

Our Nevada

Iowa

February
2026

It's Our Anniversary

This publication started
four years ago this month.

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The Buzz

IT'S OUR NEVADA'S ANNIVERSARY

Four years ago this month, we published the first Our Nevada magazine with a cover photo like the one you see on this month's cover.

Some of the people may be different, but the organizations they represent are the same.

Mayor Ryan Condon represents the City of Nevada.

Dr. Steve Gray represents the Nevada School District.

Nate Thompson represents Story Medical Center.

Matt Runge represents the Nevada Economic Development Council.

Linda Murken represents Story County.

Julie Samson represents Main Street Nevada.

These six organizations came together four years ago to make this publication happen, and each organization provides funds to publish and distribute the Our Nevada magazine each month. The magazine is meant to provide residents with information that these community leadership organizations believe is important and/or informative to residents who live in the greater Nevada community.

As we shared in the January issue, we have introduced a Facebook page to expand our messaging as we work through our fifth year of this endeavor.

We believe producing Our Nevada has been worth it. We believe that many people utilize the magazine to stay informed. We believe the partnerships that have made this publication possible are an example of the teamwork that makes Nevada a great place to live.

ON THE COVER: Shown (from left) are leaders in the sponsoring agencies of Our Nevada: Story Medical CEO Nate Thompson, Mayor Ryan Condon, Main Street Nevada President Julie Samson, Supervisor Chair Linda Murken, NEDC President Matt Runge, and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Steve Gray.

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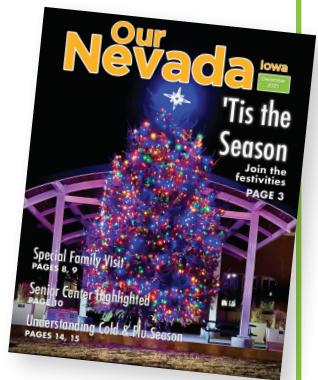
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mbarker@cityofnevadaia.org

ABOUT OUR NEVADA

Our Nevada is a monthly joint publication between the City of Nevada, Nevada Community School District, Story County Medical Center, Story County, NEDC, and Main Street Nevada.



Your Hometown Heartbeat

Main Street Nevada keeps our hometown's heart beating by supporting local businesses, revitalizing downtown, and creating places where our community comes together and thrives. Our organization is volunteer-driven, with an active volunteer Board of Directors. Each new year brings new leadership on the Main Street Nevada Board. This year's President and Vice President, whose roles started Jan. 1, are both local business owners. A big THANK YOU to our Past President, Christa Skaggs. Christa gave the Board some big goals and led by example. Her passion for the Main Street Nevada organization was felt and appreciated in big ways.

2026 PRESIDENT—JULIE SAMSON

Julie Samson, owner of Urban Roots Salon, has been on the Main Street Nevada Board of Directors for three years. She also serves on the Design Committee and has been instrumental in keeping our downtown planters looking good each season.

"I'm excited to serve as Main Street Nevada President because I believe in the power of a strong downtown. I am the business owner of Urban Roots Salon right here in the heart of Downtown Nevada. In 2026 I look forward to growing our community of business members, supporting local entrepreneurs, and creating a vibrant downtown that provides opportunity, connection, and livelihood for everyone."



2026 VICE PRESIDENT—JOE WAKEMAN

Joe Wakeman, owner of Berry Patch, is in his second year serving on the Main Street Nevada Board of Directors. Joe is also on the Design and Farmers Market Committees.

"I'm honored to step into the role of Vice President for Main Street Nevada and excited to help build on the incredible momentum already underway. In 2026, I look forward to strengthening our downtown partnerships, supporting projects that enhance the heart of our community, and helping bring new energy to the Farmers Market as part of that committee. Revitalizing the market and creating vibrant, welcoming experiences for residents and visitors will be a key focus, and I'm eager to help make it a highlight of Nevada's downtown."



Main Street Nevada Volunteers

Board of Directors

Julie Samson, President

Joe Wakeman, Vice President

Brian Quandt, Treasurer

Brooke Hartmann, Secretary

Christa Skaggs, Past President

Amber Olson

Audra Poterucha

Chris Scobba

Muriel Burnett

Steve Skaggs

Tyler Davis

Jordan Cook (Ex Officio)

Brenda Dryer (Ex Officio)

Steve Gray (Ex Officio)

Executive Director: Emily Schaack (staff)

Office Assistant: Tammy Oxley (staff)

Committees

Promotions:

Stephanie Marsau

Brooke Hartmann

Marlys Barker

Audra Poterucha

Kourtney Vier

Shannon Hahn

Design:

Christa Skaggs (chair)

