

Lake Panorama TIMES



JANUARY 2024

Mailed to all property
owners at Lake Panorama
and on newsstands.

FREE!

OH, DEER!

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WITH THE DEER
POPULATION AT
LAKE PANORAMA**

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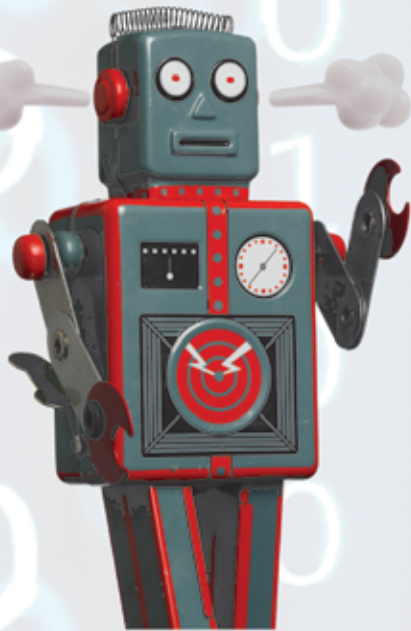


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To subscribe: Visit www.LakePanoramaTimes.com and click on the "SUBSCRIBE" link. Subscriptions are \$24 per year (12 issues).

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FINDING PEACE THROUGH STARGAZING

Staring at the sky, laying on my back, flat on the grass. Or the leaves. Or the snow. Or whatever covered the dirt that time of year. This is where I found peace as a child. By myself. With nature.

I thought about heaven, and the angels and God. I thought about what I did right and what I did wrong. I thought about my grandparents and others who died too young. I simply thought. A lot.

While doing so, through the moonlight, I would watch the branches from the old trees dancing slowly in the air. I would listen to the wind whistle its way around the neighborhood homes. And I would smell the recognizable scents of each season.

Wintertime was especially memorable. I would bundle up in my snowsuit, hat, mittens and boots and plop down on the snow in our neighbor's large backyard.

It was close enough to home to hear my mother's call but far enough to feel like I got away. I enjoyed the cold snowflakes colliding on my face, the brisk air freezing in my nostrils, and, most of all, my mind wandering aimlessly. I didn't feel the need to be with other people. I appreciated the solitude.

Years later, I hesitantly shared this experience with my friend, Tommy. It was awkward, as most things are with newly teenage boys. He didn't seem to connect with it like I did. At least I didn't think so. A few years later, when struggling with some issues, Tommy showed up unannounced



Shane Goodman

at my home and said, "Let's go lay in the grass." And we did, mostly to complete silence.

Not too many years later, Tommy died. I struggled greatly in dealing with his death. I couldn't find peace with it, until I remembered staring at the sky with him. So, as a young man in my twenties, I walked out to the open grass by the apartment where I lived, and I lay on the grass. Flat on my back. Staring at the sky. And, after some time, I smiled.

Today, my joints hurt. My bones ache. I don't appreciate the cold weather like I used to. As a result, I don't lie on the ground much anymore. But I do enjoy soaking in the hot tub. When I do, I turn off the jets and stare at the open sky, remembering those peaceful moments of my youth and searching for new ones to-

day.
It's a humbling experience for me, as it helps me realize how small one person is in this vast world and how today's problems, however troubling they may be, are miniscule in the big picture. The branches still dance. The wind still whistles. Each season still brings its scent. And my mind still wanders. Aimlessly.

Have a great January, and thanks for reading. ■


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OH, DEER

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH THE DEER POPULATION AT LAKE PANORAMA

BY RICH WICKS

Lake Panorama Times

“Watch out for deer” is common advice in Iowa, often said both as a cautionary reminder to drive carefully and as a way of indicating, “I care about you.” As more roads and homes are built, encounters with deer are inevitable. But it wasn’t always this way.

IOWA’S HISTORY WITH DEER

When settlers were first arriving in the territory that would eventually become Iowa, deer were plentiful, according to data shown on the Iowa DNR website. But throughout the 1800s, the deer population was hunted extensively, and the population plummeted. In 1898, the 27th General Assembly provided complete protection for deer by closing the hunting season year-round. By this time, deer were nearly extinct in most areas of the state.

Deer were re-established in Iowa through the escape of animals from captive herds, trapping and transplanting programs of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and the immigration of animals from neighboring states. In 1894, 35 whitetails escaped from a captive herd in Avoca, which provided the nucleus for future herds in western Iowa. In the early 1920s, about 60 deer escaped from a farm in Washington County and became established along the Skunk River. Another herd was established in Boone County at Ledges State Park in 1928 when two deer, purchased from Minnesota, were released. In 1947, the first statewide population estimate was made with deer herds reported in 58 counties containing an estimated 1,650 animals. Deer herds were reported



The statewide deer population in Iowa was estimated at 445,000 in 2020.

in 89 counties in 1950, and the population estimate was expanded to 13,000. In 2020, the statewide estimate was 445,000.

HUNTING AS A SOLUTION TO DEER OVERPOPULATION

The rapid rise of Iowa’s deer population has led to concerns of crop damage when deer feed on corn, soybeans or other crops. Deer also cause damage in gardens and yards. Because of the swelling population and lack of natural predators, hunting is considered the best means to control the population. Without adequate hunting, the number would be balanced only through disease, starvation and roadkill incidents.

Local DNR officer Jeremy King pointed out that, although some people oppose hunting, animals harvested through hunting generally do not suffer long, whereas some of the natural diseases that arise in overpopulated herds lead to animals undergoing a long, painful death. The latest statewide harvest data shows that, for the 2019-2020 season, hunters harvested 109,544 deer in Iowa.

The whitetail deer situation at Lake Panorama mirrors the statewide status. Lane Rumelhart, project manager for the Lake Panorama Association, provided information on efforts to control the local deer population and minimize related problems.

“We have a hunting program for controlling the population, and we strongly recommend our members do not feed the deer,” Rumelhart said. “Obviously, feeding the deer is going to attract them to your house, and they’re going to stay in that general area more frequently, and you’re going to anger your neighbors. It’s best to just let the deer roam freely and find their food on their own.”

Rumelhart also discourages residents from putting out salt or mineral blocks for the same reason.

According to Rumelhart, the LPA and DNR have teamed up to develop specific hunting zones at the lake. The zones are changed periodically based on deer population changes, so Rumelhart encourages interested hunters to log onto the LPA website and then check in the Hunting folder for the current map of approved deer hunting zones.

“You have to be a member to sign up, or



According to Jeremy King of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, trends in the deer population at Lake Panorama are difficult to determine. He says the basis the DNR uses is harvest registrations. Anytime hunters harvest a deer, they are required by law to report the harvest by midnight the day after they kill it.

a guest of a member. It’s free for members but costs \$50 for guests to register, and you have to sign up under a member who is registered to hunt,” Rumelhart said. Each member can have up to three non-member guests sign up under the member’s name.

“We typically get around 100 members signed up every year, and they shoot anywhere from 120 to 150 deer, so that program continues to be really successful for us,” he said. “We’d like to harvest over 100 each year. That number doesn’t seem to fluctuate much, and we’re really happy with it.”

Rumelhart notes that residing at Lake Panorama doesn’t offer any special permission. Hunters are still required to have a tag to hunt a deer and must be within one of the designated hunting zones. Deer tags can be obtained from any approved vendor in the state, including the LPA office.

- Iowa has a variety of deer hunting seasons. For the 2023-2024 season, these include: Youth, Sept. 16 - Oct. 1
- Disabled Hunter, Sept. 16 - Oct. 1
- Archery, Oct. 1 - Dec. 1 AND Dec. 18 - Jan. 10

- Muzzleloader Early: Oct. 14-22, Late: Dec. 18 - Jan. 10
- Shotgun First: Dec. 2-6, Second: Dec. 9-17
- Nonresident Holiday Dec. 24 - Jan. 2
- Population Management, January Antlerless, Jan. 11-21
- Excess Tag January Antlerless, Jan. 11-21.
- Shooting hours for all deer seasons are one half-hour before sunrise to one half-hour after sunset.

DEALING WITH DEAD DEER

Rumelhart says he receives questions at times about how to deal with a dead deer on an LPA member’s property.

“If a deer dies on your property, then you need to call one of our Animal Nuisance control specialists,” he said. “We have those listed on our vendor list. Those folks can remove that animal for a fee.”

Rumelhart says, if feasible, the property owner can drag the deer to the nearest edge of the timber and let nature take its course.

“There are a lot of animals and critters around here that will take care of a dead deer rather quickly,” he said. “Some folks may find that a bit gruesome, but that’s just

PHOTOS BY TRISH HART | SPECIAL TO LAKE PANORAMA TIMES





Jeremy King of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources says deer like going where there's an easy meal because they are animals of survival. If people are having issues with deer around their house, he suggests removing those bird feeders or elevating them high enough so deer can't get to them.

nature, and that's where we live."

And if a deer is seen in the water?

"If there's a deer in the lake, just call the office, and either security or maintenance will go out and try to get that deer out of the lake with our barge equipment."

Rumelhart said if a sick or wounded animal is seen to always call the DNR.

"They're legally responsible for taking care of those animals," he said.

DEER POPULATION TRENDS AT THE LAKE

According to DNR officer King, the trends in the deer population at Lake Panorama are difficult to determine.

"People can drive around and see more deer than they did last year and assume the deer population is up. And, at the same time, another person might not see many deer and assume the population is down," he said. "Really, the basis the DNR uses is harvest registrations. Anytime a hunter harvests a deer, they're required by law to report the harvest by midnight the day after they kill it. Then we can look at that data and see what our harvest trend is like, and we can compare that to our hunter numbers as well."

King said he worked with the DNR wildlife department and the LPA two years ago, and they came up with the deer management zone around the lake so that they were allotted their own number of tags.

"Prior to that, anytime a member of Lake Panorama wanted to hunt Lake Panorama ground, they bought antlerless tags, and those would come out of the county-wide quota," he said. "Two years ago, we established a quota just for Lake Panorama."

Taking all factors into consideration, King feels the deer population around Lake Panorama is relatively steady. In determining what is a "proper" number of deer, King stressed that it depends on the observer. He said, for some citizens, even a few deer are too many, while for hunters, there may never be enough.

"Trying to find that social balance is a really difficult thing," he said.

NUISANCE DEER

King said that, if a deer is eating your plants, you are not allowed to shoot it.

"There are processes to try to reduce or eliminate deer damage to property," he said. "We have a deer biologist who specifically focuses on how to help landowners and homeowners deal with nuisance deer problems."

King lives at Lake Panorama, and he is familiar with the many interactions with deer that happen regularly here.

"They like bird feeders," King said, "They like going where there's an easy meal. They are animals of survival. If people are having issues with deer around their house, maybe remove those bird feeders or elevate them high enough where deer can't get to them."

He added that deer will sometimes stand on their back legs to reach food, so they can reach as high as 8 feet. Other suggestions for preventing deer damage to plants and trees include putting a wrap or chicken wire around trees and installing a high fence around gardens. Also, some plants are known to emit scents that deer don't like to approach. These include lavender, sage, yarrow, daffodil and marigold.

