by the DeSmet News and Lake Preston Times, the DeSmet and Lake Preston economic development corporations worked together to research what other communities did in similar situations and how they could go volunteer-based with a weekly newspaper. Through the process, they purchased the newspapers from Blegen, sought community input about combining the papers into one and contracted with Cre-

ative Circle Media out of Rhode Island to help transform each town's defunct newspaper into the combined Kingsbury Journal.

"Creative Circle Media helped us a ton with all the backend work," Aughenbaugh noted. "They restructured and revived the newspaper. They also paginated and put everything together for several months until we were ready to do it independently."

Approximately 55 volunteers, including Aughenbaugh, provided services to help produce the newly resurrected weekly newspaper - writing articles, submitting photographs and even driving to collect the newspaper from where it gets printed in Madison, South Dakota. Initially, due to COVID-19, none of the volunteers ever met in person. The group's collaboration took place over Microsoft Teams.

"Between all of us, we got the first newspaper issue out," Aughenbaugh shared. "From there, it was just a treadmill. We met every week and planned what we needed for the next week. We still have about 50 volunteers, along with five of us who get paid now."

Each week, Aughenbaugh, content editor, pagination and advertising; Amy Halverson, writer and copy editor; Corrie Walter, writer; Dave Fields, writer; Sheryl Downes, office manager and the volunteers of the Kingsbury Journal, produce at least 24 pages for their newspaper with color on the front, back and in the middle in the print version and full color online. "What is

essential to us, from the parents taking pictures and museum boards submitting articles to the community leaders writing columns. The schools have also been awesome in sharing photos and other content, and most of our public meetings either record or stream to allow us to cover them."

Through the creation and continued operation of the Kingsbury Journal, Aughenbaugh has gained respect for the newspaper business and her local community. She has seen firsthand what can happen when one loses the other.

Please check back next week to continue the series with Karli Paulson's journey from entering the newspaper industry after graduating college with a degree in animation to becoming the owner and editor of the Clark County Courier, her hometown newspaper, and learn about the essential connections that help support Paulson's investment in her community and the rural newspaper business.

WEATHER			
Robert Cole - Official Weather Observer			
	HI	LO	PR
Feb. 6.....	43	31	0
Feb. 7.....	42	35	0
Feb. 8.....	49	35	0
Feb. 9.....	41	27	0.05
Feb. 10.....	30	26	0
Feb. 11.....	35	18	0
Feb. 12.....	43	22	0
2024 precipitation to date	0.34"		
2023 precipitation to date	0.53"		