Tom Richards

Julie Samson

Joe Wakeman

Tyler Davis

Brian Quandt

Jordan Cook

Steve Skaggs

Economic Vitality:

Amber Olson (chair)

Muriel Burnett

Peyton Klotzbach

Nancy Thompson

Lisa Oxley

Shari Hernandez

Laura Gerlach

Chris Scobba

Organization:

Brian Quandt (chair)

Joe Wakeman

Brenda Dryer

Jordan Cook

Brooke Hartmann

Julie Samson

Christa Skaggs

Additional MSN Committees

Leadership Nevada

Farmers Market

Grants

As Needed Volunteers

Brian Bappe

Ros Dunblazier

Tom Geist

Mark Oxley

Evie Peterson

Nevada Foundation gives out

The Nevada Foundation is proud to announce the completion of its first grant cycle for the Seasons of Giving fund, awarding a total of \$24,000 to six local organizations dedicated to strengthening the Nevada community.

The Seasons of Giving fund was created with a clear mission: Together, with the entities and organizations that host and support many causes in our community, we can create a larger impact by collaborating on fundraising efforts and boosting awareness. This coordinated approach allows Nevada's generosity to work year-round, supporting a continuous cycle of giving where it's needed most.

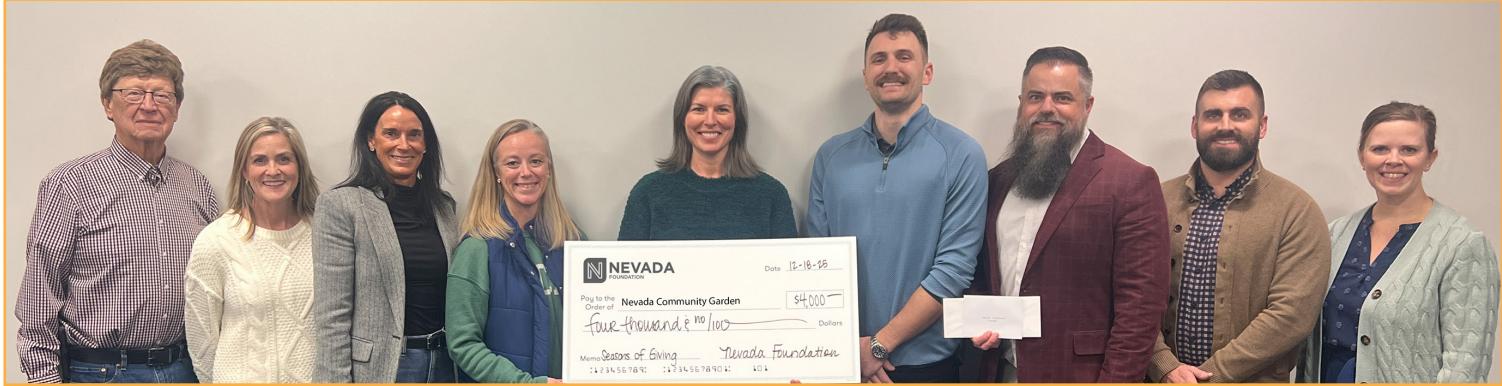
Grant awards will be distributed across three of the fund's four focus areas:

Helping Hands - Supporting basic needs such as clothing, food insecurity, and shelter. Nonprofits receiving funding in this category are working directly with families and individuals to ensure every neighbor has access to essential resources.

Building Nevada - Enhancing community life through beautification and revitalization projects, arts and recreation opportunities, and essential services that help Nevada thrive and grow.

Capturing Kids' Hearts - Supporting youth through student assistance, childcare needs, and student development programs that foster healthy learning environments and brighter futures.

The Nevada Foundation is pleased to present grant awards to the following nonprofit organizations in our community:



1st 'Seasons of Giving' grants

Nevada Community School District: Student Assistance Fund - \$4,000 (accepted by Jodi Heeren and Elizabeth Gindt)

Nevada Community Resource Center (NCRC) - \$4,000 (accepted by Kasey Taggart and Chris Burling)

Nevada Community Garden - \$4,000 (accepted by Erin Bergquist)

Harmony Clothing Closet - \$4,000 (accepted by Julie Kieffer and Elizabeth Gindt)

The Camelot Theater Foundation - \$4,000 (accepted by Melissa Sly)

Boys & Girls Club of Story County - \$4,000 (accepted by

Michelle Cassabaum and Judge Johnston)

The Nevada Foundation will continue its commitment to sustaining the Seasons of Giving fund, encouraging collaboration and shared purpose to serve Nevada today and for generations to come.

Representatives of the Nevada Foundation shown in the photos are: Ken Nelson, Melissa Sly, Michelle Cassabaum, Emily Schaack, Riley Vier, Brett Barker, Jordan Cook and Lisa Oxley.

