

THE Valley NEWS

Vol. 28 Number 108 One Section

Shenandoah, Iowa, USA

Saturday, January 13, 2018

www.valleynewstoday.com



Slip Sliding Away

Jillian Putnam of Shenandoah slides down the hill behind Shenandoah High School Thursday, Jan. 11. Local schools were closed due to icy conditions. *Tess Nelson/The Valley News*

Mental health services to be offered at SHS

By **TESS NELSON**
Editor-in-Chief

Members of the Shenandoah Board of Education met in regular session Monday, Jan. 8.

During the meeting, Breanna Dyche and Suzanne Tillman were hired as pre-school associates at \$11.84 per hour and the resignation of Spencer Rice as ninth grade baseball coach was accepted.

Additionally, a master services agreement with OneNeck Solutions, and a contract with Midwest Mental Health Services were both approved.

During the Dec. 11 board meeting, Dr. Kerri Nelson, superintendent of Shenandoah School, explained how school-based model of mental health services would work if approved by board.

Nelson said mental health services are becoming far more common in schools, as the need for mental health services has risen dramatically in recent years.

She explained Midwest Mental Health under the direction of Kindra Weston would provide mental health services at the school for those in need, and with parental consent.

"The more common approach is to contract with a provider to allow them to use your space, to have access to your students based on parent consent and authorization. If the parent allows for a waiver to be signed, we can work together to serve the student more effectively by having guidance counselors and parent-liaisons also work with those students," Nelson said.

The intent is to reduce the barrier of travel and stigma of leaving for mental health appointments. Nelson said if the services were provided at the school, students in need of mental health services could access help just as easily as if walking to class.

Midwest Mental Health would be in charge of all appointments, billing and collection. Services would not be provided to a student unless with parental consent. Additionally, it would be under the liability of Midwest Mental Health and no medications would ever be dispensed - only counseling.

"They are simply using our space to provide a service," Nelson said.

The next regular meeting of the board is set for 5 p.m. Feb. 12.

Population of coyotes continue to increase

By **TESS NELSON**
Editor-in-Chief

The yip-howl of coyotes can easily send shivers up and down a person's spine but according to Matt Dollison and Vince Evelsizer with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, coyotes are nothing to be afraid of.

"They are an animal that deserves respect," said Evelsizer, state furbearer biologist. "Their ability to adapt and survive is incredible."

In fact, coyote populations in Iowa have been steadily increasing over the past 30 years. The most populated area across the state includes Page and Fremont County. Dollison said the best way they obtain data on coyotes is through a bow hunter observation survey. In 2016, the population had increased about 25 percent from 2015. Dollison said he anticipates it continued to increase in 2017, adding that southwest Iowa had double the number of coyotes compared to other regions of that state.

The reasons for the increase in population relate to ideal habitat, abundance of food and lack of disease.

"In southwest Iowa we have a nice mixture of woodland, grassland and cropland that is ideal for coyotes. We also have

different prey available to them," said Dollison. "They are also very resilient."

The main food source for coyotes are mice, rabbits, upland birds and deer fawns. However, sometimes, Evelsizer said coyotes are blamed for livestock deaths caused by other canines like wild dogs.

"There is a lot of emotion and polarization with people hating or loving the coyote and feel they are attacking livestock or calves, but often times it's a small pack of dogs that do that more. We're not saying the coyote is innocent, but they are often wrongfully accused," said Evelsizer.

Coyotes are native to North America and nowhere else. They can live alone or in packs; sometimes doing both. Coyote packs usually start with a male and female pair with members of the litter sometimes joining. Some night the packs will stay together and other times, split apart.

Coyote packs are usually either a nuclear family centered around a reproductive female and her monogamous mate or an entirely unrelated group of animals, who may be bachelors or too young to reproduce. Evelsizer said the unrelated groups disband much more readily than families, who will generally stay together for at least the better part of a year, sometimes more.

"Non-reproductive sisters or daughters



Roger Hill

may stay with a reproductive female for another whole season to help raise the next litter of pups. Even when they don't, familial females generally stay closer to their mother's home range than their brothers do," Evelsizer said.

An average litter size is five to six pups

see **COYOTE**, Page 4A

Carbon monoxide a real concern during winter

By **SANDY PARMENTER**
Staff Writer

Recent frigid temperatures have many people cranking up the heat in their homes, but what about the people who don't have traditional heat sources, or whose electricity has gone out?

They may be using charcoal or wood heat, portable generators, stoves, lanterns or gas ranges, among other methods, to warm up, exposing themselves to the possibility of carbon monoxide poisoning.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there are over 400 deaths and approximately 50,000 emergency room visits each year as a result of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas found in the fumes produced by

many alternative sources of power and heat. CO can cause sudden illness and death when it builds up in enclosed spaces. As people breathe in the CO, their bodies replace the oxygen in their blood with CO, causing illness, and in extreme cases, if not treated, death.

People who are sleeping or who have been drinking are even more vulnerable to CO because they are not aware of their symptoms until it is too late.

The CDC lists some of the most common symptoms of CO poisoning as: headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain and confusion. Compounding the danger is the fact that these symptoms can be associated with other illnesses, delaying reactions of those involved.

If CO poisoning is suspected, get the victim to fresh air and seek medical attention

immediately.

The CDC suggests having a battery-powered or battery back-up CO detector near every sleeping area in a home, and checking them regularly, and offers the following tips to help prevent carbon monoxide poisoning:

•Never use a gas range or oven to heat a home.

•Never leave the motor running in a vehicle parked in an enclosed or partially enclosed space, such as a garage.

•Never run a generator, pressure washer, or any gasoline-powered engine inside a basement, garage, or other enclosed structure, even if the doors or windows are open, unless the equipment is professionally installed and vented. Keep vents and flues free of debris, especially if winds

see **CO2**, Page 4A

Green appointed Mayor Pro Tem, commercial rules questioned

By **TESS NELSON**
Editor-in-Chief

At-Large Councilman Aaron Green was re-appointed Mayor Pro Tem by Shenandoah Mayor Richard "Dick" Hunt at the Tuesday, Jan. 9 regular meeting of the Shenandoah City Council.

A fiscal year 2017 independent audit report from the State of Iowa was approved by members of the council, as was change order No. 1 from MZ Construction for Iowa Department of Natural Resources mandated work done

at the wastewater treatment plant.

The change order was for additional piping, valves and supports in the amount of \$9,058.

Council members additionally accepted the work on the Safe Routes to School project. The final cost of the project was \$233,584 and was funded through a Department of Transportation program.

In other business, the council:

—Renewed a liquor permit for the American Legion Country Club, Casey's General Store No. 2539 and Hy-Vee, Inc.

—Heard from West Sheridan Avenue commercial building owner Deanna Viner who informed council members her property should not have to be registered as a vacant commercial property. Shenandoah City Attorney Mahlon Sorensen explained the property only has to be registered as a vacant commercial property until a business occupies it.

"We're not asking her to buy more insurance; we're not asking her to remodel it. All the city is asking for her to do is register it as a commercial vacant building," Sorensen said.



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