"Another simple thing you can do that

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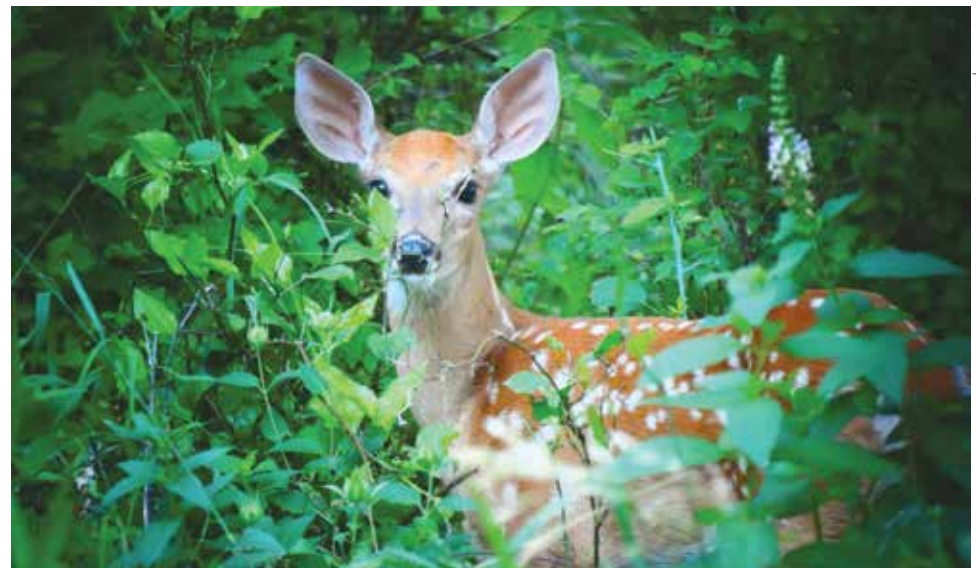
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A known disease issue with deer locally is Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease, which is also known as "blue tongue." EHD infects deer that are bitten by a midge bug. It causes their tongue to swell, and they run a fever and go to water. Usually within three to four days after they've been bitten, they die. Jeremy King of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources says three deer carcasses were found at Lake Panorama from suspected EHD virus over the past year.

usually works pretty well is add a dryer sheet with a paper clip or something attached to the plant or the area," King said. "A lot of times, that will ward them off."

King stresses that deer are quickly getting used to being around people.

"I've driven around Lake Panorama and seen deer literally lying against houses underneath the dryer vent where the warm air is blowing on them in the winter," he said. "A number of animals have learned to become very adapted to humans. Whitetail deer is one of them, along with raccoons and Canada geese. Deer have just learned to live with humans."

In addition to dealing with live deer, King acknowledges, as Rumelhart did, that occasionally a deer carcass needs to be removed. He said the standard practice for dealing with dead deer on a roadway is to drag it into the nearest ditch.

"If a landowner finds one, absolutely, they're more than welcome to drag it off somewhere," he said. "If you find a dead deer and you want the antlers, the way Iowa's laws are, if the antlers are still attached to the skull, then you have to get a salvage tag before you can take them."

King said the salvage tag is free and can be obtained through him by calling or texting his work cell phone number of 712-250-0061.

DEER AND DISEASE

King says Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in Guthrie County has not been a problem.

"There are about seven to nine counties in Iowa that have it," he said. "The nearest one is Greene County, where one deer has

been sampled in the last two years that had CWD. This issue that we have is EHD, which is also known as 'blue tongue'."

EHD, which stands for Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease, is common in the county's deer.

"It's a disease the deer get by being bitten by a midge bug," he said. "It basically causes their tongue to swell, and they run a fever, so they go to water. And usually within three to four days after they've been bitten, they die."

Deer infected with the EHD virus will often be found dead in the water. King said over the past year, three deer carcasses were found at Lake Panorama from suspected EHD virus. He asks the public to inform him of any such carcasses so the DNR can use accurate data to help adjust hunting tag numbers to best balance the population.

ENJOY THE DEER

In summarizing how to deal with wildlife nuisance issues, King said, "We do have a federal biologist that we work with, and our local biologist can help you come up with solutions if you have a major issue going on. And I think a lot of folks need to remember that we have a beautiful lake... and we're going to have wildlife that's going to be around there. We built homes in their home."

King encourages everyone to remember that the natural beauty of the lake area includes geese, deer, raccoons, foxes, mink, bobcats and other animals. His best advice?

"Pour an extra cup of coffee, sit back and enjoy it." ■

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Q: CAN CHRISTMAS TREES BE DROPPED OFF AT THE YARD WASTE FACILITIES?

A: Yes. According to the LPA, natural Christmas trees are welcome at both yard waste facilities, but the trees cannot be wrapped in plastic. The LPA also stresses NOT to place Christmas trees on the ice or in the lake, as trees do not make good fish habitat without special preparation and can become floating obstacles in the spring.

Q: IS THERE A FEE TO RUN OBITUARIES IN LAKE PANORAMA TIMES?

A: Yes. Starting in 2024, the advertising rate to run an obituary with a full color photo is \$40. Your local funeral care provider can handle this for you and your family, or you can send directly to Shane Goodman at shane@dmcityview.com.

Q: CAN I HAVE A FUEL STORAGE TANK ON MY PROPERTY?

A: Section 9.2c of the LPA Rules and Regulations addresses fuel storage tanks. It states that every tank for the storage of heating fuel or propane that is installed outside shall be buried below the surface of the ground or screened by fencing or shrubbery. It also states that no fuel storage tank larger than 20 gallons shall be installed, above or below ground, other

than for the storage of heating fuel or propane.

Q: WHAT ARE THE RULES ON SNOWMOBILES AT LAKE PANORAMA?

A: Section 4. 3 of the LPA Rules and Regulations addresses snowmobiles, stating that "all regulations regarding snowmobiles promulgated by the State of Iowa shall apply, including but not limited to age restrictions" and "the off road recreational vehicle regulations and laws of the State of Iowa shall apply to the Lake Panorama Subdivision." In addition, it states, "Snowmobiles may be operated on member's lot only, or on areas specifically designated by the Lake Panorama Board of Directors or LPA management as authorized by the Board of Directors." For answers to more specific questions, reach out to the LPA office at 641-755-2301.

Q: I HEARD THE GUTHRIE COUNTY TIMES VEDETTE NEWSPAPER IS NOW AVAILABLE VIA EMAIL FOR FREE. IS THAT TRUE? IF SO, HOW DO I RECEIVE IT?

A: It is true, and you can receive the Times Vedette now digitally for free, sent to your email inbox on Tuesdays and Fridays during the lunch hour. Sign up at www.gctimesnews.com. ■

PANORAMA EXCELS AT DANCE TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

BY RICH WICKS
Lake Panorama Times

On Nov. 30, the Panorama High School Dance team danced their way to multiple trophies at the Iowa Dance Team Championships, which were held at Wells Fargo Arena and Hy-Vee Hall in Des Moines. The team includes Maci Bauer, Madelyn Carstens, Donovan Delp, Riley Gibson, Hadley Fitch, Zoey Hambleton, Tori Heckman, Jessica Randol, Lexi Wasson and Sarah Westergaard. The team is coached by Kristi Vance and Mikeely Denger.

Team awards won by the Panthers in-

clude Class I Lyrical Team (first place), Class I Contemporary (first place) and Class III Jazz (second place). The team was also awarded the Judges Choice Award, Community Service Award, ISDTA Cares Award-Food Shelter Donation, and Academic Excellence Award. Individually, Donovan Delp repeated as Class III State Champion Dancer. His average score from the three judges was 92.17, well ahead of the closest challenger's 89.5 average.

The Iowa Championships are the nation's largest high school dance competition with more than 250 teams and more than 5,000 dancers. ■



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MANAGERS' COFFEE PROVIDES ASSOCIATION UPDATES

Royce Shaffer and John Rutledge share information on plans for 2024.

BY SUSAN THOMPSON
Lake Panorama Times

The last Managers' Coffee for 2023 was Dec. 15 at the Lake Panorama National conference center. Updates were shared by both Royce Shaffer, who was named LPN director of operations Sept. 1, and John Rutledge, who has been the Lake Panorama Association (LPA) general manager for more than 17 years.

This is the second event where Shaffer provided the LPN update rather than Rutledge.

"Since our last coffee in September, a good portion of my time has been spent planning for 2024," Shaffer said. "This consists of budgeting and working on the 2024 restaurant lease. I am pleased that both of these items are now finalized."

Shaffer said the LPA board of directors approved the proposed LPN budget, which includes projected revenue of about \$1.8 million.

Earlier in the fall, the LPN food and

beverage task force used a survey to gather input on the 2023 operation. A total of 490 responses were received. From this survey, Shaffer said the task force identified a list of items they wanted to work on with current tenants Nick and Lynn Kuhn.

Shaffer listed some of the responses that stood out in the survey, including 89% of LPA homeowners said it is extremely important or very important to have a restaurant at LPN; 83% of respondents want a casual full-service dining experience; when asked to choose between personal service and fast service, 82% chose personal service; 75% of respondents would like a server to take their order; and 60% of respondents felt it was important for a server to close out their order.

"These survey results were helpful in crafting a strategy for 2024, and I am pleased LPN has reached an agreement with Nick and Lynn Kuhn for 2024," Shaffer said. "In this new agreement, they have agreed to add a table service option in addition to the QR code ordering. Look for this to start around May 1 when they can hire additional staff. Also, peak season hours will be expanded to include lunch on Friday, Saturday and Sunday."

Shaffer encouraged continued support

for The Links Lounge during the off season. Winter hours are Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 4-10 p.m.

Regarding the golf portion of the LPN, Shaffer said everyone who was a season passholder at Panorama West or Lake Panorama National in 2023 has received 2024 passholder forms in the mail. Those who are interested in season passes at either course for the first time can find details on the LPN website at lakepanoramational.com by clicking on the "season golf passes" link.

Shaffer said both the LPN events center and the Panorama West clubhouse are booking events for 2024. To inquire about these event spaces, complete the "contact us" form on the LPN website. The link for this is on the top right of the homepage.

Shaffer closed his report by encouraging anyone not receiving the LPN Resort Weekly email to get signed up. This newsletter typically is sent each Monday and highlights upcoming LPN events and other information. To sign up, go to the LPN website, scroll down to the "Get the Latest News" section, and enter an email address.

Rutledge opened his report by talking about the Lake Panorama Rural Improvement Zone (RIZ). He said the rip rap along the south shore was funded by RIZ, at a

cost of about \$850,000. Legal agreements are in place between RIZ and LPA that the area will be maintained as a green space and not a developed area.

"LPA allows the Panorama Community Schools to use the south shore trails for a portion of their cross country trail," Rutledge said. "The start, finish, bathrooms, concessions and parking are all located at the school, so the impact on LPA is minimal. The disc golf course is ready for use, with signage to be added in the spring. The trails are great for recreational walking and hiking. Thanks to Friends of Lake Panorama for their efforts and leadership on this new recreational amenity."

Expansion of the old CIPCO sediment basin, which has been renamed the 180th Trail Basin, continues. The project is expected to exceed \$4 million in total cost once completed. This basin will be used for dredging spoils once the current basin is full.

RIZ operated a pilot program for cover crop incentives in 2022 and expanded the program with local producers in the lake's watershed this fall.

"This addresses erosion vulnerability and nutrient runoff during the period between fall harvest and spring planting and emergence," Rutledge said. "We currently have 1,320 acres enrolled, which

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includes 11 different producers and land-owners.”

The 2023-24 RIZ fiscal year began July 1. Projected tax increment financing (TIF) revenues for this fiscal year are \$3 million.

“Valuations for 2023, which will be taxable in 2024-25, were released late yesterday. An initial review indicates RIZ revenues will continue to grow, with 2024-25 TIF collections exceeding \$3.5 million,” Rutledge said. “It is difficult to forecast this number precisely as the 2024-25 budget year represents uncharted territory due to a property tax overhaul by the Iowa Legislature.”

Rutledge said RIZ issued \$9.7 million of debt certificates this fall.