If you are interested in contributing to our Seasons of Giving Fund, you can find more information on our website at <https://www.nevadafoundation.org/seasons-of-giving>





Nevada Public Library is falling to 'pieces'

If you are a lover of jigsaw puzzles, then you're going to love what the Nevada Public Library has added to its collection.

A section of shelving in the library, near the fireplace area, is now dedicated to jigsaw puzzles that can be checked out by library patrons.

Assistant Library Director Danielle Schmitt has already organized several puzzle competitions, one in December and one this month, to go along with the introduction of puzzles available for check-out.

"Not every library has puzzles for checkout, so we're excited to be able to offer this," Danielle said. She noted that having puzzles as part of the library's offerings was not an idea she came up with, but was a discussion of previous library staff members. She's just lucky enough to be part of the current staff who get to enjoy watch-

ing children and adults look through and select puzzles they'd like to complete.

"Some of the puzzles will be for children, and the rest will be for adults. We have puzzles of various sizes for adults, with most being 500- and 1000-piece puzzles. A few puzzles are larger than 1000 pieces, and we still need to order some 300-piece puzzles," she said.

In looking at the puzzle boxes, some already shelved and others waiting on carts to be catalogued for check-out, you'll see a variety of content and brands. Most are new; some are already opened once but in excellent condition.

"The thing we want to stress most to those who check out puzzles is that we understand that puzzle pieces can be lost or can get damaged, and we would ask that people let us know if something like this has happened when they return the puzzle. This way we can pull it from the

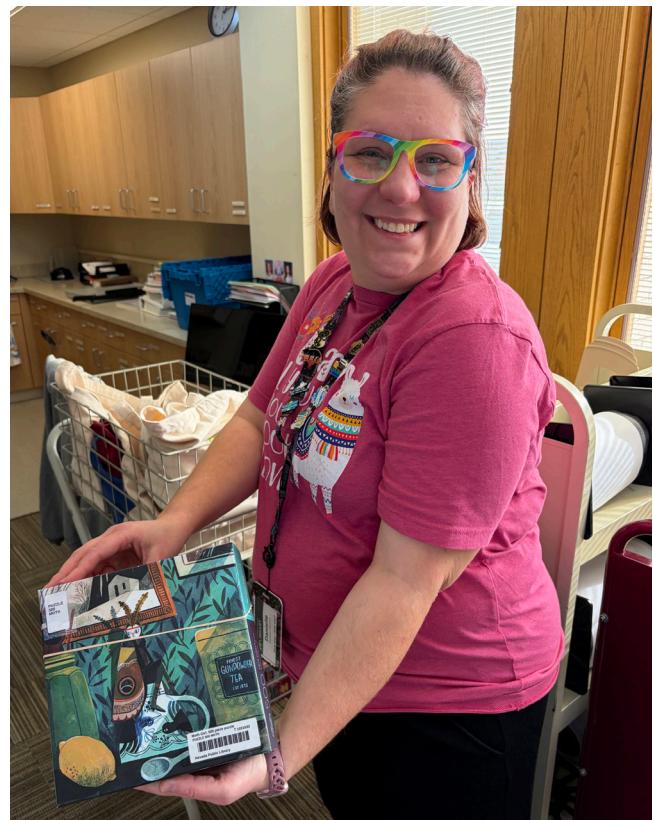
collection," Danielle said.

Having puzzles available to the public will be a learning process for the staff, but if all goes well, it could be a very enjoyable pastime for many. In fact, the library almost always has one or two puzzles in progress on a table at the back of the library. "We have several patrons who come in to work on the puzzles quite often," Danielle said.

She encourages puzzle enthusiasts to also watch the Library website's events page for more puzzle team competitions. The first one was "wild," she said. Seven teams of 2-4 people competed on different 500-piece puzzles. The winning team was finished in 43 minutes and the second-place team in 55 minutes. "The last two teams were within 30 seconds of each other," she noted, "and they had to run up and hit a button when they completed the puzzle, so it was fun to watch."

If you want a "piece" of the action — either competing or going your own pace at home — check in at the library, and check out the fun.

Assistant Library Director Danielle Schmitt shows one of the puzzles that has been tagged with all the necessary cataloging information and is ready for shelving.



The next puzzle competition takes place Monday, February 2, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. in the library meeting room. If you're seeing this in time, use the QR code to learn more. Up to 10 teams can compete and this time all will compete using the same puzzle, as a like-collection will be graciously loaned to the Nevada Public Library by the Ames Public Library.

