

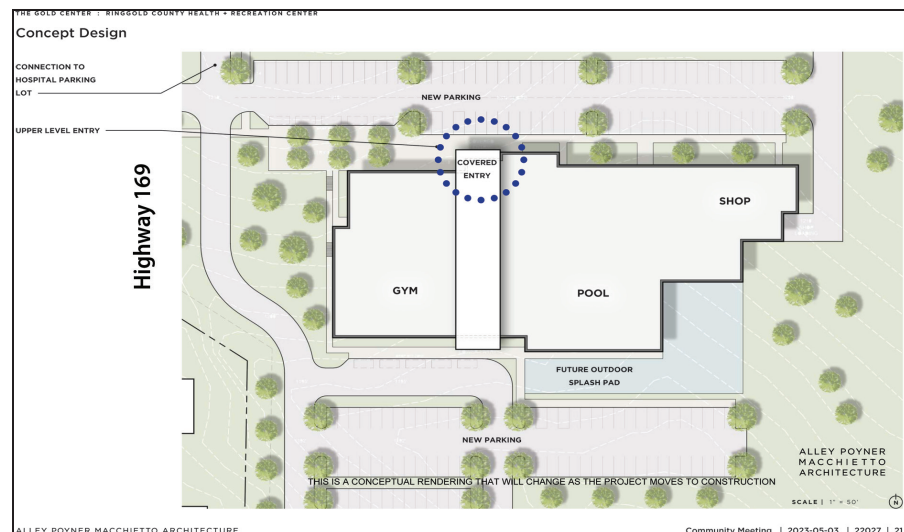
# Mount Ayr Record News

Volume 160, Number 8 • Thursday, May 11, 2023 • Mount Ayr, Iowa 50854 • USPS No. 365-120 • staff@mtayrnews.com • \$1.00

## Gold Center concept revealed



A preliminary design and 3D building massing by Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture shows a view of the Gold Center concept from the Southwest.



An overhead design proposal of the potential new Gold Center.

BY JENNIFER KELLNER

Local residents finally got their first look at the proposed Gold Center being planned for Ringgold County during a public meeting held last Wednesday, May 3 at the Mount Ayr High School auditorium.

Modeled after the CREW Center in Woodbine, Daric O'Neal with Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture presented early concepts to an audience of roughly 50 people.

While no cost estimates were shared, the public was able to get a feel for the size and scope of the project, and imagine entering the two story building that may someday exist just south of Ringgold County Hospital.

Gold Center executive board member Brad Elliott hopes the community sees that "It's more than just a pool." According to Elliott, the social and educational components are vital, because the Gold Center would provide "a place to meet and connect in a neutral space."

Entering from the north side, the main entry serves as the hub of the facility with technology-equipped open and shared work space, community gathering areas, and fami-

ly-friendly changing rooms.

A competition sized gym with a full basketball court, tiered seating, and upper level walking track is planned for the west side of the facility along Highway 169. The initial site plan also incorporates a workout space for group fitness classes with a separate area for weights and machines.

On the far east, an educational area showed four classrooms and a large shop area that would be utilized by Southwestern Community College (SWCC).

The Iowa Department of Education has already awarded SWCC a million dollar grant towards the career academy that would offer adults and high school students an opportunity to receive technical training in auto mechanics, health care, welding and education closer to home.

On the southeast side, the site plan showed a 5,000 square foot swimming pool with large overhead doors, a separate zero entry shallow water area, and water resistance channel. The concept allowed room for a splash pad to be added in the future between the aquatic area and the

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## City council moves on bids and nuisances

The Mount Ayr city council covered a light agenda at their regular meeting Monday, May 1.

Among actions taken, the city council:

- approved Little League Coaches, adding Ty Boyer to the coaching roster.

- renewed liquor licenses for El Vaquero Mexican Restaurant, LLC and Ringgold Post No. 172 of the American Legion of Iowa.

- approved the limestone chip quote totaling \$76,397.60 from Blacktop Services Co. on April 18, 2023.

- Chip sealing will include Cass St. (Highway 2 to W Van Buren St.) for \$4,257.20, West Van Buren St. (Cass St. to dead end) for \$53,325.20, North Polk St. (E Jefferson St. to Columbus St.) for \$7,116.60 and West Columbus St. (Henderson St. to Valley West Dr.) for \$11,698.60.

- approved a manhole rehabilitation proposal from Rehab Systems, LLC repairs on Manhole #145 for \$1,822.50, Manhole #144 for \$1,620.00, Floor/Invert repair ranging from \$250.00 to \$1,000.00 based

on severity and mobilization for \$400.00.

- approved closing documents for 703 North Cleveland St. selling the property to Rahim Martin.