“This sounds like a tremendous amount of money, but in the context of RIZ, it is not,” he said. “We will use these funds to replace the dredge and booster pump and continue advancing on our plans for sediment storage and preventative water quality endeavors.”

Legislative issues remain a top priority for LPA, Rutledge said.

“Property tax reform was one of the hot issues for 2023, and there are talks about the legislature revisiting that with another round of property tax reforms. TIF reform would impact RIZ. We’ve already been involved with key legislators and Gov. Reynolds’ office to set a foundation for future discussions and input to protect RIZ.”

In addition to RIZ, Rutledge said LPA is watching other topics at the legislature.

“These efforts ebb and flow; there are years in which I’m required to visit the Capitol only a couple of times, while other years demand multiple visits and daily monitoring of legislation and amendments,” he said. “2024 will be a busy year for me at the legislature.”

Turning to LPA business, Rutledge said no changes were made to the 2023 buoy map for 2024.

“There were some requests for expansion of no wake zones into the coves, but the water safety committee and LPA board opted to leave the map unchanged,” he said. “The committee is concerned creating more no wake areas would push boating traffic into a narrower and smaller footprint, creating safety issues.”

Rutledge also noted speed and wake are not necessarily the same thing.

“Some 10 mph areas are hot topics for member concerns, as they see a boat putting out a wake and want LPA to cite this boater. Often, the boater is traveling at 8 or 9 miles per hour and complying with the speed limit,” he said.

The LPA deer hunting program runs

into January, but Rutledge said the majority of the harvest had been realized, with 95 antlerless deer harvested by Dec. 15. He said this is down from previous years and follows a local trend for reduced deer population.

Rutledge said the 2024 LPA budget has been approved by the LPA board and includes a 5% dues increase. Camping fees increased for the coming year, but there was no change to boat stickers and no change to water rates at this time.

There is one large capital project planned for 2024.

“This is fixing a scour that exists in front of the dam,” Rutledge said. “It likely developed over time, and we need to install large rip rap to ensure continued flow does not undermine the footings of the dam itself. This is not a short-term emergency, but rather a long-term proactive investment.”

Rutledge said LPA has ample salt on-hand for winter snow removal.

“Please remember this process does require us to ‘wing back’ snow from the road edge, which can shave some turf off the edge of the roadway,” he said. “This occurs because turf grows annually in height, and the road stays the same. Thus, periodic shaving occurs.”

Rutledge issued a reminder to follow the rules at the brush dumps.

“Most people follow the rules, but there are a handful who don’t and risk ruining this for the entire membership,” he said. “If you hire a contractor, please emphasize they need to follow the rules, as they are provided access to the facilities on your behalf.”

Phil Watson Jr. has purchased Coulter’s Panorama Marine. This was a voluntary sale that Lyn Coulter and Watson negotiated privately. LPA’s role was to consent to the new marina tenant. On Sept. 26, the LPA board of directors approved a 2024-2028 lease between LPA and Watson for operation of the LPA-owned marina.

Boat lines carried by Coulter’s will continue to be carried by Watson, and Coulter’s staff have the opportunity to work for Watson’s organization. Watson is developing a boat sales, service and storage facility on Highway 4 and is experiencing some construction delays. Rutledge said he has assured LPA he is moving forward, although he will likely occupy the existing sales and service building for a few months to accommodate delayed completion of his facilities.

Rutledge closed by sharing the date of the 2024 LPA annual meeting, which is Saturday, May 11, 10 a.m. at the LPN conference center. He said to watch the LPA Prompt for dates of 2024 Managers’ Coffees. ■



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LOCAL FILM REVIEWS

WONKA. PURPLE. FERRARI. DUCKS. MORE.

And a great film directed by George Clooney and an awful one starring Eddie Murphy.

BY MICHAEL C. WOODY
Lake Panorama Times

Grab another cup of coffee and take a nice long look at the lake, because we have some movies to talk about. Hang on tight. This is a lot to take in, but it will give you an idea of how my holidays were spent.

“SALTBURN”
(in a limited theatrical release and streaming)

This movie was apparently made to deliberately irritate at least half of its audience every night. It stars Barry Keoghan, who was Oscar-nominated for his performance in “The Banshees of Inisherin” last year, and it was written and directed by Emerald Fennell, who challenged us with



“Saltburn”

“Promising Young Woman” a few years ago. This is a polarizing film that will test many audience members. It is not for the weak of heart. **Grade: B/B+**

“CANDY CANE LANE”
(streaming on Amazon Prime)

Eddie Murphy continues to embarrass himself in comedies that don’t possess a single funny idea or line of dialogue. This movie will save you money because it will likely cause you to cancel Amazon Prime Video. The word abysmal comes to mind. This man simply needs to stop making



“Candy Cane Lane”

movies. **Grade: D**

“EILEEN”
(coming to streaming soon)

Like the best of the old 1950s “tough guy fiction” noir films, “Eileen” is an interesting look at a young woman living a miserable existence working at the prison in a small town. Mom is dead, and dad is a former cop, now just a drunk who is literally drinking himself to death. Eileen’s life changes dramatically when a new woman is hired at the prison. To tell you more might spoil your fun. I liked the movie, but



“Eileen”

it is challenging at times. **Grade: A-**

“WONKA”
(in theaters and doing well)

Timothee Chalamet inherits Roald Dahl’s Willy Wonka mantle from Gene Wilder and Johnny Depp, and he does it quite well. Maybe better. It is a different Wonka than the previous over-the-top films, but I liked this one better. Sweet, charming and, of course, twisted, “Wonka” is one of the year’s pleasant surprises. **Grade: A**

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LAKE PANORAMA TIMES

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"Wonka"



"The Boys in the Boat"



"Migration"



"Anyone But You"

"THE BOYS IN THE BOAT" (in theaters)

George Clooney directs this adaptation of the successful book about a small rowing team that ends up competing in the Olympics. I'm leaving out a lot of the story so you can experience it like we did. It is a wonderful movie about a piece of history I was unfamiliar with, and the film was exhilarating and very, very well done. **Grade: A**

"MIGRATION" (in theaters)

From the animation folks who bring us those hilarious Minions movies, "Migration" is a story about a Mallard duck family trying to migrate to Jamaica. To say that it is a crazy trip would be an understatement.

I found "Migration" both fun and funny, but the kids in the packed theater were absolutely loving it. **Grade: B+**

"ANYONE BUT YOU" (in theaters)

When a couple who meet in a cute way but end up splitting over a misunderstanding end up at a destination wedding together, funny stuff happens. It's not the best movie I saw this holiday season, but it does have some laugh-out-loud raunchiness with the premise. It is a popcorn movie, for sure. **Grade: B**

"FERRARI" (in theaters)

Director Michael Mann delivers another excellent film, this time about legendary

auto designer Enzo Ferrari. My two Ford Windstar mini-vans would tell you I'm not a car guy, but this study of a man in crisis (on several levels) is so well done — and the ending so traumatic — I was completely on board. Adam Driver is excellent as Ferrari, and Penelope Cruz is also top-notch as his estranged wife. **Grade: A-**

"THE COLOR PURPLE" (in theaters)

This film version of the Broadway hit musical is based on the 1985 film of the same name with Whoopi Goldberg and Oprah Winfrey. This one left me feeling flat. The subject matter, at times, is disturbing, but I admit that I was hooked by the end, which redeemed most of the rest of it. **Grade: B-**

I hope everyone had a great holiday season, and though we have not seen much snow, I think we've got plenty of winter left to come. Best wishes for a happy and healthy new year. Now, 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 Lake Panorama.





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DONATIONS SOUGHT TO REPLACE TREES ALONG LAKE PANORAMA'S WEST ENTRANCE

At least a dozen trees along the west entrance have been removed with both storm damage and disease as culprits.

BY SUSAN THOMPSON

Lake Panorama Times

In 2012, the Lake Panorama Association conducted a fundraising campaign to plant trees along Panorama Road at the main west entrance to the lake. In the early days of the lake development, pine trees lined both sides of the road north of where a guard shack was originally.

As those trees reached the end of their life span, they were removed, but no replacements were planted. LPA members provided the impetus for the fundraising campaign, and a number of trees were planted to replace those that were lost.

Ten years later, the same situation exists. At least a dozen trees along the west entrance have been removed with both storm damage and disease as culprits. The trees planted in 2012 helped cushion the blow of these more recent losses, yet gaps remain where trees once stood.

Some members have contacted the LPA

to ask if there are plans to replace trees along this iconic entrance to Lake Panorama. In 2012, Friends of Lake Panorama, a 501(c)3 nonprofit charity, did not exist. Now LPA is working with Friends on a fundraising campaign that will give donors who itemize at tax time the opportunity to deduct their donations.

The LPA has partnered with Isom Tree Farm on a tree planting plan. It calls for 11 new trees to be planted along Panorama Road north of the guard shack. The plan also includes the addition of two trees near the sports court at Sunset Beach.

Five sugar maple trees would be planted with a tree spade with four along Panorama Road and one at Sunset Beach. Larry and Heather Isom, who live on Burchfield Cove and own Isom Tree Farm, plan to donate one sugar maple.

The plan also includes eight nursery trees — two red maples, three London planetrees and three autumn blaze maples. One autumn blaze maple would be planted at Sunset Beach, with the other seven along Panorama Road.

The average cost per tree is \$400. Those interested in funding a single tree would make a \$400 donation. Larger and smaller donations also are welcome. Once fundraising is complete, all donors will be recognized in a story in the LPA Prompt and the Lake Panorama Times. Donors of \$500 or more can make their donation in honor or memory of someone and will be recognized on the Friends of Lake Panorama website.

The total cost of this tree-planting project is \$4,500. It is hoped this goal can be reached by the end of March so trees can be planted as soon as spring conditions allow. The LPA will take care of watering, deer protection and fertilization.

Donations to Friends are tax-deductible; all donors receive a letter of thanks to use during tax preparation. Donations can be made by check payable to Friends of Lake Panorama and mailed to Friends, P.O. Box 488, Panora, IA, 50216. Donations also can be made through Venmo @Panorama-Friends, or by credit card at [friendsoflakepanorama.org](https://www.friendsoflakepanorama.org). ■



Larry Isom planted two sugar maple trees at the Lake Panorama dog park in November 2021. He and his wife, Heather, who own Isom Tree Farm, donated those trees and installation. Now money is being raised to plant 13 trees, with 11 along Panorama Road near Lake Panorama's main west entrance and two at Sunset Beach. Five of the trees planned are sugar maples, which Isom will plant using this tree spade.



This photo shows the size of the nursery trees available from Isom Tree Farm. A fundraising effort to plant 13 new trees on the west side of the lake includes plans for eight nursery trees — two red maples, three London planetrees and three autumn blaze maples.

PHOTOS BY SUSAN THOMPSON | LAKE PANORAMA TIMES



LPA and Friends of Lake Panorama have partnered to raise money for some trees to be planted on the west side of the lake. Sugar maples from the Isom Tree Farm will be transplanted from here with a tree spade to locations along Panorama Road near the guard shack and Sunset Beach.

FRIENDS OF LAKE PANORAMA CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY

The nonprofit's mission is to improve recreational amenities at Lake Panorama.

BY SUSAN THOMPSON

Lake Panorama Times

Throughout 2024, Friends of Lake Panorama will be celebrating its 10th anniversary. Articles of Incorporation were filed with the Iowa Secretary of State's office Nov. 1, 2013. The first meeting of the Friends of Lake Panorama board of directors was Dec. 3, 2013.

On Jan. 17, 2013, an application for 501(c)(3) nonprofit designation was submitted to the IRS. A letter from the IRS dated July 2, 2014, stated the Friends of Lake Panorama is exempt from federal income tax, and contributions to the public charity are deductible under federal law.