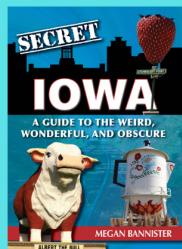


Author Talk featuring **Megan Bannister**

Monday, Feb. 9

6 p.m.

Nevada Public Library
Meeting Room



Prairie Rivers of Iowa presents **Grow Native: Start with Our Seed Bank**

Join Katelyn Rinicker from Prairie Rivers of Iowa for an engaging presentation about growing native plants and transforming your landscape for pollinators.

This is a **FREE** program, and some seeds will be provided. This program will be held Monday, Feb 23, from 6-7 p.m. in the library meeting room.

City Employee News



RYAN HUTTON

HUTTON RETURNS FULL-TIME TO NEVADA PD, SYDNE RESIGNS

Ryan Hutton has returned to a full-time position as an officer in the Nevada Police Department/Public Safety Department. Hutton has continued to be a part-time officer alongside his duties as the City's Building and Zoning Official for the last few years. The City is in the process of hiring for a new Building and Zoning Official.

Public Safety Director and Police Chief Chris Brandes said Hutton's return to his department as a full-time officer will be a benefit to the department. "Ryan is still fully certified, and has been working with our department either full- or part-time since 2015. He knows the job, he knows the people, he knows the community, and he's fully trained. This will be a huge staffing boost for the PD, especially with the recent resignation of Officer Kellan Sydnes."

Sydnes has served the Nevada PD for the past five years and will continue his career as a Sheriff's Deputy in the State of Montana. Nevada PD wishes him nothing but the best of luck and thanks him for his service to the Nevada community.



KELLAN SYDNE

ERIN MOUSEL PROMOTED TO CITY CLERK/EMPLOYEE SERVICES DIRECTOR

Erin Mousel has begun a new role in the City's Administration Department as the City Clerk/Employee Services Director.

Mousel, a 2001 graduate of Nevada High School, started employment with the City of Nevada in the Parks and Recreation Department in May of 2010. In April of 2022, she became a Deputy City Clerk in the Administration Department at City Hall.

In her newest role, Mousel will continue city clerk duties, while also having broader interaction with City staff. "As I transition into this expanded role, I look forward to continued learning and growth. As staff transitions with current and incoming employees, I hope to find a balance that supports teamwork, efficiency, and service to the community," she said.

Mousel added that she's excited to build on relationships she's already made city-wide and continue growing alongside a great team of people. "I look forward to learning something new every day, taking on fresh challenges, and helping make our work smoother and more collaborative. Most of all, I'm grateful for the chance to be part of a City organization that works hard to serve the community and support one another."



ERIN MOUSEL

GIBSON EARNS GRADE 2 CERTIFICATION FOR WWTF

Jordan Gibson, an employee at the City's Waste Water Treatment Facility, has passed his Grade 2 Wastewater Treatment Exam. This earns Gibson the title of a "Regular," allowing him IDNR approval to make operational changes when necessary. Gibson was hired by the City in September of 2024.



JORDAN GIBSON

Update on the Camelot Theater

As presented to the Nevada City Council Jan. 12, 2026, by Audra Poterucha, a member of the Camelot Theater Foundation

MAJOR 2025 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Completion of 2nd- and 3rd-floor apartments which are currently rented. This was accomplished with significant volunteer hours by board members, use of a Downtown Housing grant, and help from local contractors, who often donated time.
- Water mitigation, roof improvements
- Hosted around 75 events (concerts, movies, plays) throughout the year

Concerts included country music, classic rock music, an Elvis impersonator, bluegrass/alternative music

Movies were shown for summer daycare kids, school classes and NCRC kids, for Halloween a Hocus Pocus event, and for Christmas, which saw showings of "Elf," "It's a Wonderful Life" and "The Polar Express"

Plays from Story Theater and Ames Footlights productions

Hosted a Main Street Nevada Mix and Mingle, and the "It Takes A Village" series for the Nevada Schools

- Fundraisers: Collaborated with the Story County Animal Shelter for a CatVideo Fest
- Opened during Community Events: Pizza Pie Looza, Farmers Market, July 4th, LHD, Downtown Trick-or-Treat, Hometown Christmas (showed cartoons and made bathrooms available)
- Also interacted and partnered with other Nevada merchants (particularly downtown businesses) to sponsor or host an event, have prizes for attendees, hoping that coming to an event encourages patrons to visit downtown businesses.

