

# TIC

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PHOTO SUBMITTED

Greg Michaelson is an EMT on the Iowa Falls EMS crew. He was eligible to receive the vaccine in the first phase of doses. He got his first shot on Dec. 29, and his second a month later.

## Vaccines prove hard to get for some locals

Demand for COVID-19 drug continues to outpace supply

BY SARA KONRAD BARANOWSKI | skonrad@iafalls.com

Richard Stephen received an email from Hardin County Public Health last week, inviting him to set up an appointment to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. But the 85-year-old Iowa Falls man, who's eager to get vaccinated, didn't see the email right away. By the time his daughter got off work and could help him access the scheduling website, all of the appointments were taken.

"We're not very tech savvy," he said of himself and his 87-year-old wife. "It looks to me like the younger people that are tech savvy are going to be first to get the vaccine and we're going to be last because we don't understand it."

- Put your name on Hardin County Public Health's COVID-19 vaccine list by filling out the form at this address: <https://forms.gle/Eepb52TEk7A8Vf616>.
- Or call Greenbelt Home Care/Hardin County Public Health at 641-939-8444.

"The way it's set up now we're just going to be last," he said. "I don't see any other way."

Stephen's frustration is shared by dozens of other Hardin County senior citizens and their family members who have been trying to navigate a mostly-online system to sign up for a small number of vaccine appointments. With demand outpacing supply, most have been left out.

It's a common complaint heard by the employees at Hardin County Public Health who have a list of more than 1,000 people who qualify for the vaccine right now, but have to wait because the agency is only receiving a few hundred doses each week.

VACCINES ... P2



Riverbend Middle School band students (from left) Andres Lugo-Figueroa, Gabi Stauffer, Tessa Lorenz-Neumann and Peyton Lawrence sit in front of the entrance to the music room. The school has been spruced up with decorative wall graphics to designate different areas of the building.

# Decorative Decor

RMS latest building to receive wall art

BY JUSTIN ITES | ites@iafalls.com

Instrumental music teacher Ross Schumaker has a method for directing visitors to the Riverbend Middle School music room.

"In the past, I've always told people unfamiliar with our school to use their ears and they will find us," Schumaker said.

His directional directive may no longer be needed, as RMS is the latest school building in the district to receive new decorative wall art and graphics.

RMS Principal Jeff Burchfield said Sports Graphics of Clarion had staff on site earlier this week to spruce up various spots inside the building. Similar artwork has been installed at Iowa Falls-Alden High School, Rock Run Elementary, Pineview Elementary and Alden Elementary.

Burchfield said the company brings in vinyl sheets, which begins a process that ends with the art adhering to the wall.

"This project was something all of the administrators at Iowa Falls and Alden discussed with our staffs," Burchfield said. "If you go to the high school, you see similar work in the student center and the entrances. Rock Run also has had work done there. It was simply our turn."

The RMS principal said the Iowa Falls School Board approved the project, which is required when the cost exceeds \$5,000. Once the work was green-lit, Burchfield said details were worked out, including exact measurements. Decals were printed off and Sports Graphics arrived ready to install some of the art this week.

Four pieces were completed this week. They're located at the music room entrance, gymnasium entrance, cafeteria and the double doors located past the administrative office.

In the near future, Sports



PHOTOS BY JUSTIN ITES / TIMES CITIZEN

Riverbend Middle School Principal Jeff Burchfield talks to a group of students near new decals that were installed at the school this week. The branding can also be found at the high school and Rock Run.

Graphics will return to spruce up the area surrounding the office, as well as the main entrance to the building. Burchfield said the bitterly cold temperatures have delayed work on the entrance area, as the art does not adhere to the building quite as well.

"We wanted to focus first on the music room and gymnasium hallway because that is where our students, staff and visitors are most likely to congregate when the building is open to the public," Burchfield said. "We have a lot of people in that area when we have events."

All of the artwork is expected to be completed by the spring.

Burchfield said the early feedback from staff and students has been positive. He said the graphics really "pop" and give the building a modern feel.

"Buildings get dated in a hurry. Our building is highly functional but dated in some of the colors

of tiles. To bring school colors in there . . . it brightens and freshens everything up and makes the building more modern," Burchfield said.

Schumaker said the decorative art was a pleasant surprise for his band students when they came to school on Wednesday. The music room entrance art was completed on Tuesday. The artwork there includes the RMS Music Department's official motto "Excellence is a Habit."

"When the kids came in on Wednesday they were blown away and their eyes popped open. To see the kids really take pride in what they are doing academically and supported that way, it's a great feeling to see them enjoy it," Schumaker said. "When people came to the school, it wasn't too hard to find our music room. I told them to listen and they would know where to go. Now you can also look for the art." ■

# Eldora will offer assistance on blighted properties

Incentive would pay for part of demolition costs

BY MATTHEW REZAB | mreza@iafalls.com

The Eldora City Council unanimously approved a measure Tuesday that it hopes will help eliminate two blighted properties.

The City is offering up to \$6,000 in demolition assistance to the winner of a no-minimum sealed bid process regarding properties at 1607 and 1609 15th Ave. The assistance applies to each property individually. Bids must be received by 4 p.m. on March 8, the day before a public hearing will be held on the matter at 6 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

The properties have been on the City's books since 2018 and 2019 re-

spectively. A sealed bid and hearing was held in May 2019, but there were no bids received.

The properties will be "sold as is and is subject to any covenants, restrictions and/or easements of record. The successful bidder upon transfer of property by Deed will be granted 6 months to demolish any and all standing structures on the property and level the lot. Backfill, leveling and reseeded are required following demolition."

The properties are zoned Multi-Family Residence. After demolition, a house or accessory building can be constructed. If an accessory building, such as a garage or shop, is built, it must have a residence on the same or neighboring property. A request to the Planning and Zoning Board of Adjustment may be made for an exception.

ELDORA BLIGHT ... P2



MATTHEW REZAB / TIMES CITIZEN

The houses at 1607 and 1609 15th Ave. in Eldora have been owned by the city for two and three years, respectively. The city is offering an incentive - \$6,000 per house - for whomever is willing to buy them and tear down the houses, which have been deemed blighted.