The nonprofit's mission is to improve recreational amenities at Lake Panorama. The charity is governed by a volunteer, seven-member board of directors, which held its 2024 organizational meeting Nov. 29.

At the meeting, two board members — Jody Muench and Jim Tibbles — were re-appointed to new three-year terms. Other board members are Galen Johnson, John Muenzenberger, Jan Reinicke, Jackie Wellik and Bill Winkleblack.

In officer elections, Reinicke was elected president, Tibbles vice president, and Muenzenberger secretary-treasurer. Susan Thompson is the non-profit's executive director.

With the help of many donors and the Lake Panorama Association, Friends has had a busy 10 years. Sunset Beach playground opened in July 2016. Boulder Beach sports courts opened in June 2018.

Many other successful projects followed and include Shady and Boulder beaches playground improvements, Panorama West rain garden, dog park, Sunset Beach sports court, Panorama West Nature Trail, LPN Shade sails, and 20 new benches at beaches

and golf courses.

In August 2017, Friends received a \$473,700 estate gift from Jim and Joyce McLuen to be used at the Panorama West Golf Club. That estate gift turned an already good golf course into something truly special.

The current priority project is a package of low-impact recreational amenities on Lake Panorama's south shore. The Lake Panorama trails system, with a cross country trail for the Panorama Community Schools incorporated into it, is marked and open.

Also complete are a fenced driveway to a parking lot that provides walk-through access to the recreation area, and a small shelter near the parking lot. The disc golf course is open for play, with signage to be added in the spring. Also in the spring, a picnic table will be added to the shelter, informational signs will be installed, and benches and bluebird houses will be placed throughout the recreational area.

More than \$7,500 was donated to Friends of Lake Panorama in the final two months of 2023. Currently, donors giving to Friends can designate their gift to the Lake Panorama south shore recreation area, a tree planting project on the lake's west side (see related story), and the Friends general fund.

Donations can be made by check payable to Friends of Lake Panorama, and mailed to Friends of Lake Panorama, P.O. Box 488, Panorama, IA 50216. Direct donations can be sent via Venmo @Panorama-Friends. Donations also can be made by credit card on the Friends website at friendsoflakepanorama.org.

Donations of securities (stocks, mutual funds, etc.) are welcome, as are direct IRA qualified charitable distributions.

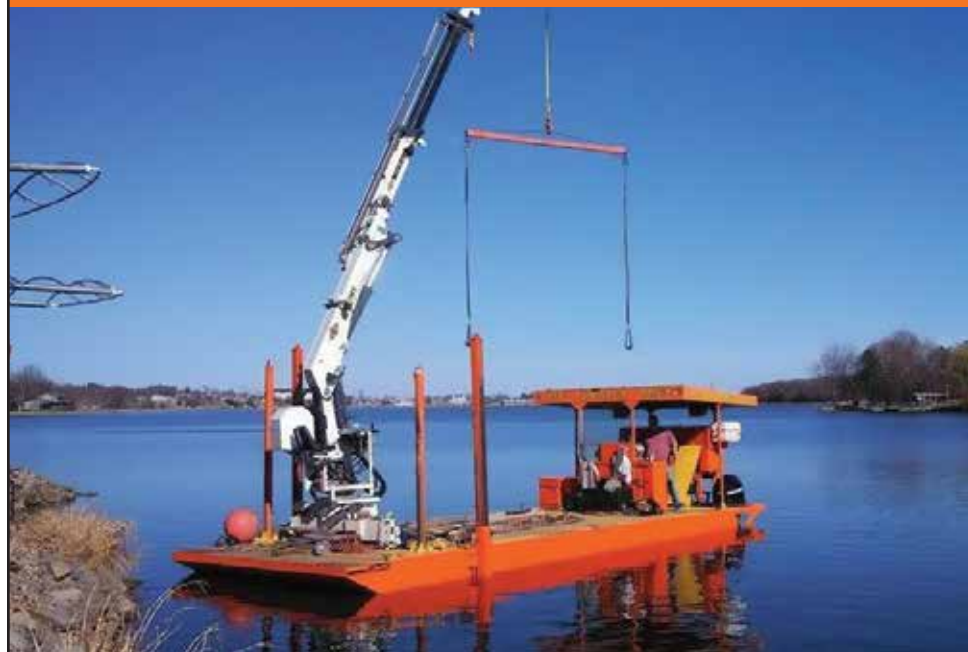
Details on past, present and future projects can be found on the Friends website. Friends also has a Facebook page. Those interested in keeping up-to-date about Friends activities are asked to "like" and "share" the Friends page. Those with questions or comments about Friends of Lake Panorama can send an email to staff@friendsoflakepanorama.org. ■

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2024 REMINDERS FROM LAKE PANORAMA ASSOCIATION

Included with the annual 2024 dues mailings is information for LPA members to review as the new year gets underway. Some key items are summarized here.

Dues and assessments are due May 1, 2024. To sign up for automated electronic funds transfer (EFT) payments, contact the LPA office at 641-755-2301 or dkrambeer@lakepanorama.org. The EFT form is available on the LPA website under the Forms folder. Complete, sign and return this form to the office with a copy of a voided check.

Members who used amenities in 2023 received amenity statements for 2024 with their dues notices. Inform the office if there are amenity changes for 2024. All dues and assessments must be paid prior to receiving boat or camping stickers.

LPA's website has lots of useful information. Members who have never signed up should go to lakepanorama.org and click on "Resident Sign Up." Request a login and LPA staff will grant access. The website has up-to-date documents and details for building permits, rental forms, boating, and much more. It also is used to communicate with the membership through the weekly LPA Prompt and special announcements. The official LPA website is lakepanorama.org. The official LPN website is lakepanoramational.com.

In 2021, LPA created a water safety video to help members review and understand rules while operating on the lake. The link to this video is on the public

side of the LPA website under the Helpful Links tab. It also is available on YouTube by searching "LPA Water Safety Video."

Current DNR registration copies and invasive species forms must be on file prior to boat sticker issuance. If a member doesn't have any change in vessels from 2023 and all information on file is current, no new invasive form is necessary. RESIDENT boats will retain the previously issued green sticker. NON-RESIDENT boats will be issued a new red 2024 sticker.

All owners of non-resident boats must contact LPA Security for inspection prior to launching their boat in 2024. Refer to the LPA website for more information. Any changes to vessels registered and new DNR registrations need to be emailed to boat@lakepanorama.org.

Maximum length for non-pontoon type boats is 24 feet, including swim platforms. Stern drive or inboard engine displacement may not exceed 6.2 liters. Outboard motors may not exceed 300 hp. Maximum length for pontoons is 27 feet, including swim platforms. Outboard motors and jet powered motors may not exceed 200 hp. Stern drive motors may not exceed 299 hp. For personal water craft (PWC), no 2-cycle PWC shall exceed 130 hp, and no 4-cycle PWC shall exceed 185 hp.

All docks must be registered with Iowa DNR, including floating docks. New members should update dock permit information with the Iowa DNR. The dock

sign application form is on the LPA website.

Phil Watson Jr., owner of Panorama Marine, is LPA's new marina tenant. Watson purchased Coulter's Marina from Lyn Coulter in 2023. Panorama Marine has the same phone number as Coulter's did. Members with questions can call 641-755-2920.

Building permits and land disturbing permits are required for any project. Contact the LPA office prior to a building project, new driveway, or projects including land disturbance. Planning ahead will save costly corrections later. Owners, not contractors, must sign all permit applications. Members requesting variances must pay a fee and make the request by 4:30 p.m. the first Monday of the month.

Members need to be familiar with LPA's rules and regulations. These can be found on the public or private side of the LPA website under the Documents tab (public side) or Governing Documents folder (private side).

To reserve a beach shelter, fill out the beach reservation form that can be found online or picked up at the office. All beaches have water, electricity and restrooms available May 1 to Sept. 30. To reserve the Panorama West Clubhouse community room, call 641-755-2250.

Two yard waste sites are open Wednesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. The sites are closed Monday and Tuesday for maintenance. Natural materials less

than 12 inches in diameter are accepted. Construction debris, root balls, stumps, plastic leaf bags and other materials that do not grow on a member's lot are prohibited.

Campgrounds are open March 1 to Oct. 31. Water is available May 1 through Sept. 30. Spots are only available to members or guests of members who currently have a camping spot. There is a waitlist; call the LPA office to check availability.

The LPA office needs current member information, which includes mailing address, phone numbers and emails. LPA does not use the website to update member information; members need to call or email LPA with any changes. Those who are unsure if LPA has up-to-date information should send an email to lpa@lakepanorama.org.

LPA board meetings for 2024 will begin in March. Normally, meetings are the fourth Tuesday of the month. Open forum is at 5 p.m. on meeting nights. Board agendas are linked to the weekly LPA Prompt prior to each scheduled meeting.

The LPA Security department cooperates with local law enforcement, regularly patrols the entire lake and enforces LPA rules, traffic and other regulations. Security responds 24/7. Call Security at 641-757-9035 to report issues. Call 911 or 641-747-2214 for fire or ambulance.

LPA office hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact the office by calling 641-755-2301 or emailing lpa@lakepanorama.org. ■

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DETAILERS EYE MOVES TO LARGER FACILITY

Shane Gliem's business started with mobile detailing in 2015 and is now located at 108 S.E. Sixth St. in Panama.

BY RICH WICKS
Lake Panorama Times

Shane Gliem's business in Panama is shining, which many boat owners on Lake Panama will attest to. Detailers Eye is the name of his vehicle cleaning service, and he started out in his parents' driveway, then later worked in his garage. With his recent purchase of the former Panama Service Center building, Gliem now has enough room to expand his services. The building is located at 108 S.E. Sixth St. in Panama, across from Guthrie County State Bank.

"When I originally started was 2015," Gliem explained. "And then when I bought that house, it became what it is now. It grew slowly, and then I was able to purchase this building. Now that I have this location, I can hopefully start growing it a little bit quicker, with employees and stuff."

Over the years since he first started de-

tailing vehicles, Gliem has gradually been buying equipment that would be of use once he obtained a large shop. Now those items are ready to be put to use. Detailing vehicles means vacuuming and wiping down the interior and washing the exterior, but there's much more to it than that.

"It's extracting the carpets, getting all the dirt out, cleaning under the seats, between the seats," Gliem said. "Some customers might not want all the bells and whistles; some do. So I have different packages to fit as many customers as I can."

Detailers Eye does detailing differently than many of the similar businesses he's seen in urban areas.

"The way they do it is with very harsh chemicals, and very quick," he said. "The goal here is to clean stuff the best you can while maintaining the finish. Everything that's manufactured on a vehicle has protective layers or coating. Even your carpet has protection on it."

Gliem's attention to detail is evident when he talks about washing cars.

"I use different processes to get stuff that is embedded," he said. "It's stuff that you maybe can't see, but you can feel it with your hand. The more stuff that's in the paint and on the paint, the duller it looks. The dust slowly will get into the paint and dull it down over time."

Since every customer has a different preference about how much cleaning is to be done, Gliem's business model is to cater to exactly what the customer wants.

"Most interiors take four to six hours," he said. "Most whole vehicles take six to eight. But it depends on how far the customer wants me to take it."

Another difference between Detailers Eye and other detailers, according to Gliem, is that he also works on boats.

"A lot of people don't realize I do cars and boats," he said. "Originally, when I started, I was mobile, so all I did was cars.



Shane Gliem makes another car sparkle.

And then, as more and more people asked me to do boats, I added that on. Occasionally, I get a tractor or something, but the main focus is cars and boats."