CAMELOT THEATER FOUNDATION VISION/MISSION

- The Camelot Theater Foundation is a nonprofit organization formed in early 2022. Its mission is to revitalize and maintain the Camelot Theater as a financially self-sustaining community arts, education, entertainment, and meeting space, therefore enhancing the vitality of downtown Nevada.
- Originally opened in 1928 as Circle Theater, became Camelot Theater in 1969
- Currently run by a 12-member volunteer board

2026 GOALS

- Continue with building improvements, structural components to decrease utility costs
- Work on green room, improved screen
- Continue to try and offer a wide variety of movies/events for the community
- Expand volunteer pool
- Increase local support for the Camelot

HOW THE CITY COUNCIL WAS ASKED TO HELP

- Continue to have city support for our mission
- Come to an event or movie
- Become an advocate in the community



Murken elected Supervisors Chair

During the Organizational Meeting for 2026, the Story County Board of Supervisors elected officers and set the day and time for official meetings. Supervisor Linda Murken will serve as Chair for the coming year, and Supervisor Latifah Faisal will serve as Vice Chair.

"I'm looking forward to serving as the 2026 Chair for the Story County Board of Supervisors. I have the great honor of working with Supervisor Faisal and Heddens and all the other elected officials



and Story County employees to meet the needs of our residents. We look forward to continuing our work on housing and transportation needs, water quality and soil health, protecting our quality farmland, broadband access

for rural areas, economic and workforce development, and many other initiatives to improve the health and quality of life of Story County residents," Supervisor Murken commented following the meeting.

Regularly scheduled meetings will continue to be held each Tuesday morning at 10 a.m. in the Board's Public Meeting Room at the Administration Building located at 900 6th St. in Nevada. The time and place for additional meetings may be designated

separately to accommodate the public.

Agendas, as well as meeting video and audio recordings, are available on Story County's website at www.storycountyiowa.gov. To stay connected with Story County, residents are encouraged to sign up for the Notify Me tool at the County's website: <https://www.storycountyiowa.gov/list.aspx>. Notify Me allows users to subscribe to an unlimited number of emails list to stay informed.

2nd half taxes due in March

The Story County Treasurer's Office is reminding property owners that second half taxes are due March 31, 2026. To pay property taxes, you can go online to IowaTreasurers.org or mail payments to PO Box 498, Nevada, Iowa 50201.

We also have a drop box available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Treasurer's Office is open 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday, except for the second Tuesday of every month when the office is open 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The Treasurer's Office number is 515-382-7340 or you can email them at Treasurer@StoryCountyIowa.Gov.



Send us your Park Pics

We want to see the parks through your eyes! Do you have scenic sunsets, adventure action shots, and other park pics hiding in your camera roll? Submit your Iowa nature and Story County Conservation park (SCC) photos for a chance to be featured. Photos will be used by SCC to showcase parks and natural areas, promote programs, and more — both online, on social media, and in print.

Send your photos, name and location one of these three ways:

- Email to conservationoutreach@storycountyiowa.gov
- Text to 515-203-7664
- DM us on social media

Story County offices and departments will be closed Monday, February 16, 2026, in observance of the Presidents Day holiday. Regular business hours will resume Tuesday, February 17 at 8 a.m.

Jobs, jobs, jobs...

It's early 2026, and if you're in the market for a career move, Nevada, Iowa and Story County as a whole often have great opportunities for you to consider.

For job seekers, the Nevada Economic Development Council offers use of a site managed by the Ames Regional Economic Alliance that emphasizes "living, working, and playing" in Ames (and Story County). The site allows people to search job openings by community, and at the start of this year, Nevada had around 25 jobs listed. (You'll find the Nevada listings specifically at: "liveinames.com/work/jobs/city-nevada/".)

"There are so many incredible opportunities in Nevada and the surrounding area for those new to the area and looking for employment, as well as those looking for a career change," said Brenda Dryer, Director of the NEDC.

Among the employers listing jobs on the site, the Nevada School District had a number of part- and full-time positions listed in January.

"Nevada Community School District offers a supportive atmosphere, community engagement, reasonable class sizes, competitive pay and benefits, fair employment practices, opportunities across educational roles and the chance to help shape student success in a positive, collaborative environment," said Dr. Steve Gray, Superintendent of Schools.

Gray said the district posts openings for a range of positions, from teachers and substitute teachers, to counselors, paraprofessionals and associates, to bus drivers, maintenance personnel, administrative assistants, coaches, kitchen crews and more.

"In a smaller community such as Nevada, staff has the ability to make a meaningful, visible impact on students' academic and personal growth. As a mid-size Iowa school district, NCSD is large enough to offer students a full array of programming, but small enough to allow for participation and personalization," Gray said. He encourages area residents to take a look at positions that are available in the Nevada School District and to be part of this forward-thinking culture.



