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## Fireworks committee proposed

By **MATT MILNER**  
 Managing Editor

**OTTUMWA** — The city council is being asked to approve a committee to take a look at the city's fireworks regulations, a step the council seems sure to take.

The idea for the committee was proposed by council members. The initial suggestion came when the city was debating whether to allow fireworks to be used in Ottumwa, and it was reiterated after the fireworks season ended earlier this year.

Such steps are taking place in many communities statewide. This was the first year in decades in which fireworks were legal for sale and use in Iowa. Under the legislation passed this past spring, cities could restrict or even prohibit the use of fireworks but could not prohibit their sale.

Ottumwa allowed fireworks between 4-10 p.m. from June 24 through July 4. Hours were extended on the holiday itself, beginning at 10 a.m. and ending at 11 p.m. Those were more restrictive dates than those in the state law.

State polls suggest support for fireworks use in Iowa sank after the Fourth of July holiday. Area residents were split when the Courier asked about it on Facebook. Few called for a return to a full ban on fireworks, but many suggested the city needed to make a better effort to enforce restrictions on when and where fireworks could be used.

Enforcement is sure to be an issue for the proposed committee, with Fire Chief Tony Miller and Police Chief Tom McAndrew among the eight people nominated by Mayor Tom Lazio.

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# CENTURY FARMS

Stories presented by: Al Martin Real Estate & Auction  
 Community 1st Credit Union • RJ Performance

## Adaptations, education keep Swanson family on the land

By **JEFF LECHNER**  
 Courier staff writer

**S**wanson Farms is more than just a Century Farm. At more than 170 years old, it's comfortably beyond the requirements for even its Heritage Farm designation.

Swanson Farms has come a long way in those 170 years. It is currently operated by Don Swanson and his brother Bill and includes more than 1,400 acres, two Century Farms and one Heritage Farm.

"They put together 80 acres, and the first 80 was actually patented in 1847. And then we bought another 40 in 1850 and another 40 in 1852," said Don Swanson.

Those 160 acres are what make up the W.A. Sands Trust Heritage Farm, which came down through Bill and Don's mother's side.

Qualifying for a Century Farm or Heritage Farm designation requires a lot of research. Don has spent time studying the history of the farm, tracing his family back to before they arrived in Iowa. He has even made a trip to Washington County, Tennessee, to pin down when and why they made the move to Iowa.

"I believe, based on when we left, we got here somewhere between 1844 and 1845 there," said Don.

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Jeff Lechner photos/The Courier  
**Above:** The farm house that preceded the one built in 1918 no longer exists. Don believes that the figures at right may be Nathaniel and his son William, the first and second generations.

**Above:** Four generations pose in front of the Swanson Farms sign, which shows its designation as a Heritage Farm. From left to right are Jake Swanson (seventh), Ryker Morrison (eighth), Dorothy Sands Swanson (fifth), Don Swanson (sixth) and Bill Swanson (sixth).

## Warning on nitrates in silage

Extension: Test nitrate levels in feed

**JEFFREY LECHNER**  
 Courier staff writer

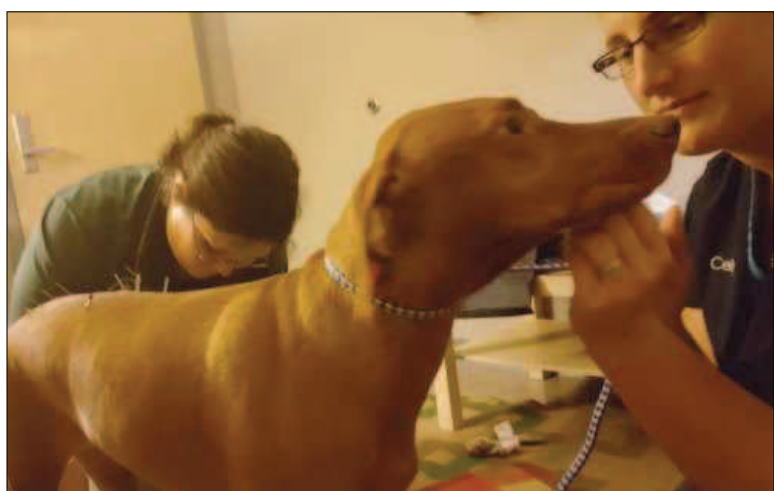
**OTTUMWA** — Iowa State Extension is cautioning farmers when feeding drought stressed corn as silage because of nitrate toxicity. This was a topic discussed earlier in the week at the Wapello County Extension Service's Beginning/Young Farmers Meeting.