The busiest seasons for Gliem are spring and fall, as boaters are getting their boats ready for the boating season or preparing them for the winter. But the demand for detailing cars runs steady throughout the year. As word of mouth has spread that he details boats, that portion of his clientele has grown.

"This year, the No. 1 service was a full boat detail," he said. "This was the first year that the boats surpassed cars, just by a little bit. But it's about 50/50."

Although some customers only come in once in a blue moon, others are regulars.

"It's a pretty good split," he said. "Probably about 80% of the boats I do are returning customers. With cars, I do have

maintenance customers, monthly or bi-monthly or whatever they want."

Asked about unusual finds during his cleaning processes, Gliem said, in cars, he occasionally discovers documents or money that the owner is glad to have back. With boats, he encounters a different type of surprise.

"The craziest stuff on boats is animals," he said. "Tons of mice — and raccoons, every once in a while."

Gliem's plan for the future of his business is to add employees and services to meet the needs of the community.

"The goal right now is to start hiring next spring, a little bit before boat season, get them trained," he said. "Maybe one or two people, and see how that goes. I'll probably end up selling some cars here, too, but I want to see how all of this goes first. I don't want to spread everything too



No crumbs remain after a good detailing at Detailers Eye.



The sign for the new location of Detailers Eye was recently installed.

thin.”

Gliem said his immediate plan is to offer Paint Protection Film, or PPF.

“I couldn’t do it at my prior location because the film is clear, and it has to be really clean, and doing it in a really small garage wasn’t ideal,” he said. “But now that I have more space, the goal is to try to get that going. That’s my first big push,

to try to grow that.”

When asked about a favorite moment in his work, Gliem said, “I’ve had a lot of older people who have had their car for a while. They’re used to just the quick vacuum and wipe down, and they can’t clean it themselves. The joy when they see it. A lot of them maybe didn’t realize just how far I can take it.” ■



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EDUCATION

PANORAMA SCHOOL BOARD WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

**Agrees to start the
process of designing
a new district website
starting in July 2024.**

BY RICH WICKS
Lake Panorama Times

The Panorama School Board met on Dec. 11 in regular session. Outgoing board members Cale Kastner and Lee White were recognized for their service to the district, and recently elected board members — Heidi Clark, Clint Deardorff, Deb Westergaard, and Damon Crandall — were sworn in. Deb Westergaard was selected as the board president and Heidi Clark as vice president.

The board agreed to start the process

of designing a new district website in July 2024.

"We are trying to make communication a little more efficient and streamlined for all parents," Superintendent Kasey Huebner said. "A Panorama mobile app will also be refreshed during this process."

The board also approved using the company Monkey This to be the content manager to help tell the story of what is happening in the classroom.

In the "Good News" portion of the meeting, it was mentioned that girls wrestling is seeing success in the initial season as an independent school after last year's co-op. The program was able to get new uniforms that meet the new requirements from the IGHSAU. There has been more participation, as well as interest, in younger girls participating in wrestling now that they have seen the opportunity opened for them in the district. ■

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CINDY STRAHAN

1954-2023

Our greatly beloved Cindy Strahan went home to her Savior the Lord Jesus Christ on Friday, Dec. 1, 2023.

Cindy and Reid Strahan had their first home on Lake Panorama in Horseshoe Cove from 1999 through 2008. They began construction on their second lake home in 2015 at 5147 Panorama Drive. This home has been the place of many family gatherings and celebrations, including the wedding of their granddaughter, Sabrina DeGroote, and Grant Thompson in May of 2021. Reid and Cindy enjoyed time at their lake home nearly every week Monday through Wednesday year round until Cindy was unable to come any longer due to her battle with advanced colon cancer in the late summer of 2023.

Cindy received Christ at an early age and trusted Him alone for forgiveness of her sins and the hope of Eternal Life. She was zealously devoted to the interests of Christ in her life and in the lives of everyone around her. Someone asked her once, "What can I do to encourage you?" She said, "Start obeying God and start being faithful to church!" She was on her way to the Heavenly City, and she wanted to take everyone else with her.

She taught, she exhorted, she shared quotes and she loved people deeply and cared about their souls. She led a woman's Bible study for decades. She stood rock solid by her husband, Reid, through the joy and struggles of

pastoring a church.

She loved the Bible, listening to sermons and great quotes about living for God. She loved the gifts of the Spirit and exercised a remarkable spiritual gift of praying in the Spirit, interpreting and speaking powerful, encouraging messages to those she prayed for.

Cindy had a previous battle with cancer in 1983-84 discovered during her pregnancy with her and Reid's third child, Luke. Abortion was recommended by her doctor, but she chose to keep her baby and take on any additional risks to her life in so doing. Luke was born safely and without predicted deformity from her chemotherapy. After six months of chemotherapy in the University of Iowa Hospitals in Iowa City, her cancer had spread through her body, and they could do no more for her. She was on pain medications and given two weeks to live. The Lord promised her healing in a vision, and shortly thereafter, Dr. Cross and Dr. Shreck from Iowa Methodist knocked at the door of her home and asked her to try one more round of a different chemotherapy. She went to the hospital that day, had an emergency colostomy, and Dr. Shreck began the new treatment. Her cancer quickly disappeared, and within a few months, she was cancer free, her colostomy was reversed, and she went on to live nearly 40 years full of life.

Cindy delighted in being a grandmother. Every Thursday for years, her home was filled with her grandchildren, laughing, playing, reading, cooking and doing crafts. Although the work and cleanup was substantial, it was the highlight of her week.

Cindy helped start Strahan Construction with her husband, Reid, in the late 1980s. She was a gifted salesperson and home designer. She knew how to create an awesome floor plan, front elevation, and how to decorate a home. Due to her ability to design home fronts with street appeal, the early sales slogan "Who Built That?" worked for the company.

To her husband, Reid, Cindy was a faithful loving wife of 47 years. She was his best friend, lover, and fellow soldier in the battles of life. She stood behind

him, encouraged him, loved him, and made life fun through it all. They had a date day every Tuesday and enjoyed lunch together at the Cafe in Ames for years. They had pizza every Friday night and watched a TCM movie. Pastries and coffee on Saturday morning finished up the week. Reid has many friends but says he enjoyed being with her most of all.

She knew how to fight the good fight of faith and how to press on when life got painful. Obedience to God, doing the right thing no matter the cost (and regardless of her feelings) was her way of life. And it served her well. She knew the kind of dying to self for Jesus' sake that leads to a flourishing soul and an abundant life.

Cynthia (Cindy) Lorraine Ellgren was born March 18, 1954, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The family moved to Humboldt, where Cindy was raised with two brothers, Scott and Todd. She graduated from Iowa State University in

1976. Reid Strahan asked her to marry him on their first date, and she said, "Oh, Reid, I've always loved you! Yes!" Reid and Cindy were married June 12, 1976. They had three children, Justin, Alissa and Luke. Cindy stayed home with them, loved them and home-schooled them.

Cindy is survived by her husband, Reid. Her brother, Todd Ellgren, and his wife, Amy. Her son, Justin, and his wife, Melissa, and grandchildren, William, Weston, Sam, Everett, Lucy, Harrison, Ocean and Jack. Her daughter, Alissa DeGroote, and her husband, Josh, and grandchildren, Sabrina Thompson and her husband, Grant, and other grandchildren, Olivia, Isabella, Eden, Silas and Grayson. Her son, Luke, and his wife, Elizabeth, and grandchildren Cedric, Christian, Peter, Gwendolyn and Johnny. Her sister-in-law, Brenda Ellgren. She was preceded in death by her parents, Kenneth and Lorraine Ellgren, and by her brother, Scott. ■

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2 NEW MEMBERS ON LPN BOARD

Paula Hansen and Galen Redshaw appointed.

BY SUSAN THOMPSON

Lake Panorama Times

While the Lake Panorama Association has owned the LPN golf course since 1977, it only has owned the LPN conference center since 2005. At the time the conference center was purchased, the LPA board established the legal corporate entity known as LPN, LLC to manage this wholly owned subsidiary.

As a 501(c)4 nonprofit organization, LPA is required to pay taxes only on gains from land sales. Revenues from dues and assessments are not taxable. Keeping the LPA and LPN, LLC operations separate is necessary to protect the nonprofit status of the LPA.

To keep this separation, the LPA board of directors created and appointed the LPN board of managers, which held its first meeting in October 2015. The LPA

board provides oversight of the LPN, LLC board. The LPN, LLC board oversees LPN policies and direction.

At the LPA board's Dec. 12 meeting, two new people were appointed and one reappointed to the LPN board of managers. Board terms are three years, and members can serve two consecutive terms.

Sue Merryman had served her two-term limit, and Paula Hansen was appointed to fill that position. Kathy DeLucca has served one term and was reappointed to a second three-year term.

John Coghlan, who was appointed to the board in August 2018, stepped down from the board with one year remaining on his term. Galen Redshaw was appointed to fill the final year of Coghlan's term.

Others on the seven-member board are Greg Steffen, Barry Monaghan, Shanell Wagler and Chris Duree. Wagler currently serves as president, with Monaghan as vice president and DeLucca as secretary/treasurer. Officer appointments for the coming year will take place at the board's March meeting. ■

RIZ BOARD ELECTION RESULTS

Trustees Doug Hemphill and JoAnn Johnson are both re-elected.

The Lake Panorama Rural Improvement Zone (RIZ) board of trustees election was held Tuesday, Dec. 5 with 65 total ballots cast. Trustees Doug Hemphill and JoAnn Johnson were both re-elected to three-year terms. Other trustees are Bill Dahl, Larry Petersen and Corey Welberg.

The trustees are responsible for administering the RIZ, which includes the platted portions of the Lake Panorama development. The Lake Panorama RIZ is a local government entity designed to

manage erosion control and water quality at Lake Panorama and within its watershed.

The RIZ was formed in 1997 by the initiative of the LPA through legislation in Des Moines. The tax increment financing district allows tax growth dollars to stay within the Lake Panorama development for water quality purposes.

The board of trustees oversees the annual budget and associated expenditures. Estimated revenue for the 2023-2024 fiscal year is nearly \$3 million. These funds are used exclusively to fund improvements allowed under IA Code 357.H, which includes dredging operations, erosion control practices and water quality improvements. For more information, visit www.lakepanoramariz.org. ■

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COMMUNITY

10 SQUARED WOMEN'S GROUP GIVES \$14,800 TO TIMBER CREEK CHARITIES



SPECIAL TO LAKE PANORAMA TIMES
Cindy McCarty and Carrie O'Brien accept the 10 Squared Women's donation.

Special to Lake Panorama Times

The 10 Squared Women of Guthrie County held their final meeting of 2023 on Tuesday, Nov. 28 at Twin Vines Winery in Panora. Fifty-eight women attended in person and 17 members attended via Zoom. The group added four new members.

Three organizations made presentations for consideration. Kathy Miller and Julie Tibbles presented for Panora P.E.T.S, alongside volunteer Michelle Doran. Cindy McCarty presented for Timber Creek Charities, alongside board member Carrie O'Brien. Kristen Crouthamel presented on behalf of Dani Fink for the Guthrie County Sheriff K9 Fund. The group announced a lump sum \$14,800 donation to Timber Creek Charities. Additional donations and employer matches were collected from the group members after the

photo showing \$13,600 was taken. The \$14,800 amount is the largest donation to date for the 10 Squared Women's group and consists of member donations and employer matches.

Timber Creek Therapies was created in 2001 to help individuals using innovative tools not seen in many other outpatient centers. At the same time, Timber Creek Charities was created to help individuals receive therapies when they lacked adequate insurance coverage and/or financial resources to do so on their own. Timber Creek Charities is a 501c3 non-profit entity and is governed by a board of directors.