The local hospital, Story Medical, is another of the community's larger employers and often has openings. Susan Schrader, Vice President of Human Resources at the hospital, said, "There's been a wide variety of positions open in recent months across clinical, support and administrative areas. Examples include Registered Nurses (inpatient, emergency, outpatient and senior care settings), Licensed Practical Nurses, Certified Nursing Assistants, Patient Care Technicians, paramedics, surgical technologists, cooks, and housekeepers. These opportunities span full-time, part-time, and PRN (as needed) roles."

The most common openings at the hospital of late have been for nursing and patient care support personnel, such as Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, CNAs, and Patient Care Technicians.

Story Medical hires across a spectrum of educational and experience levels. "Some roles, like housekeeping, hospitality aide, and food service, may only require the individual to be at least 16 years of age," Schrader said. Of course, it goes without saying that many positions in a hospital do require certain licenses and/or certifications and advanced education.

Working at the local medical center can be rewarding, no matter the position one holds. "One of the things employees value most about working at Story Medical is the strong team atmosphere," Schrader said. "Staff members frequently share that there is a genuine sense of support. People help one another, step in when needed, and work together toward a shared purpose."

Schrader also believes hospital employees appreciate the opportunity to make a meaningful impact in a community-based healthcare organization. "Along with competitive benefits, professional development opportunities, and a culture that emphasizes teamwork, (we appreciate) caring for one another as well as our patients and residents."

In addition to these public entities, many of Nevada's businesses/industries also have openings posted too.

Dryer would like even more people to be able to see the great opportunities available in Nevada, Iowa. "Be sure to share the liveinames.com/work/jobs/city-nevada/ website with family and friends to help spread the word," she said.

Lillian Frideres selected as Samsung American Legion Scholar

Our community is proud to celebrate Lillian Frideres, who has been selected as a Samsung American Legion Scholar, a prestigious national honor sponsored by The American Legion and Samsung Electronics America. Lillian is one of only 10 students nationwide chosen for this distinction, placing her among an elite group recognized for outstanding academic achievement, leadership, and character.

As a Samsung American Legion Scholar, Lillian will receive a \$10,000 scholarship to support her future educational goals. In addition, she will be formally recognized at The American Legion's national conference in Washington, D.C., this month.

She has also been invited to attend the Samsung American Legion Scholars Recognition Event while she is on her weeklong trip to Washington, D.C. She will join fellow scholars from across the country, meet with Congressional elected officials, and network with leaders from The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary from her home state. The experience is designed to honor academic excellence while encouraging civic engagement and future leadership.



Recipient of the Samsung American Legion Scholarship, Lillian Frideres

The American Legion will cover all travel expenses for Lillian and one chaperone, who must be a parent or legal guardian. Lillian is looking forward to attending the recognition event, as it offers a meaningful opportunity to participate in a national celebration of achievement in addition to meeting others from across the country.

The school district believes Lillian Frideres is the first student from Nevada to receive this honor, making her accomplishment even more significant for our state and community. Her selection is a point of pride for her family, school, and the entire Nevada community. We congratulate Lillian on this remarkable achievement and look forward to the bright future ahead of her.

Nevada FFA Fruit Sales Success

Nevada FFA members sold over \$24,000 of fruit, cheese, and sausage to faculty, community, and businesses within the community. Sales took place in October with personal sales, online ordering, and payment collection. Along with fruit, cheese and sausage, assorted candies and chocolate products were also offered.

Hayden Black set a new individual sales record with \$3,530 in sales. Jayden Schmalzreid was second place with \$1,873, followed by Savannah Klein at \$1,335, Isabella Betting at \$1,281, and Erica Madden at \$1,049.

All products arrived at the high school ag mechanics facility on Tuesday, Dec. 9 at 7 a.m. Students prepared mixed boxes for specific customer orders, and started delivering that night. After cost, the chapter should experience a profit of around \$9,672.



Nevada FFA top 12 salespersons, front L to R, Jayden Schmalzreid, Reed Kelly, Savannah Klein, Isabella Betting, Byron Thiphasouk, back row L to R, Hayden Black, Adam Tendall, George Nelson, John Nelson, Tyler Tendall, Rylee Schaack, and Erica Madden

NEVADA CSD RATED AS A HIGH PERFORMING DISTRICT

This past fall, the Iowa Department of Education released School Performance Ratings for each school building in the state (see November 2025 edition of 'Our Nevada'). The DOE has now released District Performance Ratings for each of the 329 Iowa public school districts.

The Performance Rating for each district was based on the following:

- Attendance Growth,
- Chronic Absenteeism,
- English Language Growth,
- 4-Year Graduation Rate,
- 5-Year Graduation Rate,
- Mathematics Growth,
- English Language Arts Growth,
- Mathematics Proficiency,
- English Language Arts Proficiency,
- Science Proficiency,
- Post-Secondary Readiness Index (College Credit),
- Post-Secondary Readiness Index (Work-Based Learning).

