



At the Clark Chamber of Commerce annual meeting on Monday, January 27, Dakota Butcher (top) was awarded Business of the Year, and (bottom) Monica Forest was awarded Person of the Year. In the first photo are Chamber President Lacey Helkenn and Ida Foster and Ed Hickley, representing Dakota Butcher. Pictured (right) is Monica Forest and Helkenn.

Top photo by Carolynn Olson

Dakota Butcher and Monica Forest recognized at Clark Chamber meeting

By Carolynn Olson

The Clark Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting was held on Monday, January 27 at Dakota Butcher in Clark. President Lacey Helkenn called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

Chamber Board Positions

The board welcomed Dean Hilmoe of Clark Ace Hardware. Officer elections were also held, including Lacey Helkenn, president; Trevor Forest, vice president; and Cassi Kottke, secretary/treasurer.

Dakota Butcher was awarded Business of the Year, and Monica Forest was awarded Person of the Year.

It was also reported that there are currently over 50 members of the Clark Area Chamber of Commerce.

Planned Events

The board discussed upcoming events for 2025 and assigned members to specific days/events.

Clark Chamber event dates were set, including Jump Into Spring coming up on Saturday, March 29 and a golf tournament on Saturday, June 28. Potato Days will be August 1-3. Small Business Saturday

and the CocoaCrawl event is set for Saturday, November 29, and Christmas in Clark will be Saturday, December 6.

The Chamber also noted that for Valentine's Day, they will be sending carnation flowers to residents at Clark Chamber businesses: Avantara - Clark and Fay Wokey Memorial Assisted Living Center.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m. The next meeting of the Clark Area Chamber of Commerce will be held on Monday, February 17 at 6:00 p.m. in the Dacotah Bank community room.

WEATHER

Robert Cole - Official Weather Observer

	HI	LO	PR
January 28.....	40	18	0
January 29.....	46	22	0
January 30.....	43	24	0
January 31.....	49	22	0
February 1.....	34	21	0
February 2.....	48	24	0
February 3.....	26	11	T
2025 precipitation to date	.17"		
2024 precipitation to date	.29"		

February Clark City Council meeting held Monday night

By Carolynn Olson

The February meeting of the Clark City Council was held on Monday, February 3 at 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Kerry Kline called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Council members not present were Melissa Neshiem and Nick Dalton. Brandon Kottke appeared via phone.

A first reading on the rezoning of North Cloud Street will be held at March's city council meeting. North Cloud Street will be rezoned from residential to industrial. There was no public input.

Clark City Council
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Gale Filipek to be honored at Watertown Winter Farm Show

By Tara Knutson

Agriculture and the cattle industry have been the pillars on which Gale Filipek of Raymond has built his life.

"I've always been on the farm - born and raised there. My wife Mary and I raised our kids on our operation, and the tradition has continued to the third generation."

The prairies of Raymond, S.D. have produced generations of Filipeks and generations of beef cattle for this producer and his family. Gale went to college at South Dakota State University graduating in 1974 with degrees in dairy and animal science, and in 1973, he married his high school sweetheart, Mary.

"I would have never thought we would be married. Initially, we got along like a cat and dog in a gunny sack," laughs Filipek. "Mary was a city girl on top of it all; she wasn't initially very happy about moving out to the farm. She came around to liking the idea though, especially



Gale Filipek of Raymond, pictured above with his wife Mary, will be one of the honorees at the 80th Watertown Winter Farm Show set for February 12-15 at the Codington County Extension Complex in Watertown.

Photo Courtesy of Gale & Mary Filipek

ly when she saw just how much the kids loved the farm as our fami-

ly grew." Raising kids and raising cattle became a way of life for the

couple. The Watertown Winter Farm Show, held every year in early February, has always been a family highlight for the Filipeks - a winter vacation. "We would stay in a hotel close to the barns, and the kids would swim in the hotel pool while I went to work. We've been going for 34 years in a row," Gale explains. He is the current breed manager for the Simmental Cattle Show and Sale.

The Watertown Winter Farm Show honors individuals who have contributed to the success of the farm show by dedicating the show to them. This year's 80th Watertown Winter Farm Show, commencing February 12-15 at the Codington County Extension Complex, will be extra special for the Filipek family. Gale Filipek, along with Dan Engbreton of Watertown will be recognized for all those years of service to the show.

Gale Filipek
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The senior class at Willow Lake High School started a new project tradition through Mrs. Angela Terhark's English class this school year. In December of 2024, each student selected a teacher, coach or school personnel member that made an impact in their lives.

The students then wrote letters explaining how that person impacted their experiences at Willow Lake School followed by surprising their selected person in their work setting during a videotaped surprise in-person presentation where they read their letter of impact and presented them with a special 'I have made an IMPACT WLHS Class of 2025' t-shirt.

Pictured in photos are three of the seniors with the teacher they selected as their person of impact. Above: Mrs. Kim Bratland with Carmen Efraimson. Top right: Ginny Warkenthien with Mr. Dan Tonak. Bottom right: Kate Larson with Mrs. Lori Hovde.

Submitted photos

Willow Lake High School seniors write letters of impact to staff members as part of school project

By Carolynn Olson

The Willow Lake High School Class of 2025 completed a letters of impact assignment for their English class in December.

When their teacher, Mrs. Angela Terhark first introduced the idea of this project to her students, they were unsure about laying their heart of the line. But after a little persuasion, the students realized the importance of sharing how much various teachers, coaches or school personnel have made an impact on their lives.

"We watched a video of another school that had done a similar project for inspiration," disclosed Terhark.

The students took time to carefully consider who they were going to choose. "One of my stipulations was that they each had to pick a different person so there was no doubling up," said Terhark. The class

also designed a t-shirt to gift to the person they chose. The shirts read, "I have made an impact WLHS Class of 2025."

The seniors shared their letters of impact the week before Christmas break in December of 2024. This was intentional as a token of appreciation to these very important people in the students' lives.

"It was required that the students 'interrupted' their chosen teacher/school personnel when they were presenting their letter to share this special message and to spread the word about the impact that person had on them," Terhark explained.

The students were also required to record the delivery of the letter as they read the letter out loud to their person of impact. The hope for the video was to create something to share with others.

Senior Logan Hymans said, "I



picked Mr. (Lukas) Anderson because he made me enjoy science, and I was more comfortable talking to him than other teachers."

This was the first year of this project. "Because of the meaningful impact the project had on its recipients, I look forward to doing this project again in the future," said Terhark. "This project goes hand-in-hand with a Senior Memoir project the students will be completing during their final semester at WLHS that includes a compilation of writings that share their life and experiences from elementary through high school," she added.

One of the students' favorite parts of this project was how appreciative and thankful the person receiving the letters were and how surprised they were ones that a student chose.

"It was very meaningful to hear from a current student about the impact that I have had on them. As a teacher, you sometimes wonder whether your efforts are truly making a difference," said Willow Lake High School teacher Dan Tonak.

"I am very proud of this group of seniors for taking on this new project with me. They did an excellent job of making this a meaningful learning experience," said Terhark.

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