The next meeting is Feb. 27 at St. Mary's Catholic Church Parish Hall in Guthrie Center. To learn how to get involved, visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/10squaredwomensgc, or email them at 10squaredgc@gmail.com. ■

COMMUNITY



SPECIAL TO THE TIMES VEDETTE
Emily Albers, Mya Albers, Taylor Gross, Zakira Lowe, Pam Pierce, Page Arganbright, Ryan Albers, Heidi Huitt, and Stella Albers welcome the donation to Little Panther Day Care and Preschool.

TEN SQUARED PLUS MEN DONATES \$20,200 TO LITTLE PANTHER DAY CARE

Special to Lake Panorama Times

Ten Squared Plus Men of Guthrie County presented their last check of 2023. Ryan Albers presented for the Little Panther Day Care and Preschool during their November meeting, and they were declared the winner of the check for \$20,200, the largest single donation to date.

Little Panther, which serves more than

70 young people, will use the funds to replace two aging furnace and air conditioning units. Since the initial gift of \$11,100 to the elementary schools for the backpack programs in 2016, the philanthropic group has given \$357,350 to Guthrie County entities without a dime of expense. Ten Squared Plus Men will meet next in April of 2024. For information on how to be part of the group, email B.monaghan@gcsbank.com. ■



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HOBBIES

CARVING OUT TIME FOR FELLOWSHIP

Raccoon River Valley Carving Club meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays 9-11:30 a.m. in the Conference Center at Lake Panorama.

BY RICH WICKS
Lake Panorama Times

A recent meeting of the Raccoon River Valley Carving Club found four of the members present at their workshop in the Conference Center at Lake Panorama. The room included a variety of ma-



Terry Sprague and Dennis Shepherd concentrate on their creations.

chinery, tools and books related to wood carving, but the centerpiece was the four artists and friends sitting around the tables. Dennis Shepherd, Terry Sprague, Tom Schaefer and Dave Beidelman each worked on a current carving project as they socialized. Members not present were Ted Reeve, Rich Schumacher, Jim Sievers, Mike Halupnick, Tom Loeck, Jerry Armstrong and Frank Teale.

The group meets regularly on Tuesdays and Thursdays 9-11:30 a.m. and has been doing so for several years.

“Tom Jeschke gets the accolades for the group,” Shepherd said. “He started teaching classes in the community a long time ago, and he had a lot of students. This group hasn’t been here all that long, as far as meeting in this location.”

Dr. Jeschke passed away in March of 2023, and the four carvers agreed that he was a skilled instructor who helped each of them improve techniques and know-how.

In describing how Jeschke first started carving, Sprague said, “The story was that (Jeschke’s wife) Conni saw something that she liked, and Tom wasn’t going to pay that price for it, so he just decided to make it himself.”

Each of the four shared examples of how carving is a learning process and that mistakes are inevitable, but valuable, moments.

“(Dr. Jeschke) was very patient as a



Tom Schaefer works on a small figure.

teacher, and meticulous,” Shepherd said. “He let you do your own thing, and he kept an eye on how you could improve.”

As the members talked, they showed what they are currently working on. Many of the projects are planned to be given to grandchildren or other family members. Figurines and Christmas tree ornaments are first carved, then sanded and painted. Most of the objects are carved from basswood, since it’s a soft and tight-knit wood with few cracks in the grain.

Although each member pointed to Jeschke as his instructor, the four have also become teachers to new carving enthusiasts. Shepherd told of introducing a

Girl Scout group to carving.

“I introduced them to carving a yam, as Tom did with us,” he said. “It’s a lot softer and easier to carve than wood.”

The group keeps safety in mind, since the power tools and even the hand tools can easily cut deeply into flesh. The four also said they welcome anyone interested in carving to come visit them for advice and help in getting started.

The four chatted and joked as they worked on their projects and gave each other suggestions when asked. It soon became apparent that the friendship is at least as important as the craft.

“The group is kind of about fellowship,” Shepherd said. ■

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WHAT'S IN YOUR GARAGE?

CORVETTE OWNER FOLLOWS IN FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS

Melissa Merical is the proud owner of a 2022 Chevrolet Corvette Stingray.

BY SUSAN THOMPSON
Lake Panorama Times

The phrase, "Like father, like son," is well known. But in the case of Melissa Merical, the phrase, "Like father, like daughter," fits. That's because her love of Corvettes reflects the love her father had for Corvettes.

"I always wanted a Corvette when I was younger," Merical says. "My father was a Corvette collector and had many Corvettes through the years. He was president of the Corvette Club of Iowa. He collected Cor-

vettes and Dodge Vipers. He would take me with him to club meetings, parties and racing events."

Now, Merical is the proud owner of a 2022 Chevrolet Corvette Stingray. The name of the car's color is as fancy as the car itself — Hypersonic Gray Metallic.

"When the new C8 Corvette was introduced, I knew I had to have one," Merical says. "I purchased it from Joel Hester at Karl's Chevrolet in Stuart. I ordered it in 2020, and because of COVID delays, it arrived in 2022."

When she was a child, Merical's parents, Jim and Sandy Strong, had a condo on Lake Panorama's main basin. Later, they had a home on the west side near Shady Beach, so she spent many years of weekends and summers at the lake. She grew up in homes in West Des Moines and Ankeny and graduated from Ankeny High School.



Melissa Merical in the driveway of her home on Donahey Drive with her 2022 Chevrolet Corvette Stingray.

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Merical has lived full-time at Lake Panorama since 2006 when she built a house on Donahey Drive. Merical's father passed away in 2008. Her mother has a log cabin across the street from her, and her sister lives in a home nearby. Her three children and five grandchildren all live within an hour's drive.

She is a self-taught artist and interior designer. Her website, Merical Creations, features a gallery of original paintings and large design projects. Beginning in 2012, Merical developed a portion of her family's farm west of Panora that now is Twin Vines. She planted the vineyard and designed the house, barn and other structures. For a time, she had her art studio in the house.

Merical's 2022 Chevrolet Corvette Stingray features removable hard tops, an engine in the back, and a "frunk" in the front, where the engine is found on most cars. Online specs show the C8 Corvette can go from zero to 60 in 2.9 seconds and has a top track speed of 194 miles per hour.

This isn't the first notable car Merical has owned.

"I had a 2019 Dodge Challenger R/T powered by a 5.7 Hemi," she says. "That was a fun car to drive. I owned it four years and sold it when I got the Corvette."

Merical's Corvette is in a cozy garage attached to her home. It is climate controlled with geothermal and in-floor heating with a



The vanity license plate on Merical's Corvette references the word Mistletoe, a nickname her father gave her when she was a little girl.

shiny epoxy floor that is kept as clean as the Corvette.

"My daughter Nicole says my Corvette is a 'garage queen' because I rarely drive it. She did convince me to drive her to the Jelly Roll concert in Omaha last year, and I even let her drive it back home," Merical says. "I have been to the Guthrie County Cars and Coffee meets a few times. I've also been to several parades and area car shows. I really enjoy being with other car enthusiasts and talking cars and car-related topics."

Does Merical plan any updates to her Corvette?

"I ordered the car fully optioned and have not made any additional improvements," she says. "I am planning to have Detailer's Eye in Panora give the car a ceramic coat in the spring, which will help protect the



Melissa Merical in the front seat of her 2022 Chevrolet Corvette Stingray.

paint.

"I don't consider myself a gearhead," Merical says. "But I do enjoy driving a car with more than average horsepower. My dad was a pilot and enjoyed flying in the air as well in his Corvettes. I share that same passion."

The vanity license plate on Merical's Corvette references the word Mistletoe.

"My dad used to call me that when I was a little girl," she says. "I thought this would be a good remembrance of him, because this is the kind of car he loved."

As they say, like father, like daughter. ■

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2023 RESTAURANT OPERATORS RETURN TO LPN RESORT FOR 2024

Nick and Lynn Kuhn will continue to operate The Links Lounge and Spikes, plus manage events.

BY SUSAN THOMPSON
Lake Panorama Times

For a second year, a contract has been signed between the Lake Panorama National Resort and Nick and Lynn Kuhn to operate The Links Lounge and Spikes, plus manage events.

The LPN kitchen closed in July 2022 after the departure of several key kitchen personnel. A task force reviewed several options and recommended the best long-term strategy would be to lease the LPN food and beverage operation to a third-party vendor.

The Kuhns own The Beerhouse in Urbandale, The Hall DSM in Valley Junction and also lease the Sun Valley Lake Clubhouse Bar + Grille. They opened The Links Lounge + Events in April 2023.

Since 2020, there has been a nationwide shortage of wait staff, which caused the Kuhns to rely on technology to fill the service personnel void. This business model has worked well at their other establishments. Rather than having a server bring menus and take orders, QR codes are on the tables. Customers review menus and place their orders using their smart phones. Orders show up on screens in the kitchen and at the bar. Bartenders deliver drinks to tables and are notified when food is ready to deliver.

At The Links, the lack of personal service proved to be a sticking point for many customers. This past fall, at the request of the Kuhns, the LPN food and beverage task force used a survey to gather input on the 2023 operation. A total of 490 responses were received, and survey results were used to help craft the 2024 lease.

When asked to choose between personal service and fast service, 82% of survey respondents chose personal service, and 75% said they would like a server to take their order. The 2024 lease includes

offering a table service option in addition to the QR code ordering. The Kuhns also plan to deploy a large QR code at the Boulder Beach docks so customers can order food and drink from The Links directly from their boats. Orders will be delivered to the dock area.

"Through feedback directly from customers, we have been able to glean information we can apply," says Lynn Kuhn. "The two service models is an example of that. Customers will have the option of placing their order with a server or by using the QR code. We plan to start offering the table service option in May, once we have hired additional staff."

The 2024 lease agreement also calls for increased days and hours of operation for The Links Lounge, with Sundays and Mondays added to the schedule and lunch offered Friday through Sunday.

Kuhn says customers can expect some changes to The Links menu and specials in the coming months.

"In addition to the great pub fare, we'll be adding regular entrées to the menu," she says. "Foodie Friday has worked well as a fall option and gives Chef Bryan Manning an opportunity to try new things. As we head into early spring, we plan to offer weekly dinner specials on other days of the week, too."

Pizza also may appear on the menu in 2024.

"We are known for exceptional pizza in the Des Moines area and are exploring this option; however, the kitchen is currently not equipped for this menu item," Nick Kuhn says. "We are working on this and hope to be able to offer pizza sometime this spring."

Beginning May 1 and running through September, The Links will be open each Monday 3-10 p.m.; Wednesday 3-10 p.m.; Thursday 3-9 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; and Sunday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. A limited menu will be offered on Sundays. The kitchen closes at 9 p.m., except on Wednesdays.

Between now and April 30, hours are Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 4-10 p.m. Those hours will return Oct. 1.

Another change in the restaurant operation will be the removal of the surcharge on credit card payments. There will continue to be a 3% surcharge for



Patrons gathered in The Links Lounge to cheer on the Iowa Hawkeyes during a football game.

credit card transactions for events and at Spikes.

Some changes in event pricing also are in place for 2024. LPN and LPA events will be charged a single \$250 facility fee. Use of the banquet room for corporate, community and personal events will cost \$750, and use of the dining room will be \$300-500, depending on the day. Golf events that include food and beverage purchases will receive a 50% discount on the room rental fee. Nonprofit charities will receive a 10% discount on the facility fees.

Lynn Kuhn coordinates events scheduled at Lake Panorama National.

"We've learned about so many wonderful events that are part of the fabric of Lake Panorama, and it's fun to be a part of those traditions," she says. "We invite more dinners, receptions and corporate events. We can accommodate groups of any size and offer some great food and beverage options to make the occasion memorable."