Districts are then placed into one of six categories based on their overall composite score: Exceptional, High-Performing, Commendable, Acceptable, Needs Improvement, or Priority.

Nevada CSD was designated as High Performing and ranked 21st out of 329 Iowa public school districts.

Top 25 of 329 Iowa Public School Districts

1. Alamakee	Exceptional
2. Morning Sun (K-6)	Exceptional
3. Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn	High Performing
4. Van Meter	High Performing
5. Adel DeSoto Minburn	High Performing
6. Denver	High Performing
7. Jesup	High Performing
8. Mount Ayr	High Performing
9. Bedford	High Performing
10. Solon	High Performing
11. West Delaware	High Performing
12. West Harrison	High Performing
13. Pleasant Valley	High Performing
14. Pella	High Performing
15. Gilbert	High Performing
16. Edgewood-Colesburg	High Performing
17. Maquoketa	High Performing
18. Ar-We-Va	High Performing
19. Dike-New Hartford	High Performing
20. Osage	High Performing
21. Nevada	High Performing
22. North Fayette	High Performing
23. Hudson	High Performing
24. Treynor	High Performing
25. Clear Lake	High Performing

Music Parents Making an Impact

Nevada Music Parents continue to play an important role in supporting music and arts students across the district. Over the past semester, the organization has funded several meaningful projects that directly benefit students at every grade level.

Recent contributions include the purchase of a new grill for the concession stand, covering admission for all elementary students to attend The Nutcracker, paying dues for students selected for honors choir, band, Opus, and similar programs, and purchasing new computer equipment for the elementary music program.

Nevada Music Parents also provided new costumes for the color guard.

Looking ahead, the group is preparing for several major expenses. The high school band has grown rapidly and now needs 30 additional uniforms, with a fundraising goal of \$25,000. Other upcoming needs include new music equipment for middle and high school programs and long-term plans to improve auditorium lighting. The organization also works to support individual students who may lack access to proper concert attire or equipment.

To help fund these efforts, Nevada Music Parents will host Tables and Tunes this month, a special fundraising event featuring desserts and a private student performance, including a preview from the upcoming musical.

Community members are encouraged to get involved or support the program. For more information, contact Crystal Sadler at nevadamusicparents@gmail.com, call 515-460-2149, or connect through the group's Facebook page. Donations through Venmo will be available soon.



Show Your Heart a Little Love

Keeping Your Lipids in Check Offers a Big Health Boost

During Heart Health Month in February, it's the perfect time to focus on one of the most critical factors in cardiovascular health—your lipids. Lipids, including cholesterol and triglycerides, play a key role in how your heart functions. Managing them properly can significantly reduce your risk of heart disease, stroke, and other serious conditions.

Why Lipids Matter

Lipids are fats found in your blood, and while your body needs some for essential functions, too much of the wrong kind can lead to problems. High levels of LDL (low-density lipoprotein), or "bad" cholesterol, can

contribute to plaque buildup in the arteries, leading to blockages that increase the risk of heart attack and stroke. Meanwhile, HDL (high-density lipoprotein), or "good" cholesterol, helps remove excess cholesterol from the bloodstream.

"Maintaining healthy lipid levels is one of the best ways to protect your heart," says Jyl Wonnell, PA-C, of Story Medical Clinic—Nevada. "It's not just about cholesterol numbers—it's about creating a lifestyle that supports heart health for the long run."

How to Keep Your Lipids in Check

The good news is that small, manageable lifestyle changes can have a big impact on your heart health.

- **Eat Heart-Healthy Foods:** Incorporate more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Reduce saturated and trans fats found in processed foods.

- **Exercise Regularly:** Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days of the week. Walking, cycling, and swimming are great options.
- **Maintain a Healthy Weight:** Excess weight, especially around the abdomen, can raise LDL cholesterol and lower HDL cholesterol.
- **Avoid Smoking and Limit Alcohol:** Smoking lowers good cholesterol, while excessive alcohol consumption can raise triglyceride levels.
- **Get Regular Screenings:** "Routine cholesterol checks allow us to track your numbers and adjust your treatment plan as needed," Wonnell says. "Knowing your numbers is the first step in taking control of your heart health."

Medication and Additional Support

For some individuals, lifestyle changes alone may not be enough to keep lipid levels in a healthy range. In these cases, healthcare providers may recommend cholesterol-lowering medications, such as statins.

"Not everyone needs medication, but for those at

higher risk, it can be an essential part of heart disease prevention," Wonnell explains. "Our goal is always to create a personalized plan that works best for each patient."