- approved closing documents for 206 East Jefferson St. selling the property to Mark and Leza Johnson.

- considered a single bid of \$35,500.00 for dirt work/brush removal at Loch Ayr Lake from McGahuey Construction. Due to the word "estimate" before listing the price, the Council requested City Administrator Wise reach out for clarification.

- reviewed two sealed bids for the city dump trailer and approved the high bid of \$3,250 from Stewart Tire.

Jordan Stewart abstained from voting.

- agreed to move forward on obtaining cost estimates from Jeff Sickels for dirt work related to storm water runoff on Dwight Hickman's South Taylor Street property.

Wise asked for Council agreement to move the water away from Hickman's to the new pond constructed on Cunning's property to the west.

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## Dentist set for June 1 opening in Mount Ayr

For the first time in years, Mount Ayr will be getting a dentist to serve the community.

Infinity Health has announced that Dr. Rodney Gold will staff an office to be located at 1201 E. South Street, the sight of the former USDA office across from Caseys. Infinity Health already has a clinic at that location.

Assisting Dr. Gold are dental hygienists Nicole Kost, Brittany Schaeffer and Pat Elmer.

The office is taking appointments at 641-446-2383. Procedures will begin on June 1.



Randy McDonnell, Jr. has taken over the family business on the square in Mount Ayr.

## McDonnell Appliance fixture for over 40 years in Mount Ayr

BY MIKE AVITT

McDonnell Appliance has been a fixture in Mount Ayr for forty-one years.

Randy and Robin McDonnell own the business started by Randy's father, Randy McDonnell, Sr., in 1982 after the elder McDonnell had several years of appliance experience to his credit.

So, how did it all start?

Randy and Ruth McDonnell came to Mount Ayr in April 1974 with their children Randy, Jr. and Angela. Randy was employed as district manager for Dakota farm machinery until October 1975 when he accepted a position with Roe Implement as parts manager and salesman for Whirlpool appliances.

In April 1982 Randy and Ruth reached an agreement with Roe Implement and opened McDonnell Appliance at 102 E. Madison. The new business would feature a full line of Whirlpool products but also service and repair was offered and still is to this day.

Somewhat new to Mount Ayr area customers in 1982 were microwave ovens, trash compactors, and dishwashers.

On January 1, 1984, McDonnell Appliance moved to its current location at 121 S. Fillmore. This historic building was erected in 1891 for Adolphus A. Huggins as a farm implement dealership. The local Masonic Lodge bought the building in 1920 and 121 S. Fillmore was used as a furniture store from 1920 to 1973. An auto parts store followed until 1983.

There were two other businesses in the new location along with McDonnell Appliance: The Brass Thimble (Judy Cuning) and Shirley and Dave's Computers (Shirley Hightshoe and Dave Hardy). All three businesses held their Grand Opening on March 9 and 10, 1984.

Shortly after this, while still in high school, Randy Jr. began cutting meat for Gerald and Gregg Cannon at Community Meat Processors.

Randy Jr. enjoyed this trade and would follow it for a few years. Later, he married Robin Jones and worked as a meat cutter in places such as Creston, Sioux City, Iowa and Faribault, Minnesota. They returned to Mount Ayr in 1993.

"Robin and I wanted to be closer to family and we wanted our kids to attend Mount Ayr Schools," says Randy concerning their return home.

It was at this time Randy Jr. began working at McDonnell Appliance. Satellite televisions were popular at this time; the ones with the eight foot antenna receivers. McDonnell Appliance installed and serviced many of these monsters in rural areas and Sun Valley Lake.

Other popular appliances at this time were video cassette recorders and camcorders.

Randy Jr. worked with Daron Richie then and still does today.

Daron began his career with McDonnell Appliance in 1984 and still delivers, services, and repairs appliances and other products sold at the firm.

Ruth McDonnell handled the bookkeeping duties until illness prevented her from doing so (Ruth passed in 2022). Today, Randy Jr.'s daughter Stephanie does the books.

McDonnell Appliance has customers all over southern Iowa and northern Missouri.

As well as families, they have clients such as hog-raising facilities, nursing homes, Southern Iowa Rural Housing Association, colleges, schools, and hotels. Refrigerators, freezers, washers, and dryers are in constant and continuous demand.

In recent years, Whirlpool has acquired such brand names as Maytag, Amana, and KitchenAid, but McDonnell Appliance also sells Speed Queen and Frigidaire, giving them a wide range of products to offer their customers.

Randy Jr. took over the business in 2019. With the longevity and reputation of McDonnell Appliance, "word-of-mouth" serves them well.

"Service is a very large part of our business," says Randy. And it shows.