To discuss an event for the 2024 LPN calendar, email lkuhn@lakepanorama.org.

Spikes and the beverage carts are in-



Nick and Lynn Kuhn are entering their second year as operators for the Lake Panorama National food and beverage operations.

cluded in the lease agreement. Deb Douglass will manage the snack shop and beverage cart operation again for 2024.

Beginning April 1 and running through April 30, the 2024 agreement calls for Spikes to be open daily 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with adjustments made for weather.



The LPN events center offers many options for wedding receptions, with fees negotiated for each event based on needs. This wedding reception included a buffet dinner set up in the lounge area with seating in the lounge, dining room and banquet room.

er and tee times. Those hours will return Sept. 3 through the end of October.

Beginning May 1, Spikes will be open daily 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., with extended evening hours Wednesdays and Thursdays to accommodate league play. Beverage cart service will be expanded to all scheduled golf events of at least 24 players and both men's and women's golf leagues.

"In 2023, Nick explored new ways to get food and beverages to golfers using QR codes on golf carts," Lynn Kuhn says. "This will help make LPN an even better experience. Be on the lookout for that option this spring."

"We have enjoyed getting to know the Lake Panorama community. We also have enjoyed 'throwing spaghetti at

the wall and seeing what sticks' as far as menu options and processes," Nick Kuhn says. "We have learned quite a lot and look forward to implementing some new ideas and processes in the coming year."

Plans for an Easter brunch are in the works. The Links Lounge + Events Facebook page and the LPN Resort Weekly will provide updates on this and other offerings throughout 2024.

"We invite the entire Panorama community to come enjoy what The Links Lounge + Events has to offer," Nick Kuhn says. "And a shout out to the staff at Spikes and The Links. We have some fantastic people. Although facing a challenging local labor market, we look forward to growing our team in 2024." ■

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GARDENING

BEST CONIFER TREES FOR IOWA

And a few planting tips.

BY LYNN KUHN
Special to Lake Panorama Times

I can't think of a better time of year for this topic. As I write and gaze across the landscape, it's mostly gray. Thank goodness for conifers, fruiting shrubs and ornamental grasses adding much desired winter interest. You might think most conifers struggle in Iowa due to the number of browning trees in private and commercial landscapes. However, there are several conifer trees that grow well in our state including a couple of deciduous conifers. For now, let's focus on the conifers that are considered "evergreen." Below I have highlighted four underused conifers based on performance, beauty and overall usefulness in the landscape.

CANADIAN HEMLOCK
A.K.A. EASTERN HEMLOCK
(TSUGA CANADENSIS)

Canadian hemlock is native to the Chicago area and eastern United States.
Hardy to zone 3 (northern Minnesota).
Growth rate is moderate at 1-2' per year.
Mature size is 40-70' tall by 25-35' spread.
Somewhat deer resistant depending on what else is available.
Somewhat shade tolerant.



Taylor juniper at the Brenton Arboretum, Dallas Center.



Canadian hemlock

Intolerant of heat, drought, strong wind and poorly drained soils.

Fun Fact: There is an herbaceous plant also called Hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) that is deadly. The famous Greek philosopher, Socrates, met his maker after being given Hemlock at his execution. (Source: wildlifetrusts.org) For more info go to [How to Identify and Remove Poison Hemlock \(thespruce.com\)](http://How to Identify and Remove Poison Hemlock (thespruce.com)).

Designer's Tip: Sprinkle hemlock trees through a shady treed area for winter privacy. Don't be afraid to plant them tightly. Due to their loose open habit, hemlock knit together nicely without suffocating adjacent trees.

LIMBER PINE A.K.A. ROCKY MOUNTAIN WHITE PINE
(PINUS FLEXILIS)

Native to Rocky Mountains, western United States and Canada.
Hardy to zone 4.
Full sun to part shade.
Mature size is 30-50' tall by 15-35' spread.
Tolerates dry soil, is more disease and pest resistant than other types of pine, and more tolerant to alkaline soils than Eastern White Pine (Source: Morton Arboretum).

Fun Fact: Limber Pine gets its name from its very flexible branches, especially when young, giving it the ability to live



Limber pine

many years. A tree was discovered in Idaho that lived to 1,650 years. (Source: U.S. Forest Service)

Designer's Tip: Instead of planting the straight species, try one of these two cultivars due to their fast growth rate, tight form and improved bluish color.
Pinus flexilis "Extra Blue"
Pinus flexilis "Vanderwolf's Pyramid"

SERBIAN SPRUCE
(PICEA OMORIKA)

Native to southeastern Europe, Serbia, and Bosnia (Source: Morton Arboretum)
Hardy to zone 4.
Mature size is 40-60' tall by 20' spread.
Tolerates air pollution.

Designer's Tip: Instead of choosing Colorado Blue Spruce, which has several disease and pest problems, plant Serbian Spruce. Its graceful slender form is ideal for tight spaces and it is a gorgeous workhorse in the landscape. Serbian Spruce works well as a hedge, staggered grouping, or a specimen. You'll love the silvery blue green coloring of this special conifer.

TAYLOR JUNIPER (JUNIPERUS VIRGINIANA "TAYLOR")

A columnar form of Eastern Red Cedar, which is native to Iowa.
Hardy to zone 4.
Mature size is 15-20' tall by 3-4'.
Tolerates heat and dry soil.
Designer's Tip: This tree is a designer's



Serbian spruce

best friend due to its versatility. It grows in less than desirable conditions, stays narrow, and provides year-round privacy. It's parent plant is rather unruly, but Taylor is well-behaved, refined and tough as nails.

A FEW MORE TIPS...

If you are poised to plant conifers this coming year, be sure to avoid planting them too low. Unfortunately, this is very common, and they do not like wet feet. Instead, dig a saucer-shaped hole 2-3 times the width of the rootball and keep the hole shallow. Plant them so the top of the rootball is 4-6" above grade and bring soil up around the rootball to prevent it from drying out. Add 3" shredded bark mulch and water slowly and deeply.

If you happen to own conifer trees of any type, especially Colorado Blue Spruce, have them checked regularly by a certified arborist. Look for indications of fungal issues, such as a pale purple foliage, which is an indication of Rhizophaera needle cast.

Iowa only has five native conifers: white pine, eastern red cedar, balsam fir, common juniper, and yew. (Source: ISU Extension) This is a very short list. Thankfully, there are many non-natives that are available in the nursery trade that will perform well in our state.

The best way to decide which conifer tree is right for you is to observe them at a local arboretum or public garden. I recommend the Brenton Arboretum just



Taylor juniper

south of Dallas Center and Iowa Arbo-
retum near Madrid. We are so fortunate
to have these beautiful places where
trees are tested and grown for our en-
joyment. ■

Written by Lynn Kuhn, author of “Con-
versation Gardens: Where Conversa-
tions Flow and Relationships Grow.” She

is a landscape architect,
speaker and owner of
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Cheers to a New Year!


As the calendar turns the page, we wish you the very best in the
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RECIPE

DON'T BE INTIMIDATED BY ASPARAGUS — TRY THIS EASY ASPARAGUS SCRAMBLE

BY JOLENE GOODMAN
Lake Panorama Times

Each year, I choose a word. It's kind of like a New Year's resolution, but simpler. The word guides me through the year, keeping me focused on what I want to work on. My word for 2024 is healthy. I am an admitted sugar addict, so I am working to cut down the consumption while adding more greens into my daily menus. This asparagus scramble is delicious, and you will have a serving of greens before you leave the house for the day. Asparagus intimidates me, but this recipe keeps it crisp and provides great flavor. So, if you are an asparagus lover, you'll thank me for this simple and easy recipe. As well, the bits of green provide a great presentation when served. Broccoli and sweet potatoes work well, also.

Here's to a healthy new year. Happy cooking. ■

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




Jolene Goodman

ASPARAGUS EGGS


- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 bunch of asparagus, trimmed and cut to 1/4" pieces
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 4 large eggs
- 1.5 tablespoons chopped chives (optional)
- freshly ground black pepper


Add olive oil to a pan warmed at medium heat. Heat for one minute. Add asparagus and 1/4 tsp salt. Cook and stir for 4 minutes until tender. While asparagus cooks, whisk eggs, 1/4 tsp salt and 1 tbsp chives. When asparagus is tender, turn heat to low. Add egg to pan. Cook and stir slowly, scraping eggs from the bottom of the pan. When eggs are almost set, but slightly wet, turn off heat and remove pan from burner. Continue to stir until eggs are not wet and mixture is creamy, about 3 minutes. Sprinkle with chives and pepper. ■






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Q&A: JOHN RUTLEDGE

ASSOCIATION GM ANSWERS
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

BY SUSAN THOMPSON
Lake Panorama Times

John Rutledge is halfway through his 17th year with Lake Panorama Association. At its July 2007 meeting, the LPA board of directors voted to hire Rutledge as LPA general manager after he spent three months in a sort of apprenticeship under then-manager Roger Dunlop.

Rutledge grew up in Guthrie Center, where he graduated from high school in 1992. He earned a bachelor's degree in finance from the University of Northern Iowa in 1996. He spent a year at Principal Financial in Des Moines before returning to Guthrie Center to join his father's business, Rutledge Construction.

In 2004, Rutledge ran for the position of Guthrie County auditor. He won the election and served in that position for two years before resigning to join the LPA. John and his wife, Tricia, have two children and live in Panora.

In this month's Q&A, Rutledge answers questions he and others in his office are asked about the Lake Panorama Association.

Q: The LPA has a lot of personal information on each association membership. Does that information ever get shared with third parties?

A: No, LPA does not share personal or contact information with third parties. The information isn't even available to fellow LPA members. One of LPA's core values is to protect the privacy of our membership.

If a member has been contacted by a third party or a solicitor, that information came from some other source, not LPA staff.

It is worth noting that the concept of privacy in 2024 is substantially different than it was 20 years ago. Back then, it took a lot of legwork or a mutual connection to gain someone's personal contact information. Now that information is readily accessible through a variety of online sources. Websites like Guthrie County Beacon (GIS) provide a wealth of property data. In addition, most of the apps we use on smartphones are designed to gather data for marketing goods and services to us.

Q: It's easy to see how busy the LPA staff is spring through fall. But what does LPA staff do to stay busy in the off-season?

A: The nature of LPA's work is a year-round endeavor. Although membership traffic coming to the LPA office or contacting us via phone calls and emails tends to be heaviest in the spring and summer, the work of the association continues steadily throughout all seasons.

Winter work for our field crew involves a wide variety of tasks. Snow removal and water system repairs are top priorities, but there are a number of other projects for when time allows. Examples include routine maintenance on LPA equipment, tree removal and roadside trimming, general cleanup of LPA work areas and recreational areas, and assembly and repair of picnic tables from LPA's beaches. From an administrative standpoint, staff is involved with RIZ budgeting, legislative advocacy, the

annual LPA and LPN financial audit, and preparations for the 2024 season.

Q: Does LPA have a role in determining property tax assessments and property tax bills?

A: LPA is not directly involved in the process by which member's property tax assessments or property tax bills are established. The only exception to this is LPA's support services to the Lake Panorama Rural Improvement Zone (RIZ), as RIZ receives Tax Increment Financing (TIF) revenues to manage erosion control and water quality at Lake Panoram.

LPA does advocate at the local level on behalf of the association. But this advocacy is general and certainly not specific to the individual tax assessments and bills received by LPA members. Our advocacy encourages responsible fiscal management, continued quality of services and infrastructure, and transparency of local government decision making.