In drought conditions nitrates absorbed by the plant are not always converted into grains due to the lack of moisture and can remain in the plant at high levels which if high enough can be toxic. In article published by Iowa State University Steve Ensley, of Iowa State University's Veterinary Diagnostic and Production Animal Medicine (VDPAM) department states that, "The most common problem is when drought stressed corn is green chopped and fed to livestock without going through ensiling." Usually the nitrate will collect in the lower portion of the stalk and it should be chopped 12-18 inches above ground level.

"If you turn your cows out to graze on stalk field you should definitely test the nitrate concentration," Beef Field Specialist Patrick Wall. Anything with a concentration greater than 16,000 ppm for KNO<sub>3</sub>, 2,300 ppm for NO<sub>3</sub>-N, or 10,000 ppm NO<sub>3</sub> should not be used as feed until ensiled.

There are several methods that can be used for testing,

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Mark Newman/The Courier  
**Pipestone's Breanna Estle, DVM, is licensed in animal acupuncture as well as veterinary medicine. Friday during a dog's first acupuncture treatment, veterinary technician Celsey Orman helps keep "Kona" calm.**

## Veterinary acupuncture points to Ottumwa

### Pipestone vet offers optional Chinese pet treatment

By **MARK NEWMAN**  
 Courier staff writer

**OTTUMWA** — If a sick pet isn't responding to typical veterinary treatment, there may be something else to try. Acupuncture for pets is, however, still overseen by a licensed veterinarian.

Breanna Estle, DVM, started at

Pipestone Veterinary Clinic in May after graduating from Iowa State University. But she also has another qualification: She's a graduate of the Chi Institute in Florida.

There, they teach animal doctors things they don't learn at veterinary school. Old-fashioned Chinese medicine is taught, as is a modern version of the ancient technique of acupuncture.

Small needles — pins, really — are inserted into specific points in an animal's body. Though the scientific and medical communities are not exactly certain how

the technique helps, studies show that it does help.

Estle said so far, western research has determined that when safely, gently pushing into certain spots, the body is encouraged to help itself, and may release beneficial chemicals into the blood stream.

"I was attending a lecture where [the speaker] mentioned it. I thought it sounded interesting ... and did some research. There are ... studies showing a good therapeutic effect."

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### TWO-DAY FORECAST



Today ... Sunny with a high near 84. East northeast wind 3 to 7 mph. Tonight ... Mostly clear with a low around 58. East northeast wind 5 to 8 mph becoming calm after midnight. Sunday ... Mostly sunny with a high near 84. Calm wind becoming east southeast around 5 mph in the morning. Sunday night ... Mostly clear, with a low around 62. East wind around 6 mph becoming calm in the evening.

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Saturday Courier



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From left to right, eighth generation Ryker Morrison, seventh generation Jake Swanson and sixth generation Don Swanson pose their sulky plow, an original piece of farm equipment.

Jeff Lechner/The Courier

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## SWANSON: Adaptations keep family on the land

Continued from Page A1

"My great-great-grandfather, this is where it all starts, with Nathaniel Sands," said Don, pointing out the name at a scanned page from "The History of Wapello County Volume 1." It's clear that Nathaniel and his son William were among the early settlers to come to Iowa, but the date is not entirely certain. The book mentions them in both 1844 and 1845. Don tends to lean toward the 1844 date.