Take Charge of Your Heart Health

Heart disease remains the leading cause of death in the U.S., but taking steps to control your lipids can make a life-changing difference. By making simple, heart-healthy choices and partnering with your healthcare provider, you can keep your heart strong for years to come.

If you haven't had your cholesterol checked recently, now is a great time to schedule an appointment with a provider at Story Medical Clinic—Nevada to discuss your heart health."

To schedule an appointment with a primary care provider at Story Medical Clinic, please call us at 515-382-5413.

News & Notes

NEW CARDIOLOGIST OFFERS OUTPATIENT CARE AT STORY MEDICAL IN NEVADA

Story Medical is pleased to share that Esteffania Villegas, MD, of McFarland Clinic Cardiology is now providing cardiology services at Story Medical's Outpatient Clinic in Nevada, offering access to specialized heart care close to home for patients in Story County and the surrounding communities.



Through this partnership, Story Medical offers diagnostic, office-based services focused on helping patients manage and recover from heart-related conditions. Care is available for individuals who have experienced:

- Heart attack
- Valve surgery
- Stable congestive heart failure
- A variety of other cardiovascular diagnoses

Dr. Villegas provides comprehensive cardiology care and works closely with patients and their primary care providers to support heart health, recovery, and long-term wellness. By offering services in the Nevada outpatient clinic, patients can receive specialized

News & Notes

cardiology care without the need to travel outside the community.

Patients are seen on a referral basis. Those who believe they may benefit from cardiology services are encouraged to speak with their primary care provider about a referral to see Dr. Villegas at Story Medical.

STILL TIME TO GET FLU SHOT

For millions of people every season, the flu can mean a fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle aches, fatigue, and miserable days spent in bed. However, flu also causes hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations, and thousands or sometimes tens of thousands of deaths.

The flu vaccine has proven effective in limiting the risk of serious complications. You can make an appointment for your shot by calling us in Nevada at 515-382-5413 or Maxwell at 515-387-8815.

WORK AT STORY MEDICAL

If you are looking for a new career in a friendly work environment, look no further than Story Medical. We are always recruiting and currently have a number of clinical and non-clinical positions open.

Learn more about what is available and fill out an online application at storymedical.org/careers.

Calendar of Events

SENIOR CENTER MEN'S COFFEE

Feb. 5 & 19, 9 a.m.

Senior Center, 1231 6th St.

NEVADA FOOD AT FIRST

Mondays & Thursdays, 5:30 p.m.

First United Methodist Church,
1036 7th St.

Find out more, set up delivery:
<https://nevadafoodatfirst.com>

COFFEE WITH COUNCIL

Feb. 7, 9 a.m.

Renn's Cafe, 1001 6th St.

NEVADA COMMUNITY CUPBOARD OPEN

Every Saturday, 10-11:30 a.m.

1110 11th Street

Provides food for those in need

HARMONY CLOTHING CLOSET

Every Monday, 4-7 p.m.

1122 6th Street

Provides free clothing. Donations may be dropped off at this time.

NCSD SCHOOL BOARD

Feb. 2 & 16, 6:30 p.m.

Gates Memorial Hall

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Every Tuesday, 10 a.m.

Story County Admin. Bldg.

AMERICAN LEGION TACO TUESDAY AND BINGO

Tuesdays, 4:45-8, 7-9 p.m.

American Legion Post

Enjoy Taco selections from 4:45-8; play BINGO from 7-9. \$5 plays all games. Snacks available.

SENIOR CENTER WOMEN'S COFFEE

Every Wednesday, 9 a.m.

Senior Center, 1231 6th St.

FRIENDS OF LIBRARY BOOK SALE

Feb. 6 & 7, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Nevada Public Library

SENIOR CENTER POTLUCK

Feb. 9, 11:30 a.m.

Senior Center, 1231 6th St.

Bring a dish to share. A short program will begin around 12:15 p.m.

CITY COUNCIL

Feb. 9 & 23, 6 p.m.

City Hall

AMERICAN LEGION FISH FRY

Feb. 13, 5-7 p.m.

American Legion Post

Alternate choice will be chicken. Adults \$12, Children \$5

AMERICAN LEGION FISH FRY

Feb. 20, 5-7 p.m.

American Legion Post

Adults \$12, Children \$5

NEVADA SCHOOL FOUNDATION TRIVIA NIGHT

Feb. 21, 7-10 p.m.

Christy Hall

Go to the NevadaCSDfoundation Facebook page for team registration information.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY FISH FRY

Feb. 27, 5-7 p.m.

American Legion Post

Alternate choice of chicken and noodles, and mashed potatoes, green beans, rolls, desserts and drinks. Adults \$12, Children \$5