Members interested in providing input on property tax assessments and levy rates should remain involved throughout the year by engaging county supervisors and school board members to discuss issues and concerns in a productive and ongoing manner. Iowa's local government system is extremely accessible and is truly governed



John
Rutledge

by our friends and neighbors. I have yet to meet a local government representative who is unwilling to listen to the concerns of their constituents. This doesn't mean every request can be satisfied and every concern can be resolved, but they are willing to listen and provide follow-up and feedback.

Q: The availability and affordability of technology has increased the number of cameras in use at Lake Panorama. How does this impact LPA operations?

A: First, let's discuss cameras owned and operated by the association. LPA has cameras at the brush disposal facilities, at the boat ramp, in our LPA security vehicles, and in the form of officer body cameras. The cameras at the brush disposal facilities and the boat ramp are there to ensure we can enforce our rules in areas where it is not feasible to station an officer at all times. These cameras are very effective at catching dumping at the brush facilities and also help us ensure all boats being launched have a current sticker and are following invasive species regulations.

The cameras in the LPA patrol vehicles and on the officers' chests help to protect both LPA and the membership. These cameras allow security, management, the LPA board and the LPA appeals committee to review incidents as these happened. These are in use for both traffic stops and boating violations.

The other context in which we discuss cameras is privately owned cameras. Members often have security systems, or

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smart doorbells with a camera feature. LPA encourages members to remember there are a number of different entities that have a legitimate purpose to be on member lots as a function of their work. This includes LPA staff, utility providers, licensed land surveyors, government agencies (assessor and sheriff) and delivery companies.

Members are encouraged to be discerning before they call LPA security or the Guthrie County Sheriff regarding suspicious activity on their cameras. If a crime is being committed, or repeated trespassing is occurring, then it is appropriate to call the Guthrie County Sheriff's Office and report this concern. However, if you see isolated incidents of utility workers or land surveyors on camera, this is not a reason to contact the Sheriff's office or LPA security.

Q: As we enter 2024, do you have any suggestions for LPA members who have questions?

A: As we look ahead to the coming year, my No. 1 tip is to take an active interest in the association. Each new year brings exciting opportunities and elements of change to Lake Panorama. Here are some ways to stay up to date on those developments.

If you are not receiving and reading LPA's weekly email bulletin, I strongly recommend you make that part of your New

Year's resolution list. This is LPA's official means of communicating with the membership. The LPA Prompt generally is distributed each Thursday, and contains important information throughout the year.

LPN, LLC, also has a weekly email that focuses on the golf, dining and lodging elements, which are managed by our wholly owned subsidiary. The LPN Resort Weekly typically is distributed each Monday. If you're not receiving this, go to the LPN website at lakepanoramanational.com, scroll to the bottom of the home page, and complete the online form.

The LPA launched a new website in February 2022, which replaced one that had been in place since 2009. There are public and private sides to the website, and a wealth of information is available on both. If you're not receiving the LPA Prompt, go to the LPA website at lakepanorama.org and click on the "Resident Sign-Up" link in the upper left corner. LPA staff will confirm your membership and grant access to the private side of the website. Taking this step also will get you signed up to receive the LPA Prompt.

Local newspapers continue to provide great coverage of events relevant to Lake Panorama, as well as surrounding communities and throughout Guthrie County. Support these local publishers with your readership and your patronage. Support

their advertisers through shopping local, whenever you can.

LPA holds a number of informational meetings throughout the year, in the form of both the official annual meeting and periodic managers' coffees. Attending these meetings and getting involved is a great way to learn what is going on, and also a great way to share thoughts and concerns with association staff. Dates for these meetings will be publicized as we approach spring. I can tell you now the LPA annual meeting is Saturday, May 11, beginning at 10 a.m., at the LPN conference center.

Social media and online forums continue to be popular platforms for member connections. LPA encourages you to celebrate good news together on these platforms. Social media sites also are fantastic for sharing lake-related tips and photos of your time spent at Lake Panorama. However, please remember these social media platforms and online forums are not official LPA sources of information. Those who have a question about something related to Lake Panorama or the LPA will get the answer they're seeking faster if they contact LPA staff by calling 641-755-2301 or emailing lpa@lakepanorama.org. ■

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BUSINESS

SHARON NEEL RETIRES FROM LAKE LUMBER

**The Neel family has
a long history in the
lumber business.**

BY SUSAN THOMPSON

Lake Panorama Times

After 32 years, Sharon Neel's last day on the job at Lake Lumber was Dec. 28. At an open house that afternoon, customers and friends joined the Lake Lumber family in wishing Sharon well as she retired.

The Neel family has a long history in the lumber business. In 1900, George Neel and Sons purchased a lumberyard in Rippey. One son, Leonard, started Neel Lumber in Grand Junction in 1927. His son, Bob, took over the business in 1954. Bob and Dorothy Neel purchased Lake Lumber in 1977, and continued to operate the Grand Junction location until it closed in 1982.

Bob and Dorothy's son, Tom, joined the business in 1984. When Tom and Sharon married and moved to Panora, Sharon worked for Midwest Landscaping. She joined the lumber business Jan. 2, 1992, taking over management of the hardware line. The Neels sold Lake Lumber to Kelvin Hafner in July 2021 and have continued to work there since the sale.

"I have greatly appreciated having Sharon stay on since I purchased Lake Lumber," says Hafner. Hafner's wife, Stephanie, joined the business in May 2022. She oversees the retail operation and manages the hardware line.

"Sharon is a wealth of knowledge," Stephanie Hafner says. "She has been a valuable asset throughout the transition. Sharon has built an amazing hardware store for our community, with the goal of providing homeowners and contractors the resources to repair any project. She has graciously passed down her meticulous notes on products, vendors, tips and tricks for every department of the store."

Sharon says while she is ready to retire, she will miss the relationships that have formed.

"We have the best customers, who have become friends. It's like a reunion every time our seasonal friends return to say hello, shop and catchup on family," she says. "I will miss my people, and that includes co-workers and salespeople. So many people



SPECIAL TO LAKE PANORAMA TIMES

Sharon Neel has been a part of Lake Lumber for 32 years. She retired Dec. 28 with a long list of plans for her retirement years.

supported and helped me during my 32 years at Lake Lumber."

Neel places relationships at the top of her list of things she liked about working at Lake Lumber, but there is more.

"I also enjoyed the creative process of building displays and promoting amazing new merchandise," she says. "Plus helping customers find what they came into the store to buy."

Tom Neel continues to work four days a week with no set date for his retirement. Tara Rooney, who Sharon mentored for several years, now oversees the paint department. Brenda Wilson and Jessica Hein joined the Lake Lumber team in 2023, and also will help fill Sharon Neel's shoes.

Neel's retirement plans are extensive.

"First is to simply enjoy time at home and complete some furnishing and decorative projects. I also plan to unpack boxes to find lost items from our move to Lake Panorama from Panora five years ago," she says.

Next up are travels to visit friends and family, volunteering, organizing years of photos and memories, crafting, watercolor painting, and perhaps picking up her guitar again. She might even consider a seasonal job at a greenhouse, nursery or floral shop to take her back to her horticulture roots.

Asked for a final comment, Neel returns to her customers.

"It was my privilege and a blessing to have met, known and been allowed to help so many awesome customers who chose to shop Lake Lumber," she says. ■

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LAKE DOG

BY CHERYL TEMPLE | *Lake Panorama Times*

Name: Pearl

Age: 2

Breed: Corgi

Owners: Steve,
Jillian, Posey and
Wesley Ortner

Pearl's hobbies are chasing the kids, Wesley and Posey, and her dog sister, Scotch. She also loves to swim, chase birds and chew up things she shouldn't. She's really good at begging for belly rubs. She loves her dual farm/lake dog life. ■



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COVE CAT

BY CHERYL TEMPLE | Lake Panorama Times

Name: Aloe
Age: 2-3 years old
Breed: Tortoiseshell
Available at: Panora Pets

Aloe adapted to the shelter rather quickly but has been waiting for her furever home for more than a year now. She is curious, playful and energetic but not so much a fan of other kitties. Aloe loves human attention and interaction. She has a beautiful tortoiseshell coat and stunning eyes. Aloe has been vaccinated, altered and microchipped. ■





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LPA BOARD MINUTES

LAKE PANORAMA ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING OCT. 24, 2023

The Lake Panorama Association Board of Directors met Oct. 24, 2023, at 5 p.m. at the Lake Panorama Association Office. Board members in attendance were Emily Donovan, David Finneseth, Dennis Flanery, Mark Jorgensen, Rich Schumacher, Sue Thompson and Dirk Westercamp.

LPA Staff in attendance: Danna Krambeer, Corey Larsen, Lane Rumelhart and John Rutledge.

LPN Staff in attendance: Royce Shaffer

Visitors in attendance: None

President Donovan called the meeting to order at 5 p.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Approval of the Agenda

Finneseth moved to approve the agenda. Motion seconded, carried

unanimously.

No conflicts of interest were disclosed by the Board of Directors regarding agenda items.

Agenda Item 2 – Open Forum – No one present

Agenda Item 3 – Consent Agenda

Schumacher moved to approve the consent agenda. Motion seconded, carried unanimously.

Consent agenda to include:

a) LPA General Manager's Report

b) Approval of minutes from 09.26.2023 LPA Board Meeting

c) Acceptance of the 09.30.2023 LPA LPN Consolidated Financial Statement

d) Set date for next two board meetings 11.28.2023 and 12.12.2023

e) Accept minutes from 09.18.2023 LPN LLC Board of Managers Meeting

f) Accept Building Codes Minutes – electronic meeting

Agenda Item 4a – Report from Treasurer

Flanery reported he met with Krambeer and reviewed financial items. There are no concerns to report.

Agenda Item 4b – Roof pitch variance request for lots 1567 and 1568

A roof pitch variance request from Jonathan Sukut, combined lots 1567 and 1568, 5120 Panorama Drive, for 5/12 roof pitch on new home construction. The Building Codes Committee reviewed the request and recommended it be accepted, per the plans provided.

Thompson moved to approve 5/12 roof pitch variance for new home construction on lots 1567/1568, 5120 Panorama Drive, per the plans submitted for construction. Motion seconded, carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 4c – Roof pitch variance request for lots 1153 and 1154

Roof pitch variance request from Tim McDermott, combined lots 1153 and 1154, 5303 Chimra Road, for 4/12 roof pitch on the garage portion of new home construction. The Building Codes Committee reviewed the request and recommended it be accepted, per the plans provided.

Thompson moved to approve 4/12 roof pitch variance on the garage portion of new home construction on lots 1153/1154, 5303 Chimra Road, per the plans submitted for construction. Motion seconded, carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 4d – LPN, LLC 2024 Operational and Capital Budget

Royce Shaffer, Director of Operations, presented the proposed LPN Operational and Capital Budget, reviewing each department. Shaffer advised the LPA board of directors

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TRISH HART'S NATURE PHOTOS

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Female cardinal



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Male blue jay



Male house finch

BY SUSAN THOMPSON

Lake Panorama Times

This month's nature photos shared by Trish Hart are for those who mourned the lack of a white Christmas this year. Colors are tough to find outdoors during Iowa winters, and that's made worse by a snow-

less landscape. To help us remember how snow makes a difference, Trish gathered a few photos she took last winter that feature colorful birds against a snowy background. Hart offers custom prints of her photos on canvas, paper, metal and glass. Learn more by visiting Nature's Canvas Photography on Facebook. ■

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WHO IS IT?



The image from last month's "Where Is It?" is the shed of Gary and Mary Dusenberry located at 5202 Bean Bend. Have a guess on who the courageous domed warrior is in the pontoon seen on the lake on Dec. 31? Have a photo to submit for future issues? Send to shane@dmcityview.com. ■

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