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**Here's news from other towns nearby.**

**BODE:** The Twin Rivers School Board will close the elementary building in Livermore after the current school year. Portable classrooms for grades K-2 will be purchased for \$190,000 and placed on the school grounds in Bode. School officials considered two lease options and one purchase option and decided that buying the L-shaped building was cheapest in the long run since it is planned that the buildings will be in use for several years. The fire-rated setup will include six classrooms (three large and three small), two restrooms, a hallway, a janitor's closet, and two handicap accessible exterior ramps. The classrooms were ordered in mid-March and will be delivered by an Illinois company in June.

**GARNER:** The teachers union and the school board have agreed on a new contract. It includes a 3.5 percent pay raise and a 9.1 percent insurance raise for a total increase of 4.6 percent.

**OSAGE:** The Duckwall's variety store began a going out of business sale last week. Company officials say the six-year-old store wasn't profitable. Duckwall-ALCO of Abilene, Kansas announced it was closing 12 Duckwall's and eight ALCO stores nationwide. The Garner store will remain open.

This is the second variety store in Osage to announce its closing. Shirley's Variety is also going out of business after a four-year run.

**WEST HANCOCK:** A committee of citizens from Britt and Kanawha can't agree how to align the grades between the two towns. Starting next fall, all Kanawha K-4 students will go to school in Britt, leaving the Kanawha elementary building empty. Should the Britt 5th grade be moved to the grades 6-8 middle school in Kanawha? Should both towns have preschools? Should there be an after-school program in Kanawha? The committee is deadlocked 5 to 5 on a decision to move the 5th grade and isn't planning any more meetings.

**STEAMBOAT ROCK:** The Pine Lake ethanol plant produced its first gallon of corn-based fuel on March 19. When up to full speed, it will make 20 millions gallons of ethanol per year.

**FRANKLIN COUNTY:** First it was not enough fluoride in the water in Hampton. Now it's too much fluoride in the water in Sheffield. Tests have discovered that the water supply in Sheffield has a fluoride level of 2.35 milligrams per liter. An ideal level for healthy teeth is 1.0, but government authorities don't worry until the level goes above 2.0. Folks get real excited when the level is 4.0 or higher because that has been linked to bone disease. In the case of Sheffield, parents are being told to avoid city water for children under the age of nine because the 2.35 fluoride level might discolor teeth. It is safe for older children and adults. The city is "adjusting the blend rates from the wells to lower the fluoride levels".

**NORTH IOWA:** Iowa Falls was mostly dry, Belmond got several inches, and Osage got nearly a foot of new snow March 18. The total was even higher in southern Minnesota. A group of Osage children got right outside the next day and built two giant snowmen over eight feet tall. In Hampton, a man brought a truck full of snow down from the north so his small grandchildren could play in the white stuff.

**EAGLE GROVE:** The school board will try again to pass a Physical Plant and Equipment Levy. Voters rejected the ten-year tax by a large margin several weeks ago. Another vote may be held in conjunction with the September school board election.

The Class of 1955 would like to place a granite sign in front of the high school. But class members are having second thoughts after remarks about closing the high school were made by the school superintendent following the failed PPEL election. The superintendent assured the Class of 1955 that he intends to do what-ever is necessary to keep the high school open.

CLEAR LAKE: Harmony Ranch will hold a silent auction, dinner and variety show fundraiser Saturday at the middle school starting at 4 p.m. Harmony Ranch is a non-profit Christian organization that provides therapeutic horseback riding opportunities for children and adults who are physically, mentally, or emotionally challenged. For information call 641-357-7960.

HAMPTON: The Franklin County Fair has been named one of the top ten things to do in Iowa by the internet travel company Travelocity.

For the third time in about a year the city council has declared a dog "vicious". A blue heeler mix was banned from the community after it bit a small child and chased other children. The dog's owner said the animal wasn't vicious, just "a little over-zealous". But the police chief said the city ordinance offered little fudge room. He told the council, "You don't have any other categories to put this dog in."

VENTURA: School officials apologized for a mistake in calculating the cost to property owners for a \$6.7 million bond issue for the high school. Early estimates given for the proposed bond issue were about \$1.50 per thousand too low, under-estimating the cost for a home with an assessed value of \$50,000 by \$75.00 per year.

CLARION: A 20-year-old man died at a Des Moines hospital after suffering a self-inflicted gunshot wound March 21.

The public library has added wireless internet to its list of services. Patrons with the proper "card" in their laptop computer can access the internet from anywhere in the building.

FOREST CITY: The city council has agreed to ask voters to approve a \$2 million bond issue for a new swimming pool. The total project has an estimated price tag of \$3.7 million, so the bond vote won't come just yet. Supporters of the new aquatic center say they would first like to try to raise \$1 million privately. Their goal is to do this in the next six months and have the election in November. The pool would be twice as large as the current one. It would include zero depth entry, a water slide, an inner tube slide, a lazy river, and an eight lane competition pool with diving area. If all goes as planned, it would open in 2007.

NORTHWOOD: Habitat for Humanity will soon build its first home here. Volunteers are being recruited and qualified families are being sought. The North Central Iowa chapter has constructed 21 homes. Worldwide, Habitat for Humanity has built 150,000 homes in 89 countries.

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