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Dining Dollars Campaign returns for 2021

BY JAKE BOURGEOIS
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After taking a brief hiatus in 2020, the Dining Dollars Campaign, which raises money for the programs at the Jones County Senior Center, is returning for 2021.

Last year, the center was able to get support from Heritage Area Agency on Aging with the purchase of emergency supplies as well as some grants to help cover their operating costs.

After having the sites closed

throughout most of 2020 and into 2021, the sites have slowly begun to reopen. Anamosa resumed for Monday through Friday noon meals July 6, Wyoming opened July 21 and the Monticello site is slated to open Dec. 1.

While not open, the center was limited in hours and limited to delivering frozen meals while trying to do their best to keep their clients safe and healthy.

"We didn't know if we could be carrying something," Senior Dining Director Lisa Tallman said.

The impacts of the pandemic

Hours

The Jones County Senior Center, 112 N. Ford St., Anamosa, is open from 7 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday to Friday. Meals are served at noon, and reservations can be made by contacting Director Lisa Tallman at 319-462-4484.

can still be felt with issues in the supply chain that limits the center's ability to get some of their usual options, but since reopening, the center has seen a confirmation of how important it's been for them to be able to get back

That includes not only the ability to deliver hot meals like they have in the past, but also the opportunity they provide for seniors to socialize. More than just a meal, the dining centers make it possible to meet friends, play cards, put together a puzzle, watch a movie, listen to music, make crafts and enjoy many other activities.

"They missed it really, really bad," Tallman said of the social opportunities the center provides. "Everybody was thrilled to be back in the dining room. Everybody's thrilled to be getting

hot meals again."

In addition to helping fund the operations, donations could help the center make needed updates to the interior of the building, which would have to come out of their budget. Tallman said she'd like to have the ability to update the wainscoting or update the dated blinds in the building, which have been there at least the last 16 years Tallman has been in the position.

With the holidays approach-

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Strawberry Hill Elementary counselor earns state award

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Greta Lundsgaard-Vaughn, the school counselor at Strawberry Hill Elementary, was named the School Counselor of the Year at the elementary level by the Iowa School Counselor Association.

"It was very humbling to be honored by my peers," she said.

"I believe all school counselors are empathetic and want to help solve student problems, lend a helping hand, and be role models in society. Greta is all of that and so much more. She is one of the best. Greta adds so much to our students, school and community," Strawberry Hill Elementary Principal Ellen Recker said.

"She is a passionate, caring, knowledgeable and dedicated counselor who leads by example. She exemplifies all of the greatest strengths and qualities of a highly effective school counselor. Strawberry Hill Elementary and the Anamosa Community School District are lucky to have one of the best school counselors in the nation. We are proud of Greta and are thrilled to share a small glimpse of what makes her an outstanding school counselor."

Lundsgaard-Vaughn has been a school counselor for over 20 years and has been a long-time member of the Iowa School Counselor Association. She has advocated through the years to local and state legislators about the importance of having school counselors in education to support students, and she is passionate about highlighting the

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Iowa School Counselor Association President Melissa Murphy, left, presents Greta Lundsgaard-Vaughn with her award for counselor of the year.

Board appoints new officers

BY JAKE BOURGEOIS
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Getting together for their annual and organizational meeting Nov. 23, the Anamosa school board finished up old business and welcomed a new member to the board.

Before approving the results of the latest school board election, the board recognized Bruce Miell for his contribution over the last couple of years after being appointed in January of 2020 to the seat vacated by Nicole Claussen.

"We had an election where we had people not participating. We had vacancies on the board where people did not run for those spots and I just want to thank Bruce because I think he'd did an outstanding job, especially to step up at a time where it was much needed," board member Matt McQuillen said at the Nov. 16 meeting.

President Carl Chalstrom echoed McQuillen's sentiments Nov. 23, before presenting

Miell with a plaque. Miell thanked the members for their words.

Following that and swearing in the newly elected board members, with Chalstrom, McQuillen and Brian Hurt keeping seats on the board and newcomer Dennis Holland joining them, an election was held for board president and board vice president. By a 4-3 vote, previous vice president Brian Hurt was named the new president over previous president Carl Chalstrom and Eric Wickham was elected vice president over Sean Braden by the same margin.

"Thank you for putting your trust in me," Hurt told his fellow board members during the board comment time.

Chalstrom was thanked for fulfilling his role as president the last three years.

"I would thank Carl for your time as president," McQuillen said to a chorus of agreement. "Especially with all of the stuff that we've gone through outside of our control."

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