Bill and Don Swanson are the sixth generation to work the farm, but the family is on the eighth generation "We started through my great-great-uncle Zachariah, 75 acres for \$21 in 1874; that's Bill and I's Century Farm. That was founded in 1874; it's all one operation now, but the original Sands Trust is my grandfather," said Don. The farms were joined when Zachariah sold his 75 acres to his great-nephew, William Arthur Sands, Don and Bill's grandfather.

More important than the history of the farm is the long-term view that the family has had in preserving the farm for future generations. Education and sustainability go hand in hand. The Swanson family has had four generations attend Iowa State University, including Don's son Jake Swanson. Jake currently works in Des Moines as an assistant to the Iowa secre-



Jeff Lechner/The Courier

The current farm house was built in 1918, making it 100 years old next year. It was built in the same year as a barn and hog house that are also still on the farm. The house is currently being renovated with plans to rebuild the deck, which Don Swanson says has seen a lot of tricycle traffic over the years as well as a few scooters.

**"One of the things our farm is really good at is precision agriculture, and using science and technology to use the best practices for our farm with a sustainable focus."**

JAKE SWANSON

tary of agriculture and will actually be announcing the new Century Farm award recipients at the state fair this year.

Jake stressed the importance of sustainability and using new technology. That means protecting the land. If the farm were to lose all of its soil, then there would no longer be a farm.

"We were one of the, I think, one of the first farms to receive the Iowa Environmental Leader award," said Jake. "One of the things our farm is really good at is precision agriculture, and using science and technology to use the best practices for our farm with a sustainable focus."

Innovation and adoption

of new technology goes way back, but it has always been tempered by a certain frugality.

"You know each generation has challenged themselves to get smarter, to learn to adapt, but yet I drug up that piece of machinery I showed you, you remember that?" Don said. "It just kind of tied it together that they were progressive enough that they bought a sulky plow instead of having to be out there walking behind and yet they were frugal enough that they kept patching it up, literally, with bailing wire to keep it going, so I thought that just kind of summed it up right there," said Don.

"I mean maybe it's a boring story," said Don, "but I know one thing: Bill and I, we never took it for granted, I guess, we never will, and if that sets us apart or what, but we were always looking ahead. We were always trying to get better and trying to adapt new technology and appreciated what we have and never stepped back."

And that's the attitude that has kept the Swansons on the land for more than 170 years.

## STATE BRIEFS

### Data breach at medical clinic

**SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP)** — Plastic Surgery Associates of South Dakota has announced a data breach that might have left some patient records open to hackers.

The company has locations in Sioux Falls, Dakota Dunes, Yankton, Mitchell, Watertown and Spencer, Iowa.

The company in a statement said it learned of a ransomware attack on Feb. 12 and hired third-party experts to determine what data was potentially accessed.

Plastic Surgery Associates is providing notice to about 10,200 people that some personal patient information might not have been protected. The company says it has no evidence that there's been any misuse of patient information.

The company is reporting the incident to federal

officials, working to guard against future breaches and offering a year of credit monitoring to people who might be affected.

### 1 killed by gunfire, 2 arrested

**DES MOINES (AP)** — Police say one person has been shot to death and two others arrested in Des Moines.

The Des Moines Register reports that the shooting happened Friday afternoon in the city's River Bend neighborhood.

Des Moines Police Sgt. Paul Parizek says a gunman inside a vehicle fired several shots, hitting a person in the chest who was standing on Oakland Avenue. Parizek says the victim was taken to a hospital and pronounced dead.

Parizek says eyewitnesses described the vehicle carrying the shooter. Police later spotted the vehicle and took two people into custody

after the driver crashed near the intersection of Sixth Avenue and Madison Avenue.

### Parents accused of abuse

**DES MOINES (AP)** — An Ankeny couple who adopted nine disabled children from foster care have been accused of physical abuse.

The Des Moines Register reports that 55-year-old John Elmer Bell and 57-year-old Joyce Marie Bell are charged with felony child endangerment causing injury. Polk County Jail records say they remained in custody Friday. Online court records don't list the names of attorneys who could comment for the Bells.

The Register says 21-year-old Crystal Bell, one of those adopted, had turned over to authorities four videos depicting physical abuse of her adoptive brother.

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